Anglia libera: Protestant liberties and the Hanoverian succession, 1700–14

With the publication of the splendid edition of Harrington’s works, Toland secured his position at the heart of a ‘true commonwealth’ interest. This intimate collaboration with elite Whig politicians led to Toland becoming the leading defender of Protestant liberty. This took immediate form in a vindication of the legitimacy of the Hanoverian succession under the terms of the Act of Settlement 1701. For many ‘commonwealthsmen’ around Europe the act that confirmed the succession of Sophia of Hanover was a republican device to exclude both popery and tyranny. The third Earl of Shaftesbury even wrote to Benjamin Furly in Holland, claiming that his ‘friends’ had been involved in the committee for the legislation. 1 The subtitle of the act, ‘for the further limitation of the crown and better securing the rights and liberties of the subject’, established for many contemporaries its radical ambitions. A later commentator, echoing these points, described the act as ‘the last great statute which restrains the power of the crown’. 2 As a direct response to William III’s speech to Parliament encouraging swift settlement of the succession after the death of the Duke of Gloucester, Parliament set in train the political process that resulted in the act in early March 1701. Despite the aftermath of a bitterly contested General Election, the act was passed without controversy. A contemporary, the Whig William Blathwayt, suggested that Whigs and Tories were collaborating ‘in weakening the Crown’. 3

That an explicitly republican agenda was still tenable during the debates surrounding the act can be seen in works like The limitations for the next foreign successor (1701) that was sometimes (falsely) attributed to Toland. Reasserting the commonplaces of the ‘true Whig’ agenda against corrupt monarchy it argued for a radical reintroduction of the limitations of the ‘original’ bill of rights. Annual parliaments, limitations upon the exercise of prerogative, the
abolition of ‘dependence’ upon the court, parliamentary counsel in the appointment of ministers like the Lord Chancellor and Lord Treasurer, as well as the parliamentary creation of nobility, were amongst the fifteen points of regulation proposed as limitations upon the crown. These conditions ‘would dissolve the monarchy, and reduce it to a commonwealth’. Citing Fortesque alongside a range of other medieval and more contemporary sources, the insistence was that such regulations were part of ancient usage that restrained kings from lapsing into tyranny. Even Moses had ruled with the counsel of limited government. Plato, Aristotle and Tacitus, in distinguishing between the rule of kingship and the degeneracy of tyranny, had determined that legitimate government established the common good over the private interest of the few. As one respondent put it bluntly ‘the drift of it tends to a commonwealth’ and ‘democracy and confusion’. The author claimed to be in favour of monarchy when really ‘he was preaching up the doctrine of Harrington’s Oceana’. Gilbert Burnet commented that the conditions were ‘such extravagant limitations, as should quite change the form of our government, and render the crown titular and precarious’.

Some contemporaries suggested that Toland had penned this piece, either at the request of Robert Harley or Shaftesbury, grasping the opportunity to press for a radical completion of the unfinished work of the 1689 revolution. Nevertheless it is unlikely that Toland wrote the work. A central theme of the Limitations was an implacable hostility to the Hanoverian succession; by mid-1701, however, Toland emerged as the leading defender of the claims of Sophia, Electress of Hanover. Fresh from his editorial labours upon the supposedly regicidal texts of the republicans, Toland turned his literary talents towards not only defending the legitimacy of the Hanoverian succession, but actively propagandising the personal merits of the Electress and her German courts. This was personal as well as political. Toland described the ‘extraordinary veneration and affection I have for the whole family, and which their conspicuous Virtues will put beyond all suspicions of flattery’. By August of 1701, Toland was taking part in the ceremonial presentation of the Act of Settlement to Sophia in Hanover. He became ‘the literary champion of the Protestant Succession’. Accompanying Lord Macclesfield (another friend of Shaftesbury’s), Toland managed to intrude himself into the centre of diplomatic formalities: as he boasted ‘I was the first who had the Honour of kneeling and kissing her hand on account of the Act of Succession’. In return for gifts of medals and portraits of Sophia and the Electoral Prince, Toland gave her a copy of his Anglia libera (1701) a work that was to be translated into Dutch, French and Latin.

This work is compelling evidence of how Toland reinvented republican traditions by becoming the advocate of a limited monarchy. Anglia libera: or the limitation and succession of the Crown of England explained and asserted (1701)
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which set about justifying the act clause by clause, was explicitly written for both British and European readers. Toland sent the work page by page to be translated into French for simultaneous publication. German and Dutch editions followed, published in Hamburg and Rotterdam, reproducing only the first ten sections of the English work that dealt with the specific details of the legal succession. The more discursive commentary on English political tradition was omitted. Through Leibniz there was direct collaboration with Sophia’s court. The Germans had not been unaware of Toland, and his work, since many correspondents sent responses to his political writings. Clearing Toland from association with the radical Limitations, it was established that he had been encouraged to write Anglia libera by several leading figures in the government. Dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle, and presented to William III by Toland himself, the work was represented as an ‘official’ defence of the succession, ‘pour servir d’information tant aux gens du pays qu’aux étrangers’. This was, then, no seditious and marginal composition of a compromising and covert republican.

The doubts entertained by Sophia about her prospects in Britain, had been prompted by the publication of Toland’s earlier editorial labours. George Stepney, envoy to Berlin and Vienna, had reassured her that although the nation had an excessive love for liberty this did not imply a deep disgust for monarchy. The republications of Harrington, Milton and Sidney amongst others, did not herald a return to 1649, as he commented ‘pour le peu que je connois le génie des Anglois, qu’il est nullement porté aux principes Républicains’. Leibniz, one of Sophia’s philosophical and political advisors, reduced republican principles to an opposition to arbitrary power and the establishment of ‘L’empire de la raison’. A variety of correspondents had alerted Leibniz to Toland’s reputation. His judgement on the Life of Milton led him to describe Toland as a man of spirit and learning, if little moderation. It was only ignorant prejudice that led to accusations of atheism. As Leibniz clarified, simply because Toland loved ‘true liberty’ did not make him a dangerous republican: ‘reasonable liberty’, where ‘good law’ constrained both monarch and people, was preferable to a situation where ‘arbitrary power’ was exercised by either. Political circumstance meant that there was little danger of a republic being established in England, because the threat of a transcendent French power meant that it was the best England could do to preserve itself from despotism. Although Leibniz was mildly critical of some of Toland’s views he admired the Flemish translation of Anglia libera. Toland, writing to Shaftesbury in July 1701, described his reception abroad as delightful; ‘I am informed that on my return from Germany I am to have some distinguishing mark of their acknowledgement. They have already put me in all their Gazettes for writing it, and look on me so far to be some sort of ambassador from the people’. Toland acknowledged his ‘duty and gratitude’ to both Shaftesbury
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and Newcastle for helping with the work and its reception. This was a long way from the Middlesex Grand Jury and book burning in Dublin.

