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THE IMPACT OF THE PHILOSOPHUS AUTODIDACTUS:
POCOCKES, JOHN LOCKE, AND THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

INTRODUCTION

In 1671, the year when Locke started on the first drafts of his Essay on Human Understanding, a bilingual text in Arabic and Latin was published at Oxford, entitled the Philosophus autodidactus (self-taught philosopher). The work depicted the development of the mind of a child from a tabula rasa to that of an adult, in complete isolation from society. By means of sensory experience and reasoning, without any innate ideas, he discovers the natural and physical sciences, God, and morality. One could call this work, with perfect justification, a case study for the main thesis of Locke’s Essay.

The Arabic narrative was Haruy ibn Yaqzain, written in the twelfth century by Ibn Tufayl (d.1185), the physician-philosopher under the Almohads in Muslim Spain. The Latin translation was made by Edward Pococke under the supervision of his father, Dr. Pococke, the first Laudian Professor of Arabic (1636) and the Regius Professor of Hebrew (1648), who provided the historical preface to the text.

The immediate question that arises is whether the appearance of this unique narrative and Locke’s drafting of the first versions of the Essay were purely coincidental or whether there is a connection. The reason for raising such a query is that the publication of the Philosophus autodidactus at Oxford comes at a turning point in Locke’s intellectual career. Scholars are largely agreed that it was in 1671 that Locke, for the first time in his writing, focused on the question of the nature of mind and its emergence out of experience without innate ideas. This empirical approach formed the nucleus of Locke’s theory of knowledge and of what subsequently came to be known as the British Associationist School of Philosophy. Prior to this period, Locke’s concerns were social, political, and practical and revealed no specific interest in the kind of epistemological issues which characterise his Essay.

The grounds for this dramatic shift in Locke’s thought have so far been unclear. It will be argued that Locke’s writing of the first drafts of the Essay
on the human intellect, after the appearance of the Philosophus autodidactus, in 1671 is not coincidental at all. The basis for this argument is not only the remarkable similarity of the empirical thesis that is common to both works; it is also dependent on Locke's intimate acquaintance with both Pococke, father and son, at Christ Church, Oxford, during the period when the Latin translation of the Arabic text was being prepared.

The existence of the Philosophus autodidactus has not been noted by Locke scholars, even though it was widely known at the time; consequently, the possibility of its impact has not arisen among the various influences on Locke's development. Therefore, in this chapter the crucial period and circumstances of Locke's drafting of the Essay will be re-examined. First, the publication of the Philosophus autodidactus and the extent of its diffusion will be presented. Then the relationship of Locke and the Pocockes at Oxford will be considered. Finally, the grounds for Locke's acquaintance with the Philosophus autodidactus will be investigated. Once that is established, then the role of the Philosophus autodidactus in Locke's intellectual development—specifically in the evolution of Locke's theory of knowledge—could be explored. Such an investigation together with a comparative analysis of the Arabic narrative and the early drafts of the Essay will constitute a separate study which is in preparation.

PART I

The Diffusion of the Philosophus autodidactus

The diffusion of the Philosophus autodidactus, radiating from Oxford to the Continent, is a remarkable phenomenon. In considering the contributing factors to the reception of this translation, one could say that it was Dr. Pococke's reputation both at Oxford and abroad which drew attention to the book. To gain an impression of the extent of Dr. Pococke's sphere of influence and the esteem in which he was held, one needs only to look at the correspondence reported by Pococke's eighteenth-century biographer, and at the number of scholars who were anxious to consult him.7 Even his son's translation has at times been wrongly attributed to Dr. Pococke.8

After its publication, copies of the Philosophus autodidactus were being presented to prominent figures abroad. In a series of letters between September and November, Francis Vernon (1637-77), who was secretary to the British Embassy in Paris at the time, reported that 'by the Doctor's own Direction,' he had delivered copies of 'his Son's Book' to a number of orientalists at the Sorbonne. He further noted that 'all had read and approved it.'9 Not only eminent orientalists or 'Sorbonists' in Paris, who were interested, but also such influential figures as Melchisedec Thévenot (1620-1692), who was in correspondence with most of the celebrities of his time,10 in fact, Vernon seems to have run out of extra copies, to distribute. In a letter to Dr. Pococke, he regrets that 'he had not begged a copy for Thévenot,' who was apparently 'much taken with the fancy of the Piece' and intended in return 'to make a present of an Arabic manuscript of the Life of Ibn Toffali.'11

The extent of the demand for the book is corroborated by the correspondence of others. We find, on 27 November 1671, John Wallis approaching Oldenburg, Secretary to the Royal Society, to send copies to Vernon on behalf of Dr. Pococke. It is not, however, only for 'Mons. Thévenot' but also for some bookseller, since they are so greedy of those books (as appears) in Paris, if hee think fit, some number of them (a dozen or twenty) may be sent him to put off some Bookseller, here at a price, but move it as from yourself, or me, but not as from Dr. Pococke, who is loth to take y' confidence of giving him [Vernon] that trouble, unless he should intimate his willingness to undertake it.12

By 4 December, Oldenburg is firmly promising to send a copy of the Philosophus autodidactus for Thévenot.13 We learn that Vernon, having run out of copies, had to part even with 'his own copy' in order to present it, either on his own initiative or possibly upon request, to Christiaan Huygens, the celebrated Dutch scientist who was in Paris at the time.14 By November of the same year, the book had already been taken to Florence by Abbot [Lorenzo] Panciatichi (1635-1676), to 'make the value of it known there.'15 By the end of December, the Philosophus autodidactus was being translated into Dutch in Holland.16

The efforts of the Oxford circle of Dr. Pococke's supporters were no doubt responsible for the initial distribution of the book. The fact that it was in Latin also made it accessible to the educated elite, and put it 'in a capacity to travel thro' Europe.'17 These do not, however, explain the popularity of the book, or as Vernon related, why 'they every where made Account of it.' There were urgent requests for the Philosophus autodidactus even from scholars who came to Oxford from abroad, to study with Dr. Pococke. For example, Ferrand at the Sorbonne, asked for a copy from one such Swiss scholar, named Ortius, on behalf of Francis Bosquet, the Bishop of Lodève and later of Montpellier, who 'impatiently expected it.'18

The bi-lingual publication of the Philosophus autodidactus was followed by retranslations into Dutch, English, and German, initially from Pococke's Latin, but subsequently also from the Arabic original.19 There were reprinted
editions, summaries (in English and French), and plagiarised adaptations which continued right into the next century. These editions evoked avid responses not only from orientalists, but also from theologians and natural philosophers. The first English translation, from Pococke’s Latin edition, was made by a Presbyterian turned Quaker,22 a second one by an Anglican vicar.23 A copy was in the hands of the Jesuits.24 Leibniz, for example, regarded it as an illustration of the excellent philosophical tradition in Arabic.24 Its second Dutch translation was apparently undertaken with the encouragement or possibly on the suggestion of Spinoza.25

Although one should not discount the appeal of its charismatic title, the *Philosophus autodidactus*, to the age of the ‘new philosophy’, it is not sufficient to explain why an Islamic work from the medieval past should sustain such interest to become literally a best-seller within a short period of time. Its success is particularly surprising in an age which was also characterised, contrary to its label, by unreasonable currents of religious persecution and intolerance. In England ‘Papists, Turks, and Muhammadans’ were indiscriminately lumped together as ‘atheists’ threatening both Church and State.26 Therefore in the face of virulent hostility to Islam as a ‘false’ religion, the enthusiastic reception of an Arabic text which was not scriptural, nor specifically mathematical, astronomical, or medical, defies expectation. Furthermore, its widespread impact is also difficult to reconcile with the waning of interest in Arabic, at the time, in contrast to the enthusiasm of the earlier decades. The answers must clearly be sought in the the content of the work and its relevance to the central intellectual concerns of the second half of the seventeenth century.

The Nature of the Narrative: Hayy ibn Yaqzân

The *Philosophus autodidactus* is preceded by an introduction by Ibn Tufayl where he presents a critical review of the development of philosophy in Islamic Spain, acknowledge his intellectual debt to such figures as al-Fârâbî (d.950), al-Ghazâlî (d.1111), and Ibn Sînî (d.1037), and finally states his purpose in writing the work.

The narrative itself is about Hayy ibn Yaqzân (Alive, son of Aware) who, cast up on a desert island as a baby and fostered by a gazelle, survives. As the baby becomes a child, he is forced by his observations to question his identity and to find out why he is different from other animals. The result is a unique, if unlikely, account of how the boy, Hayy ibn Yaqzân, grows to adulthood and intellectual maturity by the use of observation, experience, and reason. By his own efforts alone, he progressively discovers the natural and the physical sciences, as well as philosophy. In the process, Hayy ibn Yaqzân acquires not

only a systematic mastery of scientific principles, but also an awareness of God, the creator, as the embodiment of perfection and total knowledge. With this awareness comes morality, Hayy ibn Yaqzan thus arrives at the ultimate meaning of human existence which distinguishes man from animals.

With the chance arrival of Absal from a neighbouring island, who is in search of solitude to contemplate God, Hayy ibn Yaqzan learns about man, society, and religious institutions. Absal finds, to his astonishment, that what was taught through revealed religion, Hayy ibn Yaqzan had discovered by himself, but in a pure and more perfect conceptual form. Hayy ibn Yaqzan desires to bring the people on Absal’s island to a more rational understanding of the revealed truths of their religion, which seem to him to have been corrupted by anthropomorphistic symbolism and distorted by concrete images. His attempt is a complete failure. Through this experience, however, Hayy ibn Yaqzan gains insight into the nature of men, who seem far from the idealised, rational creatures he had imagined. They are selfish and motivated by greed. They respond only to emotional persuasion, not to reason. He concludes that in society men need the Law for the social control of their behaviour, and that religion provides this required dogmatic authority. In fact, for the majority of men, prophetic religion is their only source of Truth and Morality. With this insight Hayy returns, together with Absal, who has become his disciple, to his contemplative existence.35

The narrative is no medieval theological disputation, but a uniquely readable story. At the same time it presents a novel theory of the sources and nature of human understanding. The author shows in detail how experience via the senses starts a process of mental development which gradually transforms the vacuous mind of the infant into the subtle complexity of a mature intellect.

PART II

The Philosophus autodidactus and Locke

We can see how the Philosophus autodidactus could have spread with such astonishing speed on the Continent; how its content would have served as an empirical focus to some of the key themes of the seventeenth-century debates. These debates revolved around the question of whether the concept of God was self-evident (intuitive or innately provided) or derived from rational considerations. They centred on the concept of the ‘law of nature’ and of ‘natural religion’, with its implications for morality. They considered the role of religion as an essential aid for social control. The Philosophus autodidactus was, in fact, perceived as an embodiment of these issues.36

Above all, the content of the narrative provides a perfect support for the Lockean notion of the mind as a tabula rasa where ideas are acquired by means of sensory experience and reasoning as opposed to the Cartesian notion of their innateness. With this background, we can now turn to Locke and examine to what extent Locke was aware of this work and possibly influenced by it.

