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THE SPECTRE OF BUCKINGHAM:
ART PATRONAGE AND COLLECTING IN
EARLY STUART ENGLAND

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the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the relationship of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham (1592-1628) to the art and aesthetic ideas of his era. As the intimate and all-powerful favourite of two successive kings, James I and Charles I, Buckingham profoundly influenced the course of English politics, both at home and abroad, and it is as a political force that he is generally viewed. But, as a major patron of many artists and the builder of one of the largest art collections of the time, his influence in the cultural sphere must have been equally significant. Yet no modern study of this aspect of Buckingham's persona exists.

After a review of the general historiographical material on Buckingham as well as his evaluation by art historians over the years, Chapter I presents an analysis of the concept and role of Favourite in social and cultural terms. It goes on to detail Buckingham's personal position within early Stuart court culture, and argues that while this culture formed and defined him, he simultaneously re-formed and redefined it through his choices and actions.

Chapter II examines the dynamics of art patronage and Buckingham's activity as a patron, beginning with his early dealings with the native English painter, William Larkin. The relationship of Buckingham and the young Anthony Van Dyck is discussed, with particular attention to the artist's brief visit to England in 1620-21, and it is suggested that Buckingham was instrumental in bringing about this event. The Duke's dealings with the controversial polymath, Balthazar Gerbier, are explored, as are his many-layered connections with the premier painter of the day, Peter Paul Rubens.

In Chapter III, the traditions of art collecting, especially in England, are discussed, as is Buckingham's reputation as a collector compared to some of his rivals in the field. The extant documentation of his collection is examined, along with the chronology and methodology of its formation. Particular attention is given to gifts of art to Buckingham by King Charles, the Earl of Arundel and others; the art-buying by Buckingham's agents like Balthazar Gerbier; and the incorporation by the Duke into his own inventory of parts of other collections such as that of the Duke of Hamilton and, more importantly, that of Rubens.

Both in the realm of court culture and in the world of art patronage and art collecting, it was Buckingham more than anyone else who supplied the energy and set the fashion. And he continued to do so even after his premature death: the Duke's image remained bright in the memory of King Charles, whose subsequent expanded relationships with Rubens and Van Dyck owe much of their intensity to both artists' previous connections with Buckingham.

SOMMAIRE

Cette thèse examine la relation de George Villiers, premier duc de Buckingham (1592-1628), avec l'art et les idées esthétiques de son époque. Ami intime et favori tout-puissant de deux rois successifs, Jacques I^{er} et Charles I^{er}, Buckingham a profondément influencé la politique anglaise, à la fois au pays et à l'étranger, et c'est sous l'aspect d'une puissance politique qu'il est généralement considéré. Mais, en tant que mécène de nombreux artistes et architecte de l'une des plus importantes collections de tableau du temps, il a dû avoir une influence également marquée dans la sphère culturelle. Cependant, il n'existe aucune étude moderne sur cette facette de sa personnalité.

Après une revue de l'historiographie générale et des jugements que les historiens de l'art ont portés sur Buckingham au fil des ans, le premier chapitre analyse le concept et le rôle de favori en termes sociaux et culturels. Il précise la place de Buckingham dans la culture de la cour des Stuarts à ses débuts, et démontre que si cette culture a formé et défini Buckingham, celui-ci l'a simultanément remodelée et redéfinie par ses choix et ses actions.

Le chapitre II examine la dynamique du mécénat et l'activité de Buckingham à cet égard, en commençant par ses premiers rapports avec le peintre anglais William Larkin. Il traite des relations de Buckingham avec le jeune Antoine Van Dyck et notamment de la brève visite de ce dernier en Angleterre en 1620-21, visite qui serait due à Buckingham. Il examine également les contacts de Buckingham avec le polymathe controversé, Balthazar Gerbier, de même que les relations qu'il entretenait à divers titres avec le principal peintre de l'époque, Peter Paul Rubens.

Dans le chapitre III, on examine les traditions de la collection d'art, spécialement en Angleterre, de même que la réputation de Buckingham comme collectionneur, comparé à quelques-uns de ses rivaux dans le domaine. On étudie la documentation existante sur sa collection, de même que la chronologie et la méthodologie de sa formation. Une attention particulière est accordée aux oeuvres reçues en cadeau du roi Charles I^{er}, du comte d'Arundel et d'autres personnages; aux achats faits par l'entremise d'agents comme Balthazar Gerbier; et aux oeuvres d'autres collections—come celle du duc de Hamilton et, plus encore, celle de Rubens—que Buckingham a lui-même incluses dans son inventaire.

Tant à la cour que dans le monde des mécènes et des collectionneurs d'art, c'est Buckingham qui, plus que quiconque, donnait l'impulsion et lançait la mode, et cela même après sa mort prématurée. Le souvenir du duc resta vivace dans la mémoire du roi Charles I^{er}, dont les rapports subséquents avec Rubens et Van Dyck durent beaucoup de leur intensité aux relations antérieures de ces deux artistes avec Buckingham.

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PREFACE

The contention of this study is that George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, altered the visual style of his time, both directly during his short lifetime and posthumously via the power of his image in the memory of King Charles I. It is a topic which has never been explored thoroughly. In 1860, Thomson appended a chapter on Buckingham and the arts to her biography of the Duke; Cammell in 1940 did the same. Both approached the subject essentially from the point of view of connoisseurship, a valid though limited perspective. Needed now is a comprehensive, multifaceted exploration of Buckingham's influence on art, one which integrates art-historical concerns into the socio-cultural context of the early seventeenth century, as well as exploring some of the theoretical issues raised by Buckingham's activities. Such an in-depth inquiry would be an original and valuable contribution to the study of the period.

Some years ago, when I first learned of George Villiers, read about his brief but brilliant life and career, and encountered his likeness in a portrait drawing by Peter Paul Rubens, my reaction was a mixture of fascination and, for lack of a better word, sadness.

The fascination grew out of the fact that here was a man who virtually had ruled England for a dozen years and done so from the unofficial position of court favourite. Moreover, he had been the personal favourite of not one but two successive kings, James I and Charles I, father and son. This very unusual, if not bizarre, accomplishment alone seemed worthy of investigation.

The sadness came from the realization that history has not, perhaps, given Buckingham his due. Or rather has only partially done the job. In accounts of the period, Buckingham has been occasionally ignored, often vilified and usually treated with a

reluctant, 'good-riddance' attitude. Granted there are many historians who, perforce, have had to deal with him and have done so within a strictly political context. But it seemed to me that a man who wielded the power that Buckingham did, and did so with panache, would have also set the style of the times, too.

And this is no mere generalized suggestion. Buckingham possessed a spectacular visual presence and made the most of it all his life. He was one of the major art collectors of his age. (I have included as useful appendices the two known compilations of Buckingham's collection, the inventory of 1635 and the sale list of 1648-50, which are not always easily accessible.) He was a patron of many important artists, including Rubens, the premier painter of the time, and Van Dyck, its rising star. He knew from first hand experience the artistic tastes and trends in France and Spain. And he understood, for even more intimate reasons, the aesthetic enthusiasms of England's most sophisticated and dedicated art-lover, King Charles I.

Charles was one of the most image-conscious rulers of Britain. Not only did he love images *per se* and amass the greatest collection of art that the country has ever known—one which remains the core of today's Royal Collection—but he consciously worked to create an image of himself, one which was, I think, as much *for* himself as it was for the public or for posterity. He did not manage, for lack of resources, energy or skill, to create an all-pervasive image-making technology the way Louis XIV of France did a few years later. But he did articulate a distinct visual style for himself and his court which has come down to us most notably in the paintings of Anthony Van Dyck, Charles' official Court Painter. This style emanated from a man who was an intensely private person, who assessed everything and everyone on a personal basis and whose own life history was coloured by one early and intense relationship—his friendship with George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

How can this situation be explored in order to reveal Buckingham's true place in the cultural world of his time and do justice to him as an individual? How much emphasis should be placed on the psychological—or even psychoanalytic—dimension? And to what extent should a study of Buckingham be an exercise in Psychohistory, as defined by one of

its pioneering practitioners, Erik Erikson, as 'disciplined subjectivity'? Originally, I saw this as the one proper methodological route. Over time, however, I have realized that although individual psychological motivation forms the subtext to my discussion, to make it the only theme would have been restrictive. Psychohistory, or the science of motivation, mainly concerns itself with causes, with why people do what they do, rather than what they do and how they do it. In the case of Buckingham, the what and the how are, to my mind, as interesting as the why. In other words, Buckingham's impact on the culture around him and how *he* made that impact is my focus: art history as viewed through the lens of cultural theory.

Two of the leaders in the theorizing of cultural dynamics are the French sociologist-*philosophe* Pierre Bourdieu and his British counterpart, Anthony Giddens. Although they share some of the same views, it is Giddens' work that more strongly influences my project. In essence, Giddens argues that individuals create their social contexts even while being constrained by them. He avoids entering into the debate as to whether the social structure or the individual experience is the appropriate unit of analysis; rather he focusses on the dynamic relationship between the two, their inseparability and their dependence on a continuum of time and space. Furthermore, he proposes a certain randomness and obliviousness to this creation/constraint model of human behaviour: unintended consequences of any given action become unacknowledged causes of future action.

How does this relate to the subject of Buckingham and art? Since the concept of social structure necessarily contains that of cultural structure, and since culture necessarily includes the practice and product of art work, it should be possible to restate Giddens as follows: Buckingham created his cultural context even while being created by it. Or: intentionally or not, Buckingham changed art even while being changed by it. Investigating such ideas is the business of this thesis.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this study, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was not an artist himself. He painted no pictures, sculpted no stone, designed no buildings with his own hands. If art history is about people who do these things and the objects they produce, what possible place could Buckingham have in it? Such a question brings up others which bear directly on the heart and soul of the discipline. How broad should it be? How much can Art History contain before bursting and dissolving into History *tout court*? Is such a dissolution inevitable? Already effected? Bad? Or, in the words of Svetlana Alpers, "Is Art History?"¹ That is, while Art History originally concerned itself with objects as evidence of stylistic change in a historic context, lately it has become focussed on the idea that works of art, like all other events, are pieces of history. As such, the circumstances of their making become the business of Art History. Who commissioned them? Why? What audience were they intended for? Where would they be seen? And, as Francis Haskell points out, while it is easy to understand why art lovers and many art historians cringe at referring to beautiful paintings as 'pieces of history' or 'historical documents,' it is important to remember that most images were initially created to be exactly those things and have survived—or sometimes have been destroyed—exactly because they were.²

It is the intent here to bring together these two streams of thinking about art and its history, with the Duke of Buckingham as the common thread. His motives and actions as a patron and collector were structurally and contextually determined. At the same time, they produced shifts in contemporary concepts of beauty as well as changes in the style of art.

¹ Svetlana Alpers, "Is Art History?" *Daedalus* 106, no. 3 (1977) 1-13.

² Francis Haskell, *History and its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven and London, 1993) 2.

A theoretical framework

Binarism has always haunted the human mind. From the ancient cultists who believed that the world is a battlefield between equal forces of good and evil to modern-day computer programmers whose base of operations is the manipulation of 1 versus 0, the notion of 'if this, not that' tends to permeate all thought, all speculation, from abstract philosophy to quotidian conversation. Do objects have essential form or only apparent form? Is faith more productive than reason? Does society form the man or vice versa? Does culture bring forth art, or art culture? Who is more important, the person who makes a work of art or the person who buys it?

While recognizing that it is almost impossible to evade the dualistic set of human thought, some people have suggested that the best way to deal with the issue is to avoid endowing the either-or model with hierarchical possibilities; that is to say that one of any given pair will ultimately prove to be more important than the other. Instead, they propose that the binary model itself become the subject of inquiry. Rather than looking solely at the two teams on a playing field with an eye to an eventual winner, it is more interesting to examine the necessary reciprocity of the teams at play and the randomness of the game itself.

In the field of social and cultural studies—the question of whether the social creates and contains the cultural, or vice versa—the terrain has been occupied by numerous French thinkers but he ranks also include the British sociologist and political scientist, Anthony Giddens, whose approach may be seen to have particular validity in regards to Buckingham and his context. Rejecting the model of individual-versus-structure in social, cultural or political studies, Giddens envisions the human reality as a sort of Möbius loop or double helix: yes, there are two sides or components to it but, no, they do not, cannot function separately. For Giddens, what is interesting about this reality-system is how it functions—he often playfully suggests that the fact that it actually works at all is amazing—since it has no existence except in the minds and memories of individuals. It is individuals who bring structure into being and it is structure which creates the possibility of individual

action.³

The dynamics of this equation start with Giddens' assumption that people ⁴ have a generalized attachment to the routines of life. His basic unit of analysis is the recursive practice, both relatively private ones like a daily commute, a weekly night at the movies, an annual vacation, and the larger shared patterns such as speaking in a particular language, wearing a recognizably consistent costume, eating a regional diet, etc.

This necessarily entails a time-space continuum, which for Giddens is a single, complex dimension, as crucial to his concept as it is to Einstein's theory of relativity. The individual actor (this is Giddens' term) will trace a more-or-less specifiable time-space itinerary on any given day. Expanding on this, it can be said that every day, the world's entire population participates in a mass movement through time-space, which is inseparable from, and intrinsic to, the very existence of individuals, organizations, nations.⁵ The world is made (a)new every day. Furthermore, while the principle of the centrality of recursive behaviour to human existence is constant, its particulars vary from period to period and geographical place to place, thus explaining global variations in human behaviour patterns.

Recursive behaviour has also an interpersonal dimension. No one lives life alone in a vacuum and every individual action, no matter how 'solitary' it may seem, necessarily implies the existence of other people and connects to them via the power of speech. Giddens, like most contemporary philosophers, recognizes that language is the *sine qua non* of human existence. Without the ability to communicate with one another, people would not be able to create the routines and reproduce the patterns so necessary to their ability to function on a daily basis.

But all reproduction is necessarily production, and the seed of change is contained in every act which contributes towards the reproduction of any ordered form of social life.⁶ Using as an example his own work to illustrate this point, Giddens says that by

³ Philip Cassell, ed., *The Giddens Reader* (London, 1993) 12.

⁴ Giddens uses the word "actors" which, although occasionally unnerving, is consistent with his theory: there can be no theatre/structure without individuals/ actors, and vice versa.

⁵ Cassell, 1993, 18.

⁶ Anthony Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method* (London and New York, 1976) 102.

writing in English, he at once creates an individual piece of communication accessible to those people who share the same linguistic resource and contributes to the continuation of the existence and power of the English language. The former result is intentional, the latter is not.⁷ But the 'seed of change' is also there, since Giddens does not, cannot, write English in exactly the same way as anyone else.

A similar example might be drawn from art, when a painter—Van Dyck, for instance—creates a work in the painterly idiom-structure of his time and place as well as in the style-structure of his mentor, Rubens. Van Dyck thereby communicates a specific narrative message through the painting itself, while contributing to the maintenance of the hegemony of Rubens in the realm of painting. But Van Dyck cannot paint exactly stroke-for-stroke like Rubens and so he sows the seed of change, whether he intends to or not. Again, when a collector, Buckingham, buys a work by Titian, an artist well-established within the currently perceived structure of the art market, he is expressing his own interest in the artist while reinforcing Titian's status. At the same time he is contributing to a rise in the price of the works of Titian, which, in turn, makes it more difficult for him, Buckingham, to acquire another work by the painter. So he might decide instead to buy a Fetti, thus elevating this painter's status in the eyes of the world, and so on.

The seed of change is always germinating and usually in unpredictable ways. For Giddens, "Structure forms personality and society simultaneously—but in neither case exhaustively: because of the significance of unintended consequences of action, and because of unacknowledged conditions of action."⁸ That is, the random results of present acts feed back as the surprising inspirations for future ones.⁹ Applying this idea to art provides a possible explanation of how and why styles change. No artist is entirely aware of the ways in which he or she is affected by another, nor are the effects of his or her work on other artists predictable or controllable. This helps explain the often puzzling meanderings of style in any given period or place.

⁷ Giddens, 1984, 8-9.

⁸ Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (London and Berkeley, 1979) 69.

⁹ Giddens, 1984, 7.

The issue of intention is also a factor in human behaviour. Giddens maintains that people maintain—also routinely—a theoretical understanding of the reasons for their actions, although they may not be able to articulate it coherently. This he calls 'practical consciousness.' Motivation, however, is different. Most daily activity is not directly motivated, and, according to Giddens, motives directly affect actions only unusually, only in situations which break with routine.¹⁰

The implications of these ideas for art, art makers and art consumers are considerable. First, they allow for a turning away from the widely-held belief that what makes art interesting is its separateness; that the creation of art is the very opposite of routinized behavior and that artists are by definition highly and consistently motivated people different from the rest of humanity. Giddens would deny both points. What makes art, artists and patrons/buyers interesting is precisely their interdependence and interaction. While Giddens' theory is based on the concept of a necessary dynamic between individuals and structures, one that simultaneously enables and constrains, a problematic aspect of it is Giddens' treatment of motivation, of the notion that people can be impelled to behave in ways they themselves do not understand and which can even be detrimental or dangerous to their own apparent best interests. He recognizes the existence of subconscious motivation, of course, but in essence he downplays its role in human affairs. For Giddens, motivation operates at a strategic level, and since individuals think and behave strategically only in relatively unusual circumstances,¹¹ he believes that what he calls practical consciousness is the fuel of human behavior. Although, this would seem to place him in a position diametrically opposite to those historians and art historians who take Freudian (and post-Freudian) psychoanalytic theory as their touchstone, it is fair to say that Giddens would not share a reading of history which totally ignores the motivational dimension of human behavior.

There is, therefore, a possibility that concepts enunciated by a sociologist can coexist with theories based on human psychology in an art-historical study such as this one, which focuses not on an artist but on an actor in the theatre of art.

¹⁰ Ibid., 5-6.

¹¹ Giddens, 1984, 6.

With such a challenge in mind, a brief consideration of some aspects of psychohistory is appropriate. The methodology is not without its controversies. One of its practitioners, Charles Carlton, believes that in the United States, psychohistory is a welcome methodology, whose critics complain that it is not taken far enough, while he feels that in England, critics are generally horrified by the approach and suggesting that taking it anywhere takes it too far.¹² Taking a broader stance, while implying a not-dissimilar feeling, Laurie Schneider Adams has said that art history and psychoanalysis have been “married and divorced” several times in the recent past.¹³

The source of these ongoing conflicts lies partly in the not-uncommon belief that since psychology is subjective and history must be objective, the two are mutually exclusive. But the problem is also more subtle than that. Any historian or art historian of any stature must know deep down that he or she cannot entirely avoid subjectivity, if only because he or she is a subject with a unique set of thought and behavioral patterns. This is both a source of pride and confidence as well as of shame and insecurity. One's own feelings, and by extension one's ideas, might turn out to be ‘fantasies’ or ‘wishful thinking’ or ‘wrong’ and that possibility is, in a word, terrifying. It is far safer, and by extension better, to stick to data, to objective facts that cannot ever be ‘wrong.’ But such a stance ignores one overriding fact, which Peter Gay has pointed out: history is full of mistakes and errors of judgement. In fact, most historical events result from mistakes that individual people make about the world¹⁴ and if idiosyncratic, perverse subjectivity is not adequately taken into account, any view of any historical event will itself be mistaken. The most basic insight of psychoanalytic theory is that the wish, the emotion and the fantasy are as important as the fact in man's experience.¹⁵

Nevertheless, the objection often continues, “you cannot psychoanalyze the

¹² Charles Carlton, *Charles I: The Personal Monarch*, 2nd ed. (London and New York, 1993) xiv. The author's assessment of transatlantic differences of opinion may reflect and explain the ostensibly minor role assigned to motivation by the Englishman, Anthony Giddens.

¹³ Laurie Schneider Adams, *Art and Psychoanalysis* (New York, 1993) 1.

¹⁴ Peter Gay, *Art and Act: On Causes in History—Manet, Gropius, Mondrian* (New York, 1976) 16.

¹⁵ Peter Gay, *Freud for Historians* (New York and Oxford, 1985) 173.

dead.”¹⁶ In a sense, this statement is true: classical psychoanalytic theory requires a process of interaction in its clinical application. This dynamic is described in terms such as Transference and Counter-transference, for example, and consists largely of the random retrieval of fragments of early childhood memories and emotions by the subject and the gradual reprocessing of them over an open-ended period of time with the analyst. Moreover, the memory-material consists largely of sexual conundrums not normally available to the historian dealing with people from the past, although when a body of material written by a deceased person survives, a kind of approximation of the psychoanalytic process is possible. (In the realm of art history, the cases of Van Gogh and Michelangelo are two such instances.) In fact, Freud himself famously analyzed Leonardo da Vinci. However, he later had second thoughts about the essay,¹⁷ and this seeming self-repudiation by the master himself has come to serve as a reinforcement for the widely-held belief that no living person can analyze one no longer able to participate in the process. Countering this position are the psychohistorians, whose approach was called ‘disciplined subjectivity’ by its pioneering figure, Erik Erikson ¹⁸ and whose rationale has been summed up by Peter Gay: since what is called civilization is simply a macrocosm of the individual microcosm, all history must to a great extent be psychohistory.¹⁹ Further described by another practitioner, Charles Strozier, as sanctioning the use of the historian’s own emotional responses as a source, the psychohistorical method permits, but is not defined by, an empathetic encounter with the historical record. ²⁰ This would seem to make it ideal for the study of art and artists, since the first experience anyone has with any given work of art might well be called an ‘empathetic encounter,’ an emotional event rather

¹⁶ This statement forms the starting point to Peter Gay’s masterly refutation, cited above.

¹⁷ Sigmund Freud, *Leonardo da Vinci: A Study in Psychosexuality*, trans. A.A.Brill (New York, 1947). The present author believes that this work remains a valid one in spite of Freud’s retreat on it. See “Freud and Leonardo: An Art Historical Study,” in Meyer Schapiro, *Theory and Philosophy of Art: style, artist and society* (New York, 1994) 153-192.

¹⁸ Erik H. Erikson, *Young Man Luther* (New York, 1958).

¹⁹ Gay, 1976, 19.

²⁰ Charles B. Strozier, “Disciplined Subjectivity and the Psychohistorian: A Critical Look at the Work of Erik H. Erikson,” in Geoffrey Cocks and Travis L. Crosby, eds., *Psycho/History: Readings in the Method of Psychology, Psychoanalysis and History* (New Haven and London, 1987) 45-49.

different from a first encounter with a written text, which might be characterized as an 'intellectual encounter' or a rational event. In any case, although the psychohistorical approach has produced interesting results in recent years²¹, it still remains useful to remember Gombrich's observation: "Let it be said in all humility—Psychoanalysis is not really competent; but neither is the History of Art."²²

But before proceeding with the art-historical business of this thesis, a brief chronology of its central character's life is required.

Introduction to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham²³

George Villiers²⁴ was born in Leicestershire in central England on August 28, 1592.²⁵ He was the second son of Sir George Villiers of Brooksby (d. 1606) by his

²¹ See, for example, Robert S. Liebert, *Michelangelo: A Psychoanalytic Study of His Life and Images* (New Haven and London, 1983); Germain Bazin, *Théodore Géricault* (Paris, 1987); William M. Runyon, "Why Did Van Gogh Cut Off His Ear? The Problem of Alternative Explanations in Psychobiography," in Cocks and Crosby, 1987, 121-131; Svetlana Alpers, *The Making of Rubens* (New Haven and London, 1995). For an anti-Freudian position, see Creighton Gilbert, *Caravaggio and his Two Cardinals* (University Park PA, 1995).

²² E.H. Gombrich, *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art* (New York, 1963) 44.

²³ The data in this section is drawn from a wide range of sources, and conforms to the entry on George Villiers in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, 22 vols. (London, 1885-1901) vol. 20, 327-337. Major issues and events, as well as the source material on them, are discussed fully in subsequent chapters.

²⁴ The surname is sometimes spelled Villers, Villirs or Villars in contemporary (and later) accounts. English orthography was not standardized until the time of Samuel Johnson in the eighteenth century; thus, seventeenth-century documents contain a bewildering, often comical, variety of spellings. Even educated, literate, well-travelled people wrote with no consistency, and the same word will appear spelled several different ways on the same page.

²⁵ A note on dating: during this period, England still used the Julian calendar (adopted 46 B.C.) which was approximately ten days behind the continental, or Gregorian, calendar, proclaimed by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. This adjustment was authorized by the Council of Trent in 1545 in order to make up for the by-then obvious astronomical discrepancy between the actual date and the official one based on the Roman belief that the year was exactly 365 1/4 days long. As well, the new calendar made January 1 the start of the new year in the Catholic countries. In England, however, the new year continued to begin on March 25 (an arbitrary correlation with Easter, which, while considered to mark the start of a year, might fall anywhere between March 22 and April 22.) In this study, the so-called "new style" calendar is used for the designation of years.

second marriage to Mary Beaumont (d.1632).²⁶ There were three male and three female half-siblings by Sir George's first wife, who had died in 1587.

Young George had an older brother, John (1590?-1657), an older sister Susan (1591?-1655?) and a younger brother, Christopher (1593-1630) all of whom benefitted greatly from their brother's successful career.²⁷

At the age of ten, George was sent to Billesdon School nearby, where he stayed for about three years. After the death of his father, he lived with his mother at Goodby. Lady Villiers seems to have decided early on that this son had the most potential of her children even though it was clear that he was neither intellectual nor contemplative. So she encouraged him to capitalize on his physical endowments and hone his dancing and fencing, along with other courtly skills. In 1609, when George was sixteen, his mother arranged for him to go to France to continue this kind of education. This sojourn, which lasted for several years, is sparsely documented. At its outset, he was accompanied by his brother, John, but it is unclear when and where (or if) he encountered a young man who was later to become Sir John Eliot (1592-1632) and one of George's prime political

²⁶ She was created Countess of Buckingham in her own right by King James in 1618. This unusual ennoblement was made partly to please her son, the royal favourite, but also because James genuinely esteemed her, as he did all the members of the Villiers family. It is the cause of a certain controversy surrounding Mary Beaumont, who prior to her marriage to Sir George Villiers, served as a waiting-gentlewoman to a relative, Lady Beaumont of Cole Orton, and as a result has been characterized as a kitchen-maid who married above her station. The origin of this idea seems to be Roger Coke, *A Detection of the Court and State of England during the Last Four Reigns and the Interregnum* (London, 1696) 44-45. For rebuttal, see S. R. Gardiner, "Facts and Fictions about the Duke of Buckingham's Mother," *Notes and Queries* 4th Series VII (June 3, 1871) 469-471; Constance Russell, "The Mother of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham," *Notes and Queries* 6th Series XI (May 30, 1885) 434-435. The accusation of social-climbing was always one of the main thrusts used against Buckingham during his lifetime, and casting aspersions on his mother's status has simply been part of an overall strategy.

²⁷ John was knighted in 1616, held various positions in the royal household and in 1619 was created Baron Villiers of Stoke and Viscount Purbeck of Dorset; Susan married in 1607 William Fielding, Earl of Denbigh; Christopher also was appointed to several royal household posts and became Baron Villiers of Daventry and Earl of Anglesey in 1623.

opponents.²⁸ In any event, his experiences in and of France likely served him well in subsequent situations.

He returned to England in 1612-13, and, after another year at Goodby, went to London in 1614, aged 22, to seek his fortune at court. In August of that same year, his career did, indeed, begin when he travelled to Apethorpe, a great Northamptonshire house hosting a summer visit by King James I (b. 1566; r. 1603-25). The middle-aged James still found his greatest pleasure in lusting after beautiful young men like George Villiers, who, as tradition has it, caught his eye by 'dressing down' for the occasion in an old black suit.²⁹

If this was in fact a tactic, it worked. He soon began to be in favour with James, although the incumbent favourite, Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset (1586-1645) was still much in evidence. James made his new young man a Cupbearer almost right away and at Christmas 1614, he subsidized a theatrical performance which featured young Villiers and his dancing skills. Now, the personal became the political as George was taken up by a court faction led by Archbishop Abbot and the Earl of Pembroke eager to supplant Somerset with their own man. The way to success led through James' wife, Queen Anne of Denmark, who, in a process devised by the King's wily mind, had to 'recommend' a young man for royal appointment, in case the situation turned out badly, at which point the King could blame her for the problem.³⁰ Anne was, of course, wary,³¹ but seems to have liked Villiers better than Somerset and did 'persuade' the King to knight him.

This ceremony took place on St. George's Day, April 23, 1615, in the presence of

²⁸ On this complex and unusual relationship, see John Forster, *Sir John Eliot: A Biography* (London, 1864); Hugh Ross Williamson, *Four Stuart Portraits* (London, 1949); Harold Hulme, *The Life of Sir John Eliot* (New York, 1957) who is sceptical of the notion that Eliot and Villiers became friends in France, noting that there is only one source for this, a general history of England published in 1720. Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629* (Oxford, 1979) 33 ff. cites letters from Eliot to Buckingham during the parliamentary battles of the late 1620's in which there is never any reference to any long-standing or boyhood friendship between them.

²⁹ The story comes from a hostile contemporary source, Sir Symonds D'Ewes, who reports it as proof of Buckingham's shabby background. J.O. Halliwell, ed. *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, Bart.* 2 vols. (London, 1845) I, 86. Another version tells how George's mother arranged the encounter at Apethorpe (Coke, 1696, 45).

³⁰ John Rushworth, *Historical Collections, Volume I* (London, 1721) 456.

³¹ Coke, 1696, 47.

the royal family—including Charles, Prince of Wales, then an impressionable fifteen-year old. At the same time, Sir George Villiers was made a Gentleman of the King's Bedchamber and thus began his spectacular rise in power.

His personal relationship with the king is underlined by his appointment, in January, 1616, to the post of Master of the Horse, which gave him control of the royal stables, and by his investiture into the Order of the Garter in April of the same year.³² In August, 1616, he was created Viscount Villiers and Baron Whaddon and given a substantial land grant. In January, 1617, he was made Earl of Buckingham, a very high status, indeed.³³ In January, 1618, he became Marquess of Buckingham, thereby outranking everyone except the royal family. And in January, 1619, he was appointed Lord High Admiral, one of the most important political offices in the realm. The navy at that time had fallen into a rather woeful state unbefitting to the legendary conqueror, only 30 years earlier, of the Armada. Ultimately, even most of Buckingham's detractors credit him with reviving and refurbishing this most English of institutions.³⁴

During this heady period, not only did the bond between Buckingham and King James become permanent, but also a new one was forged between George and Charles, Prince of Wales, and heir to the throne. At first, the two younger men did not get along. Charles resented the bold, beautiful favourite and Buckingham ignored the small, shy prince. But the King hated 'family' dissension and insisted that Buckingham befriend his son: not a difficult task for a man of his well-honed charm. This friendship proved to be the most important one of both men's lives.

Another milestone in Buckingham's life was his marriage, in May, 1620, to Katherine Manners (1603-49), daughter of the Earl of Rutland, and reputedly one of the

³² The Most Noble Order of the Garter, England's highest decoration, was established by Edward III in about 1350, along chivalric principles. It consists of the reigning sovereign and 25 Knights Companions, who often number among them foreign notables for political reasons. See Michael De-La-Noy, *The Honours System* (London, 1985).

³³ This significant ennoblement was evidently made on short notice to the Lord Chancellor, who had to arrange the investiture ceremony. See Vicary Gibbs and Lord Howard de Walden (eds.) *The Complete Peerage by G.E.C.*, 13 vols. (London, 1910-1940) II, 392. Also, unusually, Buckingham's brothers were made heirs to the title should he leave no sons.

³⁴ For a critical view, see Kenneth R. Andrews, *Ships, Money and Politics: Seafaring and Naval Expertise in the Reign of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1991).

richest heiresses in England. She was, however, also a Catholic and had to convert to the Anglican faith before the King would consent to the union; the issue of religion subsumed everything during this period, and was a continuous source of personal and political difficulty for everyone.³⁵ Regardless of the circumstances of their connection, the couple maintained a genuine affection and respect for each other throughout their married life. They had four children. Mary (1622-85), nicknamed Moll, and a favourite of King James, married first Lord Herbert of the Pembroke family and second the Duke of Richmond, cousin to the King. Charles (1625-27), named after the King, died in infancy. George (1628-87), the second Duke of Buckingham, was a playwright and playboy of the Restoration period who died childless, thus extinguishing the title. Francis (1629-48), born posthumously and said to have inherited his father's best qualities, died in one of the last skirmishes of the Civil War at Kingston-on-Thames.

Buckingham's interest in the areas of art and culture also began to have their effect in the years around 1620. As the all-powerful royal favourite, he was the dispenser not only of political but also of cultural patronage. As the ally or opponent of art collectors like the earls of Pembroke and Arundel, his competitive instincts were applied to connoisseurship. And as the close friend of Prince Charles, who was innately susceptible to the beauty and balm of painting, he was present at the creation of an art-intensive court culture. All these factors, along with his own sense of fashion, taste and imagery, as well as his education and experience in these areas, gave him the ability to affect substantially the course of aesthetic activity and history.

Perhaps the single most important event in the artistic conditioning of both Buckingham and Charles occurred in 1623. In February, the two set out incognito with only three attendants bound for Madrid, capital of England's traditional arch-enemy. The reason given for this odd action was to bring home a bride for the Prince in the person of

³⁵ Another pervasive problem was that of sorcery and witchcraft, with which the Rutland family had a bizarre connection: the Earl's two sons died in 1618, ostensibly as result of sorcery by a servant-woman. Katherine apparently only barely avoided the same fate. See Anon., *A Complete History of Magick, Sorcery and Witchcraft*, 2 vols. (London, 1715-16). King James himself wrote a tract entitled *Daemonologie*. See H.R. Trevor-Roper, *The European Witch-Craze of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1967) 74.

the Infanta of Spain.³⁶ Precisely who was the prime instigator of the trip has always been debated, as has the question of whether Buckingham had a secret agenda. But the short-term outcome of the adventure was simple: no bride for Charles; and an heroic public image for Buckingham, now Duke,³⁷ as the confounder of Spain.³⁸ More complex and lasting, however, was the now-indissoluble personal bond between Charles and George, comprised at least partially of a shared memory of the great royal collection of Spain as both a model for and a challenge to their own ambitions in the field of art.

Politically, the 1620's were for Buckingham a period of intense and complex activity. He was the instrument of England's foreign policy, which consisted essentially of trying to play Spain and France off against each other. At this game, his talents were not quite up to those of his opposite numbers, particularly Cardinal Richelieu of France. As a result, most of Buckingham's initiatives failed utterly.³⁹ Domestically, his relations with Parliament were turbulent: one session he was cheered, the next reviled.⁴⁰ The low-point occurred in 1626, when Buckingham was impeached on thirteen counts, most of them dealing with alleged fiscal crimes and misdemeanors, but the final indictment accused him of poisoning the late king (James had died in March, 1625). He did not have to answer the

³⁶ The most complete account of the historical and political aspects of this episode in English-Spanish relations is S.R. Gardiner, *Prince Charles and the Spanish Marriage: 1617-1623*, 2 vols. (London, 1869). For a detailed description of contemporary dynastic machinations and motivations, see Roy Strong, "England and Italy: The Marriage of Henry, Prince of Wales," in Richard Ollard and Pamela Tudor-Craig (eds.), *For Veronica Wedgwood These: Studies in Seventeenth-century History* (London, 1986) 59-88.

³⁷ On May 18, King James dubbed Buckingham the first non-royal duke in half a century: the idea was to make him equal in rank to his Spanish counterpart, Olivares, with whom he was conducting the marriage negotiations. On May 17, for reasons of protocol and family harmony, James had made his cousin, the Scottish Duke of Lennox, Duke of Richmond in the English peerage.

³⁸ Anon., *The loyfull Returne of the most illustrious Prince Charles, Prince of great Brittain, from the Court of Spaine* (London, 1623).

³⁹ See S.R. Gardiner, *A History of England under the Duke of Buckingham and Charles I*, 2 vols. (London, 1875). The structure of the title reveals the author's assessment of the power structure of the time. For a discussion of one of Buckingham's continental peers and their interrelationship, see John H. Elliott, *Richelieu and Olivares* (Cambridge, 1984).

⁴⁰ Parliaments of this period were still grappling with the issue of their own identity and responsibility. Put in terms of Giddens' theory, it might be said that their role as enabler and restrainer of the monarchy was not yet clearly or consistently understood. For a variety of views on the subject, see Kevin Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and Parliament: Essays on Early Stuart History* (Oxford, 1978).

charges. The new king dissolved Parliament, interpreting criticisms of Buckingham as criticisms of himself, and perhaps banging the first nail into his own coffin. In short, the succession of Charles did not, as many had predicted or hoped, change the political landscape, except to reveal Buckingham as more powerful than ever. For the next three years or more, he was, to all intents and purposes, ruler of England.

Shortly after the accession of Charles, in the summer of 1625, Buckingham travelled to Paris as representative of the King to attend the marriage-by-proxy of Princess Henrietta Maria (1609-1669), sister of King Louis XIII (b. 1601; r. 1610-43) and to escort the new queen back to England. His appearance caused a sensation even in sophisticated, fashion-conscious Paris. As did his behavior: this trip is the source of the romantic, swashbuckling image of Buckingham. But the occasion gave him more than the opportunity to play the wily diplomat, or to show off.⁴¹ He acquainted himself with the trends and personages of the day in Europe's most culturally-conscious city. He managed an introduction, for example, into the avant-garde intellectual and literary circle of the Duchess of Rambouillet. Moreover, he made the acquaintance of the foremost painter of the age, Peter Paul Rubens, who was also in Paris, ostensibly for reasons of art,⁴² but also in his growing role as diplomatic operative for the Infanta Clara Eugenia, ruler of the Spanish Netherlands. Buckingham took the opportunity to give Rubens a major artistic commission as well as to establish a personal and diplomatic connection that would continue to be important for both men.

The next few years of Buckingham's public life were preoccupied with more diplomatic manoeuvres and subterfuges vis-a-vis France and Spain, culminating in an almost-declared war with France over the fate of French Protestants. In 1627, the Duke himself led a military expedition to liberate the Huguenot stronghold city of La Rochelle. Although the offensive was a military and political disaster, Buckingham himself

⁴¹ See Chapter 2, note 172, for a contemporary account of Buckingham's extraordinary preparations for his visit to Paris.

⁴² Rubens was in Paris to supervise the installation of his new cycle of paintings, commissioned by the dowager queen, Marie de' Medici for her residence, the Luxembourg Palace, and publicly unveiled to mark the marriage of her daughter, Henrietta Maria. A fuller discussion of the situation is found in Chapter 2 below.

performed bravely, and returned to England determined to continue the operation with another, bigger expedition.

This he never did. On August 23, 1628, in Portsmouth, Buckingham was assassinated by a disgruntled soldier, John Felton. King Charles was devastated. He ordered a state funeral, followed by the raising of a splendid monument to the Duke. But neither happened as public animosity towards Buckingham had, by then, become simply too great.

Buckingham was interred almost surreptitiously in his family crypt in Westminster Abbey (at that time the only non-royal tomb in the church). Only in 1634 was an elaborate sculpted monument of marble and bronze erected above the crypt, paid for by his widow with the blessing of the King.

Review of the literature on Buckingham: Biographers

i) Wotton

The first biography of Buckingham, by Sir Henry Wotton (1568-1639), was published in 1651. Entitled *The Life and Death of George Villiers, Late Duke of Buckingham*, it appeared in a volume of the collected writings⁴³ of a man who was not only a writer and poet but also a diplomat, connoisseur, art dealer, courtier, educator and cleric during his lifetime. His relationship with Buckingham endured over many years—as it did with other important figures of the time, notably King James, John Donne, the Earl of Arundel and John Milton—and it is useful to include here a brief biography of Wotton himself before discussing his view of Buckingham.⁴⁴

Upon the accession of the Scottish King James VI as James I of England in 1603, Wotton, who had worked for James in Scotland, sought further government employment. The King obliged him with a knighthood and the post of Ambassador to Venice, an important foreign assignment at that time. He served in that capacity, with a few breaks, from 1604 to 1623. In essence, his diplomatic mission was to implement King James' notion of a league of states to oppose the alliance of the Papacy and Spain, thereby

⁴³ Sir Henry Wotton, *Reliquiae Wottonianae* (London, 1651).

⁴⁴ Logan Pearsall Smith (ed.), *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton* (Oxford, 1907).

ensuring European peace through a balance of power. Venice, already at loggerheads with the Pope, was seen as a natural ally, as well as a natural beachhead for Protestantism in Italy. Wotton assiduously cultivated both these opportunities. He sometimes overdid it, as when he presented the Doge of Venice with a book written by King James in which the Pope was called "the whore of Babylon that rideth upon the Beast."⁴⁵

In most ways, however, Wotton was an ideal emissary to this centre of art and learning. Already highly literate and culturally attuned, he developed, during his long residence in Venice, a taste far more sophisticated than most of his contemporaries, hence his importance as an art advisor and agent for major English art collectors.

When he returned to England permanently in 1624, Wotton was given, through the influence of Buckingham, the position of Provost of Eton College and in 1627 he took holy orders. His writings, especially *The Elements of Architecture* and *A Philosophicall Surveigh of Education* as well as his letters provide valuable insight into the intellectual life of the period.

It is his view of Buckingham, however, which is of interest here. Besides the specifically entitled *Life*, the volume published under Wotton's name included a thematic piece by the Earl of Clarendon, *Parallel and Disparity between the Earl of Essex and the Duke of Buckingham*.⁴⁶ Together, they provide much of the data basis for Buckingham's early life (particularly the belief that he was trained for the role of favourite by his adoring and controlling mother)⁴⁷ as well as description and rationalization of the concept and dynamics of the phenomenon of political favoritism. The system whereby a monarch invested another individual with enormous power on the basis of personal affection was nothing new, as the title of the essay on the favorites of Elizabeth I and James I indicates. The difference between the two, he suggests, is that while Elizabeth gave Essex too much rein—treated him, in short, like an adult—James never viewed Buckingham as anything but a dependent child—admittedly a spoiled one—and in that way managed to avoid the

⁴⁵ Christopher Hibbert, *Venice: the Biography of a City* (London, 1988) 125.

⁴⁶ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6854, 30-145.

⁴⁷ Wotton, 1651, 74.

inevitable rupture of affection.⁴⁸ It is also Wotton's belief that this approach to favoritism allowed James, both psychologically and literally, to transfer Buckingham's affection to Prince Charles, and vice versa. The two were, in his view, brothers, although Wotton does at one point exhibit a glimmer of suspicion about this "becoming secondly seized of favour, as it were by descent...which I have set down, without looking beyond the vaile of the Temple, I mean into the secret of high inclinations, since even Satyricall Poets...are in this point modest enough to confess their ignorance."⁴⁹ This kind of rationalized modesty has prevailed until very recently in discussions of the relationship between James and Buckingham and Charles.

Unfortunately, Wotton's experiences as Buckingham's factotum in the Venetian art world are not recounted in his biography of the man. It is as if either the cultural prominence of such an important political person needed no detailed proof, or that his work in this area for Buckingham had caused him some discomfort. It is known, for example, that in 1621, Wotton and Lady Arundel had a falling out over the price of some pictures that Wotton was trying to acquire for Buckingham.⁵⁰ Nowhere does he feel enthusiastic enough to speak of the Duke as he does of King Charles, another of his clients, calling the King's paintings "the most splendid of all your entertainments."⁵¹ And perhaps his opinion of the Duke as connoisseur was less than glowing: "The Duke was Illiterate (meaning un-literary) yet he had learned at Court...to suck what might be for the publike or his own proper use; so as the less he was favoured by the Muses, he was the more by the Graces."⁵²

If Wotton's views on Buckingham the individual are ambivalent, he accepts explicitly the system of favoritism so prevalent in the political culture of the time, while recognizing that the individual dynamics of it vary from instance to instance. He does not theorize. He does not see favoritism as an unstable system, one whose structure is

⁴⁸ Ibid., 78, 95.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁰ Hibbert, 1988, 128.

⁵¹ Wotton, 1651, 145.

⁵² Ibid., 20.

constantly and necessarily changing as it simultaneously enables individuals to, and constains them from, changing it.

ii) Thomson

The first modern biographer of Buckingham was Mrs. Thomson, whose three-volume study appeared in 1860.⁵³ As its title proclaims, it is written “from Original and Authentic Sources,” that is to say, drawing on the material being made available in the ongoing publication of the Calendars of State Papers which began in mid-nineteenth-century England. This vast scholarly enterprise reflects the period’s determination to discover, classify, and disseminate everything about the world, past and present. It resembles, and was inspired by, similar projects in the physical sciences. The underlying premise of such activity, stated or unstated, was to manifest the advanced status of the time, the superiority of the nineteenth century in terms of knowledge, power and often morality, over all previous eras, as well as to form a basis for the continuation of its values through the instruction of the future. ‘Survival of the fittest’ was proved by shelves of new encyclopedias.

In this sense, Thomson’s work is very much of its time. She sets the events of Buckingham’s life within detailed diversions into contextual matters: fashion, literature, morality and art because she intuitively knows that the setting shows off the jewel.⁵⁴ Thus, while remaining positive and admiring of Buckingham as a phenomenon, her fundamental viewpoint is akin to that which might be taken by an assayer of precious stones or an archaeologist examining traces of an extinct species: “The system of favoritism (was) one of James’ great weaknesses...at his death, the experiment, which had been tried once too often, was abandoned never to be renewed...”⁵⁵ Considering her work on the Duchess of

Marlborough, Thomson’s statement seems odd. Yet it conforms to her positivist agenda:

⁵³ Mrs. Thomson, *The Life and Times of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham from Original and Authentic Sources*, 3 vols. (London, 1860). The author styles herself in the semi-anonymous way common to nineteenth-century female writers. Her name sometimes appears as ‘Mrs. A.T. Thomson’ and she was a prolific historian, producing, among other things, lives of Henry VIII, Sir Walter Raleigh and Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough

⁵⁴ Thomson, 1860, I, x.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 7.

here is how things used to be done in their own charming way but now the world is improved and much more sensible.

When it comes to evaluating the personal relationship of Buckingham with James and Charles, Thomson steps as gingerly as Wotton, though with a high Victorian moral tone: "If Villiers were at that period of his life unworthy, James, endowed as he was with all the experience which his own vicious Court could bestow, was criminal beyond measure to place his only son, on whom the hopes of the nation rested, in contaminated society."⁵⁶

It is in her discussion of Buckingham and the arts that Thomson breaks new ground, although she does so in a structurally problematic way, relegating the topic to a separate chapter at the end of the third volume of the biography.⁵⁷ While this may be acceptable for reasons of efficiency, it is necessarily artificial—the equivalent to segregating his religious beliefs, say, or his family life to a single chapter. And it creates difficulties, particularly since so much of Buckingham's activity in the realm of culture is so closely connected to his diplomatic and political business. Still, Thomson provides the earliest examination of Buckingham and art and much of her material remains valid and basic to the subject. She stresses the importance of the visit to Spain as formative.⁵⁸ She expands the role of Balthazar Gerbier, whom she does not like, in the Duke's affairs.⁵⁹ And she documents Buckingham's patronage of artists such as Mytens, Honthorst, Gentileschi, and Lanier.⁶⁰ Finally, she sums up with words that could stand as an epigraph to this very study: "Few men, it must be acknowledged, in so brief a space, have done more for the arts in this country than George Villiers."⁶¹

iii) Early twentieth-century biographers

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 117 ff.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, III, 139-181.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, III, 142, 148.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, III, 153-157.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, III, 174-177.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, III, 180.

The next comprehensive evaluations of Buckingham came in the 1930's with a small flurry of biographies. First is Philip Gibbs' ⁶² chatty telling of Buckingham's life as a swashbuckling romance worthy of the attentions of Alexandre Dumas and Sir Walter Scott. Gibbs is a great admirer of the Duke who also prides himself on being up to the difficult challenge of uncovering the essence of Buckingham.⁶³ He also makes some useful contributions to the literature through references to certain material which had come to light since Thomson's work of 1860 (although he does not acknowledge her biography as a source for any earlier references) and his discussion of the phenomenon of Buckingham's transference of power from James to Charles, and the differences of the nature of that power.⁶⁴ As far as Buckingham's interest in art is concerned, Gibbs devotes only four pages to the subject, although he does cite some hitherto unknown letters from Balthazar Gerbier to his employer.⁶⁵

The next biography, by Mary Ann Gibb, came five years later.⁶⁶ Less scholarly than Gibbs, Gibb is equally conversational in style, and her project is one of rehabilitation, to "recreate something of that charming personality," based on her belief that none of the many favourites and mistresses of the various Stuart monarchs has been so badly treated and misunderstood by posterity as Buckingham.⁶⁷ By this, she presumably means misunderstood by general historians rather than previous biographers. And Gibb makes only one perfunctory reference to Buckingham and art.⁶⁸

Third of this group of biographers is C.R. Cammell.⁶⁹ In a way, this work is both the most uninspired and the most spectacular. It is fundamentally a recasting of Thomson in a single volume: the sources cited are similar and the overall structure is the same. The tone, however, is very different. Cammell adores Buckingham—there is no other word for

⁶² Philip Gibbs, *The Romance of George Villiers, First Duke of Buckingham* (London, 1930).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 5-6, 185-87.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 231-35.

⁶⁶ M.A. Gibb, *Buckingham 1592-1628* (London, 1935).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶⁹ C. R. Cammell, *The Great Duke of Buckingham* (London, 1939).

it—and his biography takes the form of a panegyric which can be embarrassing, if not impossible, to read. This work could be easily dismissed as a transparent attempt to sanitize the relationship between Buckingham and James, and to transcendentalize the subsequent bond between Buckingham and Charles. Does Cammell believe that George and James had physical sexual relations? Apparently not, but his convolutions and contrivances in the negotiation of this territory take on a kind of bittersweet charm in the end. In the case of George and Charles, he remains resolutely sublime, referring to Buckingham as “the hight priest of his (i.e. Charles’) initiation into the Mysteries of the Beautiful.”⁷⁰ Cammell, in other words, while assiduously avoiding the issue of homosexuality, somehow leaves the impression that he was writing a kind of secret ‘gay history’ in a code known only to a particular group of readers.

Like Thomson, Cammell devotes a chapter to Buckingham and art. Likewise, he puts it at the end of his book, after the Epilogue.⁷¹ This section essentially reprises the information in Thomson (with appropriate acknowledgment) but Cammell tends to reproduce entire documents and catalogues when he cites them. In some cases, this is useful; in others, excessive. Ultimately more useful—and this is Cammell’s prime contribution to the study of Buckingham—is his *Iconography*, or catalogue of the then-known portraits of the Duke.⁷² This section, along with the author’s earlier work on the subject,⁷³ remains the only systematic study of the visual images of Buckingham.

Finally, from 1940, there is Hugh Ross Williamson’s work on Buckingham, subtitled *Study for a Biography*.⁷⁴ In sharp contrast to earlier biographers, Williamson is no admirer of Buckingham and delivers a stern critique of both the man and his activities (excluding those in the realm of art, which are not dealt with at all). In short, Buckingham is seen as a subversive element in British history: “A mistress may be the power behind the throne and her existence complicates the problems of statesmanship; but a minion breaks all

⁷⁰ Ibid., 352.

⁷¹ Ibid., 344-69.

⁷² Ibid., 371-85.

⁷³ C. R. Cammell, “George Villiers First Duke of Buckingham: Portraits of a Great Connoisseur,” *The Connoisseur* 98 (1936): 127-32.

⁷⁴ Hugh Ross Williamson, *George Villiers First Duke of Buckingham* (London, 1940).

the rules. The nice adjustment between bedchamber and Council Chamber, which constitutes the actual, if unadmitted, basis of all government, is immediately destroyed."⁷⁵ According to Williamson, therefore, the Civil War and the destruction of the monarchy hinged on Buckingham.⁷⁶ As to the question of whether Buckingham poisoned King James—one of the articles of impeachment of the Duke in 1626—Williamson leaves the verdict to the reader, although his own belief in Buckingham's guilt is clear.⁷⁷

iv) Erlanger

The French view of Buckingham has always been somewhat conflicted. On the one hand, he is the enemy of France politically and militarily. On the other, he is exactly the kind of male figure every French man aspires to be: suave, beautifully-dressed and irresistible to women. No more proof of the latter point is needed than the story of his relationship with Anne d'Autriche, Queen of France (1601-65),⁷⁸ whom he met, wooed and allegedly won during his visit to Paris in 1625. This affair has assumed legendary status and is central to French thinking about Buckingham: it forms the core plot of the famous novel by Alexandre Dumas.⁷⁹ It also informs Philippe Erlanger's 1951 biography of the Duke.⁸⁰ Erlanger makes the beginning of the liaison the occasion in 1623 when Buckingham and Prince Charles were passing incognito through Paris on their way to Spain and caught a glimpse of Anne and Henrietta Maria at a ball: "Pour la première fois de sa vie, George fut ébloui."⁸¹ He cites a letter from Buckingham to the French Ambassador

⁷⁵ Ibid., 11.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 233.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 171-74.

⁷⁸ Anne, sister of Philip IV of Spain, married Louis XIII of France in 1615 at the same time Philip wed Louis' sister Isabelle, thus making the two kings brothers-in-law twice over; Louis and Charles I became brothers-in-law in 1625 when the latter married the former's sister, Henrietta Maria. European dynastic connections were always mediievally dense. See Ruth Kleinman, *Anne of Austria, Queen of France* (Columbus OH, 1985); A. Lloyd Moote, *Louis XIII the Just* (Berkeley and London, 1989) esp. 147-48, 193-94.

⁷⁹ Alexandre Dumas, *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (Paris, 1844).

⁸⁰ Philippe Erlanger, *L'Enigme du Monde: George Villiers duc de Buckingham* (Paris, 1951).