_Anglia libera_ had both intellectual and social functions. The work not only projected Toland’s reputation onto a European canvas, but also opened the doors of the Hanoverian court. Both Sophia and her daughter Sophie Charlotte (Queen of Prussia) entertained Toland repeatedly throughout the 1700s. Although Sophia, because of Toland’s poor reputation in England, was discreet about her intimacy with him, nevertheless her correspondence is littered with accounts of their meetings and conversations. At one point Toland suggested he might be tutor to the Electoral Prince, such was his standing.21 Reports of his perambulations with Sophia in the gardens of Herrenhausen led observers to imagine ‘that they were talking of important matters concerning affairs of state and that Her highness took him into great confidences’.

As Leibniz speculated, the conversations were mainly about philosophical and literary curiosities rather than politics, but nevertheless the presentations of medals and other gifts were rewards for his book on the succession.22 Sophia received repeated warnings about Toland’s character and the dangers of intriguing with him. His attempt to ingratiate himself with her by advancing proposals in print for inviting the Electoral Prince to England, backfired when the text was condemned by Parliament, and Sophia had to distance herself by rebuking Toland.23 The Irishman persisted in his attentions, deliberately lodging near the court and passing on gifts and writings from England, at times exploiting unsuspecting collaborators like Spanheim and Archbishop Sharp into his intrigues.24

It is clear, that whether Toland was discoursing with Sophia about the metaphysics of matter and motion, or the nature of the Christian canon, he used his connections to attempt to embroil the Electress in anti-Tory politics. Sophia, although evidently encouraging Toland to discourse on a number of deep metaphysical and theological issues, managed carefully to avoid public political scandal. Although she repeatedly wrote to others confirming her distance from Toland, the evidence suggests she was in contact with him, especially through attendance at the court of her daughter, Sophie Charlotte, Queen of Prussia. Certainly, in many of her letters there is a barely hidden sympathy for Toland who was suffering the calumny of prejudiced clergymen. When Toland was reported to have defended the culture of the cannibals from the charges of the Spanish who had in his view invented such monstrous behaviour to justify their own cruelties, Sophia commented that she was not surprised that ‘poor Toland took the part of the Cannibals, because one day they might possibly be his protectors, given that all Christianity was against him’.25 The Electress’ daughter, Sophie Charlotte, perhaps less concerned with diplomatic niceties, was more tolerant of Toland’s public company, expressing
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disappointment when Toland had failed to visit her court. Evidence suggests that Toland was indiscreet and challenging about matters of politics and religion, sometimes he spoke incautiously like a ‘républicain’. Sophie Charlotte commented that, ‘it’s true that his language is a little free, but I find that he is becoming more and more wise’.

Toland did not moderate his views when walking with queens, yet he was undoubtedly committed to defending the Hanoverian succession. As one diplomatic observer put it Toland presented himself as ‘the greatest and first promoter of the succession, and the man who drew out the deduction of the rights of your E[lectoral] H[ighness]’. Throughout the 1700s and 1710s, Toland claimed he had ‘favour’ with various politicians like Harley who vigorously denied such a mission. Establishing the exact nature of Toland’s political credentials in 1701 is not easy given the shadowy quality of his connections. One thing is certain, Anglia libera was dedicated to the ‘most noble and mighty prince, John, Duke of Newcastle’, although it seems likely that this was omitted from the Dutch and German editions. Newcastle deserved the honour of the dedication because of his ‘inviolable love’ for the ‘liberty of your country’ and the particular zeal for ‘the late settlement of our Crown in the House of Hanover’. Like the Valerii of ancient Rome, nobles such as Newcastle ‘were extremely popular and rever’d, for the mildness of their nature, the easiness of their manners, and the affectionate esteem they paid their Fellow Citizens’. This celebration of aristocratic virtue was a reflection of the elite dimensions of republican political life in the period. Newcastle’s virtue derived from his kinsman Holles, ‘the ablest champion of English liberty, and the sincerest Lover of the true constitution of our Government’. The combination of property and virtue, meant that men like Newcastle had a ‘natural right to share in the government of any place, where they have an interest to secure, and the people such a pledge of their Fidelity’. Newcastle’s virtue was incorruptible. A stern defender of the Revolution and loyal to William III, he would approve of ‘these new limitations to the Crown’ which would preserve and enlarge the liberty that 1689 had restored. As Toland explained, his purpose was show ‘all persons both at Home and Abroad’ that the Parliamentary limitations were ‘agreeable to the principles of justice and the ends of all good government, as well as according to the constant practice of this Kingdom’. It was also designed, importantly, ‘to acquaint the House of Hanover with the true nature of their title’. Anglia libera was then a treatise upon republican kingship.

In Anglia libera Toland plundered many intellectual resources: Locke, Harrington, Cicero, Tacitus, Sallust plus many others were cited to establish ‘the true principles of civil society’. The Lockean premise of his political thought was that ‘men are born in the same condition, and that, when they come to years of

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maturity, they are equally free to dispose of themselves as Reason shall direct them’. These rational individuals incorporated themselves into ‘civil society’ for ‘mutual delights and assistance’ and ‘greater security to their persons and possessions’. For the ‘good of the whole community’ certain rules and laws, ‘the measure and standard of everyman’s actions’ were agreed and exacted by ‘indifferent umpires’. Although legislative power was supreme, it was not arbitrary, but fiduciary. The ‘whole people may call them to account’ if the trust of establishing the ‘security, welfare and felicity’ of the common good was compromised. Arbitrary power was the rule of passion. Such rule, especially in the form of an absolute monarchy, was not really ‘any kind of civil government’ being ‘infinitely worse than the very state of nature’. On the contrary the genius of ‘free governments’ lay in the ability to ‘perfect the Felicity of mankind’. The people were ‘numerous, industrious, sober, wealthy, and martial’, the architecture, agriculture and roads and rivers were ‘equally stately and commodious’. Free states made a balanced, vigorous and thriving society where ‘all orders of men maintain their proper Characters, but the stoutness, neat apparel, and good air of the common people particularly demonstrate their freedom and plenty’. As well as economic and social success, ‘arts, inventions, and learning are universally encourag’d, and in the most flourishing condition’, there was no intolerance directed against the free exercise of religious or philosophical expression.

The principles of ‘civil liberty’ were not the singular focus of Toland’s recommendations in *Anglia libera*. Fundamental to the definition of liberty in a free state was the preservation of ‘liberty of the understanding’. Eliding republican discourses with a Protestant vernacular (citing Harrington) Toland argued that ‘religion it self is not more natural to man, than it is for every Government to have a national religion, or some public and orderly way of worshipping God, under the Allowance, Indowment, and Inspection of the civil magistrate’. The free constitution of the national church was arrayed against the tyranny of popish idolatry and superstition. ‘Liberty of Conscience’ was the premise of civil liberty. Dissidence from the national religion ought not to mean deprivation either in ‘persons or possessions’ for anyone ‘from any privileges in the state to which they have a Right by birth, naturalisation, or otherwise’. As Toland emphasised, the limitations in the Act specified that the monarch must be of the Protestant communion, so by default the commonwealth had a religious framework.