(A) The Exeter Meeting

In the same year as the publication of the Philosophus autodidactus, a meeting took place at Exeter House in London between Locke and a number of his friends. It was the well-known meeting at which the question of ‘human understanding’ was first raised. Years later in an attempt to recall the circumstances of his writing of the Essay, Locke describes the occasion.

Five or six friends meeting in my chamber and discoursing on a subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand by the difficulties that arose on every side.

Locke proposed that they start by an analysis of their own abilities and the limits of their understanding.

After we had awhile puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts that we took a wrong course; and that before we set ourselves upon enquiries of that nature it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with. This I proposed to the company, who all readily assented: and thereupon it was agreed that this should be our first enquiry. Some hasty and undigested thoughts, on a subject I had never before considered, which I set down against our next meeting gave the first entrance into the discourse; which having been begun by chance was continued by entreaty, written by incoherent parcels, and after long intervals of neglect, resumed again as humour and occasion permitted.

Locke’s recollection blurred by the lapse of some eighteen years (The Essay was published in 1689) does not shed much light on the nature of the discourse, except to indicate that it was started by ‘chance’, on a subject he had never before considered, and that the Essay was written piece-meal by incoherent parcels.38

James Tyrell, the grandson of Bishop Usher, who was one of those ‘five or six friends present’ at the meeting, is a little more helpful. In the margin of his copy of Locke’s published Essay, Tyrell notes that ‘the discourse on the occasion when Locke first raised the issue of human understanding’ was ‘about principles of morality and revealed religion.’ Thus both recollections

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are in agreement that (a) the question of ‘human understanding’ was raised for the first time at the Exeter meeting; and that (b) the initial discourse was ‘very remote from this’ (Locke); and that it was ‘about principles of morality and revealed religion’ (Tyrrell).  

If Locke ‘had never before’ considered the subject, then what triggered the question of ‘human understanding’ and altered the course of the discussion at the meeting? What could have brought about the particular ‘discourse’? (A question which has been raised by numerous Locke scholars without finding a satisfactory answer beyond hypothetical scenarios.) If the critical issue is the extent to which ‘chance’ factors were responsible, as Locke vaguely indicates, then an alternative possibility is that the discourse was directly stimulated by the acquaintance of the participants with the recently published Philosophus autodidactus.

(B) Pococke’s Publication of Harvy ibn Yagzan

It is significant that in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society for 17 July 1671, Edward Pococke’s publication was announced together with a summary of its contents, which is worth giving in full.

This Book being translated out of a fair Arabick Manuscript in the Bodleian Library into Latin by the care of the Learned Dr. Pococke, and printed in both Languages together, is a very ingenious piece, and by the testimony of the skillful, elegant in the Original, and in excellent style. The design is to show, How from Contemplation of the things here below, Man by the right use of his Reason may raise himself into the knowledge of higher things; which is here perform’d by a Feigned History of an Infant exposed, he knows not how, on an Island not inhabited; where he was nursed up by a Gazal (or a kind of Deer), and coming afterwards to years of knowledge, did by his single Use of Reason and Experience (without any human converse) attain the understanding, first of Common things, the necessities of human life, how to shift among the Beasts for his food, etc., the use of cloaths, of weapons (to keep the beasts in order, who were before too hard for him); then to the knowledge of Natural things, of Moral, of Divine, etc. And afterwards by an accident coming to know that there were other men in the world beside himself, and being removed out of his Island to them, and having learned the Language, was found to excell their studied Philosophers. The whole design handsomely laid and ingeniously prosecuted. The Epistle, written by Abi Jaafer, contemporaneous to Averroes, who lived about 500 years ago...

In this fairly accurate outline of the narrative, presumably by Oldenburg, the Secretary of the Royal Society, the central theme is made clear to anyone interested in the origins and the extent of ‘human understanding’: ‘man... by his single Use of Reason and Experience (without any human converse) attain the understanding, first of Common things [to survive],... then to the knowledge of Natural things, of Moral, of Divine, etc.’

(C) The Impact of Pococke’s Translation and Locke’s Essay

At the Exeter meeting, if the issue turned, as Tyrrell stated, on the principles of morality and religion, then what could have been more natural than to discourse on a recently published book, which, by means of ‘a Feigned history’, provided a concrete argument against ‘innate’ ideas and an innate notion of God or morality. The content of the Philosophus autodidactus could have both initiated the discourse and channeled Locke’s thinking to the ‘limits’ of human understanding. For this to be the case, however, requires, at least, the establishment that Locke was aware of the book and its content. The Essay Concerning Human Understanding was published in 1689. The title, as we know it, was given and the final draft completed in 1686. When Locke had actually started on the very first ‘draft’ has been the subject of much discussion. On the basis of Locke’s own statement, it could not have been before the Exeter meeting, the exact date of which has also been in dispute. Scholars agree that prior to 1671, Locke was not directly concerned with epistemological issues. He had written on the question of the ‘Law of Nature’. He was perhaps gradually moving towards the idea that knowledge of the outside world began in sensory perception, but what he had written pertained largely to his moral and political thought.

Locke’s intellectual development with regard to the issues of the Essay is narrowed down to the period between 1667 and the summer of 1671 when Locke had actually started writing on the human intellect. The evidence is provided by the existence of two manuscript drafts, in Locke’s own hand, which are entitled Inteletus and De Intellectu Humano. The first draft is dated ‘10 Jul. [1671]’, which puts the Exeter meeting earlier. Since the Philosophus autodidactus was reviewed in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society also in July, we can assume that the book itself must have appeared in the previous months. Therefore, the Exeter meeting could very well have been at the time of, or shortly after, Pococke’s publication. If that were the case, then the content of the Philosophus autodidactus could have been the critical factor responsible for both the discussion at the meeting and Locke’s subsequent draft of the Essay.

Since considerable evidence points to 1671 as the crucial year for the development of Locke’s ideas on ‘human understanding’, let us review the events. Just before Locke began a draft of the Essay, we have a publication which literally describes the development of the mind of an infant from a tabula rasa to that of a natural philosopher by means of experience. He ‘furnishes the cabinet of his mind’ with knowledge about the world, by means...
of sense experience and 'reflection' on sense experience. The work provides for Locke, a clear and detailed demonstration of how scientific principles could be empirically acquired. At the same time, it also constitutes a tailor-made case for Locke's conviction [in the Essay] that sensory knowledge formed the basis of 'reflection,' leading to the discovery of moral truths.

The identity of the issues, which are central to both the Philosophus autodidactus and Locke's thought, is dramatic. Although, on its own, it cannot be taken as evidence that Locke had read the work, an examination of the events leading up to the Drafts of the Essay reveals a striking sequence. Considered in chronological order, what appears first is the publication of the Philosophus autodidactus, followed by the Exeter meeting; then in July we have both 'Draft A' of the Essay, which was left unfinished, and Oldenburg's summary of Pococke's book; and finally, early in September, Locke's second draft (Draft B). To determine to what extent this chain of events is causally linked, we need to re-examine the circumstances when Locke began to consider the question of the human 'intellect' and 'understanding' during the 'crucial' period from 1667 to 1671.

(D) The Grounds for Locke's Acquaintance with the Book

1. Oxford
At the time of the writing of the early drafts of the Essay, Locke was also part-time in Oxford. If the popularity of a book emerging from Oxford spread throughout the Continent, it is reasonable to assume that it would have been known in its place of origin. During the period from 1640s to the late 1670s, Oxford apparently had over 110 natural philosophers and virtuosoi, who, in spite of the diversity of their backgrounds and activities, represented a highly cohesive social community. The institutional life of the University brought them into daily contact through lectures, meetings, societies and clubs; or outside at taverns and coffee-houses. If they left because of professional commitments, then they corresponded, as we have seen, not only on specific issues, but also on a wide range of general topics.

In such an environment, the circulation of any book would have been immediate, especially when reviewed in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society. We have already learned from the correspondence of Oldenburg that the book, and its popularity abroad ['the greed they had for it'], was known, not only to Vernon, a Fellow of the Royal Society, but also to others who had no Arabic, such as John Wallis, the Savilian Professor of Geometry, who taught Locke as an undergraduate. Therefore, on these grounds alone, it is difficult to see how Locke, who had been elected as a
which was delivered as an impassioned plea for the study of Arabic', and published in 1627 would have been at the root of Busby's interest in Arabic. Pasor marshalled a wide range of arguments for the importance of 'Arabic' in order to persuade the theologian (in elucidating the Biblical texts); the classical scholar (as a key to the 'treasure house of ancient knowledge', both Greek and [with some exaggeration] Roman); and the natural philosopher (as a means of access to Greek texts, particularly in mathematics and astronomy, the originals of which had been lost). By the time Busby became the headmaster of Westminster in 1638/40, the chairs of Arabic had already been established at both Cambridge (1632) and Christ Church, Oxford (1636), with that of Hebrew to follow in 1648. To Busby, it would have seemed an official recognition of their practical and pedagogic utility. How assiduously Busby promoted oriental languages by 1660s is reflected in the letter written by Edmund Castell, the Sir Thomas Adams Professor of Arabic at Cambridge, to Samuel Clarke (1625-1669) at Oxford, enclosing some papers from Dr. Busby, who presents his kind respects to you, desires the cast of your eye, and your most exact censure, alteration, and emendation of Hebr; Chaldee, Arabic, etc.

The extent to which Arabic is taken seriously is clear from the fact that the papers of the students are submitted to the 'severity' of three leading Arabic scholars. Thus under Busby, as an alumni of Christ Church himself, the ties between Westminster School and Christ Church at Oxford (as well as with Trinity College, Cambridge) were clearly strengthened. It is not surprising therefore to find Arabic and Hebrew incorporated into the method of electing a King's Scholar for one of these two Colleges. At Westminster Locke became a King's Scholar under Busby, and went through what was known as the 'challenge' or the minor election. The challenge included not only the classical languages, but also Hebrew and Arabic. That means that Locke's early education included these languages. John Evelyn, who witnessed such an election of scholars at Westminster, described the process as 'sent to the University', confessed in his Diary (on 13 May 1661) that such exercises 'in Lat; Gr & Heb: Arabic & in Theames and coterminous Verses, as wonderfully astonish'd me in such young striplings, with such readiness and wit, some of them not above twelve or thirteen years of age. The 'minor' challenge was followed by a 'major' election for places at Oxford and Cambridge which included the delivery of public orations in Latin, Greek, Hebrew or Arabic by the several candidates. It seems to have

Fellow of the Royal Society in 1668, could have remained unaware of Oldenburg's announcement and summary.