⁸¹ Ibid., 125.

in 1628 as proof that the Duke was “un amant déçu”⁸² and recounts the presentation to an older, sadder Anne of Cardinal Mazarin by Richelieu, who said “Il vous plaira, Madame, il ressemble à M. de Buckingham.”⁸³ Apart from amplifying the high-level romance, Erlanger deals with the underlying political dynamic of the time, the competition between Buckingham and Cardinal Richelieu. He sees Richelieu as the clear victor,⁸⁴ although he is more attracted to the phenomenon of Buckingham, whom he likens to a fantastic, extinct creature at once deplored and desired by “notre époque sombre et maussade.”⁸⁵

v) Lockyer

The most detailed biography of Buckingham is Roger Lockyer's 1981 work.⁸⁶ It is a densely-packed, often difficult book, combining a chronological account of a multiplicity of political events and machinations, often with considerable stress on economic issues and influences. Unfortunately, Buckingham's involvement in things of art and culture are given scant attention (although, to be fair, the author admits his lack of interest in the topic)⁸⁷ and consist almost entirely of data about his collecting activities with emphasis laid on their competitive nature. Having seen the Spanish collections, for example, Buckingham was determined to equal or outdo them.⁸⁸ Concerning the quality of what he amassed, Lockyer is of the opinion that Buckingham's art collection was indisputably superior to Arundel's.⁸⁹ There is no equivalent observation, however, on the dynamic of the art-collecting relationship between Buckingham and King Charles. The element of competition was important, of course, but insisting on it as virtually the sole motivation for art

⁸² Ibid., 275.

⁸³ Ibid., 339.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 199, 342.

⁸⁵ Ibid., ii

⁸⁶ Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, First duke of Buckingham 1592-1628* (London and New York, 1981). Nowhere in this dense work does the author cite any of the previous biographies of Buckingham, with the exception of Wotton's; Lockyer's project was evidently to start from scratch.

⁸⁷ Ibid., xiii.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 214.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 410.

collecting has the effect of reinforcing the view of Buckingham as a reactive *parvenu* rather than the pro-active *parvenu* that he was, forming the artistic tastes of his era even as they simultaneously formed him.

Lockyer is, however, a political historian,⁹⁰ and as such, his overall assessment of Buckingham is naturally expressed in political terms, although with a surprisingly strong emotional overtone for such an otherwise relatively dispassionate biography. He sees the Duke's generally negative reputation as based on a false assumption, namely that the Parliamentarians of the time had achievable goals which Buckingham thwarted. Lockyer believes that the Commons hated and persecuted Buckingham because he had set an example of derring-do and greatness for England which they longed for but could never live up to. He was, in short, the personification of their own neuroses, and they succeeded in convincing not only themselves but subsequent generations that Buckingham was an enemy to everything that the name and history of England symbolised.⁹¹

Review of the literature on Buckingham: Historians

i) Clarendon

The pre-eminent historian of the years 1640-70, one of the most momentous periods in English history, is Edward Hyde, first Earl of Clarendon (1609-74). His position in early historiography is unique: he has shaped posterity's understanding of his time to such a degree that it is often difficult to decide whether something taken as a given about the period is in fact Clarendon's interpretation of the thing. In this respect, he occupies a position in the verbal realm not unlike Van Dyck's in the visual: the recorder as the creator of what he records. Clarendon has, in fact, become an object of literary study *per se*.⁹² This singular position has long been recognized: Horace Walpole said "Vandyke little thought, when he drew Sir Edward Hyde, that a greater master than himself was

⁹⁰ One of the standard histories of the period is Roger Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain 1471-1714*, 2nd ed. (London, 1985).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 474.

⁹² See, for example, H.R. Trevor-Roper, "Clarendon and the Practice of History," in *Milton and Clarendon: Papers on 17th Century English Historiography* (London, 1965); Christopher Ricks, "The Wit and Weight of Clarendon," in *Essays in Appreciation* (Oxford, 1996) 51-66.

sitting to him.”⁹³

Although his *magnum opus*, originally published in 1702-04 and often referred to simply as the *History*,⁹⁴ was written after Buckingham’s death about events he did not participate in, it is nevertheless one of the chief sources of information and opinion about the Duke. Clarendon includes a biographical sketch of Buckingham in the first book of his history. In this description are found many of the still-accepted notions about the Duke’s character, its virtues and its flaws, as well as certain factual details⁹⁵ and anecdotes, which continue to be woven into discussions of Buckingham (the present one included).

Clarendon did not, it is fair to say, know Buckingham personally. He was only nineteen when the Duke was killed, and until at least 1625, was living with his family in Wiltshire or in student lodgings at Oxford. He came to London in 1625 or 1626, so it is at least possible that he saw Buckingham in person and may have actually met him in some brief, formal way. In any event, Clarendon’s assessment of Buckingham is clear: he was a man whose influence had been totally negative in the realm of politics and whose death was, if not a blessing, at least a relief in that it necessitated great changes at the top.

Clarendon sees Buckingham as a phenomenon rather than a necessary part of the socio-political structure and process. The Duke’s admittedly extraordinary career was based, he says, “upon no other advantage or recommendation, than of the beauty and gracefulness and becomingness of his person.” And he insists on this point in the very same paragraph: “his first introduction into favour was purely from the handsomeness of his person.”⁹⁶ Clearly, Clarendon does not, in his heart, approve. This problem is a difficult one for him to deal with: as a devoted royalist, he does not want to criticize kings; as a diligent conservative, he feels that the royal method of governing has been misguided.

⁹³ Horace Walpole, *A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England* (London, 1796).

⁹⁴ Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, 2 vols., (Oxford, 1844). The author divided his history into sixteen ‘books;’ the original edition of 1702-04 consisted of 3 folio volumes. Many editions have appeared since, notably the 6-volume one in 1888. The edition used here is a plain buckram-bound affair, presumably intended to be affordable to a wide audience; it does not employ the numbered paragraph system of other later editions.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 4. Clarendon erroneously calls Buckingham the eldest son of his father’s ‘second bed.’

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 4.

He is baffled by the transfer of Buckingham's influence on James to Charles. He calls it, in characteristic style, "a rare felicity; seldom known and in which the expectation of very many was exceedingly disappointed" and he credits the situation to Buckingham's opportunity during the escapade to Spain in 1623.⁹⁷ This trip, which Clarendon says was entirely Buckingham's idea,⁹⁸ gave him the chance to make himself invaluable to the Prince and to persuade Charles that he needed no other counsel.⁹⁹ A bad influence on everyone, shallow and egocentric, albeit a charming, affable, non-vindictive, visually impressive man: this is the Clarendon verdict on Buckingham. Not entirely surprisingly, Clarendon ends his character sketch with a lengthy description of the apparent spate of stories predicting a violent and untimely death for the increasingly unpopular duke.¹⁰⁰ It is as if he is consigning Buckingham to the realm of sorcery or witchcraft, which was so much a part of seventeenth-century psychology. But he cannot dispose of him quite so easily, for he notes that, after Buckingham's death, "the king admitted very few into any degree of trust, who had ever discovered themselves to be enemies of the duke."¹⁰¹ Buckingham continued to be a bad influence even from the grave.

ii) 19th- and early 20th-century historians¹⁰²

One of the most famous of 19th-century chroniclers of British history, T.B. Macaulay, does not mention Buckingham in his *magnum opus* ¹⁰³ which became the classic of Victorian historiography. Since Macaulay subtitles his work *From the Reign of James II*, the omission is not entirely surprising, although much of Volume 1 of the history

⁹⁷ Ibid., I, 5.

⁹⁸ Ibid., I, 5-7. The author describes in great detail, as if he had himself been present, the various heated conversations and confrontations between King James, Prince Charles and Buckingham over this matter. This illustrates both the pleasures and the pitfalls of Clarendon's work: what appears to be eye-witness reportage is, of course, no such thing.

⁹⁹ Ibid., I, 11.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., I, 18-19.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., I, 13. Clarendon repeats this observation in I, 395.

¹⁰² In a historiographical universe which is almost infinitely vast, this selection is necessarily limited to the best-known and/or most influential figures.

¹⁰³ Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England*, 7 vols. (London, 1858).

consists of a *précis* of events prior to 1685 and in the sections on James I and Charles I, Buckingham's name does not appear. Macaulay's view of English history before the Glorious Revolution of 1688 is like a medieval churchman's view of human events before the advent of Christianity: it was all a primitive prologue to the real and proper saga of man's earthly progress.

S.R. Gardiner¹⁰⁴ is the pre-eminent authority of his day on the Stuart period and remains a touchstone for all historians concerned with the seventeenth century. There is no doubt that Gardiner considers Buckingham a central figure (one section of his collected work is entitled *A History of England under the Duke of Buckingham and Charles I*) and his fundamental project is to separate the Duke's two historical roles, favourite and minister, into which his career might be seen naturally to divide. This is perfectly congruent with the belief of most 19th-century Englishmen that the history of their country was essentially the history of Parliament, its birth, maturation, triumph and exportation as the most perfect system of government ever achieved. Thus, Buckingham as favourite of James I becomes a symbol of the parliamentary system in what might be called its early adolescence, the period of Elizabeth and her successor, a passionate but inchoate time. In this sense, Gardiner speaks about Buckingham as possessing the "strong animal spirits" necessary to attract the "foolish fondness" of King James,¹⁰⁵ thus, at least perfunctorily, recognizing a gay relationship of some sort between the two. Still, Buckingham's early career is trivialized as being one solely motivated and sustained by vanity and whim.¹⁰⁶ Later, during the reign of Charles I, when Parliament was attaining the critical mass of adulthood which would result in its victory in the Civil War, Buckingham is seen as a minister. Such a status cannot be understood in the modern sense, of course, in which ministers emanate from the elected body rather than the hereditary one. Nevertheless, Gardiner maintains his distinction, finding the explanation of Buckingham's unusual influence in the belief that his purpose in befriending Charles was always duplicitous in that

¹⁰⁴ Gardiner's studies of the Stuart era were published from the 1860's onward and appeared together as Samuel Rawson Gardiner, *History of England from the Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War 1603-1642*, 10 vols. (London and New York, 1883-84).

¹⁰⁵ Gardiner, 1869, I, 82-84.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 155.

he had always aimed at being the master of the King and the real controller of the destinies of the State. That he achieved his ambition is acknowledged by Gardiner, who having elevated him to a role more politically acceptable—minister rather than favourite—then proceeds to damn Buckingham as among the most incapable ministers that England has ever had.¹⁰⁷ Regardless of Gardiner's verdict, the bifurcation of Buckingham's *persona* into 'favorite' and 'minister' not only serves the historiographical agenda regarding the evolution of the English constitution but also neatly reinforces contemporary morality. All the sexual dimensions of the favorite are relegated to the outmoded structure and, at the same time, any hint of such dimensions in the relationship between Buckingham and Charles are finessed and foreclosed.

An even more pejorative assessment of Buckingham is made by George Trevelyan, the ultimate exponent of British imperialism, whose work became, and is still, one of the standard texts covering the Stuart period.¹⁰⁸ Trevelyan does not theorize as much as Gardiner, preferring a more uncompromising approach: his chapter on Buckingham is replete with terms like "specious," "incompetence," and "mortgaged the future of England."¹⁰⁹ He goes so far as to call Buckingham "the evil match-maker" of King Charles' marriage to Henrietta Maria of France. This most succinctly represents his, and other traditional historians', opinion and evaluation of George Villiers.

iii) Later 20th-century historians

C.V. Wedgwood ranks as one of the foremost authorities on 17th-century England and Europe.¹¹⁰ Although she has written extensively about the period of the Civil War and her books on the epoch are among the most widely-read, her references to Buckingham are relatively few and she seems to see him as a somewhat unsettling dream-figure. Whether

¹⁰⁷ Gardiner, 1883-84, VI, 358.

¹⁰⁸ G.M. Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts* (London, 1904). There have been over twenty editions of this work and it has been reprinted as recently as 1985.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 124-48.

¹¹⁰ See C.V. Wedgwood, *Richelieu and the French Monarchy* (London, 1949); *The Great Rebellion*, 2 vols. (London, 1955-58); *Thomas Wentworth, first earl of Strafford 1593-1641: a re-evaluation* (New York, 1962); *The Trial of Charles I* (London, 1964).

this is a conscious exclusion of someone deemed extraneous to her project or a subconscious writing-out of an inconvenient influence is not clear. Wedgwood does, however, acknowledge Buckingham's role from time to time, particularly in the sense that he was someone whom the King would back, no matter what the circumstance and no matter what the cost.¹¹¹ She offers, as well, one of the most vivid restatements of Clarendon's belief in Buckingham's posthumous power over King Charles: "The King endured his agonizing loss with an unnatural calm, veiling his feelings even to his nearest friends, but the murder scarred his memory for life and he never forgave his people for the heartless rejoicing with which they celebrated the death of the man he had loved so dearly."¹¹²

Another historian who has written extensively on the 17th century is H.R. Trevor-Roper.¹¹³ His particular interests lie in the realm of belief systems and their causes and effects. Sometimes, this takes the form of theological or doctrinal history; in other cases, the dynamics of how and why human beings attend to their spiritual lives is the focus. Concern with matters of religion was, of course, central to the 17th century, when everything from personal relationships to political fissures were expressed and delineated in terms of religious rivalries. For Trevor-Roper, this is the interesting aspect of Buckingham's life and career, particularly insofar as it intersects with the life and career of William Laud (1573-1645), Archbishop of Canterbury (1633-45). Laud was the theological force (as King Charles was the political) behind the concept of a religious middle road between the extremes of factional Protestantism and corrupted Catholicism, an Anglican *via media*, continuous with the English past and with all the secular and aesthetic strength of the Roman church but without the unacceptable political claims.¹¹⁴ To implement such a strategy, Laud set about to reassert the ceremony, decorum and aesthetic dimensions of worship, both in the liturgy and in the physical fabric of the church. This

¹¹¹ Wedgwood, 1962, 53.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 72.

¹¹³ See H.R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud*, 2nd ed., (London, 1962); *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans* (London, 1987); *From Counter-Reformation to Glorious Revolution* (London, 1992).

¹¹⁴ Trevor-Roper, 1992, xi.

strategy he famously called 'the Beauty of Holiness' and the idea became the basis, literally and metaphorically, of the great struggle for the soul of England. Buckingham was Laud's early patron and champion; as early as 1621, Laud was able to work theological persuasion upon a Buckingham apparently leaning towards converting to Catholicism to please his newly-converted and always-influential mother.¹¹⁵ In 1622, he became Buckingham's chaplain, a position of great importance and closeness: Laud diligently recorded his dreams about Buckingham, some of which have a dramatically intimate tone.¹¹⁶ After 1625, Buckingham installed Laud in the favour of King Charles and the partnership which ultimately led to disaster was formed. Trevor-Roper's opinion of Buckingham is neither friendly nor hostile. Recalling in a way the distinction made by Gardiner, he says: "The volatile favourite had his streak of religiosity and confided in his stolid and fussy confessor: and Laud could not but be dazzled by the magnificence of the young minister who both raised him to a position of influence and listened to his advice."¹¹⁷ But he sees the death of Buckingham as a good thing, a conciliatory event, both for his biographical subject, Laud, as well as for the country.

Trevor-Roper also has something to say about Buckingham and art, specifically as a collector of it. He examines the great changes in the art market during the 17th century, noting that the amassing of collections, once a royal monopoly, became an aristocratic fashion indulged in by *arrivistes* (like Buckingham) who, having begun by following a trend, actually become in the end relatively knowledgeable collectors and even occasionally imaginative patrons of art.¹¹⁸ Again, his opinion of the Duke is equivocal.

Another balanced viewpoint on Buckingham is that of Conrad Russell, a political historian known for being a leader among revisionist writers on England in the 17th century. Russell's central objection to the traditional view of the early Stuart period as one

¹¹⁵ Trevor-Roper, 1962, 60.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 76; 87-89. Unlike Laud himself, the author avoids detailed descriptions of any of the dreams. See James Bliss (ed.), *The Works of William Laud*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1853) esp. III, 170. For an interpretation, see Charles Carlton, "The Dream Life of Archbishop Laud," *History Today* 36 (December, 1986): 9-14; Alan Bray, "Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England," *History Workshop Journal* 29 (1990) 1-19.

¹¹⁷ Trevor-Roper, 1962, 88.

¹¹⁸ H.R. Trevor-Roper, *The Plunder of the Arts in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1970) 10.

of conflict between court and country, or government and opposition, is that neither of those positions is institutionally or ideologically sound. It is, he maintains, impossible to oppose government policy when there is no clear government policy. Both under James and Buckingham and Charles and Buckingham, lack of consistent policy prevailed, and the dynamics of both court and country politics were factional rather than ideological. Russell sees this lack of predictability can be a good thing, avoiding as it does the problem of ideological polarization which destroyed Charles after 1640.¹¹⁹

As far as Buckingham himself is concerned, Russell's opinion is mixed. "Not exceptionally well-endowed with brains"¹²⁰ contrasts with the view that Buckingham seems to have had "more sagacity than he has been given credit for" and that his career was not entirely due to his homosexual relationship with the King.¹²¹

One of today's most prolific historians of the Stuart period, Kevin Sharpe,¹²² follows Russell's lead in seeing the politics of the period as a matter of factionalism and personal relationships rather than the dialectical opposition of parliament vs monarchy. To political history, then, he adds a broadly-based psychohistorical overtone. Sharpe views Charles I, his chief subject and interest, as neither a pawn of historical forces (the traditional view) nor as an inept individual endowed with power unused or misused to the point of altering history (the revisionist view). Instead, Sharpe believes Charles to have been a much more dominant personality with both a clear vision of where he wanted to take the country and a strategy to implement that vision. Nothing short of a moral reformation of England was Charles' goal and the composition and comportment of his own court was to provide the model for it.¹²³ In this project, Buckingham presents a problem. The widely-detested favourite and lover of the former king had transferred his power intact, if not

¹¹⁹ Russell, 1979, 9-10.

¹²⁰ Conrad Russell, *The Crisis of Parliaments: English History 1509-1660* (Oxford, 1971) 286.

¹²¹ Russell, 1979, 10.

¹²² Kevin Sharpe, *Politics and Ideas in Early Stuart England* (Oxford, 1989); *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (London and New Haven, 1992).

¹²³ Kevin Sharpe, "The image of virtue: the court and household of Charles I 1625-42," in David Starkey (ed.), *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London, 1987) 226-60.

augmented, to the new king, so any credible reformation of anything was impossible. Sharpe sidesteps this conundrum by focusing on the years after Buckingham's death but the psychohistorian in him is obliged to deal with the problem of Buckingham's influence on Charles. He notes that while much attention has been paid to the strikingly personal letters between James and Buckingham, those between Charles and the Duke, which he calls "uncharacteristically intimate," deserve more study.¹²⁴ Ultimately, Sharpe's conclusion is that Buckingham acted as enabler for the unformed Charles, someone who made it possible for the Prince to come onto the stage of public affairs secure in the knowledge of the support of a personal and political friendship that was never to be repeated during his life.¹²⁵ Moreover, according to Sharpe, Charles saw his friendship with Buckingham as one of equals¹²⁶ and blamed the existing corrupted parliamentary system for the Duke's military failures in Cadiz and La Rochelle with their attendant loss of national and personal honour.¹²⁷ Hence there was the necessity for reformation, a need which became to the King shockingly clear after Buckingham's murder. Although Sharpe does not say so, by this logic Buckingham is the unacknowledged cause of Charles' ultimately disastrous decision to rule without parliament. It was Buckingham's presence that enabled Charles to perform politically; it was the Duke's absence that prevented him from performing successfully.

Review of the literature on Buckingham: Art Historians

Buckingham's place in the history of art, for better or for worse, is the subject of this study. The views of art historians on the matter, therefore, are obviously the most germane to any such discussion. These views are examined more fully in subsequent chapters on specific aspects of and events in the Duke's involvement in the realm of art. Nevertheless, a brief review of what, in general terms, some art historians have said is useful here.

¹²⁴ Sharpe, 1992, 46.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

i) Vertue and Walpole

George Vertue (1684-1756) and Horace Walpole (1717-97) may fairly be called the fathers of Art History in England. Their work has become inextricably linked, since the latter based much of his writing on art, originally published between 1761 and 1771,¹²⁸ on the notebooks of the former.¹²⁹

Vertue was apparently an indefatigable snoop, with enough charm to gain access to any house in England where any items of artistic interest might be found. His notebooks are crammed with data—both his personal observations as well as information provided by the owners of the thousands of works of art he saw—and, often, little sketches of things, signatures, monograms, etc. All of this material was intended to be synthesized into an encyclopedic *History of the Arts in England*, which Vertue never actually compiled. The notebooks remain, however, one of the main sources of information on artists and collections in Britain in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Buckingham's name appears regularly in the notebooks, both in connection with specific works as well as in more general entries. Vertue includes references to Buckingham's relationships with King James and Prince Charles,¹³⁰ his friendship and dealings with Rubens,¹³¹ and his association with Balthazar Gerbier.¹³² He includes a (partial) catalogue of Buckingham's collection.¹³³ And he lists the actual images of the Duke which he had discovered: fourteen portraits and five group portraits. All of this continues to be primary source material for present-day art historians.

Horace Walpole, who finally realized Vertue's project, was the very model of an 18th-century man of sensibility. An eccentric aesthete, he was a writer of gothic romances

¹²⁸ Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, Ralph N. Wornum, ed., 3 vols. (London, 1862).

¹²⁹ George Vertue, *Notebooks* The Walpole Society 18 (1929-30); 20 (1931-32); 22 (1933-34); 24 (1935-36); 26 (1937-38).

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 157, 192-93.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, II, 102.

¹³² *Ibid.*, IV, 3, 27, 118, 192.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, IV, 68-69.

and the leader of the Gothic Revival in architecture and decoration. His free adaptation of Vertue's material, published in the 1760's, made him the Vasari of England. It is structured as a series of biographies of artists and engravers, which include lists and descriptions of their major works, interspersed with essays on various aspects of art. There is a chapter, for example, on Charles I¹³⁴ in which references to Buckingham appear. Walpole asserts that it was after his accession that Charles began to form his collection, yet stresses the importance of the experience of art he and Buckingham had in Spain in 1623.¹³⁵ He speaks of the difficulties of persuading continental artists to come to England, mentioning particularly Buckingham's unsuccessful overtures to Carlo Maratti in Rome.¹³⁶ He reiterates the story of the Earl of Arundel offering Buckingham £7000 for a painting by Titian.¹³⁷ And like Vertue, he makes much of the person of Gerbier.¹³⁸ Otherwise, Buckingham's name occurs occasionally in Walpole in the biographies of artists who may have had some dealings with the Duke.

ii) Some recent Art Historians

In the years following, Buckingham's reputation in the art world continued to decline in parallel with his reputation in the political arena. Mainstream art historians tend to treat him in one of several essentially pejorative ways: as the 'junior partner' to such people as the King and the Earl of Arundel in England's golden age of collecting, to borrow Ellis Waterhouse's phrase;¹³⁹ as an uppity parvenu who, in the view of Roy Strong, built up his role as art lover as a kind of compensation for his lack of lineage;¹⁴⁰ or as a tasteless spendthrift whose interest in art, in Jonathan Brown's opinion, was simply one of quick

¹³⁴ Walpole, 1862, I, 261-301.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 264.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 269.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 297. This must be apocryphal or a misreading of a document: paintings by Titian were then selling for as low as £40 and this particular piece was bought by Gerbier for Buckingham for £275 in 1621. See François Portier, "Prices Paid for Italian Pictures in the Stuart Age," *Journal of the History of Collections* 8, no. 1 (1996) 57.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 274-82.

¹³⁹ Ellis Waterhouse, *Painting in Britain 1530 to 1790* (Harmondsworth, 1953) 33.

¹⁴⁰ Roy Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales and England's lost Renaissance* (New York, 1986) 57.

acquisition of a quantity of art made even more artificial by an overriding concern for dazzle and brilliance of effect in the pieces he bought; this in sharp contrast to Arundel, who was, according to Brown, imbued with the love of art.¹⁴¹ David Howarth, in his work on Arundel,¹⁴² actually treats Buckingham a little better than that, calling him a “collector of panache”¹⁴³ and crediting him with the realization that art could be useful to him, “the concept of being a Renaissance magnifico was a valuable asset which he almost certainly owed to Arundel.”¹⁴⁴

There have been other balancing voices as well. Gregory Martin has noted that Buckingham had an eye for talent: his interest in Rubens was instrumental in kindling King Charles’ admiration for the Flemish artist.¹⁴⁵ Oliver Millar has suggested the same thing in regards to two leading exponents of the new Caravaggist style in painting, Gerrit Van Honthorst and Orazio Gentileschi.¹⁴⁶ Millar also has intimated that Buckingham was able to inspire an artist like Mytens to produce an uncharacteristically accomplished and original piece in his portrait of the Duke.¹⁴⁷

Conclusion

It is probably fair to say that almost all the historical and art-historical opinions and evaluations of Buckingham are supportable in some way. From a structuralist point of view, he can be seen as a threat to the political system of his time; it is easy to point to many things that he did which caused major problems for England, both in the short- and long-term. Those who have viewed him as an individual phenomenon—whether negatively, as a one-of-a-kind aberrant personality, or positively, as a prototypical yet

¹⁴¹ Jonathan Brown, *Kings and Connoisseurs: Collecting Art in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Princeton, 1995) 24. See also Graham Parry, *The Golden Age Restor'd: the culture of the Stuart Court 1603-42* (Manchester, 1981) 136-45.

¹⁴² David Howarth, *Lord Arundel and his Circle* (New Haven and London, 1985).

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 200.

¹⁴⁵ Gregory Martin, “Rubens and Buckingham’s ‘fayrie ile,’” *The Burlington Magazine* 108 (1966) 613-18.

¹⁴⁶ Oliver Millar, “Charles I, Honthorst and Van Dyck,” *The Burlington Magazine* 96 (1954) 36-42.

¹⁴⁷ Oliver Millar, “Some Painters and Charles I,” *The Burlington Magazine* 104 (1962) 324-30.

flawed swashbuckler—have plenty to go on too. Looking at Buckingham as as part of the cultural milieu, the same two views easily present themselves. He can be characterized as typifying the acquisitiveness of the era, one of the perpetrators of the seventeenth-century “plunder of the arts,” to use Trevor-Roper’s phrase. Or, he can be seen as an accidental star, briefly flashing into fashion, then disappearing as quickly as his expensive clothes and houses.

What has not been common is a broader perspective on Buckingham, a view of him as simultaneously and necessarily a creature of, and creator of, the style of his era; that is, through the lens of the ideas of Anthony Giddens. From this angle, the socio-political structure of favouritism permitted—not to say required—the emergence of a Buckingham, but the system itself consisted merely of the behaviour of the incumbent favourite, namely Buckingham, and was continuously redefined by him. When this same structuration theory is applied to art patronage and collecting, a similar equation can be stated: the prevailing views and tastes both formed and focussed those of any given individual—even an increasingly all-powerful favourite—while the expressions of that individual’s aesthetic predilections necessarily transformed the way that the rest of society thought about art. And now is the time to begin to explore how the presence and performance of Buckingham both suited and refashioned the visual culture of his time.

CHAPTER 1

BUCKINGHAM: THE ART OF BEING THE FAVOURITE

George Villiers was the favourite of two successive kings of England—a “rare felicity” in the words of Clarendon, one of the leading political observers of the seventeenth century,¹ who, like many of his contemporaries, regretted the instance while accepting the institution. But in today’s political universe, the concept of The Favourite is decidedly out of favour. In western discourse, in fact, the idea simply no longer exists. Elected authority rules. Any other manifestation of political power is instantly suspect: the notion of appointed authority is seen as vestigial at best, innately corrupt at worst. In both Canada and Britain, the unelected bodies of government—Senate and House of Lords—are under attack for being both superannuated and dishonest. Even in the United States, where powerful cabinet positions are appointed by the President, there is an increasingly gruelling and often humiliating confirmation process in which the duly elected sit in judgement of the merely selected. The idea that anyone not voted-in should hold power is held in such low esteem that even elected officials’ spouses who appear too aware of government policy are subject to widespread suspicion or disapproval.

A casual observer might, therefore, come to the conclusion that The Favourite—a person wielding great power through an intimate, biological or non-biological relation to a political leader—is an extinct species. Not so, however. It is, for instance, alive and well in England today in the relationship of Tony Blair and his adviser, Peter Mandelson. While an exact congruence between the seventeenth and twentieth-century situations does not exist, there are certain similarities. Blair represents the arrival of a new dynasty, the Labour Party, in England just as the Stuarts replaced the Tudors in the early 17th century.

¹ Clarendon, 1844, I, 11.

Mandelson is a friend of the Prime Minister, intimately involved in the leader's political strategies and tactics, though unelected to anything. When he did run for election to a position on his party's executive committee, he actually lost; the loss, however, did not lose him any power with his patron. Moreover, Mandelson was the chief adviser to previous Labour leaders and, over the years, has become alternately lionized and vilified by politicians and public alike. Blair, who kept Mandelson on and keeps him very close—a "rare felicity" perhaps—has said that "the Labour party will come of age when it learns to love Peter."² Compare that to King James' reported words in 1617 to a council which he believed unheeding of George Villiers: "They should be quite clear that he loved the earl of Buckingham more than any other man, and more than all those who were here present."³ Again, the point here is neither a specific one about the individuals involved, nor a general one about British political history. Rather, it is a reminder that not only are all politics local but also that all politics are personal too. For that reason, there will always be The Favourite in some form or other and the incumbent will always be powerful.

The favourite in theory and practice

While the twentieth century seems, to use a contemporary cliché, in denial regarding the existence and importance of favourites in public life, the early modern era, particularly the seventeenth century, might be called 'the age of the political favourite.' During this period, not only was Buckingham all-powerful in England, but in both France and Spain, the reigning monarchs Louis XIII and Philip III and IV depended almost totally on personal intimates.

Why this should be so is beyond the scope of this study, although one reason might be socio-politically based: the rise of physically and emotionally discrete nation-states meant that the heads of those states could successfully entertain new ambitions of independent behaviour too. Increasingly freeing themselves from such structures as transnational ecclesiastical authority, they could also alter, if not altogether discard, other traditional constraints, like the power of the hereditary nobility to fill the ranks of the

² Siôn Simon, "The Peter to come," *The Spectator* (4 October 1997) 19-20.

³ Lockyer, 1981, 43.

monarch's chief counsellors. They could, and did, elevate relatively low-born people to positions of political eminence, thereby at one stroke reducing the status of the old noble class and assuring themselves of absolute control of their wholly-beholden new advisers. Intelligent rulers also realized the specific political uses of a favourite. He/she functioned as a straw dog, drawing criticism of the monarch to himself and away from the throne.⁴

Another view of the reasons for the proliferation of powerful favourites takes the position that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were periods of great instability, characterized by inflation, population growth and violent religious schism; that social and political survival required strength at the centre: absolute monarchy. However, kings chosen by God were not always genetically equipped to rule intelligently, energetically or sensitively. Thus some monarchs, out of confusion, laziness or obliviousness, eased the burden of their lifetime assignments by transferring the responsibilities of the day-to-day business of governing to someone in whom they had personal confidence and over whom they believed they had complete control.⁵

How the seventeenth century itself saw the phenomenon and role of the favourite—at least in their English manifestations—is summed up by Francis Bacon (1561-1626), the philosopher and early articulator of modern scientific methodology, in one of his essays.⁶ Bacon distinguishes four degrees of honour in subjects of a monarch (*literatim*):

“*Participes Curarum*; those upon whom Princes doe discharge the greatest Weight of their Affaires; Their Right Hands, as we call them. The Next are, *Duces Belli*, Great Leaders; Such as are Princes Lieutenants, and doe them Notable Seruices in the Warres. The Third are, *Gratiosi*, Favourites; Such as exceed not this Scantling To be Solace to the Souveraigne, and Harmlesse to the People. And the Fourth, *Negotiis pares*; Such as haue great Places vnder Princes, and execute their Places with Sufficiency.”⁷

⁴ Lockyer, 1981, 473.

⁵ Roger Lockyer, “An English ‘valido’? Buckingham and James I,” in Ollard and Tudor-Craig, 1986, 45-58.

⁶ Francis Bacon, *Essays* (London and New York, 1955) .

⁷ *Ibid.*, 220-21.

As to which category Bacon would have assigned to Buckingham, it would not be far-fetched to suggest that he might have called the Duke 'all of the above.' The essays, first published in 1597, with a dedication to Bacon's brother, Anthony, were greatly revised and expanded in the version which appeared in 1625, now dedicated to the Duke, then at the height of his powers. In fact, the relationship between Bacon, another older man with a taste for beautiful young men, and Buckingham was fairly intense. It began in 1615, when King James suggested that his Lord Chancellor, Bacon, act as mentor to his new favourite. Thereafter, there were ups and downs in the friendship, but in the end, when in 1621 Bacon was indicted by Parliament for financial corruption, Buckingham's was the sole vote in favour of Bacon's acquittal.⁸

The twentieth-century psychohistorian Elizabeth Wirth Marvick has focussed on the role of the favourite, particularly the seventeenth-century version thereof, in her investigation of the emotional context of decision-making.⁹ She attempts to identify recurring patterns of types of interpersonal relationships and to show how such private emotional dynamics are transformed into public behaviour, for better or for worse. Distinguishing between a favourite—someone who delivers a prince's view of the world to the world—and a factotum—someone who works to change the world and then delivers those changes to the ruler—Marvick also divides the function of serving a superior figure into two types, the 'affective' and the 'instrumental.' In a clinical-statistical fashion, she devises a matrix to describe graphically how a given individual negotiates this territory.¹⁰ A person can, for example, move from being a childhood friend or care-giver of a prince to being a public figure with or without becoming a favourite. Presumably, although less discussed, the reverse is true and a political figure can become a friend of a ruler without taking on the role of favourite. These concepts are further refined into the identification of two patterns of favoritism which especially lend themselves to discussion from the point of view of psychoanalytic theory, that of the surrogate father and that of the substitute sibling.

⁸ Lockyer, 1981, 95-100.

⁹ Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, "Favorites in Early Modern Europe: A Recurring Psychopolitical Role," *Journal of Psychohistory* 10 (1983) 463-89.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 465.

The former is exemplified by the relationship of Henry VIII of England and Cardinal Wolsey, and Philip IV of Spain and the Count-Duke Olivares; the latter by that of Louis XIII of France and the duc de Luynes.¹¹ (Louis' relationship with his other, historically more important favourite, Cardinal Richelieu, oscillates between the two, in Marvick's analysis.)¹² As far as Buckingham and his two royal masters are concerned, the triangularity of the situation complicates the investigation almost too much for any matrix-based approach to deal with, and Marvick does not deal with Buckingham in depth. What is relevant to him in her discussion is an acknowledgment of the role of humour in the phenomenon of favouritism. Either directly—"I have made His Eminence laugh!" was the young Cardinal Mazarin's explanation of his increasing influence with the old favourite-minister Cardinal Richelieu¹³—or indirectly through what Marvick calls a "complicity of naughtiness,"¹⁴ a favourite's ability to amuse a prince is often the key to his or her advancement. This dimension was indeed central to Buckingham's career, although most historians likely would agree with Marvick when she says (though not specifically of Buckingham) that such a component does not bode well for the interests of the state.

Roger Lockyer's model for the analysis of the phenomenon of the favourite is different. He proposes three categories, or stages, of favourite, which may or may not be distinct chronologically. First, there are 'Companions,' defined as the prince's friends, who entertain the sovereign and who are treated in turn to money and titles. Often, there is a sexual dimension to this role.¹⁵ The second category is that of 'Political Favourite,' who use the monarch's affection as a springboard to an independent power-base. This is the type of favourite most nearly corresponding to the modern (Prime) Minister. Finally, the

¹¹ Ibid., 468, 473-75.

¹² The author is particularly interested in the French experience: see Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, *Louis XIII: the making of a king* (New Haven, 1986) and *The Young Richelieu: a psychoanalytic approach to leadership* (Chicago, 1983).

¹³ Marvick, 1983, 467.

¹⁴ Ibid., 476.

¹⁵ Lockyer, however, avoids ascribing a sexual dimension to the relationship between James and Buckingham.

pure favourite, or 'Valido,' who is different in that the key to his¹⁶ relationship is the dependence not of the favourite but of the monarch. In other words, the ruler has consciously or unconsciously abdicated his authority but relies on the favourite to sustain it. In Lockyer's words, the favourite is "the agent who reconciles the theory of monarchical absolutism with the reality of monarchical incapacity."¹⁷

In terms of structuration theory, then, the power of the favourite cannot be separated into socio-political and psychoanalytic terms. True, he or she exists and functions within a certain set of circumstances; and, of course, every instance of favouritism is psychologically unique. But the circumstances determine the uniqueness while the uniqueness alters the circumstance in an on-going and never entirely predictable way.

Moving into the realm of art, there is a painting by Anthony Van Dyck from 1620-21 entitled *The Continnence of Scipio* that illustrates both Buckingham's own (re)interpretation of the concept of The Favourite as well as the recognition of his unique position by others in the court structure. Before examining this work and its significance, however, the complex and bifurcated narrative of the career of Buckingham should be known.

Buckingham and James I

When George Villiers met James Stuart, King of England, Scotland and Ireland, in August, 1614, he personally entered into the structure of absolute monarchy, with its attendant predilection for, and requirement of, favourites. He would be greatly empowered by the system even while the system controlled him. Becoming and remaining The Favourite formed him while he forever re-formed the position of favourite. Ultimately, his performance had consequences both intended and unintended, and transformed the spirit and style of the times. But initially, of course, he was only able to perform because he had been dubbed an actor in the play being written by King James.

¹⁶ Neither Lockyer nor Marvick ascribe real power to any of the famous female favourites of the age. Lockyer consigns Madame de Pompadour and the mistresses of Charles II to the realm of the sexual 'Companion.' Marvick says that the power of Madame du Barry and even Madame de Maintenon was only marginally political. The present author does not agree.

¹⁷ Lockyer, 1986, 49-50.

Here, a brief chronology of biographical events in the life of James I is useful.¹⁸ Son of Mary Queen of Scots (1542-87) and her cousin Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley (1546-67), James was born in 1566 at Edinburgh Castle. Baptised a Catholic, he was crowned Protestant King of Scotland in 1567 after his mother was forced by a rebellious Protestant aristocracy to abdicate. The infant monarch came under the control of a succession of regents—the Earls of Moray, Lennox, Mar and Morton—and this manifestation of the political instability of Scotland, which resulted in James' being held captive by conspiring nobles on more than one occasion, make it almost miraculous that he survived at all. In spite of the turbulence, James was unusually well-educated by tutors who noticed the boy's intellectual ability and curiosity. This erudition was a source of solace and pride to James all his life.¹⁹

In 1579, the first of James' favourites appeared in the form of Esmé Stuart (1562-83), a cousin from the French side of the family. Although he brought glamour and excitement to James' rather severely circumscribed adolescent life, his political status and ambitions caused havoc, resulting in his return to France in 1582.

In 1589, James married Princess Anne of Denmark (1575-1619), a woman who was, unusually for the times, as well-educated as he.²⁰ She was also rather flighty and, embarrassingly for James, tended towards Catholicism. They had seven children, three of whom survived into adulthood: Henry (1594-1612), Elizabeth (1596-1662) and Charles (1600-49). With heirs, James' Scottish throne became more secure. Eventually, upon the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603, James, as the nearest Protestant relative,²¹ succeeded to

¹⁸ The standard biography remains D.H. Willson, *King James VI and I* (London, 1956). Other useful accounts are William McElwee, *The Wisest Fool in Christendom* (London, 1958); for a focus on the king's literary side, David Mathew, *King James I* (London, 1967); for a questionable psychological approach, Antonia Fraser, *King James* (London, 1974).

¹⁹ James himself was a poet: see Allan F. Westcott, ed., *New Poems by James I of England*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1966). He wrote political treatises: see James Craigie, ed., *Minor prose Works of King James VI and I* (Edinburgh, 1982). Between 1604 and 1611, he presided over, and contributed to, a new translation of the Bible into English—the 'King James Version.'

²⁰ E.C. Williams, *Anne of Denmark* (London, 1970). For a discussion of Anne's literary and cultural influence, see Leeds Barroll, "The Court of the First Stuart Queen," in Linda Levy Peck, ed., *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991) 191-208.

²¹ He was related to Elizabeth through his great-grandfather, James IV of Scotland, who had married Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII.

the throne of England, thus personally uniting the kingdoms.²² His early experiences in England seemed to reiterate those in Scotland: plots to destabilize his control abounded, most notably the Gunpowder Plot of 1605.

The second of James' publicly-acknowledged favourites came on the scene in 1607. Robert Carr (1587-1645) was a Scot who had migrated to England to seek his fortune. He found it in the king, becoming Viscount Rochester in 1611 and Earl of Somerset in 1613. Even though he and his wife were convicted in 1615 in a scandalous murder trial,²³ his sentence was mitigated by the king and he continued to wield considerable power even while being supplanted by George Villiers.

In 1612, James' eldest son, Prince Henry (b. 1594) died, making the younger surviving son, Charles, heir to the throne. The following year, James' daughter, Elizabeth, married Frederick, Elector Palatine (1596-1632), one of the leading Protestant rulers in Europe.²⁴ This was part of James' grand political strategy: to achieve transcontinental religious and political peace through dynastic association. He proposed to balance Elizabeth's union with the marriage of Prince Charles to the Infanta of Spain, a scheme which played a key role in the intricate relationship of Charles, James and Buckingham during the early 1620's.

During his reign, James sparred with the four Parliaments he called (1604, 1614, 1621, 1624). He did not at heart believe in the idea of parliaments, although he begrudgingly acknowledged the need for some form of public approval of his management of the country.²⁵

In March, 1625, James died of a general deterioration of his health, attended by his son and his favourite, both of whom would later be implicated in the King's death.²⁶

²² They were not constitutionally united until 1707.

²³ See David Lindley, *The Trials of Frances Howard: Fact and Fiction at the Court of King James* (London and New York, 1993).

²⁴ The couple became King and Queen of Bohemia in 1619, were defeated by Catholic forces in 1620 and spent the rest of their lives in exile in Holland as the objects of international wrangling. The present Queen of England is descended from Elizabeth and Frederick.

²⁵ James' basic political beliefs are stated in his treatises *The True Lawe of free Monarchies* (1598) and *Basiliikon Doron* (1599). See Craigie, 1982.

²⁶ Lockyer, 1981, 233-34; Williamson, 1940, 170-74.

A dramatic, not to say melodramatic, life: James was, in today's terms, a survivor. As such, he had—or needed—a sense of humour.²⁷ A contemporary observer characterized James as being very playful, with “as many ready witty jests as any man living, at which he would not smile himself, but deliver them in a grave and serious manner.”²⁸ And while this playfulness was often unsubtle or silly, it is not only one of the keys to his character but also a basic component of his relationship with Buckingham. There was between them a definite “complicity of naughtiness,” to use Marvick's phrase. James loved nothing more than to escape from the endless scrum of petitioners at court²⁹ and run off to one of his many hunting lodges. Buckingham's role was to aid and abet these escapades; to be there with and for James, along with other selected young men, to ride and hunt and play and carouse as long as the King wanted. An anonymous verse of the time says:

“At Royston and Newmarket
He'll hunt till he be lean.
But he hath merry boys
That with masks and toys
Can make him fat again.”³⁰

The Venetian Ambassador, reporting on the Christmas festivities at court in January, 1618, says that at the performance of a masque the King became impatient and bored at the length of the piece. “Why don't they dance? What did they make me come here

²⁷ It has been said that the English mistakenly took James too seriously. See Jenny Wormald, “James VI and I, ‘Basilikon Doron’ and ‘The Trew Law of Free Monarchies’: the Scottish Context and the English Translation,” in David Starkey, ed., *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London, 1987) 36-54.

²⁸ Sir Anthony Weldon, “The Court and Character of King James,” in Sir Walter Scott, ed., *Secret History of the Court of James the First*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1811) II, 7.

²⁹ James' schedule seems exhausting. In 1620, for example, he was at Whitehall on January 1; at Newmarket January 15; back at Whitehall for Ash Wednesday; at Theobalds February 28; during April and May, he moved between Whitehall, Hampton Court and Greenwich; on May 30, he was at Theobalds; at Whitsun, Greenwich; at Windsor in June; in July, he visited Oatlands, Whitehall, Theobalds; on July 15 began his summer progress which took him to Andover, Malmesbury, Wilton, Stonehenge, Salisbury, Beaulieu, Farnham; in September, he went to Theobalds, Hampton Court, Royston; in October, Theobalds, Royston, Whitehall; in November, Theobalds, Royston, Newmarket; he was back at Whitehall in December. See Gervas Huxley *Endymion Porter: the Life of a Courtier 1587-1649* (London, 1959) 45-46.

³⁰ Cited in Lockyer, 1986, 51.

for? Devil take you all, dance!" At which point, Buckingham leapt onto the stage and performed "a score of lofty and very minute capers" which changed James' mood entirely—along with that of the entire company.³¹

A negative vision of all this is given by Sir Anthony Weldon, a contemporary critic of the King, who says "In his old age, Buckingham's jovial suppers...made him sometimes overtaken, which he would the very next day remember and repent with tears."³²

Buckingham maintained his hold on the King's affections by entertaining him and making him laugh. But there is more to it than that. He seems to have possessed the insight that the way to James' heart was through his need to be treated like a human being while simultaneously being recognized as the King. And he fascinated the King by his instinctive ability to alternate between "insolence and servility," in Trevor-Roper's phrase.³³ In letters—and presumably in person—he knew exactly how and when to say things that, coming from another, would have constituted *lèse majesté*. He habitually addressed his letters to the King "Dear Dad and Gossip" and their tone swings from a kind of cheeky intimacy to a detailed factuality, often within the same paragraph. In a letter trying to persuade James that he can survive ten days at a hunting lodge without him, Buckingham calls the King "your sowship."³⁴ When reporting to James some intricate negotiations with a French emissary, Buckingham confides that as the man spoke, he thought "shitten mouth (I pray you, sir, do not kiss that word...)"³⁵ While in Spain in 1623, he wrote home giving his "poor and saucy opinion" on what jewels would be appropriate to send as gifts for the Spanish court, adding "if you do not send jewels enough I'll stop all other presents. Therefore, look to it!"³⁶ When James pleaded illness for cancelling an address to

³¹ *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy*, Allen B. Hinds et al., eds., 38 vols. (London 1864-1940) XV, 110-14.

³² Weldon, 1811, II, 2.

³³ Trevor-Roper, 1962, 51.

³⁴ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6967, f.194.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, f.237.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, f.78.

Parliament, Buckingham said: "I will forbear to tell them that notwithstanding your cold you were able to speak with the King of Spain's instruments, though not with your own subjects." ³⁷

James not only took no offence at any of this, he loved it and was always importuning his "sweet Steenie"³⁸ to write more often. Even Queen Anne appreciated Buckingham's ability to charm her husband out of ill-temper, writing to him "you do very well in lugging the sow's ear and I thank you for it..."³⁹

Buckingham could also indulge the King's taste for sophisticated literary expression and language. A good example is the letter he wrote from Madrid in 1623 after having been created the first non-royal duke in fifty years. Here is the intricate bread-and-butter letter, which hardly supports biographers, historians or art-historians who have painted a picture of Buckingham as intellectually or culturally uninspired. It is transcribed here as written.⁴⁰

"Dear Dad and Gossope,

"It cannot but have bine an infinite trouble to have written so longe a letter, and so sone, especiallie at this painfull time of your armes; yet wish I not a word omitted, though the reading forsed blouses (blushes?) deserving them no better; neyther is it fitt I should dissemble with my master, wherefore I confess I am not a gott (jot?) sorie for the pains you have taken. That might argue I love myselfe better than my master: but my disobedience in all my future actions shall witnes the contrairie; and I can trulie say it is not in the power of your large bountiful hand and hart, ever hereafter, eyther to increase my dutie and love to you, or to overvalue myselfe as you

³⁷ Ibid., f.196.

³⁸ James' most consistent nickname for Buckingham—a diminutive of Stephen—seems to have come from the Biblical passage which records St. Stephen as having "the face of an angel." Lockyer, 1981, 28.

³⁹ Williams, 1970, 172.

⁴⁰ The orthography is as precise as the present author can render it. The ink on the paper shows through from side to side which makes the occasional piece of guesswork necessary, as does Buckingham's slashing, slanted handwriting. A comparison of this with James' small, squiggly hand, full of crossings-out and inserts is amusing and possibly revealing.

doe by thinking it fitt I should be set so farre above my fellows. There is this difference betwixt that noble hand and hart: one may surfitt by the one, but not by the other, and soner by yours than his one (own?). Therefore gve me leave to to stope with mine that hand which hath bine but too redie to execute the motions and affections of that kind obliging hart to me. As for that argument, that this can be no leading case to others, give me leave to say it's trew onele in one (but that's a greate and the maine) poynt, for I grant that I am more than confident you will never love more of your servants (I will pausie here) better than Steenie.

“Thus it will be no leadeing, but you can not denie but it may be a president of emulation hereafter to those that shall succeed you, to expres as much love as you have done to me, and I am sure they may easelie find better subjects. So, if it be unfit in respect of the number (of dukes created in the future) this way it will be increased; but I mayntaine it's unfitt in respect there is not here (in Spain) as in other places, a distinction between Duckes' and Kings' children, and before I make a gape or a stepe to that paritie between them, I'le disobey you—which is the most I can say or doe. I have not so much unthankfulness to denie what your Majesty sayeth, that my former excus of the disproportion of my estate is taken away, for you have filled a consuming purse, given me faire howses, more land than I am worthie, and to maintain both me and them, filled my coffers as full with patents of honer that my shoulders cannot bare more. This, I say, is a still great argument for me to refuse; but have not bine contented to rest here, when I thought you had done more than enough, and as much as you could; but hath found out a way which, to my hart's satisfaction, is far above all, for with this letter you have furnished and enriched my cabinet with so precious a witnes of your valuation of me, as in future tymes it cannot be sayde that I rise, as most courtiers doe, through importunitie, for which caracter of me, and incomparable favor from, I will sine with as contented,

nay, as proud a hart, from your poare Steenie, as Duke of Buckingham.”⁴¹

Leaving aside the claim that he did not ‘importune’ the ducal ennoblement—which, though no letter survives which proves he did, seems somehow unlikely—Buckingham’s response to James’ action is almost a gentle parody of the King’s own style in his political writings.⁴² It bears witness to a sensitivity not always found in favourites and reconfirms the notion that Buckingham had an instinctive knowledge of James’ character. He knew where and how far he could go within the system he was part of; the constraints of being the royal favourite enabled him re-invent the position and succeed in it better than any of his predecessors.

One of the main constituents of this success was sexuality. And, although psychohistorians naturally stress the centrality of sexual energies and experiences in individual personality formation, and, therefore, in how individuals perform in public, they are almost always stymied by lack of relevant material when dealing with historical figures. Freudian or post-Freudian psychoanalytic theory hinges on the potential for retrieval of early childhood memories; documentation of these is conspicuously missing from the archives of history. (There are those who argue that much such material has been destroyed over the years, either by the subjects themselves or by their heirs, just as so many general writings about sexuality, deemed immoral by somebody sometime, have been expurgated or burnt.⁴³) Other historians of other theoretical persuasions often use this lack as a rationalization for the avoidance or rejection of sexuality as a major force in human affairs. Even those who accept it as a necessary component of historical investigation are frequently uncomfortable with it. A question hangs in the air: Is Sex History? It seems that everybody would be much relieved if the answer were No.

All of the foregoing is doubly true of anything to do with homosexuality. And it is

⁴¹ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6987, f. 153.

⁴² See James’ *The true Lawe of Free Monarchies* in Craigie, 1982, 57-82.

⁴³ For a summary of this idea as it pertains to sources relating to homosexuality, see John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (Chicago and London, 1980) 17-21; William Armstrong Percy III, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece* (Urbana and Chicago, 1996) 3-8.

amply clear that most historians would prefer it had James' sexual object choices been limited to Anne of Denmark, mother of his children. They were not, and thus posterity has not been kind to King James I.⁴⁴ While many of his contemporaries saw him in a positive light⁴⁵ —not only partisan supporters but also critics like Sir Symonds D'Ewes⁴⁶ —his reputation quickly and almost permanently plummeted, only gradually to be rehabilitated from the 1960's onward.⁴⁷ James' image through history has to a large extent been taken from the writings of Sir Anthony Weldon, a contemporary who was certainly no admirer. Weldon is the source of most of the clichés about James: that he was timid, sloppy, ill-dressed; that his tongue was too big for his mouth and his skin as "soft as taffeta sarsnet"; that he was always fiddling with his codpiece and ogling unsavoury young men.⁴⁸ Another contemporary criticized James for loving "indiscreetly and obstinately,"⁴⁹ while Sir Henry Wotton remarks more discreetly that James was "very familiar with his gentlemen of the Chamber."⁵⁰ John Chamberlain wrote to Dudley Carleton in 1617 that when Buckingham proposed a youth named Conie for advancement and the King demurred, "the waggess...play constantly upon his name, saying The King loves a conie and yet loves not one."⁵¹ Such qualities and behaviour patterns provided ammunition to subsequent historians who instinctively sought to marginalize a king who flaunted his attraction to other males.

⁴⁴ For a digest of evaluations of James, see Marc L. Schwarz, "James I and the Historians: Toward a Reconsideration," *Journal of British Studies* 13, no. 2 (May, 1974) 114-34.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 118-19. See also Robert Ashton, *James I by his Contemporaries* (London, 1969).

⁴⁶ Halliwell, 1845, I, 264-65. D'Ewes praised the king for maintaining the Protestant Church "pure and sound" and for "augmenting the liberties" of the people.

⁴⁷ Schwarz, 1974, 133.

⁴⁸ Weldon, 1811, II, 2.

⁴⁹ Ashton, 1969, 3.

⁵⁰ Smith, 1907, I, 315. Interestingly enough, Wotton praises James for his chasteness, by which he means the King did not follow the example of his ancestors and disturb the equilibrium of the kingdom by fathering illegitimate children.

⁵¹ Norman E. McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1939) I, 79. 'Conie' is an old word for hare; also a long-established slang term for a man who has sex with another man. It was believed that hares were not only sexually promiscuous but perverted; these strange myths have their basis in Aristotle, Pliny and the Old Testament. See Boswell, 1980, 137-43.

