Publishing reason:
John Toland and print and scribal communities

Toland did more than simply read and write books: he was a key agent in disseminating ideas around the elite salons of early eighteenth-century Europe. In the last chapter Toland’s involvement in a world of learning and the library was explored. One of the intentions was to underscore the social dimensions of this world of learning: gaining entrance to the inner sanctum of a man’s library was a means of getting inside his head. In locating Toland in this milieu we only get glimpses of his conduct and status from the surviving records. A more straightforward means of establishing his presence and the purpose of his literary activities can be achieved by disinterring his involvement in the business of scribal circulation and print production. Toland’s skill at manipulating both print and scribal works laid the foundation for his political ambitions: his literary transactions produced both cultural and political effects.

Toland’s archive provides a wealth of material for reconstructing, in some detail, what Robert Darnton has called a communication circuit. A fluent and talented public author, facile in the rhetoric of print culture, Toland also played a critical role in the production and dissemination of manuscript material in England and on the continent in the early eighteenth century. Traditionally, Toland has been regarded as one of the pivotal polemicists of the ‘Radical Enlightenment’, because of his involvement in the production and circulation of scribal works such as the Traité des trois imposteurs, a story which will be rehearsed in detail in a later chapter. Toland, as we will see, was a figure adept at exploiting both scribal and printed ‘forms’ of communication to persuade elite and public audiences. He was involved in much more than the distribution of one clandestine work. By exploring his facility with different forms of writing, his abilities to manipulate and construct diverse audiences for similar works, and his intimacies with the mechanics of the business of printing and publishing, it will be possible to reconstruct his attempts to
communicate his ideas to powerful and politically effective communities. Questions of audience and readership, of access and inclusion, can be explored with precision in the case of Toland where it is possible to see him inventing a community of readers by the circulation of his works. This community was a platform for his political ambitions.

The starting point for this investigation is Toland’s private archive which, as well as preserving many original manuscript works, includes a great deal of fragmentary material relating to Toland’s transactions (both financial and literary) with booksellers and printers, as well as correspondence with sympathetic readers and notes towards works in progress. Amongst the various papers and palimpsests there is one particular fragment which casts a shaft of light onto the identity of the community established by Toland’s scribal efforts. On a small scrap piece of paper, dating from after 1718, Toland noted a record of ‘Manuscripts of Mine Abroad’. The manuscript list was compiled over a period of time: the recording of names and titles are made in the same hand but in different qualities of ink. Indicating periodic amendment of the record, six of the items are crossed through, suggesting that the text had been read and returned. ‘Manuscripts of mine abroad’, although a modest document (it is fewer than 100 words), tells us a good deal about the range of Toland’s scribal activities and contacts. Twelve people are named: nine men and three women. Seven of these individuals can be identified. Sixteen manuscripts were in circulation, although only fourteen titles are named. Of these works ten can be identified: two were published during Toland’s life and three in the posthumous collection of 1726. Only four of the texts remain obscure.

Who were these men and women bound together in intellectual intimacy by Toland? A prosopographical study of the people identified on the ‘lent list’ establishes that at the same time as moving amongst European figures, Toland belonged to a circle at the heart of elite Whiggism. It was one of Toland’s skills to be able to fabricate, participate and move between these divergent intellectual, social and political communities. Of the list of twelve people, with some exceptions, the majority are unknown to mainstream historiography. Five of the individuals (Robert Molesworth, Thomas Hewett, Lord Castleton, Matthew Aylmer and Lady Carriere) were intimately connected with the Hanoverian Whig political establishment, most of them favouring the neo-republican wing of the party. As will be discussed in detail below, Robert Molesworth was a significant political figure, author of influential ‘commonwealth’ works, and political principal of the ‘Old Whigs’ in and out of Parliament. Like Molesworth, four of these men had been Whig members of Parliament, who consistently supported the tolerant and sometimes anti-clerical platforms of the true Whigs. Castleton, Aylmer and Parker had all
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received promotion and peerages as rewards for political loyalty to the Hanoverian regime after 1714. Matthew Aylmer, a former client of the irreligious second Duke of Buckingham (and regarded by Swift as a violent partisan) was a senior naval officer, ultimately becoming Rear-Admiral of Great Britain after 1718. James Sanderson, who trained as a lawyer, represented Lincolnshire as a Member of Parliament, and was rewarded for political loyalty between 1714 and 1720 by being made successively Baron, Viscount and Earl of Castleton. The other minor Whig figures – the architect Thomas Hewett and the antiquary Hugh Wrottesley, as well as the bookseller Robinson – also displayed a commitment to ant clerical and tolerationist principles.

Thomas Parker, husband of Lady Carriere, was perhaps one of the most powerful people receiving material from Toland. A key legal figure in the early eighteenth century, as a staunch Whig he made his name defending Whig printers such as John Tutchin. He explicitly used his legal skills to defend toleration and the Hanoverian succession. A fierce prosecutor of Sacheverell, Parker became Lord Chief Justice and ultimately Lord Chancellor of England (April, 1718). As a legal officer Parker was a key administrative figure in the succession of George I, meeting him on his arrival in Greenwich in 1714. A popular courtier, Parker also gained favour with George I because of his judgement affirming the King’s rights over his grandchildren. Parker became first Lord of the Regency between 1718 and 1725. As a legal officer, Parker was hostile to the Test and Corporation Acts and defended the interests of Quakers in 1722. An examination of his correspondence between c. 1704 and 1730 indicates that he was also a man of letters. He corresponded with Pierre Desmaizeaux over the receipt of the standard foreign literary journals. Parker, with his legal power and popularity with George I, was clearly a significant figure: it is of profound interest that Toland (admittedly through the agency of Parker’s wife) was able to include him in his circle. Toland’s messages were then getting through to elevated circles.

These men and women were not simply connected by their literary relationship with Toland. Most of them, for example, also had relationships with either Anthony Collins or Pierre Desmaizeaux, whose exchanges of letters between 1712 and 1727 frequently mention intellectual or political transactions. For example, Desmaizeaux visited Parker at Shirburn Castle in the winter of 1716, and conferred with Wrottesley about translating various legal documents for a case Parker was pursuing. Wrottesley also inquired of Desmaizeaux whether he could recommend a French-speaking tutorial companion for a child of his acquaintance in Bristol. Collins periodically wrote to Desmaizeaux asking for accounts of Wrottesley’s welfare and asking him to pass on invitations to stay at his Essex house. Collins married Wrottesley’s sister Elizabeth in 1724. Robert Molesworth, a leading Whig politician from the 1690s, had links with almost all of the other figures in the circle: he was

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friendly with Thomas Hewett, who also worked on projects on his estate. Molesworth’s son, John, corresponded with Parker about the allocation of a clerical living. He also knew Lord Castleton and corresponded with both Collins and Desmaizeaux. Although there were intimacies between these men independently of their connection with Toland, by his distribution of manuscripts he brought them into a different sort of dialogue.9