This ‘liberty’ had a history. ‘Great and various’ had been the attempts to ‘ruin it’. Invoking Harringtonian analysis, Toland insisted that the conflict between Kings, clergy, nobility and commons was driven by the material cause of the ‘overballance of property (and consequently of power)’. Now the commons conjured power and authority. The ‘new model’d’ government, however, following Tacitus’ dictum (‘arcanum novi status, Imago Antiqui’),
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retained ‘the image of the old’: it still looked like a monarchy. Toland condemned the tyranny of the Stuarts who had persistently ‘redoubl’d their efforts to grasp at an arbitrary power’. Churchmen played a key role in this tyrannous attempt by infecting ‘the understandings of the people, and ... mak[ing] them eternal slaves by their own concurrence as well as consent’. James II, by breaching the ‘natural relation or original compact between all kings and their subjects’, forfeited his right to ‘regal government’. The ‘free people’ by inviting William to rule, had thereby ‘successfully recover’d the just rights of themselves and their posterity’. Appropriating the language of radical contractarian traditions, Toland insisted that William was chosen by the judgement of the Convention Parliament because of his virtue, which gave him a secure title, for ‘no king can ever be so good as one of their own making; as there is no title equal to their approbation, which is the only divine right of all magistracy, for the voice of the people is the voice of God.’

The Act of Settlement was a framework for preserving ‘liberty’ from the threatened encroachments of ‘a second Restoration’ of popish Stuart Kings. Toland argued that Britain was already a free state. As he explained, ‘For tho we were a free nation before, and that at one time or other we enjoy’d the greatest part of the privileges contain’d in this Act, yet there never was the Time wherein they all at once had the Force of Laws’. The resonance with the idea of a remodelled monarchy found in the editions of Harrington, Milton et al., and Anglia libera is profound. The Act of Settlement was a ‘republican’ measure intended to reinforce ‘liberty’ in the tradition of Magna Charta and the Petition of Right. This reworking of the relationship between kingship and liberty was initiated (according to Toland) by William III’s dedication to the preservation of liberty. As indicated in his speech to Parliament in February 1701, William placed restraints upon prerogative just like Theopompus, King of Sparta, ordained ‘the Ephori, or overseers, shou’d be created at Lacedemon, to be such a restraint upon the Kings there, as the Tribuns are on the Consul at Rome’. Monarchy, as bound by law, was a key part of ‘our present form of government’ thus ‘shou’d never be abolisht’. Although the history of the Stuart monarchy had made men ‘like the Romans to abhor the very Name, or at least despair of having any king that should have no separat interest from the Nation’, even the ‘republicans’ supported the ‘naming’ of Sophia as successor. ‘There was’, proudly exclaimed Toland, ‘not one single person of the real or reputed Republicans in the whole Kingdom who did not heartily concur with his Majesty’s Judgement’. This naming was also received with ‘unanimity and cheerfulness’ in Parliament; the ‘most illustrious order of the English nobility’ were especially zealous.

Just as the regal element was a fundamental part of the constitution, so was the aristocracy. Like the patricians of Rome, and those of Athens, Sparta and Venice, the ‘nobility’ were the leaders of the people in war and ‘their protectors
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and guides in peace’. Citing James Harrington, ‘one of the greatest repub-
licans that ever liv’d in the World’, Toland applauded the ‘nobility’ as leaders
like officers in an army. ‘Gentlemen’ were critical to good government as the
examples of Moses, Lycurgus, Numa, Brutus and the Gracchi ‘who lost their
lives for the people of Rome’, and Cornelia daughter of Scipio, established.
The names to be added to the list were William of Nassau, founder of the
Dutch commonwealth and Sophia. The ideological link was forged between
classical republican traditions and the legitimate status of the contemporary
regime.

By carefully detailing the ‘limitations’ in the settlement Toland claimed that
the measures would halt the pernicious contentions between ‘prerogative and
privilege’ forever. The articles appealed to the political ambitions of Royalists
and Republicans, ‘for the Royalists have still a king, under which magistrate
they thought liberty the most secure: and the Republicans enjoy Liberty
under a King, tho they once thought them things dissociable and scarce to be
reconcil’d’. The distinction between ‘Royalists’ who supported ‘our antient
form of government, consisting of King, Lords and Common’, and those
‘obstinat sticklers for the Divine Right of Monarchy’ was critical for Toland to
be able to detach his understanding of monarchy from Jacobite discourses and
make common ground with more mainstream loyalists. Extending the argu-
ments he had refined in the editions of Harrington and Milton, Toland
reinforced republican commitment to the reformed monarchy: the ‘Republi-
cans are unanimously pleas’d with the new Limitation and succession of the
Crown’. Such men were lovers of ‘liberty under any form or denomination’: it
was ‘not the name of any magistrate, but his power that ought to be chiefly
consider’d. The word king, for example, has no other Force or Right than
what particular Nations are pleas’d to annex to it’. Exploring the variety of
linguistic usage (Caesar, Grand Segnior, Cham, Czar) Toland attempted to
dissociate the word from the thing: ‘kings’ in the commonwealth of Rome
were not only frequently deposed but were ‘usually clients to the nobility’.
Indeed the Roman kings ‘before Tarquin the proud, were but the chief
Magistrates of a free Government’ like the kings of Athens and Sparta.

Applying a form of political nominalism, he observed ‘that in government
the Names are often chang’d when the power is still the same, as at other
times the Power is actually chang’d tho the name remains unalter’d’. The
same titles thus ‘have different significations in different places’. Kings of
Poland were formerly dukes, Venetian magistrates might be called kings or
dukes. Toland was insistent that the word ‘commonwealth’ did not mean a
form of democracy, nor indeed, any particular form of government ‘but an
independent community, where the Common Weal or Good of all indifferent-
ly is design’d and pursu’d, let the Form be what it will’. Admittedly,
republicans had sometimes been hostile to corrupt kingship, but the reforms
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of 1689 meant they were ‘ready to pay all good Kings not only obedience but double Honor’. The argument here prudently detached the ‘form’ from the ‘nature’ of government and in doing so (in a strict sense) implied there was no necessary connection between liberty and specific sorts of political institutions. It was perfectly possible for government by monarchy to produce the conditions for a ‘free state’ when regulated and limited. This programme for republican reform was precisely what Toland advanced in Anglia libera to an audience that included the present and future monarchs.

Toland defended the English tradition: ‘our manner of constituting the chief magistrate is the laudable mean between two most vitious extremes’. Electing a new person on the king’s death would, as the example of Poland suggested, be to expose the nation to uncertainty, confusion and war. Making the succession ‘absolutely hereditary’ would potentially subject the nation to the successive government of ‘tyrants, madmen, fools or idiots’. The English practice limited the succession to ‘a certain line’ thus avoiding the opportunity for contention, but still reserved the ability to ‘transfer the Right of Succession from one line to another’ according to necessity. Citing a number of historical examples, drawn from John Somer’s Exclusionist tract The brief history of the succession, documenting the ‘free choice of the people of England’ from the Saxons to the Tudors, Toland documented the ‘power of Parliaments with relation to the Succession’. The limitations were no innovation, but an application of ‘the fundamental rules of our Constitution to particular persons’. Proposing a veneration for the ‘sacred names’ of heroes like Timolean, Junius Brutus and ‘William the Old Prince of Orange’, Toland wished for a ‘stentorian voice which might reach to all the regions of the world, and call mankind aloud to liberty’! A free England, in liaison with the Dutch republic could lead Europe out of slavery.