Even recent writers continue to do this in various ways. Ridicule remains one method: "His well-known proclivity toward the handsome male courtiers, all of whose buttons he liked to button, whose clothes he liked to fondle and whose absence from court he mourned in letters that embarrass our modern sensibilities."⁵² Another is an almost-charming *faux-naïveté*, as exemplified by Lockyer: "He surrounded himself in the country with young men...whose boisterous high spirits kept him young in heart if not in years."⁵³ Then there is the less charming approach of Antonia Fraser, who, while allowing that the relationship between James and Esmé Stuart was probably consummated, suggests that if an equally attractive woman had come along at the same time as Esmé, "the homosexual inclinations of King James might never have been aroused."⁵⁴

But they were, and they lighted eventually on George Villiers. It is, of course, impossible to say exactly what James and George did together in private. That their relationship was emotionally intense is clear. On one occasion in 1617, James upbraided his Council for their disregard of his new favourite. He was, he reportedly said "a man like other men, who did what other men did, and confessed to loving those he loved...and they should be quite clear that he loved the Earl of Buckingham more than any other man, and more than all those who were here present. They should not think of this as a defect in him, for Jesus Christ had done just what he was doing. There could therefore be nothing reprehensible about it, and just as Christ had his John, so he, James, had his George."⁵⁵ Such a blatant public statement seems surprising even today. It is, however, typical of the King's style and behaviour patterns and it can be read at several levels. Politically, it reminds its audience of James' firm, not to say fervent, belief in the theory of the divine right of kings, as he himself defined it in *The True Lawe of free Monarchies* of 1598 (*literatim*): "a Monarchie, which form of gouernment, asresembling the Diunitie, approacheth nearest to perfection...all Christian & well founded Monarchies as being founded by God himselfe, who by his Oracle, and out of his owne mouth gaue the lawe

⁵² Schwarz, 1974, 114-15.

⁵³ Lockyer, 1986, 51.

⁵⁴ Fraser, 1974, 36-37.

⁵⁵ Lockyer, 1981, 43.

thereof..."⁵⁶ On another plane, knowing the King's penchant for erudite theological discussions, his speech can be seen as a reminder of his learnedness in religious matters and his constant keen interest in the well-being of the (his) Church. There is, however, another possible subtext at play here. The playwright Christopher Marlowe (1564-93) had been accused of heresy and treason on the basis of a number of his alleged statements, one of them being that "Saint John the Evangelist was bedfellow to Christ and leaned always on his bosom, that he used him as the sinners of Sodome."⁵⁷ Again, taking James' pride in his education and literary interests into account, it might even be suggested that in his royal ire, the King was consciously or subconsciously over-asserting his divinely-ordained position by referring to Marlowe's scandalous words and daring his Councillors to call him on it.

In any case, there can be little doubt that the relationship between James and George was physically intense. An early letter from the new favourite to the King wonders "whether you loved me now better than at the time which I shall never forget at Farnham, where the bed's head could not be found between the master and his dog."⁵⁸ And James writes to Buckingham at one point (*literatim*):

"My onlie sweete & deare chylde, notwithstanding of your desyring me not to wrytte yesterdaye, yett hadde I written in the euening if at my comming in out of the parke suche a drowzienes hadd not comed upon me as I was forced to sitte & sleep in my chaire halfe an howre; & yett I can not contente myselfe withowte sending you this pullet, praying God that I may haue a ioyefull & confortable meeting with you, & that we maye mak at this Christenmasse a new marriage, euer to be kept hereafter; for God so loue me as I desyre onlie to liue in this worlde for youre saike, & that I hadde rather liue banished in anie pairt of the earth with you, then liue a sorrowefull widdowe's lyfe without you; & so God blesse you, my sweete chylde & wyfe, & grawnte that ye maye euer be a conforte to your deere

⁵⁶ Craigie, 1982, 59, 67.

⁵⁷ Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London, 1982) 20.

⁵⁸ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6987, f. 214.

daide & husbande.”⁵⁹

Can all these words be taken at face value? Were James and George sexually involved, or is that conclusion merely a modern interpretation of past actions and feelings? It has been pointed out, for example, that references to beds and bed companions abound in writings of the times and do not carry sexual implications since beds were scarce and were normally shared with family, friends and even servants.⁶⁰ As beds are not only where people sleep, they are also where people talk, and being a bedfellow also suggested being an influence, sharing power.⁶¹ But, would Buckingham be using the term “bed’s head” in this way? Would he be boasting of power-sharing to/with the King? It seems unlikely: the obvious sexual meaning is a better interpretation.

As far as James’ letter to Buckingham is concerned,⁶² this might be simply a matter of style rather than content. Men of the period addressed each other in a much more elaborate, emotive way. This was a sign of being educated, of being able to use words in metaphoric, hyperbolic constructions— ‘conceits’ as they were called. Alan Bray analyses the “elegant garments” in which male friendship of the time was “dressed,” as much in daily usage as in poetry or the theatre.⁶³ But is this what is happening in the King’s letter? The words are so simply stated and so insistent that a literal interpretation forces itself to the forefront and the sexual meaning seems clear—if only because of the word ‘wife.’

While the point here is not to deny that in some ways the seventeenth century used language differently from the twentieth, the language itself is the same: English. Moreover, although the human condition has altered considerably over three hundred years, human

⁵⁹ Godfrey Goodman, *The Court of King James the First*, J.S. Brewer, ed., 2 vols. (London, 1839) II, 379. Bishop Goodman was a contemporary of James and his account of the king is generally favourable; he assigns a date of 1625 to this letter, although to the present author, an earlier date seems more likely.

⁶⁰ Nieves Mathews, *Francis Bacon: The History of a Character Assassination* (New Haven and London, 1996) 307. Mathews’ book attempts to prove that the philosopher Francis Bacon was not homosexual.

⁶¹ Bray, 1990, 4.

⁶² The nineteenth-century compiler of royal correspondence, J.O. Halliwell, called the letters between Buckingham and the King “the strangest specimens extant.” (Cammell, 1939, 149.) It is indeed remarkable that they were not expurgated by someone along the way.

⁶³ Bray, 1990, 3-8.

nature has not, and it is a mistake to assume that genetic change has kept pace with technological innovation. Or, in the more provocative voice of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, scholarship should not continue its series of dismissals of evidence of past homosexual behaviour, dismissals such as: "passionate language of same-sex attraction was extremely common during whatever period is under discussion—and therefore must have been completely meaningless; same-sex genital relations may have been perfectly common—but since there was no language about them, they must have been completely meaningless; attitudes about homosexuality were intolerant back then, unlike now—so people probably didn't do anything; the word 'homosexuality' wasn't coined until 1869—so everyone before then was heterosexual."⁶⁴ Sedgwick's list of dismissive responses which continue to short-circuit discussion reflects the orthodox position on homosexual definition and historicity: it didn't happen, it doesn't make any difference, it didn't mean anything.

But it did happen, and it fell under the rubric of Sodomy. According to James himself, in *Basilikon Doron* published in 1598, there were "some horrible crimes that ye are bound in conscience never to forgive: such as witchcraft, wilful murder, sodomy..."⁶⁵ If the latter included homosexual acts, there is a dissonance between James' words and his own behaviour.⁶⁶ One explanation for this would be simply that he was writing a philosophical tract to impress upon his readers his firm dedication to upholding the laws and customs of his kingdom—a strong monarch committed to the *status quo*. Sodomy was, according to the jurist Edward Coke, "*crimen lesae mjestatis*, a sin horrible committed against the king; and this is either against the king celestial or terrestrial."⁶⁷ It was, therefore, a political and religious crime, one of the unholy trinity of sorcerers, sodomites and heretics.⁶⁸ At this level, sodomy has become an abstraction. In fact, at the time, the word, while including the homosexual meaning, encompassed a multitude of sins: it was

⁶⁴ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1990) 52-53.

⁶⁵ James Craigie, ed., *The Basilikon Doron of King James VI* (Edinburgh, 1950) 37-38.

⁶⁶ Caroline Bingham, "Seventeenth-Century Attitudes Toward Deviant Sex," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* I, no. 3 (1971) 447-68.

⁶⁷ Bray, 1990, 3.

⁶⁸ Bray, 1982, 19.

closer to a description of general moral and physical debauchery. Gregory Bredbeck traces the etymology and semiology of the term, articulating as it did a system of concepts and serving as a rhetorical shorthand for undifferentiated vice.⁶⁹ He points out that the establishment churchman and poet, John Donne, invoked sodomy not as a specific condemnation of male-male eroticism but as part of a larger attack in which "prostitute boy" and "plump muddy whore" are equivalent.⁷⁰

Continuous fulmination from the pulpit and the bench, not to mention the pen of the monarch, created the notion of a crime so broad, so bad and so beyond civilized behaviour, that the word and the idea of sodomy came to be disassociated with real life. When, occasionally, individual cases of 'sodomy' came to public trial,⁷¹ they were avidly followed by all levels of society, as such cases are today, and, as happens today, they were seen as exceptional. And just as electricity will not arc from contact-points placed too far apart, so a person cannot connect his own routine activity in the day-to-day continuum of time and space with behaviour too far removed from what they see and experience in everyday life. Even aristocrats and kings, who are, of course, individual people with everyday lives, cannot make the leap, a fact abundantly brought home by the antics of the present-day royal family. Furthermore, royal rationalization of questionable royal behaviour is easy when the divine right of monarchs to rule is accepted. James himself wrote(*literatim*): "a good King will frame all his actions to be according to the law: yet is hee not bound thereto but of his good wil...For as in the Lawe of Absteineing from eating of flesh in *Lentron*, the King will for examples sake make his owne house to obserue the law: yet no man wil think he needes to take a licence to eate flesh."⁷²

To theorize this slightly differently, the historian John Boswell has argued that

⁶⁹ Gregory Bredbeck, *Sodomy and Interpretation, Marlowe to Milton* (Ithaca NY and London, 1991) 5-11.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁷¹ The 1631 trial and execution of the Earl of Castlehaven is the one most often cited. Castlehaven was accused of crimes "so heinous and horrible that a Christian man ought scarce to name them" and was found guilty of "a crime of that rarity that we seldom know of the like"—the rape of his wife—and another "we scarce hear of"—having sex with servants—both of which "are of that pestiferous and pestilential nature that if they not be punished they will draw from heaven heavy judgments upon this kingdom." See Bingham, 1971, 447-68.

⁷² Craigie, 1982, 72-3.

societal attitudes about something—in this case, human sexuality—are neither necessarily, nor absolutely, congruent with individual attitudes.⁷³ If, for example, it is fair to say that ancient Greece and Rome did not institutionally distinguish heterosexuality from homosexuality, this does not mean that most, or even all, individuals failed to make the distinction.⁷⁴ Carrying the idea further, a seemingly positive, non-threatening climate in general does not mean there are no spots of particular rough weather: not every young Athenian in 500 B.C. named and called *kalos* on an erotic pot was happy about it. The opposite, of course, is equally true. A highly negative and punitive societal view, such as the nineteenth and twentieth century one on male homosexuality, does not prevent an individual maintaining a high level of self-esteem and even living a public life. In other words, social structure and individual identity are closely linked but not synonymous. This idea begins to resemble those of Giddens, although Boswell implies that society and the individual are in a kind of combat whereas Giddens sees them as symbiotic. Furthermore, Giddens would say that neither highly oppressive nor highly permissive systems can achieve their (un)stated goals because both are unbalanced and inherently unstable. The oppressive structure forces individuals to work to destroy it, if often only in a passive manner; the permissive system enables—and ultimately requires—individuals to behave in ways that are eventually self-destructive.

Buckingham and Charles I

To posterity, the most problematic aspect of the James-Buckingham-Charles relationship has been the 'succession,' the fact that George Villiers transferred his powers intact from James I to Charles I, from father to son. This is certainly unusual, if not unique; normal political procedure is for a new administration to replace the powerful people of the previous one, usually with vehement denunciations of their actions and abilities, often with ridicule. So how can Charles' behaviour in increasing Buckingham's power be rationalized? One way is to see it as a purely political strategy: Charles wanted to maintain

⁷³ John Boswell, "Revolutions, Universals and Sexual Categories," *Salmagundi* 58-59 (1982-83) 89-113.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

the buffer between monarchy and populace that his father had put into place in the person of Buckingham. Tactically speaking, this policy makes a certain amount of sense, especially given the fact that the new king was unsure of himself in the public arena. A corollary to this interpretation would be that the fact that Charles maintained Buckingham as favourite and intimate companion proves that the previous relationship of James and George was not sexually consummated. After all, openly consorting with one's father's male lover would seem to be a taboo that even kings could not violate. Therefore, Charles' behaviour purifies that of James. Perhaps, but another interpretation—that the private activity of two men did not automatically register as the socially-disqualifying and morally-damning debauchery known as sodomy—permitted Charles to continue Buckingham in power.

Although the part of Charles' life which concerns this study is limited to his relationship with Buckingham, a brief chronology of his entire life and reign is appropriate.⁷⁵ He was born in November, 1600, at Dunfermline Palace near Edinburgh. Considering the high rate of infant mortality of the time, it is somewhat surprising that he survived infancy; he was far from being a robust baby and at three years old, still had not learned to walk or speak. When his father succeeded to the English throne in 1603, his parents and two siblings, Henry and Elizabeth, moved south. Charles stayed behind for reasons of health until the summer of 1604.

In 1605, he was created Duke of York. In 1612, his older brother Henry, something of a golden boy, died suddenly, and Charles inherited not only Henry's position as heir to the throne, but also his collection of art objects which became one of the nuclei of the future Royal Collection. The following year his sister, to whom Charles was close, married and left England. Charles never saw her again.

Now heir to the throne, Charles became Prince of Wales in 1616. In 1619, his mother, Queen Anne, died, leaving her son another collection of pictures. A third stage in Charles' aesthetic formation occurred in 1623, when he and the Duke of Buckingham rode

⁷⁵ Although Kevin Sharpe maintains that there is no satisfactory biography of Charles I (Sharpe, 1992, xvii), several recent ones are useful: Carlton, 1995; Pauline Gregg, *King Charles I* (London, 1981); John Bowle, *Charles the First* (London, 1975); Christopher Hibbert, *Charles I* (London, 1968). The latter is particularly good for visual material.

off to Spain together to capture a bride for the Prince and returned with pictures and statues—but no wife.

Charles finally married Henrietta Maria (1609-69), daughter of King Henry IV of France (r.1585-1610), in the summer of 1625. Their early relationship was difficult for many reasons, personal and political, and was not helped by outside influences: Buckingham on Charles and France on Henrietta Maria. After the assassination of Buckingham in 1628, however, the couple became ever closer, although it is fair to say that the Queen never held the political power of the Duke. It is, perhaps, not insignificant that she became pregnant with her first child only in November, 1628, after Buckingham's assassination. Altogether, they had seven living children, five of whom reached adulthood: Charles II (b. 1630, r. 1660-85); Mary, Princess of Orange (1631-60); James II (b. 1633, r. 1685-88); Henry (1639-60); Henriette-Anne, duchesse d'Orléans (1644-70).⁷⁶

In 1629, Charles determined to rule without Parliaments. This, the so-called Personal Rule lasted until 1640.⁷⁷ Although he kept England at peace and unentangled in the vicious Thirty Years War raging on the Continent, Charles embarked on some domestically disastrous policies. A system of taxation known as 'ship money' promulgated in 1634 and an attempted imposition of Anglican liturgical and ecclesiastical form on the Church of Scotland in 1638 caused enough internal disruption to force the King to call one Parliament in April, 1640, and another—the Long Parliament, which technically remained in continuous session until 1660—in November. Charles and Parliament never understood each other; everything each side did seemed intended to undermine and offend the other, and the momentum of hostility quickly reached a level which made civil war inevitable.

The Royalist side lost the war; the Royal Family fled to exile in France; the King was tried for treason against his people, convicted and beheaded on a scaffold in front of

⁷⁶ Julia Dobson, *The Children of Charles I* (London, 1975).

⁷⁷ For two different views of this period, see Sharpe, 1992, and L.J. Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule* (Cambridge, 1989). Essentially, Sharpe sees Charles as pro-active and working to unite factions; for Reeve, he was reactive, sometimes almost paranoid, thereby exacerbating factionalism.

the Banqueting House, Whitehall, on January 30, 1649.⁷⁸ As the royal martyr, the day of Charles' death was marked on the liturgical calendar of the Church of England until late in the nineteenth century.⁷⁹

Both Buckingham and Charles, then, met unusually violent deaths— John Felton's dagger and Gregory Brandon's axe.⁸⁰ While they were alive, however, they formed a bond which, for Charles at least, was virtually exclusive during the Duke's lifetime. This exclusivity was the source of frequent and considerable political trouble: Lockyer, quoting a parliamentarian of 1626, refers to it as "the chief cause of these evils and mischiefs."⁸¹ The intensity of the relationship also caused unease. Sir Henry Wotton speaks of "the secret of high inclination...beyond the vaile of the Temple."⁸² A popular opinion is found in a scurrilous verse, typical of the anonymous entertainments of the period (*literatim*):

"Our Charlemaine takes much delight
In this great beast soe faire in sight
With his whole heart affects the same
And loves too well Buck-King of Game."⁸³

Casual relationships often have a sexual dimension; intense ones always do. The nature of the erotic component, however, is not always the same. This is as true of same-sex pairings as of opposite-sex ones and there are as many types of male-male connections as of male-female ones. The eroticism may emanate from the love-object's possession of something lacking in the lover. It may lie in the perceived power of the object of attraction. In the case of Buckingham and Charles, both appear to be in play for both parties.

Buckingham possessed the physical grace and beauty which Charles decidedly lacked. Bishop Goodman, admittedly an admirer of the Duke, said Buckingham had "a very

⁷⁸ For a fine account of the King's fate, see Wedgwood, 1964.

⁷⁹ It is still celebrated by some High Anglicans.

⁸⁰ Wedgwood, 1964, 184-85.

⁸¹ Lockyer, 1981, 321.

⁸² Wotton, 1651, 5.

⁸³ Frederick W. Fairholt, ed., *Poems and Songs relating to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham; and his Assassination by John Felton, August 23, 1628*, Percy Society, vol. 29 (London, 1850) 5-6. The author, no admirer of Buckingham, is also a true Victorian, occasionally censoring his material with such explanations as "the subject of the next stanza is much too coarse to print."

lovely complexion; he was the handsomest bodied man of England; his limbs so well compacted and his conversation so pleasing and of so sweet a disposition."⁸⁴ Charles, on the other hand, was short, stuttering, "wilful, somewhat inclining to perverseness of disposition,"⁸⁵ and physically had always been unprepossessing.⁸⁶

Conversely, Charles possessed the bloodline which George Villiers conspicuously lacked. Buckingham's lifelong obsession with advancing and ennobling his relatives can be read as an attempt to create the illusion of a great family lineage. This was always held against him: the eleventh article of impeachment against him in 1626 accused him of procuring titles for his kindred "whereby the noble barons of England, so well deserving in themselves and their ancestors, have been much prejudiced."⁸⁷

Insofar as the eroticism of power is concerned, the attraction of Charles for Buckingham is clear: he was heir to the throne, and subsequently King, in an absolute monarchical system. But Buckingham's power, as perceived by Charles, is less obvious. It lies in the Prince's relationship with his father King James. Briefly stated, Charles was always uncomfortable with his father. The problem may have stemmed from early childhood memories of a parent who wanted to have the muscle under Charles' tongue cut to facilitate speech, and iron boots clamped onto his legs to strengthen them.⁸⁸ Buckingham, however, was totally at ease with James and able to handle him effortlessly. The King was, in John Chamberlain's words, "never so out of tune but that the very sight of my Lord of Buckingham doth settle and quiet all."⁸⁹ Charles evidently realized the situation early on and initially resented Buckingham. On more than one occasion, he

⁸⁴ Goodman, 1839, I, 225-26.

⁸⁵ Weldon, 1811, II, 61. The author was a critic of the Stuarts; his assessment, however, seems fair.

⁸⁶ Carlton, 1995, 4-5. Accounts of childhood afflictions and weaknesses begin with Charles' early care-givers, Sir Robert and Lady Carey. See Robert Carey, *The Memoirs of R. Carey, Earl of Monmouth* (London, 1808).

⁸⁷ Lockyer, 1981, 322.

⁸⁸ Carey, 1808, 140-41. Both corrective procedures were apparently successfully protested by Lady Carey.

⁸⁹ McClure, 1939, II, 121.

exhibited his hostility, once by stealing a ring, once by turning a water-spout on his rival.⁹⁰ But James forced his son to co-exist with his favourite. A letter from Buckingham thanks the King for “the assistance of a young nobleman called Baby Charles, whom you, by your good offices made my friend.”⁹¹ For his part, Charles rather quickly surrendered to the brilliant personality who could relate to his father as he himself could not. In 1618, Charles writes: “Steenie, There is none that know me so well as yourself... I pray you to commend my most humble service to His majesty, and tell him that I am very sorry that I have done anything to offend him...Your true, constant, loving friend, Charles P.”⁹² In short, Charles recognizes Buckingham’s power and desires him for it.

The personal bond seems to have strengthened continuously. In 1625, after the death of James, Charles wrote Buckingham: “I have lost a good father and you a good master, but comfort yourself, you have found another that will no less cherish you.”⁹³ For his coronation in February 1626, Charles made the Duke Lord High Constable of England for the day, so that Buckingham could present the regalia, and after the crowning, Buckingham had the honour of putting on the King’s spurs.⁹⁴ When, in 1627, the Duke was away pursuing his ill-fated siege of La Rochelle, Charles wrote letters quite remarkable for their tone of both personal anxiety and self-blame for the Duke’s military setback.⁹⁵ Perhaps most telling is Charles’ discussing with Buckingham the details of his difficulties with his new wife, Henrietta Maria, in November 1625, worrying over the causes of “discontentments in my wife” and instructing the Duke to advise him on a course of action— “I shall put nothing of this in execution until I hear from you”⁹⁶ The next month, he wrote: “You know what patience I have had with the unkind usages of my wife...and overcome by your persuasions to me, that my kind usages would be able to rectify those

⁹⁰ *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of James I, 1603-1625*, Mary Anne Everett Green, ed., 5 vols. (London, 1857-59) III, 354, 370.

⁹¹ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6987, f. 234.

⁹² British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6986, f. 83.

⁹³ Lockyer, 1981, 234.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 308.

⁹⁵ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6988, ff.25, 26, 31.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 96.

misunderstandings. I hope my ground may be true, but I am sure you have erred in your opinion; for I find daily worse and worse effects..."⁹⁷ Shortly thereafter, Charles confided to the Duke that "my wife begins to mend her manners."⁹⁸ In July 1626, however, he unburdened himself again in a long letter describing his relationship with Henrietta Maria from their first meeting at Dover, when he felt that he "could not expect more testimonies of respect and love than she showed," up until the present moment, which he saw as full of "little neglects I will not take the pains to set down; as, eschewing to be in my company; when I have anything to speak to her, I must means her servant first, else I am sure to be denied."⁹⁹ He went on to complain of having to endure "passionate discourses about how miserable she was...which, when I offered to answer, she would not so much as hear me."¹⁰⁰ The King related, almost boastfully, how he "bade her to remember to whom she spoke...and then I made her both hear me, and end that discourse."¹⁰¹

Thus, it can be seen how, through intimacy with Charles, Buckingham obtains royal power and status; while through Buckingham, Charles becomes decisive, effective, a more (self-)impressive adult male. The dynamic model of this relationship is said by some historians and biographers to be one in which Buckingham replaces Charles' older brother, Henry, who died in 1612.¹⁰² In such an interpretation, the fact that Buckingham was not James' son but his lust-object, along with Charles' awareness of that fact, is overlooked. This aspect, however, is crucial, providing a sexual dimension not only to the personal relationship but also to the way Buckingham negotiated and affected the shifts in style between two successive monarchs. It might be concluded, for example, that Charles' ideas *vis-a-vis* interpersonal intimacy and emotion were formed more by the male expression of them than the female. Only after Buckingham's death was he forced to reconcile with his

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, f. 1

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, f. 3.

⁹⁹ Sir Charles Petrie, *The Letters, Speeches and Proclamations of King Charles I*, (New York, 1968) 42-45.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*

¹⁰² For a positive articulation of this idea, see Cammell, 1939. A more sinister view is that of Charles Carlton, who sees Buckingham as a kind of Rasputin, preying on Charles' insecurities (Carlton, 1995, 104-5).

wife, who was then the only other person remotely close to him.

Buckingham and the Court(s)

As favourite, George Villiers entered into, and thrived in, two quite different court atmospheres which surrounded his two masters, James and Charles. In both cases, however, the monarch and his entourage believed the court to be a microcosm of how the country—and the world—should be, the proper manifestation of a social order centred on the king. Even when factions at court battled with each other, they maintained the ceremonies of a self-representation as an orderly, coherent and orthodox organism. And within the circuit of the court, its own complicated rules and patterns were seen as exact models of the knowable universe.

In the words of a contemporary memoirist, Lucy Hutchinson, "King Charles was temperate and chaste and serious, so that the fools and bawds, mimics and catamites, of the former court, grew out of fashion; and the nobility and courtiers, who did not quite abandon their debaucheries, yet so revered the King as to retire into corners to practice them."¹⁰³ A not dissimilar statement of this is that James' court was innovative and energetically extroverted, while under Charles, the tone was one of over-cultivation and self-conscious refinement.¹⁰⁴ Yet another way of looking at the difference is to see the extravagances of the Jacobean court as a reflection of the King's own view of England as a money tree and his accession to the throne as akin to winning a lottery,¹⁰⁵ while the Caroline court had at least to pretend to live with more fiscal restraint. Or, that James' style was rough and Scottish while Charles' was more sophisticatedly English.¹⁰⁶ Or, that a determining difference was the effect of continental European influences on their

¹⁰³ Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* (London, 1908) 67. The Hutchinsons, confirmed anti-Royalists, add that Buckingham had attained his position through "prostitution," ostensibly originally with James but the choice of words cannot help but implicate Charles as well.

¹⁰⁴ Parry, 1981, 264-65. The author contends that Charles' court sealed itself off from the central currents of thought; he attributes this tendency to the King's dour education compared to that of his father.

¹⁰⁵ Ashton, 1969, 56-69.

¹⁰⁶ Sharpe, 1987, 227.

ambiences:¹⁰⁷ in the earlier reign, 'foreign' still meant 'hostile,' while by 1625 a new generational viewpoint had begun to develop as a result of increased exposure of many young Englishmen—the King and Buckingham included—to continental cultures.¹⁰⁸

Clearly, there has been considerable debate about both the tones of the early Stuart courts and their structures. In a sense, James I continued the inherited Elizabethan court which was presided over until his death in 1612 by Robert Cecil, the last of the late Queen's great ministers,¹⁰⁹ the man James himself had referred to as "king there (England) in effect?"¹¹⁰ In this model, the King, whose lifestyle was one of almost frantic travelling from place to place, hunting lodge to hunting lodge and noble house to noble house, with a very small entourage, did not create a new court culture, but allowed the great aristocratic households to maintain the systems and styles which had always sustained them.

But at another level, James' accession to the English throne initiated a profound change in court structure and dynamics. Malcolm Smuts sees the Jacobean court as a difficult though exciting transitional period—a kind of "Russian spring"—a place of volatility and enthusiasm, attracting people of ambition and talent with a wide variety of tastes and styles, all of them competing for notice and favour.¹¹¹ In this model, James' court was volatile and complex, revelling in an outgoing freedom quite different from the restrictive uniformity of both the previous Elizabethan one and the Caroline court to follow,¹¹² even if such freedom ironically caused a greater level of anxiety than is usually

¹⁰⁷ Malcolm Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, 1987) esp. Ch. 3.

¹⁰⁸ A good account of the experiences of a young gentry-level Englishman in France at this time is found in Helen A. Kaufman, *Conscientious Cavalier* (London, 1962).

¹⁰⁹ Pauline Croft, "Robert Cecil and the Early Jacobean Court," in Linda Levy Peck, ed., *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, (Cambridge, 1991) 134-47.

¹¹⁰ G.P.V. Akrigg, ed., *Letters of King James VI and I* (Berkeley and London, 1984) 173.

¹¹¹ Malcolm Smuts, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Change at the Court of James I," in Peck, 1991, 99-112.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 111-12.

found in court cultures.¹¹³ Hugh Trevor-Roper takes a similar viewpoint, seeing the court of James as open and experimental. "Behind its apparent disorder and absurdity," he says, "it was a Baconian court."¹¹⁴

In this light, one of the fundamental differences between James' and Charles' cultural environments was that the former stressed the verbal and literary, the latter the visual and artistic.¹¹⁵ King James took pleasure in leisure pursuits which included, in Jenny Wormald's phrase, "the very abnormal one of writing books."¹¹⁶ Not only books: he like to compose poems to mark memorable occasions. In the summer of 1621, Buckingham entertained the King at his country house, Burley-on-the-Hill, an occasion which inspired James to pen the following piece of doggerel (*literatim*):

"The heavens that wept perpetually before
Since we came hither, shewe their smiling cheere.
This goodly howse it smiles and all this store
Of huge provisions smyles upon us here.
The bucks and stagges in full they seem to smyle
God send a smiling boy within a while."¹¹⁷

Words amused James; he was decidedly uninterested in pictures.¹¹⁸ He even hated sitting for portraits and hardly ever did it.¹¹⁹ He owned a total of only 21 pictures, scarcely enough to dress the walls of one room in the hanging style of the day. An inventory of 1623-24 lists eighteen paintings and three drawings, including one each by Holbein, Titian, Tintoretto, Mor, Rubens, Mytens, Johnson, Pourbus, Van Somer and Heemskerk, seven by more obscure artists and one unattributed work. Most were portraits of royal figures and

¹¹³ Smuts, 1991, 99-112, suggests that, during this period, the term 'court culture' does not really apply, since there was no effective, constant centre of culture at Whitehall. Rather, the palace was just one of a group of cultural environments which included the court but was not totally dependent on it.

¹¹⁴ Trevor-Roper, 1992, 38.

¹¹⁵ Peck, 1991, 7.

¹¹⁶ Wormald, 1977, 37.

¹¹⁷ Westcott, 1966, 65.

¹¹⁸ Parry, 1981, 21.

¹¹⁹ Weldon, 1811, 3.

presumably came to him as gifts.¹²⁰

While James' interest in the visual arts appears to have been minimal, especially when compared to that of his sons, Henry and Charles, it also contrasts with his wife's. Anne of Denmark is known to have been an enthusiastic literary and artistic patron,¹²¹ giving Inigo Jones his first full-scale monumental commission, supporting Isaac Oliver, the miniaturist, and appointing to her service Paul Van Somer, the most notable foreign artist in England before the coming of Mytens and Van Dyck.¹²² Thus the cultural influences on Buckingham, while at first primarily literary as articulated by the King and Francis Bacon, would have gradually widened to include the artistic, especially considering his early friendship with Queen Anne—an influence which may be more significant than is sometimes acknowledged—and his increasing intimacy with Prince Charles.

To put it another way: the Platonic concept of the monarchy as a reflection of the divine order expressed by James in his own writings broadened to embrace a Neoplatonic idea of earthly beauty, including that of man-made art, as a mirror of heavenly radiance and virtue.¹²³ At the time, Francis Bacon warned of the danger of equating physical attractiveness with moral virtue: "Vertue is like a Rich Stone, best plaine set."¹²⁴ Nevertheless, the Neoplatonic philosophy became central to Charles' court culture, particularly in the 1630's, and provided the intellectual justification for the formation of a vast collection of art. In his dedication to the first edition, in 1636, of *De Pictura Veterum*, the scholar-historian Franciscus Junius wrote a panegyric to the King and his activity:

¹²⁰ W. Noel Sainsbury, *Original Unpublished Papers Illustrative of the Life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens* (London, 1859) 355.

¹²¹ For a viewpoint which minimizes Anne of Denmark's influence on the visual arts in favour of that of her son, Henry, see Strong, 1986.

¹²² Barroll, 1991, 208.

¹²³ Plato considered art to be *mimesis*, or imitation, a two-dimensional representation of an imperfect earthly object, and therefore, doubly distanced from true reality; the artist, as a purveyor of illusion and untruth, is banished from Plato's republic. (Plato, *Republic* [Oxford, 1994] X). In the writing of Plotinus (204-70), the founder of Neoplatonism, art connects to beauty through the creative act, the vision of real beauty in the artist's mind or soul, which he injects into otherwise ordinary objects. The work of art does not actually incarnate beauty, however; it simply mirrors it and allows the viewer to communicate with it. See John Gregory, trans., *The Neoplatonists* (London, 1991) 149-53.

¹²⁴ Bacon, 1955, 177.

"Certainly your example shows to all that after earnest and heavy labour of the day the pleasures of leisure are a joyous and useful balm for the eyes...Under so great a Maecenas painting triumphs and will be triumphant in the future. For who will dare despise what he sees Your Majesty hold dear?...You daily revive that heavenly inspiration...You marvellously enflame the zeal and the hearts of men to burn towards You."¹²⁵ The visual, then, equalled, and often surpassed, the verbal in importance as a means of glorifying the monarch or conveying the political interests of the King.¹²⁶ That is, in Malcolm Smuts' analysis, in the Neoplatonic scheme of things, political order indeed derives from divine truths which earthly beings can only understand via images. Art translates and promotes these truths—justice, social harmony, prosperity—and so by "refashioning the arts, a ruler may also refashion the minds of his subjects and control their behavior."¹²⁷ Martin Warnke sees the process even more broadly: the many claims, standards and beliefs of the court system had to be "objectivized, reconciled and mutually delimited and it was the task of art to do this."¹²⁸

But, as Kevin Sharpe has pointed out, this emphasis on visual/visible presence was not an expansive, democratic one. Few people enjoyed access to the King¹²⁹ and, unlike the royal progresses of Queen Elizabeth, Charles' travels were not public displays in the ceremonial style.¹³⁰ They were even less socially visible than the busy peregrinations of his father. Charles, it has been said, had a near obsession with privacy¹³¹ and this combined with his other obsession, art, indicates an introverted, contemplative approach to

¹²⁵ Keith Aldrich, Philippe Fehl and Raina Fehl, eds., *Franciscus Junius: The Literature of Classical Art*, 2 vols. (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1991) I, 319-21.

¹²⁶ Parry, 1981, x;

¹²⁷ Smuts, 1991, 100.

¹²⁸ Martin Warnke, *The Court Artist: On the ancestry of the modern artist*, David McLintock, trans. (Cambridge, 1993) xvi.

¹²⁹ A specific manifestation of limited royal access—Charles' distaste for the traditional curing of scrofula by the king's touch—is viewed metaphorically by Judith Richards, "His Nowe Majestie" and the English Monarchy: The Kingship of Charles I before 1640," *Past & Present* 113 (November, 1986) 70-96. His discomfort with this ceremony, however, might have been simply a visual one: scrofula is a particularly ugly skin disease.

¹³⁰ Sharpe, 1987, 242-43; Smuts, 1987, 201.

¹³¹ Sharpe, 1987, 244.

visual beauty rather than an outgoing, active one. Recalling that the King was not himself a physically prepossessing man, this makes sense. Buckingham, on the other hand, was a visually spectacular person who had made his fame and fortune primarily if not exclusively through self-display. Through his closeness to the Duke, Charles could observe beauty in action and vicariously live the life of a beautiful man. In fact, Buckingham's very existence, which proved the importance of visual presence in achieving success and which suggested, therefore, that physical beauty was a virtue in itself, might help to explain Charles' own notions of beauty and their evolution.

After Buckingham's death in 1628, Charles turned to Queen Henrietta Maria as a replacement for the support he needed. From then on, the belief that physical beauty, moral virtue and divine love were synonymous started to assume the status of a cult centered on the royal couple.¹³² Portraits by Van Dyck of the Queen show her as taller and more elegantly beautiful than she actually was; the artist's likenesses of the King also make him seem more formidable and better-looking than in reality.

The King and Queen were identified with Hermaphrodite, the mythological being who had united the male and female principles. One of the leading court poets, Thomas Carew wrote:

"Thy sacred Love shows us the path
Of modesty and constant faith
Which makes the rude male satisfied
With one fair female by his side;
Doth either sex to each unite
And forms love's pure Hermaphrodite."¹³³

These two balanced and mixed royal souls functioned as the single controlling spirit of Britain, called 'Carlomaria.'¹³⁴ Their love for each other reflects their love for their people and of the heavenly love which unites and harmonizes the universe.¹³⁵ In pure Platonic and Neoplatonic theory, the ascent of the soul was fuelled by contemplation of

¹³² Vaughan Hart, *Art and Magic in the Court of the Stuarts* (London, 1994) 20-22.

¹³³ Rhodes Dunlap, ed., *The Poems of Thomas Carew with his Masque 'Coelum Britannicum'* (Oxford, 1949) 90-91.

¹³⁴ Parry, 1981, 184.

¹³⁵ Hart, 1994, 22.

such unity and beauty and transported by the love of it. Thus the love of Charles and Henrietta Maria for each other becomes the model for the world to contemplate in its desire to know the divine. This cult of disembodied love encouraged by the King—although, as Malcolm Smuts suggests, less influential than often supposed¹³⁶—displays a certain intellectual consistency, along with a sense of the subtle tension between passion and discipline, which may hark back to the King's relationship with Buckingham. A unity of souls with a unity of purpose was precisely what Charles must have felt the two men as sharing. And the name of Hermaphrodite, though symbolically signifying the male-female duality, literally refers to Plato's *Symposium*, where the classical attitudes towards human sexuality are most explicitly discussed and where the mechanics of male-male relationships are ultimately given pride of place.¹³⁷ It would seem that 'Carlomaria' contained at its heart a resonance of the relationship King James always referred to as "Sweet boys and dear venturous knights."¹³⁸

Whatever may have been the differences between them, however, both the courts of James I and Charles I have always been closely linked with the theatrical form known as the masque.¹³⁹ The principal form of literary and musical entertainment for royalty and courtiers alike, the masque consisted of a script in the form of poetry and a staging characterized by increasingly elaborate, inventive, occasionally dangerous special visual effects involving aquatic, pyrotechnic and aerobatic devices created by the architect and polymath, Inigo Jones.¹⁴⁰ It was also interactive theatre, since major roles in most

¹³⁶ Smuts, 1987, 195-96. The author says that Platonic love doctrines likely served as esoteric topics for fashionable small-talk.

¹³⁷ Plato, *The Symposium*, Walter Hamilton, trans. (Harmondsworth, 1951).

¹³⁸ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6987, f.13.

¹³⁹ The masque as a phenomenon is the subject of considerable interest in literary and cultural studies. See, for example, Margaret Barnard Pickel, *Charles I as Patron of Poetry and Drama* (London, 1936); Allardyce Nicoll, *Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage* (London, 1937); Stephen Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque* (Cambridge MA, 1967); Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: the Theatre of the Stuart Court* (Berkeley, 1973); Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals 1450-1650* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1984) 153-70. There is also a poignant account of "The Last Masque," in C.V. Wedgwood, *Truth and Opinion* (London, 1960) 139-56.

¹⁴⁰ John Summerson, *Inigo Jones* (London, 1966) 21-23, 108-11; J. Alfred Gotch, *Inigo Jones* (New York, 1928).

masques were taken by members of the royal family and favoured aristocrats.¹⁴¹ Related to medieval 'disguisings,' Italian *Intermezzi* and early Tudor pageants, the plot and moral of all masques served to dramatize monarchical divinity, while the set design and staging almost magically made such divine status visible, palpable, believable. As Roy Strong has pointed out, the period of popularity of masques exactly coincided with that of the most extreme political statement of the Divine Right of Kings.¹⁴²

The structure and sophistication of the masque evolved significantly during King James' reign: Graham Parry lists twenty-three major court masques created between 1605 and 1625.¹⁴³ This was due to the involvement of particularly talented creators: the poet, Ben Jonson and the architect-designer, Jones, as well as the input of Queen Anne herself until her death, in 1619. The most important and enthusiastic patron of the masque, she is sometimes credited with giving the masque its final two-part form: opening 'anti-masque,' the exposition of conflict performed by actors, and final 'masque,' the resolution of all problems played out by real courtiers and royal family members.¹⁴⁴

Buckingham was no stranger to these performances during his tenure at court: not only did he take part in the official court masques, usually scheduled during and after the Christmas and Lenten seasons, but also he commissioned and mounted elaborate examples of the art-form in his own houses as entertainments for his royal patrons.¹⁴⁵ As early as December, 1614, John Chamberlain writes "Yet for all this penurious world, we speake of a maske this Christmas towards which the King gives 1500 pounds, the principall motive whereof is thought to be the gracing of young Villiers and to bring him on the stage."¹⁴⁶ In January, 1618, a Venetian observer describes a masque starring Prince Charles which so bored the King that Buckingham had to leap up on stage and perform an elaborate dance in

¹⁴¹ Reading the script of a masque and imagining its staging is difficult today: a good way to approximate the experiencing of one might be to look at Rubens' *Medici Cycle* of paintings in the Louvre, with their elaborate, sometimes comic, compositional effects.

¹⁴² Strong, 1984, 154.

¹⁴³ Parry, 1981, 268.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1981, 49.

¹⁴⁵ Lockyer, 1981, 350. Buckingham's role as a patron of theatre, music and literature deserves a study of its own.

¹⁴⁶ McClure, 1939, I, 561.

order to change the monarch's mood.¹⁴⁷

What seems to be the first masque which Buckingham may have actually commissioned is an untitled and anonymously-written one performed during the Christmas season of 1619-20.¹⁴⁸ Structured as a dialogue between a Scholar and a Master of the Revels, the piece is modelled on a Jonsonian masque, *Lovers Made Men*, of 1617, and is characterized, according to James Knowles, by a playful, even abusive, satirical tone and mocks those who criticized court masques as a wasteful extravagance.¹⁴⁹ Buckingham, as well as several other named courtiers, performed in the entertainment, which may have been a 'running masque,' so-called because it 'ran' from house to house. But perhaps the most famous masque associated with Buckingham is a 1621 work written by Ben Jonson, *The Gypsies Metamorphos'd*. Often called King James' favourite masque,¹⁵⁰ its creation celebrated the visit by the King to Buckingham's recently-acquired house, Burley-on-the-Hill. Performed several times during the summer (an atypical schedule), it featured Buckingham as Captain of the Gypsies along with many members of his family and household in lesser roles. The music was composed by Nicholas Lanier, who received £200 from Buckingham for his services, an unusually large sum which suggests that he might also have done the staging for the masque.¹⁵¹

After the accession of Charles in 1625, there seems to have been a six-year hiatus in the creation of official court masques,¹⁵² although later in the 1630's the Caroline masque reached its apogee under the design direction of Inigo Jones.¹⁵³ The break in theatrical continuity may in part be due to the influence of Queen Henrietta Maria, who brought the

¹⁴⁷ Ashton, 1969, 241.

¹⁴⁸ James Knowles, "Change partners and dance: A newly discovered Jacobean masque," *TLS* (August 9, 1991) 19.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Parry, 1981, 55.

¹⁵¹ G.J. Callon, *Nicholas Lanier, His Life and Music* (Ann Arbor, 1985) 34-39. Lanier was also an artist; Buckingham had six miniature portraits by him in his collection.

¹⁵² Parry, 1981, 268, lists none between 1625 and 1631.

¹⁵³ Strong, 1984, 155. See also John Harris, Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *The King's Arcadia: Inigo Jones and the Stuart Court* (London, 1973).

latest French styles of dancing and performing to London with her.¹⁵⁴ In January, 1626, the Queen oversaw preparation of an entertainment (not technically a masque) at which the King partnered her in the final dance.¹⁵⁵ However, later that year Buckingham put on a more traditional masque-like entertainment for the royal couple at his London residence, York House. In it, Henrietta's mother, Marie de' Medici was portrayed as the spirit of peace in war-torn Europe while, at the climax of the masque, the Duke himself set forth, accompanied by allegorical figures of Fame and Truth, to do the pacifying.¹⁵⁶ Crude perhaps, but politically correct: Buckingham was at that moment pursuing a military alliance with France against the Hapsburgs.

At this point, and at a more gossip level, the theatrical world in London seems to have perfectly mirrored the real one, as Buckingham and Henrietta Maria competed for the King's attention. It was an unequal contest. Even if she had not been French and Catholic and somewhat unco-operative, she could not have dislodged the Duke from favour. So while the Queen "lived like a nun"¹⁵⁷ at Somerset House, Buckingham slept, whenever he chose to, in a room connecting with the King's at Whitehall. Once, when she had said something he did not like, Buckingham had even reminded Henrietta Maria that there had been queens of England who had lost their heads.¹⁵⁸

But Buckingham's interest in the masque was more than tactical. There was a longer-term strategy at work too. He wanted to take on as many of the trappings, styles and prerogatives of royalty as possible and the masque was one of them. Its form had been developed by and for the royal court; it was in a sense a private medium of communication. For Buckingham to commission and mount masques of the type staged at court was his way of demonstrating his status as quasi-royal. Of course, from early on in his career as

¹⁵⁴ Susan A. Sykes, "Henrietta Maria's 'house of delight': French influence and iconography in the Queen's House, Greenwich," *Apollo* 133 (1991) 332-36.

¹⁵⁵ Elizabeth Hamilton, *Henrietta Maria* (London, 1976) 84-85. See also Quentin Bone, *Henrietta Maria, Queen of the Cavaliers* (Urbana IL, 1972) 52.

¹⁵⁶ Lockyer, 1981, 350. Buckingham had just sent off a fleet to blockade Cadiz and seize the Spanish treasure galleons from America; he would shortly embark on an equally unsuccessful military expedition against France.

¹⁵⁷ Hamilton, 1976, 73.

¹⁵⁸ Clarendon, 1844, I, 17.

favourite, King James' lavish gifts of cash and property rights meant that he had ample money to do it. Masques were expensive propositions: during the 1630's, for example, the court spent £14,500 on eleven masques; the King's three costumes for one of them cost £250.¹⁵⁹ Masques also consumed large amounts of time and energy: in 1627, a Venetian diplomat complained that theatrical rehearsals had pushed all state business aside for months.¹⁶⁰

Buckingham, then, had the tacit blessing of both James and Charles to commission and produce masques from time to time, if only because it saved both kings considerable expense. Furthermore, the Duke seems to have been the only courtier willing and able to stage full formal masques. It was, of course, an activity which he enjoyed and to which he was perfectly suited. He loved being centre stage. He possessed all the traits and talents necessary to being a star, including the unsettling but effective combination of casual profligacy and firm attention to detail. And, in a way, his whole life was a kind of masque in itself, an unreal passage from the ordinary to the sublime on the strength of bodily beauty. He himself appreciated this notion. In *The Gypsies Metamorphos'd* of 1621, Buckingham, as the Captain of the Gypsies who tells the fortune of King James, speaks these lines (*literatim*):

"But why doe I presume, though true,
To tell a fortune, Sir, to you,
Who are the maker here of all,
Where none doe stand, or sitt in viewe,
But owe theire fortunes unto you,
At least what they good fortune call?

My selfe a Gypsye here doe shine,
Yet are you Maker, Sir, of mine.¹⁶¹

The image of a gypsy youth transformed into royal favourite seems an appropriate comment on Buckingham's own prodigious coming up in the world. And although some historians have distinguished this masque from official court masques on the grounds that it was not first performed at Whitehall or another royal residence and that it did not centre its

¹⁵⁹ Carlton, 1995, 149.

¹⁶⁰ Smuts, 1987, 191.

¹⁶¹ Parry, 1981, 55.

plot exclusively on the ritual exaltation of the monarch, it is here suggested that it was in both intention and content a true court masque, and that its first performance at a house belonging to Buckingham transforms that house into a royal residence. This was the whole point of the exercise and of Buckingham's overall strategy. The structure of the masque enabled him to use his natural gifts to further himself, while he subtly co-opted the form to solidify his increasingly elevated position.

In broad terms, the court masque, with its increasing emphasis on the visual presentation of the subject, reflected a more generalized, growing Western cultural preoccupation with the observable phenomena of the world. This was the age of Bacon and the beginning of modern science, based on experimentation by observation; of exponential increase in the exploration of the non-European parts of the world; of Galileo and his telescope, Leeuwenhoek and his microscope. In art, too, the natural, authentic visual experience in all its variety (and, according to Michel Foucault, with all its deceptive yet playful illusions) was replacing the more rigidly intellectualized images of the Renaissance or the self-consciously imagined ones of the Mannerist period.¹⁶²

Included in this macro-cultural model was a heightened interest, especially but not exclusively among the educated and aristocratic segments of society, with visible/visual self-presentation, a concern which grew in intensity during the early 1600's.¹⁶³ In England, this socially and culturally acceptable preoccupation with physical appearances clearly affected Prince/King Charles. He in turn intensified such cultural preoccupation through his particularly strong feelings for the visual arts, the theatre and what might be termed the ritualized beauty of monarchy. All three ultimately derived from his own experience and psychological make-up. Charles had always been discomfited by his father's notoriously un-regal bearing and behaviour.¹⁶⁴ This, combined with insecurities about his own small, shy, stammering self, especially *vis-a-vis* his position as a divinely

¹⁶² J.R. Martin, *Baroque* (Harmondsworth, 1981); Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *La Folie du Voir: De l'esthétique baroque* (Paris, 1986).

¹⁶³ See Anna Bryson, "The Rhetoric of Status: Gesture, Demeanour and the Image of the Gentleman in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England," in Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn, eds., *Renaissance Bodies: the Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540-1660* (London, 1990) 136-53.

¹⁶⁴ Carlton, 1995, 20-21; Smuts, 1987, 193.

appointed monarch, led him to place great store in how he looked and acted and in dreaming up the most appropriate surroundings in which to appear.¹⁶⁵ Such a habit did not always serve him well. Some of the most politically damaging events of his reign stemmed from his need to appear and perform in a self-styled kingly way.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, for Charles, the appearance and demeanour of others usually determined his opinion of them and thus their status, Buckingham being the most spectacular example.

Anna Bryson has noted this increasing direct attention to the way a gentleman, and by extension, a courtier or a favourite, was supposed to look, through her examination of contemporary texts on social behaviour which, for her, not only serve to regulate or constrain categories of bodily perception and experience, but also to create them.¹⁶⁷ Late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century books on manners, a rather large genre of writing,¹⁶⁸ feature a vocabulary which continually refers to physical deportment as 'representation,' almost equating it to a theatrical art form.¹⁶⁹ For these writers on gentlemanly manners, Bryson concludes, "the body was a text from which good or bad character could be read."¹⁷⁰ In other words, no matter what a man's lineage, no matter how great his valour in battle, no matter how well his inner virtues had been perfected by proper liberal education, all of these qualities required a visible embodiment and visual representation to be effective and convincing. This, Bryson points out, led to a paradox: through his self-presentation, a gentleman was supposed to show his superior virtue and entitlement to

¹⁶⁵ The most detailed exposition of this aspect of the King's character is found in the notebooks of his Master of Ceremonies, John Finet. See A.J. Loomie, ed., *Ceremonies of Charles I. The Notebooks of John Finet, 1628-1641* (New York, 1987).

¹⁶⁶ In January, 1642, King Charles physically entered Parliament to supervise the arrest of five members for treason; they had been warned and fled; the King ended up looking stranded and impotent. In April of the same year, he appeared in full regalia at the gates of Hull in Yorkshire, demanding the keys to the city; the commander refused; the King left angrily, again looking weak and ineffectual. See Clarendon, 1844, I, 152-53; 216-17.

¹⁶⁷ Bryson, 1990, 139.

¹⁶⁸ Notable examples are James Cleland, *Hero-Paideia: or the Institution of a Young Nobleman* (London, 1607); Richard Weste, *The Booke of Demeanor* (London, 1619); Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (London, 1622); Robert Brathwayt, *The English Gentleman* (London, 1630); Nicholas Faret, *L'Honnet Homme ou l'Art de Pliare à la Cour* (Paris, 1630).

¹⁶⁹ Bryson, 1990, 144.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 145.

respect. Yet such display smacked clearly of effort and artifice and therefore showed vanity and hypocrisy rather than moral probity.¹⁷¹

As a man "magnificent in his deportment"¹⁷² who dearly loved to display himself and whose whole career had depended on an innate gift for self-presentation, Buckingham was a prime example of this paradox. His manners and dress made him the very model of a gentleman courtier in the eyes of two successive kings, yet this accomplishment was often seen as the result of vanity, hypocrisy and general immorality. Brathwayt included among the vices of fashionable men "delicacy in face and sumptuousness in apparel."¹⁷³ and Francis Osborne wrote at the time specifically of Buckingham's "effeminatenesses of dressings...whoreson looks and wanton gestures."¹⁷⁴ From this point of view, an interest in dress and demeanor was equated with the female gender and automatically foreclosed any chance of gentlemanly status.¹⁷⁵ Of course, much of this type of criticism came from people who also found fault with the political and/or religious attitudes and policies of the court. But by no means all of it did. There were many who would be classed as staunch Royalists who felt that the tone and manner of both early Stuart courts was inappropriate; that of James for its unabashed lewdness and that of Charles for its remote effeteness. In the latter case, overtones of gender and sexual instability were exacerbated by notions like the concept of Carlomaria, the unified hermpahroditic embodiment of Neoplatonic ideas of beauty and Platonic ones of love which permeated court discourse. Intellectually pure though it all may be—Erik Larsen cites a 1634 letter between two courtiers describing it all as "a love abstracted from all corporeal gross impressions and sensual appetite, but (it) consists in the contemplations and ideas of the mind, not in any carnal fruition"¹⁷⁶ —it is

¹⁷¹ Bryson, 1990, 153.

¹⁷² Thomson, 1860, II, 207. The author is translating a description of the Duke by Mme de Motteville, a contemporary observer and diarist.

¹⁷³ Brathwayt, 1630, 10.

¹⁷⁴ Francis Osborne, "Traditionall Memoyres," in Scott, 1811, I, 275.

¹⁷⁵ For a discussion of the relationship of dress to gender and sexuality, see Susan Dwyer Amussen, "The part of a Christian man: the cultural politics of manhood in early modern England," in Susan D. Amussen and Mark A. Kishlansky, eds., *Political Culture and cultural politics in early modern England* (Manchester and New York, 1995) 213-33.

¹⁷⁶ Erik Larsen, "Van Dyck's English Period and Cavalier Poetry," *Art Journal* 31, no. 3 (1972) 257.

also freighted with various implications and uncertainties which continue to affect assessments of court imagery, both the poetic¹⁷⁷ and the artistic, especially the portraits of Van Dyck.¹⁷⁸

To step back from the specifics of the Jacobean and Caroline courts for a moment, it is possible to see the roots of all the contemporary concern with demeanour and dress, especially among males, in the *modello* of all treatments of gentlemanly behaviour, Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* first published in 1528.¹⁷⁹ Translated into English in 1561 by Thomas Hoby, the attitudes and recommendations of Castiglione soon became the accepted standard of gentlemanly behaviour in England.¹⁸⁰ In his handbook on how to be a successful courtier, Castiglione constructs a model of verbal and physical grace with, as Anna Bryson says, "rather more emphasis on the social attractiveness of the courtier than on his ethical or political substance."¹⁸¹ Castiglione's model is expressed thus: "The end of the perfect courtier is...to lead his prince along the stern path of virtue, adorning it, however, with shady fronds and strewing it with gay flowers to lessen the tedium of an arduous journey for one whose endurance is slight."¹⁸² This passage could almost have been written with Charles and Buckingham in mind; it certainly would have held enormous appeal to the King, as would the melding of Platonic love with Christian theology, for example,¹⁸³ and the underlying Neoplatonism of Castiglione's whole project. "The eyes

¹⁷⁷ See, for example, Lawrence M. Venuti, *The Cavaliers in Love: Erotic Poetry at the Court of Charles I*, unpublished Ph. D. thesis (Columbia Univ., 1980).