Beyond the listing of recipients this fragment also illuminates a number of other themes. It confirms Toland’s involvement in the dissemination of a number of clandestine works both in England and on the continent. For example, amongst the material that Lord Castleton received was ‘The Cloud & Pillar’, a work which was later published in 1720 as part of Tetradyms under the title of Hodegus: or the Pillar of Cloud and Fire. The text was, however, first circulated in scribal form in French c. 1710 in the collection of the Dissertations Diverses sent to Prince Eugene and Baron d’Hohendorf.10 As will be discussed in a later chapter, this work originally derived from the researches Toland had pursued in the Low Countries. Some of the material was published in Latin in the Hague, the other extracts (which are similar to passages in the Traité des trois imposteurs) Toland disseminated in scribal form to an audience of two. The fact that Toland was able to recycle the material that made the ‘Cloud & Pillar’ across a decade of time, and in Holland, Vienna and England, illustrates a measure of his flexibility and skill at adapting his ideas to different circumstances and readers. Toland was capable of adjusting his ideas to different contexts and attempting to persuade quite distinct groups of people to a common agenda. That Toland could have worked upon a text for over a decade, and thought it viable for a different audience, is testimony both to the continuity, and the flexibility, of his intentions in communicating his opinions. As will be seen (in chapter 8 below) in the discussion of his life-long labour on the manuscript work on the history of the Christian canon, Toland revised and remodelled his work continually.

Toland undoubtedly kept many of his intellectual activities hidden from public knowledge, but he also quite commonly, and deliberately, drew attention to projected works. It is possible in a number of cases to identify the scribal outcome of such advertisement. Many of Toland’s announcements denoted intellectual hubris, rather than any serious intention. In Christianity not mysterious (1696) he announced a work called ‘Systems of divinity exploded’; in The Militia reform’d (1698) his proposal was for an account of ‘Brutus, or the history of liberty and tyranny’; in the 1700 edition of Harrington’s works, he claimed that he was going to draw a ‘parallel’ between Socrates and Christ.11 Such rumours of intended works were calculated to cultivate public expectation (and clerical anxiety).12 Commenting on the project for a comparative history of Socrates and Christ, Toland admitted ‘that I have
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been some time about it, I freely avow; yet not in the manner those officious informers report, but as becomes a disinterested Historian, and a friend to all mankind, as will more fully appear to the world whenever the Book itself is published. In 1706 Elisha Smith commented to Thomas Hearne that ‘Mr Toland is making collections for his Brutus yt he promis’d and for ye life of Socrates’. Unfortunately, no fragments of these works exist to allow an assessment of their intellectual intentions.

There is little doubt that Toland liked to exploit processes of literary rumour in order to set off the anxieties of the orthodox: for example, the hearsay that he was about to reveal evidence of a ‘new Gospel’ convulsed the Church in 1713–1714, and prompted attack prior to publication. Not all of these announcements were unsubstantiated provocation. In *Amyntor* (1699) Toland published a short consideration of apocryphal scripture: using this as a starting point he announced his intention of composing a fuller ‘History of the Canon of the New Testament’ in 1710. In another printed preface (1718) he mentioned that his history of the canon ‘whereof I have written ... in two parts, to be publish’d in convenient time’.

The ‘lent list’ recorded that Mr Hewett had borrowed and returned a text called ‘History of ye canon’. The 1726 collection reproduced *A Catalogue of Books ... as truly or falsely ascrib’d to Jesus Christ, his Apostles, and other eminent persons*, which is an expanded version of the original printed fragment in *Amyntor*. Toland, thus, had produced a text that was originally printed, which he expanded in scribal form for circulation between c. 1710–1720. The evidence of this practice of making public his intentions, and then consequently circulating such material, suggests a sophisticated process of self-publicity based in a complex relationship between print and scribal publication.

These were not isolated instances. Toland persistently employed the prefaces of his printed works to ‘hint’ at ongoing works. One of the most significant of the ‘missing’ works of Toland is his ‘Respublica Mosaica’. He first drew attention to such a work in the manuscript dissertations he sent to Prince Eugene, c. 1708–1710. By 1718, he reported in print ‘I can now gladly tell you, my materials are in such a readiness; that one half year, free from all other business, wou’d be sufficient for me to form and finish the whole work’. Two years later the work had still not appeared, but Toland again drew attention to the ‘promis’d’ work which would be controversial. As he noted, warning his readership to brace itself, ‘I find it highly necessary to publish before-hand some short specimen of my undertaking’. This was to ‘prevent surprise’ in his readers at the novelty of his arguments. The probable result of advertising the work in this way was (again) to prompt anxiety rather than comfort amongst his potential audience. Beyond the evidence of his library, which contained a number of important works on the history of Judaism, there is nothing to suggest that the work was circulated in specimen or indeed even completed.
Toland, by straddling the bridge between scribal and print culture in this way, was able to ‘circulate’ the idea of a text without material form.

As the evidence of yet another non-extant, possibly fictive, text, *A treatise upon tradition*, suggests, Toland devoted some efforts to ensuring that his projected works would provoke a hostile reception amongst the orthodox. In responding to clerical critics of *Nazarenus* (1718), Toland insisted that he would ‘publish a tract on this subject very soon’. 20 Indeed the evidence of Anthony Collins’s correspondence with Desmaizeaux (in March 1722) does confirm that Toland had devoted some effort to researching such a work. 21 Toland’s ‘promise that I both will write, and dare publish a treatise concerning tradition before Midsummer next, my life and health continuing’, was broken perhaps only by his ultimately fatal ill-health. 22 Certainly, Toland indicated that although he had intended to publish the work in 1720, upon ‘second thoughts’ he had delayed publication, perhaps anxious that its reception would not be good. 23 Toland contrived, then, by using the medium of his printed work, to generate a potentially hostile audience for a project, before embarking upon the production of such a work. Presumably this enabled him to scrutinise the reactions of his audience through oral or printed responses, and so adapt his work to take account of this. The evidence of the rewriting of works like *Nazarenus* for different audiences indicates that Toland was adept at reconfiguring his work according to its potential reception. 24

