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Horace Walpole and John Giles Eckardt: A study of 'political' patronage and a forgotten artist

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Horace Walpole and John Giles Eckardt: A study of 'political' patronage and a forgotten artist

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Contents

Abstract

As the first major study of John Giles Eckardt (1720-1779), this dissertation will attempt to highlight the career of an artist who has been largely forgotten.

It will explore his success as a portrait painter for Horace Walpole, and hypothesize his downfall as one of the last foreign imports.

Its main point of inquiry will question: how can Eckardt be seen as a political artist?

John Eckardt, *Horace Walpole*, (National Portrait Gallery, London, 1754)

Introduction

John Giles Eckardt[1] is a forgotten artist. By the middle years of George II's reign, he was however, one of the prominent portrait painters in England. In a period where Horace Walpole suggested there to be 2000 portrait artists in London,[2] Eckardt's career stood out as noteworthy and striking. Whilst, the remainder of these artists fought for any possible commission they could obtain, Eckardt instead seems to have relied principally on one client. With a mass of individuals to choose from, it was Eckardt that Horace Walpole decided to support. Over the period of twenty years, Eckardt assumed a 'traditional' form of patronage with Walpole: receiving support, friendship, and over 50 commissions from the patron and his network of friends.[3] At the turn of the 18th century, however, Eckardt seems to have reached the peak of his career, and for reasons that this dissertation will explore, falls out of favour.

This dissertation will examine Eckardt's rise and fall. Central to his life and work was his principal patron, Horace Walpole. Emphasis will therefore be placed on Horace Walpole and the Gothic House he created in Twickenham, Strawberry Hill (fig.6), where 23 of Eckardt's portraits hung (Appendix 1). Moreover, I will suggest the reasons for Eckardt's sudden decline in the 1760s, contextualising the end of his career with the changing conditions of British patronage. As such, it will situate Eckardt as one of the last foreign portraitists who came to Britain to fill the void of indigenous practitioners.

As its main point of inquiry, this dissertation will address the recurring theme of politics in Eckardt's career. By painting portraits for Horace Walpole, son of the first Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole, Eckardt's success was made by commissions for Whig sitters. Was he, in his perceived bias towards Walpole and those within the Whig party, merely subject to patterns of patronage, or can he be seen in some way a consciously 'Whig artist'? This problem will be addressed, showing how Eckardt's tractability as a portrait copyist allowed Walpole to align himself with past collections of political power and refined 'taste.' Important new biographical research will also

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[1] Eckardt's name has been variously spelt, and for reasons that are unclear it has become more common
[2] Shawe-Taylor, D., *The Georgians: Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and Society* (London, 1990), 9; Walpole, H., *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence,* vol.15 (1937-83), 47.
[3] When referring to patronage in this essay, my definition will follow this statement describing a patrons direct commissioning of works of art and on-going support.

reposition Eckardt and raise further questions about the mutable status of the painter in 18th century Britain.

a) Literature Review

It has been the consensus of art historians that

> excepting Hogarth, the first half of the eighteenth century was a very undistinguished period in British art; including Hogarth, it was an unsettled, trying, and disappointing time for British connoisseurship and patronage.[4]

As a consequence, artists such as Eckardt have been overlooked or considered 'dim'.[5] When we think of them at all, it is in Hogarth's terms – "as plodding imitators of Kneller or Van Loo, or slaves to decadent Italian and French fashions, or knavish marketers of fakes and copies to gullible 'connoisseurs'."[6] Indeed, Ellis Waterhouse's brief description of Eckardt in the *Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century British Painters*[7], describes the artist as deriving 'entirely from Van Loo.'[8]

Ironically, such a statement holds more truth in Eckardt's case: he was, in fact, a principle assistant to Van Loo at the beginning of his career, and also went on to copy many of his works. However, Eckardt's brief history in Waterhouse's text, and his generalized alignment to Van Loo, does little to highlight his significant contribution towards what most social historians have seen as a "prosperous, innovative and self-confident age."[9] The purpose of this dissertation, therefore, sets out to challenge this imposition of 18th-century artists, by looking at the unfamiliar and arguably significant case study of John Giles Eckardt.

To date, there is almost no contemporary literature on Eckardt. The most conclusive account of the artist has been formed by Deborah Graham-Vernon in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.[10] Whilst Graham-Vernon's description of the artist is biographical, this dissertation will aim to see Eckardt in a more critical manner.

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[4] Lippincott, L., *Selling Art in Georgian London: The Rise of Arthur Pond,* (London, 1983), 3.
[5] Lippincott 1983: 3.
[6] Lippincott 1983: 3.
[7] Waterhouse, D., *The Dictionary of British 18th Century Painters in Oils and Crayons,* (Suffolk, 1981), 117.
[8] Waterhouse 1981: 117.
[9] Lippincott 1983: 3.
[10] Graham-Vernon, D.,'Eccardt, John Giles (1711–1779), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed. (Oxford University Press, Sept 2004), accessed [12/04/2015]

This has been aided by extensive archival research into Eckardt's career. In visiting the Heinz Archive & Library (National Portrait Gallery) and the Witt & Conway Libraries (The Courtauld institute), these archives and their cataloguing of Eckardt's portraits, of which cumulatively 50 can be found, has facilitated my understanding of Eckardt's close patronage to Walpole and Whig sitters. In obtaining Eckardt's will and marriage certificate from the Heinz Archive, this dissertation will consider Eckardt and the significance of his marriage. Whilst the National Portrait Gallery own 6 of his portraits, a number of posthumous prints and original portraits are also in the Royal Collection.[11]

Fortunately for those studying Eckardt, Walpole was careful to catalogue his collection: 'with view to their future dispersion.'[12] Just like the older collections from which the objects and works of art had been derived or imitated from, Walpole hoped that that they too would be dispersed to future collectors. Thus, in *A Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole[13]*, he made a detailed account of his artworks, objects, and curiosities that he had collected for those that would eventually receive them. Regarding 'himself as the successor to a great English collecting tradition,'[14] Walpole's intentions were to uphold the posterity of his collection and elevate his status as an 18th-century patron and connoisseur. In doing so, he also ensured the posterity of Eckardt's 23 portraits that he painted for Strawberry Hill House, which has allowed this studies cataloguing of Eckardt's works at Strawberry Hill (Appendix 1).

Walpole's letters, compiled in Wilmarth Lewis's forty-eight volume collection,[15] display a dozen references to the artist (Appendix 3), often discussing a recent commission and its impending completion. Furthermore, much can be obtained from George Vertue's *Note Books,[16]* which Horace Walpole used for his *Anecdotes of Painting.[17]*

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http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8434

[11] It should be noted that the Royal Library have catalogued a text written by Eckardt, titled *Do Origine Germanorum.* However upon inspecting the text, it was written by a George Eccardi, and thus miscataloged. http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/1021610/de-origine-germanorum

[12] Walpole, H., *Aedes Strawberrianae* (London, 1842), preface.

[13] Walpole, H., *A Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole* (Strawberry Hill Press, 1774)

[14] Snodin, M., 'Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill' (London: V & A, 2009),17.

[15] Walpole, H., *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence,* ed. Lewis, W.S., 48 vols. (Yale University Press, 1937-83)

[16] Vertue, G., *Note books,* vol.3 , *Walpole Society* (Oxford, 1934), 110, 127, 132.

[17] Walpole, H., *Anecdotes of painting in England,* vols.3 (London, 1798)

b) Methodology

Lippincott's *Selling Art in Georgian London: The Rise of Arthur Pond,*[18] has offered an instructive parallel in my study of Eckardt. In her study of Arthur Pond, an artists who has also been widely ignored, Lippincott outlines coherent sets of questions that should be addressed:

> the problems concerning an individual's recruitment into a group, his training, employment, and patrons, are germane to artists, writers, or members of any profession. Moving beyond consideration of the individual, it would be useful to analyse the internal organization of the group itself, and determine its points of contact with other groups and the outside world. Thus one would like to know how and why a young man became an artist and the reasons for his eventual success or failure. His relationships, formal or informal, with other artists and with patrons should be examined and his standing in the community at large should be established.[19]

By looking at Eckardt's 'recruitment into a group, his training, employment, and patrons,' this study will explore the influence of his master Jean-Baptiste Van Loo, his Eckardt's status as a foreign artist, and the complexities of his patronage with Horace Walpole. In acknowledging Eckardt's involvement with Walpole's family and Whig politicians, it will address how other artists were affected by patronage, and whether or not they engaged with politics as Eckardt did.

