The canonical image of John Locke as one of the first philosophses is so deeply engrained that we could forget that he belonged to a very different historico-political context. His influence on Enlightenment thought, not least that of his theories of political liberty, has been the subject of widespread debate. In Locke’s political liberty: readings and misreadings a team of renowned international scholars re-evaluates Locke’s heritage in the eighteenth century and the ways it was used.

Moving beyond reductive conceptions of Locke as either central or peripheral to the development of Enlightenment thought, historians and philosophers explore how his writings are invoked, exploited or distorted in eighteenth-century reflections on liberty. Analyses of his reception in England and France bring out underlying conceptual differences between the two nations, and extend an ongoing debate about the difficulty of characterising national political epistemologies. The traditional Anglocentric view of Locke and his influence is demystified, and what emerges is a new, more diverse vision of the reception of his political thinking throughout Europe.

Of interest to political philosophers and historians, Locke’s political liberty: readings and misreadings reveals how the issues identified by Locke recur in our own debates about difference, identity and property – his work is as resonant today as it has ever been.

Wilda Anderson, Preface
Christophe Miqueu, Introduction – Beyond canon and revision: exploring Locke’s réception

I: From resistance to toleration

Jean Terrel, Constituent power and resistance: did Locke have any followers?

Pierre Lurbe, Political liberty in John Toland’s Anglia Libera

Daniel Carey, Two strategies on toleration: Locke, Shaftesbury and diversity

Christopher Brooke, ‘Locke en particulier les a traitées exactement dans les mêmes principes que moi’: revisiting the relationship between Locke and Rousseau

Gerhardt Stenger, Liberty and toleration: Locke, Voltaire and ‘laïcité à la française’

II: From propriety to property

Duncan Kelly, The propriety of liberty and the quality of responsible agency

Pierre-Yves Quiviger, Sieyès as a reader of John Locke: metaphysics, politics and law

Jørn Schøsler, The reception of Locke’s political philosophy in Denmark – an historical approach

James Farr, Locke, natural law and New World slavery

Jean-Fabien Spitz, Nozick’s ‘Locke on Property’: an obituary

John Dunn, Postface

Summaries

Selected bibliography

Index

Pages:
244

Price Sterling (£):
65

Collaborators:
Wilda Anderson, Johns Hopkins University; Christopher Brooke, Balliol College, Oxford; Daniel Carey, National University of Ireland, Galway; Mason Chamie, Harris Manchester College, Oxford; John Dunn, Kings College, Cambridge; James Farr, Northwestern University; Duncan Kelly, Jesus College, Cambridge; Pierre Lurbe, Université Rennes II – Haute Bretagne; Christophe Miqueu, Université Montesquieu – Bordeaux 4; Pierre-Yves Quiviger, Université Paris 1 – Panthéon-Sorbonne; Jørn Schøsler, Syddansk Universitet; Jean-Fabien Spitz, Université Paris 1 – Panthéon-Sorbonne; Gerhardt Stenger, Université de Nantes; Jean Terrel, Université Michel de Montaigne – Bordeaux 3.