During the preparation and publication of the *Philosophus autodidactus*, the Pocockes, both father and son, were at Christ Church, Oxford—the most important and influential College of the University. Dr. Pococke held the chairs of both Arabic and Hebrew. His son, Edward Pococke, the translator, had received both his B.A. and M.A. degrees there. It was also the College where Locke had been both a student (having received his B.A. and M.A.) and a lecturer. In such a close-knit community, it would have been impossible for anyone to be ignorant of a publication 'by the care of Dr. Pococke' if he were associated both with the College and with Dr. Pococke, who was also Canon of Christ Church.

II. Westminster: Introduction to Hebrew and Arabic

Furthermore, at Christ Church, a strong bond existed among the Royalist circle of natural philosophers, virtuosi and divines. This was largely due to their common origin at Westminster, a renowned seventeenth-century school. The source of this bond was its Royalist headmaster, Richard Busby (1606-1695): a man with broad interests in mathematics and natural philosophy. He supervised the production of Latin and Greek grammars for the use of his pupils, for which he is known; but he also introduced the teaching of 'Arabic' into the school (along with his own Hebrew and Arabic grammars) for which he is not generally known. During the Commonwealth, a generation of brilliant pupils emerged under his headship; many of whom were elected to the closed studentships reserved for them at Christ Church. John Locke was one of these students. What prompted, one might ask, the headmaster of a school such as Westminster to promote Hebrew and Arabic studies? Busby was at Oxford during the period between 1624-1630, when Matthias Pasor (1598-1658) had started giving, in addition to Hebrew, instructions in Arabic through public lectures and private tutorials. A refugee Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy from Heidelberg, Pasor was incorporated M.A. at Oxford in 1624. Two years later, 'oriental languages' were added to his teaching at his own request. Pasor had already acquired Hebrew before leaving Heidelberg, and subsequently studied Arabic both in Leiden under Erpenius, the distinguished Dutch scholar, and in Paris with the Maronite Gabriel Sionita. It was under Pasor that Pococke had also started his Arabic before moving on to William Bedwell (1563-1632), and then as chaplain to the Levant Company in Aleppo where he acquired proficiency.

Paso's inaugural lecture (*Oratio pro Linguae Arabicae professione*),
been more of a ceremony which came at the end of crucial private negotiations in order to procure the patronage of influential and prominent persons. We know from Locke’s personal letters (4 and 11 May 1652) that he went through the major election and prepared his orations in both Latin and Hebrew.  

What Locke thought of this educational process is reflected in his preference, in later years, of private tutoring as opposed to public school. He was highly critical of the methods adopted for the teaching, particularly of classical and oriental languages, no doubt with his Westminster experience in mind.84 ‘Is it worthwhile,’ he asks, ‘to hazard one’s son’s innocence and virtue for a little Latin and Greek?’ A knowledge of Latin was essential, but, contrary to the practice of his age, Locke thought, Greek, together with Hebrew and Arabic should be left to the ‘profess’d scholar.’ 85 Evelyn also remarked in his Diary that ‘pitty it was that what the pupils attain here [at Westminster] so ripely, they either do not retain or improve more considerably when they come to be men.’ In concluding, however, that ‘though many of them do, he was more optimistic than Locke.86

There is no question that Westminster formed the beginning of the formative education of Arabic and Hebrew for many scholars who went into different professions ranging from theology to medicine and politics.64 Indeed, among Locke’s generation of Bushy’s pupils some acquired enough competence later to become ‘profess’d scholars’ in Arabic, such as Henry Stubbe (d. 1676) with whom Locke corresponded on the question of toleration,65 and Humphrey Prideaux (1648-1724), who became a lecturer in Hebrew at Christ Church.66

Those who did not become ‘profess’d scholars’ still took an interest in Arabic and Hebrew. Francis Vernon (1637?–1677), the virtuoso who circulated the copies of the Philosophus autodidactus, is a good example. He matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford in 1654, two years after Locke, and received his B.A. in 1657–8 and M.A. in 1660.67 With his ‘knowledge in many sciences and languages,’ Vernon ‘impressed’ the mathematicians such as Edward Bernard (1632–96), James Gregory (1638–75), and John Collins (1625–83). He procured texts for them from abroad and acted as a purveyor of scientific information. Like Locke, he later became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1672, proposed by Oldenburg.68 It should be noted that Vernon was at Christ Church during the years when Locke was a student, tutor and lecturer.

III. Christ Church at Oxford and Pococke

With his matriculation at Christ Church, Locke’s exposure to Arabic and Hebrew continued. After four years as an undergraduate, Locke also completed his M.A. (1656) for which Hebrew and Arabic were required in accordance with Laud’s statutes.69 Along with history, astronomy, mathematics, and philosophy (i.e., Aristotelian logic and metaphysics), Locke’s studies included these two languages.70 At that time, Pococke was the most distinguished orientalist in England, holding the Arabic and Hebrew chairs. He was also Canon of Christ Church. In addition to Hebrew and Arabic classes twice a week,71 Locke would have also been attending Dr. Pococke’s Thursday sermons at Christ Church.72

Pococke is regarded by all of Locke’s biographers, as the teacher who influenced him most in his early years at Oxford, and to whose lectures Locke paid more attention than was prescribed by the University rules.73 Locke’s turn to Royalist views, in spite of his Puritan background, is, for example, largely attributed to Pococke.74 Considering Locke’s attitude to the teaching and relevance of ‘oriental languages’, it is significant that of all his teachers, the one ‘he most revered’ should have been ‘Dr. Edward Pococke’.

Locke’s own statements leave no doubt of his great admiration of Pococke: ‘I do not remember ever saw in him any one action I did or could in my own mind blame or think amiss in him’; and ‘He had the silence of a pupil where he had the knowledge of a master.’ What impressed Locke was not only Pococke’s ‘great learning’:

So extraordinary an example, in so degenerate an age, deserves, for the rarity, and, I was going to say, for the incredibility of it, the attestation of all that knew him, and considered his worth. … His other virtues and excellent qualities had so strong and close a covering of unaffected humility, that though they shone the brighter to those who had the opportunity to be more intimately acquainted with him, and eyes to discern and distinguish solidity from show, and esteem virtue that sought not reputation—yet they were the less taken notice and talked of by the generality of those to whom he was not wholly known.75

Clearly, Locke was among those who had the ‘opportunity to be more intimately acquainted’ with Pococke. Brome suggests that Pococke ‘seems to have been in simplicity and nobility of temperament very much like his panegyrist,’ and that ‘perhaps Locke learnt something more and better than Hebrew and Arabic from him.’76

In fact, when material was being collected in 1704 for a biography of Dr. Pococke, Locke was approached by Humphry Smith, Vicar of Dartmouth, because of having been informed that Locke was ‘for several years intimately acquainted with Dr. Pococke’.77 This choice is all the more significant when one considers Pococke’s wide range of acquaintances and friends. Within England alone, these included not only scholars concerned with ‘oriental’
languages, but also natural philosophers who consulted Pococke, and who, like John Wallis (1664–1703), owed their interest in Arabic mathematics to him. During the Civil War, the sequestrators of Laud's estates tried illegally to take away the endowment for the Arabic lecture. It was the pressure from Pococke's friends and admirers—such as Gerard Langbaine, provost for Queen's, John Greaves, the Savilian Professor of Astronomy and John Selden, Burgess of the University—which compelled them to restore it. Furthermore, it was the petition from Oxford scholars, masters, and others, only two of whom were Royalists, which enabled Pococke to continue his two lectureships. When he came under threat of ejection from his ministry, it was again the leading Oxford scholars, including Seth Ward, John Wilkins, John Wallis, headed by John Owen (1616–1683) who warned the commission of the contempt they would draw upon themselves if they turned out Dr. Pococke for such an absurd charge as 'insufficiency', when his vast learning and accomplishments were the admiration of Europe.75

His following was not confined to Oxford, but extended to Cambridge and London as can be deduced from the subscriptions for Dr. Pococke's publication ventures. Edward Bernard (1638–96),76 for example, urges Dr. Pococke in 1671, (coming perhaps in the wake of the reception of the Philosophus autodidactus), to publish his translation of Arabic Proverbs (Chitadi) over which he had spent thirty to forty years:77

The Encouragement was not inconsiderable. Dr. Castell had promised to secure a hundred Books for Cambridge and a still greater Proportion might be depended upon in Oxford, besides what the Assiduity of his good Friends in London such as Mr. Boyle, etc. might get off.78

Boyle, for example remained in close contact, commissioning Dr. Pococke for translations, requesting explications of inscriptions, and showing concern over Dr. Pococke's sickness which left him lame. Locke stands out against such a background. As Pococke's eighteenth-century biographer, Twells, points out, 'of all the Encomiums bestowed on our author after his Death, none was so full as that which was drawn up by the celebrated Mr. Locke.'79 His contribution, an eleven-page long obituary letter, preserved in the Lovelace collection, leaves no doubt that a close relationship existed between Dr. Pococke and Locke.80 This is further corroborated by Humfrey Smith's acknowledgment that of the 'many letters' from those 'who were intimately acquainted' with Dr. Pococke, he gained 'a clearer and more distinct Idea of his great Worth' from Locke's 'than from any other hand.' In fact, encouraged by Locke's letter, Smith further requests Locke to answer a list of specific questions about Pococke's life to which he had found no information.81 Locke is not, however, able to comply in any greater detail because of

7. The portrait of Dr. Pococke (d. 1699) reproduced from L. Twells, The Theological Works of the Learned Dr. Pocock, Sometime Professor of the Hebrew and Arabick Tongues, in the University of Oxford, and Canon of Christ Church... to which is prefixed An Account of his Life and Writings never before printed (London: 1740).
his 'decaying bad memory which did ill serve my desire to obey your commands'. Writing, now at the age of seventy-two, he regrets not having been
put upon this task soon after his Dr. Pococke's death, I might have better furnished than this, and with particularities fitter for your purpose to fill up the character of so good and extraordinary a Man, and so exemplary a life.

In a second letter, Locke again apologises that

...so copy a Subject has lost, in my bad Memory, so much of what heretofore I could have said, concerning that Great and Good Man, ... Time, I daily find, blots out space the little Stock of my Mind, and has disabled me from furnishing all that I would willingly contribute to the Memory of that Learned man."

Although Locke's biographers refer to Dr. Pococke as one of the most influential figures on Locke, and the one 'most revered' by him, they have not investigated this relationship. If Dr. Pococke's works are mentioned at all, no reference is made to his collaboration with his son on the Philosophus autodidactus—a work, even from its title, most likely to be of interest to Locke.