¹⁷⁸ A chronological review of assessments of Van Dyck's painting is found in Erik Larsen, *The Paintings of Anthony Van Dyck*, 2 vols. (Freren, 1988) esp. I, 8-23. For a discussion of the relationship between Van Dyck's work and that of the so-called Cavalier poets, see Larsen, 1972; and Graham Parry, "Van Dyck and the Caroline Court Poets," in Susan J. Barnes and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., eds., *Van Dyck 350: A Symposium* (Washington, 1994) 247-62.

¹⁷⁹ Baldesar Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, George Bull, trans. (Harmondsworth, 1967).

¹⁸⁰ Castiglione had actually travelled to England in 1507 to deliver Raphael's painting of St. George and the Dragon now in the National Gallery, London, a gift to Henry VII from Castiglione's employer, the Duke of Urbino, on the occasion of the Duke's being invested into the Order of the Garter.

¹⁸¹ Bryson, 1990, 137.

¹⁸² Castiglione, 1967, 288.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 300-40.

are the guides of love" he writes, ¹⁸⁴ and "Only rarely does an evil soul dwell in a beautiful body, and so outward beauty is a true sign of inner goodness."¹⁸⁵ This is as succinct a summation of Neoplatonism as is Francis Bacon's rejection of it (*literatim*): "Neither is it almost seene, that very Beautifull Persons, are otherwise of great Vertue."¹⁸⁶ For Buckingham, too, Castiglione would have served as advice and consent.¹⁸⁷ A courtier must possess a beauty spectacular to behold, yet—and Castiglione is unworried about the inherent dilemma—naturally free from effeminacy. The great virtues proposed for a gentleman/courtier/favourite are decorum, nonchalance and gracefulness, the famous *sprezzatura*, which must be evident at all times. "Let him consider well whatever he does or says, the place where he does it, in whose presence...he should arrange to accomplish bold and notable exploits...if possible under the very eyes of the prince he is serving."¹⁸⁸ In other words, the show is all. The visible/visual man is the one who succeeds. Buckingham is Castiglione's courtier incarnate. In terms of Anthony Giddens' ideas, Castiglione articulated a structure that defined Buckingham's role even as the Duke redefined it and took it to a level beyond its original theoretical enunciation.

Conclusion: 'The Continnence of Scipio'

Virtue and power, politics and sex, beauty and art—all the strands come together in a painting by Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641) entitled *The Continnence of Scipio*, now in the collection of Christ Church, Oxford (Fig. 1). Painted during the artist's brief early visit to England from October, 1620 to February, 1621,¹⁸⁹ it is listed in the inventory of Buckingham's collection at York House as "Vandyke—One great Piece being Scipio."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 268.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 330.

¹⁸⁶ Bacon, 1955, 177.

¹⁸⁷ Buckingham might have taken umbrage at some of Castiglione's words, particularly his view that the ideal courtier must spring from a noble family. (Castiglione, 1967, 56-7).

¹⁸⁸ Castiglione, 1967, 115.

¹⁸⁹ Earlier opinions about the dating of the work are reviewed in Oliver Millar, "Van Dyck's 'Continnence of Scipio' at Christ Church," *The Burlington magazine* 93 (1951) 125-26.

¹⁹⁰ Randall Davies, "An Inventory of the Duke of Buckingham's Pictures, etc., at York House in 1635," *The Burlington Magazine* 10 (1907) 379.

It hung in the Hall of the house—the first place a visitor would step into—along with only one other picture, namely a copy of one of Titian's most celebrated works, the so-called 'Titian's Glory' (Fig. 2) then as now in the Spanish Royal Collections. Clearly the 'Scipio' was one of the Duke's prize possessions.

Before discussing why this was so, a brief description of the painting is warranted. A large and sumptuous-looking work, *The Continnence of Scipio* is a fine example of both the young Van Dyck's emerging personal style—swirling, sensuous surfaces that also show a reflective quality and an emphasis on feeling—and his continuing admiration for the work of his mentor and employer, Peter Paul Rubens, the most celebrated painter in Europe at the time. In fact, the 'Scipio' has been compared (unfavourably, by Graham Parry) to an earlier treatment of the same subject by Rubens.¹⁹¹

As Pamela Gordon has noted, it is the only surviving painting conceived and executed by Van Dyck which shows an actual event from ancient history.¹⁹² The work depicts an episode from the Second Punic War as recounted by Livy.¹⁹³ After capturing the city of New Carthage in 209 B.C., the victorious Roman general, Publius Scipio, assured the people of the place that no harm would come to them from him or his army. To prove his word, Scipio, who had been 'presented' with the most beautiful local maiden by his men as part of the spoils of war, sent for her fiancé and returned the girl to him, her virtue intact. His only condition was that the young man be a 'friend to Rome' thereafter. At the same time, he gave the ransom offered by the girl's parents to the young couple as a wedding gift. With these gestures was born the legend of Scipio, the conqueror wise enough to know that true allegiance is better born out of generosity and goodness than out of force.

Why this subject would appeal to Buckingham—and why Van Dyck's representation of it would be so prominently displayed at York House—reflects partly on

¹⁹¹ Parry, 1981, 139-40. The Rubens picture was destroyed in 1636 and is known only through copies and engravings. See also Agnes Czobor, "An Oil Sketch by Cornelis de Vos," *The Burlington Magazine* 109 (1967) 351-55.

¹⁹² Pamela Gordon, "The Duke of Buckingham and Van Dyck's 'Continnence of Scipio,'" in *Essays on van Dyck* (Ottawa, 1983) 53-55.

¹⁹³ Livy, *The History of Rome*, E. Rhys, ed., (London, 1926) IV, 53-67.

the character of the Duke himself and partly on the circumstances of the work's creation. There are several theories as to who commissioned the piece and why. And all of them allow for the idea that the 'Scipio' is also a *portrait historié* and that the figures in it can be 'identified,' although these 'identifications' require a certain amount of imagination.

One idea is that it was Buckingham himself who commissioned the work, with the aim of demonstrating his superior artistic taste and his power as an active and progressive art patron.¹⁹⁴ In this view, the voluptuous colours and surfaces of the painting, along with its scenographic architecture, demonstrate a strong influence on Van Dyck of Paolo Veronese (1528-88), the Venetian painter famous for those qualities. Veronese was extremely well-represented in Buckingham's collection at that time. Van Dyck would have seen these pictures and not only been impressed by them, but also cued to the Duke's particular tastes.¹⁹⁵ In this analysis, the people in the painting represent Buckingham (the young Carthaginian), his bride and King James (Scipio)—a flattering portrait, indeed, since James was a rather dishevelled fifty-five years old at the time!¹⁹⁶

Another interpretation implicates King James himself in the dealings with Van Dyck, and sees the painting as commemorating the recent wedding of his favourite, perhaps even being a gift to mark that occasion.¹⁹⁷ Here, the dynamic is seen as a bringing together of the young, glamorous Van Dyck and the young, glamorous Buckingham through a choice of subject matter both sexy and erudite—that is, very much in keeping with James' emotional yet donnish character. Here again, Scipio is James, the wise Scottish 'conqueror' of England ruling through generosity and proper morality!

A third theory holds that the 'Scipio' was commissioned by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, and given to Buckingham as a gift, again on the occasion of his marriage.¹⁹⁸ Arundel had been, at least until the arrival of Buckingham and Prince Charles on the art

¹⁹⁴ Christopher Brown, *Van Dyck* (Oxford, 1982) 56.

¹⁹⁵ Oliver Millar, *The Age of Charles I* (London, 1972) 18; Oliver Millar, *Van Dyck in England* (London, 1982) 11-13.

¹⁹⁶ Gregory Martin, "The Age of Charles I at the Tate," *The Burlington Magazine* 115 (1973) 59.

¹⁹⁷ Ron Harvie, "A present from 'Dear Dad'? Van Dyck's 'The Continnence of Scipio,'" *Apollo* 138 (October, 1993) 224-26.

¹⁹⁸ David Howarth, *Lord Arundel and his Circle* (New Haven and London, 1985) 156-57.

scene, the leading aristocratic connoisseur of the visual arts in England. He had acquired, largely through his wife's money, the largest collection of art and antiquities in the country; he travelled widely on the continent and was well-connected to the art market in the major centres of Italy and the Netherlands. Because of this, he is often credited with bringing Van Dyck to England in 1620, although as Christopher White has recently said, it is impossible to be certain whether Arundel or Buckingham was the prime mover in persuading the artist to come to London and "the truth may be that as active patrons of the arts they both played a decisive role."¹⁹⁹ One of the things that has connected Arundel to the 'Scipio' is fragment of the antique marble frieze in the bottom left corner of the picture which almost supports the figure of Scipio above it. Known as part of Arundel's collection of antiquities, this second-century Roman work was only rediscovered in 1972,²⁰⁰ and its prominence in Van Dyck's painting seems to prove that the Earl commissioned the picture. In fact, the frieze has been interpreted as a sly dig by Arundel at Buckingham's attitude towards antique sculpture, which was one of disdaining good fragments in favour of less deserving but better-preserved pieces.²⁰¹ (On the other hand, it has also been argued that the marble was actually part of Buckingham's collection and only bought later by Arundel from his estate.)²⁰² In any case, in this scenario, the Earl, who was then out of favour with the King, ordered a portrayal of Buckingham as Scipio, the wise victor who ruled through generosity, and presented it to the favourite in order to win his support at court.²⁰³ If true, the tactic seems to have worked: in 1621, Arundel was appointed Earl Marshal, perhaps on Buckingham's recommendation. Furthermore, this theory would help to explain the place of honour given the painting at York House; it would have reminded everyone that the old-line aristocracy was now subservient to the new power in England: Buckingham himself.

¹⁹⁹ Christopher White, *Anthony Van Dyck: Thomas Howard The Earl of Arundel* (Malibu CA, 1995) 58.

²⁰⁰ John Harris, "The Link between a Roman second-century Sculptor, Van Dyck, Inigo Jones and Queen Henrietta Maria," *The Burlington Magazine* 115 (1973) 526-30. The frieze is now in the Museum of London, while the rest of the 'Arundel Marbles' are in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

²⁰¹ Howarth, 1985, 197-98.

²⁰² Brown, 1982, 56.

²⁰³ Lockyer, 1981, 67.

On the other hand, the choice of Scipio as subject may have been a subtle piece of self-assertion by Arundel, who believed, according to Henry Peacham, that the Howard lineage stretched back to “that Cornelian stem whereof Scipio was said to be the top.”²⁰⁴

From an art-historical standpoint, however, the more important message of Van Dyck's *The Continnence of Scipio* is that, no matter who commissioned it, the piece was painted *for* Buckingham and that it was, in Oliver Millar's words, “far more sophisticated than usual...where demand still was almost exclusively for portraits.”²⁰⁵ In terms of Giddens' structuration theory, then, the painting can be said to show how contemporary attitudes towards art created Buckingham's interest in it while he simultaneously revised and reformed contemporary tastes. The dynamic is particularly dramatic if the commission originated with Arundel, for it would then be a case of one sophisticated patron of the older generation recognizing and trying to communicate with another of the younger—but in the younger man's idiom. Such a situation might well lead to the conclusion that the ‘Scipio’ was painted at the end of Van Dyck's first stint in England, since Arundel could have seen what the artist had already done for Buckingham—the ‘Adonis and Venus’ (Fig. 10)—and commissioned something in the same ‘new’ style to present to the favourite.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman, The Truth of Our Times and The Art of Living in London*, Virgil B. Heltzel, ed., (Ithaca, 1962) 4.

²⁰⁵ Millar, 1972, 18.

²⁰⁶ The author is indebted to Thomas Glen for this observation.

CHAPTER 2

BUCKINGHAM: THE ART OF PATRONAGE

As the most influential man in England for at least the decade 1618-28, George Villiers was the cynosure of everyone seeking every kind of advancement in life. His unparalleled personal relationships with Kings James and Charles made him the conduit to royal favour while his own exponentially-increasing wealth and list of titles gave him almost unlimited access to, and control over, positions at all levels in all areas of activity all over the country. His every word was hung on, every gesture watched, every mood noted in order to discern the most propitious time to approach him with a request or an offer of service. Even in the correspondence between minor provincial aristocrats,¹ Buckingham's slightest attention is immediately and excitedly reported. He is early on seen as the rising star, "who will and who will not,"² and a good friend to the Earl of Mar.³ Later, he supports the Earl's candidacy for the Treasurership of Scotland ⁴ and promises to help him "as occasion offers."⁵ Buckingham subsequently expresses concern regarding the Earl of Kellie's situation,⁶ and, in 1622, publicly commends the Earl of Mar's behaviour.⁷

It was not just peripheral figures whose (self)esteem rose and fell with Buckingham's words and whims. Francis Bacon, the noted polymath and politician,

¹ Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Supplementary Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Mar & Kellie*, Henry Paton, ed. (London, 1930).

² *Ibid.*, 59.

³ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 65-67.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.

cultivated Villiers from the start of his ascendancy at court.⁸ Their relationship ran both smoothly and roughly over the years. In 1617, Bacon was appointed Lord Keeper and he had no doubt about the favourite's role in getting him this promotion: "You are the truest and perfectest mirror and example of firm and generous friendship that ever was in Court. And I shall count every day lost wherein I shall not either study your well doing in thought, or do your name honour in speech, or perform your service in deed," he wrote.⁹ Later that same year, however, the two had a falling out over the marriage of Buckingham's brother, John. Bacon made a *faux pas* in commenting on the matter and had to scramble to try to regain the favourite's favour. His letters of the time suggest an unequal relationship, with his role as one of supplicant,¹⁰ although in general Bacon seems to have tried to play on Buckingham's own belief: "I know well the difference between naked obedience and that where affection is joined to it."¹¹

Whether Buckingham always possessed such perspicacity is questionable. The case of Sir John Eliot (1592-1632) belies it. In 1625, Eliot, a long-standing friend, wrote to Buckingham: "In the great desire I have unto your Grace's service, nothing has more unhappied me than the want of opportunity in which I might express the character of my heart that only takes of your impressions...I will, in the meantime, settle all my resolutions and become wholly devoted to the contemplation of your excellence..."¹² But a few months later, after Buckingham had ignored Eliot's honest assessment of a man the Duke wished to appoint Vice-Admiral of Cornwall, Eliot became one of Buckingham's most aggressive opponents, likening him to Sejanus, the favourite of the Roman Emperor Tiberius and a classical personification of greed and corruption.¹³ This *volte-face* and its manner of

⁸ This was at least partly at the behest of King James, who saw the older Bacon as a potential intellectual mentor for his new love-object.

⁹ Lockyer, 1981, 31.

¹⁰ Ibid., 45-48. See also Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune: the troubled Life of Francis Bacon 1561-1626* (London, 1997). This biography portrays Bacon as a disorganized, yet tenacious, opportunist who often tended to miss the subtleties of the patronage system in which he enthusiastically operated.

¹¹ Ibid., 46.

¹² Williamson, 1949, 91.

¹³ Cammell, 1939, 266-67.

articulation may say as much about Eliot's character as about Buckingham's; it does, however, suggest that the Duke did not always place honesty and affection above obedience.

Buckingham's self-professed ability to know the true from the false in the behaviour of his supplicants and dependents did not, of course, mean that those people themselves accepted Buckingham's decisions with equally perceptive perspective. For every person honoured, another several are slighted and over the years the balance weighs heavier and heavier on the negative side. By the time of his impeachment by Parliament in 1626, the weight was ready to crush him. And of the thirteen "Misdemeanors, Misprisons, Offences, Crimes and other Matters" listed in the declaration against Buckingham, eight concerned his (mis)use of powers of patronage.¹⁴ His trial on these charges was only prevented by King Charles' dissolving Parliament.

One specific example of Buckingham's working methods in the area of patronage is the lengthy campaign waged by Sir Dudley Carleton (1573-1632) to obtain a sinecure.¹⁵ A widely-travelled and sophisticated man, Carleton served English legations in Madrid, Venice (ambassador from 1610-16) and The Hague during his career and played an important part in the art-collecting activities of the Duke, the King and other English connoisseurs, himself included. During his posting as ambassador to Holland, he became a correspondent with Peter Paul Rubens on matters both of art and diplomacy.¹⁶ In 1618, he offered to exchange 123 antique pieces, mostly busts and statues, for some of Rubens' own paintings. In this way, he came to possess a group of works by Europe's leading painter which was only bettered when Buckingham in turn bought Rubens' own private collection in 1627.

Since at that time, ambassadorial posts were notoriously unprofitable for the

¹⁴ Sections 1) Plurality of Offices; 2) Buying the Admiral's Place; 3) Buying the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports; 6) Extortion of £10,000 from the East Indian Company, with the Abuse of Parliament; 9) Compelling Lord Roberts of Truro to buy his Title of Honour; 10) Selling Places of Judicature; 11) Procuring Honours for his poor Kindred; 12) Exhausting, intercepting and misemploying the King's revenue.

¹⁵ John H. Barcroft, "Carleton and Buckingham: The Quest for Office," in H.D. Reinmuth, ed., *Early Stuart Studies: Essays in Honor of David Harris Willson*, (Minneapolis, 1970) 122-36.

¹⁶ Sainsbury, 1859; P. Yorke, ed., *Letters from and to Sir Dudley Carleton* (London, 1757).

incumbents, Carleton aspired to a lucrative appointment in England. During virtually his entire tenure in The Hague, he was constantly engaged in attempts to obtain first the provostship of Eton and then one of the two positions of Secretary of State. Carleton's dealings with Buckingham interwove art-buying and office-seeking in a way which illustrates the impenetrable complexity of the quest for preferment at the courts of James and Charles. It was intentionally byzantine: by playing competitors off each other, by juggling positions and people, by interminable negotiations over payments, reversions and pensions, Buckingham was able to keep the maximum number of people in a state of continuous petitioning and entreating for favour. Carleton's disadvantageous location in Holland meant that often he had to use his nephews as intermediaries; they would report that Buckingham spoke of Carleton "comfortably enough"¹⁷ yet no appointment materialized year after year. Clearly, Buckingham preferred that Carleton stay where he was of most value to him and the monarchy, in The Hague. But he did not want to demoralize the man by saying so.

In early 1625, one of the secretaryships became vacant, and Carleton's nephew presented, with great indirection, a gift of artwork to Buckingham on behalf of his uncle. The Duke was taken aback, knowing that Carleton could not afford such a grand gesture. The nephew said his uncle would be heartbroken if Buckingham refused the gift; it was therefore accepted. When it became clear that the secretaryship was already filled and Buckingham seemed to be planning to send a reciprocal gift to Carleton, it was quickly necessary to disassociate the original present from the competition for the office of Secretary, so as to maintain its value as leverage toward any other potential office.¹⁸ Eventually, things did work out for Carleton. In 1628, he was created Viscount Dorchester, and later that same year he finally got his long-coveted secretaryship. Ironically, this was after Buckingham's death, but the Duke had promised the appointment and King Charles honoured the commitment.¹⁹

The entire saga of Carleton's quest for advancement is instructive in two ways.

¹⁷ Barcroft, 1970, 124.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 130-32.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 135.

First, it shows that patronage in the seventeenth century was not always condescending and corrupt. It could be so, of course, but it often served as a kind of severance pay, or a retirement package, or unemployment benefit.²⁰ Secondly, Carleton's experience, while not an example of Buckingham's own art patronage, nevertheless links patronage, art and the Duke in a manner that once again demonstrates that the way to Buckingham's heart was through his eyes.

Art patronage in England

In Britain, as in the rest of Europe, being a patron of artists was inextricably bound up with being an aristocrat, a (secular or ecclesiastical) prince or a monarch. As well, art patronage seems to have increased in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although it never reached continental levels. English energies were more directed towards what are known as the decorative arts rather than the fine arts.²¹ Still, there are important examples of high-level patronage of accomplished painters and sculptors.²² Perhaps the most famous is the relationship between Henry VIII (1509-47) and Hans Holbein (1497-1543), which Roy Strong calls "the most lavish and intensive patronage of the visual arts prior to the accession of Charles I"²³ and which resulted in imagery that helped create a new myth of monarchy in England (Holbein was officially appointed King's Painter in 1537). And the King was not the only patron of the German painter. The great courtiers like Thomas More (1478-1535)²⁴ and Cardinal Wolsey (1475-1530)²⁵ also availed themselves of his talents. Nor was Holbein the only artist favoured by the King. In 1545, according to Martin Warnke, the painter Girolamo da Treviso was given a residence which reflected Henry's high opinion of him.²⁶

²⁰ Ibid., 135-36.

²¹ Anthony Wells-Cole, *Art and Decoration in Elizabethan and Jacobean England* (New Haven and London, 1997).

²² Roy Strong, *Artists of the Tudor Court* (London, 1983).

²³ Roy Strong, *Holbein and Henry VIII* (London, 1967) 5.

²⁴ Warnke, 1993, 84. The author notes that the great humanists, More and Erasmus "smoothed the way for Holbein's association with the English court."

²⁵ S.J. Gunn, ed., *Cardinal Wolsey: church, state and art* (Cambridge and New York, 1991).

²⁶ Warnke, 1993, 126.

Not until the early 1600's, however, did art patronage in England achieve what might be termed critical mass. This growth of interest in the visual arts at that time was due to many factors. It reflected the Europe-wide emergence of increasingly strong nation-states headed by increasingly absolutist monarchs with a pronounced need for self-sustaining propaganda. It signalled the particular desire of the Scottish Stuart dynasty to assert not only its political legitimacy in England, but more importantly its cultural sophistication: the English court saw the new rulers—not without reason—as coarse and provincial. And it revealed a burgeoning personal interest, hitherto somewhat lacking,²⁷ in the artistic and aesthetic trends and developments on the continent. Granted, the first Stuart monarch, James I, was not part of this tendency; his interests were verbal, not visual. But his son and heir, Henry (d.1612), was an active patron and collector of European art²⁸ as was, more famously, his eventual successor, Charles I.²⁹

While the historian Malcolm Smuts has said that the short-term use of art as socio-political propaganda by the Stuart court was spectacularly unsuccessful in comparison with that of the Bourbons in seventeenth-century France,³⁰ it can be argued that in the longer term, the image of Charles and his court, as created primarily by Van Dyck, has been equally 'successful,' or potent. This image came to represent the very essence of English aristocracy and continued to do so right through the nineteenth century. (Some would say that a Van Dyck portrait still sets the standard in how the upper class sees itself.) And it is one of the contentions of this thesis that, while that image resulted from the intimate patron-painter relationship of King Charles and Van Dyck, it also contains traces, resonances of the influence of Buckingham on Charles' ideas about, and tastes in, art and art patronage.

²⁷ Smuts, 1987, 133, n. 1, says that Henry VII's patronage of Holbein and the interest in continental art taken by a few Tudor and Elizabethan patrons did not have a deep or lasting impact.

²⁸ Strong, 1986, *passim*.

²⁹ Ursula Hoff, *Charles I Patron of Artists* (London, 1942); Oliver Millar, *The Age of Charles I* (London, 1972); Arthur MacGregor, ed., *The Late King's Goods: collections, possessions and patronage of Charles I in the light of the Commonwealth state inventories* (London, 1989).

³⁰ Malcolm Smuts, "The Political Failure of Stuart Cultural Patronage," in Guy Fitch Lytle and Stephen Orgel, eds., *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1981) 165-87.

Issues of Art Patronage

Before looking at Buckingham's activities as a patron of artists, a brief definition of terms is required. 'Art patronage' and 'art collecting' are often conflated but they are not synonymous. While it may be safe to say that all patrons are collectors, the reverse is not true. Moreover, while all patrons interact directly with artists, all collectors do not (although some do sometimes). Simply put, a patron orders a work of art not yet done; a collector buys a piece which already exists. Thus, a patron is involved in the creative process from its very inception.

Such involvement means that a patron, to a greater or lesser degree, influences both the form and content of the artwork. The painting or sculpture (or building or concerto or poem) is the product of the interaction of two people, artist and patron, which can, like all human relationships, be smooth and co-operative or tempestuous and conflicted.

In recent years, there has been ever-increasing concern with the dynamics of patronage on the part of art and cultural historians. Some of this interest has come out of Marxist theory, whereby the artist-patron relationship is seen as a dialectic based on money: the patron has it, the artist needs it; the patron shops for prestige, the artist sells it.³¹ Interest in patronage also has arisen out of Deconstructionist ideas, in which the mystique of authorship is replaced by the belief that meaning and value in art is the result of a continuously changing contextual collaboration.³² There is also a connection between Reception theory and the increasing focus on the role of the patron in art since a patron functions also as a viewer/beholder, who brings various culturally constructed assumptions and expectations not only to the act of responding to a work of art but also to the commissioning of it. All three interpretations of patronage often come into play together, of

³¹ See, for example, Bruce Cole, *The Renaissance Artist at Work* (New York, 1983); Bram Kempers, *Painting, Power and Patronage: the Rise of the Professional Artist in the Italian Renaissance* (London, 1992); Richard Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy* (Baltimore, 1993); Alison Cole, *Virtue and Magnificence: Art of the Italian Renaissance Courts* (New York, 1995); Anabel Thomas, *The Painter's Practice in Renaissance Tuscany* (Cambridge, 1995);

³² Some prime examples are Rona Goffen, *Piety and Patronage in Renaissance Venice* (New Haven and London, 1986); Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven and London, 1992); Evelyn Welch, *Art and Authority in Renaissance Milan* (New Haven, 1995);

course.³³

Much of the work in this field has concentrated on Italy during the Renaissance, largely because of the availability of a large amount of archival documentation concerning artistic commissions there during that period.³⁴ But, as Bram Kempers has pointed out, a great deal of data on the circumstances of particular commissions has been lost and what remains is often difficult to interpret: things were not written, or painted, “with a view to facilitating future historical research.”³⁵

Even if much writing on patronage is perforce speculative, there is nevertheless no doubt that, in Francis Haskell’s words, a “defensible conclusion” can be made that the influence of patrons on the arts has been enormous.³⁶ And this has been true throughout history. Artistic patronage has a grand pedigree—even the word for patron in French, *mécène*, derives from the name of Gaius Clinius Maecenas (70-8 B.C.), the wealthy Roman patron of Vergil and Horace.³⁷ In his examination of the history and traditions of patronage, Haskell makes a distinction between ‘pure’ and ‘expedient’ types of it, the former being motivated by a genuine interest in art for its own sake, the latter by utilitarian motives, e.g. the desire to assert power, social prestige, personal wealth, religious convictions and so on.³⁸ It is arguable whether such a distinction would have been made by patrons of the past, and Haskell himself admits that, even in periods of grandiose patronage like the Renaissance and the seventeenth-century, it is hard to separate the pure

³³ See Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford, 1972); Edward Goldberg, *Patterns in Late Medici Art Patronage* (Princeton, 1983); Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: on the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven, 1985); Mary Hollingsworth, *Patronage in Renaissance Italy from 1400 to the early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1994); Steven F. Ostrow, *Art and Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Rome* (Cambridge, 1996).

³⁴ Italy also remains the most seductive territory for many art historians.

³⁵ Kempers, 1987, 9.

³⁶ Francis Haskell, “Patronage,” in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, 16 vols., (New York, 1959-83) XI (1966), 118-32.

³⁷ For a discussion of the relationship of literary and artistic activity, and the theoretical problems this has caused, see Rensselaer W. Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting*, (New York, 1967).

³⁸ Haskell, 1966, 120. For a different view, see Joseph Alsop, *The Rare Art Traditions* (New York and London, 1982) 67, where the author distinguishes between “art-for-use-plus-beauty” sought by a patron, art-as-precious-material sought by a treasure-gatherer and “art-as-an-end-in-itself” as sought by a “true collector.”

and expedient versions. During that time of increasingly strong centralized monarchies, artists became more and more attached to courts, while it became universally believed that art patronage was an essential attribute of monarchy.³⁹ In his dedication to King Charles I of the first edition of *De Pictura Veterum* (1638), the humanist scholar Franciscus Junius wrote: "You, a ruler suffused with grandeur, who attends upon the pressing cares of the public good, in equal measure also earnestly love and cherish letters and the other liberal arts."⁴⁰ By extension, this attitude towards art patronage applied to aristocrats in general, particularly newly titled and wealthy people like Buckingham who moved in the highest circles and considered themselves integral components of the monarchical system.

Today, true art patrons do not lie thick on the ground. The princes and aristocrats of the past have not been replaced by the tycoons and stars of modern times. It is not that there is any lack of people with the means to commission art; the rich simply seldom do it. Art, in the modernist view, should be created by the free and autonomous artist. Any outside influence, particularly that of money, taints the purity of the artistic product and therefore must be avoided. Thus, patronage—and even the word itself has taken on a pejorative ring—has become suspect when applied to art.

This was not always the case, of course, and in past centuries, the collaboration of patron and artist was seen not only as necessary but also as beneficial to both parties. Furthermore, as Meyer Schapiro has said: "It is highly unlikely that sculptors and painters felt the requirements specified in their commissions...to be infringements of their artistic freedom, any more than an engineer today regards the specifications for the work to be done as a constraint on the liberty of his profession."⁴¹ Titian (c.1488-1576), for example, wrote to a patron in the 1520's: "I am firmly convinced that the greatness of the art of the old painters was in large part, or rather altogether, helped by those great princes who very wisely gave them prescription, by means of which they achieved fame and praise."⁴² This,

³⁹ Ibid., 126. See also A.G. Dickens, ed., *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage and Royalty, 1400-1800* (New York, 1984).

⁴⁰ Aldrich, 1991, I, 319.

⁴¹ Meyer Schapiro, "On the Relation of Patron and Artist: Comments on a Proposed Model for the Scientist," *The American Journal of Sociology* LXX, no. 3 (November, 1964) 363-69.

⁴² Haskell, 1966, 124.

however, runs counter to the beliefs of most Renaissance writers on art. Alberti (1404-72) laid the foundation for a theory of art centered on autonomy, individuality, innovation and excellence.⁴³ Vasari (1511-74), while recognizing the impetus provided by challenging commissions from educated connoisseurs, still stressed the primacy of individual artistic ability and genius.⁴⁴ Later theorists tended to follow the Albertian line: Lomazzo (1538-1600) elevated the individual artistic imagination to almost mystical heights in his analysis of creativity.⁴⁵ Bellori (1615-96) revived the classical concept of the Idea, the perfect mental image, which the artist is to superimpose over the natural object in order to create an enduring, meaningful work: art as the perfection of nature.⁴⁶ De Piles (1635-1709), famously championed Rubens and the role of colour, as opposed to draughtsmanship, in the creation of great art, but he did not theorize on the role of patronage.⁴⁷

All of this seems to point inexorably towards the modern notion of the autonomous artist, which was presaged most forcefully by the tempestuous Salvator Rosa (1615-73) who told a client who had suggested an idea for a picture to "go to a brickmaker, for they do work to order."⁴⁸

Nevertheless, as Bram Kempers has said: "Autonomy was in fact a very scarce commodity"⁴⁹ and is an idea cultivated by artists and their biographers as well as art theorists and historians anxious to create an autonomous intellectual position and discipline. In colloquial terms, it might be said that artists have always tended to be in denial. A dramatic exception is Pietro da Cortona (1596-1669), an artist who refused to choose his own subjects and claimed never to have done so in his career.⁵⁰

⁴³ Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, Cecil Grayson, trans. (Harmondsworth, 1972).

⁴⁴ Vasari, 1987.

⁴⁵ Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *A Tracte Containing the Arts of Curious Painting...*, Richard Haydocke, trans. (Oxford, 1598).

⁴⁶ Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* (Rome, 1672).

⁴⁷ Roger de Piles, *The Principles of Painting*, Anon., trans. (London, 1743).

⁴⁸ Francis Haskell, *Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations Between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque* (London, 1963) 11.

⁴⁹ Kempers, 1987, 4.

⁵⁰ Haskell, 1963, 11.

Somewhere between the extremes of da Cortona and Rosa lies the true position of both the artist and the patron, which, according to Haskell, ideally "implies a personal relationship between the patron and the artist."⁵¹ Not necessarily a friendship, although it can evolve into one, this relationship is more like a personal business association with all its implied competition. It can, of course, be(come) antagonistic, an unhappy struggle of two wills, which, however, often produces art of great consequence. The classic example of this is Michelangelo and Pope Julius II. There might even be a case made for the idea that since only a battle can produce a victory, the ideal patron-artist liaison must be a violent intellectual conflict. In any case, whether or not such a relationship also implies an enlightened love of art on the part of the patron and/or a heightened level of social sophistication on the part of the artist is the basis for much of the discussion of the subject of patronage. But, clearly, for the dynamic of patronage to function, there must be at least a rudimentary personal relationship between artist and patron, even if it takes only the form of a single piece of written communication and even if, as was often the case in the period under consideration, this involved the interposition and interpretation of an intermediary. It sounds simplistic, but for a commissioned work of art to come into being, the patron must say what he or she wants and the artist must read/hear the words.

In terms of Giddens' theory of structuration, the artist-patron dynamic can be seen as one of mutual constraining-enabling. The patron, as representative of the prevailing social structure, constrains the artist through the terms and expectations of a specific commission while at the same time enabling (either through encouragement or challenge) the artist to create a work which reflects his own ideas about, and interpretation of, the subject commissioned. Simultaneously, the artist, as representative of the prevailing aesthetic style, constrains the patron through a limiting of what is acceptable as art, while enabling the patron to suggest personally meaningful variations and alterations to the current mode. This, fundamentally, is how styles change and are transmitted; the breadth and permanence of the transmission depends both on the persistence of the patron and the

⁵¹ Haskell, 1966, 118. For a discussion of the role of intimacy between patrons and creators, see Guy Fitch Lytle, "Friendship and Patronage in Renaissance Europe," in F.W. Kent and Patricia Simons, eds., *Patronage, Art and Society in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford, 1987): 47-61.

amenability of the artist.

But, since human communication is, like human thought, rarely, if ever, mechanically linear and its result is rarely, if ever, entirely predictable, for both parties to the artist-patron conversation, understanding what is said may be problematic. Giddens gives an example of a brief conversation: Q) "Do you want a game of tennis?" A) "I have work to do." In purely lexical terms, there is no apparent connection between the two utterances, but the link can be made in the socio-cultural realm if the speakers have mutual knowledge that work generally takes precedence over play, or something of that sort.⁵² The acceptance of the answer, as well as its intention, are circumstantially dependent on a variety of factors: time, place, the nature of the relationship between the two people, etc.

What, in the 1620's or 30's, would be the picture that resulted from this conversation: Q) "Do you want a picture in the modern manner?" A) "I don't like dark shadows." Even if, as Michael Baxandall has shown, within a given environment, artists and patrons share both a spoken and an unspoken cultural code,⁵³ there is still room for misinterpretation and misunderstanding of whatever is said: the same words do not mean the same things for everyone. And what of patrons and artists from different cultural environments: Buckingham and Rubens, for instance, or Charles I and Van Dyck? If mutual knowledge is absent, or only imperfectly there, the resulting communication can be non-existent or disastrous. Or it can be serendipitous. A particular pictorial detail or compositional construct, however accidentally arrived at, might prove to be the most admired passage in a painting and the one which engenders future patronage. In this way, it is the harbinger of stylistic change. In Giddens' terms, the unintended consequence of action becomes the unacknowledged condition of future action.⁵⁴

⁵² Giddens, 1976, 102-13.

⁵³ Baxandall, 1972, *passim*.

⁵⁴ Giddens, 1984, 1-14. A more art-related elucidation of this idea is found in Warnke, 1993, 100: "What mattered, especially when the intended recipients were princes, was not so much the originality of subject as the originality of the execution, and that artists banked on the princes' being interested in novelties, curiosities and a show of brilliance."

Buckingham as art patron

There are no extant documents which detail a single commission by Buckingham to any specific artist.⁵⁵ As unfortunate as this may be, it is not particularly unusual. Obviously, much material has been lost or destroyed, particularly during the turbulent 1640's in England. But beyond that lies the suspicion that patrons did not often spend time writing out their ideas about art and aesthetics, even when dealing with an artist about a specific job. Moreover, most artists did not make a habit of writing about their work or their theories about it.⁵⁶

Thus, even on the subject of King Charles himself and the Royal Collections, scholars and art historians have always bemoaned the lack of documentation regarding the King's ideas and feelings about art. In the nineteenth century, the archival historian Sir Henry Ellis wrote of Charles: "No letters have been found which bear upon his taste for the cultivation of the Arts."⁵⁷ And, more recently, concerning Rubens' commission for the ceiling of The Banqueting House, Whitehall, Oliver Millar has rued the fact that no record has survived of any discussions between Rubens and the King "about anything except the truce,"⁵⁸ the painter having come to England in his role as diplomat representing the King of Spain.⁵⁹

Like Charles, Buckingham had important dealings with artists (many of the same ones, in fact) but left no written evidence of it—only, of course, actual paintings. In other words, the experience is the evidence. Various extant pictures of the Duke prove that he patronized artists, so the evaluation or interpretation of his role as a patron can only happen through an examination of those pictures.⁶⁰ And, in focussing mainly on portraiture, there

⁵⁵ More written material has survived regarding the Duke's collecting activity, but even on this subject, documentation is still scanty.

⁵⁶ Rubens is a notable exception.

⁵⁷ Sir Henry Ellis, *Original Letters Illustrative of British History*, 3 vols. (London, 1824) III, 186.

⁵⁸ Oliver Millar, *Rubens: The Whitehall Ceiling* (London, 1958) 10.

⁵⁹ For discussions of this aspect of Rubens, see Emile Cammaerts, *Rubens: Painter and Diplomat* (London, 1932); C. V. Wedgwood, *The Political Career of Peter Paul Rubens* (London, 1975).

⁶⁰ The subject of the use of artworks in the interpretation of the past is central to much art-historical work today, most notably in Haskell, 1993; see also Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb, *Art and History: Images and Their Meaning* (Cambridge, 1988).

is a coincidental relevance to the history of British art in general, which might be said to be a history of styles and concepts in portrait-painting.⁶¹

Numerous images portraying Buckingham throughout his short career on the world stage have been identified over the years. The most comprehensive list remains that compiled by Cammell, who catalogued eighty portraits traditionally identified as likenesses of the Duke, including original works, versions and copies of them, plus drawings and engravings.⁶² In his commentary on these images, Cammell disputes a 'Buckingham' identification for a number of them, thus raising an issue that bedevils any discussion of portraits from the distant past: certainty as to who is the sitter. David Piper has noted that contemporary documentary or epistolary mention of portraits, which can be identified unhesitatingly with surviving pictures, is quite rare. Engravings can sometimes help, since they are often inscribed with a sitter's name, and are occasionally dated. But, of course, not every painting is engraved. Even an apparent likeness of features in one work to those in an authenticated portrait is an unreliable tool of verification except in cases of exceptionally idiosyncratic faces and often the only course is to accept an old and relatively believable tradition.⁶³

⁶¹ Why portraits play such an important, often almost exclusive, role in English art is an interesting question. Is it the result of excessive confidence or insecurity? Does it bespeak a belief in art as a utilitarian way to display dynastic or economic prowess to others (See Roger Fry, *Reflections on British Painting* [London, 1934] 25), or a luxury for private delectation? Is it simply arrogant self-absorption of the kind noted in 1497 by an Italian visitor: "The English are great lovers of themselves, and whenever they see a handsome foreigner, they say that 'he looks like an Englishman' or 'it is a great pity that he should not be an Englishman.'" Cited in David Piper, *The English Face* (London, 1957) 85.

⁶² Cammell, 1939, 371-85. The author never published a *catalogue raisonnée* complete with illustrations.

⁶³ David Piper, *Catalogue of Seventeenth-Century Portraits in the National Portrait Gallery* (Cambridge, 1963) xii-xiii.

i) William Larkin

The earliest generally-accepted likeness of Buckingham (Fig. 3) a slightly over-life-size picture hanging in the National Portrait Gallery, London, benefits from such a tradition. It is inscribed 'George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham' and was always considered an authentic portrait by its long-standing owners, the Fieldings, into which Buckingham's sister, Susan, married. It is this provenance which mitigates so strongly for the traditional, and now universally-accepted, identification. But even allowing for any possible error, it is difficult to imagine exactly who else the painting might portray.

In the picture, a male figure shown full-length stands in a rather contrived, formal pose and looks out at the viewer, a stiff little smile on his lips. His right arm sticks straight down from the shoulder at about a forty-five degree angle and the right hand rests somewhat unconvincingly on the corner of a table, whose perspectival rendering looks almost willfully arbitrary. The left arm is akimbo, with the left hand pressed against the side of the body, fisted except for the thumb, which juts straight out and point up towards the head. The weight of the figure (if indeed there is any sense of weight to it at all) is taken by the left leg, while the right leg moves forward in an awkward profile. All the bodily proportions are anatomically incorrect; the fingers, arms and especially the legs are elongated to the point of attenuation, while the head and upper torso are reduced in relation to the rest of the figure. The decidedly unclassical treatment of the male anatomy is to some degree camouflaged by the costume worn by the sitter. An elaborate profusion of embellished shapes and textures, it consists of a heavy-looking gold-embroidered tight doublet and padded, puffed out breeches above a pair of silvery silk hose. A starched lace collar carries the head almost as if on a platter, while the same stiff lace forms cones at the cuffs of the doublet. The shoes are gold, high-heeled pumps decorated with large beaded pompoms. Layered over top of everything is a structurally complicated floor-length cape of red velvet, lined in gold satin; over this is a long, elaborately-looped gold rope and tassels which attaches to a scabbard on the left, as well as heavy, jewel-encrusted chain and pendant which lies in a great semicircle from shoulder to shoulder. There is also a jewelled garter below the left knee. The figure stands on a patterned oriental carpet under a canopy

of crinkly, metallic-looking material of a bronze-green colour. On the table to his right sits a tall, white-plumed hat. The overall effect is one of extravagant display of material wealth and status entirely consistent with what Christopher Breward calls the aesthetic and sexual surroundings of James I's court, which saw itself dominated by a series of tall, beautiful young male favourites, whose clothing "blossomed into a visual celebration" of surfaces and textures.⁶⁴ For Breward, the result is theatrical, ritualistic and out of touch with everyday life.⁶⁵ Certainly, this picture is one which feels as much an icon as a person, in a composition reflecting a rarefied aesthetic. It is an English incarnation of Mannerism, which privileges artistic over natural forms.

The portrait was always considered by the Fielding family to be from the hand of Daniel Mijtens (Mytens) the Elder (c.1590-1647) and Cammell does not question the attribution.⁶⁶ Upon its acquisition by the National Portrait Gallery in 1952,⁶⁷ the picture was de-attributed on stylistic grounds; in Piper's 1963 catalogue, it is listed as by "artist unknown," but suggests one of the Anglo-Flemish painters such as Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (1561-1635) or John De Critz (c.1552-1642), who became Serjeant-Painter to King James in 1603.⁶⁸

In 1969, Roy Strong gave the work to William Larkin (c.1585-1619), a relatively obscure portrait painter.⁶⁹ His father was associated with Robert Peake (c.1555-1623), the principal painter to Henry, Prince of Wales and Larkin himself lived and worked in the company of the miniaturists Nicholas Hilliard (c.1547-1619) and Isaac Oliver (c.1568-1617) in the artists' neighbourhood in Blackfriars.⁷⁰ There are only a few documented

⁶⁴ Christopher Breward, *The Culture of Fashion* (Manchester, 1995) 78-79.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Cammell, 1939, 372.

⁶⁷ The Fieldings sold it at auction in 1938; the buyer was Benjamin Guinness, whose heirs presented it to the National Portrait Gallery in his memory.

⁶⁸ Piper, 1963, 39. The author subsequently suggested that the painting is an early copy of a lost original.

⁶⁹ Roy Strong, *The English Icon: Elizabethan and Jacobean Portraiture* (London, 1969a) 313-16.

⁷⁰ Mary Edmond, *Hilliard and Oliver: The lives and works of two great miniaturists* (London, 1983) 169-71.

references to Larkin, all falling within the period 1610-20.⁷¹

Calling Larkin "one of the great discoveries in English painting if the construction of his *oeuvre* is acceptable,"⁷² Strong identified a group of ten works, in which appear carpet and curtain patterns identical to two securely documented portraits by Larkin.⁷³ He also noted certain stylistic affinities, as well as similarities in the pose and posture of the figures, and, therefore, attributed all of these portraits to Larkin.⁷⁴ Looking at two others of Strong's ten 'curtain and carpet pictures,' *Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke* (Fig. 4) and *Susan Villiers, Countess of Denbigh* (Fig. 5), his attribution of all the works to the same hand feels correct.

Then, comparing one of Gheeraerts' contemporary portraits, *Sir Thomas Parker* (Fig. 6), and De Critz' famous likeness of King James I (Fig. 7), the attribution of the Buckingham portrait to either of those artists seems wrong on stylistic grounds alone, as both painters evince a much more stolid style and their figures look heavy and stiff in comparison to the ethereal, languid body of the young Buckingham. Consider the line of the shins and calves; they are as taut and delicate as Cupid's bow. This emphasis is, of course, particularly appropriate to a portrait of Buckingham, who was noted for, and vain about, his legs all his life.⁷⁵ The gentle S-curve of the figure—is it really there, or is it an illusion created by the layers of taffetas and velvets?—suggests a slight slouch, a casualness which serves as a visual allusion to *sprezzatura*, or nonchalance, the foremost social quality to be cultivated by Castiglione's ideal courtier.⁷⁶ Again, a perfectly appropriate attitude for a likeness of the young Buckingham, who, according to Wotton, was possessed of a "singular assurance...never man in his place and power did entertain greatness more familiarly..."⁷⁷ And finally the face: it is painted as if on porcelain, as

⁷¹ Strong, 1969a, 313.

⁷² Roy Strong, *The Elizabethan Image: Painting in England 1540-1620* (London, 1969b) 60.

⁷³ James Lees-Milne, "Two Portraits at Charlecote Park by William Larkin," *The Burlington Magazine* 94 (1952): 352-56.

⁷⁴ Strong, 1969a, 313-14.

⁷⁵ Wotton, 1651, 15-17; Cammell, 1939, 77-81; Lockyer, 1981, 33.

⁷⁶ Castiglione, 1967, I, 65-8

⁷⁷ Wotton, 1651, 17.

delicately as the faces in miniatures. George Villiers was a very beautiful young man, to be sure, but the prettiness here is also a matter of technique and style. It bespeaks a familiarity with miniature-painting, which William Larkin had. According to Mary Edmond, Larkin and the miniaturist Isaac Oliver, both freemen of the Painter-Stainers' Company and lodgers in Blackfriars, more than once executed portraits "in large" and "in little" of the same sitter,⁷⁸ so a kind of cross-over influence is not unlikely. Moreover, the figure of Buckingham, especially the face, is painted virtually without modelling or shadows: this follows the precepts of Nicholas Hilliard himself, who said that "the principal part of painting and drawing after the life consisteth in the truth of the line...without shadowing."⁷⁹ The point here is that the style of the works attributed to Larkin is different from that of the Flemish *émigrés*, Gheeraerts and De Critz, and that the difference relates to English miniaturists, Oliver (French-born but brought to England as an infant by Huguenot refugees)⁸⁰ and Hilliard.

The date of the painting has always been given as c.1616.⁸¹ In a way, this is a result of circular reasoning: if the picture is by Larkin, it must have been done before 1619, when the painter died. And if the sitter is George Villiers, the portrait cannot have been created any earlier than July, 1616, since in it, Villiers wears the regalia of the Order of the Garter, into which he was installed as a Knight in that month.⁸² The painting is, then, considered as commemorating his being received into England's highest order of honour.

Buckingham's creation as a Knight of the Garter was apparently controversial. In a letter to Dudley Carleton in April, 1616, John Chamberlain writes: "there is much casting about how to make him (Villiers) a great man, and that he shall be now made of the Garter but *non credo*."⁸³ Then, in a later letter: "Sir George Villiers being elected into the order of

⁷⁸ Richard Sackville, Earl of Dorset and Lord Herbert of Cherbury, for example. See Edmond, 1983, 169-70.

⁷⁹ Nicholas Hilliard, *A Treatise concerning the Arte of Limning*, R.K.R. Thornton and T.G.S. Cain, eds. (Manchester, 1981) 86-87.

⁸⁰ Edmond, 1983, 29.

⁸¹ Piper, 1963, 39; Strong, 1969a, 313.

⁸² Lockyer, 1981, 26. He was actually named Knight of the Garter in April, 1616, but not installed until July.

⁸³ McClure, 1939, I, 623

the Garter, which seemed at first a strange choice...(he) so lately come into the light of the world."⁸⁴ If much opinion at court was indeed skeptical or negative about the awarding of such a high honour, it would make sense that someone, either the King or Buckingham himself, would want a commemorative portrait, both to display his achievement and to make critics eat crow.

At the time of his investiture in 1616, Buckingham was not quite twenty-four; the person in the Larkin portrait looks approximately that age. And he is elaborately attired in exactly the kind of costume worn at Garter installations at the time, with items of the order's regalia (Fig. 8) prominently visible: the great jewelled chain and its pendant 'George' (a carved image of St. George) across his shoulders, the sword-belt, the eponymous garter below his left knee and, on the table to his right, the plumed hat worn by the Knights on ceremonial occasions. Missing only is the large badge worn on the left side of the cloak and often seen in official Garter portraits; this, the French *Etoile du Saint-Esprit*, was added to the regalia by Charles I after Buckingham's death as a kind of homage to his French-born wife.

Furthermore, at that time, there were no other beautiful twenty-three-year-old men installed as Knights of the Garter. In sum, the label affixed to this portrait—William Larkin, *George Villiers*, *First Duke of Buckingham*, c.1616—is probably correct.

Having accepted the attribution, the issue now arises: how did Buckingham's patronage of Larkin in 1616 reflect and/or refashion the artistic tastes of the time? This question is based, of course, on the assumption that the sitter selected the portraitist. In Buckingham's case, it would seem logical that he did. Having risen so fast to such prominence, a certain brash self-assurance in all matters would have been only natural. On the other hand, considering his innate ability to charm his superiors, he well could have asked for, and accepted, advice on the matter. Either way, what he got was Larkin and Larkin's style and there is no reason to believe he was displeased with the result.

It has already been noted that Larkin was personally and professionally associated with the leading miniaturists of the age and that his work shows the connection in certain subtle ways. Miniature-painting, while seeming rather quaint and artisanal to modern eyes,
⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 625.

was one of the most popular genres in the past, particularly in England.⁸⁵ Cammaerts has even said that in England, the best artists of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries “neglected large oil-painting and devoted their talents to ‘limning.’”⁸⁶ Why the miniature should be so prevalent in England is not entirely clear, although its popularity must be related to that of portraiture, since virtually all miniatures are portraits.⁸⁷

Roy Strong has said that the rise of the sixteenth-century interest in miniatures is at least partly connected to the increased activity during the reign of Henry VIII in the Royal Library, which was newly restaffed with Flemish illuminators.⁸⁸ And there is no doubt that the genre reached its most celebrated level during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I in the work of Hilliard and Oliver.⁸⁹ The miniature has come, in fact, to be the source of much of the modern conception of the appearance and attitudes of court and society in Elizabethan and Jacobean England.⁹⁰ In the words of David Piper, it “answered the Elizabethan imagination: the piling together of images...regalia, gems, the entire disdain of naturalistic illusion. Eventually it escapes altogether from the orthodox canons of European art: it is vain to judge it by its plastic values, for it is a hybrid of costume, of calligraphy, of flat repetitive design, of literature and of emblematic love.”⁹¹ Alice Friedman interprets the peculiarities of Elizabethan artistic style as consciously chosen to express political ideology and gradually adopted by the upper classes as the fashionable style of the era.⁹² This Elizabethan court-manner persists right up until the 1620’s—the term ‘Jacobethan’ is often

⁸⁵ Edmond, 1983, 19. The term ‘miniature’ comes not from any consideration of size, but from the Latin *minium*, the word for the red lead used as a base by illuminators and miniaturists.

⁸⁶ Emile Cammaerts, “The Flemish predecessors of Van Dyck in England,” *The Burlington Magazine* 85 (1944) 304.

⁸⁷ See note 63 above. Also Robert Bayne-Powell, *Catalogue of Portrait Miniatures in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1985); John Murdoch, *Seventeenth-century English Miniatures in the Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1997).

⁸⁸ Roy Strong, *The English Miniature* (London, 1981) 26-29.

⁸⁹ Waterhouse, 1953, 18.

⁹⁰ Edmond, 1983, 24.

⁹¹ Piper, 1957, 69.

⁹² Alice T. Friedman, “Did England Have a Renaissance? Classical and Anticlassical Themes in Elizabethan Culture,” in Susan J. Barnes and Walter S. Melion, eds., *Cultural Differentiation and Cultural Identity in the Visual Arts* (Washington, 1989): 95-109.

used⁹³ —and portraiture remains an exercise in producing the full-length costume piece, with the sitter displayed in a niche draped with metallic-looking curtains. In other words, the portrait by William Larkin.⁹⁴

So, in his first formal artistic commission, Buckingham appears to have adhered to the fashion of the day and had himself shown in an image that is part heraldry, part swagger. The question of whether he really had any choice is, of course, crucial. Unlike later periods, when two types of artist, the '*avant-garde*' and the '*salon*,' co-existed, the seventeenth-century aesthetic was more homogenous. This does not mean, however, that individual patrons could not elicit unusual, even radically different work out of established artists if they so desired. A famous example is the portrait of Sir John Luttrell by Hans Eworth (1520-73) done in 1550 (Fig. 9), a painting so strangely idiosyncratic that it is hard to believe that it originated where and when it did.