Anglia libera was a set piece of propaganda critical to the ‘survival’ of republican traditions of political thinking in the period. Sponsorship by leading noble politicians like Shaftesbury and Newcastle is significant, underscoring the theme of the text itself, that the ‘patricians’ of the nation had an important role in the preservation of virtue and liberty. Even though the work was by the hand of a man responsible for the ‘republican editions’ of the late 1690s, its reception in Germany by the nominated successor, Sophia and her advisors like Leibniz, suggests that the work was both successful and effective. Contrary to commonplace suggestions, republicanism was a serious, and still vigorous, way of conceptualising the task of politics and government in the early eighteenth century. Toland’s propagation of this republicanism was not confined to the publication of such powerful set-pieces but took at least two other forms after 1700. First he advanced his republican arguments in a series of polemical political pamphlets, composed between 1701 and 1705 when his
connections with Shaftesbury and possibly Harley, entangled him in the day-to-day exigencies of party politics. Second, and perhaps more importantly, he also promoted his vision of a republican monarchy by acting, almost single-handedly, as a publicist for Sophia of Hanover.

Dedicated to William III, ‘supreme magistrate of the two most potent and flourishing commonwealths in the universe’, The art of governing by parties (1701) published by Bernard Lintott who also produced Anglia libera, was premised upon Harringtonian conceptions of political counsel. He commended William III, for his ‘unparalleled zeal for Liberty (a thing so unusual with crown’d heads)’. Invoking the duty of counsel, implicit in citizenship of a ‘free government’, Toland explained, ‘I write with in the reach of no Tyrant; but under the wings of a valiant, wise, and just Prince’. The cast of the pamphlet was historical, establishing a narrative of Stuart tyranny, focusing especially on Charles II. Combining the dual ambitions of ‘popery and despotic power’ Charles II had established his tyranny by fomenting division amongst his people, creating an ‘implacable animosity of contending parties’. Both in politics and religion, with the assistance of the ‘peevish and ill-natured ecclesiastics’, the brothers Charles and James attempted to execute their illegal designs. The most powerful solvent of liberty had been the creation of ‘parties’ in religion. Underpinning other differences it was the ‘most successful machine of the conspirators against our government’.

Charles II had divided his people and possessed ‘the Royalists with apprehensions of a commonwealth’ when ‘all the world know that England is under a free Government’. Legislative power was directed by a mutual ‘check and balance’ of King, Lords and Commons, which ‘indifferently designed and pursu’d’ the common ‘good of all’. Although England was a free commonwealth it was ‘ordinarily stil’d a Monarchy because the chief magistrate is call’d a King’. These party fears had been inflamed by the Church, ‘men who then appropriated to themselves the name of the Church of England, but were really the scandal and betrayers of it, mercenary drudges of the court … and tools of popery’. The tyranny of Charles II was systemic, successively corrupting the monarch, the church, the ministry, the judiciary, and the army. By the use of ‘parties, places and pensions’ Charles II had compromised the independence of Parliament and local corporations, raising a ‘sort of civil war, creating quarrels and perpetual animosities in all countys and corporations’. Such corruption of ‘honor, preferments, dependences, or expectations’ appealed to the private interests of all under the cover of the ‘interest of their party’: the ‘good of the public was minded by none or a very few’. To dampen these potentially corrupting factors, Toland recommended the staple reforms of self-denying bills to remove temptation. The only sure remedy was the election of annual parliaments which would make bribery too expensive. An equalisation of representation would also bring vigour back to the independence of
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Parliament. Such measures would establish a ‘sort of rotation among the Gentlemen into this great school of wisdom’. Toland’s commentary upon the corruption of late Stuart politics was intended as a reflection upon implicit dangers in the 1700s. William III was invoked as a reformer of these abuses. Government by ‘party’ was government, ultimately, by the passions of self-interest. Ministers of state and counsellors who applied their passionate ‘reason of state’ in their service to Princes in the form of ‘nauseous and repeated flatteries’ compromised the common good. Quoting the ‘picture of corrupt ministers’, described by Sidney in the Discourses on government, Toland condemned the venality of courts. The consequence of government by ‘party’ was a tragic compromise of liberty; kings became ‘rather the ring-leaders of Petty clubs, than the fathers of great nations’. The only remedy against the ‘mischief of parties’ was a ‘Parliament equally constituted’. The introduction of constitutional reforms like annual elections, a qualifying bill and an extension of the electorate to all those who paid church and poor rates would make a platform for civic virtue. An independent Parliament made of MPs of integrity and moderation would refurbish a declining liberty. This theme of the need for fundamental institutional reform was taken even further in Paradoxes of State (1702), a work Toland composed in collaboration with Shaftesbury. The pamphlet was structured around the last speech of William III to Parliament in December 1701, affirming that when the court was not popish, prerogative and liberty might have a common interest. The political premise was that there was ‘an ill balance still left in the state by the insufficiency of our hasty Bill of Rights’. In this work, the remodelling of monarchical discourse to republican purpose, literally by appropriation of the King’s words, was an effective and powerful political strategy. Lord Somers was reported to have composed the speech; certainly it became an icon of liberty, being translated into Dutch and French to be hung up in frames. Echoing the last phrases of William’s words, the text of Paradoxes insisted that distinctions between parties (Whig and Tory, Williamite and Jacobite) could be collapsed to one division between those of Liberty and Tyranny or England and France. After William had restored, confirmed and enlarged ‘liberty’, ‘all republican pretences were out of doors’ because England was ‘the best, the most equal, and freest commonwealth in the world’. If principles of toleration, frugality and military valour could be preserved then Britain would be protected from both ‘internal corruption’ and ‘external threat’. One of the recurrent themes of these political writings of 1698–1702 was confidence in William III’s kingship, premised as it was on a commitment to ‘liberty’ in civil and religious matters. One of the consequences of this trust was that criticism of the conduct of politics was deflected from structure to conduct. ‘Kingship’ was not the pressing political problem, whereas corrupt courtiers and crafty priests were. Republican criticisms were not directed
against the monarchy, because Toland and Shaftesbury were convinced that the legal and constitutional limitations after 1689, placed effective bridles on illegitimate conduct. They did not then hesitate to criticise limited regal government, but saw no need of so doing: the butt of their assault lay elsewhere. One of the presuppositions of much of Toland’s political writing in this period (and later) was that much civic mischief was made by the misunderstanding of the vocabulary of political discourse. Such misunderstanding was the result not of ignorance but deliberate fraud ‘as they are severally influenc’d by ignorance, prejudice, passion or design’.66 The perpetrators of this deceit (whether courtiers or churchmen) were the targets of attack: anti-courtly and anticlerical polemic then became a fundamental element in the republican programme.