IV. Edward Pococke and Locke

The beginning of the friendship between Locke and Dr. Pococke is dated to the period after 1660 when Pococke returned to Christ Church. With the Restoration, Pococke ended his exile and regained his position as Canon. It coincided with Locke's appointment as tutor also at Christ Church. In addition, Locke was assigned to the college Readerships in Greek and Rhetoric and to the Censorship of Moral Philosophy and held these offices (1661-64) which were usually assigned to clergymen."

Thus when Edward Pococke matriculated at his father's College at the age of thirteen, Locke was also present both as lecturer and tutor. A record of his pupils' names and the fees they paid him exists in an account book in which Locke had kept note of his income and expenditure. In the first two years of Locke's duties as tutor, which he took up in 1660/61, listed among his pupils is Dr. Pococke's eldest son. We do not know the exact nature and extent of Locke's relationship with Edward Pococke, who seems to have been one of Locke's younger pupils. It can, however, be ascertained from the fact that the tutor-pupil relationship at the time was more than merely pedagogic. In addition to performing his academic duties to his charges, the tutor had to take a keen interest in almost every aspect of their welfare. As Cranston put it, 'a tutor stood in loco parentis'; which meant that he would advise them in the conduct of their private lives and be responsible for their money (even though, unlike the tutors prior to 1660, he did not have to 'ensure the salvation of their soul'." Letters from some of the parents of Locke's pupils also show how much was expected of him. A number of Locke's pupils remained in touch with him after they left Oxford. Therefore, the interaction between Locke and Edward would have been very close.

Thus in 1660, Locke became not only a lifelong friend of Dr. Pococke, but also [and most likely because of it] 'tutor' to Dr. Pococke's eldest son, the future translator of the Philosophus autodidactus. Between 1661 and 1664 while Edward was taking his B.A., which he completed on Feb. 1664-65, Locke was still at Christ Church, lecturing in Greek and Rhetoric. Even when Locke's stay at Oxford became intermittent, with the beginning of his relationship in 1665 with Lord Ashley (the later Earl of Shaftesbury), Locke kept his chambers and his books at Christ Church.

After this period, he still remained in close contact with both Pocockes. For example, in 1672, a year after the publication of the Philosophus autodidactus, he commissioned Edward, who was no longer at Oxford, to translate a text by Maimonides. Twells reports that

For about this time, Mr. Locke, since then so well known to the World, in a letter to the Father, mentions his having engaged his Son at Salisbury, in translating and printing a Part on Maimonides, and that he had spoken with Mr. Boyle about it. He desired to have it printed, just as that Piece translated by Mr. Pridoux was. He further assured Dr. Pococke that it would greatly encourage those who wished well to the Work, if he could assure them, that it should be done under the Father's direction."

Although Twells is rather vague about the date of this letter, a number of interesting points emerge from it. First of all, it shows that Locke was still corresponding with his former pupil as well as with Dr. Pococke. Secondly, he is engaging Edward to undertake a translation which indicates that Locke was familiar with Edward's expertise in Hebrew and Arabic. And Edward Pococke had only one major publication to his name: *the Philosophus autodidactus*. Thirdly, Locke's request that the translation 'should be done under the Father's direction' does not reflect any mistrust of Edward's abilities. On the contrary, it reveals Locke's knowledge of the success of the *Philosophus autodidactus*, which was done 'under the Father's direction'. Therefore, the association of the 'Father' with the project could similarly ensure the success of the new project and procure more subscriptions. Otherwise why engage Edward, and not Dr. Pococke?

Leaving aside Edward's relationship to Locke, for the moment, what also emerges is the impression that, in spite of the wide diffusion of the *Philosophus*
autodidactus, Edward had not been able to establish himself as an orientalist in his own right, and that he remained in the shadow of his father, as the ‘Son to the famous Dr. Pococke’. He seems not only to have failed to succeed to his Father’s chairs of Arabick and Hebrew, but to have abandoned ‘oriental studies’ entirely and died in obscurity. The reasons are not clear. According to Hearne, there was no doubt that ‘he understands Arabick and other oriental Tongues very well, but wanted Friends to get him y’ Professorship of Hebrew and Arabick at Oxford’. It is a curious observation, considering his father’s influence and position.

Although we have no statement of what Locke thought of Edward, Locke’s ‘obituary letter’ leaves no doubt of his close relationship with Dr. Pococke. It reflects an intimate knowledge of Dr. Pococke’s scholarly activities, his translation projects and publications, his unfulfilled plans, as well as details of his personal life and characteristics of his personality, even his sense of humour. Above all, it reveals Locke’s deep affection, and boundless admiration, to the point of reverence, for Pococke, whom he describes as a man of deepest humility, gentle and unassuming manners, greatest temperance, completely devoid of vanity or ostentation, of ‘a liberal mind, given to hospitality’; if he indulged in any one [thing] too much, “it was that of study”. And further that he was the readiest to communicate to anyone who consulted him. Indeed he was not forward to talk, nor ever would be the leading man in the discourse, though it were on a subject that he understood better than any of the company, and would often content himself to sit still, and hear others debate in matters in which he was more a master of. He would not put to shame in their presence or censure in their absence anyone for their ignorance nor display the airs of triumph and ostentation, frequently practised by men of skill and ability. I can truly say that I knew not anyone in that University whom I would more willingly consult, in any affair that required consideration, nor whose opinion I thought better unto the hearing than his, if he could be drawn to enter into it and give his advice.

Such detailed knowledge indicates that Locke spent a great deal of time in conversation with Dr. Pococke. With such a relationship it would seem unthinkable for Locke not to have known of the publication of his admired friend and mentor, or of the translation of his pupil. Locke’s own words, again in the obituary letter, reinforce this: ‘The Christian world is a witness to his great learning, that the Works he publish’d would not suffer to be conceal’d. . . .’ It is also most likely that Locke’s name was suggested to Humphry Smith by Edward, who was assisting Smith in the preparation of the ‘Account of Dr. Pococke’s Life’.

Although we do not know exactly when father and son started on the translation of Ḥāfy ibn Yaqqān, it could not have been before Edward received his Master of Arts in 1667/68. Since Arabic was one of the required languages for an M.A., Edward would have become proficient only after the completion of his degree.

In the introduction to the Philosophus autodidactus, Dr. Pococke states that it was undertaken by Edward with his persuasion and encouragement. An earlier unfinished translation into English was already attempted by Dr. Pococke, possibly during his exile in Childrey, near Berkshire, during the Civil Wars. The extant fragments of this translation, consisting of four folios, bear the date of Jul: 10. 1645. Could Dr. Pococke have resurrected this particular Arabic manuscript because of his acquaintance with Locke? Considering the range of his scholarly activities, Dr. Pococke could have had his son assist him in a number of works on which he was then engaged. Furthermore, the Latin title is not a direct translation of the Arabic original, Ḥāfy ibn Yaqqān (Alive, son of Aware). Since Dr. Pococke’s English translation does not bear it either, one is tempted to think that the title, Philosophus autodidactus (the self-taught philosopher), might have even been inspired by Locke. It would have been unusual for Dr. Pococke, a theologian, and Locke, philosopher—who ‘learnt much in conversation’—not to have discussed the implications of such a work for ‘Mortality’ and ‘Revealed Religion’.

Prior to this same period, Locke had treated many subjects while preparing for his small encyclopaedias. ‘But never in these early papers [up to 1667], it is interesting to note,’ as Aaron points out, ‘is he concerned with metaphysical matters; nor do these problems of epistemology to which he was later driven here disturb him.’ Even if some of the earlier ‘Essays’ are shown to have an epistemological concern, what is important is that such a concern does not seem to have been central to Locke’s thought before the time of the translation of the Philosophus autodidactus. In fact, the resurrection of Ḥāfy ibn Yaqqān and its Latin translation by Edward, ‘with the help of his father’, coincide with the shift in Locke’s interest to questions on the nature and extent of ‘human understanding’.

Locke not only ‘learnt much in conversation’, as the Exeter meeting indicates, he was also a voracious reader. For example, Aaron states that ‘it is probable that no book of any worth published in England during his adult years passed unnoticed by him.’ This is confirmed by Locke’s unusually large private collection of more than three thousand books. A list of this ‘Library’ exists in Locke’s own hand.

At the time when Dr. Pococke was distributing copies of his son’s translation, Locke was at Oxford, starting on the second ‘Draft’ of the Essay.
Given his avid interest in books, Locke would have been presented with a copy, if not by his former pupil, certainly by his admired friend. Such an omission would have been entirely out of character with Dr. Pococke. By the time Locke left for Somerset in September 1671, the copies of the Philosophus autodidactus had also left Oxford and were already circulating in France.

On the basis of all the evidence, the conclusion is inescapable that not only Locke must have known the work, but also that he must have been intimately acquainted with the progress of the whole project. Thus the period (1667-1671), during which Locke first began to consider the ‘problems’ of the Essay, and put them in writing for the first time, coincides precisely with that of the translation, publication and dissemination of the Philosophus autodidactus by Edward and Dr. Pococke.

(E) Evidence from Locke’s Papers

1. Locke’s Library Catalogue

Curiously, however, Locke’s ‘Library Catalogue’ contains no copy of the Philosophus autodidactus. This, in itself, is not significant. First of all, in his frequent moves, and particularly when he had to flee to Holland because of Shaftesbury’s political position, Locke’s books were removed from Oxford to London and from London to a friend’s house in the country, near Oxford. There is nothing to show what titles were in Locke’s chambers in the summer of 1671 when he was making the first drafts of the Essay.109 Some of his books (coming under the officially condemned titles) were burned at Oxford in 1683, partly, it seems, under Locke’s supervision to dispose of ‘embarrassing’ possessions. Out of these, a few were saved by James Tyrell;110 some were given as gifts.111

Far from being representative of his full collection, the record of Locke’s library reflects only what was available to him in the last phase of his life. Harrison and Laslett emphasise that of the 3,641 titles which Locke owned between 1670 and the early 1700’s, a large number (685) were not registered in his final catalogue even though some of those were in his ownership at the time.112

Locke’s ‘Library Catalogue’ does, however, reveal a number of important items: for example, Locke subscribed to and owned twenty-two volumes of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society for 1665-1702, including the one [volume VI 1671] which contains the summary of Philosophus autodidactus.113

Secondly, it lists Baltasar Gracián’s L’Homme de Cour (H: 1685).114 the

French translation of the first volume of a three-part Spanish narrative—the part which was based on Hayz ibn Yaqzan. In fact, the similarity between El Criticón and the Philosophus autodidactus, was first noted by Paul Rycaut (1629-1700), diplomat and a Fellow of the Royal Society, in the preface to The Critic (London, 1681), his English translation of the Spanish work.115

Furthermore, there are sufficient titles in the ‘library’ to reflect Locke’s interest in Arabic and Hebrew, including a French translation of the Qur’an.116 Dr. Pococke’s translations from Arabic,117 and commentaries on the minor prophets (Hosea, Micah, and Joel) are also listed. One would assume that Locke would have been more keen to own a copy of the Philosophus autodidactus than the message of a ‘false prophet’.118 Some of these may, however, be remnants of textbooks from his Oxford studentship. The omission of the Philosophus autodidactus, when Dr. Pococke’s works are included, could only be due to the incompleteness of the record.