By using Lippincott's inquiries of 'relevant sociological and historical issues,'[20] this dissertation will adopt a 'social historical' methodology. The art historian T.J. Clarke has been central to forming this methodology. Similar to Lippincott, Clark argues the importance of exploring 'a range of relevant social relations between artists, artworks and institutions, as well as to political arguments and economic conflicts without giving explanatory priority to any one of them.'[21] The present dissertation will follow this approach, exploring the political contexts surrounding Eckardt's career, whilst also highlighting his wealth as an important factor in understanding the artist. Using Lippincott and T.J.Clark, the methodological approach of this dissertation therefore stands in contrast to Clive Bell's formalist approach, which states that art is independent from historical or social contexts: 'to appreciate a work of art we need

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[18] Lippincott 1983.
[19] Lippincott 1983: 6.
[20] Lippincott 1983: 7.
[21] Hatt, M., and Klonk, C., *Art History: A Critical Introduction to its Methods* (Manchester, 2006), 134.

bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs, no familiarity with its emotions.'[22]

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[22] Clive, B., *Art* (unpaginated eBook Project Gutenberg, 2005).

1. John Eckardt and Horace Walpole

a) Rising to fashion as a foreign artist

John Eckardt was one in a long line of Continental painters who came to Britain to work. Born in Darmstadt, Germany, on 25th June 1711,[23] Eckardt immigrated to London in 1740. As a young artist, Eckardt hoped to launch his career in the 'metropolis of the moment.'[24] Like for many other foreigners in the 18th-century, London had become a 'cultural magnet, drawing to it an astonishing number of artists and musicians.'[25] With a burgeoning economy, imported painters were 'conscious of its rising status and eager to clothe its naked wealth in the elegant and respectable garments of good taste.'[26]

On arrival, artists such as Eckardt would have been aware of the previous success that foreigners had achieved in England. As Smart posits:

> from the time of Holbein onwards, painting in England had been dominated by the presence of foreign artists who had found no great difficulty, on account of the general ineffectualness of indigenous competition, in establishing themselves in their adopted country as the most esteemed painters of their day.[27]

The prestige enjoyed by foreign artists prior to Eckardt, was most prominently reflected in the successive knighthoods bestowed upon Van Dyck, Lely, and Kneller. Eckardt came to London at a time when foreign artists were greatly favoured by English patrons.

During the time of Eckardt's arrival in England, it was the French Jean Baptiste Van Loo who was most in favour. So popular was the artist that, according to Rouquet, 'crowds of coaches flocked to Mr. van Loo's door, for several weeks after his arrival, just as they crowd the playhouse.'[28]In such high demand, Van Loo adopted Sir Godfrey Kneller's model of hiring a team of assistants to help with his overwhelming number of

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[23] 'Eccardt, John Giles (1711–1779),' http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8434 (12/04/2015)
[24] Brewer, J., *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (Bath, 1997), xxv.
[25] Brewer 1997: xxv.
[26] Brewer 1997: xxv.
[27] Smart 1992: 42.
[28] Rouquet 1970: 37.

commissions. We are told in Vertue's notebooks that Eckardt was one of these assistants.[29]

In October 1742, Van Loo departed from Britain, leaving portraits 'unfinished to be dressed by his men.'[30] Eckardt and another assistant named Root, 'remained here and set up business for themselves.'[31] Working in partnership, Eckardt was said to have painted the faces of sitters, whilst Root painted the drapery. However, it is not known how long these two remained in partnership. If Root was working with Eckardt during his later patronage with Walpole, we can assume that Eckardt was the principal painter. Walpole never mentions Root in relation to Eckardt and all of the portraits are attributed to Eckardt alone. Furthermore, as Smart has argued:

> it would be a mistake to suppose that Van Haecken was in any way responsible for the conception and design of Ramsay's major works, just as it would be no less absurd to attribute to Peter Toms, the faithful assistant of Sir Joshua Reynolds, any such part in Reynolds's compositions.[32]

Having trained under Vanloo, Eckardt's status as a painter would have been greatly elevated. With few organized art schools at this time, Eckardt would have received an invaluable experience with one of most highly rated portrait painters. Eckardt and Root seemed to have taken advantage of this, working with 'some success'[33] after their master's departure. However, little is known before Eckardt's patronage with Walpole in 1746.

The year of 1746 can be seen as the turning point in Eckardt's career. It is during this time that the artist became acquainted with the obsessive collector, eccentric man of letters, creator of the neo-gothic Strawberry Hill, and scion of a great Whig dynasty: Horace Walpole. This is evident in his first group of commissions for Walpole and the first reference of Eckardt to in a letter from Horace Walpole to Henry Seymour Conway.[34] Furthermore, an advertisement in October 1746 informed Vertue that Eckardt had removed from his lodgings in Covent Garden, to Van Loo's residence;[35] a sign of his increasingly fashionable status. Additionally, around this time Eckardt also

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[29] Vertue 1934: 110.
[30] Vertue 1934: 110.
[31] Vertue 1934: 110.
[32] Smart 1992: 62.
[33] Vertue 1934: 110.
[34] *Horace Walpole's Correspondence:* Vol. 37, pg.234. From Conway, Sunday 6 April 1746
[35] Vertue 1934: 127.

married Susannah Duhamel, daughter of a watchmaker, and went on to have a son named Jacob and a daughter named Susannah a few years later.

Alistair Smart, one of the few art historians to have recognised Eckardt's career, positioned the artist as one of 'the more successful'[36] rivals to Allen Ramsay in the 1750s. However, in comparison to artists such as Van Loo, Andrea Soldi, and Hogarth, Smart has recognized Eckardt as a 'secondary figure,'[37] amongst the likes of Thomas Gibson, Arthur Pond, John Robinson and Hamlet Winstanley.[38]

Smart's positioning of Eckardt seems appropriate. Eckardt was an artist who made his career out of imitating and appropriating from past styles. In his production of portraits, Eckardt therefore could have been accused of substituting a true portrait for what has aptly been called a 'social mask' – a superficial although accurate enough likeness of the sitter, often enhanced by a 'stock attitude' taken from an extensive repertoire of poses. [39] Whilst Ramsay often appropriated iconography from other artists, he would make 'significant revisions.'[40] Eckardt's portraits on the other hand, often bore uncanny resemblances to their originals (fig.1,2,3,4).

It should be noted here however, that to view these works by Eckardt as inferior due to their nature as copies would be a mistake. Contemporary perspective has often assumed that

> reproductions create two arenas of taste for visual art, one true and authentic, which appreciates the singularity of the original, the other false and fake, which is satisfied with a simulacrum.[41]

As Eckardt's portraits clearly show, the line between what was 'true and authentic' in the 18th century became significantly blurred. Walpole's house itself was seen as a 'random melange of Gothic ornament from different periods and places.'[42] Furthermore, the increasing popularity of the print market and mezzotint copies of original paintings highlighted the presence of copying and imitation. Thus, the realm of the reproduction in this era was 'not inevitably inferior but simply different.'[43]

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[36] Smart 1992: 43.
[37] Smart 1992: 43.
[38] Smart 1992: 43.
[39] Smart 1992: 47.
[40] Smart 1992: 62.
[41] Brewer 1997: 460.
[42] Reeve, M., 'Gothic Architecture, Sexuality, and License at Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill,' *The Art Bulletin,* vol.95, no. 3 (2013), 423.
[43] Brewer 1997: 460.

b) Horace Walpole Patronage

Most importantly, Smart's suggestion of Eckardt rivalling Ramsay would have been based on his patronage with Horace Walpole. The fact, that Eckardt posed a threat through his patronage with Walpole alone, highlights the significance of Walpole as a patron. Eckardt was an artist fortunate enough to receive seemingly unrequited support by this individual, assuming a similar model of traditional patronage that a monarch would have offered, such as the case with Charles I and Van Dyck. Over the course of twenty years, Walpole would support Eckardt through a number of commissions that would effectively make the painter a one-patron artist.