Buckingham did not follow in Luttrell's daring footsteps. But was there anything special at all in the commission for his Garter portrait? From the artist's point of view, was the patron's input constraining or enabling? And from the patron's: was the artist seen as traditional or innovative?

In the artist's position, having a patron like the new star at court would be intimidating and the desire to please would tend to mitigate in favour of a play-safe, conservative approach to the commission and do a portrait in a style that his other aristocratic patrons were then favouring. On the other hand, there may be a hint that Larkin felt able to experiment a little. In Strong's discussion of Larkin's work, he says that "the carpet and curtain pictures were obviously a special line and do not help very much in the definition of his earlier and later styles."⁹⁵ Since these works were all done c.1615-16, and since Buckingham is one of the most prominent and glamorous of the ten subjects in

⁹³ Piper, 1957, 87.

⁹⁴ Other artists too adopted this manner: Cornelius Johnson (1593-1661), born in England but trained in Holland, made an early career out of painting life-size portraits in the idiom of Oliver and Hilliard. Buckingham sat to Johnson on several occasions (see below).

⁹⁵ Strong, 1969a, 313.

the group,⁹⁶ it is tempting to think that the young George Villiers' portrait might have been the first in the series and might have encouraged the artist to be a little adventurous and inventive, to create a slightly new look, which would then appeal to other fashion-conscious courtiers.

From Buckingham's standpoint, Larkin may have been chosen simply because he was currently painting, or had very recently painted, some other important courtiers like Philip Herbert, brother of and successor to, the Earl of Pembroke, one of young Villiers' earliest supporters. On the other hand, there may be the hint of an agenda in the fact that Larkin was an Englishman working in a field dominated by foreigners. It has long been remarked upon that in painting in England, from the time of Henry VII (r.1485-1509) until the mid-eighteenth century, the most influential and successful (portrait) painters were foreigners, mainly Flemish, Dutch and German.⁹⁷ This was a source of considerable hostility on the part of native born artists, as Susan Foister has detailed in her account of the activities of the Painter-Stainers Company.⁹⁸ Larkin was a member of the Company,⁹⁹ which had kept up a litigious campaign against the foreign competition ever since the time of Holbein's residence in London in the 1530's and 1540's. There were the occasional victories in this struggle; in 1581 and again in 1612, during Larkin's time in the Company.¹⁰⁰ Thus, Buckingham's selection of Larkin might have signalled an increase in interest in native-born artists on the part of the leaders and taste-setters at court.

Another factor which might have been at play was what is now called the 'generation gap.' In 1616, the leading portrait artists were De Critz, who was sixty-four, Gheeraerts, who was fifty-six, and the English-born Robert Peake, who was about sixty-six. Larkin, however, was thirty, only a few years older than Buckingham himself. It is not hard to imagine that the young favourite at court would in turn favour a painter close to

⁹⁶ The others in the 'carpet and curtain' portrait group are the Duchess of Richmond and Lennox; the Earls of Dorset and Pembroke; the Countesses of Bedford, Denbigh, Exeter, Oxford and Stamford; Lady Seymour of Trowbridge.

⁹⁷ Waterhouse, 1953, *passim*; Piper, 1957, 44.

⁹⁸ Susan Foister, "Foreigners at Court: Holbein, Van Dyck and the Painter-Stainers Company," in David Howarth, ed., *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Court* (Cambridge, 1993):32-50.

⁹⁹ Edmond, 1983, 170.

¹⁰⁰ Foister, 1993, 39.

his own age, both on general principles of human nature as well as for reasons of self-promotion; a newly-powerful young courtier should cultivate a network of young dependents as a way of strengthening and perpetuating his position.

The theory that young Buckingham may have singled out young Larkin as his 'court painter' is supported by two observations. First, one of the other people Larkin painted standing on the same carpet was Susan Villiers, Countess of Denbigh, Buckingham's elder sister (Fig. 5). Secondly, one of the few contemporary documents mentioning Larkin is an accounts book at Belvoir Castle, which itemizes a payment to Larkin in 1619 for a "portrait of Lady Katherine."¹⁰¹ Although Strong, who cites this document does not make the connection, it seems likely that this refers to Lady Katherine Manners, daughter of the Earl of Rutland, of Belvoir Castle, who, after a melodramatic courtship, married George Villiers in May, 1620. The suggestion that Buckingham commissioned a portrait of his future wife from his chosen portraitist seems more than defensible.

William Larkin died that same year, 1619, and whether his relationship with Buckingham would have produced anything other than some rather pretty portraits in a traditional 'Jacobethan' manner will never be known. On the face of it, this is doubtful, and Buckingham's patron's eye would have inevitably moved on.

¹⁰¹ Strong, 1969a, 313.

ii) Anthony Van Dyck

The Antwerp-born Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641), who was to become Court Painter to Charles I during the period 1632-41 paid an earlier visit to England between late 1620 and early 1621, a time when Buckingham's star was approaching its apogee. The circumstances of, and reasons for, this trip have long been debated. The uncertainty is to no small extent due to the lack of documentation extant concerning Van Dyck.¹⁰² Indeed, that so little exists on such a socially active and prominent painter is extremely puzzling and has always bedevilled biographers. The nineteenth-century British archival scholar, William Hookham Carpenter, complained that in published letters of the period, there is "scarce any allusion made to him, though he must have been personally known to most of the writers."¹⁰³ More recently, Ronald Lightbown has despaired of the paucity of contemporary records of Van Dyck in England.¹⁰⁴ Alan McNairn, on the other hand, responded to this problem by suggesting that through Van Dyck's paintings and drawings themselves, it is possible to (re)construct a biography of sorts.¹⁰⁵

Early contemporary writers like Bellori do not mention the early trip to England at all and the first reference to it is by Félibien who says, in his explanation of why Charles chose Van Dyck as Court Painter: "Il parut même que l'Angleterre eut quelque regret d'avoir fait si peu de cas de Vandeik, au premier voyage qu'il y fit."¹⁰⁶ Félibien expands no further and it was not until the mid-1800's that any more detail came to light concerning the French historian's tantalizing phrase. Hookham Carpenter, the British archival scholar, published an entry from the Order Books of the Exchequer, which reads (*literatim*):

¹⁰² What documentation does exist has led to lively debate. For example, on the artist's early career, see Margaret Roland, "Van Dyck's Early Workshop, the 'Apostle' Series, and the 'Drunken Silenus'", *Art Bulletin* 66 (1984) 21-23 versus Katlijne van der Stighelen, "Young Anthony: Archival Discoveries Relating to Van Dyck's Early Career," in Susan J. Barnes and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., eds., *Van Dyck 350: A Symposium* (Washington, 1994) 17-32.

¹⁰³ William Hookham Carpenter, *Pictorial Notices: Consisting of a Memoir of Sir Anthony Van Dyck...* (London, 1844) 1.

¹⁰⁴ Ronald Lightbown, "Van Dyck and the purchase of paintings for the English Court," *The Burlington Magazine* 111 (1969) 418.

¹⁰⁵ Alan McNairn, *The Young van Dyck* (Ottawa, 1981) 9.

¹⁰⁶ André Félibien, *Entretien sur les Vies & sur les Ouvrages des Peintres*, 6 vols. (Trévoux, 1725) III, 445.

"Anthony Vandike in reward for Service/ By Order dated XVI of Feby 1620/ To Anthony Vandike the some of one hundred pounds by way of reward for speciall service by him performed for his Matie without accompt imprest or other charge to be sett uppon him for the same or for anie part thereof."¹⁰⁷ Hookham Carpenter suggested that the money was in payment for a portrait of James I in the Royal Collections; Lionel Cust later felt that it was for copies of various royal portraits and that such activity offended Van Dyck, causing him to leave England.¹⁰⁸ In any case, the fact that Van Dyck stayed only a short time in Britain on this visit is also documented in a note in the Register books of the Privy Council for 28 February, 1621 (*literatim*): "A passe for Anthonie van Dyck gent his Maties Servaunt to travaile for 8 Months he havinge obtayned his Maties leave in that behalf As was sygnified by the E of Arundell."¹⁰⁹

The name of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel (1585-1646)¹¹⁰ has always, as a result of this archive, been credited with instigating Van Dyck's first trip to England.¹¹¹ (Arundel was an old-line aristocrat and connoisseur whose relationship with Buckingham was as variable as the weather; in 1620, it was cool. As suggested earlier, this situation may have resulted in the earl's commissioning from Van Dyck *The Continnence of Scipio*.) Another document reinforces the connection: in June, 1620, Arundel received a letter from his secretary, Francesco Vercellini, who was then with the Earl's wife in Antwerp: "Van Dyck is still with Signor Ribens (*sic*) and his works are hardly less esteemed than those of his master. He is a young man of twenty-one years, his father and mother very rich, living in this town, so that it will be difficult to get him to leave these parts, especially since he

¹⁰⁷ Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 9.

¹⁰⁸ Lionel Cust, *Van Dyck*, 2 vols. (London, 1908) I, 16.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹¹⁰ The significance of Arundel and his wife in the world of art in England is discussed more fully in the following chapter.

¹¹¹ See, among others, Cust, 1900, 21-4; Brown, 1982, 52; Jeffrey Muller, "The Quality of Grace in the Art of Anthony van Dyck," in Arthur J. Wheelock, Jr., et al., *Anthony van Dyck* (Washington, 1990) 31.

sees the good fortune that attends Ribens.”¹¹² The phrasing of this letter suggests that Arundel had shown an interest in Van Dyck and perhaps considered offering him an invitation to England. That his efforts paid off seems to be shown by another letter, this one dated November, 1620, from Tobie Mathew, an English agent in Antwerp to Sir Dudley Carleton, Ambassador in The Hague (*literatim*): “Your Lp will have heard how Van Dike his (Rubens’) famous *Allievo* is gone into England, and yt the King hath given him a Pension of £100 pr ann.”¹¹³ Mathew’s letter, however, makes no mention of Arundel in the matter.

In 1990, David Howarth published a recently-discovered letter from another English agent, William Trumbull, resident in Brussels, dated October, 1620, and addressed to Thomas Locke, Clerk of the Privy Chest (*literatim*): “Freind, ...the yong Painter Van Dyke is newly come to the towne and brought me lres from Sgr Rubens; I am tould my Lo: of Purbeck sent for him hither but hee is out of towne, but it may be if he bee any thing well hee may come hither upon this occasion.”¹¹⁴ Lord Purbeck was John Villiers, older brother of George Villiers. Purbeck had a history of mental instability which prompted searches for cures, such as the visit to Spa in Flanders in the summer of 1620, where he stayed in rooms opposite those of the Countess of Arundel, who was on her way to Italy. Thus, although there may be an Arundel connection to Van Dyck’s English visit, it may be, as Howarth suggests, that Lady Arundel spoke of Van Dyck to Purbeck, who reported back to his brother, who in turn instructed Purbeck to recruit Van Dyck.¹¹⁵

If an invitation to become ‘official’ painter to the young luminary of the English court was not in itself tempting enough to the rising star of painting in the Netherlands,

¹¹² Mary F.S. Hervey, *The Life, Correspondence & Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (London, 1921) 176. Cited also, with altered orthography, in Christopher Brown, *Van Dyck* (Oxford, 1982) 52.

¹¹³ Sainsbury, 1859, 54. Cited also, with altered orthography, by Brown, 1982, 52, and by Julius Held, “Van Dyck’s Relationship to Rubens” in Barnes and Wheelock, 1994, 67. The Italian term *allievo* has been the subject of considerable interest in the investigation of the early connections between the two artists: does it mean ‘pupil’ in the strictest pedagogical sense, or has it the broader connotation of ‘assistant’ or ‘employee’?

¹¹⁴ David Howarth, “The arrival of Van Dyck in England,” *The Burlington Magazine* 132 (1990) 709.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 709-10.

what other reason might Van Dyck have had to overcome his difficulty to leave home? He was certainly well-employed in Antwerp. 1620 was the year in which Rubens obtained the contract to decorate the new Jesuit church in the city—39 large-scale-painted scenes¹¹⁶—an enormous undertaking even for a man of Rubens' energy and organizational ability. The project contract took its own vastness into account: it specified that Rubens was to design the paintings but the execution could be by assistants, of which the only one actually named was Van Dyck.¹¹⁷ Thus, the young artist was publicly honoured as contributor to the most prestigious commission of the day, although, as Peter Sutton has noted, his contribution to it must have been limited, since he was in England for several months during its completion.¹¹⁸ But why would he have left his job at the moment of maximum involvement? One reason sometimes given is that there was some specific incentive offered to him, like a large-scale decorative project as prestigious as the Jesuit ceiling; the designs for a series of tapestries, for example, or the ceiling of the new Whitehall Banqueting House then under construction.¹¹⁹ Oliver Millar goes so far as to wonder whether Van Dyck's trip was some sort of reconnoitering of the Banqueting House situation on Rubens' behalf.¹²⁰

But the reason for Van Dyck's departure from Antwerp more likely lies in the character of the man. From about this time on, Van Dyck regularly exhibited a tendency to leave situations which were absolutely secure and profitable for him. In Italy during the 1620's, he regularly deserted his adoring clientele in Genoa for other cities;¹²¹ in 1634, when his new portraits were dazzling the London court, he suddenly returned to Antwerp for almost a year; and in 1640, after being granted denization in England, he again left

¹¹⁶ The price was 7000 guilders (less 1000 already owed to Rubens for two previously-painted altarpieces), or about 150 guilders each. See Held, 1994, 70-71.

¹¹⁷ John Rupert Martin, *The Ceiling Paintings for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, I (London, 1968) 213-19.

¹¹⁸ Peter C. Sutton, *The Age of Rubens* (Boston, 1993) 31. The newly-decorated church was consecrated in September, 1621. See Christopher White, *Peter Paul Rubens: Man & Artist* (New Haven, 1987) 148-60.

¹¹⁹ Brown, 1982, 54.

¹²⁰ Millar, 1958, 5.

¹²¹ Susan J. Barnes, *Van Dyck in Italy 1621-27*, Ph.D. thesis, (New York University, 1986).

seeking different employment, first in Antwerp and then in Paris.¹²² Such a pattern of dissatisfaction with security likely can be traced back to Van Dyck's early relationship with his mentor.

There has always been, in the literature on Rubens and Van Dyck, an uneasiness about the apparent harmony between the two talents working so closely together over so many years. Bellori, while detailing the symbiotic nature of the two men's day-to-day working habits and the mutual benefits thereof, also said that Rubens encouraged Van Dyck to concentrate on portrait-painting. This advice has been interpreted as a kind of put-down, portraiture having always been seen as inferior to what is called history-painting.¹²³ The early eighteenth-century biographer, Arnold Houbraken, hints of jealousy on the part of Rubens and his desire to get rid of the younger man.¹²⁴ And a late twentieth-century art historian, Thomas Glen, says "Fortunately or unfortunately...the young Van Dyck could not escape the fact that while he was himself developing as an artist, Peter Paul Rubens was firmly establishing himself as an eloquent spokesman for revived Roman Catholicism."¹²⁵ Erik Larsen is more blunt: Van Dyck "suffered from having been born under the shadow of Rubens."¹²⁶ On the other hand, there is the view of Susan Barnes, who believes that Van Dyck's association with Rubens gave him a "magnificent training in art and life."¹²⁷ No doubt Van Dyck was well aware of the nature of both aspects of his situation, its freedoms and its constraints. The closeness to Rubens provided a showcase for his technical and conceptual brilliance while it reinforced in the eyes of the world the belief that he was 'another Rubens.'¹²⁸ Altogether, the pressure, both positive and negative, must have been enormous, especially on a psyche as sensitive and ambitious as

¹²² Oliver Millar, *Van Dyck in England* (London, 1982) 34-35.

¹²³ Bellori, 1672, 254.

¹²⁴ Cited in H. Gerson and E.H. Ter Kuile, *Art and Architecture in Belgium 1600-1800* (London, 1960) 111.

¹²⁵ Thomas L. Glen, "Observations on Van Dyck as a Religious Painter," in *National Gallery of Canada Essays on Van Dyck* (Ottawa, 1983) 46.

¹²⁶ Erik Larsen, *Seventeenth Century Flemish Painting* (Freren, 1985) 325.

¹²⁷ Susan J. Barnes, "The Young Van Dyck and Rubens," in Wheelock, 1990, 21.

¹²⁸ Held, 1994, 67.

Van Dyck's is always considered to have been.¹²⁹

Any desire stirring in Van Dyck to spread his own wings (or to take flight from Rubens) might well have coincided nicely with an invitation to cross the channel, whether it came directly or indirectly from a person as eminent as the Marquis of Buckingham. Excitement and insecurity; glamour and security: the prospect offered the perfect mix to a personality in transition.

As far as understanding why Buckingham would have been interested in Van Dyck, there are several possible explanations. As a newly-minted aristocrat with quasi-royal status, he saw art patronage as one of the appropriate activities of a man in his position. By 1620, his wealth and power had reached the level where he could cast his net as far and wide as he desired; he could compete with and for anyone on the continent and he wanted to advertise this fact. If, as is almost certain, he had heard of the prodigious talents of the young man in Antwerp, and if his chief rival for prestige at court, Arundel, had also expressed interest in Van Dyck, it would be a delightful coup to be able to land him first. Furthermore, Buckingham had already, in the case of William Larkin, shown an interest in encouraging up-and-coming young artists, and Van Dyck, seven years younger than Buckingham himself, fit that description better than anyone else at the time. Thus an invitation to Van Dyck showed a consistent artistic agenda. Finally, there might have been an element of sheer curiosity: the beautiful young favourite of the King of England simply wanted to meet the beautiful young favourite of the 'Prince of Painters.'¹³⁰ In any event, meet they did, for there is a document recording a payment made "to Vandyke the picture drawer" on Buckingham's behalf by Endymion Porter, one of his staff.¹³¹

The result of this meeting is another image of Buckingham (Fig. 10), one which displays him in a manner completely different from that of Larkin. This picture came to

¹²⁹ An amusing illustration of this idea lies in the fact that, from 1620 on, Rubens and Van Dyck avoided being in the same place at the same time. 1620-27: Van Dyck in England and Italy; Rubens in Antwerp. 1628-32 Van Dyck in Antwerp; Rubens largely away on diplomatic business. 1632-41; Van Dyck mostly in London; Rubens in Antwerp. This 'game' was begun by Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 21; see also Held, 1994, 71-72.

¹³⁰ In a letter dated May, 1618, Sir Dudley Carleton called Rubens "prince of painters and painter of princes." See Yorke, 1757, 35.

¹³¹ Millar, 1972, 18.

light only in the late 1980's when it appeared on the London art market.¹³² The picture's history is spotty. It is not recorded in any early inventories and is first recorded as belonging to an eccentric English expatriate, Frank Hall Standish (1799-1840), who bequeathed his entire collection to King Louis-Philippe of France, who in turn deposited it in the *Musée Standish* at the Louvre. After the 1848 revolution which overthrew him, Louis-Philippe claimed the Standish pictures as his own property and after his death, the collection was shipped to London, where it was sold in 1853. The Van Dyck fetched 21 guineas. It disappeared again, into the country house of a Mr. T. A. Houghton, and resurfaced in 1918 at the London auction of his estate, where it went for 7 guineas to a certain Van Slochem, thence to a private collection on the continent.¹³³

Both the identification of the sitters and the artistic attribution have raised questions,¹³⁴ although the subject is now generally agreed to be Buckingham and his wife, who were married in May, 1620, and the painter to be Anthony Van Dyck. The title and date of the work, *Sir George Villiers and Lady Katherine Manners as Adonis and Venus*, late 1620-early 1621, are those given in the catalogue of its first public reappearance in 1990.¹³⁵

Before going on to discuss the picture, one problem must be addressed: the two-hundred-year *lacuna* in its history. What happened to 'Adonis and Venus' between the time of their creation and their resurfacing in the Standish collection in the mid-nineteenth century? Why did the painting appear to disappear? One explanation suggests itself: the work was rejected by its patron. Buckingham might have decided that it was simply too fleshy and too forward, even though he may have asked the young painter for something new and nervy. Such a reaction would be understandable, for at first glance, the painting has, even to twentieth-century eyes, a certain shocking quality. Simultaneously, there is

¹³² It is still, as of this writing, in the hands of Mr. Derek Johns, who very kindly arranged private access to the work for the present author.

¹³³ Files of Mr. Derek Johns, London.

¹³⁴ Godfrey Barker, "A Duke fit for a King," *Art News* 88 (December, 1989) 87-89; Michael Jaffé, "Van Dyck's 'Venus and Adonis,'" *The Burlington Magazine* 132 (1990) 697-703; Jeremy Wood, "Van Dyck's pictures for the Duke of Buckingham: The elephant in the carpet and the dead tree with ivy," *Apollo* 136 (July, 1992) 37-47.

¹³⁵ Wheelock, 1990, 124-26.

something amusing about it, a feeling of what Michael Jaffé has called a combination of "the learned and the *louche*" that characterized the early Stuart court.¹³⁶ But, while being irreverent and funny is often attractive in theory or in fantasy, it can be equally often embarrassing in reality. So if Buckingham did say no to the painting, what might have become of it? He could have paid for it anyway, had it rolled up and stored away, forgotten for generations until someone found it and offered it to the eccentric collector, Mr. Standish. Or, he might have left it with the painter, who would have been, it is fair to say, offended. Van Dyck has always been characterized as self-indulgent,¹³⁷ vain,¹³⁸ proud and sensitive,¹³⁹ with a difficulty in dominating his sensibility¹⁴⁰ and Martin Warnke cites a letter describing the artist as moody and unstable.¹⁴¹ So Van Dyck might have packed up his picture and sought the assistance of Buckingham's rival, Arundel, in arranging his return to Antwerp. This would help explain the documentation of 1621 referring to Van Dyck's departure under the apparent *aegis* of Arundel.¹⁴² Moreover, it has frequently been wondered as to why Van Dyck left England so fast. Graham Parry suggested that he might have been advised to spend some time in Italy learning from the great masters.¹⁴³ If so, was the advice Buckingham's? Hookham Carpenter does, in fact, blame Buckingham for Van Dyck's not being asked to stay on in England, although not in the scenario just described.¹⁴⁴ In any event, if the 'Adonis and Venus' was rejected and taken back to Antwerp, its non-appearance in English records is explained, as is its re-appearance on the Continent: it was always there.

¹³⁶ Jaffé, 1990, 701.

¹³⁷ Félibien, 1725, III, 446.

¹³⁸ Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 46.

¹³⁹ Cust, 1900, 19; Oliver Millar, *Van Dyck, Wenceslaus Hollar & The Miniature-Painters at the Court of the early Stuarts* (London, 1968) 6.

¹⁴⁰ Leo van Puyvelde, "The Young van Dyck," *The Burlington Magazine* 79 (1941) 177-85.

¹⁴¹ Warnke, 1993, 251. The letter from the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand to the King of Spain reads "Tiene humor, yo así no puedo asegurar nada a V.M....es loco rematado...no tiene juicio ninguno."

¹⁴² See note 110 above.

¹⁴³ Parry, 1981, 140.

¹⁴⁴ Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 10.

But whether rejected or treasured by its sitter, Van Dyck's painting remains a spectacular piece and one well worth examining in detail.

Briefly, the picture shows two life-size full-length figures. George Villiers, almost naked except for a dark indigo cloak clasped on his right shoulder and sandals on his feet is posed with his right hand flickering across his bare chest and his left encircling Katherine Manners and resting on her bare back. He gazes down and inward to look at her while she engages the viewer. She too is dressed only in a cloak, in this case of a brilliant pomegranate red, gathered in her left hand at waist height. Her hair is trimmed with a row of pearls and ribbons and she wears a pearl choker, matching earrings and a bracelet of gold and jewels on her upper left arm. A wiry greyhound leaps up to the right of Villiers. In the background to the right are two twisted tree trunks rising to a canopy over the couples' heads; to the left, a tree stump entwined with ivy¹⁴⁵ and a distant landscape.

The pair are strolling in an open-air setting—or more accurately, are pausing during a promenade along a woodland path. There is almost a feeling that the viewer has interrupted a romantic interlude, and in this sense, the picture can be seen as an early example of what would later become known as a 'conversational painting,' typified by Rubens' series of images of the early 1630's called *Conversatie à la mode*. Elise Goodman has defined works of this genre as depicting "modish people in fashionable social interaction or engaging in agreeable and easeful interchange or discourse, with women as the center of interest."¹⁴⁶ The pursuit of love is the major theme of these popular pictures, and a garden setting is usual. In Goodman's words, they "breathe a different, new spirit," embodying concepts of social behaviour and fashion distinctively French in their inspiration.¹⁴⁷ By the second quarter of the seventeenth century, society in northern Europe looked to France as the source of fashion and etiquette. And although there is no attempt in Van Dyck's painting to show the latest styles in clothing, in every other respect,

¹⁴⁵ Ivy as a symbol of eternal marital fidelity is often found in Dutch and Flemish paintings; in emblem books it is paired with the motto *amicitia etiam post mortem duerans* (love outlives even death).

¹⁴⁶ Elise Goodman, *Rubens: the Garden of Love as 'Conversatie à la Mode'* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1992) 8.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

the picture is typical of the 'conversational' genre. It could, in fact, be called a 'proto-*conversatie*,' an early example illustrating both Van Dyck's instinctive attraction to this kind of scene and Buckingham's personal familiarity with France and French culture. Alone of the members of the royal 'family' in 1620, he had lived in France and it was this experience which had helped him find favour initially with King James.

While it displays distinct overtones of 'conversational painting,' the picture is also clearly an allegorical scene based on a mythological source, even if the association of the figures with Adonis and Venus seems somewhat arbitrary. But the characters portrayed—a muscular nude youth, a beautiful undraped female and a leaping hound on a forest path—recall the story of the mortal young man beloved of the goddess, who was killed when, ignoring her fervent pleas, he went off hunting. Yet the composition itself does not show either of the two traditional views of the mythological story as found in Ovid.¹⁴⁸ Van Dyck has chosen neither the moment when Venus tries to restrain Adonis from leaving, nor her lament over his body after he has been killed by a boar. His different choice might be simply another example of the young Van Dyck's tendency to take liberties with standard formats. Or it could reflect the artist's reluctance to show violence, even when a narrative seemed to require it: Van Dyck's versions of the story of St. Sebastian, for example, all show the martyr prepared for execution rather than full of arrows, as is more common in art.¹⁴⁹

The choice of subject-moment also could be the result of patron input. Buckingham, as an avid hunter who was himself gored on at least one occasion, would have liked the association of himself with the beautiful mortal Adonis, while portraying his bride as Venus would have been equally appealing—minus, of course, any of the negative aspects of Ovid's story, namely desertion and death. The compromise seems happily arrived at, with Van Dyck possibly drawing on his own earlier work, as the muscles of Adonis' legs, his cloak and the pose of the leaping hound are very similar to another

¹⁴⁸ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Mary Innes, ed. (London, 1955) 239-45.

¹⁴⁹ Jaffé, 1990, 701. The author mentions a *Jupiter and Antiope* in Ghent and the Louvre *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* as other examples of Van Dyck's departure from standard iconography. See also McNairn, 1981, 20.

treatment of the subject done by the artist around 1618-20 (Fig. 11).¹⁵⁰

Specific visual sources for the composition are, for the figure of Venus, Titian's *Lady in a Fur Wrap* (Fig. 12) which Van Dyck would have known through Rubens,¹⁵¹ and for the couple together, Raphael's *Mercury Conducting Psyche to Olympus* (Fig. 13) again familiar to Van Dyck via Rubens, who owned engravings by Raimondi after Raphael.¹⁵² There is also a striking resemblance in Van Dyck's picture to a print, well-known at the time, by Dürer (Fig. 14).¹⁵³ An even more direct source of inspiration might be an engraving by Michel Lasne (c. 1590-1670) called *Promenading Couple on a Terrace* (Fig. 14a). A French engraver, Lasne spent the years 1618-20 in Antwerp working with Rubens on the master's book-title pages.¹⁵⁴ Obviously, Lasne and Van Dyck would have known each other, and each other's work; Van Dyck might well have thought that Lasne's fashion-conscious engraving a suitable model for his equally fashionable English patron.

The technical and stylistic features of the painting have occasioned some disagreement between the scholars who have written most extensively on it. Michael Jaffé believes that the manner of painting—a vigorous, fluent, light *impasto*—along with the saturated colours and the rendering of the hands and feet link it firmly to another work universally dated to Van Dyck's early visit to England, *The Continnence of Scipio* (Fig. 1) at Christ Church, Oxford.¹⁵⁵ On the other hand, Jeremy Wood sees painterly traits close to work done in Antwerp in 1618-20, and believes that the Buckingham picture too was done in Anwerp before Van Dyck went to England and was then reworked into its present form. He bolsters his theory by pointing out 'weaknesses' in the treatment of Venus which betray

¹⁵⁰ Wood, 1992, 43.

¹⁵¹ Julius Held has said that Van Dyck "saw Titian's work through Rubens' eyes." Julius S. Held, "Rubens and Titian," in David Rosand, ed., *Titian: His World and His Legacy* (New York, 1982) 334.

¹⁵² Michael Jaffé, "Rubens and Raphael," in *Studies in Renaissance & Baroque Art presented to Anthony Blunt on his 60th birthday* (London, 1967) 100.

¹⁵³ Wheelock, 1990, 126.

¹⁵⁴ Goodman, 1992, 16-17.

¹⁵⁵ Jaffé, 1990, 697. See also Millar, 1951, 125-26; Harris, 1973, 526-30; Gordon, 1983, 53-55; J. Douglas Stewart, "Mariette's Louvre Van Dyck Drawing 'The Continnence of Scipio': Date, Function and Influence," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 121 (April, 1993) 181-90.

the hand of a lesser artist, perhaps a studio assistant.¹⁵⁶ Susan Barnes splits the difference, attributing some awkwardness in the female figure to Van Dyck's having to join a from-the-life portrait head to an imaginary nude torso. But she states categorically that the painting was done in England in 1620-21.¹⁵⁷

As far as the actual identification of the people in Van Dyck's picture is concerned, there is no inscription to serve as a guide, nor any traditional belief out of established provenance, as there is in the case of the earlier Larkin portrait of Buckingham. The old supposition, dating from the mid-nineteenth century, that the picture represented Rubens and his wife is easy enough to reject, but the identification with certainty as Buckingham and *his* wife¹⁵⁸ requires a little more effort. Once again, as is so often the case with Van Dyck's work, the problem is best addressed by looking at Rubens.

A sketch (Fig. 15) by Rubens, now in the Albertina, Vienna, apart from being a fine example of his skill at portraiture, provides a vivid likeness of Buckingham as well as an incisive evaluation of the Duke's character. It was drawn in 1625, in Paris, on the occasion of the first meeting of artist and sitter, when Buckingham commissioned Rubens to create some large works for his official residence, York House.¹⁵⁹ The sketch was intended to serve as an *aide-mémoire* for Rubens as he worked up the final painting back in Antwerp. It shows Buckingham at a high point in his life; he was serving as King Charles' official representative at his marriage-by-proxy¹⁶⁰ to Princess Henrietta Maria and as escort to the new Queen on her trip to England. The drawing is the best mirror before which to hold all other likenesses of the Duke until, and unless, a certifiable Van Dyck portrait comes to light.

Jaffé notes that the body of the Adonis figure is too stylized and heroic to be considered a literal representation of Buckingham's physique. Nevertheless its exaggerated sensuality is loaded with particular meaning: when Buckingham's famous legs are recalled,

¹⁵⁶ Wood, 1992, 44-45.

¹⁵⁷ Wheelock, 1990, 126.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁵⁹ This commission is discussed more fully below.

¹⁶⁰ Buckingham was not the actual proxy groom; that position was filled by the Duc de Chevreuse.

the limbs in the picture almost take on a personality of their own. But it is in the face and head where the kinship with the Rubens drawing is found, in the beard, the upturned moustache and, especially, the expression of self-assurance verging on self-love.¹⁶¹

Wood also links the head of Adonis to the Rubens sketch, but for him the identification remains problematic. He maintains that the Duke's hair, judging by earlier portraits such as the Larkin and some engravings by Simon de Passe (Fig. 16), did not take on the luxuriant curliness seen in the Van Dyck until exactly 1625, when Buckingham, in Paris, came under the ministrations of the Duc de Chevreuse's barber.¹⁶² Thus, for Wood, the painting must date from after 1625. But Van Dyck never saw Buckingham again after 1621. Wood's theory is that Van Dyck began the composition as a generalized mythological piece in his Antwerp workshop before 1620, left it there for some years, and then returned to it after his return from Italy in 1627 and after Buckingham's death in 1628. At that time, he inserted the portrait likenesses, possibly at the request of the Duchess herself, who wanted a memento of her early happiness with her young husband.¹⁶³ (That the Duchess had dealings with Van Dyck in the early 1630's is documented by Philip McEvansoneya.)¹⁶⁴

The identification of Katherine Manners, (then) Marchioness of Buckingham, requires a similar procedure and raises similar concerns. Again, comparison with a Rubens sketch (Fig. 17) helps enormously, as does looking at a Van Dyck portrait of the Duchess (Fig. 18), done in the 1630's and now at Belvoir Castle, her ancestral family home.

But, of course, the picture of the Buckinghams as Adonis and Venus is not a formal portrait intended to document their appearances at any given time. It is a *portrait historiée*, a mythological allegory in which costume, hairstyle and anatomy are treated *all'antica*, with only the facial features done with enough naturalistic exactitude to make the connection between the sitter and the story—or between the sitter and the satire. This leads to what is

¹⁶¹ Jaffé, 1990, 697.

¹⁶² Wood, 1992, 43.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 43ff.

¹⁶⁴ Philp McEvansoneya, "Van Dyck and the Duchess of Buckingham's Collection," *Apollo* 140 (December, 1994) 30-32.

the most intriguing question about the 'Adonis and Venus,' that is *why* such a piece was commissioned in the first place. For, as Susan Barnes has remarked, although portraits with allegorical or symbolic content had long been popular in England, an image like this one, "with sitters unclad, is apparently without precedent in either Flemish or English painting" at the time.¹⁶⁵

Was it a visual vow of heterosexuality from groom to bride?

Derek Johns thinks that it may well have been secretly commissioned by Buckingham for the private apartments in one of his homes since, although it appears to be a marriage-portrait (albeit an unusual one, especially when compared to an example with which Van Dyck would have been very familiar, Rubens' 1609 portrait of himself with his young wife, Isabella Brant [Fig. 19]), no record of a marriage-portrait exists.¹⁶⁶ Such a view is supported by the fact that, as previously noted, no inventory of Buckingham's collection mentions it. It may have been considered a 'family' painting, too personal to include in any scrutinized inventories or sale lists. This is not unusual: Rubens' *Helène Fourment in a Fur Wrap (Het Pelsken)* (Fig. 20) was deemed too personal to include among the artist's possessions catalogued after his death in 1640.¹⁶⁷ (In other words, the picture may never have left England until its earliest-recorded owner, Frank Hall Standish, having somehow acquired it in the early nineteenth century, took it with him to the Continent.)

The intimate nature of the sitters' presentation reinforces such a conclusion. A topless marchioness could hardly hang in any but the most secluded surroundings. And the portrayal of George Villiers as Adonis, the hunter, contained a private reference for him: in the selection of a noble name for the new favourite back in 1617, Buckingham had been chosen because it contained 'buck,' a word with both hunting and sexual connotations and,

¹⁶⁵ Wheelock, 1990, 126.

¹⁶⁶ Derek Johns, conversation with the author, December, 1996.

¹⁶⁷ Jaffé, 1990, 703.

therefore, perfectly congruent with King James' two main interests.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, the illicitly playful mood of the picture reveals a certain sense of humour in the work of Van Dyck, which, according to J. Douglas Stewart, has been overlooked.¹⁶⁹

Finally, it is instructive to compare the 'Adonis and Venus' and a picture by Rubens, *Francesco Gomez de Sandoval y Royas, Duke of Lerma, on Horseback* (Fig. 21) done in 1603. Rubens painted the Duke of Lerma (d.1625), all-powerful minister and favourite of King Philip III (1578-1621) on his first visit to Spain. The commission was a private one and the resulting foreshortened, front-facing equestrian state portrait has always been considered a uniquely innovative achievement.¹⁷⁰ Without overstressing the comparison, Rubens' and Van Dyck's paintings have much in common. Both were painted on the artist's first visit to an important foreign country; both were commissioned by the currently reigning favourite of that country's monarch; both are unusual compositions for their time and place; both were created by men who shared an unusually close artistic heritage and style. Yet the differences between them are profound. One, the Rubens, presents the viewer with a public spectacle; the other, with a private peek. Does this speak to differences in character of the painters? Or the patrons? The answer is: both. And both artworks came about as a result of a particular interpersonal situation, a give-and-take which in both cases produced a precise balance of power and a successful picture.

In other words, in 1620-21 Van Dyck's style proved to be relevant to the demands of Buckingham, and Buckingham's taste matched Van Dyck's artistic vision. That the final product is unlike anything seen previously in England is, perhaps, an unintended consequence of the collaboration as well as an unacknowledged cause of Van Dyck's return to England over a decade later as Court Painter to the King.

¹⁶⁸ Lockyer, 1981, 33. The idea that the picture might have been intended as a gift for King James is a tempting one. James had encouraged his favourite to marry and he was always very fond of 'dear Kate.' A painting like this would have been in keeping with James' ribald tastes without being entirely distasteful or 'sodomitical.'

¹⁶⁹ J. Douglas Stewart, "Death Moved Not His Generous Mind": Allusions and Ideas, Mostly Classical, in Van Dyck's Work and Life," in Arthur J. Wheelock, Jr., ed., *Anthony van Dyck* (Washington, 1990) 69.

¹⁷⁰ Frances Huemer, *Portraits I: Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard XIX* (London, 1977) 21-25; 132-35; Sutton, 1993, 22; W. Alexander Vergara, *The presence of Rubens in Spain*, Ph.D. thesis, 2 vols. (New York University, 1994).

iii) Peter Paul Rubens

If the *persona* of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) looms large in the life of Van Dyck, it is also an important element in Buckingham's career; a complex one as well, since Rubens and the Duke not only worked together as artist and patron but also dealt with each other as diplomat and politician.¹⁷¹ Their artistic collaboration, in fact, resulted from their meeting at an event both men attended for reasons of state: the period of celebration surrounding the marriage of Charles I of England and Henrietta Maria of France in May and June of 1625.

Buckingham was in Paris as the King's representative. His mission was to promote the image of England as a country as rich and powerful as any other in Europe and to do so, he had to outshine all competitors—even when, like the Duke of Chevreuse, they were bedecked with so many diamonds and precious stones that “their radiance was said to turn night into day.”¹⁷² Buckingham succeeded spectacularly. Exactly how the Duke dazzled Paris can be inferred by the contents of a contemporary document which describes the luggage and entourage for his trip (*literatim*):

“My Lord Duke is intended to take his Journey towards Paris on Wednesday the 31st of March. His Grace hath for his body twenty seven rich suits embroidered and laced with silk and silver plusches, besides one rich white satten uncut velvet suit, set all over both suit and cloak with diamonds, the value whereof is thought to be four score thousand pounds, besides a feather made with great diamonds, with sword, girdle, hat-band, and spurs with diamonds; which suit his Grace intends to enter Paris with. The other rich suit is of puple satten embroidered all over with rich orient pearl; the cloak made after the Spanish fashion with all things suitable; the value whereof will be twenty thousand pounds; and this is thought shall be for the wedding day in Paris. His other suits are all rich as invention can frame, or art fashion. His colours for the Entrance are white and watchet,

¹⁷¹ They also did business together: Rubens sold Buckingham a large part of his own private collection of art and antiquities in 1627. See Chapter 3 below.

¹⁷² Lockyer, 1981, 236.

and for the Wedding, crimson and gold.”¹⁷³

The account continues with a list of fifty-nine other senior gentlemen in his employ, each with three “rich suits” apiece; 163 of his own servants, all with at least one “rich suit.” Then, “Three rich velvet Coaches inside, without with gold lace all over. Eight horses in each Coach, and six coachmen richly suited. Eight score musicians richly suited. Twenty two watermen, suited in sky coloured taffaty all gilded with anchorgs and my lords arms; all these to row in one barge of my lord’s. All these servants have every thing suitable, all being his Graces charge.” The retinue also includes thirty-nine other Lords (named) and “Knights of great worth” (anonymous), each with several pages and footmen. “The whole train will be six or seven hundred persons at least,” the account concludes.

Even by the standards of today’s state-visit entourages, these numbers are impressive; whether or not the monetary values of the various ‘rich suits’ are accurate,¹⁷⁴ there can be no doubt that the overall effect of the visitors must have been impressive, even to the Parisians. It was also surely dazzling to Buckingham himself, as accustomed to luxury and adulation as he was, to be such a star and to be obliged to behave like one. During his short stay from mid-May until the first week of June, he managed to create a scandal by being overly, and overtly, attentive to the Queen of France,¹⁷⁵ a romance well-embedded into history through the novels of Alexandre Dumas. He also became acquainted with some of the leaders of French society and culture through Catherine, Marquise de Rambouillet (1588-1665), whose salon was the most illustrious of the period between 1620 and 1645. Buckingham was received by the Marquise in her *chambre bleue*,¹⁷⁶ where she and other *beaux esprits* gathered to cultivate refinement and sophistication in manners and letters and who were known, not yet disparagingly, as *précieuses*. There he became friendly with Théophile de Viau (1590-1626), one of the writers who advocated the

¹⁷³ The account is in the British Library, *Harleian MSS.*, 389, and is cited in Ellis, 1824, 189.

¹⁷⁴ It can be pointed out here that the entire cost of the 1619-22 building of Inigo Jones’ Whitehall Banqueting House, a splendid structure by any measure, amounted to £14,940 1s., 1 p. See John Summerson, *Architecture in Britain 1530 to 1830* (London, 1953) 76.

¹⁷⁵ Lockyer, 1981, 239-41; Erlanger, 1951, *passim*.

¹⁷⁶ Emile Magne, *Voiture et les origines de l’Hôtel de Rambouillet 1597-1635*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1911) 58.

literary powers of sensuality and eroticism and who, shortly after Buckingham's departure from Paris, was imprisoned for heresy and obscenity. Still trading on his star quality, the Duke intervened successfully on his behalf.¹⁷⁷ Ultimately, he left behind him a rage for all things English, up to and including his own hunting cap, which became the height of fashion and was called, in an early example of 'Franglais', *un boukinkan*.¹⁷⁸

Also in Paris in connection with the interdynastic marriage, Rubens had arrived in February, 1625, ostensibly to supervise the final installation of his monumental series of paintings on the life of Marie de' Medici (1573-1642), Queen Mother of France, in her residence at the newly completed Luxembourg Palace. The twenty-one large canvases depicting the life story of the queen (along with two allegorical panels as prologue and epilogue) had been commissioned from Rubens for the sum of 20,000 crowns in January, 1622. Finished in early 1625, they were serendipitously to be unveiled in conjunction with the triumphant wedding¹⁷⁹ of Marie de' Medici's third daughter to a third European sovereign.¹⁸⁰

But Rubens travelled to Paris as more than an installation man. On this occasion, as on so many others, the artist was also a political operative, serving the cause of the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia (1566-1633) Governor of the Spanish Netherlands and aunt of Philip IV.¹⁸¹ Although Jacob Burckhardt reported Spinola's opinion that "painting was the least of Rubens' merits,"¹⁸² Veronica Wedgwood has said that Rubens' achievements as a diplomat are "little more than a footnote" to those as a painter.¹⁸³ It is, however, more useful to think of the two activities as intertwined, particularly at this time in his life and

¹⁷⁷ Goodman, 1992, 28-29.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 236.

¹⁷⁹ There is no record of an official ceremonial unveiling; Cardinal Richelieu gave a feast in the gallery on the night after the wedding ceremony.

¹⁸⁰ The other daughters of Henry IV and Marie de' Medici had married Philip IV of Spain (Isabelle) and Victor Amadeus I of Savoy (Christine).

¹⁸¹ The Infanta had served as autonomous co-ruler of the territory with her husband, Archduke Albert (1559-1621) and this sovereignty would have passed to the couple's children. There were, however, no heirs, and when Albert died, Isabella was appointed Governor in her own right.

¹⁸² Jacob Burckhardt, *Recollections of Rubens* (London, 1950) 11.

¹⁸³ Wedgwood, 1975, 61.

particularly in his relationship with Buckingham.

The combination of artistic and political activity was not unique to Rubens¹⁸⁴ but he became its most accomplished practitioner. Itinerant painters had long been common and they made handy couriers, observers and conduits, since their work as portraitists permitted contacts of important people to be made discreetly in their studios. Rubens himself even made use of Van Dyck's studio in Antwerp to meet secretly with the Earl of Carlisle on the subject of an Anglo-Spanish treaty in 1629.¹⁸⁵

Rubens was ideally suited to the diplomatic function. Unusually well-educated and well-read, he spoke Flemish, Italian, French and Spanish, moved in the intellectual circles of whatever city he was in and corresponded with the leading scholars of his time. His friendship and collaboration with Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580-1637) made him part of a Europe-wide network whose members called themselves 'the Republic of Letters', and who exchanged scientific, archaeological and political information in their copious correspondence.¹⁸⁶ These men (it seems to have been an exclusively male club) shared what Simon Schama has called a "homeland...the borderless community of the Latin-reading educated classes" and considered themselves to be citizens of "a second, Christian Rome: not the narrow dominion of the Baroque Popes but an empire of the learned, the virtuous and the civil."¹⁸⁷

Rubens' politics were simple and consistent. He was a loyal subject of the Spanish Netherlands, at the time split in two and the flashpoint of Protestant-Catholic antagonism, and he worked all his life, in one arena or another, to achieve peace with the protestant Dutch and the harmonious reuniting of the whole Netherlands under the crown of

¹⁸⁴ Velazquez, for example, had political business on his two trips to Italy. See Edward Goldberg, "Velazquez in Italy: Painters, Spies and Low Spaniards," *Art Bulletin* 74 (September, 1992) 453-56.

¹⁸⁵ Wedgwood, 1975, 39-40. Another topic of conversation on this occasion was perfume: Carlisle, one of Buckingham's entourage and a fashion-plate, wanted Rubens to find him a particular favourite scent in Madrid. See Ruth Saunders Magurn, *The Letters of Peter Paul Rubens* (Cambridge MA, 1955) 296-97.

¹⁸⁶ David Jaffé, "The Barberini Circle: Some Exchanges between Peiresc, Rubens and their Contemporaries," *Journal of the History of Collections* 1. 2 (1989) 119-47.

¹⁸⁷ Simon Schama, "Mr. Europe: Peter Paul Rubens and the universalist ideal," *The New Yorker* (April 28 & May 5, 1997) 209.

Spain.¹⁸⁸ He steadfastly believed, even against the evidence of his own reason and experience, that his people and all of Europe would benefit from a *pax Hispanica*.¹⁸⁹

But even the most learned painter in the world, the “*uomo universale* of his epoch”, in Christopher White’s phrase,¹⁹⁰ had to overcome the prejudice of the times against the use of a professional painter, a mere craftsman, in dealing with matters of state. It was not easy and it took time. Rubens’ experience in matters of politics and diplomacy began in 1603 when, in Italy in the employ of the Duke of Mantua, he was sent to Spain, ostensibly to deliver some expensive gifts (including sixteen copies of paintings by Raphael and Titian from the Mantuan collection) to King Philip III (r.1598-1621).¹⁹¹ But the Duke was angling for an appointment as an admiral of the Spanish fleet, so he also wanted Rubens to report back to him on the latest intrigues at the court in Madrid.¹⁹² Years later in 1621, the Archduke Albert specially recommended Rubens to his wife, the Infanta Isabella, as their most devoted, trustworthy and intelligent servant when it came to delicate matters.¹⁹³ But seven years after that, Philip IV was still writing his aunt: “I am displeased at your mixing up a painter in affairs of such importance.”¹⁹⁴ It is a credit to Rubens’ ability and character that, when the two finally met, Philip quickly became Rubens’ intimate friend and appointed him to carry out formal peace negotiations with England—much to the pleasure of Charles I.¹⁹⁵

In 1625, in Paris, however, Rubens was still the confidential agent of the Infanta Isabella, and even the difficult challenge of installing his cycle of paintings for Marie de’ Medici in the Luxembourg Palace did not prevent his carrying on diplomatic business. In this case, it concerned the resurgent turbulence in the Netherlands: a truce signed in 1609 had expired in 1621 and the Infanta was working to renew it. Her overlords in Madrid

¹⁸⁸ Wedgwood, 1975, 13-14.

¹⁸⁹ Schama, 1997, 219.

¹⁹⁰ Christopher White, *Peter Paul Rubens: Man & Artist* (New Haven and London, 1987) preface.

¹⁹¹ Wedgwood, 1975, 16-17.

¹⁹² Sutton, 1993, 21-22.

¹⁹³ Burckhardt, 1950, 11.

¹⁹⁴ Sutton, 1993, 39.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 39.

wanted war; France was equivocating; England's policy was inconsistent. The state wedding in Paris seemed an ideal occasion to try to find support for what today would be called a 'peace process.'

In Otto von Simson's analysis, the Medici Cycle of paintings is, in fact, a metaphor for the contemporary political realities of both France and Europe and he sees its creation as a struggle between the artist, Rubens, and the politician, Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642).¹⁹⁶ In light of the work done subsequently for Buckingham by Rubens, von Simson's thesis is especially relevant. Calling the paintings "the greatest and most astonishing example of painting in the service of politics,"¹⁹⁷ he describes the political position of its official patron, Marie de' Medici, granddaughter of a Habsburg emperor, as advocating "peace and collaboration among the Catholic powers which, under Habsburg leadership, was to have revived the unity of the Middle Ages."¹⁹⁸ In other words, she had an agenda very similar to that of Rubens.

At the same time, an alternative position had been evolving in France. Ironically championed by Marie's husband, the assassinated Henry IV (r.1589-1610), this policy aimed at the consolidation of French national power for an ultimate showdown with the Habsburgs over European hegemony. Even more ironically, this was the agenda of Cardinal Richelieu, who was Marie's chief advisor and the one who negotiated her political rehabilitation after her rebellion against her son, Louis XIII, and whose ascendancy in French politics began at the same time Rubens got the commission from the Queen Mother.¹⁹⁹ But if Richelieu had set his sights on the triumph of France over Spain, why did he allow, or even encourage, the woman he controlled to expound so egregiously a pro-Spanish view and to employ a pro-Spanish painter to do it? Von Simson suggests that France, i.e. Richelieu, was not yet strong enough to achieve the desired goal. So there were three reasons to support a splendid portrayal of Marie's life. First, domestically, to

¹⁹⁶ Otto Georg von Simson, "Richelieu and Rubens: Reflections on the Art of Politics", *Review of Politics* 6 (1944) 422-51.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 424.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 426.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 426.

have Marie de'Medici "extolled as the Mother of France in the emphatic vision of Rubens which often blended the features of the Queen with those of the Blessed Virgin served well the man who had risen in her shadow."²⁰⁰ Second, internationally, the paintings served to assure others of the peaceful designs of French politics (Fig. 22). Third, and most crucially, the cycle was intended to strengthen Louis XIII's position by demonstrating that despite all the internecine battles, Marie had pursued the traditional policy of France and that her estrangement from her son was the work of foreigners and traitors. (Fig. 23) ²⁰¹

But what of Rubens in all this? In a letter to Infanta Isabella, he wrote: "One must realize that the entire government of this kingdom lies at present in the hands of the Queen Mother and Cardinal Richelieu."²⁰² So was he merely a dupe of Richelieu, bedazzled by the size and scope of the commission and willing to paint anything for his own personal glory? Von Simson credits Richelieu with more than enough subtlety and knowledge of art to have employed and inspired the painter, his political adversary, and to have blended their visions "in a masterful, ambiguous, and eloquent interpretation of politics."²⁰³ Richelieu even managed to get Rubens to include his portrait in the painting called *The Treaty of Angoulême* (Fig. 24) illustrating the negotiation of the reconciliation of Marie and Louis XIII.²⁰⁴ But here is precisely where von Simson sees real evidence both of the battle between Rubens and Richelieu, as well as of the artist's full realization that he was indeed in a war zone. For Rubens has portrayed the critical moment: does Marie accept her son's offer or not? The figure on the right, Richelieu, puts his hand on her right arm in a gesture which can be read either as one of restraint or urgency. In this "masterpiece of ambiguity and dissimulation,"²⁰⁵ von Simson sees the artist introducing ideas subtly though unmistakably different from the Cardinal's.²⁰⁶ He goes on to note other expressions of

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 430.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 432.

²⁰² Magum, 1955, 105.

²⁰³ von Simson, 1944, 431.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 438.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 438.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 443.

Rubens' political views in the seven paintings of the middle section of the Cycle. And, of course, Rubens never doubted Richelieu's attitude towards him and his views. Proof of hostility came finally in 1630 when the other half of the original commission, a corresponding series of paintings depicting the life of Marie's husband, Henry IV, was abruptly cancelled.²⁰⁷

But von Simson gives the final victory to Rubens, since "as *ars politica* the work died with the political moment for which it had been created. What has survived is Rubens' art."²⁰⁸

It may be argued that von Simson overemphasizes the power of Richelieu in the creation of the Medici Cycle: could he, for example, single-handedly have cancelled the whole project in 1623? Probably not, but his creative input was alluded to by Rubens himself in a letter to Peiresc: "I believe that if the other subjects had been entrusted entirely to us, they would have passed, as far as the Court is concerned, without any scandal or murmur. (In margin) The Cardinal perceived this too late, and was very much annoyed to see that the new subjects were taken amiss."²⁰⁹ The point here is that Rubens not only was well aware of the politics inherent in his commission but also that he actively interpreted and manipulated them in his work. Moreover, he was able to handle the interference of a man like Richelieu and even seems to have enjoyed the give-and-take involved in the process.

When he met the Duke of Buckingham in Paris in May, 1625, the opportunity to meld art and politics presented itself anew. Buckingham was known as a patron and collector of art. He was also known to have a political aim during his ceremonial visit to France, namely to get French support against the Habsburg monarchies.²¹⁰ This, of course, would run directly counter to the position of Rubens and the Infanta Isabella,

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 446.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 451.

²⁰⁹ Magum, 1955, 109.