II. The Quaker Connection: Keith, Barclay, and Furry

Locke’s ‘Library Catalogue’ lists, however, a number of works by two leading figures of the Quaker movement, George Keith and Robert Barclay.120 Their inclusion may raise questions in the light of Locke’s attitude towards Quakers—particularly, his reaction to the dangers of ‘enthusiasm’, or reliance on emotional conviction as a basis of truth—but it provides an additional channel for Locke’s acquaintance with the Arabic narrative.121

George Keith was responsible for the first English translation in 1674 from Pococke’s Philosophus autodidactus—a translation which also bears a significant relationship to the ‘Society of Friends’ or the Quaker movement.122 Keith (1639-1716), a Scotman who was educated at Mariscal College, Aberdeen, comes also from a theological background which combined mathematics and ‘oriental’ languages.123 Instead of being ordained a Presbyterian chaplain, he was converted to Quakerism around 1662.124

Why would a Presbyterian-turned-Quaker translate the Arabic narrative? From the introduction to the translation, it is clear that Keith had examined not only the Latin text but also knew of the Dutch translation. The reasons for his interest are explained in his ‘Advertisement to the Reader’:

after it came into my hands and I perused it, I found a great freedom in mind to put it into English for a more general service, as believing it might be profitable unto many; but my particular motives which engaged me hitherto was, that I found some good things in it, which were both very savoury and refreshing unto me; and indeed there are some sentences in it that I highly approve, as where he saith, ‘Fretch not thou the sweet savour of a thing thou hast not tasted:… Also he showeth excellently how far the knowledge of a man whose eyes are spiritually opened, differeth from that knowledge that men
As we can see from this explanation, Keith found a remarkable affinity between this ‘Mohammedan’ text and his own form of Nonconformist Christianity where personal experience is put above the established dogma of the Church. At the same time, he is acutely aware that such an affinity might seem inherently incongruous to his readers. Rather defensively, he adds that the ‘reader’ must not think it ‘strange’ that the ‘Author and the person of whom he writeth hath been a good man, and far beyond many who have the name of Christians’. The book will serve to rectify the ‘neglecting’ of the ‘overward testimonies in the soul and mind of man it self’.

Keith’s translation seems to have coincided with his drafting of the formal Quaker manifesto, or ‘confession of faith’, in co-operation with Robert Barclay (1648-1690), the highly influential Scottish apologist for the Society of Friends.\(^{123}\) For Keith, the *Philosophus autodidactus* represented precisely what he summarised as the Quaker ‘common notion’: ‘the sufficiency of inner light’. The Quaker tenets were put forth in 1675 as fifteen propositions, referred to as *Theses Theologicae*, a public discussion of which was held at Aberdeen. Robert Barclay’s *Apology,* prepared in defense of these ‘theological theses’, was printed in Amsterdam in 1676.\(^{124}\)

Keith seems, not only to have influenced Barclay in the shaping of the Quaker phraseology, but also to have provided him with a ‘quaker par excellence,’ namely Havy ibn Yaqgin. The self-taught philosopher appears in the *Apology*—Propositions V and VI (par. xxvi)—as the perfect illustration of the ‘experience of inner light without the means of the Holy Scriptures’.\(^{125}\) In his summary, Barclay leaves out the intellectual development of Havy ibn Yaqgin, and focuses, like Keith, only on the final attainment of the knowledge of God through personal experience. Although Barclay may have seen Pococke’s Latin publication, the central statement of his summary, though less verbose, is taken almost verbatim from the ‘Advertisement to the Reader’ in Keith’s version of the *Philosophus autodidactus*.

Yeaa there is a book translated out of the Arabick, which gives an account of one Hai Ebh Yokdan, who without converse of man, living in an island alone, attained to such a profound knowledge of God, as to have immediate converse with him, and so affirm that the best and most certain knowledge of God is not that which is attained by premises premised and conclusions deduced, but that, which is enjoyed by conjunction of the mind of man with the Supreme Intellect, after the mind is purifyed from its corruptions and is separated from all hody images and is gathered into a profound stillness.\(^{126}\)

Keith, fully aware of his contribution to the Apology, gives an account of it years later in his *Standard of the Quakers examined*, or an *answer to the Apology of Robert Barclay*.\(^{127}\) By that time he had given up Quakerism, after a life spent in and out of prisons with atrocious battles raging from England to America (Pennsylvania), where he presumably carried at least the summary of Havy ibn Yaqgin, if not a copy of his own translation.\(^{128}\)

The *Apology*, as the most authoritative and systematic statement of Quaker principles, was highly influential in its original Latin as well as in its English, Dutch, French, German, and other versions. In the *Apology*, the Quaker movement was defined as a religion of ‘inner light’, against both Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism, where neither the Church nor the Scriptures could claim ultimate authority; the Holy Spirit alone, working through the believer, led to Salvation.\(^{129}\) Havy ibn Yaqgin was seen as the perfect demonstration of religion as an individual experience of ‘inner light’ and served Quaker purposes. In fact, the eighteenth-century English translation from the Arabic original by Simon Ockley (1678-1720) was largely in reaction against the Quaker interpretation and use of the *Philosophus autodidactus* as a mouthpiece for ‘enthusiastic’ notions.\(^{130}\) The passage was withdrawn from the *Apology* in 1779 by the Society of Friends.\(^{131}\)

The Quaker use of the *Philosophus autodidactus* would have been of intellectual interest to Locke in his concern with ‘nonconformity’ versus authority, and the implications of ‘enthusiasm’ versus ‘reason’.\(^{132}\) The translation of the *Philosophus autodidactus* is not given with Keith’s other works (dating from 1675) in Locke’s ‘Library Catalogue’. The edition of Barclay’s *Apology*, which contains the summary of Havy ibn Yaqgin is included among the listed titles.\(^{133}\) The connection between Locke and the Quakers, however, goes beyond Locke’s collection of Quaker books.

While Locke was finishing his *Essay* between 1687-89, he had moved from Amsterdam to stay in the household of Benjamin Furly (1636-1714), an English Quaker who had settled as a merchant in Rotterdam sometime after 1659. Furly was also a bibliophile, with an impressive command of languages.\(^{134}\) Before coming to Holland, he had given painstaking assistance to Henry Stubbe, the arithstist, in his compilation of the ‘Battle Door’ which was for teachers to learn singular and plural cases in thirty-five languages. That ‘a mere merchant of humble birth should be so learned in Latin, Hebrew and other languages’ apparently impressed his visitors.\(^{135}\)

Benjamin Furly was closely associated with the leaders of the Quaker
movement, not only William Penn, whom Locke met, but also Keith and Barclay for whom Furry acted as interpreter in their missionary forays into Europe shortly after the publication of the *Apology* in 1676. When Furry’s library was auctioned at his death, *The Catalogue* contained 4,400 titles. Furry’s books reflect his passion for religious liberty as well as his interest in unusual topics. Having settled in Rotterdam, sometime after 1659 and before 1677, Furry is unlikely not to have had the Dutch translation of the *Philosophus autodidactus*, published in 1672—a work to which ‘inner light’ was seen to be central. It is most probable that Keith was introduced to this edition by Furry, as there is no evidence that he knew Dutch.

(F) Bibliothèque Universelle et Historique

According to his biographers, Locke was considerably influenced by his stay in Holland, both by what he read in Furry’s remarkable library and by the people he met. Furry’s house had become a meeting place for Quakers as well as for such radical theologians as von Limborch (1633-1712) and Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736), who at the time was the Professor of Hebrew and Philosophy at the Remonstrants’ College in Amsterdam, having accepted the chair in 1684. When Locke became acquainted with him in Amsterdam during the winter of 1685-86, Le Clerc was preparing the first issues of his new literary journal, *Bibliotheque Universelle et Historique* (1686-93, 25 vols.), with which Locke became closely involved.

In 1686, Le Clerc published a twenty-two page summary of the *Philosophus autodidactus*. In the preceding volume, an article by Locke appeared, entitled ‘Méthode nouvelle de dresser des Recueils, communiquée par l’Auteur.’ It was the French version of his ‘Method of a Common-Place Book’, which gave an account of how Locke set out materials in his commonplace books—a cross-reference and index system for his notes.

The question that arises first of all, is why a long summary of the *Philosophus autodidactus* was made fifteen years after the first publication of Pococke’s Latin in 1671. The Dutch translation from the Latin had appeared in 1672. And secondly, who summarised [and reviewed the *Philosophus autodidactus*?] Could it have been Locke? The answer to the first question is simple. In 1686, a second English translation of the *Philosophus autodidactus* was published in London by George Ashwell, the Rector of Hanwell, Oxfordshire. We know that Locke, as a voracious reader and collector, kept abreast of ‘book of any worth published in England.’ Aaron states that even when Locke was in France and in Holland, he ‘kept himself well informed of English publications and he also knew of the more important books published in those countries.’

It is significant that in 1685/86, the same year when Locke was completing a final draft of his *Essay*, we have an extraordinarily long summary of the *Philosophus autodidactus* in the journal with which Locke was closely involved. According to Fox Bourne, ‘there can be no doubt that, if Locke did not take part from the first in the deliberations as to the nature and purpose of the new review, he soon became one of Le Clerc’s chief advisers on the subject. He also became one of his coadjutors.’ In fact, Locke seems to have been the author of the reviews of English books on ‘theological and scientific subjects’, scattered even in the early volumes of the *Bibliotheque Universelle*. He is considered to have been the author, especially, of articles which appeared in December 1686 on, for example, Boyle’s *De Ipsa Natura* and later in September 1687 on Sydenham’s *Schedula Monitoria*. We know that Locke did not only review new books. Between July 1687 and February 1688, he also contributed nearly everything in the journal, including an epitome of his *Essay*, which was by then compiled, but still unpublished. The epitome was translated into French by Le Clerc and entitled ‘Essai Philosophique concernant l’Entendement’.