As a foreign artist having trained under Van Loo, Eckardt was an attractive proposition in comparison to a native artist such as Allen Ramsay or Thomas Hudson. Moreover, for reasons that will be further explored, Walpole was drawn to Eckardt's tractability as an artist. For Walpole alone, Eckardt painted in the manner of Rubens, Van Dyck, and Watteau, and made copies not only after Van Loo but also of Holbein and Sir Peter Lely. The sitters of these portraits represented Horace Walpole's family and closest group of friends, including a portrait of Walpole himself. For his family, Eckardt painted portraits of Horace's father and mother (fig.5), his half-sister Lady Catherine Maria Walpole and her husband Charles Churchill (fig.4), and others such as his cousin Henry Seymour Conway. For his friends, he painted Richard Bentley (fig.2) who was member of his 'committee of taste', the poet Thomas Gray (fig.3), the theologian Dr Conyers Middleton (fig.8), the playwright Sir Charles Hanbury Williams (fig. 9), and many others.

Seven of these works, commissioned between 1746 and 1755, were placed in the Blue Bedroom chamber (Appendix 1) forming a homogenous assemble that would have associated itself with a 'family portrait gallery.' Each portrait was framed (apart from his parents), in black and gold frames 'carved after those to Lombard's prints from Van Dyck, but with emblems particular to each person.'[44] Walpole further highlighted that Bentley's, Gray's, and his own portrait all appeared in the style of Van Dyck, whilst Conway's and Maria Walpole's (placed on either side of the door), were modelled on Watteau and Rubens.[45]

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[44] Walpole 1774: 38.
[45] Walpole 1774: 37-8.

Having been on the Grand Tour, Walpole would have seen many majestic collections of family portraits. The concept of copying a portrait gallery may have also influenced Walpole. In 1553, Cosimo de Medici so greatly admired the collection of Paolo Giovio that he commissioned the artist Crisofano dell'Altisimo to copy his entire collection of portraits. In the seventeenth century, Cardinal Leopoldo de Medici gave this collection of copies to what eventually became the Uffizi collection of artists' self-portraits.[46] Shearer West has therefore argued that even though 'many of these portraits were copies, rather than original works, suggests that artistic authority was not a major concern.'[47]

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[46] West, S., *Portraiture* (Oxford, 2004), 45.
[47] West 2004: 45.

2. 18th- century Politics

In William Blackstone's magisterial *Commentaries on the Laws of England*[48], published between 1765 and 1769, the judge termed the expression; 'a polite and commercial people.'[49] Acknowledging this, Paul Langford has argued that Blackstone's quote suggests 'something of a consensus about the central characteristics of mid-18th century England.'[50] So strong was this notion of polite society, that Langford has argued its presence was most felt in eighteenth century culture: where 'politeness' was 'stamped on the country houses and portraits which for many provide the most vivid introduction to the culture of the eighteenth century.'[51] For Langford, portraits and the country houses they inhabited, were evocations of fanciful taste that conveyed the elegance and politeness of the patron.

In contrast to Langford, Jeremy Black has suggested a more political response to 18th-century culture. Subverting Langford's reasoning, Black posits: 'societies that place an emphasis on order are generally, at least in part, concerned with disorder.'[52] This can be seen in the seventeenth century, 'with its civil conflicts, religious strife and social uncertainty.'[53] Instead of projecting conflict and instability however, culture suggested otherwise. For example, portraits by seventeenth century masters such as Van Dyck, conveyed values of peace, harmony and dynastic fruitfulness. The eighteenth century inherited this deceptive nature in their pursuit of aesthetics. Whilst there was 'a strong emphasis on the virtue, as well as value, of restraint and balance,'[54] the nation remained rooted in all three of the opprobrium that was present in the seventeenth century.[55] Thus Black has argued that

> any stress on England as a polite society, a happy symbiosis of aristocratic ease and elegance with bourgeois energy, a balanced constitution sustaining those with property in liberty, has to address powerful elements of instability and division.[56]

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[48] Blackstone, W., ed. Morrison, W., *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 4 vols. (London, 2001),
[49] Blackstone 2001: 326; from Langford, P., *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford, 1992)*,* 1.
[50] Langford 1992: 1.
[51] Langford 1992: 1.
[52] Black, J., *A Subject For Taste,* (London, 2005), 19.
[53] Black 2005: 19.
[54] Black 2005: 19.
[55] Black 2005: 19.
[56] Black 2005:20.

Many of Eckardt's portraits at Strawberry Hill suggest a happy encomium of elegance and 'politeness.' In imitating artists such as Van Dyck, they stressed the elegance of Walpole's family and circle of friends. For example, Eckardt's portrait of *Horace Walpole* (fig.1), derived from *Simon Vouet* by Van Dyck, gives the sitter 'an air and effect of the works of Van Dyck.'[57]

Arguably however, like their purpose in the reign of Charles I, these portraits were more 'political in intention than aesthetic.'[58] As Clinton Lawrence has argued:

> Charles did not write a justification for Kingship like his father. Instead he presented it in magnificent displays. This distinction is reflected in Charles' complex and nuanced representation in portraiture.[59]

Similarly, in drawing a parallel between Charles I's and Horace Walpole's collection of portraits, it can be argued that Walpole used portraiture as a way of defending his political standing in society. Eckardt's role as an artist was arguably more political than its appropriation of 'polite' Van Dyck dress would suggest.

During the time of Eckardt's career, England was riven by conflict between two organized political parties, the Whigs and the Tories. First formed after the civil war, factions fractionalized during the Exclusion Crisis of 1679-81, when the Whig party attempted to exclude Charles II's Catholic brother from staking claim to the throne. Whilst the Whigs defended militant Protestantism against the encroachments of the 'Popery' and its Catholicism, the Tories upheld sanctified monarchy and defended the high Church of England. Political differences were therefore rooted in religious disagreement, which consequently led to a broadening of political power from the monarchy. No longer ruled under an autonomous ruler or religion, both parties saw themselves as guardians of liberty and religion. In reality they were 'better characterised by their defence of existing order than by any radicalism.'[60] To state that, 'English political and legal institutions favoured the propertied and privileged, was truistic.'[61] Whilst wealth and nobility united them, to exchange 'politeness' with one another

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[57] Smart 1992: 63.
[58] Thomas, K., 'Dressed to Impress,' [accessed 02/04/15] http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/feb/14/anthony-van-dyck-portrait-painting
[59] Lawrence, C., 'Charles I and Anthony Van Dyck Portraiture: Images of Authority and Masculinity,' PhD. Thesis (University of Lethbridge, 2013),1.
[60] Monod, P., 'Painters and Party Politics in England 1714-1760,'*Eighteenth-Century Studies,* Vol.26, 3 (Spring, 1993), 369.
[61] Porter, R., *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1990), 142.

would have been questionable. Instead, Roy Porter has argued that politicians 'tore at each other's throats like fighting cocks.'[62]

Horace Walpole, son of the first Prime Minister Robert Walpole, was a 'Whig to the backbone.'[63] Proudly extolling the virtues that his father had established, he believed in

> the principles of the constitution as it was settled at the revolution, the best form of government in the world that I know of, and which made us a free people, a rich people, and a victorious people, by diffusing liberty, protecting property, and encouraging commerce.[64]

For Whigs, the principle of 'liberty' and freedom were at the heart of their ideologies. A copy of the Magna Carta and warrant for Charles I's execution lay on either side of Walpole's bed as a reminder of their emancipation.[65] Whilst his father, Robert Walpole, was the epitome of the successful Whig, Horace's 'political career was erratic.'[66] He was never at the centre of power, but was 'spasmodically influential behind the scenes.'[67] He took full advantage of his political situation; his father's gift of three lucrative sinecures, together worth some £2,000 annually, gave him a substantial income for the remainder of his life.

In light of such political division, Black has argued that political antagonism affected every aspect of life, 'from government policy about trade to church music and the patronage of painters.'[68] He asserts that

> the cultural world was not separate to that of political strife. This was true of individual careers, the response to individual works, and the willingness with which political issues were presented in terms of cultural commitment.[69]

Despite Black's argument, scholarship concerning the relationship between politics and 18th century British painting have on the whole been ignored. Art historians

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[62] Porter 1990: 106.
[63] Lewis 1961: 72.
[64] *Horace Walpole's Correspondence:* Walpole to Mason, vol.21 (2 feb. 1784), 72.
[65] Lewis 1961: 73.
[66] Lewis 1961: 72.
[67] Lewis 1961:72.
[68] Brewer 1997: xxviii.
[69] Black 2005: 8

have tended to see the work of painters as being free from party labels.[70]Two notable exceptions to this have been Paul Monod and Shearer West, who have both explored the consequences of political conflict in 18th-century art.