After the death of William III, the accession of Anne changed the emphasis of relations between crown and republican. Toland clearly avoided any direct commentary on the nature of her religious and political commitments: he preferred to look forwards to the Hanoverian option, or backwards to the example of William. While Anne was praised as an Elizabeth restored, the ambiguity of her religious and dynastic commitments were further complicated by her relationship with the dynamics of party politics in the period. The fury of the ‘rage of party’ and the intricate nature of parliamentary influence and political management focused on central issues such as religious toleration and the power of the Church. The continuity of political language with the 1690s, in the case of Toland, can be seen in the publication of his controversial The Memorial of the State of England (1705) an answer to the High Church anxieties that the ‘Church was in danger’. Toland drew a powerful link between the divisions amongst Churchmen and dissenters and disputes about the nature of civil government: low churchmen limited the ‘civil government with law’ while high churchmen stressed ‘the uncontrollable Power of the prince in Temporal affairs’. The dispute then was between liberty and prerogative.67 Fomenters of discord like James Drake had attempted to tar dissenters with ‘being Commonwealthsmen, or for popular government’, when in fact they defended ‘the liberty of the antient English Government’, secured by laws ‘and by divers other excellent regulations’. Such ‘republicans’ were indeed ‘zealous for the House of Hanover’ and Protestant liberties, only those who pursued ‘designs of arbitrary and despotic power’ were fearful.68

Elemental to Toland’s arguments was religious toleration. William III had removed the ‘civil sting’ against liberty of conscience. Contrary to the clerical claims that compulsion in matters of conscience was legitimate, as acts both of religious duty and civil magistracy, Toland insisted that civil authority should take ‘no cognisance of those inward dispositions which are wholly seated in the mind’. It was a mistake to confound ‘persecution for opinions with punishment for crimes’. The nature of human epistemological competence
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meant ‘that as men have different capacities, apprehensions, and opportunities, so they cannot possibly but have different notions of things’. Whether men lived in free or despotic dominions they would have different opinions, consequently ‘a great variety of opinions is a certain sign of a free government, and no wonder, since men are there permitted to live as men, making use of their reasoning faculties, and speaking what they think, as they think what they please’. Answering Augustinian assertions that the civil magistrate had a Christian duty to induce men to a consideration of the truth by the application of penalties, Toland countered that ‘the Question is not if mens opinions be true, or their ceremonies best, but if they be hurtful or not’. All persecution and compulsion was illegitimate whether Protestant or Popish: Calvin, Beza and Rutherford had all defended compulsion. Contrary to the ambitions of those that wanted to make ‘men in all things of one mind’ Toland asserted that a diversity of religions was beneficial to the state. Extending this argument he suggested that the sacramental test be abolished. The debate was au fond a question of civic participation and ‘civil trusts’: all men should be ‘treated, as well as reputed, like good subjects, and admitted without any partial distinction to all offices in the state’. The suggestion that the Test be abrogated was unacceptable to contemporary churchmen. It was however a practical political objective, and as such, indicates the programmatic dimensions of republican politics.

Toland’s Memorial was a plea for ‘moderation’ but one articulated in a republican idiom. All ‘good government’ was ‘(under God) originally from the choice of the people, for whom, and by whom’ it was established. The end of society was the pursuit of the common good regulated by the rule of law. The mixed form of government was one means of achieving this end, and although there was a regal line it was limited by the precept that princes were made ‘for the people, and not people for the use, will or lust of the Prince’. Tyrants and usurpers could be legitimately resisted in the name of ‘free government’. Contrary to those Tory discourses that demanded a ‘servil and blind obedience to the prerogative’, Toland argued that ‘understanding and vertue be the best foundation of the love of liberty’. In private correspondence (probably with Harley), Toland reiterated that he was, ‘for a free government against what is arbitrary and despotic, which is to say, that I prefer standing and indifferent laws to the uncertain and byast will of any Prince’. Acknowledging that there were many different forms of free government, he still preferred ‘our own mixt constitution’. He acknowledged that his editorial efforts of the 1690s combined with his evident ‘ardent love of liberty’ had led some to mischaracterise him as ‘a most violent republican’. Toland’s ambitions were to serve the cause of liberty and his country: he had drawn up various memorials to advise ‘true whigs’ of the incipient dangers to liberty. His terms of employment were simple, he would work for Harley (for
example) ‘on such a foot as is agreeable to my principles, and for the particular benefit of the succession’. These were no idle words, for Toland did indeed work hard for ‘the benefit of the succession’.

For his ‘early and great love to the House of Hanover’, wrote the satirist John Dunton in 1716, Toland merited the reward of ‘place or pension’ from the new regime. Launched into intimacy with the courts at Berlin and Hanover between 1701 and, at least, 1707, Toland was a regular (if sometimes unwelcome) visitor. A variety of correspondence indicates that Toland remained committed to the interest of Sophia’s succession right up until her death. In 1711 when offering his services again to Harley, one of the skills he said he could contribute was good relations with Hanover. An indication of his own hopes was expressed in a letter he wrote (to an anonymous correspondent) upon hearing of Sophia’s death, ‘Lord! How near was my Old woman being a Queen! And your humble servant being at his ease! All is not over yet, and some symptoms are promising enough’. Relations between Hanover and England in the 1700s were delicate and made complex not only by diplomatic matters but by the difficult relationship between Anne and Sophia. The fraught context of party politics in England made over-zealous public commitment to Hanover a dangerous business. Many gentlemen and politicians clearly kept their options open by paying their respects in Hanover. So for example, Sir Justinian Isham who, while studying at the Ducal Academy at Wolfenbuttel, was encouraged by his father to visit: ‘I wou’d have you go to Hanover for some time to make your court there, which I believe may be kindly taken’. Enthusiastic men like Sir Rowland Gwynne attempted to force the issue of Sophia’s status by various political attempts (in collusion with Leibniz and others) to have her invited to England: the attempt in 1706 resulted in Parliamentary condemnation. The issues of Sophia’s naturalisation, the provisions for a Regency, the inclusion of prayers for her in religious services, invitations to England and funding for her court, were all the focus of convoluted political machinations between the Whig and Tory interests during the course of the 1700s.

Toland had nailed his colours to the mast while William III was still alive, with the publication of Reasons for addressing his Majesty to invite into England their highnesses, the Electoral Dowager and the Electoral Prince of Hanover (1702), which was ‘Censur’d by ye Lords 16 May 1702, as a malicious villainous libel’. Prompted by Louis XIV’s recognition of ‘the pretended Prince of Wales’, Toland’s work was an urgent response to (and defence of) the Attainder and Abjuration Acts of January 1702. Although statute had settled the succession, Toland had doubts that ‘the ink and parchment of this law may prove but a small defence’ against Jacobite military threats. ‘For the safety and the benefit of the nation’ both Sophia and Prince George should be accommodated...
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in England. Sophia considered herself ‘as an English woman, speaks our language as well as any of the natives’ and looked forward to coming to her mother country. Bringing over the Prince would allow him to be ‘educated in the language, laws, and the establisht religion of the nation he’s to govern, not by his own will and discretion, but according to certain rules and limitations, whereof he shou’d not remain ignorant till the time they are put into practise’.81

Even as Toland propagandised on behalf of Hanover he was also inscribing its ‘limited’ nature, highlighting the irony and urgency of republican ambitions being attached to the insecurity of a dynastic succession. Indeed in the second part of the work, Toland launched a virulent attack upon the popish tyranny of the Stuart monarchy, which earned Parliamentary censure in Anne’s reign. Abjuration and attainder of the Prince of Wales was necessary to defend ‘liberty and Religion’ and ‘free government’. Since the ‘whole right of succession in this Kingdom is founded on the good will of the people’ it was only just that an oath should be tendered to all to establish their allegiance. Junius Brutus, a ‘watchful guardian of Liberty’, had encouraged the people of Rome to make an ‘act of banishment against all those of the Tarquinian name’. Solon had made it a capital offence ‘for any man to remain an unconcern’d spectator when any sedition shou’d happened in the city’. In Toland’s view the abjuration should be administered to ‘all manner of persons’ including ‘the King’s majesty’ and ‘her Royal Highness the Princess of Denmark’. Hardly calculated to enamour himself to Queen Anne, he commented that ‘Caesar’s wife ought to be unsuspected as well as innocent’.82 The examples of Brutus and Solon underscored the republican dimensions of inviting the people in public acclamation of the legitimate succession.