If Locke reviewed works by Boyle and Sydenham, whom he knew well, then what better candidate than him to summarise the English translation of the *Philosophus autodidactus*, the joint work of his esteemed friend and of his pupil from his former College—or at least to advise Le Clerc if Le Clerc were the author of the French summary. In either case, the introductory description of the work, leaves no doubt of Locke’s knowledge of it:


Locke was certainly thinking of Edward Pococke at the time of the publication of the *Essay on Human Understanding*. In the Lovelace Collection, there are, in Locke’s hand, lists of persons to whom Locke sent or gave copies of his publications (between 1689/90-1699). These are publications where the authorship is acknowledged by Locke on the title page or during his lifetime. Among the select few who were to be sent the first edition of the *Essay* (1689/90) is ‘Pococke, Edward: jun.’ The inclusion of Edward, the translator of the *Philosophus autodidactus*, together with those who were close to Locke, such as Lord Ashley, Lady Masham, Boyle, Le Clerc, Sydenham,
Tyrell, and others, such as Huygens, is significant. Perhaps it is a subtle recognition of an earlier debt for a copy of the *Philosophus autodidactus* given him in 1671.

**Conclusions**

From the material considered, several points clearly emerge. First of all, Locke was engaged in intellectual activities at a time when 'Arabic' interest was high, whether in biblical studies, mathematics, medicine, or astronomy. He was at a College which was central to that interest. Secondly, in addition to his close relationship with the Pocockes, he was also in contact with 'orientalists' and others who were concerned with *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* or the *Philosophus autodidactus*. His activities in Oxford, London, Amsterdam and Rotterdam put him in contact with figures who had a keen interest in the work. In his trip to Paris, for example, he met and remained in correspondence with Melchisedèc Thevénot, who had been anxious to get a copy from Dr. Pococke via Vermon, Wallis, and Oldenburg, and who was familiar with the author, Ibn Tufayl. Translations and re-editions of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* continued during Locke's lifetime. Pococke's Latin translation was reprinted in 1700, followed by the reprinting of its Dutch version in 1701, three years before Locke died. (The interest in the work was re-stimulated with a new translation from the Arabic original in 1708.)

These circumstances establish beyond any reasonable doubt that Locke had detailed acquaintance with the *Philosophus autodidactus*. He could only have been unaware of it, were he the victim of some gigantic conspiracy [involving Dr. and Edward Pococke to start with; then Oldenburg and the Fellows of the Royal Society; not to mention Pury and Le Clerc] to hide the work from him or to keep him in ignorance of it.

At the same time, it must be mentioned that no direct statement has been found that Locke has read the book or that he owned a copy. The lack of mention of a book is no more an indication of ignorance, than a statement ownership, on its own, would be incontrovertible proof of its having been read.

Nonetheless, the question remains as to why Locke makes no reference to the book. In the face of overwhelming evidence, such an omission seems almost deliberate. It was, in fact, neither unique nor an isolated case when one considers Locke's precarious existence and his cautious and highly suspicious attitude to others.

First of all, the period of the translation and publication of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* and the height of Locke's relationship with the Pocockes coincides with the crucial phase of Locke's life between 1667 and 1672, concerning which only 'stray and fragmentary information have come down to us.' Furthermore, although his journals and commonplace books demonstrate his wide reading, Locke was not in the habit of revealing his debt to others by citing all his sources. His references are found to be few. Secondly, Locke was highly secretive. Scholars have found him a very difficult person to write about because of this trait. It is reflected in Locke's 'preoccupation with anonymity' even after he settled back in England, when he had no need to use pseudonyms. When his works were in print, only one, the Essay was openly acknowledged to have been written by him. 'He is described as having an 'inability to be open with the world, his friends, or even with himself about what he has written and why he had written it.' For example, Cranston, describes Locke as 'an elusive subject for a biographer because he was an extremely secretive man.' He would go to extraordinary lengths: 'he modified a system of shorthand for the purposes of concealment; he employed all sorts of curious little ciphers; he cut out signatures and other identifiable names from letters he preserved; at one time he used invisible ink.' Among the inventories drawn up of Locke's belongings in London and Oxford, some of which were taken from his rooms at Christ Church, there is one item (recorded along with 'my portrait') which is a trunk marked with the initials 'P.E.' They identity has been puzzling to scholars, and even described by some as 'romantically mysterious.' On the basis of the foregoing disclosures, the mystery of the initials can also be resolved. In view of Locke's well-established trick of reversing initials, if one transposes 'P.E.' to 'E.P.', they clearly stand for Edward Pococke. This can be corroborated from Locke's 'journals'. For the year 1681, we have an entry, dated 'Mon., Mar. 7,' which states the arrival of two large trunks from Dr. Pococke 'both full of physique books.' From Locke's 'Journals' we also know that as a physician, he treated 'Mrs. Pococke', Edward's mother, on Sunday Jan. 18, 1680, with a recipe which 'cures even the most violent coughs if taken in the morning three times.' Considering Dr. Pococke's generous nature, his reluctance to impose on even the closest of his friends, the trunks 'full of physique books' could have been a token of his gratitude to Locke.

Locke exemplifies, for the historian, the importance of the seventeenth-century 'Arabic' interest. When such an 'unlikely interest' is seriously considered, a major figure can be seen from an entirely new perspective which brings out an aspect of his intellectual development that had formerly been unknown.
NOTES

1 The full title is *Philosophus Autodidactus sive Epistolae Abi Sa’dar ebn Tophayl de Hui ebn Yokhdan in qua Ostendarum quinque Inferiorum contemplatione ad Superiorium notitiam Ratio humana ascendere posit (Oxford: A. Hall. Academiae Typographus, 1671). It was reprinted at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, in 1700.


7 L. Twells, The *Theological Works of the Learned Dr. Pococke, To which is prefixed An Account of his Life and Writings* never before printed (London: 1740). I. It includes correspondence which is no longer extant. Subsequent references will be to this volume, cited as *Works*. See also, *Vogel to Oldenburg.* In *The Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg*, eds. A. R. Hall and M. B. Hall (London: Mansell, 1975), XII, 226f, pp. 75-77 and note 1.  

8 Twells explains (Works, p. 3) that because the father wrote the learned Preface, it led foreigners, especially those of France to consider the Whole as the Father’s Performance. This wrong attribution has, in fact, continued even in this century with references to the ‘Latin translation of Pococke’ without identifying which one, as in Gauthier, *Hayy ben Yaqzan*, p.vii.

9 See Twells, *Works*, 1, pp. 67-68. Vernon cites such eminent French orientalists as Capellain, Herbelote, De la Croix, and Ferrand and conveys their admiration and enthusiasm for the book.

10 Later as librarian to Louis XIVth, Melchisedec was at the centre of the circle associated with the origins of the Académie des Sciences. His academic interest in ‘oriental’ subjects is realised in a practical way by his nephew, Jean de Thévenot (b. 1635), who travelled in the Near East, Persia and India between 1652 and until his death in 1665. The account of his travels was published in five volumes, *La Description de l’Amsterdam,* (Amsterdam, 1727). For the earlier volumes, see note 179 below. The first volume, *Relation fait d’un Voyage fait au Levant* (Rouen: 1665), which is his Near Eastern travels, was originally edited by his uncle, Melchisedec Thévenot.

11 Twells, *Works*, p. 68. I have not been able to ascertain this ‘Life of Abu Tophayl’ in Manuscript, unless it is the history of the Maghreb, *Al-Mu’jam Bi Talkih Abkar al-Maghrib* by Abd al-Wahid al-Marrakhi, the thirteenth-century chronicler of the Muslim West. It gives an account of Ibn Tufayl along with Ibn Rushd (Averroes). It is edited by R. Dozy (Leiden, 1881); and translated into French by E. Fagann, *Histoire des Almohades d’Abd al-Wahid al-Marrakchi* (Algiers: 1892/93). The possibility of this history as Thévenot’s copy is loosely supported by the information supplied by Vernon about Ibn Tufayl, that he was a Philosopher of great note and Eminence in his Age, that he was Averroes’ Master [Patron], and that he had like to have made a new Sect among the Mahometans, being withal of an active Spirit’ in Twells, *Works*, p. 68.


13 Oldenburg to Vernon on 4 Dec. 1671: ‘I will send him . . . Pococke’s *Philosophus autodidactus* for Thévenot.’ (From the memorandum in Royal Society MS. V. no. 18, 1836) and a week later: ‘Dec. 11 writ to him again; and sent Pococke’s letter, and y’ Society’s being pleas’d with his communication of [philosophical] occurrences,’ (MS V. no. 18) in A. R. Hall and M. B. Hall,* Correspondence*, III, 1836, p. 392 and 1840, p. 397.


16 This anonymous Dutch translation from Edward Pococke’s Latin is entitled *Het leven en de Reis van ebn Yokhdan* (Amsterdam, 1672) and went through several editions. For example, when Pococke’s Latin was reprinted in 1700, a second edition of the Dutch translation followed in 1701, with the additional title of *De Natuurlyke Wyzegte.*


18 February 17, 1672 in Twells, *Works*, 1, p. 68.

19 See Russell, *Discovery of Childhood*, pp. 171-172.


21 This translation is discussed later in this paper on pp. 244-47.

22 For details of this translation, see below, note 35.

23 See below, notes 114 and 115.


26 For an overview of the complex attitudes, see John Redwood, ‘Aristics ascribed in Reason, Ridicule and Religion: The Age of Enlightenment in England 1660-1730’ (London: Thomas and Hudson, 1976), chap. i, pp. 29-48; he further points out (p. 209): ‘many argued that Papists, Turks, and Mohammedans were atheists and that consid-


32 See, The History of Hai Edh' Yaqoban, an Indian Prince: or the Self-Taught Philosopher (London: S. Alston, for Richard Chiswell and William Thope, 1660). The long subtitle illustrates how Hai ibn Tugias was interpreted: 'Written Originally in the Arabic tongue, by Aba Jaafur Edh' Tughi, a Philosopher by Profession and a Mohomonist by Religion. Wherein is demonstrated, by what steps and degrees, humane Reason, improved by diligent Observation and Experience, may arrive to the knowledge of natural things, and from thence to the discovery of Supernaturals: more especially of God, and the Concernants of the other World.' For example, in the Introductory Epistle to this English version from Pockee's Latin, George Adswell (1612-95), Rector of Hanwell, Oxfordshire, further summarises the key issues. He hopes that the Philosopher, whose life is here described 'will set an example to the men of this licentious generation' and 'will instruct them in such principles of Morality and Religion, and such alone, as the Light of Nature discovers, and which must needs be acknowledged for true by all those, who will judge and act as Men, according to the Dictates of Reason, and the conclusions resulting from Experience.'

He goes further to express his wish that 'all of us were arrived even thus far, by the guidance of this light, and agreed in such principles as humane Reason teacheth out of the Book of Nature, which sets forth to our view God's work of Creation and Providence.' See Note 47 below.

33 The italics are mine.

34 Epistle to the Reader' (prefixed to the published edition of The Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1689), x).