In Paul Monod's *Painters and Party Politics in England, 1714-1760,[71]* the author argues that politics 'imposed a constraining context, a set of boundaries within which they had to work.'[72] Whilst Monod confronts the problematic issue of whether or not portraits reflected ideologies of a particular party, West, in her article on *Patronage and Power: The Role of the Portrait in eighteenth-century England* is more cautious in tackling this debate, stating that, 'such categories cannot be accepted without qualification.'[73] Furthermore, West's article highlights how 'the portrait was, like the country house itself, both a manifestation and a symbol of power.'[74] In emphasising patrons desires to commission portraits of power, West argues that 'the setting in which portraits were hung is an essential consideration in the evaluation of what they projected and how they were meant to be perceived.'[75]

Considering West and Monod's articles, this dissertation will also explore the influence of politics in 18th-century portraiture; specifically through the case study of John Eckardt. In the context of Eckardt's patron and his political milieu, the next chapter will present evidence to suggest how Eckardt and his portraits were closely tied to Whig politics. In accordance to Black's argument, it will offer an alternative view of 18th-century 'polite' society, by highlighting the great political divide that lay underneath its surface. Monod has argued that prior miscalculation of portraits by artists such as Eckardt, 'is understandable, because the relationship of politics to painting was elusive.'[76] Eckardt's portraits, often in the manner of Van Dyck, contain a complex set of associations; that of elegance and fashion, but also of power and previous patronage. In highlighting an artist who seemed so embedded in 18th century politics, this dissertation will attempt to clarify its 'elusive' nature through the associations that his portraits made.

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[70] Monod 1993: 369.
[71] Monod 1993.
[72] Monod 1993: 369.
[73]West 1991:144.
[74] West 1991: 132.
[75]West 1993: 135.
[76] Monod 1991: 369.

3. How can Eckardt be seen as a political artist?

'Everything is conducted in England by the spirit of party; this is the main design of all their actions, and by this general spirit everything in life is determined.'[77]

a) Whig Politics

Due to his connections by birth and breeding, Horace Walpole's circle of friends were largely formed by influential Whig's. As a consequence, Eckardt's portraits at Strawberry Hill were predominantly portraits of Whigs, such as George, 3rd Earl of Albermarle, General Henry Seymour Conway, George Edward Cornwallis, Viscount Malpas, Dr. Conyers Middleton, George Montagu, Richard Rigby and Sir Charles Hanbury Williams (Appendix 2). In researching Eckardt's portraits outside of Strawberry Hill, which have been referenced in the archives at the National Portrait Gallery[78], all of his other portraits further suggest that the sitters were related to Horace Walpole or Whig politics. This can be seen in the portraits of Thomas Winnington, William Lord Digby, Henry Pelham, John Monckton and Henry Fox; all of whom were established Whig members of society (Appendix 2). It seems likely therefore, that whilst Eckardt was commissioned to paint 23 portraits for Strawberry Hill, his patron further promoted him to his extensive circle of Whig friends.

Thus, in light of Rouquet's aforementioned statement, it becomes evident that Eckardt used politics to enhance his artistic career. Whilst his personal political affiliation is not clearly stated in any primary sources, his portraits show how he openly sought partisanship with the Whigs. In exploiting the opportunities of pluralism, Walpole's patronage opened up a network of commissions for the artist. This can be seen in his letters to Whig friends such as George Montagu, emphasising the artist's talent; 'Eckardt has done your picture extremely well: what shall I do with the original?'[79]

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[77] Rouquet 1970:41.
[78] Heinz Archive & Library: London, National Portrait Gallery, MS NPG 50/6/20
[79] *Horace Walpole's Correspondence:* To Montagu, vol.9 (24 June 1746), 35.

Eckardt's partisanship to the Whigs, therefore presents an antithesis to most 18th century portrait painters, who Monod has argued, were 'reluctant to deal with party politics.'[80] Unlike writers such as Alexander Pope, who used partisan polemics to enhance the interest in his writing, portrait artists mostly avoided political preferences. Their reasons being that their An artist's political background could turn a patron against him or her, if his beliefs were antagonistic to their own.

However, in Monod's *Painters and Party Politics in England, 1714-1760*[81], the writer also highlights how some artists have previously been regarded to be strictly Whig or Tory painters. In Stuart England, some have seen Michael Dahl to be chief Tory painter of Queen Anne's reign, and that his rival Godfrey Kneller served the Whigs.[82] During George II's reign, Thomas Hudson, built up a chain of patronage through his connections with Tory Patrons.[83] Originally from Devon, Hudson was favoured by a group of West Country Tories such as the Carews, the Courtnays, and the Dukes of Beaufort.[84]

Nevertheless, whilst these painters seemed to have concentrated on one party or the other, Monod has argued that, in the 18th century, 'none of the painters could afford to exclude entirely a group of potential customers.' In a competitive portrait market of 2000 artists, where works were commissioned for around 30 guineas,[85] artists could not refuse to serve adherents of another party. Thus, 'outwardly, painters adopted an appearance of strict political neutrality.'[86]

Whilst historians have argued for political relationships for Dahl and Kneller, Monod has highlighted how they both painted portraits for either party; 'Dahl painted Whigs, and Kneller Tories.'[87] Arguably, Kneller who served every monarchy from Charles II to George I can be seen as 'a paragon of political compliance.'[88] Equally, Thomas Hudson worked for a select number of Whigs such as the Earl of Hardwicke.[89] Eckardt's career from 1746-64, is therefore striking and notable, as the artist seems to

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[80] Monod 1993: 368.
[81] Monod 1993.
[82] Monod 1993: 370.
[83] Monod 1993: 370.
[84] Monod 1993: 393.
[85] This price for a portrait is taken from Shawe-Taylor 2005: 10.
[86] Monod 1993: 370.
[87] Monod 1993: 370.
[88] Monod 1993: 370.
[89] Monod 1993: 393.

have painted for only one party. In contextualising the sitters that he paints, his portraits consistently lead back to Walpole and his circle of Whig companions (Appendix 2).

Whilst Eckardt's portraits highlight how the artist was closely associated with Whig politics, the question of whether or not his portraits were specifically tied to Whig ideals is more complex. A number of Art Historians have argued that Strawberry Hill's architecture and its landscape were a reflection of Whig ideals.[90] With the Glorious Revolution in 1688, Walpole saw this change in power as a return to political, but also artistic freedom. Reeves highlights this point, stressing that Walpole saw artistic style as 'a reflection of the political character of its period, leading to an integrated reading of the history of art.'[91] For example, Walpole saw Gothic architecture as a reflection of Whig ideals concerning liberty and freedom. In his *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, he writes about 'the Gothic as a period of freedom, elegance and ornamental extravagance.'[92]

On the basis of these previous associations, if Walpole's moral reading of Gothic architecture meant political freedom, his collection of portraits inside Strawberry Hill would suggest a paradoxically oppressive and imperial message. This can be seen in Walpole's desire to recreate the collections of Charles I and his father, Robert Walpole. Eckardt, a tractable artist who painted in many styles, facilitated these desires for his patron. To understand how these associations to the past can be seen as political, one must initially consider the political nature of patronage in the 18th-century, its desire for portrait paintings and the ideas surrounding connoisseurship in Georgian England.

In the first half of the 18th-century, elite English aristocrats governed patronage. The Hanoverian monarchy had expressed little interest in the arts; George II admitted, 'I hate bainting and boetry, neither the one nor the other ever did any good.'[93] With the Hanoverian monarchy renouncing its leadership of taste, the broadening of political participation allowed other groups to enjoy an enhanced cultural influence.

With Tories and Whigs vehemently questioning each other's social and political status, and having assumed the power of patronage from monarchy; culture was used as a vehicle to justify their political existence over the other. As Black has argued, culture

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[90] Quaintance, R., 'Walpole's Whig Interpretation of Landscaping History,' *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* 9, (1979); Reeve 2013; Worsley, G., "The origins of the Gothic revival: A reappraisal," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6, no.3 (1993): 105-50.
[91] Reeve 2013: 417.
[92] Reeve 2013: 416
[93] Shawe-Taylor 1990: 9.

could be used to promote their 'stability by emphasising the power and immutability of the elite leadership of society.'[94] With religion at the heart of this division, politics would hold a restraining context for artists. This can be seen in the overwhelming demand for portraiture.

Monod and West have argued that 'political assumptions had a great deal to do with this'[95] desire for portraiture, over other genres such as history painting. The reason being that history painting 'continued to bear a religious and political taint, which made it a questionable pursuit for many Protestants, especially Whigs.'[96] A protestant market, made up mostly of elite Whigs and Tory aristocrats, therefore preferred portraits, landscapes and genre pictures.