²¹⁰ Lockyer, 1981, 236-41. Buckingham spent much time negotiating with Richelieu on this matter; he got nowhere and was disappointed and frustrated. Lockyer suggests that the Duke's attentions to the Queen, Anne d'Autriche, one of Richelieu's strongest opponents in the French court, were born out of this political frustration.

which was to strengthen the pro-Spanish elements in France as embodied by the parties of Marie de' Medici and Anne d'Autriche. So it would have been remiss of the artist not to court the patronage of Buckingham, if only in order to sound out the Duke's policy commitments and to articulate the benefits of an alternative strategy. Furthermore, as Julius Held adds, Rubens would be sure that a major work done for the King of England's closest adviser would certainly be helpful in securing the commission for the Whitehall Banqueting House ceiling, which the artist had been eyeing since 1621.²¹¹

For his part, Buckingham could not have passed up the chance to work with Rubens. A commission accepted by the most famous and successful painter in the world would greatly enhance his own image as a connoisseur and Maecenas of the arts. It would also, incidentally, embellish his London mansion York House, with pictures in the latest fashionable continental style.

Although there is no reference in Rubens' letters of 1625 to a commission from Buckingham, there is, in the English archives, a record of payment in that year: "Given to Mr. Rubens for drawing his LP^s picture on horseback. 500 liv."²¹² The painting in question is a large equestrian portrait of the Duke (Fig. 25), which has survived only in black-and-white photographs,²¹³ although a *modello* for the work (Fig. 26) remains.²¹⁴ The finished picture is mentioned in the 1635 inventory of Buckingham's collection but not in the 1649 list of paintings from the collection being sold in Antwerp by the Duke's

211 Julius Held, "Rubens's Sketch of Buckingham Rediscovered," *The Burlington Magazine* 118 (1976) 547.

212 Cited in Sainsbury, 1859, 68. The original source is the Account book of Sir Sackville Crowe, British Museum, *Add. MSS.* 12.528.

213 The picture was destroyed by fire in 1949. It was then at Osterley Park, where it had been since about 1711, having been bought by Sir Francis Childs in Holland between 1697 and 1699; Osterley Park passed by descendency to the Earls of Jersey. See Hans Vlieghe, *Rubens Portraits of Identified Sitters Painted in Antwerp: Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard XIX*, vol. 2 (London, 1987) 64-67.

214 Held, 1976, 547-51.

son.²¹⁵ The sketch reappeared on the market in the 1970's.²¹⁶ Both works show Buckingham, his features clearly having been based upon the drawing *ad vivum* (Fig. 15) made by Rubens in 1625, atop a bay-coloured horse in profile and in a position Huemer calls *pessade*²¹⁷ and Vlieghe correctly identifies as *levade*.²¹⁸ The Duke, in dark armour and gripping a baton in his right hand, looks out at the viewer. He is surrounded by allegorical figures and in the left background are a group of ships.

Equestrian portraits of rulers or military figures hark back to antiquity. Rubens himself had contributed to the evolution of the type as early as 1603 in his work for the Duke of Lerma and the pose chosen for the Duke was used by Rubens both before and after 1625.²¹⁹ In the Buckingham picture, then, Rubens combined his own fondness for, and expertise in, the equestrian portrait with an English tradition of showing noble horsemen in front of naval actions (Fig. 27), with which the Duke presumably was familiar.²²⁰ Although the essential elements are constant from *modello* to finished painting, there are enough difference of detail, style and interpretation to merit a kind of comparative analysis.

In the sketch, all the things associated with Rubens at the creative-development stage of a project are evident. There is an overall energy of brushwork, a freshness of colour—particularly in the crimson breeches worn by the Duke and in the pink cape snapping in the wind—and a sparkling play of light across the entire panel.²²¹ In other words, there is a sense of a mind and a hand in the throes of creation.

In the final painting, the feeling is different. Here, there seems to be less energy and more calculated control, even a certain slickness. To many who saw the painting before its

²¹⁵ Vlieghe presumes that the work had been sold before 1649 (Vlieghe, 1987, 64) but the present author believes that, as a 'family portrait', it would have been retained by the 2nd Duke as long as possible and only sold after his death in 1687.

²¹⁶ It had been sold in Paris in 1881 and was identified in a private collection in 1911. In both cases, the sitter was misidentified as a (different) Habsburg prince. The earlier history of the sketch is unknown. (Held, 1976, 548.)

²¹⁷ Huemer, 1977, 57.

²¹⁸ Vlieghe, 1987, 64.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 65.

²²⁰ Huemer, 1977, 58; Vlieghe, 1987, 65.

²²¹ It is made of three boards, joined vertically.

destruction, there was evidence of it having been done with considerable studio assistance—a phenomenon not uncommon in Rubens' procedure.²²² The compositional proportions have also changed. There is more space around the central figure, especially at the top, which allows for the addition of more allegorical features, an inflation Held assumes to have been Buckingham's idea rather than the artist's,²²³ although such features are not uncommon in Rubens' work. As well, the relative size of the Duke to his horse has been subtly altered in the man's favour. Not surprisingly too, there is more detail in general; seashells on the ground under the horse, roiling clouds in the sky, precise rendering of the ships and the sea surface in the distance, and a harbour-fortification tower on the far right edge. The Duke is also wearing the insignia of the Order of the Garter, a detail presumably supplied by the sitter.

As far as the allegorical figures are concerned, there is considerable difference from sketch to finished picture. In the former, Neptune and a naiad look up at the Duke, their admired ruler (Buckingham had been made Lord High Admiral in 1619) while a young cherub figure flies overhead carrying a trumpet and blowing in the wind.²²⁴ In the final version, allegorical elements have greatly increased. An elaborately jewelled and draped goddess carrying a laurel wreath and cornucopia flies ahead of the Duke, along with a chubby little wind-god. Behind Buckingham, a voluptuous female seen from the rear subdues a demonic figure with one hand and holds a flaming heart in the other while another young wind-god blows flowers over the Duke's head. Both Neptune and the naiad have also been enlarged.

Interpretations of these figures has been varied. Gregory Martin identifies the leading goddess as Concord, the one behind as Charity, dragging Envy.²²⁵ Frances Huemer proposes that the painting, besides advertising the martial schemes of Buckingham and Charles I, is an allegory of Virtue and Envy, where masculine virtue is personified by the Duke and Envy, "his ever-present female counterpart, who constantly tries to deprive

²²² Held, 1976, 551.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 551.

²²⁴ Held, 1976, 548, n. 10, reports evidence of another figure painted out at the upper left.

²²⁵ Martin, 1966, 61.

virtue of his strength, is here suppressed by the Duke's own spirit of charity."²²⁶ Hans Vlieghe finds such a reading too abstruse and sees the meaning of the work as simply to glorify Buckingham as commander of the navy, although he identifies the two female figures as Victory and Charity.²²⁷

There is one difference between the sketch and the painting, however, which has not been remarked upon, and which not only impacts on the allegorical interpretation but also suggests the existence of a political discourse—not to say struggle—between Rubens and Buckingham akin to the one between Rubens and Richelieu as described by Otto von Simson. In the sketch, the ships in the background are shown peacefully riding a calm sea, their prows turned in towards the shore. In the painting, the ships surge across a stormy sea, guns blazing, towards the fortification tower on the right. This change must have been made for a reason; it must have had some meaning for either the artist or the patron or both.

One possible explanation lies in the date of the commission: May, 1625. Assuming that the sketch was done either in Paris in May or June, or, more likely, in Antwerp after Rubens returned home in July, the peaceful ships could connote Rubens' hope that Buckingham's rebuff by Richelieu would lead to an Anglo-Spanish treaty, a hope that Buckingham himself might have encouraged. By the time Rubens would have been able to finish the painting—and in a letter to Balthazar Gerbier, Rubens says that an assignment from Infanta Isabella had caused a delay in painting the Duke's equestrian portrait²²⁸—the situation had changed dramatically. In August, Buckingham had sent English ships to join the Dutch fleet blockading Dunkirk in the Spanish Netherlands²²⁹ and in October, a fleet set sail to blockade the Spanish coast at Cadiz. The operation was a fiasco; the storm- and disease-ridden English fleet struggled home in early December.²³⁰ Rubens would have been well aware of all this and, changing neither the initial concept of Buckingham's portrait nor its design, he had an opportunity to convey a message to his patron. The lands of His

²²⁶ Huemer, 1977, 58-61.

²²⁷ Vlieghe, 1987, 65. The author follows Cesare Ripa's widely-used handbook of personifications, *Iconologia* (1593), for the identification of allegorical attributes.

²²⁸ Cited in Held, 1976, 548.

²²⁹ Lockyer, 1981, 271.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 281-85.

Catholic Majesty will repulse any attack—visually, the intact fortification tower withstands the onrushing warships—and the attacker would do better to reject an aggressive policy and consider the benefits of peace with Spain—visually, the demonic figure is thrust away behind the Duke and the spirit of peace leads him forward to a time of plenty as symbolized by the cornucopia and glory indicated by the laurel wreath.²³¹ In other words, victory through peace. This is an idea which informs the life of Rubens, both artistically and politically, and while the commission from the Duke required him to paint a military hero, it enabled him to define on canvas his view of the true meaning of heroism.

Thus it may be argued that in the equestrian portrait of Buckingham, Rubens is engaging in *ars politica* from the artist's side of the equation. In a simpler, more contained way than the Medici Cycle, the picture is the record of a struggle between artist and patron. a diplomatic duel which continued for the rest of Buckingham's short life. In a letter written in 1625, Rubens says: "When I consider the caprice and the arrogance of Buckingham, I pity that young King who, through false counsel, is needlessly throwing himself and his kingdom into such an extremity (i.e., war with Spain)."²³² But Rubens' opinion of Buckingham had many shades. In early 1626, he wrote, with perhaps a hint of avuncular concern: "As for Buckingham, I am of your opinion that he is heading for the precipice."²³³ And again: "Surely it would be better if these young men who govern the world today were willing to maintain friendly relations with one another instead of throwing all Christendom into unrest by their caprices."²³⁴ In April, 1627, the contact between the two men was once again close, although secret, and Rubens employed artistic terms (perhaps meant to refer also to the ongoing negotiations over the sale of the artist's collection to the Duke) in speaking of a possible agreement between England and Spain: "I wish as much as I ought to see the completion of this *beau chef d'oeuvre*."²³⁵ By September, 1627, after Buckingham's policy had veered in a direction more congenial to

²³¹ As is shown by the various interpretations, the main allegorical figure is difficult to identify precisely. She is part Victory, part Fame, part Plenty, a conflation of personifications.

²³² Magurn, 1955, 123.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 124.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 130.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 174.

that of Rubens and the Infanta, when he was engaged in an attack on the French at La Rochelle, Rubens wrote of his desire to "keep Buckingham in good humour."²³⁶ And on the same day, he wrote to the Duke himself: "'In spite of the iniquity of the times, keep me in your favour and believe that no accident of fortune or violence of public destiny can separate my affections from your very humble service to which I have dedicated and devoted myself."²³⁷ The ambiguity of Rubens' view of Buckingham seems ultimately summed up in a letter of October, 1627, in which the artist writes: "He seems to me, by his own audacity, to be reduced to the necessity of conquering or of dying gloriously. If he should survive defeat, he would be nothing but the sport of fortune and the laughing-stock of his enemies."²³⁸ In a certain sense, the equestrian portrait is a visual expression of those words.

Although no letters of Buckingham's survive in which he talks in personal terms of Rubens, there does remain one rather poignant visual expression of the Duke's admiration for the man. The only surviving part of Buckingham's great London residence, York House, is the Water Gate (Fig. 28).²³⁹ Built in 1626,²⁴⁰ it is clearly modelled on the garden portico of Rubens' House in Antwerp (Fig. 29). It stands today, an unusual

²³⁶ Ibid., 203.

²³⁷ Ibid., 205.

²³⁸ Ibid., 208.

²³⁹ Apart from a small section of an almost entirely rebuilt New Hall, Buckingham's house in Essex, the Water Gate on The Embankment is the only remaining architecture associated with the Duke.

²⁴⁰ G.H. Gater and W.H. Godfrey, eds., *Survey of London, Volume XVIII, The Strand* (London, 1937) 51-60.

example of *hommage* of patron to artist.²⁴¹

²⁴¹ There is another work of art which links Buckingham and Rubens, although the details of its creation are considerably less clear than those of the equestrian portrait. This is a painting (Fig. 30) often called an apotheosis of the Duke (Martin, 1966, 613); it was also destroyed in the Osterley Park fire of 1949, although for it, too, a preliminary sketch (Fig. 31) remains. (Gregory Martin, *The Flemish School: National Gallery Catalogue* [London, 1970] 147-53.) The work, portraying a variety of mythological and allegorical personages escorting Buckingham triumphantly heavenward over various other defeated symbolic figures, is done in *di sotto in su* perspective and was intended to be mounted in a ceiling. For that reason, and for stylistic similarities in general, it is reminiscent of the central panel of the Whitehall Banqueting House ceiling, *The Apotheosis of James I*, commissioned from Rubens by Charles I in 1629-30, finished in 1634, installed in 1635 and paid for in 1637-38. (John Charlton, *The Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace*, rev. ed. [London, 1994] 22-23.) Whether the 'apotheosis' of Buckingham was connected to the commission for the equestrian portrait is unclear: there are no records of payment for it, and, of course, an apotheosis implies the death of its subject, in this case 1628. Furthermore, although it is mentioned in the inventory of the Buckingham collection of 1635, the wording of the entry, "In the Great Chamber...Reuben...A great peice for the ceiling of my Lord's Closett," indicates that the painting was not installed in its intended place. This raises a question as to why not, especially if it had been done almost a decade previously as part of the 1625 commission. It could have been temporarily displaced, of course. Or, the work might indeed have been done after the Duke's death, perhaps even in conjunction with the Banqueting House project. (Per Palme, *Triumph of Peace: a Study of the Whitehall Banqueting House* [London, 1957] 255-62.) Charles might have commissioned a memorial to his lost friend at the same time as the one to his late father. (Immediately after Buckingham's murder in 1628, the King had wanted to erect a public memorial to him; he was dissuaded on the grounds that he had not yet even honoured his parent in such a way.) This would help explain some of the anomalies concerning the picture.

iv) Balthazar Gerbier

If Buckingham and Rubens were gears in a seventeenth-century politico-cultural machine, Balthazar Gerbier (1592-1667)²⁴² might be called a lubricant. Born and raised in Holland of French Huguenot parents, he studied painting there. He also spent time in France, where, like his coeval Buckingham, he travelled with his brother to broaden and finish his worldly education.²⁴³ Apparently naturally gifted in self-promotion,²⁴⁴ on his return to Holland, he managed to come to the attention of the powers that be and travelled with the Dutch ambassador to London in 1616,²⁴⁵ where he was taken into the service of the young, rapidly-ascending George Villiers.²⁴⁶ His entry position was that of painter of miniatures. Although he quickly became Buckingham's chief art advisor and curator of his collection²⁴⁷ and although his services to his employer expanded to the point where he was something like Buckingham's personal assistant, agent and interpreter, he was always known as "the Duke's painter."²⁴⁸ As late as 1627, Infanta Isabella wrote to her nephew, the King of Spain: "Gerbier is a painter just as Rubens is. The Duke of Buckingham sent him here with a letter by his own hand and with instructions to present these propositions.

²⁴² The only modern biography of Gerbier is by Ross Williamson, 1949. Discussions of his relationship with Buckingham are found in I.G. Philip, "Balthazar Gerbier and the Duke of Buckingham's Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine* 99 (1957) 155-56; Lita-Rose Betcherman, "The York House Collection and its Keeper," *Apollo* 92 (1970) 250-59. His activities relating to art after Buckingham's lifetime are dealt with in Maija Jansson, "Remembering Marston Moor: the politics of culture," in Amussen and Kishlansky, 1995, 255-76. His dates are variously reported: Ross Williamson, following Sainsbury, following Walpole, gives 1591-1667; Betcherman says 1592-1667; Jansson suggests 1592-1663/5; a 1996 Sotheby's sale catalogue gives 1591-1663.

²⁴³ Ross Williamson, 1949, 26. It would be a nice coincidence if the young Gerbier and Buckingham were in France simultaneously.

²⁴⁴ Gerbier always claimed aristocratic lineage. In a letter of 1638, he writes: "The now living Heralt of Armes of the Duché of Brabant hath subscribed my genealogie...my Father, borne at Antwerpe, sonne of a Norman Knyght to his grand Father, married to Catherina de Laloe, daughter to Alonzo de Laloe, Secretary of State unto King Philip the 2d, and, by her mother's side, daughter of Francis de Valadolid, Heyg stuart (high steward?) unto the Emperor Charles the fift..." See Sainsbury, 1859, 316.

²⁴⁵ Jansson, 1995, 258; Betcherman, 1970, 250, gives the date as 1615.

²⁴⁶ Ross Williamson and Jansson believe that Gerbier's employment with Buckingham began in 1616; Magurn, 1955, 162, suggests 1618.

²⁴⁷ Betcherman, 1970, 250.

²⁴⁸ Millar, 1958, 3.

We could not, therefore, refuse to hear them.”²⁴⁹

Buckingham’s patronage of Larkin and Van Dyck was fairly limited and relatively simple. His relationship with Rubens spanned a longer time and operated at several levels. But his dealings with Gerbier ²⁵⁰ went on for a dozen years and show considerable intricacy. Although Horace Walpole later described him as “a common Pen man,”²⁵¹ meaning something like “bureaucrat,” Gerbier himself described his utility to the Duke as follows (*literatim*):

“My attendance was pleasing to him because of my several languages, good hand in writing, skill in sciences as mathematics, architecture, drawing, painting, contriving of scenes, masques, shows and entertainments for great Princes, besides many secrets which I had gathered from divers rare persons, as likewise for making of engines useful in war, as I made those which might blow up the dyke that stopped the passage to the town of Rochelle, for it was of the same model of that of the Prince of Parma, when the attempt was on Antwerp. He did put to me first the contrivance of some of his habitations, to choose for him rarities, books, medals, marble statues and pictures. I did keep his cyphers.”²⁵²

Although this resumé looks excessively ambitious, it is not totally inaccurate: Gerbier seems to have had a certain amount of talent in many areas, coupled with enough nerve and energy to capitalize on these various abilities, at least in the short term.²⁵³

Ultimately, the most important work Gerbier did for Buckingham in the realm of art

²⁴⁹ Magurn, 1955, 163.

²⁵⁰ The various spellings of his name in contemporary documents suggests than, in England, it was pronounced ‘Jer-beer.’

²⁵¹ Walpole, 1862, I, 274.

²⁵² Balthazar Gerbier, *Balthazar Gerbier, knight, to all men that loves truth* (Rouen, 1646).

²⁵³ Gerbier was, in the modern colloquial term, a survivor, with all that that word implies. His reputation during his lifetime was vaguely unsavoury—even his most constant friend, Rubens, worried over his trustworthiness in a diplomatic letter of 1631 (Magurn, 1955, 381)—although he managed to obtain a knighthood from King Charles in 1638 and was made Master of Ceremonies (i.e., chief of protocol) to the monarch in 1641. Even when in favour, however, he was disliked and distrusted and he made life difficult for Charles with his behaviour; the King finally encouraged him to leave England in 1642 by giving Gerbier a letter of introduction to the King of France. See Ross Williamson, 1949, 41-46.

was as agent-buyer and curator of the Duke's collection.²⁵⁴ In the early 1620's, he made several trips to the continent primarily in this capacity, although the covert diplomatic activity which became so intense in the last half of the decade likely began on these early travels. In 1621, for instance, Gerbier was in Italy; in 1623, he joined Buckingham and Prince Charles in Madrid²⁵⁵; in 1624, he made more than one visit to Paris.²⁵⁶ By the time of the state visit of Buckingham to France in 1625, Gerbier had formed a network of contacts in the capitals of Europe and acquired a knowledge of and familiarity with art and the art market. As a result, according to Betcherman, it was Gerbier who brought Buckingham and Rubens together at that time.²⁵⁷

His putative role in the genesis of Rubens' equestrian portrait of Buckingham provides an appropriate connection to Gerbier's own work as "the Duke's painter." As has been noted, the ambitious young immigrant's original position in the ambitious young favourite's entourage was that of miniaturist.²⁵⁸ An early product of his work is, not surprisingly, a miniature portrait of his patron (Fig. 32), now in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle. Signed and dated at the bottom 'B Gerbier 1618' and with Buckingham's motto 'Fidei coticula crux' inscribed in a scroll at the top, it is, somewhat unusually for a miniature, an equestrian portrait.

The work shows a young-looking Buckingham atop a rearing dapple-grey horse and brandishing a long baton. Below the belly of the horse, a distant landscape is visible extending to a strongly tilted horizon; in the scene are four other riders (one dismounted) and an attendant on foot, as well as, to the left, a group of ships riding at anchor in a bay. The background passage, with its late medieval look, harks back to the illuminated

²⁵⁴ This is discussed more fully in Chapter 3 below.

²⁵⁵ Gerbier painted a portrait of the Spanish Infanta, the putative bride of the Prince of Wales, which was taken back to England. When the Spanish match did not materialize, no one had any use for the picture and it was given to Buckingham's sister Susan, Countess of Denbigh. See Cammell, 1939, 356-57; Huxley, 1959, 98.

²⁵⁶ Betcherman, 1970, 251.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 255; Jansson, 1995, 259, suggests it was the other way around.

²⁵⁸ Betcherman, 1970, 250, erroneously has Gerbier arriving in England in 1615 and shortly thereafter painting "a number of the York House circle." This is anachronistic: Buckingham did not acquire York House until late 1620.

manuscripts of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Burgundian court and underscores the connection between English miniatures and the traditions of manuscript painting in Northern art. Common to both are the techniques and materials of creation; essential to both are a heightened interest in conveying naturalistic surface and lighting effects, a sense of bright, sumptuous luxury, and precise detail that often borders on the astonishing.

In the little painting, Buckingham looks out at the viewer wearing a facial expression which is hard to describe: his gaze is both languid and penetrating, his slight smile is almost a smirk. The likeness is reminiscent of that in the Larkin portrait of 1616, minus the sweetness. He is wearing a red doublet and breeches with lace collar and cuffs and white stockings and shoes; the chain of the Order of the Garter is around his neck. The little painting may have commemorated Buckingham's being elevated to the rank of marquis in January, 1618:²⁵⁹ this would help explain the inscribed motto, which would have been assumed at this elevation.

But at first glance the most striking thing about the picture is its odd proportions. The human figure is far too big in relation to the horse and, in turn, the head of the man is far too big for his body. This obviously intentional internal dissonance recalls the proportions used in late Roman and early Christian art in which heads and faces were enlarged at the expense of bodies in order to emphasize their expressions of authority or piety. In this case, something similar is happening, as Gerbier makes very sure that he compositionally conveys Buckingham's physical beauty and political importance. There is also a possible technical reason for the anatomical incorrectness: Gerbier was asked to paint an equestrian portrait rather than the more usual head-and-shoulders likeness seen in miniatures. In order to do it and still remain within the limits of miniaturism, he felt it necessary to overemphasize Buckingham's head to ensure recognizability. In other words, he tried to eliminate the distance between the two formats, head-and-shoulders and man-on-horseback. Within the context of the genre, it is an interesting attempt, although not entirely successful. One of the reasons for the failure is the background scene: it reasserts a naturalism which only serves to highlight the un-realism of the central group.

Nevertheless, as a miniature, Gerbier's work lies well within the artistic tradition of
²⁵⁹ Lockyer, 1981, 32-33.

its time. Even though the art of 'painting in small', or 'limning' as it was called, reached the apogee of its popularity in England during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) and at that time far surpassed in quality any other form of painting,²⁶⁰ it was still, and would continue to be, a cherished genre much in demand, although without the pre-eminence of earlier times. Like most things of aesthetic interest, miniatures belonged to the small and select world of the court: the leading miniaturist, Nicholas Hilliard, said that his art was "for the service of noble persons very meet."²⁶¹ They were also very much a part of private life, commissioned by and/or presented to people as personal mementoes, tokens of affection, surrogates to be held in the hand or carried on one's person when the subject of the portrait was absent. Queen Elizabeth herself had kept her collection of miniatures in a private cabinet carefully wrapped in paper, with their names inscribed in her own hand.²⁶²

The miniature portrait of Buckingham likely fulfilled the same function and Gerbier apparently continued to paint such things for the family for many years. In 1623, when the Duke was in Madrid with Prince Charles, the Duchess of Buckingham promised to send her husband a picture of their daughter Mary, as well as one of herself, both by Gerbier. She also asked for a new miniature of Buckingham himself to replace the one she had already and which King James had borrowed.²⁶³ It is tempting to think that the picture lent to the King might be this very one: a likeness of his beloved favourite in a heroic pose atop a horse—they were both avid horsemen—would have been a fine image to contemplate during Buckingham's long, lamented absence from James' side.

Insofar as the actual pose is concerned, a sitter mounted on horseback was, as has been noted, a fairly unusual thing in miniatures, if only for reasons of scale. Self-image presumably prompted Buckingham to commission Gerbier to do such a portrait. But what sources were available to him? Larger-scale equestrian images formed part of the English aristocratic portrait tradition, it is true, but these might not have been the only inspiration for the miniature. Another might have come out of numismatic and heraldic motifs where

²⁶⁰ Waterhouse, 1953, 18.

²⁶¹ Hilliard, 1981, 64-65.

²⁶² Edmond, 1983, 23-24.

²⁶³ Lockyer, 1981, 153.

the size scale matches that of miniature-painting. The Great Seal of James I, for example, shows on its obverse side (Fig. 33) a mounted knight in a stance similar to that of Buckingham in the miniature. This was engraved in 1603 from a design attributed to Nicholas Hilliard (who had also designed Elizabeth I's Second Great Seal).²⁶⁴ It is possible that Buckingham, who would have been very familiar with the King's seal, pointed to its composition as a model for Gerbier to use. This would have paid homage to the King while at the same time advertising Buckingham's ever-rising status in the royal circle. In other words, it would have been another example of young Villiers' ability to blend "insolence and servility" ²⁶⁵ in his climb to the top.²⁶⁶

Finally, there is the question of the similarity of the poses in the Gerbier and Rubens equestrian portraits. They are virtually identical, although facing in opposite directions. While the idea that 'the Prince of Painters' might base a composition on the work of 'the Duke's painter' sounds like *lèse majesté*, it is worth recalling that, since miniatures were meant to be portable, Buckingham could have had it with him in Paris, as a potential personal gift to the French king, say, or to Richelieu, to mark the political *entente* which never happened. He was not shy; he would have shown it to Rubens. And the painter, desirous of making some political headway with his sitter, could have melded this rather clumsy man-on-horseback image into his own more sophisticated understanding of the equestrian concept.

²⁶⁴ Strong, 1983, 56; 144-45.

²⁶⁵ Trevor-Roper, 1962, 51.

²⁶⁶ There is another picture attributed to Gerbier, a full-size portrait of Buckingham (Fig.34) which came onto the market in 1996. Judging by the maturity of the Duke's face, as well as the style of lace collar he is wearing, the likeness must have been painted no earlier than 1627-28. The expression on Buckingham's face is far from that worn by the beautiful young favourite in earlier images. His eyes are hooded and hard, his mouth looks about to sneer. This is not a pleasant or happy man; it is the Buckingham called in Parliament "the chief cause of these evils and mischief" (Lockyer, 1981, 290ff.) and reviled by the populace: "Let Charles and George do what they can, The Duke shall die like Doctor Lambe" (Fairholt, 1850, xiv). The question is, if Gerbier painted it for Buckingham, was the portrait intended to convey a positive image of strength and military prowess (the Duke wears armour in the picture)? If so, it is partially successful: he does look tough. He also looks exactly like the kind of man Gerbier knew him to be after years of intimate association on so many levels. There is a saying that no man is a hero to his valet, and in this portrait, Gerbier proves its truth. He proves as well his ability as a painter.

v) Gerrit Van Honthorst

The last painter to be patronized by Buckingham was the Dutch artist Gerrit Van Honthorst (1592-1656).²⁶⁷ He arrived in London in April, 1628, on the invitation of the Duke and the King. A letter from Gerbier to Endymion Porter, another of Buckingham's employees, then in Holland says: "I trust you will not forget to bring Mr. Honthorst; for the Duke intends to employ him, as well as his Majesty, who will give him cause not to complain of crossing the sea."²⁶⁸ His reputation had long preceded him to England: in 1621, Sir Dudley Carleton had written of him to the Earl of Arundel as (*literatim*): "a young man growing into reputacion in these parts...and hath bene for some yeares at Rome & other parts of Italy to mend his art: which consisting much in night works..."²⁶⁹ Arundel must have at least seen the painting Carleton was specifically recommending, for in July, the Earl replied (*literatim*): "I thinke the painter hath expressed ye story with much arte & both for the posturings & ye colouringe, I have seen fewe Dutch men arrive unto it, for it hath more of ye Italian then the Flemish & much of ye manor of Caravagioes colouringe, which is nowe soe much esteemed in Rome."²⁷⁰

Arundel's assessment of Honthorst summarizes very early on his position in the art-historical canon as the most famous member of the group known as the Utrecht Caravaggisti, i.e. the Dutch followers of the innovative Italian painter, Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1573-1610), known for his fusion of realism and *chiaroscuro* lighting. Honthorst specialized in turning the Italian's dramatic patterns of natural light and shadow into cleverly-lit nocturnal scenes; as a result, he was known in Italy as 'Gherardo delle Notti'.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ A. Blankert and L.J. Slatkes, eds., *Holländische Malerei in neuem Licht: Hendrick ter Brugghen und seine Zeitgenossen* (Utrecht and Brunswick, 1986) 30-32, give Honthorst's birth date as 1592. J. Richard Judson, *Gerrit van Honthorst: A Discussion of his Position in Dutch Art* (The Hague, 1959) xix, says 1592. In English usage, the artist is normally referred to as simply 'Honthorst,' unlike other Netherlandish artists, e.g. Van Eyck, Van Dyck, Van Gogh, etc.

²⁶⁸ Judson, 1959, 113; Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 180.

²⁶⁹ Millar, 1954, 36.

²⁷⁰ Judson, 1959, 61; Sainsbury, 1859, 291. The painting was *Aeneas Fleeing the Sack of Troy*; its whereabouts is unknown.

²⁷¹ J. Rosenberg, S. Slive and E.H. Ter Kuile, *Dutch Art and Architecture 1600-1800* (London, 1966) 26-27; Judson, 1959, 127.

But Arundel apparently was not the only English patron interested in the young artist. Buckingham, too, bought an early work by Honthorst, *The Dentist* (Fig. 35) of 1622. It is fair to assume that either Carleton or Gerbier or both had something to do with this acquisition. Moreover, it is a painting like this which might well have helped initiate his eventual call to London.²⁷² According to Francis Haskell, Buckingham was, in fact, primarily responsible for bringing Honthorst to England.²⁷³

His stay was, like Van Dyck's seven years earlier, brief. In Honthorst's case, however, there is no mystery as to why. In November, 1628, he received a grant of denization (citizenship) and a pension of £100 a year for life as the King's servant "for acceptable services".²⁷⁴ He went back to Holland in December with a commission to paint Charles I's sister, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia and her family.²⁷⁵ Honthorst himself never returned to England (although his brother delivered pictures there for him) and spent his later career working for aristocratic patrons in Holland and Denmark.²⁷⁶

Joachim Von Sandrart (1606-88), the German art historian and biographer, accompanied Honthorst to England as an assistant. In his 1675 book on art and artists, he claims that the principal reason for Honthorst's trip was to paint a large allegorical canvas called *Apollo and Diana* (Fig. 36) showing the Duke of Buckingham as Mercury presenting the seven liberal arts to King Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria as Apollo and Diana, which now hangs in the Queen's Staircase at Hampton Court Palace. He goes on to say that the work was intended for the Whitehall banqueting House, was completed in six months, and was so well-received that Honthorst received not only a cash payment of 3000 guilders but also an expensive silver service for twelve along with a pure-bred horse and stableboy.²⁷⁷

²⁷² Judson, 1959, 77-78.

²⁷³ Francis Haskell, "Charles I's Collection of Pictures," in MacGregor, 1989, 222.

²⁷⁴ Millar, 1954, 36.

²⁷⁵ Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 181; Sainsbury, 1859, 295; Judson, 1959, 116. The portrait was sent to London in May 1630. Its whereabouts is uncertain.

²⁷⁶ Judson, 1959, 117ff.

²⁷⁷ Cited in Millar, 1954, 36; Judson, 1959, 113-14; Christopher White, *The Dutch Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen* (Cambridge, 1982) 55.

Sandart also states that the picture was commissioned by Charles I. However, an English observer roughly contemporary to him says that it was given to the King by Buckingham. As Christopher White notes, favouring this latter opinion, Sandart might have claimed a royal commission in order to boost Honthorst's reputation; more likely, after Buckingham's death, the King assumed responsibility for the unfinished work.²⁷⁸ And, with Buckingham as the patron, the picture would read as a dramatic demonstration of his own opinion concerning the importance of his contribution to contemporary culture in England; it could be thought of as a visual documentation of Buckingham's position *vis-à-vis* the arts.

Even though at the time of its creation, the subject matter of the picture was unequivocally identified as Buckingham presenting the arts to Charles and Henrietta Maria,²⁷⁹ by the time of the Commonwealth sale of Charles' possessions in 1649-51, the identification seems to have been slipping: it is listed as simply "A great peece of ye 9 Muses".²⁸⁰ It later became confused with other works by Honthorst.²⁸¹

Apollo and Diana is an enormous work, measuring 357 by 640 cm., or about twelve by twenty-one feet. It is also a complex composition based on several diagonal axes and containing dozens of figures on different picture-planes. The illumination is dramatic with highlights and shadows exaggerated in a manner typical of 'Gherardo delle Notti'. Colours are subordinated to lighting design, although the flashes of blue (in Diana's gown), red (in Mercury's shirt) and ochre (in Grammar's dress) enliven the atmosphere. The narrative consists of Mercury, wearing the Garter on his leg and with the features of Buckingham, leading a procession of figures symbolizing the Liberal Arts to pay homage to Apollo and Diana, who are seated on a cloud in the upper left corner and surrounded by attendants. The parade is headed by the personification of Grammar, on her knees and

²⁷⁸ White, 1982, 55. This interpretation would help explain the extra gifts to Honthorst: the King was still honouring the memory of his dead friend in impulsive ways.

²⁷⁹ It is listed in the 1638 catalogue of the royal pictures as such. See Oliver Millar, ed., *Abraham Van der Doort's Catalogue of the Collections of Charles I*, The Walpole Society 37 (London, 1958-60) 172; 179.

²⁸⁰ White, 1982, 54.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 54-55; Millar, 1954, 36.

holding a book; this is a likeness of the Duchess of Buckingham. Next comes Logic, Rhetoric, Astronomy in one group, and Geometry, Arithmetic and Music in another. They are accompanied by a black youth with a cross-staff. In the left foreground, beneath the royal cloud, allegorical figures of Ignorance and Envy are driven away by two naked boy *putti*, one blaring a trumpet and the other wielding a branding iron. Another boy pushes a goat, base passion, into oblivion. Above Apollo and Diana, with idealized features of King Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria receive the homage, Apollo stretching forward in anticipation and Diana, who wears a moon tiara, leaning back in awe. One of the attendant figures to the left of Diana is often identified as Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle (1599-1660). To the right, Neptune reclines in more clouds, with naiads in attendance. In the centre overhead and in the upper right of the picture, more *putti* scatter flowers and hold wreaths and trumpets as they accompany the procession.

As early as 1681, the picture was described as being like a court masque,²⁸² and Graham Parry has recently called it the action of a masque compressed into one moment.²⁸³ This feeling is even more pronounced in a preliminary drawing for the painting (Fig. 37) which gives the impression of costumed players lit by blasts of ignited flash-powder. Whether the work was commissioned by Charles or Buckingham, a connection with the masque would be appropriate; in fact, the dramatic *chiaroscuro* of Honthorst's style would very likely have brought this whole masque idea to mind. If so, Honthorst took it quite literally: there is a sense in the painting of a performance, but one being given by real people portrayed in the true Caravaggesque tradition—slightly fleshy, stocky, noisy-looking and almost sweating in the hot light. Oliver Millar has called the work oddly graceless, with a "rather engaging *gaucherie*,"²⁸⁴ a verdict which hints at the discomfort so often felt by historians at the idea that it was Buckingham who awakened Charles' interest in the arts. But once again, the experience is the evidence, and clearly there was no problem with depicting that kind of relationship.

²⁸² White, 1982, 54.

²⁸³ Parry, 1981, 227.

²⁸⁴ Millar, 1954, 39. This recalls the opinion of Horace Walpole who wrote "It is not a pleasing picture but it has the merit of resembling the dark and unnatural colouring of Guercino."

Nor was there any apparent hesitation in wanting a portrayal of the King and the Duke in a kind of private discourse, their body-language separating them from the busyness around them, as Apollo leans precipitously, imploringly towards Mercury, while Mercury, in turn, presses his whole body forward and raises his face as if to place his chin in Apollo's cupped hand. The fact that both wear less clothing than anyone else in the picture (except for the little *putti*) is appropriate enough for a mythical allegory. Interestingly, however, a recent cleaning of the painting revealed that, originally, the Mercury figure was more covered up (as in the preliminary sketch) but was redone to bare his left shoulder and chest as a mirror image of Apollo's bare right side. To read an explicit meaning into this would be perhaps excessive. Nevertheless, the image is there, and to present Charles and Buckingham in this shared shirtless fashion is to suggest a relationship between the two that was quite particular and intimate. Moreover, as Richard Wendorf has pointed out, even though the characteristics embodied by allegorical forms or motifs are normally abstract qualities and, therefore, shared by a variety of individuals or situations, the tendency in seventeenth-century allegory was to search for an individualized meaning for any device.²⁸⁵ In this sense, Honthorst and his patron were able, within the structure of allegory, to create something saturated with concern for individuality and individualized meaning, both in style and content.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Richard Wendorf, *The Elements of Life: biography and portrait-painting in Stuart and Georgian England* (Oxford, 1990) 95ff.

²⁸⁶ While in England, Honthorst painted a portrait of Charles I, now in the National Portrait Gallery, and a group portrait of Buckingham and his family (Fig.), now at Hampton Court Palace. The latter, presumably done for the King, shows the Duke, the Duchess, their daughter Mary (born 1623) and infant son George (born 1628). It is listed in the collection of Charles I, hanging above the chimney in his bed-chamber at Whitehall: "Done by Hunthirst...the Duke of Buckingham with his Ladie and two children" (Millar, 1958-60, 36). It became popularly established as a standard type of intimate family-group portraiture (White, 1982, 56).

vi) Other painters

During his relatively brief career, Buckingham was also associated with various other artists, all of them foreign or of foreign extraction.

Orazio Gentileschi (1563-1639), the Tuscan-born Roman who was one of the leading exponents of the dramatic realism in painting pioneered by Caravaggio,²⁸⁷ came to London in 1626,²⁸⁸ where he was, in Francis Haskell's words, "enthusiastically welcomed by Charles and the Duke of Buckingham."²⁸⁹ Eventually he became an unofficial court painter to the King and, especially, to Queen Henrietta Maria, for whose house at Greenwich he created a large allegorical ceiling painting, among other works.²⁹⁰ As Gentileschi had also worked for the Queen's mother, Marie de' Medici, in Paris earlier in 1626, it could be suggested that his invitation to England actually might have originated with Henrietta Maria. However, because at that time Henrietta Maria was well outside the power centre occupied by the King and the Duke alone, and since Gentileschi was furnished with lodgings at York House,²⁹¹ it appears more certain that the artist's invitation came from Buckingham and/or Charles.²⁹² For the grand saloon ceiling at the Duke's residence, Gentileschi painted allegories of the Nine Muses.²⁹³ But the piece most often cited as the chief example of Buckingham's patronage of Gentileschi is a picture of Mary Magdalen (Fig. 38), which hung in the drawing room outside Buckingham's bedchamber. A large canvas, it shows the penitent Magdalen alone and reclining on some flat rocks in front of a dark, overhanging entrance to a cave or grotto. Although the simple, single-figure composition and hyper-dramatic lighting may be reminiscent of the work of

²⁸⁷ R. Ward Bissell, *Orazio Gentileschi and the Poetic Tradition in Caravaggesque Painting* (University Park PA and London, 1981).

²⁸⁸ Anna Maria Crino, "The Date of Orazio Gentileschi's Arrival in London," *The Burlington Magazine* 109 (1967) 533.

²⁸⁹ Haskell, 1963, 178.

²⁹⁰ Hilary Maddicott, "The provenance of the 'Castle Howard' version of Orazio Gentileschi's 'Finding of Moses,'" *The Burlington Magazine* 140 (1998) 122.

²⁹¹ Portier, 1996, 66. The author says that £4000 was spent on the York House accommodations; such a large amount is characteristic of Buckingham's extravagance.

²⁹² This is also of the view of Betcherman, 1970, 255.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 255.

Gentileschi's mentor, Caravaggio, there is none of the psychological intensity so important in the latter's painting. This Magdalen gazes upward with a rather vacant expression. She leans her left elbow on a skull, a common *memento mori* device and toys with her hair, having casually allowed her robe to fall away from her breasts. A poetic mood may be created; an erotic one definitely is. Although the figure is correct in its anatomical proportion (and this is not always the case in Gentileschi's earlier works) it feels somewhat stiff and awkward in its pose. The colouring, on the other hand, is lush, and the *facture* slick. In this sense, the picture recalls R. Ward Bissell's observation that during his English period, the artist "consciously or not, attempted to compensate for the diminishing profundity of his paintings by an ostentatious display of technique."²⁹⁴

But perhaps the most controversial thing about Gentileschi's *Magdalen* is her price. An account to the Duke, endorsed by the ubiquitous Balthazar Gerbier, begins (*literatim*): "The somme of monnys Gentilesco hath receaved. The 12 of Sept. In Primis, for a Pitcure, onely a single figure beeinge a Magdalene: £300."²⁹⁵ The word 'onely' is revealing: Gerbier did not believe that a canvas with a single figure in it was worth such a large sum and further on in the account, he estimates its true market value at £50. No doubt, this petty-looking indignation stemmed partially from Gerbier-the-artists's jealousy. Still, the price of £300 was high for the time: at the Commonwealth sales of 1649-51, nine works by Gentileschi fetched a total of £600.²⁹⁶ Why such a premium was put on the *Magdalen* is unclear. It might have been simply Buckingham's typical profligacy with money. Or, if the picture was actually commissioned by the King as a gift for Buckingham, it may have reflected a strictly personal circumstantial evaluation of it. In any event, while the Duke could be flamboyantly generous, he could also be dilatory in bill-paying. Sainsbury cites a document in Gerbier's hand, undated but clearly post-1627, which says (*literatim*): "After his arrival he (Gentileschi) importunated the Duke so long that Mr. Indimion Porter was forcett to sollicit for him £500" and further "Afore the Duke went to Ré, the Duke tould me

²⁹⁴ R. Ward Bissell, "Orazio Gentileschi: Baroque without Rhetoric," *Art Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (1971) 283.

²⁹⁵ Sainsbury, 1859, 314; Portier, 1996, 66.

²⁹⁶ Portier, 1996, 66.

that Gentilesco squised out of his purs £400.”²⁹⁷ Presumably, much of this money was owed the artist for his decorations at York House, for there are only two paintings by him listed in the Buckingham inventories: one, the Magdalen, in the 1635 list and it, along with a Holy Family, in the 1649 Antwerp sale catalogue (both of identical dimensions). Whatever their referents, Gentileschi’s unpaid bills illustrate the often frustrating nature of artist-patron relationships at the time: painters were praised and flattered one day and treated like common tradesmen the next.

Another artist connected with Buckingham is Daniel Mijtens (c. 1590-c. 1647).²⁹⁸ A portraitist born in Delft, he was working in London by 1618. According to Haskell, he was invited to England by the Earl of Arundel.²⁹⁹ He became the leading court portrait-painter of the 1620’s but upon Van Dyck’s arrival on the scene in 1632, he was soon eclipsed by the younger artist’s dazzling skill in portraiture, and returned to Holland in 1634.³⁰⁰ That he was held in high esteem by both kings James and Charles is attested to by his being granted in 1624 a pension for life of £50 a year, and by his being paid £120 in 1625 for a copy of Titian’s “great Venus.”³⁰¹ As late as March, 1634, he was paid for a number of pictures painted for the crown,³⁰² and, although Mytens is chiefly known for his various likenesses of Charles and Henrietta Maria, he was also patronized by Buckingham.

A portrait of the Duke (Fig. 39), dated 1626, shows him in a characteristically magnificent costume of elaborately white-embroidered silk, the jacket with dramatically

²⁹⁷ Sainsbury, 1859, 310-16.

²⁹⁸ In English usage, the artist’s name is usually spelled ‘Mytens.’

²⁹⁹ Haskell, 1989, 224.

³⁰⁰ Millar, 1972, 12-13; 24-28. Mytens maintained connections with England and his English patrons, however, acting as an agent and buyer in Holland for the Earl of Arundel. In 1637, a letter to the Earl’s secretary reports the artists’s going to Amsterdam for pictures by Dürer, Holbein and Raphael: “a woman’s picture...of Andrea del Sarto as they saye, but wee hould it too be of Titciano, at 600 gild...A Holbein, a foot high, 300gild. A Madonna of Albert Dürer about the same highte at 150 gild...A picture of Raphael which is held to be of his hand, but wee hould it not to be, and is held at 60 gild.” Cited in O. Ter Kuile, “Daniel Mijtens: ‘His Majesty’s Picture-Drawer,’” *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 20 (1969) 36-37.

³⁰¹ Sainsbury, 1859, 356-58.

slashed sleeves, the breeches voluminously pleated. He wears a great blue ribbon around his neck with its pendant 'George,' one of the regalia of the Order of the Garter. His square-fronted lace collar stands stiff and spreads wide in the manner of the day. His left arm rests on a table on which a plumed hat sits and in his right hand is a piece of paper bearing his name and title of Lord Admiral. This is the picture which Oliver Millar considers an example of "the marked emancipation in Mytens' grasp of figure design" around 1625-26, and which he calls an accomplished, original and elegant piece.³⁰³ It is hard to disagree with this assessment; Mytens seems to have at least partially abandoned or transcended his earlier aversion to grandeur and bourgeois portrayals.³⁰⁴ And looking at the Buckingham portrait, it is also possible to see a forerunner of the later work of his arch-rival Van Dyck, many of whose most prominent portraits are, in Francis Haskell's words "essentially brilliant reinterpretations of the conventions of state portraiture as devised by Mytens and other earlier artists."³⁰⁵ Furthermore, a possible personal connection between Mytens and Van Dyck is hinted at by Hookham Carpenter, who suggests that the reason Van Dyck did not remain in England longer in 1621 was that both Buckingham himself, and Prince Charles under his influence, expressed admiration for Mytens and continued to patronize him.³⁰⁶ In which case, the rather precipitous departure of Mytens after Van Dyck's return to London in 1632 can be seen as part a long-standing rivalry between the two.

Associated with Mytens is another artist of the same generation who also portrayed Buckingham, Cornelius Jonson (or Janssen, Janson, Johnson) (1593-1661). Born in London of Flemish refugees, he trained as a painter in Holland before returning to London about 1618. Ellis Waterhouse has discerned in Jonson's head-and-shoulders portraits the beginnings of a native English tradition and that Jonson was the first to recognize "as only an Englishman could, that shy and retiring streak in the English temper."³⁰⁷ While such

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 326.

³⁰⁴ Parry, 1981, 220.

³⁰⁵ Haskell, 1989, 224.

³⁰⁶ Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 10.

³⁰⁷ Waterhouse, 1953, 36.

observations may be chalked up to patriotic wishful-thinking, it is fair to say that Jonson was particularly sensitive to the nuances of individual psychology and that his faces, even in full-length pieces where the body often looks laboured and inelegant, reveal the characters of their owners to a surprising degree.

There are three portraits of Buckingham attributed to Jonson and presumably commissioned by him. One is dated 1618-19, one 1620 and the third 1623-24. The earliest of the three (Fig. 40) is a full-length in which the Marquess is still beardless. He is attired in black; around his neck and wrists are fine filigree lace ruff and cuffs of the single-layer kind; also visible are the pendant 'George' of the Garter and a sumptuously decorated sword-belt. He carries a pair of embroidered gloves in his left hand; his right rests on his hip. The pose is very like that in the earlier portrait by William Larkin, except that Buckingham is facing to the viewer's right. More reminiscent of the Larkin is the facial expression: a bright-eyed glance above a slight, sweet smile in a smooth, untroubled countenance. But whereas the Larkin Buckingham looks boyishly young for his twenty-four years, the Jonson gives off the air of a contentedly self-aware and solidly successful twenty-five year old, as secure in his position as in the looks that got him there. Jonson has cleverly set his face of youthful success over a relatively simple, dark outfit and against a plain dark neutral background.

One of the earliest likenesses of a bearded Buckingham is found in Jonson's full-length portrait from about 1620 (Fig. 41), within about a year of Van Dyck's allegorical representation of Villiers as Adonis. Here again, Buckingham is wearing a dark costume, this time of a gold-on-black pattern, highlighted by a white multi-layered ruff at the neck and a scarlet-lined cloak draped over his extended left arm. His legs are encased in silver hose above high, rumpled kidskin boots. The pose is odd: he looks out at the viewer while clutching a baton in his right hand and pointing out of the picture with his left. The meaning of this is unclear (if it were not so inappropriate, a father ordering a delinquent child to his room for punishment might be one interpretation.) For the look on Buckingham's face is quite different from the one in the earlier Jonson portrait. Here, the eyes are harder, more calculating and the smile is gone; this is a portrait of a man in power. Unfortunately, the

overall effect of the dominant male is somewhat spoiled by Jonson's clumsy understanding of anatomy. As in the Larkin, the bodily proportions are all wrong and the legs—the famous Villiers limbs—do not seem to belong to the same organism. Moreover, the effect is not forgivably decorative as it is in the 1616 work; rather, the legs simply look bony and awkward.³⁰⁸

The third Jonson portrait (Fig. 42) is dated 1623-24 and is a half-length of the Duke in the full, formal Garter regalia: chain, sash and robes; gold, blue, red and silver. The ruff around his neck is even more elaborately tiered than in the previous example. His beard and hair style are both reminiscent of those in the Van Dyck allegory, although more naturalistically dark rather than mythically golden-brown. But it is the expression on Buckingham's face which fascinates. If Jonson was indeed a master of individual psychology, it is evident here, as he portrays the Duke as lord of all he surveys, a superior creature with just a hint of disdain for the lesser mortals now admiring him. Long gone is the barely suppressed smile of youthful self-delight; absent too is the edgy, overly serious stare of the newly-empowered. Here is the man who rules England, and knows it.

Conclusion

Buckingham's patronage of painters was ongoing and wide-ranging. From early on in his career at court, he commissioned pictures, almost always images of himself. In this sense, as seen in the works by Larkin, Mytens and Jonson, his behaviour lay well within the English tradition of virtually equating painting with portraiture. He sometimes, however, seems to have been interested in instigating a break with the accepted structure of court portraiture, as in the allegorical works produced by Van Dyck and Honthorst. Whether these images conformed to his intentions or tastes remains unclear, and so to call Buckingham an artistic innovator or risk-taker in the league, say, of some of the Roman patrons of Caravaggio, is probably an overstatement. He did possess, on the other hand, an eye for and understanding of, the main trends in painting of his day. He commissioned work from Rubens at his most flamboyantly Baroque period and from Honthorst and

³⁰⁸ Cammell, 1939, 373, says somewhat puzzlingly: "No other portrait shows the exquisite symmetry of the Duke's figure so admirably."

Gentileschi while both were still working to transmit the 'new' style of Caravaggio throughout Europe. Such patronage served to help bring English ideas about art into the mainstream of contemporary continental thinking, and that Buckingham was aware of his responsibility for this is made evident by Honthorst's picture of him presenting the liberal arts to the monarchy. Conversely, his activity simultaneously reinforced the pre-eminence of the 'English genre' of portraiture. This aesthetic conservatism is hardly surprising, since Buckingham's aims in patronage and politics were virtually identical: self-promotion and image-maintenance at the highest levels. What better way to achieve these ends than through a continuous, spectacular flow of various representations of the most beautiful, successful person in the country?

CHAPTER 3

BUCKINGHAM: THE ART OF COLLECTING

There are two fundamental questions about the phenomenon of collecting. Why do people collect? And, why has the collecting of certain classes of things been seen as more worthwhile than others? Any answer to the first question necessarily invokes basic human psychology and involves a discussion of such concepts as whether the hoarding tendency inherent in mankind stems from insecurity and a fear of destruction or from aggression and a desire to deprive, and therefore, destroy others. And, second, does an innate 'property instinct' exist or is ownership a social construction?

While such general issues are beyond the scope of this thesis, a consideration of the second question—why the collecting of certain objects, in this case art, has come to be a privileged activity—is obviously relevant. Theorizing in this area is often socio-economic in nature. Joseph Alsop, for example, sees art collecting as an “unceasing world eddy” of works from place to place, moving from where “power declines or money grows short, or order dissolves into disorder” and redepositing the art objects where “power is great, money is plentiful, and order reigns.”¹ For Alsop, the eddy will continue as long as collecting makes artworks ends in themselves, suitable as “ornaments of powerful states; as trophies of conquest; as ancient families’ proof of grandeur; as ancient grandeur’s substitutes for new plutocracies; and...as triple-starred attractions of famous art museums.”² This kind of view of collecting echoes many seventeenth-century

¹ Joseph Alsop, *The Rare Art Traditions* (New York, 1982) 452.

² Ibid. Alsop might have added to his list: “As socially impressive components of personal investment strategies.”

pronouncements on the subject: Scamozzi equated the possession of picture galleries with high social standing; Peacham said that the owning of art was the province of royalty, or of those with princely minds; Burton claimed collecting art as a cure for melancholy, the generic disease of the nobility.³

Buckingham's collecting has generally been characterized in somewhat similar terms. Broadly speaking, it was a part of the great movements of art and churning of collections that occurred in the seventeenth century; in specific terms, it was motivated by his desire to prove and to show off his new status. Buckingham's paintings ornamented his power; they were trophies of his conquest of the aristocracy and the monarchy. He is said to have acquired his collection, in the words of Denys Sutton, "quickly and recklessly."⁴ Jonathan Brown believes that Buckingham regarded collecting as "one among other attributes of noble status,"⁵ while Keith Aldrich suggests that, for the Duke, collecting was a matter of prestige as well as "competition for first place on all counts in the affections of the art-loving king (Charles)."⁶

While all of these observations are true to a greater or lesser degree (and Buckingham's collection confers on him what all art collections give to their owners—in the words of Krzysztof Pomian: "a certain prestige...since they serve as proofs of their good taste, of their considerable intellectual curiosity, or even of their wealth and generosity, if not all these qualities at the same time"⁷) they do not attempt to explain how and why the possession of certain objects confers prestige.⁸ This happens, Pomian believes, because these objects occupy the space and mediate the distance between the visible and the invisible, the known and the unknown, the temporal and the eternal.⁹ Pomian analyzes the

³ Cited in Jeffrey M. Muller, *Rubens: The Artist as Collector* (Princeton, 1989) 55.