Some of the most enduring relationships Toland had were with a series of booksellers, printers and *libraires* (even though these were largely unprofitable in financial terms). Figures like Samuel Buckley, John Darby, Abigail and Richard Baldwin, James Roberts, Thomas Johnson and Bernard Lintott were all periodically involved in the publication and circulation of Toland’s printed work. These engagements did not always result in ‘published’ works however. For example, in 1712 Toland made an agreement with John Humfreys of Bartholomew Lane, London to print *Cicero illustratus*. 25 The terms dictated the amount and quality of the paper, the costs of printing and extra payment for ‘working the title in red’. 26 The work cost Toland in total £6.17s, of which he made three payments leaving an outstanding bill of £3.12s 6d. Toland undoubtedly put money and effort into the production of this Latin work, which was dedicated to Prince Eugene and Baron d’Hohendorf. Desmaizeaux reproduced the work in Toland’s posthumous collection pointing out that ‘it is very scarce; and the reason is, that it was never made publick’. In fact, Toland had only ‘printed a few copies at his own charge, to distribute among his friends and subscribers’. 27 Toland exploited what Harold Love calls ‘author publication’ to establish his credentials amongst the powerful. 28 Although Toland used print technology his text was not distributed as a printed work, but he attempted to retain a precise control over the distribution of copies, and consequently over
the audience for the work. Further evidence for this bespoke dispersal is found in the manuscript annotation Toland added to the copy of the work in the Bodleian: ‘in token of respect, and for his old acquaintance-sake this book is presented to Doctor John Carr, by his most humble servant, Septr. 30: 1712. J. Toland’. Toland wished to produce an edition of the entire works of Cicero furnished with critical notes. To attract subscription for such an enterprise (especially given his reputation) he set out to create a community of readers through the distribution of his proposal. Since no Toland edition resulted we might presume either that the project was unpalatable, or the costs too great. As we will see in a later chapter he acted in the same way with one of his more controversial works, the *Pantheisticon* (1720).

Toland often tested the waters of public reception in a more conventional manner by preparing a series of mock title-pages for publishers. The example of one of the surviving copies (‘The Critical History of the Celtic Religion & Learning: Containing An Ample Account of the Druids’) suggests that these proposals were serious. The ‘lent list’ shows that a manuscript with this title was circulated. It was to be posthumously printed in the 1726 collection. The mock title-page differs from the circulated manuscript in that it indicates four parts rather than three. That the work was destined for print publication is suggested by the remark that the book would be ‘illustrated with copper cuts’. As will be discussed at length below, this work was a product of Toland’s political intimacy with Robert Molesworth. The circulation of scribal work to other contemporaries implicated them in the political agenda associated with Molesworth’s commonwealth projects. Another title-page, *Priesthood without priestcraft*, dated 1705, not only included a title-page, but also a list of sixteen chapter headings divided between two books. That a text under this title was circulated is confirmed by the evidence of Anthony Collins’s library catalogue (c. 1720) which recorded a volume under that name. The other works designed in this way do not seem to have reached maturity in circulated versions.

It was a key part of Toland’s skill as a public writer to operate in both scribal and print culture. He also was adept at recognising the opportunities of translation between the two media. The power of his skills as a communicator lay, not necessarily in the articulation of new ideas, but in the redeployment of ideas, sources and texts into different social and cultural contexts. Toland developed an arsenal of different authorial strategies when writing for a print audience, including the presentation of scholarly apparatus, the appropriation of orthodox rhetoric, and the careful presentation of typographical style. The function of this variety of authorial *personae* was to attempt to engage with as many types of reader as possible, simultaneously. Insinuation, appropriation and ambiguity were strategies adopted by Toland to capture the reader’s mind and initiate the process of persuasion or corrosion of accepted patterns of...
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authority and belief. The imperatives and constitution of scribal publication determined a different set of conventions and relationships between author and reader. In particular, scribal publication offered the author a potentially untrammelled dominion over audience: the author could choose to whom he would send a text, and might encumber that transfer of material with precise stipulations about when and where other access might be allowed to the manuscript, and by whom. The effect of this was a conversation with a specific group of people. The evidence of the list ‘manuscripts abroad’ illustrates with precision one community of readers created by Toland: the circulation of manuscript works thus not only spread ideas but made a platform for political action.

Lawyers, booksellers, aristocrats, politicians, admirals and architects formed the circle made by Toland’s manuscripts. This intellectual intimacy established the social groundwork for access to power. One of the significant minorities of people to whom Toland distributed texts was that of women. The gentle status of Lady Janet Carriere may in some sense explain her presence on the list: clearly Toland used her, in part, as a conduit to pass scribal material to her husband. The fact that she was a useful instrument in establishing such a relationship is significant in itself. Her later involvement in the sale of legal offices suggests she had a measure of intellectual and even political independence. In the face of a paucity of information about the lives of the other women to whom Toland lent works, it is necessary to broaden the context to consider the nature of Toland’s associations with other women. He encountered women most frequently in the print-bookselling trade. Abigail Baldwin, Ann Dodd and Mrs Smith were three women libraires who published a number of Toland’s works between 1700 and 1718. Baldwin published material overwhelmingly in defence of the Hanoverian succession, while Dodd was involved in producing the second edition of Nazarenus (1718), and Mrs Smith the virulently anticlerical An appeal to honest people against wicked priests (1712).

Toland had a predilection for talking with powerful women too. In the early years of the 1700s, Toland (as a result of various diplomatic missions) had established a close conversational association with both Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and consequently Sophia Charlotte (her daughter) in Berlin. One important literary result of this relationship was Toland’s Letters to Serena (1704). Addressed to Sophie Charlotte, Toland took the opportunity to defend the female sex against male ‘prejudice’. He claimed to have demonstrated ‘the Parity of the intellectual Organs in both sexes, and that what puts ‘em both on the same foot in discourse of ordinary business (which is deny’d by no body) makes em equally capable of all improvements, had they but equally the same advantages of education, travel, company, and the management of affairs’. Later he was to publish Sophie’s work on patristic scholarship as a means of reinforcing the Protestant piety of the Hanoverian succession. In the face of
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considerable conservative opinion, Toland insisted that women were potentially capable of apprehending the highest philosophy, virtue and religion. 

In a preface to a much earlier work *A lady’s religion in a letter to the Honourable My Lady Howard* (1697) Toland had horrified his readers with the suggestion that women had an equal facility for reasonable ‘plain, short and intelligible’ religion (and thus for priesthood) as men. He had underscored this point about the potentially clerical role of women, in the ‘Primitive constitution of the Christian Church’ (c. 1705), when he had provided patristic evidence for the status of deaconesses in Christian antiquity. 

Later in *Hypatia* (1720), Toland took the fate of the ancient philosophess of Alexandria who was assassinated in 415 AD, as indicative of the cruelty and perfidy of priestcraft. The work was intended to celebrate the ‘vast number of Ladies, who have in every age distinguished themselves by their professions and performances in learning’. Women had been eminent in all kinds of literature but ‘especially in Philosophy; which as it is the highest perfection, so it demands the utmost effort of human nature’. 

One of the manuscripts Toland circulated (to Mr Robinson) the ‘Piece of ye Roman education’, celebrated the role women like Theano and Muia, wife and daughter of Pythagoras, undertook in the raising and education of children. 

In print and scribal publications Toland self-consciously laid emphasis upon the intellectual abilities of women: while much of this may be the manifestation of his desire to ingratiate himself with an elite social and political milieu, the evidence of his correspondence also reveals a similar attitude.