Thus, prohibited by the political and religious milieu, artists hoping for status and success disavowed other genres for the in demand portrait. Aristocratic patrons therefore rarely commissioned history paintings; 'their public didactism,' being 'unsuitable for hanging in private houses.'[97] Safe guarded from the religious and political overtones that history painting embodied, the portrait was a genre more suitable to record the character and promote the power of the landed aristocracy. Walpole's own view of his collection highlighted this cultural trend, stating that 'the most considerable part of the following catalogue consists of miniatures, enamels, and portraits of remarkable persons.'[98]

Furthermore, whilst politics encouraged the making of portraits, the setting in which they were placed can be seen as politically motivated. Shearer West states that the demand for portraiture 'grew with the surge of country-house building and redesigning that took place in the eighteenth century.'[99] Moreover, she argues that

> the portrait was, like the country house itself, both a manifestation and a symbol of power. It was a reflection of the daily life of the gentry, but a selective reflection, clouded by desire to impress, to embody the superior intellectual and personal qualities of the subject, and to project the sense of confidence about the longevity of the subject's family.[100]

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[94] Black 2005: 44.
[95] Monod 1993: 371.
[96] Monod 1993: 371.
[97] Brewer 1997: 457.
[98] Walpole, H., *A Description of the Villa of Horace Walpole,* (Strawberry Hill Press, 1784), 396; Snodin 2009: 24.
[99] West 1991: 135.
[100] West 1991: 132.

Portraiture therefore communicated power, just like the house it inhabited. It became a staple for aristocratic patrons attempting to create a sophisticated interior, with portraits highlighting their erudition and status. Furthermore, the landowners responsible for owning these houses made great efforts to stress the "longevity" of their family lineage. Portraits by Eckardt of Walpole's family accommodated this desire.

Moreover, crucial to the power of these portraits, was their ability to convey the 'taste' and connoisseurship of their owners. Jonathon Richardson, was most influential in spreading this idea of connoisseurship. In his *An Essay on the Theory of Painting* in 1725, which indicated his 'underlying Whiggery,'[101] Richardson remarked:

> supposing two men perfectly equal in all other respects, only that one is conversant with the works of the best masters... and the other not; the former shall, necessarily, gain the ascendant. And have nobler ideas, more love to his country, more moral virtue, more faith, more piety and devotion than the other; he shall be a more ingenious, and a better man.[102]

Significantly, tied to these ideas of connoisseurship, was the belief that politics 'was considered to be incompatible with refined taste.'[103] As a consequence, not only did artists avoid open partisanship in their patronage, but 'party seldom intruded directly on artists' canvas.'[104] Politics was confined to 'low' forms of representation such as cartoons, satires, and portrait prints, all of which were "designed for a wider and less sophisticated audience.'[105] Walpole, in particular opposed the representation of politics within art. Commenting on Queen Anne's reign, Walpole scorned at the vulgar taste of the 'party, that sharpened the genius of the age, dishonoured it too – a halfpenny print of Sacheverel would have been preferred to a sketch of Raphael.'[106]

It should be further noted that Eckardt's patronage came at an increasingly volatile period in Walpole's life. This is evident in his political writings, where by 1757, 'he had written two or three dozen personal essays and several political pamphlets.'[107] Whilst his father had lost power almost four years before Eckardt's patronage began in 1742, Walpole became 'a violent champion of his father, heaping abuse upon Sir

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[101] Monod 1993: 388.
[102] Richardson, J., *An Essay on the Theory of Painting* (London, 1725), 10.
[103] Monod 1993: 369.
[104] Monod 1993: 369.
[105] Monod 1993: 369.
[106] Monod 1993: 369; Walpole, H., *Anecdotes of Painting in England* 1 vol. (London, 1798), 303.
[107] Lewis 1961: 72.

Robert's enemies, extolling his virtues, and making his faults attractive.'[108] Furthermore, with the Jacobite revolutions, it was a period where 'for many, anarchy was never far away.'[109] With Sir Robert's death in 1745, Eckardt's commissions followed only a year later. In a period of insecurity and political exposure, Horace's patronage of John Eckardt can therefore be seen as a reaction to re-establish and sustain his political and familial status within society.

One of the ways Walpole used Eckardt in an obviously political way, was his deployment as Eckardt in his imagined reconstruction of the great art collections of Stuart England. With cultural authority dispersed in the 18ᵗʰ century, the earl of Shaftesbury believed that taste 'had to be formed by educated Whig aesthetes.'[110] Richardson stated that whereas art in the past had been considered a 'pleasing superfluity,' an educated public was now 'ready for serious instruction in questions of aesthetics.'[111] Lacking a traditional model of Royal taste, the social elite, such as Horace Walpole, took it upon themselves to define public taste. Aligning themselves with the writings of Richardson, Monod has argued that 'Whigs saw connoisseurship as an expression of their social and political pre-eminence.'[112] As such, Monod has stated that:

> Whig magnates who dominated English government for most of the period between 1693 and 1763 were eager to establish an indigenous 'high' art that would embody their beliefs and aspirations.[113]

Most patrons such as the Earl of Shaftesbury attempted to create an Italianate 'high' art, inspired by works of art that they had witnessed on the grand tour. Walpole instead, represented a shift in values. Instead of Raphael's and Titian's, Walpole focussed on the English tradition of Holbein's, Van Dyck's and portrait miniatures, to establish his own 'high' art.[114] In doing so, he consciously imitated previous models of patronage in England, such as that of Charles I and his father, Sir Robert Walpole.

As a fervent Whig, Walpole had kept Charles I's death warrant beside his bed as a reminder of his hatred for the Stuarts and their oppressive monarchy. However, rather paradoxically, Walpole became fascinated with Charles I, who was in his eyes the

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[108] Lewis 1961: 11.
[109] Monod 1993: 398.
[110] Monod 1993: 385.
[111] Smart 1992: 45.
[112] Monod 1993: 378.
[113] Monod 1993: 378.
[114] Cale, L., 'Horace Walpole's Dream: Remembering the dispersed Collection,' *Critical Quarterly,* Vol.55, 4 (Dec 2013), 42-53.

epitome of English patronage and connoisseurship. Whilst this was 'galling to many Whigs, who saw Charles as a misguided meddler, if not a crypto-Papist tyrant,'[115] Walpole clearly did not hold such reservations. For Walpole, his collection had become 'legendary as a kind of prelapsarian touchstone of taste.'[116] In his *Anecdotes of Painting*, published in 1761, he stated that King Charles and the 'accession of this prince was the first era of real taste in England'[117] and had remarked to his Tory readers with great irony, and in many ways defence of his comments, that he had not 'stinted them in anecdotes of their favourite monarch.'[118] Furthermore, Walpole had pronounced that since Charles' reign, none of his successors had managed to match his success as a patron or collector. William III, whom Walpole admired as a leader, had 'contributed nothing to the advancement of the arts,' whilst George I 'was void of taste.'[119]

Thus, Walpole looked to Charles I and his collection to redefine public taste; a period where the arts had flourished under the patronage of a cultivated, unified monarchy. Crucial to this was his acquisition of Vertue's *Note Books*[120]. During the Puritan revolution, Charles I's collection had been dispersed. This brought great tragedy to aesthetes such as Walpole who had seen the dispersal of his collection as the beginning of England's lack of tradition in painting. Vertue, an engraver and antiquarian, had 'visited every collection, made catalogues of them… He visited and revisited every picture, every monument.'[121] As an established antiquarian, Frederick, Prince of Wales, had asked Vertue 'draw up a comprehensive list of Charles's collections, with the aim of reconstituting them.'[122] In his attempt to do so, Monod has argued that Frederick 'tried to reactivate royal patronage by consciously imitating King Charles.' However, due to Frederick's premature death, his plans to imitate Charles' patronage fell through. Subsequently, Walpole obtained Vertue's notes on Charles' collection, allowing him to pursue Frederick's initial objective.