35 H. R. P. Bourne finds in Locke's recollection 'a vague indication of a special subject 'never before considered' and which led to the ultimate elaboration of thoughts that were anything but 'hasty and unconsidered' in The Life of John Locke (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1876), I, p. 249.


38 The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, VI, no. 73 (London: printed for John Martyn at the Bell in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1671), 2214.

39 It is not made clear that the translator is the son and not Dr. Pockee. The statement 'by the care of the Learned Dr. Pockee' leaves it ambiguous.


42 Cranston, John Locke, A Biography, pp. 140-41.
William's Trust, 1727), p. 11-12.

Bushy was also educated at Westminster, and elected in 1624 to studentship at Christ Church, with B.A. in 1628 and M.A. in 1631. Remaining a tutor for some time at Christ Church and a provisional master of Westminster in 1638 and confirmed in 1640. In 1642 he was made Prefect of Westminster by the King. See D.N.B., I, 874-5; III, pp. 481-3.

West Abbey MSS. 43057 in Cranston, Biography, p. 21.

The procedure in Locke's day is described as follows: candidates started in the school order, and the boy at the bottom of the list challenged the boy above him to construe a particular classical author, to parse and to give the rules of grammar and usage for any word he, the challenger, chose. If the boy who was challenged failed, the challenger was promoted to his place. Locke came first; see, Cranston, Biography, pp. 21-22.


The letters (B.L., M.S. Locke, c. 34, fol. 165 and 167) are given in full in Cranston, Biography, pp. 26-27. In the letter dated 11 May 1652, Locke writes to his father from Westminster: 'I have to my utmost done what lies in me for the preparation both of myself and friends for the Election... Mr. Bushy... having spoken to the electors on my behalf, and although my Latin oration be not spoken yet, he hath promised that my Hebrew one which I made since, I shall, which I would desire you to be silent of, for there hath been something already spoken abroad more than hath been for my good.'


John Locke, Thoughts Concerning Education (1693). These were written during Locke's exile in Holland as letters to his parent for the education of his son, and later modified and published several times during Locke's lifetime. For the differences between the 'First Draft' ('Directions concerning Education') and the published edition, see Aaron, John Locke, pp. 287-91; Cranston, Biography, p. 25.

See Bourne, Biography, I, p. 21.

Among those elected together with Locke, James Careless, son of James Careless, the Turkey merchant of London, went on, for example, to become the headmaster of Magdalen College School, Oxford.

Locke wrote on the question of toleration in 1659 (B.L., M.S. Locke, c. 27, f. 12) and sent them to Henry Stubbe, who had written a pamphlet which was both a history of toleration and a plea for its extension. The pamphlet was entitled, An account of the rise and progress of Mahometanism with the life of Mahomet and a vindication of him and his religion from the calumnies of the Christians. For an evaluation of its content, see P. M. Holt, A Seventeenth-Century Defender of Islam: Henry Stubbe (1620-70) and His Book (London: Dr. William's Trust, 1972), pp. 9-29. For the interpretation of the initials S. H. on Locke's draft as Henry Stubbe, see Cranston, Locke, p. 44.

It is of interest to mention that later, as an unsalaried librarian at Christ Church, Prosopon spied on Locke's activities in 1681 by sending reports to the undersecretary of state. See Hargreaves and Mawdley, Oxford in the Age of Locke, pp. 117-118.


Aaron, John Locke (corrected ed. 1693), p. 5. According to Lloyd's Statutes of 1636, the lectures were on Arabic literature and grammar, and took place at 8:00 a.m. every Wednesday in Lent and during vacations (when the arts course did not fully occupy the time of the students, who at the time resided in the College both during vacations and term time). All (bachelors) students were required to attend under penalty of a fine. (Griffiths, Laud's Statutes of 1636, ed. 1888, pp. 317, 318, D.N.B.; 'Pocokc,' p. 8. Whether this succeeded in practice is unclear. During the Civil Wars, Pococke was given the rectory at Chaldean, having lost his canonry of Christ Church in 1640. He was almost deprived of his two lectureships as well. At the time when Locke was attending Christ Church, Pococke came to Oxford during vacations to deliver his courses, Wood, Athenae Oxonienses, ed. Philip Bliss, (An exact history of all the writers and Bishops who have had their education in the University of Oxford), 3rd ed. (London: 1820), IV, p. 319.

The choice of studies seems to have been fairly wide; little more than a mere attendance at lectures and disputations was exacted from the applicants for the mastership; and as the connection with a tutor was no longer necessary, the graduates had the flexibility to utilise their own time and make their own choice of studies. See, Bourne, Life, I, pp. 52-53. Locke, however, seems to have been discouraged by all the 'unprofitable reading in which he was expected to engage.' Lady Masham informs Le Clerc that 'This discouragement, he [Locke] said kept him from being any very hard student, and put him upon seeking the company of pleasant and witty men, with whom he likewise took great delight in corresponding by letters; and in conversation and these correspondences, he according to his own account of himself, spent for some time much of his time.' Lady Masham to Le Clerc, 12 Jan. 1704-5 (MSS in the Remonstrants' Library) in Bourne, Life, vol. I, p. 53.

Bourne, Life, I, pp. 42, 56. Bourne comments that 'at Oxford having to attend Arabic as well as Hebrew classes twice a week during two or three years, Locke doubtless continued these studies to a moderate extent; but he never was any fame as an oriental scholar.'

His attendance of his sermons is clear from Locke's recollection of Dr. Pococke: ... not only of his Devotion and Piety tie lid, and be unobserve'd in a College where the constant and regular assisting at the Cathedral Service, never interrupted by sharpness of Weather, and scarce restraint by down-right want of Health; there 'twas the Temper and Disposition of his Mind... Locke to [Humphry Smith], 23 July 1703 (3303), Correspondence, ed. De Beer, VIII, p. 37.

See Bourne, Life, I, p. 59; Cranston, Locke, p. 75.


See Bourne, Life, I, pp. 57-58. It is worth mentioning that among the reasons given which initially put off Locke from pursuing a Bachelor in physic [medicine] at Oxford was the requirement of having to attend Arabic lectures for three years merely for the purpose of learning such 'outworn stuff' as Avicenna's Canon. For the circumstances of Locke's Bachelor of Medicine, see Oxford in the Age of Locke (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), pp. 110-113.


Bernard, as the Savilian Professor of Astronomy, remained in touch with Locke about Dr. Pococke. In a letter dated 28 January 1690, he writes: 'Our friend, Dr. Pococke, of Christchurch are pretty well, especially the aged Doctor.' See Correspondence, ed. De Beer, III, no. 1241, p. 798.

These were all Maryman's collection of 6,013 Arabic proverbs (Bodl., MS. Poc. 392, Medioannis Proverbia) which Pococke had brought back from Aleppo in 1636. His Latin translation and commentary was never published. According to D.N.B. (vol. X, pp. 278-279), specimens were published by the Dutch orientalist H. A. Schultens,
entitled Specimen proverbiorum Meditantiæ ex versione Poccociana (London, 1773),
and dedicated to the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chancellor.
A further description of Pococke's manuscript, see Holt, 'Pococke' in Studies, pp. 5; 21-22, 23, n.10.

“Thomas Hearne, Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne, 11 vols. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press 1885-1927), p. 240. The entry, dated May 5, 1708, indicates that this project was never completed. Attempts were made subsequently to continue it also
failed for a number of reasons, not the least being lack of funding: ‘Some years since
Dr. Pococke made or at least began a Translation of a Curious manuscript amongst his
collection of Arabick Proverbs, but it being not ever published and nobody now
knowing where it is... attempt by Mr. Marshall—but no money since Mr. Hyde's


“A Collection of Several Pieces of Mr. John Locke, Never Before Printed or not
extant in his Works (London, 1720), 332-43, Correspondence, ed. De Beer, vol. VIII,
no. 3321, dated 23 July 1703, p. 37.

"Humphrey Smith to Locke, 17 March 1704 (B.L., MSS. Locke c. 18) in The
correspondence, ed. De Beer, vol. VIII, no. 3494, pp. 248-249. Locke answered on
May 12.

“See Letter no.3322, addressed to [Richard King] and dated 23 July 1703 in
Correspondence, ed. De Beer, VIII, p. 42. Its earlier printed version in The Works of
John Locke, E. Ens. III (London, 1714) has variations from De Beer.

"For his serious consideration of entering the Church, before abandoning it in
1666, see Bourn, Life, I, pp. 89-99.

"His matriculation date is given as 30 May 1661 in J. Foster, Alumni Oxonienses:
1300-1714, III (Oxford, 1891); also in Clarke, Life and Times of Wood, III, p. 373; and
Hearne, Remarks, p. 224.

"Cranston, A Biography, p. 71. Also, 'Account books of John Locke, 1649-74
(Commonplace Book, B.L., MSS. Locke, F11) kept at Westminster and at Oxford,
including accounts of money received from and disbursed to his pupils at Christ
Church (for 1661-66) in Peter Long, A Summary Catalogue of the Lovelace Collection of
the Papers of John Locke in the Bodleian Library (Oxford University Press, 1959),

"Cranston, A Biography, p. 71

“When Locke was a student himself, pupils had to pay nightly visits to their tutors
to hear private prayers and to give an account of the time they spent that day. See
Hargreaves and Mawslay, The Age of Locke, pp. 95-96.

"For the closely supervised student life in Locke's own experience as an
undergraduate, see Cranston, A Biography, pp. 30-31.

"Letters from the parents of Locke's pupils in the years 1662-65, clearly indicate
what was expected of him as tutor. Correspondence, De Beer, vol. I, Nos. 136, 137,

"The details of his education are listed as follows: Christ Church, matriculated,
30 May 1661; student 1661; B.A. 3 Feb. 1664-65; M.A. 14 March 1667-68. See Foster,
Alumni Oxonienses, III.

"Shaftesbury papers (series viii, no. 22) include a testimonial of good character
for Locke, from the Dean and Canon of Christ Church which is signed by J. Fell, R.
Gardiner, and E. Pococke. It is reproduced in Bourn, Life, I, p. 88.

"Nothing, however, seems to have come of it, judging by the reference to
Prideaux's subsequent publication of Maimonides (in Hebrew with a Latin version,
De Iure Parium et Peregretum), and no note is made of it.

"On the basis of this letter, Twells seems to think (Works, I, p. 69) that the
Maimonides' text mentioned here was More Neobohm. He states that from one of
Castell's letters 'it appears also that Dr. Pocock was then thought to be preparing

something of Rabbi Tanchum and Maimonides' More Neobohm, for the Publick... But
Dr. Pocock, I rather take it to have been the Design of the Doctor's eldest Son,
Mr. Edward Pocock.'