There is no doubt that Toland used his pen for personal advancement, even for more intimate advantage. At some point after 1720, Toland fell in love with a young women he identified only by the letters ‘A.B.C.D.’. Rumour had misidentified the object of his amour. Writing to ‘Mrs D***’, Toland intended to clarify the misunderstanding that had been made worse by the insinuations of various balladeers. While he acknowledged that he had used some ‘roguish expressions, which I know to be one of her favourite diversions’ he was ready to swear on his ‘corporal oath, she was never the object of my thoughts’. Toland had engaged his heart to be ‘constant to merit in the person of one excellent creature’, even though this meant ‘that I may ruin my self all at once with some other Darlings of mine (meaning the venerable society of vain and wanton Widows, the honourable company of Virgin, that have large fortunes and small understandings; with the faded skins, and cherry-cheeks of both sorts)’. The robust language suggests an intimacy and assured playfulness with the moeurs of gentle female company. Toland continued to give ‘the character of my real or imaginary mistress’: she ‘ever thinks before she speaks, tho she never speaks half she thinks’. While not the ‘monster they call a learned lady’ she joined moderate reading with prudent observation, combining the wit and beauty of youth with the ‘sense and virtue’ of age. Her
religion ‘lyes not in her tongue, but in her heart’. Her command of the social graces meant she was ‘genteel without affectation, gay without levity, civil to strangers without being free, and free with her acquaintance without being familiar’. Toland sadly acknowledged that there was no ‘return of mutual love’ partially because he had not ‘made her a positive declaration’. In a subsequent letter to the same woman Toland, describing his own love as combining the ‘ardour of the youngest man, ... with all the constancy of the oldest philosopher’, continued to laud the physical beauty of his mistress which verged on the sensual.

That Toland’s infatuation was real rather than fictional is substantiated by some fragmentary drafts of letters to a mother and daughter written c. 1720 found in his archive. The prompt for his correspondence was his gift of a copy of Hypatia to the daughter. Assuring the mother that the small present was ‘purely honorable’ he ‘hope[d] you have a better opinion of my charming Sory (I am sure I have) then that she would exchange her heart for a sixpenny pamphlet’. In the course of his letter Toland gave directions about how he expected the volume of essays should be read. The account of Hypatia ‘will most affect you, considering that a young lady of your distinguished merit must needs be sensibly touch’d to find such an unparallel’d example of her sex, but the envy and reproach of ours’. The second discourse (Clidophorus) would convince her ‘that men do commonly use as little sincerity to each other as to all women; in wch charge no way you are nothing concern’d, since your beauty and virtue, joined to so many good qualities, have privileged you against all dissimulation’. The first and last parts of the work (Hodegus and Mangoneutes) are described as ‘idle comments’ designed to ‘amuse where they cannot instruct you’. Here, although perhaps driven by desire for the particular woman, Toland provides confirmation of the motivation for circulation of (printed or scribal) texts to other women in his circle. Women were a legitimate and responsive audience for his critique of prejudice, dissimulation and priestcraft. Toland was at intellectual and social ease in the company of women whether queens, printers, ladies or lovers. His dispersion of texts was a means of engaging with female sociability, in itself a convenient means for accessing power and for countering orthodox clerical discourses about the intellectual competence of women.

The people Toland sent manuscripts to, both men and women, were a group with common characteristics. They shared a platform of similar political and religious beliefs that (as we will see in chapters 4 to 6) can be described as republican. This ‘commonwealth’ ideology made a firm connection between political and religious liberties. It was commonly articulated as an attack upon the legal foundations of the confessional state or what we could call ‘political anticlericalism’. The significance of the affinity is its identity as a politically
active group closely allied with the Hanoverian court. Toland’s community of readers was not marginal and radical but included figures (like Molesworth and Parker) that laboured at the very centre of national politics. Toland’s scribal writings were contrived to integrate him into a circle of patronage, and were in that sense instruments in creating a social connection that would enable him to advance ideas and opinions in an oral or conversational context. At the same time the texts themselves contrived to act as stimulants of political activity. We need then to be sensitive to both the social and intellectual purposes of these textual exchanges.

Toland’s relationship with the men of power he came to know can be best explored in the associations he had with Robert Harley, Anthony Ashley Cooper and Robert Molesworth. His liaison with women of power like Electress Sophia of Hanover will be considered at length below, but should be thought of as underpinning the legitimacy of his relations with all these other figures. Defending the legitimacy of a tolerant Protestant succession was a central plank of his political agenda. In the immediate aftermath of the fiercely contested General Election of 1705, Toland wrote to an anonymous correspondent (probably William Penn) in late June in answer to the queries ‘why I was not employ’d before, and how I wou’d be employed at present?’ Combining a touching reflection upon his own youthful political naïveté, with an account of the vagaries of ideological controversy in the late 1690s and early 1700s, he admitted ‘I thought everybody meant what they said as well as my self’. The consequence of this inexperience was that ‘in the most public manner I promoted the party I had espous’d, without once considering that their adversaries wou’d all very naturally become my enemies’. This public espousal involved the defence of liberty and free government ‘against what is arbitrary and despotic’. The government of ‘standing and indifferent laws’ was to be preferred to the ‘uncertain and byast will of any Prince’. As Toland clarified, the best form of a free government was ‘our own mixt constitution’. It was a shock then, to this young and ‘ardent’ lover of liberty who had embarked on the public service of republishing the works of Milton, Harrington and ‘some others’ (Ludlow, Holles and Sidney at the very least), to find himself mischaracterised and traduced as a ‘most violent republican’. The immediate political point of the letter was to distance himself from intimacy with the Whig Junto (and in particular Somers and Halifax: protesting perhaps too much Toland insisted that, ‘I have no personal obligations to either of them, nor have every enter’d into any manner of transactions with themselves or on their behalf, either here at home, or any where abroad’).45

This experience taught Toland a lesson: most politicians ‘of whom I had hitherto entertain’d a high opinion, meant nothing by the public but themselves’. Those who might have been able to offer serious counsel to such figures instead became ‘the mean tools of their avarice or ambition, being...
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their exchange or coffee-house heralds, and the trumpeters of their praises in all public meetings. The point was to distinguish between ‘men and things, between professions and performances’. The conduct of the apostate Whigs (who by principle ought to be ‘the patrons of the liberty of mankind’) in the matters of parliamentary legislation (especially the Judge’s Bill, the Triennial Bill and for the regulation of trials) was shockingly partial. The ‘business of the standing army finished all’, driving a rift between honest and corrupt men, between friends and flatterers. Toland’s point was to establish a clear ideological distance between the Junto Whigs and ‘the persevering Whigs’ like himself and the Duke of Newcastle, who were never ‘tainted with notions of arbitrary power … and who are most unlikely to be seduc’d or corrupted hereafter by reason of their great quality, plentiful fortunes, and honest principles’. Importantly, Newcastle was the cornerstone of Harley’s policy of attracting Whig support to his ministry.46