In the article *Horace Walpole's dream: Remembering the dispersed collection*[123], Luisa Cale has highlighted how this retrieval of Vertue's notesbooks were reinvented in Walpole's 'miscellaneous' section in his manuscript 'book of materials,' where he

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[115] Monod 1993: 376.
[116] Monod 1993: 376.
[117] Walpole 1798: vol.2, 47.
[118] Walpole 1798: vol.1, 214.
[119] Monod 1993: 377.
[120] Vertue 1934.
[121] Walpole 1798: vol.1, 10
[122] Monod 1993: 377.
[123] Cale 2013.

articulated a dream that he had seen Charles I's collection. In the dream, Walpole engages in dialogue with his historical counterparts:

> Thought I, in a rapture, this is the collection of Charles Ist. I will examine them carefully, for they will be burnt in Whitehall (where I thought I now was). I can never see them again; & then I will go home & look in the catalogue of King Charles's pictures, to see which I can find of them there.[124]

Walpole's dream highlighted the patrons desire to transform Strawberry Hill into a collection like Whitehall. Eckardt's patronage and portraits, therefore mirrored Charles I and his relationship with Van Dyck. The portraits by Van Dyck of Charles I[125] implied 'Charles's right to rule,' which 'stemmed as much from his innate superiority as from his coronation and legitimate descent.' [126] In appropriating the styles and iconography of past foreign artists in England, Eckardt's portraits would have triggered these associations of power in the mind of the contemporary viewer.

Furthermore, in his juxtaposition of contemporary portraits by Eckardt to old masters by Van Dyck, Walpole was imitating his father's collection. In the Drawing Room at Houghton Hall, his father had full-length portraits of Charles I and Henrietta Maria by Van Dyck, whilst also having portraits by Rosalba Carriera depicting Robert Lord Walpole and Sir Edward Walpole, the first and second sons of Sir Robert. Thus, with old portraits aligned with more contemporary portraits, Eckardt's commissions deceptively conveyed 'an organic development over the centuries'[127] in the Walpole dynasty.

In describing Eckardt's portraits, Walpole drew attention to their influence as Van Dyck's or Rubens'; to their nature as modern works. In being clear about where he is appropriating and using his styles, the patron was making a clear statement about his sophistication as a scholar of the arts, but also makes clear references to the reader that he is commissioning works of art that Charles I or his father would have collected.

In his attempt to promote his 'high' art, Walpole's intention was to exhibit these works to a wider public. In doing so, he would not only elevate his own status, but educate others who were interested in refining their taste. In 1774, Walpole started to promote his home and collection as 'a major stop on the tourist route of London

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[124] Cale 2013: 47.
[125] Strong, R., *Van Dyck: Charles I on Horseback* (London, 1972)
[126] Thomas, K., 'Dressed to Impress,' [accessed 02/04/15]
[127] Snodin 2009: 15.

houses.'[128] Printed tickets of admission were issued to regulate the large number of visitors to the house (fig.7) and he also promoted the tour in his *The Description of His Villa*, written in 1774. Walpole therefore hoped that when visitors came to his Strawberry Hill, that they would be confronted with assertive images of Whig friends and family, and they too would feel obliged to project a similar surety.

By collecting works of art that related to the past, and commissioning portraits by artists such as Eckardt, Walpole attempted to reimagine the collections of Charles I; the Royal King who had marked "the first era of real taste in England."[129] Furthermore, he attempted to recreate his own Houghton Hall and his father's collection that he had catalogued in *Aedes Walpolonae*. Thus, in Eckardt's imitations and appropriations of the past, Walpole arguably used Eckardt to establish a "high" art that would embody his beliefs and aspirations. Lacking a traditional model of royal patronage, Walpole looked to Charles I and his father, two figures of superior power and patronage, in his attempt to define public taste.

b) Susannah Duhamel, daughter of a watchmaker

'Painters had to disguise their political preferences. Few were financially secure enough to allow their own opinions to be publicized.'[130]

As shown in the previous chapter, Eckardt's deployment of Walpole to create a "high" art by through portraits of power and association, meant that Eckardt's portraits were closely tied to Whig ideals. Whilst these associations to Whigs were elusive, his partisanship in painting Whig individuals could have been easily read by society. As previously mentioned, most artists avoided partisanship in order to diversify their market of patrons. However, Eckardt seemed to focus on one patron and one political party.

Arguably, it is in consideration of Monod's statement mentioned above, that we are able to understand Eckardt's career as a portrait painter for Whigs. In their studies of Eckardt, Waterhouse and Graham-Vernon have failed to highlight the significant wealth that Eckardt had amounted by the end of his career. Eckardt's will in the National

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[128] Reeve 2013: 411.
[129] Walpole 1798: vol.2, 47.
[130] Monod 1993: 370.

Probate Records (Appendix 4: b), states that the artist gives 'unto my son Jacob Eckardt the sum of two thousand pounds.'[131] Furthermore, the document also states Eckardt's intention to 'give and devise unto my said son Jacob my leasehold house in Henrietta Street Covent Garden to hold to him.'[132] The sum £2000 in comparable 'economic status' from 1780 to 2015, meant that Eckardt's wealth amassed to £3.5 million.[133] Including the leasehold of his house, this would have been a quite remarkable amount of wealth for a painter at this time.

How therefore did Eckardt accumulate such a fortune? Having predominantly worked for one patron, and with evidence of around 50 portraits made during his career, the number of portraits that he made could not account for £3.5 million. If Eckardt charged the 'going rate' for a small portrait around that date, in the region of £20-£30 guineas, the most he could have earned from painting would be £1500, the sum of 50 portraits at the price £30. Working over the course of 30 or so years, this would therefore be an annualized average of £50 or so (though the majority of his output falls in the early years when he was earning a living from his production with Walpole). However, that would be adequate but by no means enough to build a considerable sum such as he left at his death.

In attempting to understand his wealth, the answer may have been in his marriage to his wife Susannah, daughter of a clock maker. In their marriage certificate (Appendix 4:a), signed on the 11th July 1746 (the year of Eckardt's first commission to Walpole), the name of his wife's father is written: 'With the consent of Jacob Duhamel the natural and lawful father of the said minor.'[134] The Duhamel's were one of the most prestigious clock making families in Europe. Whilst few details are known of Jacob Duhamel's career, other Duhamel's such as Isaac Duhamel were known to be working in London from 1731-1755 as established clockmakers. It is therefore highly likely that these two were therefore related in some form. A reflection of the Duhamel success can be gauged by the collections that they occupied. For example, a 3-case watch by Isaac Duhamel can be found in the Buckingham palace collection.[135] As Cedric Jagger highlights in his *Royal Clocks*[136], Clock makers at this time were highly respected

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[131] London, National Portrait Gallery, MS NPG 50/6/20.
[132] London, National Portrait Gallery, MS NPG 50/6/20
[133] Using measuringworth.com - £2000 equates to around £3.5 million in comparative 'economic status' (1780 equated to 2014).
[134] London, National Portrait Gallery, MS NPG 50/6/20
[135] Baillie, G., *Watchmakers and Clockmakers of the World,* Vol I, (London, 1929), 92.
[136] Jagger, C., *Royal Clocks: The British Monarchy and its Timekeepers 1300-1900* (London, 1982).

members of society, 'whose skills rewarded them with great wealth.'[137] Susannah Duhamel may have therefore inherited this wealth at some point after her father's death. If this was the case, Eckardt had further inherited this wealth, as with no mention of Susannah Duhamel (then Eckardt) in his will, we can assume that she had died by the time he had written it.

Eckardt's marriage to Jacob Duhamel's daughter therefore seems to be the key in understanding Walpole's career. Clearly the artist did not depend on painting for an income. It seems telling that in Walpole's reference to Eckardt in his *Anecdotes of Painting,* that he highlights his marriage to 'the daughter of a watchmaker.'[138] With financial backing, Eckardt was able to paint as he wished and pursue the patronage of one individual. Furthermore, whilst most artists openly avoided partisanship, Eckardt was financially secure enough to openly paint for one individual party.

In 1761, Eckardt exhibited a self-portrait at the Society of Artists.[139] Whilst the location of this portrait remains unknown, this discovery of Eckardt's wealth and marriage to Susannah Duhamel enables us to create a clearer picture of the artist, as a man of leisure and wealth. By 1961, the artist was living in Joshua Reynolds's old house in Newport Street;[140] a sure reflection of this status and wealth. In 1770, the artist was said to have sold his collection at auction. This tells us that Eckardt was a collector of the arts, with works important enough to be collected by others. This suggestion is further emphasized in Walpole's *Anecdotes* in his account of the artist Anthony Sevonyans, whose 'own portrait' was 'in the possession of Mr. Eckardt the painter.'[141] Walpole goes on to state in the footnotes that, 'it is now in my possession at Strawberry Hill.'[142]

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[137] Jagger 1982: 41.
[138] Walpole Book of materials.
[139] Waterhouse 1981: 117.
[140] Graham-Vernon, accessed [12/04/2015].
[141] Walpole 1798: vol.2, 295.
[142] Walpole 1798: vol.2, 295.