⁴ Denys Sutton, "Early Patrons and Collectors" *Apollo* 114 (1981) 288.

⁵ Jonathan Brown, *Kings & Connoisseurs: Collecting Art in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Princeton, 1995) 24.

⁶ Aldrich, 1991, xxxv.

⁷ Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice 1500-1800*, E. Wiles-Porter, trans. (Cambridge, 1990) 10.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 7-44.

various origins of art collections in human culture: funeral objects, where the items mediate between the living (visible) and the dead (invisible); sacred offerings, which link the mortal (visible) and the divine (invisible); gifts and booty, which attach the nearby (visible) to the distant (invisible); relics and icons, which join the secular present (visible) to the sacred past (invisible); and royal treasures, which maintain the bond between current power (visible) and long-standing tradition (invisible). Since the invisible is, by definition, that which cannot be reached or mastered in the way that the visible normally can, it assumes a privileged position in mythology, religion, philosophy, and even in science. Men, too, exist in a hierarchy based on a relationship to the invisible or visible. At the top are those figures who represent only the invisible (gods, ancestors, society-as-a-whole). At the bottom are, in Pomian's terms, "thing-men" with only a tenuously indirect link with it. In the middle are those who partake of both the visible and invisible (from emperors, popes and kings down to local authorities).¹⁰ And, since certain art objects seem to take on meaning by blending the transient and the lasting, the very creators of these works become thought of as possessing a privileged position in the visible/invisible equation. Thus, for Pomian, all those in the upper echelons of society, or who aspired thereto, were thus *forced* (Pomian's word) to do the same and to "make the highest bid possible for objects, which included not just the works of artists but the artists themselves, whose price was measured in degrees of meaning, and this meaning was guaranteed if they could succeed in engaging artists and in surrounding themselves with their works."¹¹

Pomian's theory accounts for the prestige value of art and art collecting, rather than simply restating it, and contrasts with conclusions such as that reached by Alsop, namely that "All truly admirable and disinterested art collectors gather their works of art because they love them."¹² Whether it can be reconciled with Giddens' ideas is another matter. At first glance, when Pomian says that monarchs and aristocrats are 'forced' to become art collectors, he seems to be acknowledging the constant constraining influence of cultural structure on individual behaviour that comprises half of Giddens' theoretical equation.

¹⁰ Ibid., 32.

¹¹ Ibid., 37.

¹² Alsop, 1982, 77.

But what, if anything, does Pomian say about structure's simultaneous enabling of innovative actions by individuals? "Individual personalities and varying degrees of sensitivity only come into play if the organization of the society provides opportunities for expressing individual differences."¹³ That little 'if' seems to separate Pomian irreconcilably from Giddens. But there is a glimmer of compatibility when he speaks about the artist as creator of works which simultaneously represent things visible in the here and now and, because of art's long-lasting quality, things that eventually become invisible. While this is true of all genres of art, it is especially true of self-representations—portraits and heroic deeds. Therefore, anyone aspiring to everlasting life and glory is forced to realize that only artists can render fame lasting. So those occupying the upper echelons of a society where "the invisible was seen less as an eternal phenomenon than a future one"¹⁴ really are forced to nurture the arts and in so doing, says Pomian, their personal preferences "showed through within the confines imposed on them by their positions."¹⁵ It is not quite Giddens' energetic symbiosis of individual action and cultural structure, but there is an acknowledgement that the inevitable is not necessarily the immutable. Art patronage and collecting may be necessary to maintaining status and power, but patrons and collectors, through the choices they make about art, continuously change the way that power looks.

In short, while the collecting of things may be said to be a widespread activity among human beings, certain people collect certain things. And, from time to time, a particular collection attains a size and shape that separates it from others and effects a redefining of the concept of collecting as hitherto understood by contemporary society.

The practice of collecting in the early seventeenth century

In the western Christian tradition, the *raison d'être* of collections can be deduced from the Bible. In I Kings, 5 and 6, the abundant decoration and ornamentation of the temple of Solomon are listed in detail, while in II Kings, 20: 13, the collection of King

¹³ Pomian, 1990, 33.

¹⁴ Ibid., 37.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Hezekiah is described thus:

“And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.”

But biblical precedents notwithstanding, collecting things for the sake of having a collection is behaviour instinctive to human beings; even people who claim not to be are almost always collectors, savers, of something. Today, the realm of ‘collectibles’ is limitless, and serious-minded people amass collections of everything from Barbie dolls to Fabergé eggs.

This catholicity of collecting is, of course, not new. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, people were as wide-ranging in their hunting and gathering of objects to form a collection as they have ever been. In fact, it is in this period that the patterns and procedures of the modern collecting mentality were formed. One of the most succinct articulations of the aim of the serious collector comes from Francis Bacon in 1594:

“First, the collecting of a most perfect and general library, wherein whosoever the wit of man hath heretofore committed books of worth...may be made contributory to your wisdom. Next, a spacious, wonderful garden, wherein whatsoever plant the sun of divers climate, or the earth out of divers moulds, either wild or by the culture of man brought forth, may be... set and cherished: this garden to be built about with rooms to stable in all rare beasts and to cage in all rare birds; with two lakes adjoining, the one of fresh water the other of salt, for like variety of fishes. And so you may have in small compass a model of the universal nature made private. The third, a goodly, huge cabinet, wherein whatsoever the hand of man by exquisite art or engine has made rare in stuff, form or motion; whatsoever singularity, chance and the shuffle of things hath produce; whatsoever Nature has wrought in things that want life and may be kept; shall be sorted and

included. The fourth such a still-house, so furnished with mills, instruments, furnaces, and vessels as may be a palace fit for a philosopher's stone." 16

A more detailed description of the components of a proper collection, and one that is perhaps more relevant to a discussion of art collecting, is found in a 1565 treatise entitled *Inscriptiones vel Tituli Theatri Amplissimii...* by Samuel Quiccheberg (1529-67), a Flemish doctor who served at the court of Albrecht V of Bavaria. In a discussion of Quiccheberg's little-known work, Eva Schulz explains how the sixteenth-century author identified the five main fields of collection, which he called 'classes,' of the whole of the universe.¹⁷ In his first chapter, Quiccheberg enumerates the classes. The first is sacred objects, paintings and artistic works, especially portraits, which demonstrate the genealogy of the collector both in society at large and in the realm of collecting itself. The second class contains items produced by man from natural materials, including sculpture, jewellery, coins, as well as what are now known as products of craftsmen and artisans. Third is the class consisting of organic materials—animals, plants, etc. The fourth class comprises man-made tools, machines, games and clothing. Finally, Quiccheberg's fifth class returns to art, being a somewhat ambiguous description of certain products of distinguished artists, seemingly engravings, emblems and the like, but also again stressing portraiture both of the collector's family and of other famous people.¹⁸

Only in his second chapter does Quiccheberg comment on the importance of a library within a collection, although he does so in detail and creates a hierarchy of classes of books to be collected.¹⁹

While Bacon and Quiccheberg codified and classified the contents of a collection somewhat differently, with the latter privileging art over nature (an important distinction,

16 Cited in Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, eds., *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 1985) 1.

17 Eva Schulz, "Notes on the history of collecting and museums in the light of selected literature of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century," *Journal of the History of Collections* 2 no. 2 (1990) 205-18.

18 *Ibid.*, 207-08.

19 *Ibid.*, 206.

certainly), they both stress that the purpose of collecting is to encapsulate the known universe. The sixteenth- and seventeenth-century 'cabinet of curiosities' or 'closet of rarities' or *Wunderkammer* or *Kunstammer* (which two terms were, according to Schulz, first used in print by Quiccheberg)²⁰ would contain selected items reflecting all aspects of human and natural existence. The growing desire to amass such collections is explained by Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor as resulting from the growing preoccupation of Renaissance learning with the natural sciences; the humanist revival of interest in the products of classical antiquity; the discovery of the New World and the opening up of contacts with Africa and Asia with their concomitant fascination with exotic and primitive objects; the simultaneous expansion of curiosity about formerly overlooked elements of western culture such as obsolete tools and peasant crafts; and the increased interest in the feats of technical manufacturing virtuosity of the time.²¹

In fact, there is more than a small element of self-fascination and self-congratulation in the activities of contemporary collectors, who became known as gentlemen *virtuosi*, an Italian term that distinguished them, not always flatteringly, from their rivals, the professional scholars. The first use of the term in English is by Henry Peacham in 1634, when he wrote of classical antiquities in the edition of *The Compleat Gentleman* dedicated to the son of the Earl of Arundel: "The possession of such rarities by reason of their dead costlinesse, doth properly belong to Princes, or rather to princely minds...Such as are skilled in them are by the Italians termed *Virtuosi*."²² And, while one of the attractive features of a 'cabinet of curiosities' was, as Impey and MacGregor note, "the all-encompassing nature of its programme, which accommodated all manner of ambitions and a wide range of budgets,"²³ the majority of *virtuoso* collectors were of 'princely' means.

None more so than the Duke of Buckingham, who became perhaps the supreme example of the type. Although Buckingham's collecting activities focussed mainly on

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 208.

²¹ Impey and MacGregor, 1985, 2-3.

²² Peacham, 1962, 117. The origin and evolution of the concept of the *virtuoso* in England is detailed in Walter E. Houghton, Jr., "The English Virtuoso in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 nos. 1 and 2 (1942) 51-73; 190-219.

²³ Impey and MacGregor, 1985, 3.

works of art and reflect Arthur MacGregor's observation that "the earliest noble collectors in Britain were tuned to the fine arts rather than to rarities and curiosities of art and nature,"²⁴ he did, nevertheless, concern himself with acquiring a broader collection of the kind recommended by Bacon and Quiccheberg. To this end, he took into his employ in 1623 a non-princely connoisseur and traveller, John Tradescant the elder, whom he commissioned to act as his eyes and hands in the search for 'rarities' abroad. A letter written in Buckingham's name by Tradescant in 1625 reads (*literatim*):

"I have Bin Commanded By My Lord to Let Yr Worshipe Understand that It is H Graces Plesure that you should In His Name Deall withe All Marchants from All Places But Espetially the Virgine & Bermewde & Newfownd Land Men that when they Into those Parts that they will take Care to furnishe His Grace Withe All manner of Beasts & fowells and Birds Alyve or If Not Withe Heads Horns Beaks Clawes Skins Fethers Slipes or Seeds Plants Trees or Shrubs Also from Gine or Binne or Senego Turkye Espetially to Sir Thomas Rowe Who is Leger At Constantinoble Also to Captain Northe to the New Plantation towards the Amasonians With All thes fore Resyted Rarities & Also from the East Indies Withe Shells Stones Bones Egge-shells Withe What Cannot Come Alive..."²⁵

Tradescant added to Buckingham's collections while enlarging his own; after the Duke's assassination in 1628, he and his family settled in Lambeth in a house-cum-museum known as 'The Ark.' The Tradescant collection was bequeathed to Elias Ashmole, founder in 1686 of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Thus, as Houghton notes, the association of a "born collector...with a sympathetic and wealthy patron...resulted in the first museum of natural history in London...the exemplar of all others in England."²⁶

Buckingham also acquired antiquities. His collection of Greek and Roman work

²⁴ Arthur MacGregor, "The Cabinet of Curiosities in Seventeenth-Century Britain," in Impey and MacGregor, 1985, 147.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 1149-50.

²⁶ Houghton, 1942, 69.

was a major one, its components distributed among his many houses, with the bulk kept at Chelsea House, a building no longer existing but which stood at the time in the far suburbs of London.²⁷ His interest in classical relics probably stemmed more from their value as rarities than from their manifestation of humanist admiration of the achievements of the ancients. And, of course, since his rival, the Earl of Arundel, was noted for his knowledge of, and taste in, antique art, the Duke's own involvement in the field can be seen as pure competitiveness.²⁸ Buckingham's collection, according to David Howarth, began as a result of his familiarity with the sculpture gallery at Arundel House, although there is only one documented visit by the Duke to the Earl's residence.²⁹

Clearly, competition did exist, and Buckingham enjoyed it more than Arundel. Both employed many of the same people to search out and gather material in the Mediterranean region, most notably Sir Thomas Roe, who, during the 1620's, was English Ambassador in Constantinople. Roe, who had travelled up the Amazon and through India and Persia, was a sophisticated and civilized man, who shared Arundel's fundamental belief that classical art had a moralizing and inspirational effect on anyone who came into contact with it.³⁰ When Buckingham asked Roe to act as his 'agent' too, Arundel was understandably irritated, since the Ambassador, for political reasons, had to give the Duke first priority on finds that the Earl coveted.³¹

Buckingham's initial foray into the antique art market came in 1624 with a letter to Roe:

"My Lord Ambassador,

I thank you for the advertisements you send me of the passages of all things in those parts and for the readiness to do me any pleasure you can during your employment there, which incites me to make use of your kindness in this particular. That if you find among those people (who prize

²⁷ British Library, *Add. MSS.* 18914.

²⁸ Lockyer, 1981, 410.

²⁹ Howarth, 1985, 197.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

³¹ Sainsbury, 1859, 280-90.

not those rarities of art that are of great esteem in other countries) any statues of excellent workmanship...to make choice thereof and cause them to be stayed..."³²

In 1626, another letter to Roe spells out Buckingham's tastes more precisely, this being necessary, presumably, because Roe had been forwarding pieces which the Duke did not like:

"I find myself obliged to you for your diligence in search of pieces of antiquities...desiring a continuance of your respect unto me in this kind, with this caution only, that you lay not out much money upon any alabaster figure pieces, unless they be figures of exquisite curiosity; for your antique masters (as I am informed) never wrought upon alabaster. Neither am I so fond of antiquity (as you rightly conjecture) to court it in a deformed or misshapen stone, but where you shall meet beauty with antiquity together in a statue, I shall not stand upon any cost your judgment shall value it at."³³

This letter can be read as proof of Buckingham's superficiality; that he only liked "smooth and well-polished statues"³⁴ or that he was not interested in the artistically incomplete but historically significant pieces of sculpture that gave Arundel so much satisfaction.³⁵ But on the other hand, it also bespeaks a well-informed discrimination in matters of antique art.

Whatever the pleasures and annoyances of the competition between Buckingham and Arundel via Roe, it was the Earl who obtained the final satisfaction. For, in the summer of 1628, Roe left Constantinople with a ship laden with manuscripts, coins, and dozens of statues for Buckingham. But the Duke was killed before the ship arrived and the sculptures went instead to Arundel.³⁶

It was in the realm of painting, however, that Buckingham's collector's heart lay.

³² Howarth, 1985, 197-98.

³³ Ibid., 198.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Parry, 1981, 139.

³⁶ Howarth, 1985, 95.

Here, too, is manifested most dramatically his rivalry with Arundel, which continues to play out today. Roger Lockyer, the Duke's biographer, claims that "where paintings were concerned, his own collection was incomparably superior to that of Arundel."³⁷ David Howarth, in his study of the life of Arundel, demurs, adding that "there are few art historians who would agree with this view."³⁸

Before examining the formation and composition of the group of paintings associated with Buckingham, it is necessary to look briefly at the condition of art collecting in England at the turn of the seventeenth century.

Collections of art and antiquities have always been part of the trappings of aristocracy everywhere. In England, for example, Henry of Blois, brother of King Stephen (b. 1097, r. 1135-54) brought a number of classical pieces into the country and displayed them as a collection in his palace at Winchester.³⁹ During the early Tudor period, powerful men like Thomas Wolsey (1471-1530) and the Duke of Northumberland (1502-53) patronized artists and architects as part of their socio-political agendas. The Earl of Leicester (1532-1588) is known to have acquired some Italian paintings in the 1580s,⁴⁰ and during the reign of Elizabeth, the existence of a group of courtier-collectors is remarked upon by Richard Haydocke in the preface to his 1598 translation of the art theories of Lomazzo (*literatim*):

"...a diligent observation of the excellency of Ancient workes; indeavouring by all meanes to purchase them, and refusing no coste when they may bee had. In which point some of our Nobility, and diverse private Gentlemen, have very well acquitted themselves; as may appeare, by their Galleries carefully furnished, with the excellent monuments of sundry famous ancient Masters, both Italian and German."⁴¹

But it was really after the accession of James I in 1603 that the activity of English

³⁷ Lockyer, 1981, 410.

³⁸ Howarth, 1985, 245.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁰ Smuts, 1987, 119.

⁴¹ Richard Haydocke, *A tracte containing the Artes of curious Paintinge Carvinge and Buildinge written first in Italian by Jo. Paul Lomatius...* (Oxford, 1598) preface.

collectors increased exponentially. An alliance with France in that year and, more importantly, peace with Spain in 1604, along with what Malcolm Smuts has called "a more flexible attitude on the part of the Vatican" in its efforts to re-convert Protestants,⁴² encouraged a more leisurely and more sympathetic experiencing of continental culture by English aristocratic 'tourists' than had been possible for decades. Such exposure to Renaissance and Classical art whetted acquisitive appetites⁴³ while it also developed considerable connoisseurship, especially among the ranks of diplomats and ambassadors like Wotton and Carleton.

After 1610, purchases of 'foreign' art reached a substantial scale due in large part to the interest and influence in collecting shown by the royal family. Unlike King James himself, his wife Queen Anne of Denmark and their eldest son, Prince Henry, were noted for their artistic leanings.⁴⁴ Henry's first recorded acquisition of a picture is in 1610, when he was fifteen; the work was a gift from the Earl of Arundel.⁴⁵ By the time of his premature death in 1612, he possessed a "gallery of very fine pictures, ancient and modern, the larger part brought out of Venice,"⁴⁶ which François Portier has estimated were worth at the time £1000.⁴⁷ (It is reasonable to assume that his mother's and brother's galleries had some influence on the later collection of Charles I, if only because he inherited the contents of both of them.⁴⁸ And, according to Timothy Wilks, Charles maintained the

⁴² Smuts, 1987, 118.

⁴³ Lawrence Stone, "The Market for Italian Art," *Past and Present* 16 (1959) 92-94.

⁴⁴ The prince's collections are discussed in Strong, 1986a, esp. 184-94 and in Timothy Wilks, *The Court Culture of Prince Henry and his Circle 1603-13*, D.Phil. thesis (Oxford University, 1987). Queen Anne's cultural involvement is examined in Barroll, 1991, esp. 200-8.

⁴⁵ Strong, 1986a, 188. The author claims a seminal influence of Arundel, who encouraged Henry "to emulate the courts of Europe regarding a collection of works of art as an essential attribute of princely magnificence."

⁴⁶ Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, XII, 106.

⁴⁷ Portier, 1996, 54-55. Henry's collection of medals and antique coins are assessed at over £3000.

⁴⁸ Some historians see Henry's influence on Charles as key. David Howarth tells of Henry's being presented in 1611 with fifteen table bronzes by Giambologna, one of which, a horse, was coveted by the ten-year-old Charles. Henry rebuffed his brother, but "the sight of these child-size bronzes was a critical moment in awakening an appreciation of sculpture in the young boy." David Howarth, "Charles I, Sculpture and Sculptors," in MacGregor, 1989, 74.

unity of Henry's collection for some years after his brother's demise.⁴⁹)

By 1612, it was possible for Henry Peacham to list England's principal aristocratic patrons of art as (*literatim*): "The Right-Honourable the Earles of Arundell, Worcester, South-hampton, Pembroke, Suffolke and Northampton, with many Knights and Gentlemen."⁵⁰ Absent from this list is Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset (1587-1645), favourite and lover of King James until his replacement by Buckingham in 1614-15. From 1612 until his fall from favour, Somerset was an active collector of art—an indication that even those who aspired to high status recognized the importance of collecting as proof of a princely temperament, or who, in Pomian's terms, were forced to acquire art. Although Somerset's holdings⁵¹ never rivalled those later amassed by Buckingham, they were substantial, being 116 pieces, according to a contemporary inventory,⁵² and worth over £1000.⁵³ Moreover, the collection implicated many of the same people involved in the creation of Buckingham's collection, most notably Sir Dudley Carleton as agent and the Earl of Arundel as competitor.⁵⁴ And Somerset also shared Buckingham's predilection for Venetian art; shipments of works from Carleton to the Earl in 1615 comprised fifteen pictures—six Tintoretos, five Veroneses, two Bassanos, a Titian and a Schiavone.⁵⁵ Thus, the model of King James' favourite as a lover of Venetian art was established, although the fact that James gave Somerset's pictures to Arundel rather than to Buckingham is instructive. It shows, first, that Arundel was still high in the king's esteem; it also implies that young Villiers had not yet grasped the necessity of forming a collection nor yet

⁴⁹ Wilks, 1987, 162-63.

⁵⁰ Henry Peacham, *The Gentleman's Exercise* (London, 1612) 7-8.

⁵¹ The complexities of Somerset's purchases and the sudden dispersal of his collection are detailed in Timothy Wilks, "The picture collection of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset (1587-1645) reconsidered," *Journal of the History of Collections*, 1, no. 2 (1989) 167-77.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 173.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 170.

⁵⁴ Carleton makes his first recorded appearance as art dealer in 1612 and Arundel was given Somerset's confiscated art by King James in 1615. See Wilks, 1989, 167ff.

⁵⁵ Howarth, 1985, 60-61; Wilks, 1989, 170-71. The authors present different scenarios for the chronology of possession of the fifteen works: Howarth says that they were not included in the 'confiscation' inventory; Wilks shows that nine of them were listed therein and the other six noted *en masse*.

decided to make art collecting part of his own agenda.

Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel (1585-1646), is the person to whom Buckingham is most often compared by art historians.⁵⁶ The comparison is usually unfavourable to Buckingham: Roy Strong says: "Arundel...saw his mission in promoting an Italianate-classical aesthetic revolution" while the Duke's interest in art was based solely on a desire to "compensate for lack of lineage."⁵⁷ Jonathan Brown reiterates this idea, calling Arundel "steeped in knowledge and imbued with the love of art" and Buckingham someone who regarded art as "one among other attributes of noble status."⁵⁸

In any case, Arundel, the man who has been called the founder of modern collecting in England⁵⁹ has always appealed to scholars and historians. Part of the reason for this lies in the *persona* of the Earl and in the way he projected it. Sir Edward Waller records a contemporary observation (*literatim*):

"His Countenance was Majestical and grave...he was of stately Presence and Gate, so that any Man that saw him, though in never so ordinary Habit, could not but conclude him to be a great Person, his garb and Fashion drawing more Observation than did the rich Apparel of others; so that it was a common Saying of the late Earl of Carlisle, Here comes the Earl of Arundel in his plain Stuff and trunk Hose, and his Beard in his Teeth, that looks more like a Noble Man than any of us."⁶⁰

The alleged opinion of Carlisle—a friend of Buckingham's—is clearly a backhanded compliment and one echoed by Clarendon, who, though he thought Arundel to be cold, miserly and incompetent, described him thus:

"It cannot be denied that he had in his person, in his aspect, and countenance, the appearance of a great man...he wore and affected a habit

⁵⁶ See Nicholas Penny, ed., *Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel* (Oxford, 1985); Howarth, 1985, esp. 189-203; White, 1995; David Jaffé et al., "The Earl and Countess of Arundel: Renaissance Collectors," *Apollo* 144 (August, 1996) 3-35.

⁵⁷ Strong, 1986, 57.

⁵⁸ Brown, 1995, 24.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶⁰ Cited in Howarth, 1985, 221-22.

very different from that of the time, such as men had only beheld in pictures of the most considerable men; all of which drew the eyes of most, and the reverence of many, towards him, as the image and representative of the primitive nobility, and native gravity of the nobles, when they had been most venerable.”⁶¹

In short, a plain manly figure, Arundel was a ‘heart of oak’ Englishman, very different from Buckingham, the beautiful favourite in his ‘rich suits.’ For this reason, posterity has preferred to assign to the former a pre-eminence in discussions of artistic taste and connoisseurship in early Stuart England.

Although Arundel was only seven years older than Buckingham, there appears to have been what today is called a ‘generation gap’ between them. But this is something of an illusion, as the Earl’s public image as an icon of the old nobility—to contrast favourably with the ultra-fashionable, newly-minted aristocrats like Buckingham—was an assumed pose and part of a life-long strategy on his part to regain what he saw as his rightful position and title in the English hierarchy, namely that of premier noble in the kingdom, the Duke of Norfolk.⁶² His grandfather, the last Duke, had been executed in 1572 by Queen Elizabeth for secretly wooing Mary, Queen of Scots and the title extinguished. Arundel was obsessed with the desire to see it restored. This constant importuning was no doubt one of the reasons for his lack of sustained success at the court of James I (although James did restore the earldom of Arundel to him) and for his off and on relationship with Charles I.⁶³

More relevant to the subject of art collecting, however, is the conclusion that Arundel’s fixation on regaining the status of duke was at least in part responsible for his ‘love’ of art. That is to say that far from being a pure aesthete or a high-minded enhancer of culture, Arundel was using art to further his personal agenda of social and political self-advancement. Nowhere is this more evident than in his relationship with Buckingham

⁶¹ Clarendon, 1840, I, 24.

⁶² Clarendon called his demeanour “affected” and superficial and said that Arundel “thought no other part of history considerable, but what related to his own family.” (Clarendon, 1840, I, 24.)

⁶³ When he was leaving England for the last time in 1644, Arundel begged Charles to restore the dukedom. Charles, in a gesture all too typically snide or inept, dubbed him Earl of Norfolk. Arundel never lived to see the duchy finally restored to his grandson by Charles II in 1660. See Arthur Foss, *The Dukes of Britain* (London, 1986) 15-16.

during the period 1619-21. Having survived the ouster of other members of his family from positions of influence, Arundel tried to attach himself to Buckingham in order to obtain the posts of Lord Treasures or Lord Keeper. Both went to clients of Buckingham. It was at this point that Arundel commissioned Van Dyck to paint *The Continnence of Scipio* as a gift for Buckingham. This tactical use of art seems to have paid off, for when Arundel was imprisoned in the Tower for insulting a fellow peer in the House of Lords, he was, in John Chamberlain's words, "very much visited and courted by the Lord of Buckingham."⁶⁴ And in August 1621, Arundel was appointed Earl Marshal by the king on Buckingham's recommendation.⁶⁵ Kevin Sharpe takes a slightly different view of the situation in 1620. He sees Arundel as admiring Buckingham for his reform work at the Admiralty, as well as for his favouring a Spanish alliance: "In 1620, common interest and policy suggested co-operation and friendship, not rivalry and enmity."⁶⁶ But even this interpretation does not preclude or deny the use of Van Dyck's painting by Arundel to advance his own cause.

So, if Arundel can be seen as part of a structure that compelled him to support the arts, how did his individual preoccupation(s) affect his artistic activities? What did his collection look like?

First of all, it was broad in scope, containing sub-collections of gems,⁶⁷ antique statuary,⁶⁸ and, most famously, drawings and prints, which, after 1635, became the Earl's chief preoccupation (he managed ultimately to own over 600 drawings by Leonardo da Vinci.)⁶⁹ Second, it was, at least to some degree, the product of a collaboration between Arundel and his second wife Aletheia Talbot (c.1590-1654), daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, whom Arundel married in 1606. The Countess brought with her not only a

⁶⁴ McClure, 1939, 375.

⁶⁵ Lockyer, 1981, 67. This important position, which involves the management of royal state occasions, is still held by the Duke of Norfolk today.

⁶⁶ Kevin Sharpe, "The Earl of Arundel, His Circle and the Opposition to the Duke of Buckingham, 1618-1628," in Sharpe, 1978, 213.

⁶⁷ Diana Scarisbrick, "The Arundel Gem Cabinet," *Apollo* 144 (August, 1996) 45-48.

⁶⁸ The 'Arundel Marbles' are the only part of the collection to remain at least partially intact today, the largest group being housed in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

⁶⁹ Arianne Faber Kolb, "The Arundels' printmakers," *Apollo* 144 (August, 1996) 57-62.

large dowry but also, on the death of her father in 1616, a huge inheritance of £25,000 a year.⁷⁰ It was her money that largely financed Arundel's collection—as well as her own, which, as Jennifer Fletcher has noted, is currently impossible to separate from her husband's.⁷¹

As far as paintings are concerned, although it is impossible to identify very many of them securely,⁷² a 1655 inventory made in Amsterdam shortly after the death of the Countess lists almost six hundred pictures, including seventeen Raphaels, twenty-six Parmigianinos, thirty-three Titians, nineteen Tintoretos, seventeen Veroneses, sixteen Dürers and forty-four Holbeins.⁷³ Clearly, there was a large Italian component to the collection, especially of those favourites of Stuart collectors, the Venetians. And there is no doubt that the Arundels were as familiar with, and knowledgeable of, Italian art and culture as anyone in England. In the period of the 1610s and 1620s, they travelled extensively on the continent, spending the majority of their time in Italy (and often bringing in their retinues artists such as Inigo Jones [1613] and Anthony Van Dyck [1621]). The Arundel family was particularly fond of Venice and its environs—their two sons attended the University in Padua—and the Countess became a well-known figure of society there. But, as Jennifer Fletcher observes, their relationship with the area was complex “being both prolonged and intermittent and rarely communal.”⁷⁴ Moreover, she poses the question: “Has Arundel's interest in Venetian art been exaggerated or perhaps confused with his affection for the Veneto? Did it really ever equal his...desire for Raphael, to whom he consistently and intelligently misattributed his own and other people's Sebastiano del Piombos?”⁷⁵ In other words, did Arundel's tastes in art centre on the older, High Renaissance masters who were painting in the years before his family's downfall and who represented the tone and manner of the period that Arundel saw as glorious and venerable?

⁷⁰ Portier, 1996, 57-58.

⁷¹ Jennifer Fletcher, “The Arundels in the Veneto,” *Apollo* 144 (August, 1996) 63-69.

⁷² Howarth, 1985, 4; Jaffé, 1996, 28-31.

⁷³ Hervey, 1921, 473-500.

⁷⁴ Fletcher, 1996, 63. To which list of adjectives might be added ‘controversial,’ as the Countess was involved in a legal battle with Titan's nephew in 1622.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 68.

Such questions become even more intriguing when the Earl's Holbein collection is taken into consideration. Perhaps his greatest passion as a collector was for the works of Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543). In a letter to Sir Dudley Carleton in 1619, he describes himself as having (*literatim*) "a foolish curiosity in enquireinge for the peeces of Holbein,"⁷⁶ and eventually he owned more paintings and drawings by this artist than any other. Although few of the forty-four paintings in the Arundel inventories can be identified with any certainty,⁷⁷ one of them was definitely the portrait of Christina of Denmark (Fig. 43), the princess who escaped being a bride of Henry VIII. Among the artist's drawings owned by Arundel is a series of members of the English court, given to the earl by his brother-in-law, the Earl of Pembroke, and now in the Royal Library at Windsor.

The point here is that Holbein was court painter to Henry VIII and had actually recorded the likenesses of members of Arundel's family, the Howards, in their golden age (two of Henry's queens, Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard were among the Earl's ancestors). David Howarth notes this intimate personal connection, but concludes simply that "Arundel loved history, and Holbein provided wonderfully vivid images of the principal figures of his favourite period."⁷⁸ David Jaffé goes further, suggesting that Arundel was motivated by "an element of patriotism, perhaps related to his lifelong goal of regaining his family's reputation for loyalty."⁷⁹ Both statements are true, of course, but they stop short of two basic points. First, Arundel's collection was, to a fairly large degree, archival and oriented towards the past. Second, he acquired art as part of his campaign to regain what he saw as his personal belongings (including titles, lands and incomes), reassert his position at the top of the aristocratic hierarchy in England, and promote his own conservative ideas about taste, behaviour and morality—what today would be called 'family values.' To this end, he envisioned open access to his possessions. In his will of 1617, his collections are stipulated (*literatim*) "to be kept together for my sake and my

⁷⁶ Hervey, 1921, 131-32.

⁷⁷ Susan Foister, "My foolish curiosity: Holbein in the collection of the Earl of Arundel," *Apollo* 144 (August, 1996) 51-56.

⁷⁸ Howarth, 1985, 69.

⁷⁹ Jaffé, 1996, 26.

desire is that all gentlemen of Vertue or Artistes which are honest men may allways be used with curtesy and humanity when they shall come to see them."⁸⁰ A democratic attitude, true, but also a didactic one, and proof that Arundel was not entirely the disinterested art lover, collecting purely for aesthetic reasons and private pleasure, as he is so often portrayed.⁸¹

The Buckingham collection

i) Documentation

There are two main sources concerning the size and shape of the art collection formed by the Duke of Buckingham. One is an inventory made in 1635 (Appendix A), discovered and published in 1907;⁸² and the other is a list of pictures sold by the second Duke in Antwerp in 1650 (Appendix B) but not published until 1758.⁸³ Neither document, according to Philip McEvansoneya, is an original: the inventory he believes to be a copy made as late as 1673,⁸⁴ while the catalogue is a translation of a French document in the British Library which, for McEvansoneya, was probably compiled in early 1648. It was then that the second duke took advantage of the lifting, in October 1647, of a parliamentary

⁸⁰ John Newman, "A draft Will of the Earl of Arundel," *The Burlington Magazine* 122 (1980) 695.

⁸¹ Arundel's collection(s) began to be broken up as early as 1639, when he became bankrupt; after his death in 1646, many of the medals and gems were sold to support the Countess in exile in Antwerp. In 1662, their son auctioned off most of the paintings and drawings in Utrecht.

⁸² Bodleian Library, *Rawlinson MSS.* A341, 30-41; Randall Davies, "An Inventory of the Duke of Buckingham's Pictures, etc., at York House in 1635," *The Burlington Magazine* 10 (1907) 376-82.

⁸³ Brian Fairfax, *A Catalogue of the Curious Collection of Pictures of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham...* (London, 1758).

⁸⁴ Philip McEvansoneya, "Vertue, Walpole and the Documentation of the Buckingham Collection," *Journal of the History of Collections* 8 no. 1 (1996) 1. McEvansoneya points to the fact that the entire volume of documents containing the inventory is in the same handwriting, with some items dated 1673, as proof that it must be a later copy. However, it is possible that the same person was writing legal documents as a young man in 1635 and as an old man in 1673, thus making the inventory an 'original.'

sequestration order against him, and began shipping objects out of the country.⁸⁵

Furthermore, neither document provides a complete list of the Buckingham collection. The 1648-50 list of 228 paintings⁸⁶ represents only the works that the second duke had managed to get out of England by that time.

The larger 1635 inventory was drawn up at the time of the remarriage of the Duchess of Buckingham to Randall Macdonnell, Viscount Dunluce, later Earl and Marquess of Antrim (1608-82), ostensibly to prevent the art works from falling into the hands of the Duchess' new husband and to assure them to the then seven-year-old second Duke. The 353 items⁸⁷ listed, however, cover only the contents of York House, and even that not entirely, as McEvansoneya has demonstrated.⁸⁸

York House was Buckingham's official London residence. An ancient and historic property on the Strand—birthplace of Francis Bacon; 'prison' of Queen Elizabeth's last paramour, the Earl of Essex—it became Buckingham's in 1622. Here were entertained ambassadors from abroad and, on occasion, King James himself. It was to York House that the Duke and Prince Charles repaired upon their return from Spain in 1623.

But Buckingham owned and frequented several other houses in London and the countryside. So, while the bulk of his art collection was appropriately displayed in his official city residence, it is not improbable that his other houses showed something on their walls too. Wallingford House in Whitehall, for example, the Buckingham family house in

⁸⁵ Philip McEvansoneya, "The Sequestration and Dispersal of the Buckingham Collection," *Journal of the History of Collections* 8 no. 2 (1996) 136. Throughout the Civil War period, the Buckingham properties, like those of many other royalist families, were subject to various interventions by parliament. The second duke seems to have been lucky to ship as much as he did to Holland, as some were less successful: the Earl of Northumberland's goods were prevented from leaving the country in early 1648. In any case, the warrant for the exportation of Buckingham's pictures included provision for their return to London; this never happened, since the Duke himself fled to Holland in July, 1648, and parliament seized all his remaining possessions in England. In spite of the seizure, more paintings were shipped to Holland in 1650 and 1653 and sold by the Duke.

⁸⁶ The total as counted by the present author. Davies, 1907, 376, gives the figure as 215. Since the catalogue is clearly printed and numbered, it is hard to understand how he miscounted.

⁸⁷ Davies, 1907, 376, says "330 pictures." The present author counts 353 items, including two entries which read "Seven Painted Italian Chests" (counting as seven) and "Martin Henrick—The Two Great Doores wh 3 little pieces" (counting as six).

⁸⁸ Philip McEvansoneya, "A note on the Duke of Buckingham's inventory," *The Burlington Magazine* 128 (1986) 607.

London where his children were born, was purchased in 1622 for £3000;⁸⁹ the country estate of New Hall, near Chelmsford, Essex, was acquired by Buckingham in the summer of the same year for £20,000;⁹⁰ Burley-on-the-Hill, a large estate in Rutlandshire near his boyhood homes, had been bought from Lucy, Countess of Bedford, in 1621 for £14,000;⁹¹ and finally, Chelsea House, on the far outskirts of London, was obtained by the Duke in 1626.⁹² All of these impressive and valuable properties would presumably have been decorated and furnished accordingly and, although no inventories for Wallingford House, New Hall⁹³ or Burley have been found, these houses almost certainly would have boasted at least a few works of art. As far as Chelsea House is concerned, the unpublished part of the 1635 inventory lists "At Chelsey House" not only Buckingham's sculpture collection kept there (118 items) but also ten paintings, eight unattributed and one each by Mytens and Bassano.⁹⁴

Further support for the idea that the collection of paintings was distributed to some extent among the Buckingham residences is provided by the fact that in the 1635 inventory, fourteen works by Veronese are listed. In the 1648-50 catalogue, there are thirteen pictures by the Venetian master, nine of which correspond exactly to entries in the older document and four that do not. Considering the turmoil of the times, it is not particularly remarkable that five paintings might have disappeared. What is noteworthy is that four 'new' Veroneses suddenly appear. Either they were added to the collection after 1635, or they had been hung in sites other than York House. The former possibility is extremely remote: although the Duchess became a patron of Anthony Van Dyck after 1632 and added at least

⁸⁹ G. H. Gater and Walter H. Godfrey, eds., *Survey of London, Volume XVI, Charing Cross* (London, 1935) 47; Lockyer, 1981, 119-20.

⁹⁰ Lockyer, 1981, 120-21; H. M. Colvin, ed., *The History of the King's Works, Volume IV, part 2* (London, 1982) 172-75.

⁹¹ Lockyer, 1981, 63.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 409.

⁹³ In a 1625 letter to the Duke, Balthazar Gerbier writes of his (their) desire to "fill Newhall with paintings, so that foreigners will come there in procession." (Godfrey Goodman, *The Court of King James the first*, John S. Brewer, ed., 2 vols. [London, 1839] II, 373-74.)

⁹⁴ British Library, *Add. MSS.* 18914. This is the transcription of the 1635 inventory made by Vertue in 1751.

one work by him to the collection,⁹⁵ there is no record of her acquiring any important Veronese. In fact, after her husband's death, the Duchess actually traded away a Veronese *Leda*, along with two other paintings, to King Charles.⁹⁶ And, of course, after her remarriage in 1635, the Duchess had placed the collection in trust to her son, so that it is most unlikely that she would have bought such major pieces to add to it.

Another anomaly has been pointed out by McEvansoneya: in the 1648-50 catalogue, there is listed a *Baptism of Christ* by Guido Reni, a painting that does not appear in the older inventory.⁹⁷ Again, the likelihood of an important work by one of the most popular artists of the day being added in the late 1630's or 1640's is remote in the extreme. The only explanation for such discrepancies is that segments of the collection were kept at places other than York House and that inventories of painting at those other locations either were never made or have not been found.

ii) Formation

If it can be concluded that Buckingham's collections remained essentially unaltered after his death in 1628 until their dispersal in the late 1640's and 1650's, the question still remains: when did he begin collecting actively? The view of the older biographers is that the desire and determination of Buckingham (and Charles) to acquire art in a large and systematic way came into being during their trip to Madrid in 1623.⁹⁸ The prevailing view now is that the collection was formed between 1620-28,⁹⁹ although recently Jonathan Brown has suggested 1619 as the year Buckingham first evinced an interest in art.¹⁰⁰ Graham Parry has gone further and proposed 1616-17 as the time when the new favourite began to behave in a way "proper to a great man,"¹⁰¹ behaviour which included collecting

⁹⁵ McEvansoneya, 1994, 30.

⁹⁶ McEvansoneya, 1996a, 9.

⁹⁷ McEvansoneya, 1992, 525.

⁹⁸ Thomson, 1860, III, 148; Cammell, 1939, 353-54.

⁹⁹ e.g. Betcherman, 1970, 256.

¹⁰⁰ Brown, 1995, 24.

¹⁰¹ Parry, 1981, 136.

paintings and statuary.

There is much to recommend this last hypothesis. Buckingham was by nature a visually oriented person. He had easily and willingly accepted his mother's programme to make him into a work of art beautiful enough to seduce kings. And all his life, he paid great attention to his visible image and self-presentation. Of course, an interest in, and instinct for, fashion does not necessarily imply an equal relationship with what is called fine art—but neither does it preclude it. The eye, when dominant, can be omnivorous. This line of reasoning can lead to a rather negative conclusion, one like Parry's: "Buckingham seems to have regarded his collection as a brilliant possession rather than an extension of his own values and character."¹⁰² But the reverse might well be closer to the truth, and would support Parry's own assignation of an early date for Buckingham's interest in art.

Beyond any theoretical reasoning, however, lie some practical causes for a 1616-17 start to the young favourite's activities in the art world. In his increasingly close and frequent contact with Charles, Prince of Wales, he would have sensed a sort of kindred spirit, someone who set great store by things visual, yet someone whose introversion turned this natural tendency into a dreamy secretiveness undesirable in an heir to the throne. Buckingham's 'job' vis-a-vis Charles (as King James himself set it out) was to combat the Prince's reticence and help to develop his personality. Sharing and encouraging a feeling for the visual arts would have been a natural way to achieve this. And, of course, it would further advance and secure Buckingham's own position at the same time.

Buckingham also would have observed that his predecessor, Robert Carr, collected art, as did many of his colleagues, or competitors, at court—Arundel, Pembroke, Hamilton—and realized that a picture collection was one of the attributes of noble status. Again, this idea is sometimes translated into a criticism of Buckingham: that he was "not initiating, but rather following, a trend."¹⁰³ In the light of the theories of Anthony Giddens, however, such a judgment seems tangential. People function within structures—i.e. follow trends—and as they do so, they recreate and reinitiate those structures and trends for everyone. Following is leading: that is the important, and

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁰³ Betcherman, 1970, 250.

interesting, thing. Moreover, if Krzystof Pomian is right, Buckingham's being taken under the aegis and into the aura of the monarchy forced him to think in terms of collecting objects of art as the visible sign of his inclusion in the invisible realm of royal, and by extension, divine, authority.

Finally, by 1616-17, Buckingham had had his first experience as a patron of art, having commissioned William Larkin to commemorate his initiation into the Order of the Garter.¹⁰⁴ And while patronage does not automatically lead to collecting, it almost always indicates a broad and active interest in things artistic.

This having been said, there is no known documentary evidence of actual purchases of paintings or sculptures by Buckingham before 1620-21, so the statement that his collection was formed between then and 1628 must be considered technically correct.

. . .

There have always been three main ways in which art collections grow: through gifts, individual purchases and the acquisition of other collections. Buckingham's was no exception.

As far as gifts are concerned, Arundel's presentation of Van Dyck's *The Continnence of Scipio* to Buckingham in 1620-21 is a spectacular example.¹⁰⁵ Less dramatic, perhaps, but no less instructive, was Sir Dudley Carleton's gift of certain unidentified works of art to the Duke in 1624-25.¹⁰⁶ In both cases, the giving was intended to influence Buckingham in the donor's favour; gifts like these, therefore, can be considered essentially as bribes.

But not all presents are petitions in disguise. In 1624, Buckingham was given the most prestigious piece of sculpture in his collection, *Samson and a Philistine* (Fig. 44) by

¹⁰⁴ See Chapter 2 above.

¹⁰⁵ See Chapter 1 above.

¹⁰⁶ See Chapter 2 above.

Giambologna (1529-1608). Originally known as 'Cain and Abel,'¹⁰⁷ it had been commissioned by Cosimo de' Medici, ruler of Florence, in 1568 and sent to Spain in 1601 as a gift to the Duke of Lerma. It was set up as a fountain in Valladolid, where it was seen by Buckingham and Prince Charles on their way home from Madrid in 1623. Charles admired the piece and it was offered to him as a memento of his visit to Spain. Back in London, the Prince gave the statue to the Duke, who had it set with pride of place in the gardens of York House.¹⁰⁸ The circumstances and meaning of this particular gift are quite different from those of the Arundel and Carleton presents.

In March, 1623, there began an extraordinary episode in English history. Charles, heir to the throne, accompanied only by Buckingham and three other people,¹⁰⁹ travelled to Madrid, capital of England's traditional arch-enemy, and remained there almost six months.¹¹⁰ Ostensibly to hasten the conclusion of the Prince of Wales' proposed marriage to the Infanta of Spain, this seemingly mad action by the two "venturous knights"¹¹¹ caused extreme anxiety in England. Although he desired the 'Spanish match' for political reasons, King James was horrified at the hazards of the journey, which, according to

¹⁰⁷ The works of the sculptor, Jean de Boulogne, known by his Italianized name, Giambologna, have often been subject to re-identification for the very good reason that the artist himself was vague or equivocal about his subject matter. In 1579, he sent a sculpture to the Duke of Parma accompanied by a note describing it as a "group of two figures...that might represent the rape of Helen, or perhaps of Proserpine, or even one of the Sabines, chosen to give scope to the science and accomplishment of art." (Cited in John Shearman, *Mannerism* [Harmondsworth, 1967] 163.) This privileging of the expression of artistic qualities over subject matter, or 'Mannerism,' is typical of late sixteenth-century art. See also John Shearman, *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, 1992).

¹⁰⁸ Lockyer, 1981, 213-14; Howarth, 1989, 73-113. McEvansoneya, 1996a, 4, notes that in the 1650 catalogue of the Buckingham sale in Antwerp, under "Models," entry 8 is "Cain and Abel in marble, by John of Bologna, now in York House garden or at Chelsea." The sculpture, if for sale, was not sold; it has remained in England continuously since 1623.

¹⁰⁹ Richard Graham, Buckingham's gentleman of the horse; Endymion Porter, a Spanish-speaking servant of Buckingham and later, Charles; and Sir Francis Cottington, Charles' secretary.

¹¹⁰ For two contemporary accounts of the events, see John Digby, Earl of Bristol, *A True Relation and Iournell of the Manner of the Arrivall and Magnificent Entertainment given to the High and Mighty Prince Charles, Prince of Great Britaine, by the King of Spaine in his Court at Madrid* (London, 1623) and William Sanderson, *A Compleat History of the Life and Raigne of King Charles from His Cradle to His Grave* (London, 1658).

¹¹¹ British Library, *Harleian MSS.* 6987, 13.

Clarendon, had been Buckingham's idea.¹¹² Other contemporary sources, however, suggest that it originated with Charles himself and that the Prince persuaded Buckingham to overcome the King's objections.¹¹³ Whatever the truth, for Charles, the trip itself was one of the high points of his life: travelling incognito through France and being feted at the grand Spanish court—for a shy young man who had never been anywhere, it must have seemed like something out of a medieval romance. It was certainly an education. Politically, both Buckingham and Charles had their eyes opened by six months of Spanish, and Papal machination and manipulation, and both returned home as fervently anti-Spanish as the majority of Englishmen. Culturally, however, the experience was more positive. The time spent in Madrid was a pivotal one in the artistic and aesthetic development of both men. The Spanish royal collections were rich in pictures by all the great masters, past and present; it was here that the works of Rubens, for example, became more familiar.¹¹⁴ It was here, too, in the palaces of Spain that an image of what a great art collection should contain and how it should be displayed became firmly implanted in the minds of both Charles and Buckingham. Moreover, they were able to acquire, either as gifts or through purchases from private individuals, numerous works for their own collections. Buckingham spent lavishly on art; among other things, he commissioned a full-scale copy of Titian's *Gloria* (Fig. 2) which later hung in the entrance hall of York House, along with the Van Dyck *Scipio*. He even lent Charles £12,000¹¹⁵ which was at least partially spent on art.¹¹⁶

The trip to Spain has always been viewed as a formative event in the personal and cultural lives of both men. Clarendon saw it as the time when Buckingham "by the conversation with the prince, during his journey into Spain (which was so grateful to

¹¹² Clarendon, 1844, I, 5-10.

¹¹³ Lockyer, 1981, 137.

¹¹⁴ See Vergara, 1994.

¹¹⁵ Thomson, 1860, III, 148-49. It has been suggested that Charles repayed Buckingham's noble gesture by giving him the Giambologna sculpture. (Cammell, 1939, 354.)

¹¹⁶ Abraham Van Der Doort's catalogue of the royal collection in the 1630's mentions the Spanish provenance of several pictures. (See Millar, 1958-60, 4, 15, 16, 19, 73.)

him)...to make new vows for himself, and to tie new knots..."¹¹⁷ Ross Williamson has put it more provocatively: "If Charles fell in love with anyone in Madrid, it was with Buckingham."¹¹⁸ In this light, the Giambologna sculpture can be seen as a gift of a rather different sort from those of the usual favour-seekers, whose presents of artworks found their way into Buckingham's collection.

The second way that works of art entered collections was through purchases on behalf of collectors by agents. As one of the most avid and wealthy art buyers of the time, Buckingham employed many individuals to search out and to acquire desirable works all over Europe. Some of these people were the official representatives of the English government abroad, like the Ambassadors Sir Henry Wotton and Sir Dudley Carleton, who combined their own connoisseurship with their diplomatic privileges to the benefit of such collectors as Arundel, Buckingham and, of course, King Charles. Others were men of semi- or unofficial status, who travelled abroad and formed networks of contacts: Michel LeBlon, Toby Mathew¹¹⁹ and George Gage¹²⁰ were of this type, who often used art-buying as an alibi for shady diplomacy or espionage. At this time, also, the first professional art dealers were appearing: such men as Daniel Nys, for example, purveyor of pictures to Carleton.¹²¹

Buckingham dealt with them all, but his agent-in-chief was Balthazar Gerbier. For the Duke, Gerbier had a multiplicity of functions: chief-of-staff, secretary, architect, decorator, curator, advisor, buyer. As Keeper of York House, the official position given him in 1622, he would have been involved closely in the acquisition of much of the art displayed therein. Actual documentation of purchases remains fairly scant, however. And of works in Buckingham's collection that Gerbier is known to have bought or recommended to buy were four Titians, three Raphaels, four Tintoretts, seven Bassanos,

¹¹⁷ Clarendon, 1844, I, 11. A similar analysis is in Wotton, 1651, 72.

¹¹⁸ Ross Williamson, 1940, 172.

¹¹⁹ David Mathew, *Sir Tobie Mathew* (London, 1950).

¹²⁰ Barnes, 1993.

¹²¹ Nys was instrumental in the acquisition by King Charles of the collection of Duke Ferdinando Gonzaga of Mantua in 1627-28; he also bankrupted himself in an attempt to double-deal the King. See Brown, 1995, 40-45.

one Michelangelo, one del Sarto, one Giorgione, one del Piombo, one Palma Vecchio; of living artists, one Reni, one Baglione, two Manfredis and many of the thirty-two Rubenses that the Duke ultimately owned. There is no documentary record of Gerbier's buying any of Buckingham's Veroneses, although a favourite expression of his, when discussing art, was "For the love of Paulo Veronese."¹²² Whether Gerbier became, in Graham Parry's words, "Buckingham's mentor in aesthetic matters,"¹²³ or whether, as is more likely, the employer and employee shared similar tastes, ideals and methods, it is fair to say that Gerbier's role in the assembling and maintaining of the York House collection was his greatest achievement in life.

An early example of his activities in the art market is Gerbier's statement of expenditures in buying pictures in Italy for Buckingham in 1621.¹²⁴ The account for £574 (plus £77 10s for framing, packing and shipping overland from Venice to Boulogne) lists ten items—including a Bolognese lute and two unfinished Florentine tapestries based on works by Raphael—of which eight are attributed paintings: a Titian, a Tintoretto, three Bassanos, two Manfredis and a Reni.¹²⁵ Prices range from £275 for the Titian *Ecce Homo* (Fig. 45) to £15 for Bassano's *Noah's Ark* (Fig. 46). The Guido Reni *Four Seasons* (Fig. 47) was the second costliest canvas at £70.

Another surviving document from Gerbier to Buckingham is a long, complicated letter of November, 1624, written from Boulogne, France.¹²⁶ Often referring back to earlier, lost letters,¹²⁷ this one updates the Duke on Gerbier's continuing scouring of Paris for paintings and sculptures to buy. "For the love of Paul Veronese," he writes, "be pleased to dress the walls of the gallery: poor blank walls, they will die of cold this winter!" The letter goes into great detail concerning "the large and rare paintings in the

¹²² Betcherman, 1970, 258.

¹²³ Parry, 1981, 136.

¹²⁴ Philip, 1957, 155-56.

¹²⁵ All of the pictures are identifiable in the 1650 sale catalogue except the two Manfredis (although the catalogue lists two Manfredis of other subjects).

¹²⁶ Goodman, 1839, II, 326-45. Also included in Cammell, 1939, 358-62.