The letter was then an application for political employment. Toland acknowledged that his own reputation was controversial: some Whigs, most Tories and all Jacobites hated him. For Toland however ‘words are but wind (as they say) and therefore names go for nothing with me’: as long as men were good countrymen and defended the constitution and the ‘Protestant Religion and Succession’ they were ‘true Englishmen’ regardless of party affiliation and ‘narrow bottom’d faction’. In the early years of Queen Anne’s reign Toland was protected by ‘high born persons’ from the accusations of both parties; ‘for at one and the same time I had a Tory Secretary of State writing letters against me to foreign Courts as Agent to the Whigs, if not obnoxious to the laws’. At the same time leading Whigs were describing him as ‘Mr Harley’s creature, which was a higher crime by far than being a Tory’. Sadly, Toland noted that he had not ‘spoke one word to Mr Harley, nor receiv’d one letter or message from him, since King William died’. Since then Toland had been treated in the manner of those ‘coquet ladies, who tast all the bitter of the scandal without enjoying any of the sweets of the sin’: he was accused of being a creature of Harley, while being distrusted by the man himself. Noting that he had offended Marlborough, Nottingham and Rochester, Toland underscored the importance of his political relationship with the leading noble figures: Shaftesbury, Somers, Halifax and Newcastle.47

Although he had been ill-used in the past, perhaps deservedly, Toland offered his services on trial: ‘I wou’d not desire any public establishment for some time, ‘till my patron had got experience of my fitness and ability’. The grounds for this arrangement were to be ‘on such a foot as is agreeable to my principles and for the particular benefit of the Succession’. Allowing him the opportunity to offer counsel would soon cure the prejudices against his character, even those advanced by the Church ‘which is so much exasperated against me’. Toland’s immediate proposition was that he should go to

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Germany ‘and keep a constant weekly correspondence with his Lordship, not only according to his instructions, but likewise as to all observations of my own, I shou’d think deserving of his curiosity or notice’. Although he would travel throughout Germany the purpose of his mission would be to exploit his own standing at the Hanoverian court ‘that when absent I shou’d know all that past there and could communicate what I thought fit to them from other places’. Such an ‘appointment’ would be paid quarterly and ‘continued no longer than I shall be judg’d to deserve the same or better’. Toland’s role was to be neither ‘Minister nor Spy’, but would prove to be ‘of extraordinary use’ to the Lord Treasurer Godolphin. Toland’s credit in this matter was derived, notwithstanding the savagely critical memorials of Nottingham, from the strength of his reputation with the Electress of Hanover, who was only restrained from acknowledging her respect for him ‘in a public manner’ by the fear of upsetting Anne.48

Two months later, writing to Robert Harley, Toland was still in pursuit of place. Through the agency of William Penn, he had re-established his connections with Harley. ‘The complication of parties, principles and designs’ and the potentially hostile construction of ‘both the violent Whigs and Tories’, meant that ‘prudence’ about the extent of their relationship, would be Harley’s best policy while it was ‘both my interest and duty to be secret’. Toland had declined to be a ‘mercenary tool’ and had consequently suffered persecution: ‘they loosed all their little curs of Booksellers and others upon me at once, knowing I could not be able to satisfy my creditors (though my debts were very small) if they came upon me all together’. These financial difficulties were moderate and ought not to be blown out of proportion as a tool to compromise Toland’s reputation. Toland proposed a ‘method’ which would ‘make me useful to yourself and the public without incurring the censure of any faction or letting it be known to your best friends, till I have time and opportunity to wear off those prejudices which my own want of experience and the treachery of others have raised against me’. Toland would abandon his ‘tattling and mean acquaintance’ and indiscreet frequenting of coffee-houses: Harley, with the connivance of Godolphin, could ‘make me a new man without changing my old principles’.49

At the same time as he was negotiating with Harley, Toland felt compelled (in order to maintain his political relationship with the third Earl of Shaftesbury) to offer some explanation of his conduct and associations. He noted that his earlier applications for political service had been unsuccessful: ‘for what my Lord Somers’ Ministry wou’d not give me, and what I wou’d not ask of my Lord Nottingham’s Ministry, the present Ministry unsought has offer’d, and I am willing to accept’. Unwilling to proceed without clearing the air, Toland requested a private and confidential meeting to discuss the ‘terms’ and ‘purposes’ of his employment. It was ‘absolutely necessary that I begin on
clear ground’. A further letter in October 1705, regretting that no meeting had taken place, attempted to make transparent his objectives by including the first fruits of his labours for the Ministry (accompanying the letter was a copy of Toland’s Memorial of the State of England a work composed in response to James Drake’s furiously High Church polemic, and encouraged by Harley). Toland was concerned to clear his name of the charge of being a turncoat: the ‘confidence’ between the two men had not been tarnished by his conduct. As he commented, ‘by this memorial you may perceive what sort of Tory I am grown, and at the same time what sort of politicians they are at the Grecian, who (as I am inform’d by no mean person) report that I am become a Tory’. This was a ‘spightfully’ contrived by ‘certain unforgiveing managers’ to ‘oppress’ him. Far from regarding the Memorial as a work of purely Harleian purposes, Toland encouraged Shaftesbury to see the book as part of his own political project: ‘I shall only tell your Lordship, that it is really your fault, if this book be not so good as you wou’d have it, since my Design of Seeing you some weeks ago was to advise about it’.

In these letters we can see Toland the politician at work, offering services, producing polemics, engineering wider intellectual support for particular policies. Even the minor episode of the Memorial establishes the breadth of his connections, and the intimacy between his writings and the highest elites of the political world. As Toland proudly noted in a letter to Harley in December 1705, ‘It is no small satisfaction to me, that the judgement of the Queen, the Parliament, and the Ministry, do unanimously concur with the Book’.

Although Toland acknowledged Harley’s encouragement in the production of the book, he also noted that there might be some things in the book ‘not according to your sentiments’. As Harley well knew this was because ‘I wanted opportunity to consult you personally’. The work was rushed, ‘I having finish’d it in a very few days, without any to advise me but Mr P[enn], being in the country, and not master of time enough to polish the very language’. Although the Memorial might not have reflected the opinions of Harley in every iota it clearly contributed to the political agenda of refuting Tory claims that the Church was in ‘danger’. By 20 December 1705, both the Houses of Lords and Commons had resolved to condemn such opinions and insist ‘that whosoever goes about to suggest and insinuate that the church is in danger under her Majesty’s administration is an enemy to the queen, the church and the Kingdom’. Instructions were sent to magistrates to prosecute any who contradicted the resolution. While, no doubt, Toland over-exaggerated the influence of his own contribution, here there is unmistakable evidence of his writings having some sort of causal relationship with the development of public policy against the High Church Tories. Whether Toland was merely the agent of Harley’s machinations, or (as the correspondence with Shaftesbury might suggest) had his own agenda in the composition, will be a matter for
debate. What is manifest is his intimacy with the agents of political power. Writing could make a difference.