4. Eckardt's Decline (1763-1779)

In 1763, Eckardt received his final commission from Horace Walpole. Having painted over fifty portraits for Walpole and his friends over twenty years, his commissions from his patron suddenly stopped. This is reflected in the collection of Eckardt's images in archives, where his portraits all fall in the period that he was working for Walpole. Whilst Eckardt's social ascent could be seen in his economic stability and past success with Walpole, by the 1760s his artistic career was being challenged.

As the 18th century progressed, traditional patronage offered by patrons such as Walpole was being widely questioned. With the division of power in cultural authority, the Whigs and Tories had used portraits to establish their status and superiority over one another. In their desires for portraiture, predominantly by foreign artists such as Van Loo and Eckardt, English patrons had greatly disadvantaged native painters. Furthermore, with no royal patronage, artists were heavily reliant upon the financial support of individuals. As Lippincott has stated, there were in the first half of the century, 'few alternative routes to the top excluded from the generosity of the great.' [143]

This therefore became an increasingly frustrating situation for English painters. Artists blamed the 'debased tastes of English patrons to explain their own lack of popularity, while patrons deplored the crude techniques of local artists which necessitated the importation of fashionable art and artists from abroad.'[144] With no native schools to educate home grown artists, foreign imports who had learnt their trade at the French and Italian academies or as studio assistants for established painters, were seen as technically superior.

Resenting this state of the arts, Hogarth waged vicious campaigns towards artist such as Van Loo, who had 'monopolized all the people of fashion in the kingdom.'[145] He argued that such excessive popularity for a foreigner should be 'opposed with sprit.'[146] Envious of foreign artists and frustrated by the 'debased tastes' of patrons, Hogarth took the power of patronage into his own hands. After the success of *A Harlot's Progress and A Rake's Progress,* Hogarth lobbied for greater legal control over the reproduction of his and other artists works, resulting in the Engravers'

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[143] Lippincott 1983: 1.
[144] Lippincott 1983: 1.
[145] Shawe-Taylor 2005:19; Hogarth, W., *The Analysis of Beauty* (Oxford,1955), 216-7.
[146] Smart 1992: 70.

Copyright Act or 'Hogarth's Act,' in 1735. Recognizing that the sale of prints could be just as profitable as the fee earned from the original, Hogarth inspired a later generation of artists such Reynolds, West and Copley to establish control over their art. Eckardt's wealth and position as an artist, aligned with gentlemanly ideals of "high" art, may have led the artists to ignore such production of prints.

Furthermore, this allowed artists to address a wider audience. Whilst the nobility and aristocracy had patronized works of art to adorn their great houses with images of family and friends, thereby establishing their legitimacy to rule, 'the rising middle class, made wealthy through commerce, yet still socially and politically disenfranchised, increasingly vied for political and cultural power through the promotion of alternative representations of national history in the narrative of political events.'[147]

As a result of individuals such as Walpole, 'many artists and art theorists positioned the failure of native art as the failure of patronage.'[148] Writing one hundred and fifty years later, Roger summed up the effect that this patronage had caused:

> It (portraiture) is, we must suppose, rather some failure in our culture as a whole, whereby our governing classes, who alone have exercised patronage in the past, have been led to adopt a contemptuous and unimaginative attitude towards the visual arts – so that the typical English patron came to regard the artist merely in his capacity of ministering to his desire for prestige, by painting images of himself and of his family.[149]

In the formation of 1768, the power base had firmly moved to artists, who could now exhibit their works of art. Supported by George III, the academy signalled the return of royal support. It marked the fulfilment of English artist's resentment towards foreign artists, 'who had been passionately united in their determination to see native achievement accorded national recognition.'[150] The Knighthood of Reynolds in 1769, symbolised the changing times. With this shift in the arts, patrons began to favour native artists such as Reynolds and Gainsborough, displacing foreign artists such as Eckardt. To patronise a foreign artists became unpatriotic and a sign of anarchic taste.

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[147] Arnold, D., & Corbett, D., *A Companion to British Art: 1600 to the Present* (Cornwall, 2013), 202.
[148] Arnold 2013: 203.
[149] Fry, R., *Reflections on British Painting*, (London, 1934), 25-6.
[150] Ramsay 1992: 42.

Conclusion

Eckardt's commercial model, close association with a single patron, and his adaptability have meant that he has received little scholarly attention. But his life and career offers important evidence for the role of the painter in mid-century London before the foundation of the Royal Academy. I hope I have demonstrated that Eckardt is a painter who can be read within the specific Whig context of his patronage and who developed a visual language – one reliant on the language of Van Dyck and Stuart portraiture – which directly supported a Whig ideology.

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List of Illustrations

1. *Horace Walpole* (1754)
   After Sir Anthony Van Dyck's Portrait of *Simon Vouet*
   Oil on canvas
   39.4 x 31.8cm
   National Portrait Gallery

2. *Richard Bentley* (1753)
   From a Van Dyck; holding his own design.
   Oil on canvas
   42.2 x 34.3 cm
   National Portrait Gallery

3. *Thomas Gray* (1747-8)
   Based on Van Dyck's portrait of the *Organist Liberti*
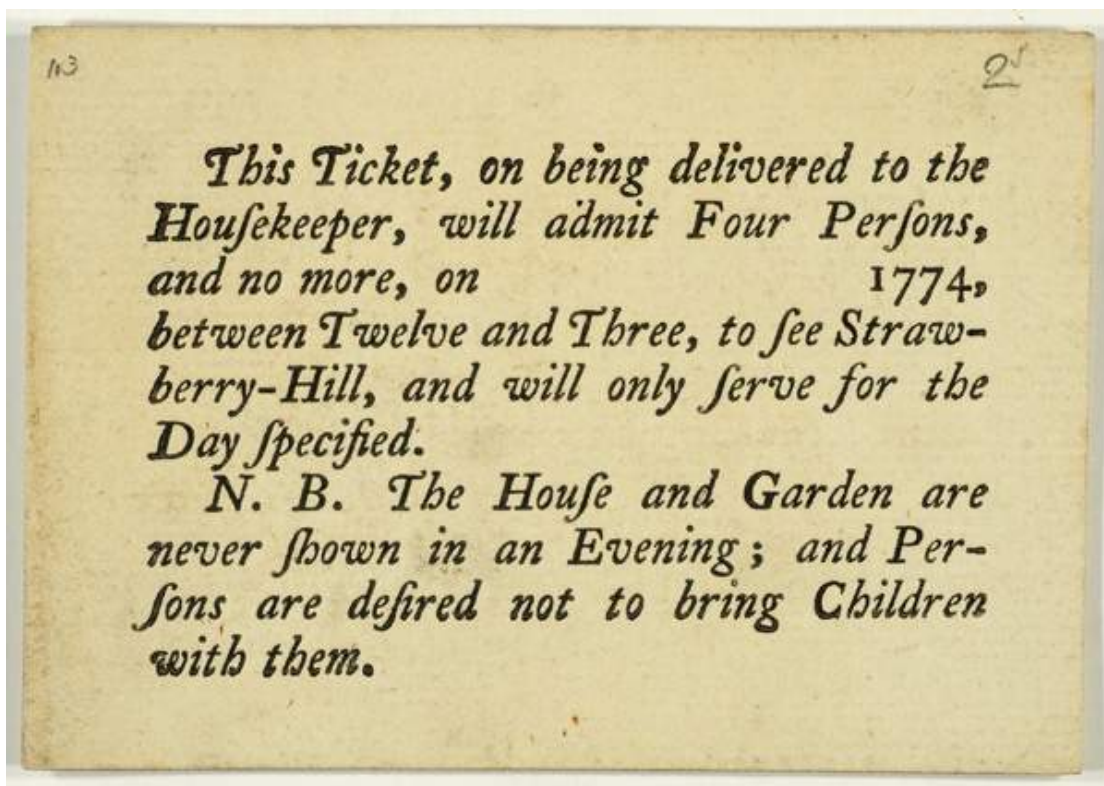   Oil on canvas
   40.3 x 32.7 cm
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4. *Portrait of Charles Churchill, Lady Maria Walpole and their Eldest Son Charles*
   (1750)
   After Peter Paul Rubens, *Reubens, his wife Helena Fourment and one of their*
   children (1635) (Metropolitan Museum)
   Oil on canvas
   66.7 x 50.8 cm
   The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University

5. *Sir Robert Walpole and Catherine Shorter, His first Wife* (1746)
   From Wooton and Zincke, in a carved frame in the style of Grinling Gibbons
   Oil on canvas
   50.8 x 101.6 x 23 cm
   The Lewis Walpole Library

6. Johann Heinrich Müntz (c.1755-59)
   Strawberry Hill
   Oil on canvas
   61.9 x 74.3cm
   The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University

7. *Ticket to View Strawberry Hill*
   Ephemera
   Letterpress
   6.5 x 9 cm.
   The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University

8. *Doctor Conyers Middleton* (1746)
   Oil on canvas
   76.2 x 63.2 cm
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9. *Sir Charles Hanbury Williams* (c.1746)
   Oil on canvas
   42.3 x 34.2 cm
   National Portrait Gallery

10. Pietro Martini (1787)
    The Exhibition of the Royal Academy
    Engraving and etching
    37.2 x 51.3 cm
    Royal Academy of Arts

Illustrations

(Eckardt portraits have been placed on the right hand side)

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ADAM DE COSTER.
PICTOR NOCTIVM, MECHLINIENSIS.