Having his fingers burnt by Parliamentary condemnation, and cautious of alienating Sophia’s favour by compromising her own political strategies, Toland turned his pen to a more subtle form of pro-Hanoverian discourse. Despite the earlier representation of William III as a virtuous legislator, much republican polemic had been directed against the corruption inherent in royal courts. In reworking these themes, Toland laboured to characterise Sophia, and her court, as a source of virtue and reason. The vehicle for this representation was his Account of the courts of Prussia and Hannover first published in 1705 by John Darby, and also in subsequent editions with supplementary material in 1706 and 1714. A French edition (1706) was published by Thomas Johnson at The Hague with beautiful illustrations. It is worth noting that these publishers (Darby, Baldwin and Johnson) were part of a printing community that produced much of the radical political and heterodox literature of the period. Some insight into this is indicated in the small catalogue appended to Johnson’s elegant edition of the Account advertising his other literary wares which included works by Sidney, Molesworth, Locke, Buchanan and Tyrrell, as well as dangerous works like the Vie de Spinoza and the Turkish spy.83
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Dedicating the work to Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, a ‘worthy Patriot’, and defender of ‘the most divine cause of Liberty’, and co-Regent, Toland took the opportunity again to reiterate and applaud the role such ‘nobles’ took in the defence of ‘free government’. That the work had political intentions was established in the preface where Toland justified his inclusion of the oath of abjuration against James III that proscribed any ‘to write or speak, or to commit any other overt act against the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover’. Similarly Toland, denying charges of flattery, deliberately used the title of ‘Royal Highness’ that was not strictly necessary to describe Sophia’s legitimacy against the claims of the Pretender.

Deliberately constructing a positive account of both the Prussian and Hanoverian governments, Toland presented them as wise and regulated, calculated to preserve both religious and civil liberty. Entire, rather than partial, liberty of conscience, was established and no one suffered civil penalties for religious difference. The Hanoverian court was polite ‘both for civility and decorum’: the clergy neither attended court nor played any role in government. Since there was a ‘complete liberty of conscience’ the clergy tended to be eirenical rather than persecuting. Sophia, ‘long admir’d by all the learned world, as a woman of incomparable knowledge in Divinity, Philosophy, History and the subjects of all sorts of books, of which she has read a prodigious quantity’, was a model of a virtuous ruler. She was without doubt above party distinctions. In the account of the ordinances of the Royal Academy at Berlin, Toland presented a ‘plan of education’ that escaped the dominance of ‘the servile fetters of systems, commonplaces, childish ceremonys, and ridiculous habits’ in favour of the advancement of virtuous knowledge which would produce a ‘learned nobility’. Citing Cicero, Toland applauded this schedule of learning, because the education of youth in the correct principles of virtue was key to the health of the commonwealth. The Electress’ daughter also established a rule of virtue in Prussia. Sophie Charlotte had such a just idea of government that she was known as ‘the republican queen’. Not only was she beautiful but learned too: ‘her reading is infinite, and she is conversant in all manner of subjects; nor is she more admir’d for her inimitable wit, than for her exact knowledge of the most abstruse parts of philosophy’. Combined with such reasonable philosophy, the Prussian militia received favourable compliment, establishing a model close to that recommended in Toland’s *Militia reform’d* (1698). It is important to emphasise that Toland intended to make a presentation that contrasted Hanoverian virtue with popish decadence.

In the anxious days of 1714, when the imminence of the succession became urgent, Toland published not only a new edition of the *Account*, but also a shorter abridgement of the work, *Characters of the Court of Hannover* (1714), which made explicit the alternatives between the regulated, virtuous monarchy
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of Hanover and the pretended, despotic and popish tyranny of the Stuarts. Prudentially, ‘crying fire before the House was burnt down’, Toland defended the Hanoverian succession against charges that the new regime would introduce ‘foreign’ traditions. The ‘limitations’ of the act of settlement would regulate the new government to render the influence of foreign ministers minimal compared with the rule of the French-influenced Pretender. The ‘personal virtues’ of Sophia and George (extracted from the 1705 work) were compared directly with the personal characteristics of the Pretender. In an earlier short pamphlet Toland had justified the creation of the Electoral Prince as a peer of the realm reproducing Queen Anne’s letters patent to establish that the succession had English credentials. In this work Toland pointed out that Sophia was not only a legitimate descendant of James I, but also of Matilda, Henry II’s daughter. Reinforcing this, Sophia had medals struck with images of Matilda for presentation to the British Embassy in 1701. The point, of course, was to establish dynastic continuity. As Toland explained, although ‘I shall ever adhere to sound Revolution principles, yet I am no means fond of frequent revolutions’. The constitution of Britain was a ‘medium between an absolute hereditary, and an absolutely elective, monarchy’. In defining it as an ‘hereditary right, under parliamentary limitations’ Toland was able both to invoke obedience to the succession, while simultaneously reinforcing the regulated and consensual origins of its authority. By April 1714 Toland stepped up his efforts with the publication of The reasons and necessity of the Duke of Cambridge’s coming (1714) which argued that it was both ‘reasonable and necessary’ that the young prince be brought to England. This would be a security for the future and a sign that the ministry was supportive of the Hanoverian succession. The prince (and his children) would become a ‘country-man’, tutored in the constitutional traditions of the nation. He was ‘our Scipio, from whom we expect the rescuing of our liberties’. As a good soldier and virtuous prince ‘his wisdom and prudence make him admired, whilst his affability makes him belov’d’.