Toland was proud of his abilities to influence public debate: indeed he forwarded to Harley evidence of the reception of the *Memorial* by the dissenting minister John Shower who regarded it as ‘the most judicious and seasonable of anything lately printed’. So much was Shower impressed that he intended to buy twenty-five copies for distribution ‘as to occasion the buying and reading of a much greater number’.\(^5^3\) Given such a reception, it was unsurprising that Toland attempted to broach further designs to Harley, ‘and therefore as well as for that, as for some other reason, I humbly and earnestly beg the favour of one half hour’s Discourse with you, wherever or in what manner you please to appoint’. The next piece of writing would be ‘without a fault; which I shall judge it be, if it has but your concurrence or approbation’. For this and other such writings and counsel it was rumoured that Toland was to be made Keeper of the Paper Office worth about £400 per annum.\(^5^4\) However, as Toland miserably complained to Harley two years later, ‘I own myself disappointed’. He had not even received ‘as much as copy-money’ for his writings.\(^5^5\)

While Toland evidently considered himself suitably qualified for senior duties in the Ministry (and the appropriate recompense), he was not successful. In a long letter of woe to Harley (‘the best friend I have on earth’) he unburdened his feelings of despair. He was (as he put it rather immodestly) ‘a great deal more capable in all respects, than several in the long list of such as have been employed in that space of time’. As an ‘absolute stranger to all bargaining’, Toland objected bitterly to the nepotism and self-interest that had governed political appointments: ‘I have neither bought with some, nor sold with others … I have neither betrayed, nor been betrayed; I am neither akin to this family, an enemy to that, nor a retainer to any; I have never a favourite brother or sister, nor am myself for such gentle services in the good graces of any Lord or Lady whatsoever; I have neither flattered nor lampooned with my prostitute rhymes’. Toland had ‘silently endured the greatest hardship imaginable’ and was modest in his demands: yet still the ‘centre of preferment’ eluded him. The slanders of ‘some hotbrained pert fellows from Christchurch’ had compromised his reputation. Harley had, according to Toland, ‘supplied me now for two whole years out of your own pocket, in diet, clothes, lodging and all other expenses’. Toland had been led to imagine, possibly by the promptings of William Penn, that these provisions had been made on the instructions of the Lord Treasurer ‘till something became vacant proper for me to accept or execute’. Only lately had he realised his dependence on Harley, ‘and truly all the world are persuaded you are my patron, and look on me as your creature’. Since Toland had often approved of Harley’s ‘impartial measures’ in politics he resolved to ‘have no other interest but yours’ as
the most ‘certain method of being always for the good of my country’. He would abandon his approaches ‘to some great person to whom I was lately recommended’.

Reassuring Harley that his imminent trip out of the kingdom would not lead him to visit either Berlin or Hanover (and thus possibly compromise diplomatic relations between Anne and Sophia by the shadow of his reputation) he also took the opportunity to submit another claim for expenses. It was, he commented, high time ‘for me to have new clothes’; the cost of new linen, the settlement of some small debts, and the charge for ‘subsistence till November next’ would come to a sum of £50. Although Toland was indebted to Harley (‘I had no other resource in the world but your protection and friendship’) he was careful to indicate he retained his independence by keeping an ‘account of all I have received from you hitherto, and I make no question but if I live I shall be able to repay you, as you have enabled me to pay others’.56 The relationship between Harley and Toland, for all the claims of honour and obligation, was not one based upon trust. Certainly in this instance in 1707, Toland did not keep his promise to avoid Hanover, and in fact Harley (rightly) doubted him enough to have his various diplomatic representatives report his movements. D’Alais reported in October, 1707 that Toland had not only visited the Elector at Dusseldorf (who presented him with ‘considerable presents’), but also paid his respects to the Electress at Hanover. Toland had claimed ‘that he was accredited by the government to the Elector for affairs of importance’.57 Toland’s ability to present himself as an intimate of the powerful was a consistent part of his conduct in Germany. Proffering all sorts of testimonials and references as he moved from court to court he fashioned himself as a conduit of influence between England and Hanover. As Lord Raby explained to Leibniz in January 1708, Toland’s claim to be employed by the English government was deceitful, ‘Mr Harley himself has written to me that so far from having any commission from him, he made difficulties in giving him a passport to leave England, not knowing what business he could possibly have abroad’. Harley’s own capacity for duplicity is perhaps evident in the supplementary comment that Raby passed on: ‘it is true that for some time he suffered him in his company, as a man reputed to have a good deal of reading, but that he was very far from ever having any friendship for or confidence in him’.58

When Harley returned to political power in 1710 Toland offered him hearty congratulations and reopened his offer of political counsel as did other commonwealthsmen like Robert Molesworth.59 Addressing a number of ‘memorials’ to the first minister, Toland delivered a series of practical political ‘advices’ for
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brokering a scheme of coalition from ‘a person of undoubted credit among the Whigs’.\textsuperscript{60} The tone of these exchanges was one of increasing alarm about the danger to the Hanoverian succession implicit in Harley’s diplomatic entanglements with France: Toland finished one letter with the injunction ‘delays are dangerous’. Repeatedly underlining the ‘difficulty of access’ and his inability to speak with Harley directly, Toland offered his ‘liberal education and experience in foreign Courts’ and his ‘credit abroad’ to the service of the ministry. He would use both his tongue and his pen to reinforce the security of the Succession: because of his connections he could ‘draw’ information from the Hague, Hanover, Berlin, Dusseldorf and Vienna, as well as ‘diffuse’ policy in the same places. In return for these services he expected payment: perhaps ultimately a salary of £200 per annum (paid quarterly) but in the interim £20 would do. Acknowledging that the attentions of the ‘Jesuits of Christchurch’ meant that significant office would not be his, he commented that ‘I know there are places very little subject to notice or envy’. Such an appointment would ‘make me not a little useful to your Lordship, as well as easy to myself’.\textsuperscript{61}

It is worth pondering for a moment the nature of these services Toland offered to the minister. Toland denied he was a spy although many hostile contemporaries made the accusation. Toland described himself as ‘very busy’. As he expanded ‘I have been at times in all places and with all people’. He had been long absent from London which had given him ‘a good pretext for an unaffected reserve’ and encouraged others ‘desirous to inform me on the foot of their own schemes and principles’. Toland characterised himself as a monitor and conduit of political opinion: ‘I therefore hear and see everything’. Haunting the coffee-houses Toland had developed the ‘art of disburthening’ opinions from men by ‘bantering and fooling, indifference and doubtfulness’. By ‘pumping’ he drew out of some people their political designs.\textsuperscript{62} The purpose of this was to find the pulse of public political opinion so that he might acquaint Harley ‘with the general notions, right or wrong, that obtain at any time in the town; with perhaps a true account of their original and tendency, what might be hoped or feared, done or undone, by such means’.\textsuperscript{63} Toland proffered practical political prudence driven by a series of confirmed objectives which converged upon securing the Hanoverian succession against the combined threats of popery and the French. At this juncture Toland’s advice was that in order ‘to settle the minds of the subjects’ an open and hearty support for the House of Hanover must be established: ‘Dry and general expressions will not do: friends must be confirm’d, and enemies put out of hope’. The lengthy letter continued to give specific and detailed advice about the treatment of diplomatic matters, financial affairs and particular individuals. The rhetoric of this advice was one of humanist counsel: Toland warned that a method must be found of stalling the malicious designs of enemies at home
and abroad because ‘I have known a boat overset, because the skipper wou’d not slacken his sail at the desire of a passenger’. In effect and intent, this memorial was a coded warning to Harley that his policies and negotiations with France were perceived as dangerous to the true national interest by both Whigs and Tories.