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HENRICVS LIBERTI.
GROENINGENSIS CATHED. ECCLESIÆ ANTVERP. ORGANISTA.

Anton van Dyck pinxit.   Petrus de Iode sculpsit.

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    61.9 x 74.3cm
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This Ticket, on being delivered to the Housekeeper, will admit Four Persons, and no more, on   1774, between Twelve and Three, to see Strawberry-Hill, and will only serve for the Day specified.

N. B. The House and Garden are never shown in an Evening; and Persons are desired not to bring Children with them.

7. *Ticket to View Strawberry Hill*
   Ephemera
   Letterpress
   6.5 x 9 cm.
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Appendix (1): Portraits at Strawberry Hill by John Eckardt

Blue Bedroom Chamber Portraits

1. *Horace Walpole* (1754).
   After Sir Anthony Van Dyck's Portrait of *Simon Vouet*
   Oil on canvas
   39.4 x 31.8cm
   National Portrait Gallery

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   Oil on Canvas
   66.7 x 50.8 cm
   The Lewis Walpole Library

7. *Portrait of General Henry Seymour Conway, Caroline, Countess Dowager of Ailesbury, and her daughter Anne* (1754)
   Watteau dress and attitudes
   Oil on canvas
   66 x 50.9
   Private Collection

Other Portraits at Strawberry Hill by John Eckardt

8. George, 3rd Earl of Albemarle.

9. Dr. T. Ashton.

10. Anne Boelyn (copied after Holbein).

11. Maria (Walpole), Wife of Charles Churchill in a veil; music books before her.

12. General Henry Seymour Conway.

13. General Henry Seymour Conway, in armour.

14. George Edward Cornwallis.

15. Lady Isabella, Countess of Hertford (after Van Loo).

16. Holbein (copied after Holbein).

17. George, Viscount Malpas.

18. Mary, Lady Malpas.

19. Dr. Conyers Middleton.

20. George Montagu (after Van Loo).

21. George, 3rd Earl of Orford (after Liotard).

22. Richard Rigby, paymaster.

23. Catherine Shorter, small W.L after Zincke.

Appendix (2): Portraits of Whig sitters

Portraits of Whig Politicians at Strawberry Hill

1. *Horace Walpole*: MP of Callington (1741-1754), MP for Castle Rising (1754-1757), MP of Kings' Lynn (1757-1768).
2. Sir Robert Walpole: Prime Minister for Great Britain (4 April 1721- 11 February 1742).
3. *General Henry Seymour Conway*: Chief Secretary for Ireland (1755-1757), Secretary of State for the Southern Department (1765-1766), Leader of the House of Commons (1765-1768), Secretary of State of Northern Department (1766-1768).
4. *George, 3rd Earl of Albermarle:* MP for Chichester (1746-1748), Lord of the Bedchamber (1748-1765).
5. *George Edward Cornwallis:* Lieutenant General, suppressed Jacobite Revolution.
6. *George, Viscount Malpas:* MP for Bramber (1754-1761).
7. *Dr. Conyers Middleton:* Wrote *Life of Cicero* (1741)
8. *George Montagu:* PM for Huntingdonshire (1757- 1761)
9. *George, 3rd Earl of Orford:* Lord of the Bedchamber (1757-1782)
10. *Richard Rigby:* Chief Secretary for Ireland (1757-1761)
11. *Sir Charles Hanbury Williams:* MP for Monmouthshire (1734-1747), MP for Leominster (1747-1759)

Portraits of Whigs outside of Strawberry Hill by Eckardt

(Archived at Heinz Archive & Library)

1. *Peter Le Heup*: Son of Thomas Le Heup who was involved with Sir Robert Walpole
2. *Thomas Winnington*: MP of Droitwhich (1726-1742), MP of Worcester (1742-1746)

3. *William Lord Digby*: MP of Birmingham (1709-1722)

4. *Henry Pelham*: Prime Minister of Great Britain (1743-1754)

5. John Monckton: MP of Clitheroe (1727-1734), Commissioner of Revenue in Ireland (1734-1748)

6. *Henry Fox* (After Vanloo): Leader of the House of Commons (1762-1763), Paymaster of the Forces (1757-1765)

<u>Appendix (3): References to Eckardt in:</u> Walpole, H., *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. Lewis, W.S., 48 vols. (Yale University Press, 1937-83)

1. *The Beauties*: Vol. 30, pg. 325-33.

2. Vol. 37, pg. 234. From Conway, Sunday 6 April 1746.

3. Vol. 9, pg. 35. To Montagu 24 June 1746.

4. Vol. 30, pg. 99. To Fox, Saturday 19 July 1746.

5. Vol. 15. pg. 25. To Middleton, Saturday 21 February 1747.

6. Vol. 35, pg. 173,174. To Bentley, Saturday 18 May 1754.

7. Vol. 9: pg. 371. From Montagu 9 June 1761.

8. Vol. 10: pg. 132. From Montagu, Monday 23 July 1764.

9. Vol. 9, pg. 207. To Montagu 27 May 1757.

10. Vol. 9, pg. 208: From Montagu 27 May 1757.

11. Vol. 10, pg. 205. To Montagu, Friday 25 March 1763.

12. Vol. 1, pg 237. To Cole, Tuesday 10 September 1771.

Appendix (4): Eckardt's marriage certificate & Will

a) Eckardt's marriage certificate (Heinz Archive and Library)

b) Eckardt's Will (Heinz Archive and Library)

... my Leasehold House in Henrietta Street ... ... To hold to him his Executors Administrators and Assigns ... the rest and residue of the term of years ... shall be then to come and unexpired at the time of my decease. And I do order and direct that all my goods ... fortune and other effects whatsoever which I shall be possessed of at the time of my decease shall as soon afterwards as conveniently may be sold and disposed of and the moneys arise ... by such sale together with ... such other sums as I may then have out on mortgage or otherwise ... give divise and equally the said ... sixty part thereof unto my said son and daughter Jacob Evardt and Susannah Potter to be equally divided between them share and share alike ... But in case my said daughter shall be then dead I give and devise her moiety or half part thereof unto such child or children she may happen to have then living And in case there shall be no child or children then living then I give such moiety or half part unto my said son Jacob Evardt And I do hereby nominate and appoint my said son and daughter joint Executors of this my will hereby revoking and making void all former and other wills by me at any time or in any other manner heretofore made. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this first day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand ... hundred and seventy eight — John Beard. □ Signed ... said published and declared by the above named John Evardt as and for his last will and Testament in the presence of us who have subscribed our names as witnesses in his presence and in the presence of each other. Thos. Waterfield, Dav. Waterfield.

... □ and do publish and declare this only to be my last Will and Testament.

This Will was proved at London the twentieth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy nine before the worshipful Andrew Coltee Ducarel of Laws Surrogate of the right Worshipful Peter Calvert Doctor of Laws Master Keeper or Commissary of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury lawfully constituted by the oaths of Jacob Evardt the Son and Susannah Potter (wife of John William Potter) the daughter of the deceased and the Executors named in the said will to whom ... administration of all and singular the Goods Chattels and Credits of the said deceased was granted having been first sworn duly to administer.

In the Name of God Amen I William Efford of the Parish of Saint George the ...

William Efford