"From Twells' reference, 'about this time' appears to be sometime after March
1672. Edward, however, became Canon of Sarum in 1675. Therefore Locke could
not have engaged him in Salisbury before that date. More research is required to
verify the dates given in Twells.

"Dr. Pocock was also an authority on Maimonides, having published an edition of
Maimonides' six discourses upon the Mishnah, entitled Portio Moser in 1655; see
Twells, Works, I, p. 44.

"Subsequently, Edward collaborated with his father on a text of the Latin
translation of Abdallatif, Historiae Aegypti Compendium, the manuscript of which
was among those brought back from Syria by Dr. Pocock. A project which, according
to Hearne, was never completed because just when the printing had started, the Latin
language of the University press was required by Bishop Pell for his own purposes.
As a result, the translation of the Pocockes had to be stopped; 'which so vexed the good old
man Dr. Pococke that he could never be prevailed to go on any further.' The
'reports' for printing the Abdallatif Compendium by subscription were also
written by Edward (Thomas Hearne, Remarks and Collections, ed. Dobbe (Oxford

"Edward was appointed chaplain to Earl of Pembroke (Clarke, Life and Times of
Wood, III, p. 373). He was 'beneficed in Bk.' Canon of Sarum 1675, and rector of
Mildenham, Wilt. 1692 until his death in 1727, see Wood's Athenae Oxonienses, IV,
pp. 651. Edward's translation of Haly Hn Tafiqin is correctly mentioned as having
been 'dione in Arabic and Latin with the help of his father.'

"Hearne, Remarks and Collections, II, p. 63. He was bypassed for the Arabick
chair for someone who apparently 'if ever he understood the language may be
supposed to have forgot it, he being the company of one that keeps that company
and few Books entirely neglecting his studies.' Dr. Pococke's successor was
Thomas Hyde (1636-1703) whose main interest was not Arabic but Persian. It is
tentatively suggested that this preference may have been due to rumours that Edward
dabbled in magic and the occult, and even that 'he was the head of the Rosicrucians'.
See, Pastor, The Idea of Robinson Crusoee, p. 186. It remains, however, a conjecture,
and needs to be substantiated.

"When Simon Ockley made the first translation (excluding Dr. Pococke's initial
attempt) into English from the original Arabick, entitled The Improvement of Human
Reason in 1708, Edward was still alive. Ockley is unique in paying him tribute as 'the
first and best Master of Haly Hn Tafiqin,' 'with whose Character and Language you
are so well acquainted, and to whom you have long ago shown a great Respect.' He
refers to him as 'the worthy Son of so great a Father.' The homage he pays Edward
is worth quoting in part: 'If ai Ebn Yodkhun... acknowledges you as his first and best
Master; and confesses, that his being put in a Capacity to travel through Europe, is owing
to your Hand.'

"The italics are mine.

"Letter to Mr. Smith, July 1703 of Dartmouth, who was collecting materials for
a life of Dr. Pococke in A Collection of Several Pieces (1720), p. 337; Correspondence,

"The following quotations are all from Locke's obituary letter; see The Remains
of John Locke, 1714, pp. 1-6; A Collection of Several Pieces, pp. 332-43; 'Locke to
Ilmbrty Smith', 23 July 1703, 3321 in De Beer, Correspondence, VIII, p. 37. (For
n. 23 and 27 see also printed in Twells, Works, 1740, I, pp. 83-4.

"This is implied in his letter to Locke, dated [19 June 1703?] where he states:
'In the Account I am drawing up of his Life, his Sons having put his Papers into my
hands for that purpose.' See Correspondence, ed. De Beer, vol. VIII, letter no. 3309,
include his most important work, _Apologie for y'true X. Diuinity as held forth by the Quakers_ (London, [1678]). For additional titles on the Quakers, see entries 2412-2421, p. 216.

128 For Locke's early attitude to the Quakers, see _The Correspondence,_ ed. De Beer, _i._ pp. 41-2; 83-4; 126; Cramton, _Locke,_ pp. 40-41.

129 _An Account of Oriental Philosophy, shewing the Wisdom of some Renowned Men of the East: and particularly, The profound Wisdom of Hal Elb Yodkan, both in natural and Divine things; Which he obtained without Conversation with Men, (while he lived on an Island a solitary life, remote from all Men from his infancy, till he arrived at such perfection)._ Writ Originally in Arabic translated into Latin by Edward Pococke, a Student in Oxford; And now faithfully out of his Latin, Translated into English for a General Service (1674). See also, Joseph Smith's _Catalogue of Friends Books,_ II, pp. 18-50. Suppl. 210. The name of the translator is not given on the title page.


131 For a contemporary outline of Keith's career, see Gerard Croese, _Historiae Quakeriana_ (Amsterdam, 1695), pp. 191-92. (1696) Part 1, p. 150.

132 'Advertisement to the Reader,' _Hal Elb Yodkan_. It is not realised that the first translation into English from Pococke's Latin was made by Keith. Priority is wrongly given to George Ashwell; see Wood's _Athenae Oxonienses,_ IV, p. 651.

133 'Advertisement to the Reader,' _Hal Elb Yodkan._

134 For Robert Barclay, see _D.N.B._, pp. 1087-90.

135 The title is _Theologiae veteris Christianae apologia_ (Amsterdam, 1676). One is reminded of the nine hundred theses of Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) of an earlier period and his _Apologia in their defense. Pico della Mirandola, in his concern with exalting the dignity of man, was also interested in the Arabic narrative through his Hebrew translation. Pico della Mirandola's contemporary biography and some of his letters were available in English through Thomas More's translation. See P. O. Kristeller, 'Introduction to a translation of Pico's Oration on the Dignity of Man' in E. Cassirer, P. O. Kristeller, and J. L. Raulin, Jr., _The Renaissance Philosophy of Man_ (Chicago, 1948).

136 The assertion in the _D.N.B._ (vol. I, p. 657) that George Ashwell's English translation of _The History of Hal Elb Yodkan, 'is remarkable for having supplied Robert Barclay with a proof of his doctrine of 'inner light' is entirely wrong. Ashwell's translation from Pococke's Latin was published in 1686 which place it after Keith's translation in 1674 and twelve years after the publication of the _Apologia._

137 Robert Barclay, _An Apologie for the True Christian Divinity._ As the same is hold forth and preached by the people, called to Scoana, Quakers. Being a full explanation and vindication of their Principles and Doctrines, by many arguments, deduced from Scripture (sic) and right Reason and the testimonies of famous Authors, both ancient and modern with a full answer to the strongest objections usually made against them, Presented to the King. Written and published in Latin, for the information of Strangers, by Robert Barclay. And now put in our own language, for the benefit of his countrymen. 4°. (London, 1678), Prop. y and vi, Farg. 27, p. 134. The earlier editions in Locke's _Library_ are dated as 1675, 1676, 1683: see note 119 above.

138 _Apologia,_ pp. 27, p. 134.

139 See, _G. Keith, The Standard of the Quakers examined_ (1702), p. 5. Written after Keith had become an Anglican, it is both a criticism of _The Apologia_ and an account of Keith's share in its preparation.

140 Unlike Pococke, 'the ornament of Oxford,' Keith seems to have been a controversial figure. In later life, he became a thorn in the side of the Quakers, earning many labels in such pamphlets as _Mr. Keith no Prebender nor Quaker; but..._
George the Apostle (1696). For an illustration of the sort of polemical writings, see G. K. (George Keith)’s Complaint against the Quakers of The Answer to the Quaker’s complaint against G. K. (1700).

14 It has also been translated into Spanish, Danish, and curiously in part into Arabic and is described not only as ‘the first defense of Quaker principles by a man of trained intelligence’, but also as ‘one of the most impressive theological writings of the [seventeenth] century’. D.N.B., pp. 1089-1090.


16 Wood’s Athenae Oxonienses, ii, pp. 911-12.

17 See, for example, his discussion of ‘Defence of Nonconformity’ in the Abstracts from his Correspondence, Journals, and Commonplace Books published by Lord Peter King, Life of John Locke (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), II, pp. 196-218.

18 Harrison and Laslett, Library, p. 79; see note 119 above.

19 See ‘Purly’, D.N.B., p. 770; also De Beer, Correspondence, III, pp. 39-40; Crompton, Biography, p. 282.

20 William Penn, for example, who founded the colony of ‘Pennsylvania’, as a model society, a Quaker Utopia, gave a copy of its constitution, which he drafted, to Locke in 1686. For Locke’s comments in his Journal, see Crompton, Locke, pp. 260-61. Penn was also an Oxford man but expelled by the Anglicans.

21 For example, they sailed to Holland on July 25, 1677 and to Germany on 6th August with Benjamin Furly; D.N.B., p. 1207.

22 A Catalogue, Bibliotheca Furlana (Rotterdam: Fritschi and Bohm, 1714) was produced after Furly’s death for the auctioning of his impressive collection of books.

23 Although it is not clear how far back their acquaintance goes, Furly assisted Keith in writing The Universal True Grace of the Gospel Asserted and translated several works from Dutch into English. It is a reasonable assumption, therefore, that Furly was responsible for the Dutch copy of the Philosophus autodidactus which, on Keith’s own admission (in the Advertisement to the Reader), ‘came’ his way.

24 Philip von Limborch was the grand-nephew of Episcopius, the founder of the Remonstrants’ Church in Amsterdam (1630), who stood against the prevailing Dutch Calvinism and for a broader church based on full liberty of belief. As the leader of the Remonstrants in Holland, he had become one of the most important and widely known theologians at the time. He is also one of the figures who influenced Locke, particularly, on the question of ‘toleration’ which was being debated in Holland. Locke’s Epistola de Tolerantia was written to Limborch in the winter of 1685-6 and published in 1689.

25 This was followed by his Bibliotheca Choisi (Amsterdam, H. Schelte, 1703-1713) in 28 vols. and Bibliotheca ancienne et moderne (1714-26) in 29 vols. Le Clerc was concerned with the necessity of a more scholarly inquiry into the origin and meaning of Biblical books. Through these journals, he exercised wide influence.

26 Bibliothèque, III, pp. 76-98.


28 Aaron, pp. 22-23. The July issue containing Locke’s article included that for August as well. De Beer suggests (Correspondence, III, p. 39, note 1) that it was unlikely for it to have been published until September.

29 For details, see note 35 above.

30 Aaron, John Locke, p. 24.

31 Bourne, Life of John Locke, II, p. 44-45.

32 See, Bourne, Life, II, 45, note 1. Bourne also asserts that the reviews of English books were ‘contributed by someone well acquainted with our language and literature. Unless by Le Clerc himself, who knew English, it is difficult to understand by whom they could have been written unless by Locke himself.’

THE PHILOSOPHUS AUTODIDACTUS: FOCOCCES, LOCKE... 265