Unmistakably, Toland was not the only man offering such counsel to Harley, but the tone and expediency of the communication is significant. Toland was not bashful in his guidance. Reflecting on the nature of this relationship one might be tempted to regard Toland as the creature and instrument of the clever politician, a man who wrote (unsuccessfully in this case) for reward and place, a hack, a hired-hand. As the evidence of the various contracts Toland entered into with a number of booksellers, publishers and printers indicates, he wrote for a living having no other visible means of support. The implication that what Toland wrote was commissioned to order and therefore, if not insincere, then certainly not the product of pure intellectual conviction, is not sustainable from the evidence of his relationship with patrons like Harley, Shaftesbury and Molesworth. Ultimately perhaps the question comes down to a matter of private motivation, an issue ever elusive from the purview of the historian. Toland made, repeatedly during the course of his life, attempts to associate himself and his writings with a series of elite political figures. At one level such relationships provided him with material benefits and ease, but importantly they also provided him with a forum, a platform and the opportunity for the broadcast and articulation of his ideas and beliefs. Toland’s skills at public writing, his reputation for learning and scholarship, his personal intimacies with a European community of letters, were all elements that made him attractive to courtiers and politicians. Indubitably Toland thought of himself as a figure at the centre of a complex web of intellectual and political relationships: he could both ‘draw’ and ‘diffuse’ information, ideas, learning, opinions and beliefs from this network. His performance in this circuit of communication was both covert and public, clandestine and communal. The texts Toland composed had meanings implicit in their languages, but also derived sense from these wider cultural contexts.

Toland’s relationship with Harley was not simply one of hierarchy, of patron and client. At one level Harley needed Toland as much as he was needed by him. Although, as we have seen, Toland described himself as a ‘creature’ devoted to Harley’s sole interest, it is important to stress that this relationship was determined by Toland’s perception of Harley’s commitment to a shared political agenda. When this communal platform was compromised Toland rapidly and determinedly withdrew his involvement with the politician. The evidence for the principled foundation of his working relationship with Harley is best displayed in the lengthy ‘memorial’ he sent in December 1711, a time when serious doubts about Harley’s motives were developing. Premising
his remarks with a description of his awareness of the protocols of true counsel (‘principibus placuisse viris, non ultima laus est’) and an assertion of his own proved intimacy with political ‘company’, he bemoaned the increasing difficulty of access he experienced, compared with the success of men ‘the most opposite to you in principles’ whom he met ‘going up your stairs or coming down’. In order to smooth his way, Toland took the opportunity to remind Harley of the sources of their ‘familiarity ... founded upon the same love of Letters and Liberty, which to generous spirits are stronger ties, than even those of blood or alliance’. From this foundation Toland invoked ‘the rights of friendship’. Unlike those men whom Harley used as ‘tools ... to say and do, to unsay and undo as they are bid’, Toland was ‘just the reverse’ in his principled consistency; he explained, ‘My management abroad, my behaviour at home, what I whisper’d in private, and what I printed to the world, all speak the same language, all tend to the same end’. This end had been served by Toland’s personal loyalty to Harley, a thing he had never exploited to personal benefit when men had ‘sollicited my interest for access to your person, or intercession in their behalf; constantly refusing the most tempting offers, and often when I had not many guineas left for superfluous expence’. The premise of Toland’s service was ‘to communicate to your Lordship my observations on the temper of the ministry, the dispositions of the people, the condition of our enemies or allies abroad, and what I might think most expedient in every conjuncture’. Qualified by experience, languages and contacts, in combination with his devotion to the ‘publick’ interest, Toland acted as a ‘private monitor’, most emphatically not a spy. Of recent times Toland had begun to suspect his counsel was not used and fearful of betraying his friends he had become ‘very cautious and reserv’d’. Toland had only the ‘good of my country’ at heart. As the evidence of his conduct in the ‘impenetrable negotiation at Vienna’ with Prince Eugene of Savoy indicated, ‘they who confided to my management affairs of a higher nature have found me exact as well as secret’. Toland pondered whether difficulties were prompted by ‘the conditions demanded by me, or in the principles on which we are both to proceed?’. The matters of providing for his ‘competent maintenance’ were insubstantial; the principles of communion ‘which with me are unalterable and indispensable, are civil liberty, religious toleration, and the Protestant Succession’ were ‘conditions sine qua non’. As Toland underscored ‘he that will not agree with me on this foot, must never employ me nor ever trust me’. Recalling that Harley had encouraged Toland’s edition of Harrington and commissioned the Memorial of the State of England, he reiterated their joint subscription to Whig and Commonwealth principles. Reviewing the defence of government by rule of law rather than will, the ‘human and heavenly principle of Toleration’ and the defence of the succession, Toland intended to reinforce the consistency of his service to Harley. If Harley had compromised his convictions, especially...
his allegiance to Hanover, then, lamented Toland, ‘what a wretched politician
am I? How greatly misled my self? And how great a misleader of others?’
Although Toland feared the worst (especially given his own shoddy treatment),
he refused to be convinced by any ‘but your self … that we are not embarked
upon the same bottom’. Anxious that he might be considered self-important
or hectoring in his address, Toland insisted that he simply acted the just duty
of the ‘free subject’. In the same breath as he confirmed his respect, love and
duty towards Harley, he commanded something be done to head off an
infamous and dangerous peace with France. To cover his own back and
vindicate his own reputation, Toland made sure that he distributed copies of
the memorial to others.

That Toland’s relationships with powerful men were built upon principle
rather than private interest is best exemplified in his reaction to Harley’s
apostacy from ‘revolution principles’. This prompted furious and powerful
criticism from Toland. In private correspondence Toland explained that
because Harley had uttered ‘ambiguous words’ against the House of Hanover,
he had ‘utterly renounc’d his friendship’ and had broken off all contact
(spoken or written). This of course left him bereft of support while still
reaping the unjust opprobrium attached to his former relationship. Retired
from the bustle of business in Epsom, Toland devoted his energies to destroy-
ing Harley’s reputation: the product was The art of restoring which skilfully
compared Harley’s conduct to that of General Monck, bracketing the restora-
tion of the Stuarts in 1660, with that of the Pretender in 1714. The evidence of
this long and tortuous relationship tends to suggest that Toland was a
principled man with an eye to self-advancement but not to hypocrisy: he had
clearly formed some personal attachment to Harley, perhaps drawn by the
natural charisma of the latter’s power and learning. The last letter he wrote
used the metaphor of lovers to describe his relationship; there were however
strict limits to the extent of this devotion: these parameters were defined by
political conviction.