The cynosure of this veneration of the Hanoverian monarchy can be found in Toland’s publication of The funeral elogy and character, of Her Royal Highness, the late Princess Sophia in September 1714. A translation of the Latin ‘Eloge’ of Johann Cramer, the text was based upon a reading of the commemorative medal cast upon the Electress’ death, representing ‘Sophia, coelo, recepta’. The starting point for the work was a reiteration of the Act of Settlement and the emphasis of Sophia’s descent from the Plantagenet line of Henry II. Sophia was ‘the most finish’d pattern’ for people of ‘all degrees’ to imitate. Learned, yet cultivated in the ‘female arts’, Sophia established a ‘regulated’ court which was the ‘repository of good sense, virtue and wisdom, as well as the temple of the Loves and Graces’. Whether walking, talking or in correspondence, Sophia combined elegance, wit, ‘politeness and temper’. 
Her attitude to approaching death was stoical: ‘she ever expected death with a countenance as intrepid as her mind; and being thus serenely prepar’d to receive him, her understanding was too much irradiated by Philosophy, to repine at anything that to human nature is incident or unavoidable’. Like Astrea, goddess of Justice, driven from earth by the iniquity of men, the Electress ‘was Sophia no less in effect than in name’. The images of her funeral medal underscored these philosophical accomplishments. Dressed as the goddess of Wisdom, she ascended in apotheosis in the manner of the ‘deification of the old Roman heroines and empresses’. Her soul was in flight to the stars. Surrounding Sophia, three angels carried different branches representing glory, love and honour. In his translation of the explication from Cramer’s Latin, Toland carefully stressed the Protestant quality of Sophia’s heritage while omitting reference to her immediate hereditary titles. She was ‘call’d to the succession of the British throne by the unanimous voice of the people, and the sanction of laws’. Sophia was the embodiment of republican self-mastery, ‘governed by the dictates of reason’. Her restraint of passion and ambition was such ‘that what in duty she was bound to do by the law of nature, she likewise willingly perform’d by the complete victory she had obtained over her own passions’. The crown of stars symbolised an ensign of immortality as reward for her ‘heroic virtue’. This pattern of regal virtue was transmitted to George I whose overwhelming zeal was directed against ‘the long intended project of a universal monarchy’. For George, the pursuit of glory ‘consists in justice’. Committed to liberty of conscience while being a thorough Protestant, George was destined to be the leader of Protestant liberty in Europe. Transforming the Hanoverian monarchy into a critique of illegal kingship, as Toland warned, ‘Hear ye tyrants, and tremble ye persecuters’. George would continue the ‘most happy legacy of the never to be forgotten William’.

Toland composed many other polemical works defending the succession between 1711 and 1714 that reinforced the theme of the Hanoverian monarchy as the most effective means of preserving English liberties and the Protestant interest across Europe. Privately he also campaigned urgently on behalf of Sophia. As he explained to Harley, ‘dry and general expressions will not do, friends must be confirm’d, and enemies put out of hope’. Toland held suspicions that some Tories, like the October club and the dons of Christchurch, were plotting against Hanover: ‘the allegorical health [at Christchurch] in Confusion to philosophy’ was directed at ‘Sophia and her friends’. To this end Toland composed a number of practical ‘memorials’ of advice to Harley, searching for a political means to preserve the succession. The most adventurous suggestion, restating some of the principles of The art of governing by parties, was his scheme for a coalition of ‘moderate Whigs and moderate Tories’ who were ‘true friends to their country’. Offering his insights into the
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state of domestic electoral politics and his standing in Hanover and Holland, Toland hoped to broker a platform for security: as he concluded his letter, ‘delays are dangerous’. Republican politics then had a very practical focus. For Toland the objective was clear, as he explained, ‘my management abroad, my behaviour at home, what I whispered in private, and what I printed to the world, all speak the same language, all tend to the same end’: the preservation of liberty, the succession and public welfare. ‘Civil liberty, religious toleration and the Protestant succession’ were the unalterable and indispensable ambitions of his political service. His support for Hanover was based on his ‘commonwealth’ defence of liberty as ‘a government of laws and not of will’. Importantly these principles were to be pursued against both party politics and the ‘spiritual tyranny’ of ‘Protestant popery’ and the ‘pride and power of priests’. Practical devices such as oaths of allegiance and abjuration would winnow out the corrupt and conspiratorial.

It is a measure of Toland’s commitment to these political values that when Harley’s fidelity to Hanover was compromised by ‘ambiguous words’, Toland ‘utterly renounc’d his friendship’ and launched a powerful print campaign against him. It was, he said, ‘impossible for a soul that’s really fir’d with the love of his country, not to express in the most pathetic terms a detestation for tyranny, a contempt for slaves, an aversion to traytors, and resentment of injur’d trust’. Published in five editions in early February 1714, the Art of restoring superficially examined the ‘piety and probity of General Monck in bringing about the last Restoration’, making the parallel between the events of 1659/1660 and Harley’s involvement in advancing the claims for the restoration of a second Stuart exile. Toland imagined himself living under a republic: England in 1714 was like it had been in 1659, a free state that preserved ‘all our liberties against Universal monarchy’. The public meaning of the historical parallel made between Monck and Harley was significant. Both men were portrayed as betrayers of republican institutions and complicit with tyrannical Stuart kings. Using Clarendon’s history, to display ‘the management’ of the Restoration, Toland meant his readers to draw contemporary connections. Although he did not condemn Monck for the act of restoration, but for the ‘wicked means that conduced to this happy end’, his point was to expose the deceit of Harley. As he spelt out, ‘our present case, ’tis true, is extremely different from what it was in the year 1659, just as different as light is from darkness. We are under the most noble, free, and legal constitution in the universe, whether the Dignity of the Prince, or the ease of the subject be considered’. Unlike the anarchy that confronted Monck, Harley was betraying a state ‘free from priestly tyranny and popular superstition’ where ‘every particular man, and all communities of men, are as secure in the enjoyment of their property and privilege as the Queen is in her Imperial throne’.

In the pamphlet Toland skilfully established a complex series of parallels
between Monck and Harley, describing the gap between the public commitment to the commonwealth/Hanoverian succession in speeches, letters and private negotiations, and the pursuit of restoration. Importantly as part of his strategy for making this comparative narrative, Toland reproduced in extenso the papers of General Monck in defence of the ‘good old cause’. Here the re-deployment of discourses of liberty against ‘tyranny and arbitrary power’ from the 1650s, just like the editions of 1698–1700, could be usefully read as commentaries on the contemporary state of politics, as much as simple historical citation. ‘Sir Roger’ (Robert Harley) was engaging in similar hidden negotiations for ‘making a King’. Just as pictures and prints of Charles II had been distributed in 1660, so images of the Pretender were deliberately put in circulation. Such a restoration ‘would change this admirable constitution into popery and slavery’. To reinforce this unfortunate parallel Toland also published two issues of a more complete edition of Monck’s letters. Accompanying this discovery of Harley’s supposed deceit were a number of political commentaries, which again made the connection between popish conspiracy and the incipient threat of tyranny. The Grand mystery laid open (1714) with its extract from William III’s last speech to Parliament prominently on the title page, exposed the popish plot against civil and religious liberties inspired by corrupt ministers of state: ‘if our liberties be invaded by the keepers of them, of whom shall we seek protection?’ In Acts of Parliament no infallible security to bad peace-makers (1714) Toland used the example of the attainder and execution of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk in the mid-fifteenth century, for making an ‘ignominious peace with France’ at the Treaty of Tours, as a warning to Harley of the punishment he might expect to receive for the disgraceful terms of the Treaty of Utrecht.

This survey of Toland’s activities as an editor of republican works, as a political polemicist, as a private memorialist, and as a propagandist for the Hanoverian succession in the 1700s has intended to establish a number of related points. First, Toland, almost single-handedly (but importantly ultimately as one element of a grouping of elite politicians) imaginatively recast the republican tradition into a form compatible with the exigencies of politics after 1689. Republican languages were not excluded from mainstream political discourse, although they were powerfully stigmatised by clericalist polemics. Toland both recovered a tradition and invented new discourses. The use Toland (and others) made of the tradition of the 1650s was not a simple justification of the regicide, but carefully adapted for the conduct of contemporary politics. ‘King-killing’ after all was a defensive strategy rather than a blueprint for civic conduct. Toland did create a canon of eighteenth-century republican texts, but this was not his primary purpose. He had specific political intentions that were achieved by making a distinction between the central intellectual contents.
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of the republican tradition and the narrower question of institutional form. The ideas of balance, liberty, of free and impartial government, and of political virtue, were reclaimed from association with the regicide of 1649, despite repeated attempts by clergymen to rivet them firmly in the public mind. The key intellectual development was the articulation of ‘limited’ and regulated monarchy encapsulated most effectively in Anglia libera and the writings projecting the ‘republican’ monarchy of Sophia. This process of adaptation certainly made republicanism ‘respectable’. While defences of limited monarchy can justly be described as less controversial than the regicidal arguments of the 1650s, they were just as vital. Toland’s political writings were powerful instruments in developing a working ideology to defend Protestant liberties against the urgent threat of popish tyranny. Killing kings in the 1700s was simply politically inappropriate.109

While regulated monarchy could be seen as a rather docile form of republicanism when compared with the achievements of the 1650s, to the audience of the time we should recall that any deviation from the shibboleths of divine government was tainted as dangerous subversion. De jure divino discourses were persistent and strong. The reinvention of republican ideas within the context of these divine arguments was difficult: making them acceptable was a major tactical achievement. Scholars have confidently argued that John Locke’s contractarian account of the origins of government and the defence of 1689 was too radical for the pragmatic needs of Whig politics in the eighteenth century, yet if we compare the success of Toland’s intrusion of a defence of ‘limited’ monarchy right into the heart of the Hanoverian court it may be possible to rethink the ‘radical’ nature of republican politics in the period.

A key practical difficulty for republicans like Toland, Shaftesbury and Molesworth in the 1700s was the dynastic insecurity of the platform for their vision of politics. Without a Protestant monarchy all prospects of liberty and virtue were damned. Anglia libera was reliant upon the successful coronation of Sophia or George rather than the restoration of James. Advancing the claims of Sophia may have been a respectable strategy, it was also a successful manoeuvre. After the safe accession of George I, men like Molesworth and Toland had not only the security of a ‘free state’ but also a political platform for the articulation of commonwealth reforms. With the collateral of George I’s defeat of the Jacobite challenge, writers like Toland turned their attentions not simply to the business of constructing defensive ideologies about the regulation of regal government, but also to the positive business of establishing a free and virtuous community. None of these republican aspirations took the form of advancing antimonarchical constitutional innovations, but, especially in defending virtue, reason and ‘liberty of conscience’, focused upon reforming the corruption of the Church. Underpinning the politics of the war of
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reason on priestcraft was a series of very specific legal, cultural and political ambitions that became part of a programme for republican politicians between 1716 and 1721.

NOTES

1 Foster Letters pp. 97, 103
4 Limitations for the next foreign successor (1701) pp. 11–13.
7 Ibid. p. 25.
9 See de Miranda ‘Shaftesbury’ pp. 196–197; Tolandiana pp. 81–82.
10 Vindicius Liberius p. 194.
12 Toland An account of the courts of Hannover and Prussia (1705) p. 69.
13 Klopp 2, p. 266.
14 See Tolandiana pp. 78–80; Anglia Libera, oder Das Freye Engelland (Hamburg, 1701), and Engelant, Vrygemaakt. Of De Bepaling en Successie Der Kroon Verklaart (Rotterdam: Barent Bos, 1701).
15 Klopp 2 p. 265.
16 Klopp 2 p. 209.
17 Klopp 2 p. 276.
19 Klopp 2 p. 288.
20 PRO 30/24/20 Parts 1–2 fo. 28.
21 Klopp 2 p. 318.
22 Klopp 2 p. 333.
23 Klopp 2 p. 341.
24 Klopp 2 pp. 357–358; Toland passed on Sharp’s Sermon on the Coronation of Queen Anne, as well as letters from Spanheim and Sir Robert Clayton.
25 Klopp 2 p. 376.
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27 Ibid. p. 20.
28 Doebner Briefe p. 22.
30 Kemble State papers pp. 463, 465, 466, 467.
31 Anglia Libera ‘Dedication’.
32 Ibid. pp. 1–2.
33 Ibid. pp. 4–5.
34 Ibid. p. 8.
36 Ibid. p. 15.
37 Ibid. pp. 98–100.
38 Ibid. p. 105.
39 Ibid. p. 19.
41 Ibid. pp. 30–32.
42 Ibid. pp. 44, 45–46.
46 Ibid. pp. 85–86.
50 Ibid. pp. 110–125, 126; see also 139.
51 Ibid. p. 188.
52 The art of governing by parties (1701), Dedication pp. i–ii, iv [unpaginated].
53 Art p. 4.
54 Ibid. p. 28.
57 Ibid. pp. 61–64, 70–71, 72.
60 Ibid. p. 135.
62 Paradoxes of State (1702) i–2. William III’s speech can be found in W. Cobbett
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63 See Parliamentary history V p. 1329.
64 Paradoxes pp. 4–5.
65 Ibid. p. 19.
66 The memorial of the state of England (1705) ‘To the reader’ A2.
67 Memorial pp. 11–13.
68 Ibid. pp. 34–35.
69 Ibid. pp. 43–44.
71 Ibid. pp. 76–78, 87.
72 Collections 2 p. 338.
73 Ibid. p. 350.
74 Tolandiana p. 197.
75 Collections 2 pp. 405–408.
76 Ibid. pp. 431–432.
80 See mss note BL copy of Reasons for addressing his Majesty (1702) call-mark 8135 b 54.
81 Reasons for addressing his Majesty pp. 1, 3, 4.
83 See Relation des cours de Prusse et Hannovre (A La Haye, Thomas Johnson, 1706).
85 Ibid. Preface, p. xii; the Appendix reproduces the oath at pp. 81–87.
88 Ibid. pp. 10–11, 23–24, 32–33.
91 Characters of the Court of Hannover (1714) pp. 3, 10, 12–17.
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92 See Toland Her Majesty's reasons for creating the Electoral Prince of Hanover a Peer of this Realm (1712) pp. 6, 7, 8.
93 Reasons (1714) pp. 4, 6, 12, 39.
94 Funeral pp. viii, 4–5, 6.
95 Ibid. p. 9.
96 Ibid. compare p. 10 with the Latin of p. 32.
97 Ibid. pp. 11–12, 13.
98 Ibid. pp. 16, 18, 19, 22.
100 Ibid. p. 410.
102 Ibid. p. 222
103 Ibid. pp. 227–228.
105 Ibid. p. 421.
106 Art of Restoring (1714) pp. 12, 13.
108 The Grand Mystery laid open (1714) p. 38.