There are some important themes that can be extracted from this account
of Toland’s relationship with Harley. First, and most obvious, is the point that
Toland defined himself as a commonwealth Whig: his allegiance to this
identity was powerful and consistent from the 1700s to his death. Importantly
this subscription to a party label for Toland meant that he was neither ‘king-
ridden nor priest-ridden’: it implied a set of arguments about the nature of
civil politics, the constitution of the Church, and the nature of the monarchy,
all of which were encompassed by the vocabulary of liberty. Committed to a
set of core republican values, Toland engaged in a powerful polemic against
‘tyranny’ whether it was located in a corrupt monarchy, a persecuting priest-
hood, or a self-interested parliament. In the broadest possible terms, then,
Toland was engaged in a political endeavour that had objectives of reforming
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the corrupt and corrupting elements of society. The evidence of his relationship with Harley, which can be compared to parallel associations he had with other powerful figures like Shaftesbury, Molesworth, Eugene of Savoy and Sophia of Hanover, suggests that Toland was a man intimate with the mechanics and personnel of elite politics. Like contemporaries of his, the historian needs to be wary of Toland’s claims to influence and connection, but there was clear substance to his assertion of intimacy with princes, nobles and men of political power. The significance of these connections needs to be carefully considered: the relationship between ‘access’ and ‘influence’ invokes some particularly thorny issues in the history of ideas.

The connections Toland established through the circulation of manuscripts c. 1720 shifts the place of his relationship with elite political culture from the margins closer to the centre. It is clear from the trajectory of his career and the concatenation of his political patrons that from the late 1690s to the end of his life Toland was intimate with the mechanics of power. Whether acting as purveyor of arguments in defence of the Hanoverian succession, editing the canon of republican texts for the Whig commonwealthmen, or composing _livres de circonstance_ against Tory enemies, it can be argued that Toland was a subtle and effective political pamphleteer. Even as a political writer Toland exploited the scribal form in writing private memorials for Harley, Shaftesbury and later Molesworth. Some of these materials survive both in manuscript and in printed versions in the 1726 collection: works like _A project of a journal_ and _A scheme for a National Bank_ were original essays composed presumably to persuade his patrons (Shaftesbury and Molesworth) to pursue his advice in the arena of national politics. If these texts were meant to persuade within a political context, we can only speculate about what role the less straightforwardly political works on the ‘lent list’ performed. When Molesworth announced to Toland his plans to run for election at Westminster, he reassured him: ‘believe me when I tell you, you shall fare as I do’. Toland replied (a week before his death) ‘Since you will embark once more on that troublesom sea, I heartily wish you all good luck, and wish I had been able to run for you night and day, which with great ardour I wou’d’. It would be wrong to separate this political relationship from the intellectual intimacy established between the two men represented in the exchange of scribal material. How far the content of the manuscript material set the context for the development and articulation of the ‘political’ tenets is difficult to establish with precision. However, it is possible to indicate that far from consigning him to the radical margins, at least in England, Toland’s scribal labours projected him into the swell of national politics.
Republics of learning

NOTES

1 See Jacob Radical Enlightenment; M. Benitez ‘La coterie hollandaise et la réponse à m. de la Monnoye sur le Traité de Tribus impostoribus’ Lias 21 (1994) pp. 71–94.


3 BL Add Mss 4295 fo. 43 ‘Manuscripts of mine abroad’.


6 See BL Stowe 750, passim.

7 See BL Add Mss 4287 fos. 210–216.

8 See the calendar in J. Almagor Pierre Desmaizeaux (1673–1745), journalist and English correspondent for Franco-Dutch periodicals 1700–1720 (Amsterdam, 1989).


11 See Christianity not mysterious Preface, p. xxvi; Militia Reform’d [Tolandiana p. 3]; J. Toland (ed.) Harrington’s works p. xli.

12 See Tolandiana p. 64.

13 E. Curll An historical account of the life and writings of the late eminently famous Mr John Toland (1722) p. 22.

14 Errata p. 3.


16 Nazarenus p. ix.

17 ONB 10,325 ‘Projet’ fos. 4–5.

18 Nazarenus Appendix I p. 2.


20 Tetradymus: Mangoneutes p. 209.

21 See BL Add Mss 4282 fo. 190 (March 15, 1722).

22 Tetradymus: Mangoneutes p. 209.


24 See Nazarenus ‘Introduction’ passim.

25 See Tolandiana pp. 157–158, 162.

26 See BL Add Mss 4295 fo. 24.
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27 P. Desmaizeaux ‘Introduction’ Collections 1 p. lvii.
29 See Tollandiana p. 158.
30 See Add Mss 4295 fos. 25 and 4, for examples of other ‘contracts’.
31 BL Add Mss 4295 fo. 61. For a transcription see Tollandiana pp. 6–7.
32 See King’s College, Cambridge, Bibliotheca Collinsiensis Keynes 217 fo. 469. Collins also owned another manuscript title ‘Christianity Restored’. A contract is in BL Add Mss 4295 fo. 4.
34 For full details of all their publications, see Tollandiana.
35 Letters to Serena (1704) Preface, §3, 5.
36 Ibid. §7, 8.
37 Collections 2 pp. 191–192.
40 Collections 2 pp. 357–363
41 Collections 2 pp. 364, 367, 368.
42 See BL Add Mss 4465 fo. 44.
43 BL Add Mss 4465 fo. 45
45 Collections 2 pp. 337–353. I am very grateful to James Alsop for allowing me to read an account of these letters. This is a corrective to the account found in F. H. Ellis (ed.) Jonathan Swift: a discourse of the contest and dissentions between the nobles and the commons in Athens and Rome (Oxford, 1967) pp. 39–42.
47 Collections 2 pp. 345–346.
49 Portland Mss IV p. 235.
52 Kenyon Revolution p. 100.
53 Collections 2 pp. 356–357.
54 Heinemann ‘John Toland’ p. 137.
55 Portland Mss IV p. 408.
56 Ibid. p. 410
57 Ibid. p. 456.
Republiques of learning

58 Kemble State Papers p. 465.
59 Portland Mss IV p. 572.
60 See Collections 2 pp. 215–219 which is a slightly different version of that reproduced in Portland Mss V pp. 126–127.
62 Collections 2 p. 404.
63 Portland Mss V p. 258.
64 Collections 2 pp. 406–409.
65 Collections 2 p. 221.
66 Collections 2 pp. 221–238 passim.
67 Collections 2 p. 429.
68 See Collections 1 pp. 448–474; volume 2 pp. 201–215. See BL Add Mss 4295 fo. 68, and Add Mss 4465 fos. 39–42, for manuscript copies.
69 See BL Add Mss 4465 fos. 27, 29.