¹²⁷ Gerbier also summed up his most desirable finds in a *Mesmoire des choses lesquelles sont à Paris entre mains de Seigneurs* (Bodleian Library, Tanner MSS. 73, 1).

possession of a person called President Chevallier,¹²⁸ who has also some antique heads in marble and in bronze, the whole neither to be sold nor given away without some scheme..." Through intermediaries, this person has let it be known that if Buckingham, while in Paris for the marriage of King Charles and Henrietta Maria, would intervene on his behalf in an ethical scandal, he would "present him with all the pictures I had seen, also 50,000 francs worth of Raphael tapestries, and a present of 150,000 francs besides." Buckingham did not rise to this bait; nevertheless, some of the paintings that Gerbier had seen seem to have become part of the York House collection, including Palma Giovane's *Henry III leaving Venice* (Fig. 48) and Bassano's *Hercules and Omphale* (Fig. 49).

The letter also includes a description of what Gerbier had seen at the house of the Archbishop of Paris—"three of the most rare pictures that can be"—a Baglione, a Raphael and a Michelangelo. The Baglione *Saint Francis* became part of Buckingham's collection, as did, perhaps, the Raphael, but the Michelangelo crucifixion described in the letter is not traceable.

Gerbier goes on to report on some pictures (including a Tintoretto and a Titian) on which he has made a down-payment.¹²⁹ He begs Buckingham to "attack Mons. de Montmorency, for he has the most beautiful statues that can be spoken of, that is to say Two Slaves by Michelangelo..."¹³⁰ And he informs his patron that he is sending another Titian, the double-portrait of Georges d'Armagnac and Guillaume Philandrier (Fig. 50) to York House. "It is a jewel," he says.

Finally, an interesting aspect of the letter is that in it, Gerbier also takes time to advise Buckingham on how to hang paintings in a collection: "Your Excellency will see here, as at the house of the Duke of Chevreuse, the best paintings are before the chimney...they always put the principal piece over the chimney." Clearly, Gerbier took his role as Keeper of York House seriously. Moreover, he had an energy and enthusiasm for

¹²⁸ Nicholas Chevalier, president of the Paris *Chamber des Comptes*, overseer of accounts for all royal financial officials. See Betcherman, 1970, 254.

¹²⁹ The Tintoretto, a *Danaë*, is listed in the 1650 catalogue; the Titian, described only as "another head," cannot be pinpointed.

¹³⁰ Even though Gerbier opined that "he will not refuse them," Montmorency only parted with the Michelangelo 'Slaves,' now in the Louvre, in 1632 as an (unsuccessful) bribe to Richelieu to spare his life. See Betcherman, 1970, 254.

his work that was sometimes palpable. In February, 1625, another letter to Buckingham begins:

“Sometimes when I am contemplating the treasure of rarities which Your Excellency has in so short a time amassed, I cannot but feel astonished in the midst of my joy. For out of all the amateurs and princes and kings, there is not one who has collected in forty years as many pictures as Your Excellency has in five.¹³¹ Let enemies and people ignorant of painting say what they will, they cannot deny that pictures are noble ornaments, a delightful amusement, and histories that one may read without fatigue...Our pictures, if they were to be sold a century after our death, would sell for good cash, and for three times more than they cost. I wish I could live a century, if they were sold, to be able to laugh at these facetious folk who say it is money cast away for baubles and shadows.”¹³²

‘Our’ pictures—Gerbier was nothing if not proprietary about the product of his labours. Nor did he ascribe any Arundel-like moral or mystical qualities to art. And in his recognition of the investment potential of pictures and statues, he was decidedly forward-looking. The question here is: was Gerbier simply playing back Buckingham’s ideas about art, or were they his own views? In other words, did the Buckingham collection reflect Gerbier’s taste,¹³³ or did Gerbier perfectly interpret his master’s taste?¹³⁴ The answer is: neither. Like all interpersonal relationships, the one between Buckingham and Gerbier exemplifies Giddens’ model of routinized behaviour creating both structure and individuality simultaneously through ongoing, though often faulty and misleading, human communication. Working together over time, then, the two men’s attitude towards the collection, and what would enhance it, became close, though never quite congruent.

¹³¹ Here, perhaps, is the source of the idea that Buckingham began serious collecting only in 1620.

¹³² Goodman, 1839, II, 369-76; Cammell, 1939, 362-64. In this letter, Gerbier also asks for “time to mine quietly” so that he can “fill Newhall with paintings,” thereby implying that Buckingham’s collection was not confined to York House.

¹³³ Parry, 1981, 137.

¹³⁴ Brown, 1995, 24.

The third method by which art collections grew and evolved was through acquisition by one collector of the possessions of another. Buckingham employed this technique on at least two occasions. The first, in 1625, involved the acquisition by the Duke of at least part of the collection of the Marquis of Hamilton (1589-1625) upon the latter's death. Philip McEvansoneya has published and interpreted a document of that year headed (*literatim*) "Coppy of the Note of Pictures & paynitings Belonging to the Right honnorable Marquis Hamleton deceased delivered to my Lord Duke according to my Lord Marquis his warrant of 14th March 1624/5."¹³⁵ It lists 46 pictures, many of them attributed to leading Italian and Northern artists, e.g. Coreggio (4), Titian (1), Tintoretto (4), Veronese (1), Schiavone (2), Bassano (4), Palma Giovane (3), Caravaggio (1), Reni (1), Mor (1), Brueghel (1), Rubens (1). That the 'Lord Duke' to whom the inventory was given was Buckingham is confirmed by the fact that nine of the works in it can be connected closely with pictures in the 1635 inventory of the York House collection and several others more loosely described might also match.¹³⁶ Why Hamilton would have bequeathed his collection to Buckingham, or at least given him first refusal to purchase it, is not entirely clear. Although Hamilton was an early ally of Buckingham, by the time of his death, relations between them had soured to the point where rumours that Buckingham had poisoned the Marquis were rife.¹³⁷ So the connection remains obscure, as does the apparent reality that not all the paintings were accepted or bought by Buckingham—unless, as McEvansoneya suggests, he took all of them, then disposed of many to finance other purchases.¹³⁸ In any case, two of the Hamilton pictures that can be securely associated with the Buckingham collection are Guido Reni's *Baptism of Christ* (Fig. 51), which, although not in the 1635 York House inventory, does appear in the 1650 catalogue of the Buckingham sale,¹³⁹ and Rubens' *Lion Hunt* (Fig. 52).

¹³⁵ Philip McEvansoneya, "An unpublished inventory of the Hamilton collection in the 1620s and the Duke of Buckingham's pictures," *The Burlington Magazine* 134 (1992) 524-26.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 526. There were only two dukes alive in Britain at the time: The Duke of Lennox, cousin to the King, and Buckingham.

¹³⁷ Lockyer, 1981, 36, 193; McEvansoneya, 1992, 524.

¹³⁸ McEvansoneya, 1992, 525.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 525-26.

Rubens himself formed a noted collection of pictures, antique statuary, gems and medals. In 1626-27, he sold a significant part of it to Buckingham. The motives and procedures involved in the sale are also unclear and somewhat controversial but, before examining them, it is worthwhile to look briefly at the conceptual basis of Rubens' collection, as well as its content.

In his study of Rubens as a collector, Jeffrey Muller has noted many levels of meaning: his collection was "his primary means of investment...a sign of social distinction, a tool for diplomacy, and a refuge from weighty affairs. It was the ornament of his home, a resource for students and colleagues, and an example to other collectors."¹⁴⁰ There is nothing surprising in this list of reasons for collecting, although exception might be taken to the point about art-as-investment: Rubens seems to have put more faith in the financial potential of real estate.¹⁴¹ But the real motivation of Rubens in collecting was, according to Muller, to reflect his own genius and proclaim his identity as an artist.¹⁴² This concept was articulated in the correspondence between Rubens and his humanist friends, especially Nicholas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc, and hinges on the evolving idea of taste as an expression of innate intelligence and sensibility. Thus, a great painter like Rubens would naturally be drawn to things that both equalled in mastery his own art, and evinced the qualities which he considered important in his own work. From here, it is not a large step to the position of Krzysztof Pomian, whereby Rubens, as a genius partaking of the divine, must collect art in order to display and maintain his connection to the invisible spirit.

Rubens' collection laid emphasis on the Venetian masters—Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto—over the Florentine or Roman. He favoured early Northern painters of the native, rather than Italianate, tradition—Van Eyck, Brueghel—although medieval art was not included, nor was anything outside the mainstream of western culture. Contemporary Italian history painting was also conspicuously absent, and the primary examples of the continuation of the classical style were pictures he painted himself and kept in his

¹⁴⁰ Muller, 1989, 3.

¹⁴¹ In a sense, his attitude was akin to that of Rembrandt, who spent extravagantly on the art market in order to help increase artists' earnings.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 9.

gallery.¹⁴³

The collection, therefore, had great personal significance for Rubens. Why, then, would he sell it—or at least a large part of it? And whose idea was the sale, Buckingham's or Rubens'? There is no question that the matter was first broached in the summer of 1625, in Paris, when the two met for the first, and probably only, time. (An earlier biographer of Rubens reported that Buckingham himself visited Rubens in Antwerp in November, 1625, while attending a high-level diplomatic conference in The Hague, but Muller repudiates the idea.¹⁴⁴ Lockyer states that Buckingham left Harwich on 7 November and landed at Helvoetsluys, Holland; he returned directly to England in the first week of December.¹⁴⁵ So, although he did not visit Rubens on his way to or from Holland, he conceivably could have taken a side-trip to Antwerp for a few days; it is only 100 kilometers from The Hague.)

With the ubiquitous Balthazar Gerbier as facilitator, negotiations began, at first, perhaps, only for the sale of Rubens' gem collection.¹⁴⁶ But, as Buckingham was then at the height of his activity in acquiring art, it is likely that the entire collection was put into play, especially since Rubens was involved in diplomatic business dependent, as Muller puts it, "on Buckingham's whim."¹⁴⁷ Still, did Rubens, as the Venetian Ambassador to London reported, sell pictures to Buckingham "to the sum of over 100,000 florins, for the purpose, they say, of thus introducing himself?"¹⁴⁸ Or, as Roger de Piles implied, did Buckingham take advantage of Rubens' diplomatic aspirations and demand the collection as a pre-condition for co-operation?¹⁴⁹ Either way, political motivation is seen as paramount in the transaction, along with an economic impetus. Being a diplomat at the time required a certain amount of wealth; the sale of his collection provided Rubens with the means to

¹⁴³ Ibid., 11-13. Rubens owned many works by Flemish contemporaries like Van Dyck, Jordaens and Brouwer.

¹⁴⁴ Muller, 1989, 78.

¹⁴⁵ Lockyer, 1981, 278-81.

¹⁴⁶ Jaffé, 1989, 122.

¹⁴⁷ Muller, 1989, 62.

¹⁴⁸ Cited in Millar, 1958, 3.

¹⁴⁹ de Piles, 1743, 17-18.

shoulder his increasing responsibilities.¹⁵⁰ A contrary view is held by Peter Sutton, for whom the motivations for the sale remain problematic: Rubens, he says, was in no special need of money; moreover, he used the proceeds of the exchange to buy “no fewer than seven houses in Antwerp.”¹⁵¹ For Sutton, Rubens’ willingness to sell was itself a strategy: he would prolong the negotiations so as to provide cover for secret diplomatic discussions of an armistice between England, France and Holland, and not until after the death of his wife in June, 1626 was Rubens truly reconciled to the idea of parting with the contents of his house.¹⁵²

No doubt there is truth to all of these ideas, but who first mentioned the word ‘sale’ will never be known. Nevertheless, Gerbier became the go-between, travelling to France in 1626 and 1627, then to the Low Countries in February and August, 1627,¹⁵³ to finalize the terms of the transaction.¹⁵⁴ The price for the collection was agreed at 100,000 florins (sometimes translated into English pounds at £10,000)¹⁵⁵ of which Rubens received 84,000, the intermediaries Gerbier and le Blon 10,000. One painting originally stipulated to be included was not and its price of 6,000 was deducted.¹⁵⁶ On the strength of this kind of valuation, Muller suggests that the majority of the thirty-odd paintings by Rubens in the 1635 Buckingham inventory may have been acquired in this sale.¹⁵⁷ At the same time, it is clear that not everyone was happy that Rubens was selling to Buckingham: Peiresc wrote in 1627 (*literatim*) “J’ay eu un peu de regret d’entendre que le cabinet de Mr Rubens aye à passer oultre mer, attendu qu’il ne pouvoit estre en plus dignes mains ne où il peult paroistre davantage ne plus servir à ayder le public.”¹⁵⁸

There is, alas, no known record of exactly which works—by his own hand or by

¹⁵⁰ Muller, 1989, 62-63.

¹⁵¹ Sutton, 1993, 39.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Muller, 1989, 78.

¹⁵⁴ Sainsbury, 1859, 84, 103.

¹⁵⁵ Fairfax, 1758, preface; Betcherman, 1970, 255.

¹⁵⁶ Muller, 1989, 78.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 64.

other artists—Rubens did deliver to Buckingham in 1626-27. Christopher Brown suggests that of the three Rubens landscapes in the inventory, one may well have been *Summer* (Fig. 53) now in the British Royal Collection.¹⁵⁹ Other likely candidates are the *Landscape with Boar Hunt* (Fig. 54), *Cimon and Iphegenia* (Fig. 55), *Medusa* (Fig. 56) and *Angelica and the Hermit* (Fig. 57).

By the time of his death, Buckingham had amassed by various means one of the largest and finest collections of art in England. Its size and scope have been described through the discussion of its formation; a good idea of the stylistic preferences of the Duke can be garnered from a letter written by Sir Henry Wotton during his 1620-23 ambassadorship at Venice. In it, Wotton, the unofficial art-buyer for Buckingham, speaks of some available works he had seen:

“One piece is the work of Titian, wherein the laest figure—namely the child in the Virgin’s lap, playing with a bird—is alone worth the price of your expense for all four, being so round that I know not whether I shall call it a piece of sculpture or picture, and so lively that a man would be tempted to doubt whether nature or art made it.”¹⁶⁰

While at one level, this kind of hyperbole was fairly typical of the art discourse of the time, Wotton’s words nevertheless were chosen with a particular client in mind and, therefore, reveal at least his estimation of Buckingham’s taste. Thus, a lifelike naturalism was considered desirable, along with charm and vivacity—all within a composition that makes an impact.¹⁶¹

This formula helps explain some of the statistical proportions of the collection. Among Italian painters, who make up the bulk of the entries in both the 1635 inventory (compiled room by room at York House) and the 1650 catalogue (arranged by artist, although not alphabetically or chronologically), is the following numerical representation of

¹⁵⁹ Christopher Brown, *Making and Meaning: Rubens’s Landscapes* (London, 1996) 37, 63-64.

¹⁶⁰ Smith, 1907, II, 256-58.

¹⁶¹ Whether the Titian in question became part of Buckingham’s collection is unclear. The 1650 sale list includes seven paintings of the Holy Family by the artist; none of them mentions a bird as a salient feature.

major Renaissance artists:¹⁶²

Leonardo 1 (3); Michelangelo 1 (1); Raphael 3 (3); Giorgione 1 (2); Correggio 2 (2); del Sarto 5 (1); Titian 18 (19); Tintoretto 16 (17); Veronese 15 (13); Bassano 19 (21); Palma 11 (8). Among contemporary Italians are Reni 3 (3) and Fetti 6 (9).

Northern artists are, with the exception of Rubens, far less represented. Moreover, in the 1650 sale catalogue, they are listed (except for Dürer) after all the Italians and none are mentioned by name in the preface to the document. Principal artists itemized are: Dürer 1 (1); Mor 5 (6); Holbein 7 (8); Mytens 4 (0); Snyder 1 (2); Rubens 30 (13).

Although generalizations are dangerous, some interpretative statements about the Buckingham collection can be made. Italian art predominates, as it did in other collections in England, Spain and elsewhere. Venetian works vastly outnumber those of other Italian schools, a reflection both of the prevailing taste in England and Buckingham's own predilection for the visually spectacular.

Somewhat different from the norm in English collections is the proportion of portraiture: the 1635 inventory contains only thirty-five portraits of named individuals, that is about ten percent of the total (although there are several others listed as, e.g. "a lady," "a Queen," or "a Dutchman" which clearly looked like portraits). A de-emphasis on portraiture can be explained partly by the fact that Buckingham did not have a parade of illustrious ancestors to advertise, nor did he try to conjure them up. His own portrait—the equestrian by Rubens—is there, along with likenesses of King James, King Charles and the Queen of France (presumably Anne d'Autriche) all in his "closet," or private study. A few other contemporary notables appear: the Marquess of Hamilton (another collector and early supporter), Lord Denbigh (his sister's husband) and the Duc de Chevreuse (his French

¹⁶² As far as the 1650 list is concerned, counting is straightforward and clear. When it comes to the earlier inventory, however, problems arise (and these have not been adequately discussed by previous writers). First, the orthography is inconsistent and often difficult. Secondly, there is the use by the composer of ditto marks under the names of artists beside a list of two or more works. Sometimes, the ditto marks appear exactly as would be expected beside each individual picture. Sometimes, one set of ditto marks floats beside two or three pictures: are these all by the named artist or not? Sometimes, there are no ditto marks under an artist's name, and the subjects described make it clear that only the first painting in the group is attributed while the other(s) are anonymous. But often, even though there are no ditto marks, the subject-description of several paintings beside an artist's name look related or appropriate to his work: should they all be taken to be by the same artist or not? This situation leads to statistical discrepancies among commentators.

ally). Interestingly, none of these appear in the 1650 sale list.

There is also, in Buckingham's collection, a discernable interest in living artists. Works by Rubens easily outnumber those by any other painter, even the beloved Veronese. Non-aesthetic explanations for this can be made but the simple truth seems to be that Buckingham wanted to own pictures by the most celebrated creator of his day, whose artistic style matched Buckingham's personal one—active, flamboyant, sensual yet very much to be taken seriously. Rubens pictures are dramatically structured and physically impressive while containing passages of dazzling naturalism, intimate charm, corporeal beauty as well as profound iconography, all of which would consciously and subconsciously have great appeal to Buckingham.

Van Dyck, too, was admired by Buckingham, although fate prevented major collaboration between the two. One picture by the young artist, the *Scipio*, had pride of place in the collection; another, the *Adonis and Venus*, seems to have been enjoyed privately. Van Dyck's works, while less muscular than Rubens', have many of the same qualities—impact, sensuousness, gorgeous colour and texture—that attracted Buckingham to a work of art.

Another artist of the time who was notably well-represented in the Buckingham collection was Domenico Fetti (1589-1624). A Roman-born painter often credited with helping to re-invigorate the art of Venice, then in the afterglow of its sixteenth-century brilliance¹⁶³ Fetti was court painter to the Duke of Mantua for nine years; several of his paintings came to England when the Mantua collection was purchased by King Charles in 1627-28. But Buckingham, too, bought Fetti's work, which is characterized by a flickering, painterly style applied to small, charming genre scenes, often showing religious themes as vignettes of contemporary life. The Duke owned nine of these and hung two of them in his bedchamber at York House. The interest in Fetti reveals a different aspect of Buckingham's taste, for the pictures are neither large nor sumptuous. They do, however, possess the contemporaneity that the Duke appreciated, along with an intimate charm and vivacity that look forward to the style of the eighteenth century. Francis Haskell has called

¹⁶³ Rudolf Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1600-1750*, 2nd ed., (Harmondsworth, 1965) 65-67; John Steer, *Venetian Painting* (London, 1970) 170-72.

Fetti "that most sensitive and poetic of painters;"¹⁶⁴ Buckingham might well have agreed.

Conclusion

In many ways, Buckingham's collection was very much of its time and place. Although it was comprised mainly of Italian paintings, it also contained, as befitted an English collection, a healthy number of works by Holbein. Although it reflected current taste in giving pride of place to the Venetian school, it also boasted works by Raphael, Michelangelo and Leonardo as proof of its status as a serious collection. And, although it was not overladen with portraits, the genre was conspicuously present.

As to how he acquired art, Buckingham's methods were also culturally and temporally typical. He accepted—and presumably encouraged—gifts from those seeking his favour. He swallowed other previously formed collections whenever possible. And he employed the same diplomats abroad as 'pickers' of pictures and buying agents as did other collectors, although his position as royal favourite generally allowed him to obtain preferential treatment, often to the chagrin of those diplomats and their other art-collecting 'clients.' At the same time, Buckingham's taste, through the record of his acceptances and rejections of his agents' finds, determined what sort of thing they should continue to look for, consciously or subconsciously, both for him and for other collectors. Moreover, especially through his employment of Balthazar Gerbier, Buckingham intensified the process of scouring the continental art markets, especially France and the Netherlands, and turned collecting into a more systematic, predatory practice.¹⁶⁵

The question "Why did Buckingham collect?" can be answered by simply saying "He was a visually-oriented man. Of course he would be drawn to the visual arts." At another level, the reply might be "This is what rich people did." But not all wealthy individuals formed art collections on the scale of Buckingham's. That the Duke's amassing of art had something to do with the establishment and maintenance of high status is, of course, an inescapable judgment. But if Pomian's ideas are right, as Buckingham changed from merely a son of country gentry parents to the man closest to monarchs by divine right,

¹⁶⁴ Haskell, 1963, 175.

¹⁶⁵ Philip IV of Spain, through Velazquez, did the same, often in the face of strong criticism.

he was *forced* to collect and to display art in order to advertise his ever-closer immersion in the invisible realm of power. In creating his collection, however, as Giddens might point out, he simultaneously changed, for better or for worse, the nature of that realm.

Buckingham collected art for pleasure—to ornament his residences, to entertain his guests and to amuse himself—as well as to promote himself. As his correspondence with Gerbier demonstrates, while he did buy sight-unseen, he did not, as many others did, buy haphazardly. Buckingham deliberately selected those pieces which would enter his environment for the simple reason that he cared about what he lived with—how he ‘clothed’ his houses—as much as he cared about how he dressed.

As time passed, this kind of private, hedonistic behaviour came more and more to be associated with the aristocracy and the monarchy. Both institutions became increasingly perceived as immoral and superficial, therefore unnecessary and dispensable. By this logic came the calamities of the Civil War and the beheading of the King.

CONCLUSION

"Style is more than a symptom of limitations," Peter Gay has observed in an echo of Anthony Giddens, "it is an instrument of discovery as well."¹ Buckingham and his career are dramatic proof of this idea. As Favourite, his physical presence translated into enormous political and social power which only increased after he transferred it successfully from James I to Charles I. As an art collector, he amassed a collection that was, in Francis Haskell's words, "an amazing one...in its adventurous quality."² And, as a patron, Buckingham played a crucial role in advancing the careers of contemporary painters, not least by bringing them to the attention of King Charles. He, more than anyone else, set the fashion—and continued to do so even after his disappearance from the scene.

Scarcely nine months after his assassination, the artist with whom Buckingham was most intricately connected arrived in England at the invitation of the King. On June 6, 1629, Peter Paul Rubens was met by Charles at Greenwich, beginning a visit that would last until the following March.³ Although for Rubens the diplomat, the reason for the trip was to finalize a treaty between England and Spain—negotiations for which Buckingham had been instrumental in instigating—Rubens the artist must have also welcomed the opportunity to meet the now pre-eminent art collector in Europe, Charles I, and to explore the possibilities for commissions from him. On both counts, Rubens was successful. The treaty was concluded to the satisfaction of all the parties involved and it is fair to say that the late Duke would have been happy with his sovereign's handling of the process. As far

¹ Gay, 1976, x.

² Haskell, 1989, 207.

³ Millar, 1958, 3-4. None other than Balthazar Gerbier was entrusted with the job of "master of ceremonies to entertain him."

as artistic activities are concerned, not only did Rubens receive requests for portraits from notable people (including the Earl of Arundel), he also finally won the commission to paint the ceiling of the Banqueting House in Whitehall Palace. This work, first bruited as early as 1621, would not be installed until 1635 nor paid for until 1638. In spite of the difficulties encountered in its creation and delivery, it remains the most important example of Baroque painting in England and it is the only one of Rubens' major decorative commissions to survive in the location for which it was painted. During the period of its creation, Rubens formed with the King, as he had done with Buckingham, a strong personal, as well as diplomatic and aesthetic, bond. Walpole reports that Rubens corrected some of Charles' own drawings⁴ and, when he finally departed from London, he was, in Oliver Millar's words, "laden with jewellery, gratitude and a knighthood."⁵

Three and a half years after Buckingham's death, the artist who had painted two of his most dazzling youthful works for the late favourite also came to London, where he would remain most of the rest of his life. Anthony Van Dyck arrived on April 1, 1632; from the outset, he was lodged at the King's expense. Given the title 'Principal Painter in Ordinary to their Majesties,' he was knighted in July of the same year.⁶ Immediately, he began producing the kind of court portraits that made both himself and the English aristocracy famous, paintings that Von Sandrart in the 1670s said possessed "extraordinary gracefulness, nicety and charm,"⁷ that Hookham Carpenter believed had "a disposition to display,"⁸ and that Robert Hughes has described as having "the look of arrogant security guaranteed to paralyze all lesser breeds from Calais to Peshawar."⁹ Such a list of descriptors might also describe the Duke of Buckingham and support the idea that his style and presence lived on in the work Van Dyck did under the *aegis* of Charles I. As he did with Rubens, the King developed a fairly intimate relationship with his court painter. He

⁴ Walpole, 1862, II, 94.

⁵ Millar, 1958, 12.

⁶ Millar, 1982, 18-20.

⁷ Cited in Larsen, 1988, 11.

⁸ Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 48.

⁹ Robert Hughes, *Nothing if not Critical: Selected Essays on Art and Artists* (New York, 1990) 40.

took a personal interest in providing Van Dyck with a suitable residence in Blackfriars (with rent paid by the Crown) and a causeway and stairs were constructed nearby so that he could sail down the river from Whitehall to observe Van Dyck at work and converse about art.¹⁰ If Charles' concepts of beauty and creativity evolved at least partially in the company of Buckingham and if, as Clarendon said, "never any prince manifested a more lively regret for the loss of a servant, than his majesty did for this great man,"¹¹ then it seems inevitable that Charles would have conveyed to Van Dyck—imperfectly and through something of a language barrier—some of the ideas and attitudes about art that he had shared with the Duke. Inevitably, too, Van Dyck would have reflected some of this in what he created for his royal patron.

An example might be found in the picture known as *le Roi à la Ciasse* (Fig. 58), painted about 1635 and now in the Louvre. The very essence of what has come to be seen as Van Dyck's glamour, shimmer and fashionable sensitivity, this unusually informal royal portrait exudes a dreamy atmosphere; it feels and looks like an escape from reality into an imaginary safe place. As a 'dismounted' equestrian portrait, it deftly combines a sense of royal presence with the feeling of a private human moment. The expression on the King's face is a touch sly; he looks like a man getting away with—or to—something: the exhilaratingly reckless trip to Spain with Buckingham in 1623, perhaps? If so, this painting is that rare thing, an almost perfect blend of the personal views of life of both artist and patron.

And Buckingham may be there in more than spirit: Van Dyck's distant scene of ships at sea recalls the one in Rubens' equestrian portrait of the Duke to qualify as an intentional citation, a private reference appreciated by both artist and sitter.

In sum, it is a truism that Charles hammered the first nail into his own coffin when he dissolved Parliament to save his friend and that, in this sense, Buckingham influenced the face of history. But it is also Buckingham's 'face' that is behind the aristocratic portraits by Van Dyck. His legacy is the image of the fashionable cavalier who can, with a gesture, change the world of everyone around him. Not just a pretty face, Buckingham became the

¹⁰ Hookham Carpenter, 1844, 29, 33.

¹¹ Clarendon, 1840, I, 13.

face of the Stuart court after 1614. He created his cultural context even while being created by it, and in this way, George Villiers was someone Anthony Giddens would surely understand.

APPENDIX A

The Duke of Buckingham's pictures at York House in 1635.

(Part of Rawlinson MSS A341 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford: "A Schedule Indented containing all such Hangings of Arras Tapistry and other Hangings Plate Jewells Agatts Pictures Statues Household Stuffe Goods Chattells Rings and other things Granted Bargained and Sold or intended to be Granted Bargained and Sold by the said Indenture whereunto the same is annexed" dated May 11, 1635.)

In the Hall

Vandyke.—One great Piece being Scipio.

Titian.—One great piece of the Emperor Charles, a copy called Titian's Glory being the principal in Spain, now in the Escorial.

In the coming in above

Reubon.—One winter piece.

Guido.—A St. Sebastian, being a copy.

Bassan.—One piece of Christ in the Grave being a copy.

Monfredi.—Judith and Holofernes.

Mantua.—An Abbot.

Tintoret.—An Ambassador of Russia.

The Picture of Raphael.

Morstract.—A Winter piece of Robbery.

Stenwick.—A great Perspective.

Quintin the Smith.—An Usurer.

Dogan.— A Flower Pott.

A little piece of Adam and Eve.

A piece of Jephtha and his Daughters.

A little piece of the Virgin Mary and Christ.

Mitens.—The Duke of Chevreux at length.

Paulo Venez.—An Italian Lady at length.

The Poland Ambassador at length.

Van Romer.—Mons^r Candanet at length.

Mitens.— The Marquesse Hambleton at length.

Count Mansfelt at length.

" The Earle of Middlesex at length.

Palma.—Andromeda and Perseus.

In the Great Chamber

Reuben.—A great piece for the ceiling of my Lords Closett.

Reuben.— My Lord Duke on Horseback.

" Our Saviour on the Crosse.

Guido.—The Foure Seasons of the Yeare.

Vost van Wingen.—Appelles drawing Venus naked.

A Disciple Basan.—Vulcan and Venus.

Titian.—Diana and Calisto.

Tintoret or Titian.—A Day of Judgment.

Manfredi.—A Banquett.

My Lord Denbigh at length.

Reuben.—The Torments of Hell.

“ A great Landskip.

“ The Hunting of the Boare.

“ A little Landskip: a Morning.

“ A little Landskip, an Evening.

“ The Archduchess of Brabant.

“ The Dutchess of Crin.

“ Marquesse Spinola.

Copy from Clin.—A little piece of our Lady and Christ, a copy.

A picture of a woman with a Baskett of Flowers done upon a Board.

In the Vaulted Room

Hans Holbin.—Jupiter and Jo in Water Coulers.

Sampson and the Philistines.

Bassan.—The Four Seasons of the Yeare.

“ A Samaritan.

A Councillor of the King of Spaine.

Tintoret.—A picture by the Life.

Our Saviour Christ in a Sepulchre.

In the Sumpter Room

Our Lady, our Saviour Christ, St. John and St. Joseph.

Bassan.—A Picture of a Fryer.

Palma.—A Picture of a Musician.

Tintoret.—A Picture by the Life.

Titian.—A piece of Our Lady w^h a man praying.

Mabuz.—A picture by the Life.

Horatio Burgeany.—A piece of Our Saviour on a table.

A Woman with a Straw Hatt.

A piece of Our Saviour Christ Our Lady and St. Catherine.

St. Laurence on a Gridiron.

Pada.—A picture of Sophonisba, a copy.

Raphael or Peter Aretine.—Picture by the Life.

Titian.—A Ladyes Picture by the Life, w^h Gloves in her Hands.

.... of Consolado, in black.

A Little Head of an Italian Woman.

Anthony.—A little head.

Bassan.—A little head.

In the Passage by the Ladies Closett

Rubens and Brugiae.—A faire Picture of the Virgin Mary in a Garland of Flowers.

Rubens.—Leander and Hero.

“ Children Tying up Fruitage about a Statue.

“ The Picture of Paracelsus.

Ruben and Brugi.—The Three Graces Sacrificing.

Ruben.—Three Graces with a Baskett of Flowers.
 Ruben.—The Picture of the Marquesse dEste in Armour.
 Ruben.—A Potugese Lady.
 Rubens and Subter.—Medusa's head with snakes.
 " The Picture of Mars.
 Rubens.—A Centaure and Diana.
 A Hermit with a naked woman.
 Rubens.—Two little old mens heads.
 Palma.—Jupiter and Danae.
 Titian as they say.—Two pictures, an Old Man and his wife.
 Rays.—Two other Pictures of a Dutchman and his wife.
 Antho. Morr.—A Dutchman w^h Gloves in his hand w^h a red beard.
 Tintoret and Bassian.—Two little heads.
 Blyenberke.—A Picture of Ben Johnson.
 Passaretto.—A Picture done with a pen.
 The City of Venice.
 Antho. Morr.—A Dutchman w^h White Sleeves.
 A Scornful Woman and a Sould^r
 Ruben.—The Dutchesse of Brabant and her Love.

In the next chamber to the Kings withdrawing chamber

Titian.—A Picture of the French Ambassador Enditeing.
 Ballian or Michal Angelo.—The Picture of St. Francis.
 Paulo Verones.—The 3 wise men offering to o^r Saviour.
 Palma.—The picture of Mars.
 Titian.—An Italian Lady Sitting in a Stoole.
 Jupiter and Donea.—Venus and Cupid.
 Andrea del Sarto.—The Virgin Mary, our Saviour, St. John, and Anne.
 Tintorett.—The Whipping of our Saviour Christ.

In the Room called the Kings Bedchamber

A great piece of Our Lady, Christ, and Joseph.
 Bassan.— The foure seasons of the yeare.
 " The 3 Wise Men offering to Christ.
 " The Arke of Noah.
 " The Shepherds and the Angels telling of Christs birth.
 Bassan.—Christ and his two Disciples at Emaus.
 Bassan.—A piece of Many Beasts and Men, being Abraham's voyage.
 Bassan.— A piece of Abraham.
 " A little piece of Shepherds.
 A little piece of a Captⁿ Embracing his lady.

In my Lords Closett

A picture of King James at length.
 Abra: Dorts Bro.—A Picture of King Charles at length.
 Titian.—Our Saviour Christ in the Sepulchre.
 Hempson.—Our Saviour Calling St. Matthew.

Conterine.—Pluto and Proserpine.
 “ Cain and Abell.
 Andrea del Sarto.—The Virgin Mary under a Canopy.
 Titian.— An Ecce Homo.
 “ Venus Looking in a Glasse. A copy after Titian.
 “ Venus Sleeping and Cupid Pissing. A copy after Titian.
 Fran: Bastian.—The Duke of Burgundy in Armour.
 Titian.—A Venetian Woman Concubine to Solomon.
 Georgioone.—A little Picture of a Man in Armour.
 Coregeo.—A little Head of Shepherd.
 Bonifacio.—A Musician and a Venetian Lady.
 The Anointing of Paulo Veroneso.
 Tintoret.—The Woman in Adultery.
 Leonardo, Venice.—Herodias's daughter w^h St. John's Head.
 Ruben.—The Picture of the French Queen.
 Titian.—The Picture of an Italian Lady.
 Martin Henrick.—The Two Great Doores, w^h 3 little pieces.

In the Gallery

Rubens.—Drunken Silvanus.
 Hunthrost.—Venus and two Satyrs.
 Reubens.—The Hunting of Lyons.
 Manfredi.—A Woman giving her Father Suck.
 “ David with Goliath's head.
 and Cupid a copy.
 Tintoret.—Two Italian heads.
 Manfredi.—An Egiptian telling Fortunes.
 Martin Hempskirk.—A Great Altar piece.
 Hen: Holdernessee.—An old woman with a Deaths head.
 Palma.—An Italian head.
 Rubens.— A Great piece w^h Fishes.
 Two of the Evangelists.
 Conterine.—St John the Evangelist.
 Titian.—A Picture of Sisiphus.
 Paulo Veroneso.—Our Saviour Washing his Apostles' Feet.
 Two other Evangelists.
 Parma.—A piece of King David being old.
 Fetty.—A Picture of St. Peter.
 Andr. Chaivone.—St. Cecilia playing and Our Lady.
 Tintoret.—An Old Italian Woman Tintoret's Mother.
 Steffen.—A Picture of St. Paul.
 Geldrop's Father.—A Picture of Mary Magdalen.
 Bonifacio.—Our Saviour haveing the Woman found in Adultery brought before him.
 Frenchman.—The two Magdalens, or Martha and Mary.
 Paulo Veroneso.—St. Jerome.
 Benetto Veroneso.—Mars and Venus.
 A little picture of a Gentlewoman of Venice.
 Labella Jucunda.—A Little Picture, a copy.
 Tintoret.—Our Saviour laid in the grave.

- Paulo Veroneso.—St. John.
 Cornel: Ketell.—A great piece of divers men and women, being the virtues overcoming vice.
 Mich^l Angelo, or a copy of his.—A Naked Man in Chaines and Tortures.
 Chigoli.—St. Stephen Ston'd.
 Ruben.—Chimon w^h Iphigenia and naked Ladyes Sleeping.
 Palma.—Venus and Adonis Dead.
 Paulo Veroneso.—Abraham's Serv^t and Rebecca.
 Venus and Adonis liveing.
 Palma.—The Entertainm^t of King Hen. 3 of France
 Paulo Veroneso.—The Samaritan Woman and our Saviour.
 Bassan.—The Circumcision of our Saviour Christ.
 Paulo Veroneso.—The woman found in Adultery.
 Bassan.—Hercules spinning and Omphaell Domineering.
 Paulo Veroneso.—The Centurion and our Saviour Christ.
 Guido Bolmezo.—One of the Twelve Sibills.
 Bassan.—A Battle of a King of France.
 Paulo Veroneso.—The Birth of our Saviour Christ
 " St. John Baptising our Saviour Christ.
 Bassan.—The Sack of Rome by the Duke of Bourbon.
 Paulo Veroneso.—Susanna and the two Elders.
 Snider.—The Hunting of the Boare.
 Paulo Veroneso.—Agar and Ishmael.
 Jaques Voquier.—Pan and Seringa a great Landskip.
 Tintoret.—Our Saviour Crown'd with Thorns.
 A little Picture of the Virgin Mary upon the Doore.
 Del Sarto.—St. John the Baptist upon the doore, a copy.
 Caraethio.—A little picture of our Saviour.
 Paulo Veroneso.—Lott and his two Disciples.
 Seven Italian Painted Chests.

In the Drawing Room

- A woman representing Picturia.
 Paulo Veroneso.—King Assuerus and Queen Hester.
 A Frenchm^{ns} work.—A little piece of a Supper.
 An Italian with a Ruffe.
 Fetti.—A little piece of a Prodigal Sonne
 A Picture of a Generall with a Red Capp.
 The Fall of Lucifer.
 Honthrost.—A Toothdrawer.
 Our Saviour, his mother, Joseph and St. John: a copy.
 Fetti.—A little piece of him that wrought all day.
 Gentilesco.—A Mary Magdalen.
 A piece where the Blind leads the Blind.
 An Italian Lady with a Heron.
 A Fiction of Divers Women and a Satyr.
 The Virgin Mary, our Saviour, St. Andrew and St. Catherine.
 Fetty.—A little piece of him that found the lost sheep.
 A Standing naked woman kembering herselfe.

A little piece of Jacob's Dreame.

Palma.—The Coronation of our Saviour w^h Thornes.

In my Lords Bedchamber

Coxuen.—Our Saviour Christ carrying the Crosse.

Our Saviour Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen.

A little piece where the Devill soweth his seed.

Guido.—The Picture of Cleopatra.

Fetty.—A little piece where they be call'd to Supper.

Stenwick.—A perspective.

Fetty.—A little piece of the debtor that had much forgiven him.

The Virgin Mary and St. Anne upon Stone.

A great Venus and Cupid.

The Virgin Mary, our Saviour Christ and Joseph.

Our Saviour taken from the Crosse.

The Infanta Maria of Spaine at length.

The Virgin Mary and our Saviour Christ sucking.

In the Little Dressing Room

A Man killing a Woman w^h a Ponyard.

Tintoret and Kai.—Three little heads.

A picture of the Prince of Bohemia at large.

Mabuz.—The Virgin Mary and Christ.

The Virgin Mary, our Saviour and Joseph.

A little piece of Venus and Cupid.

A little landskip.

In the Withdrawing Room.

The Virgin, our Saviour Christ and St. Anne.

Corovagio's copy.—St Peter Crucifying: copy.

Aurora lying upon the clouds.

Mars and Venus.

In the Upper Roomes

An old piece of the Conversion of St. Paul.

An old piece of Christ carrying his Crosse.

Christ whipping the Merchants out of the Temple.

In the Vault.

Perseus.—A Sea piece.

Old Uroome.—A Shipp.

The Supper of Christ with His Apostles.

The Fleet when our King came out of Spain.

In My Lady's Red Closett

- A little piece of our Saviour in the Garden.
 A head of our Saviour crown'd with Thornes.
 A little piece of Christ dead.
 A little piece of the Virgin Mary and Christ.
 Del Serto.—A great piece of our Saviour dead.
 A young man's picture in an ebony frame.
 Four little pieces, viz—
 1st. Christ carrying his Crosse.
 2nd. St. Francis.
 3rd. Mary Magdalen.
 4th. A Dead Christ.
 A rare little piece of the Virgin Mary and Christ.
 Raphael.—The Ascension of Christ.
 Row: Lacy.—Cleopatra in Linnen.
 Adrian Roy.—A Little head without a frame.
 Palma.—A Venetian Lady with naked Breasts.
 Holbin.—Erasmus Rotterodamm after Holbin.
 Titian.— A little Mary Magdalen.
 " Diana and Actaeon.
 Parmentius.—Prope Fortuis Paulus.
 Kay.—A little head.
 Anton^o de More.—A little picture of a Dutch man at length.
 Stenwick.—Two little pieces.
 Another woman with naked breasts.
 The Virgin Mary, our Saviour Christ, and St. Catherine.
 The Virgin Mary, our Saviour Christ, and St. John.
 Bassart.—The Conversion of St. Paul.
 A head of Kay himself wh^h a Redd Beard.
 Kay.— A Dutchman's head.
 Melanchthon.—A little head.
 A little Dutchman's head, eight square.
 Hans Evolls.—A little head of Queen Mary.
 The sack of Troy.
 A little St. Anne upon marble.
 One looking at the Moone upon marble.
 A little piece of Our Lady and Christ.
 Bruggell.—A Flower Pott.
 Rottⁿ Hamor.—Venus and Cupid.
 Rotten Hamor.—A piece of Hell.
 The Virgin Mary, Christ, St. John, and two other heads,
 like Leon^d de Venice.
 Titian.—The head of Our Lady, a Sconsolata.
 Palma.—Our Lady, Christ, Joseph and St. John.
 Bassan.—A picture of a Man wh^h a Lute.
 Holbin.—A Dutchman Sealing a letter.
 Ensen Hamor.—Eight little pieces.
 A little piece with a lyon.
 A little piece with a Duke.

A piece of Our Lady, Our Saviour, and St. John.
 Hans Holbin.—A Rare piece, being a Dutchman.
 “ “ A Queen.
 “ “ An other Lady.
 Kay.—A man's head without a frame.
 Stephens.—A man's head with a frame.
 Coregio.—A rare little piece of our Lady and Christ.
 Rotten Hamor.—A little piece of Apollo, Venus, and little Children.
 A little piece of Holbin himself.
 Holbin.—A little picture in Linnen.
 Brugell.—A little landskip.
 A piece of Pluto in the Cieling.
 Our Lady, St. Anne, and Our Lady playing with a Lamb.
 Nicho: Lanier.—A piece in the passage.

In My Lady's Green Closett

Nicho: Lanier.—Six French Ladies—viz:
 1. The Queen.
 2. The Duchesse of Chevreux.
 3. The Princesse of Conde.
 4. Princese of Conty.
 5. The Duchesse of Montpenser.
 6. Ormoine.
 Young Purbois.—The Duke of Guise upon horseback upon marble.
 Albert Duerse.—The picture of the Pope of Rome.
 Antho. Kay.—A Dutchman in a Chaire.
 Paulo Veroneso.—Our Saviour praying in the Garden.
 St. Sebastian, naked.
 A little piece with Grapes.
 The Birth of our Saviour Christ, an old piece.
 Callert.—A Dutchman's head.
 Manny Digg.—Diana Sleeping.
 Old Purbois.—The ould Duke of Brunswick in little at length.
 Callert.—A Man's Head.
 A piece of St. Jerome.
 Blockland.—A picture of Hercules.

In the Upper Closett

A picture of our Lady and Christ.
 A little Italian head.
 A little picture of Our Lady and Christ.
 A picture of Rosamund.
 Two little landskips.
 A picture of a Dutchman to the middle.

APPENDIX B

(This list of works shipped out of England after 1648 by George Villiers, 2nd Duke of Buckingham [1628-87] was edited by Brian Fairfax and published by Bathoe in 1758.)

**The Duke of BUCKINGHAM's
COLLECTION of PICTURES,
Sent to and Sold at *Antwerp*, in the Time of his Exile,
by his Agents and Order.**

	Length. Feet. Inch.	Breadth. Feet. Inch.
No. 1. Paintings by Titian		
A piece representing our Lady holding Christ on her lap, St. John and St. Joseph by, and a man kneeling before our Saviour.	3 f. 6	5 f. 2
No. 2.		
The picture of our Lady.	3 f. 0	2 f. 6
No. 3.		
A Magdalene.	1 f. 0	0. 10
No. 4.		
The Picture of an Italian lady.	3 f. 0	2 f. 3
No. 5.		
The picture of Aretine.	3 f. 0	2 f. 3
No. 6.		
A Venus looking in a glass with a Cupid near her.	4 f. 0	3 f. 0
No. 7.		
Our lady with Christ.	4 f. 0	2 f. 6
No. 8.		
The Holy Family with St. John.	3 f. 6	3 f. 6
No. 9.		
A piece representing our Lady, Christ, St. John and St. Ann.	3 f. 6	2 f. 2
No. 10.		
Another large piece called the <i>Ecce Homo</i> , wherein our Lord is brought before the people, as if it were in a great hall. There are in this picture seventeen large figures.	8 f. 0	12 f. 0
No. 11.		
A Sisyphus rolling a large stone.	4 f. 6	3 f. 0

No. 12.		
The picture of an Italian lady sitting on a chair with...by.	5 f. 0	4 f. 0
No. 13.		
A piece of Diana and Acteon, where Diana is near a fountain with her nymphs.	3 f. 3	3 f. 3
No. 14.		
Our Saviour laid in his sepulchre by Joseph, our Lady, and Magdalene. There are five figures in this piece.	4 f. 0	3 f. 3
No. 15.		
The Holy Family with St. John, and another figure.	4 f. 0	3 f. 0
No. 16.		
Two pictures representing Adam and Eve.	6 f. 6	2 f. 2
No. 17.		
Another piece being our Lady with Christ, and another figure.		
No. 18.		
A naked Venus, with a Cupid.		
No. 19.		
Two heads, supposed to be those of two priests.	1 f. 6	1 f. 0
By Passaretto.		
A Head done with a pen.		
No. 1.		
By Corregio.		
The head of a shepherd.	1 f. 6	2 f. 0
No. 2.		
Our Lady with Christ.	1 f. 6	1 f. 3
By Calcar.		
Two pictures, the one being that of a man, and the other that of a woman.		
By Julio Romano.		
A Venus lying naked, a Cupid and a Satyr by.	4 f. 5	6 f. 0
By Del Greco.		
Christ driving the traders out of the temple. There are about thirty-two figures in this picture, four whereof are the pictures of Titian, Raphael, &c.		
No. 1.		
By Bassan.		
A piece representing St. Ann going to meet the angels. Several		

figures of men, women, sheep, and other animals are painted therein, in a landskip after the manner of Bassan.	4 f. 6	4 f. 0
No. 2. Another large piece representing the battle of Pavia, where Francis I. appears on horseback with several horse and foot soldiers, and all kinds of war-like instruments, &c.	8 f. 2	12 f. 0
No. 3. Another large piece, representing the sacking of Rome by the Duke of Bourbon. Several figures and such of the warlike machines as are used in the siege of places are to be seen therein.	8 f. 2	12 f. 4
No. 4. The picture of a young man playing on the lute.	2 f. 3	2 f. 4
No. 5. The picture of a monk.	2 f. 7	2 f. 8
No. 6. Four pieces of the four seasons of the year, containing many figures of men, women, and animals.	3 f. 10	5 f. 0
No. 7. The three kings worshipping our Saviour in the arms of his mother. There are in this picture several figures of men and animals in a landskip.	4 f. 0	7 f. 0
No. 8. Vulcan in a forge, Venus looking at him, with many other figures, animals, pots, &c.	5 f. 8	3 f. 2
No. 9. A large piece of the Circumcision, containing sixteen figures and some animals.	9 f. 0	5 f. 6
No. 10. The angel appearing to the shepherds. There are in this picture several sheep, other beasts, &c.	3 f. 0	2 f. 6
No. 11. Our Saviour laid up in his sepulchre, many figures, &c. by	3 f. 6	5 f. 0
No. 12. A Leprous held up by another man, with other figures.	3 f. 3	3 f. 0
No. 13. A man's head.	1 f. 0	1 f. 0

No. 14.		
Four pieces of the four seasons, where many figures of men, women, children, animals, &c. are painted after the manner of Bassan.	2 f. 8	3 f. 9
No. 15.		
A piece representing a market place, wherein, besides all kinds of commodities, are to be seen shambles, several figures of men, women, and children, a great number of shops, all sorts of animals, &c.	5 f. 0	8 f. 0
No. 16.		
Noah's ark, with all kinds of animals getting in it. N.B. This piece was sold for 2000 gilders.	4 f. 0	5 f. 0
No. 17.		
A large piece representing Hercules spinning amongst the women and Omphale domineering over him. There are in this picture many figures, &c. after the manner of Bassan.	8 f. 0	16 f. 0
No. 18.		
Four pieces of the four seasons which have been engraved on copper-plates.	2 f. 6	4 f. 0
No. 19.		
The Journey of Abraham wherein there are several figures and animals.	2 f. 0	4 f. 0
No. 20.		
The annunciation of Christ's birth to the shepherds by an angel. There are in this piece several sheep and other animals.	4 f. 6	6 f. 0
No. 21.		
The circumcision.	2 f. 6	1 f. 9
No. 1.		
By Georgione.		
A lady and a soldier.	2 f. 6	2 f. 0
No. 2.		
The head of an armed man.	1 f. 6	1 f. 6
By Andrea Del Sarto.		
A piece containing the corpse of our Saviour, held up by two angels, and our Lady weeping.	4 f. 0	5 f. 0
No. 1.		
By Caracci.		
The corpse of St. Sebastian.	2 f. 0	1 f. 0

No. 2.		
St. Jerom in a wilderness.	2 f. 0	1 f. 4
No. 1.		
By Paolo Veronese.		
A large picture of a lady in Italian dress.	6 f. 3	4 f. 8
No. 2.		
The centurion presenting himself with soldiers before Christ.		
There are seven large figures in this picture, besides other small ones, and one on horseback.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 3.		
Susanna near a fountain in the garden with the two elders.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 4.		
Lot runing away from Sodom, and his wife changed into a pillar of salt. There are in all six figures in this picture.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 5.		
Abraham's servant and Rebecca.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 6.		
The woman of Samaria and our Lord.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 7.		
The shepherd worshipping our Saviour.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 8.		
Hagar and Ishmael with an angel.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 9.		
The woman taken in adultery brought before Christ.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 10.		
King Ahasuerus sitting on a throne with his counsellors near him, and presenting a golden scepter to queen Hester held up by two women.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 11.		
Our Saviour washing the feet of his disciples.	5 f. 0	10 f. 0
No. 12.		
The anointing of king David, being fourteen figures, and a sacrifice in a landskip.	6 f. 0	12 f. 8
No. 13.		
The picture of an Italian lady sitting on a chair.	4 f. 0	3 f. 0
By Benedetto Veronese.		
A piece representing Mars, Venus, and Cupid.	4 f. 0	3 f. 0

No. 1.		
By Bonifacio.		
A Venetian lady, with her lover playing on a violin.	2 f. 11	2 f. 10
No 2.		
The woman taken in adultery brought before Christ, containing nine great figures.	4 f. 0	6 f. 0
By Del Frati.		
A large piece representing the Virgin Mary under a canopy, and Christ, St. John, and St. Margaret, with two angels, and a lamb fighting with the devil.	5 f. 0	4 f. 0
No. 1.		
By Palma.		
A large piece by Jacopo Palma, containing the reception of Henry III. King of France at Venice at his return from Poland, wherein his picture is between those of the Duke and Cardinal with all the senate, several ambassadors, the place of St. Marc, and a great number of people as spectators of the ceremony. There are at least three hundred figures in this picture, besides the gondolas and other embellishments.	8 f. 9	13 f. 0
No. 2.		
The picture of a musician.	3 f. 6	2 f. 6
No. 3.		
A piece by Palma Vecchio, containing the Virgin Mary holding Christ on her knees, with St. Joseph, St. John, and several other figures by.	3 f. 6	3 f. 6
No. 4.		
The Holy Virgin, our Lord, and St. Catherine, with other figures.	3 f. 9	3 f. 3
No. 5.		
King David in his old age sitting on a throne, to whom a young damsel is brought. There are also several other figures in this picture.	4 f. 6	9 f. 0
No. 6.		
A piece by Palma Vecchio, containing the head of a Venetian courtezán.	2 f. 6	2 f. 0
No. 7.		
Venus and Cupid, with the corpse of Adonis in a landskip.	5 f. 6	4 f. 0
No. 8.		

Perseus and Andromeda tied to a rock in order to be devoured by a monster.	4 f. 6	5 f. 6
No. 1. By Andrea Shiavone. Our Lord attended by an angel in the garden.	2 f. 0	1 f. 8
No. 2. Our Lady holding Christ in her lap, St. Joseph by, with St. Cecilia playing on the organ.	3 f. 6	4 f. 3
No. 3. Seven large Italian trunks, on which are painted several histories of the old and new testament.	1 f. 10	6 f. 0
By Albert Durer. Two small heads of men carved on wood.		
No. 1. By Tintoret. Our Lord crowned with thorns, with eleven other figures.	4 f. 9	6 f. 0
No. 2. A piece of fancy, containing nine naked figures and a satyr.	4 f. 0	3 f. 6
No. 3. A large piece, wherein the woman taken in adultery is brought before Christ, and some sick persons are presented to him to be cured.	6 f. 0	11 f. 3
No. 4. Our Saviour judging the world, and justice sitting near him, with several other figures representing the good and the wicked.	6 f. 0	9 f. 6
No. 5. The picture of a man.	3 f. 0	
No. 6. Jupiter and Danae lying naked with a woman near her.	4 f. 6	6 f. 0
No. 7. The picture of a man sitting.	4 f. 0	5 f. 0
No. 8. Our Saviour in the sepulchre, six other figures, and the Virgin Mary fainted away in the arms of two women.	7 f. 0	4 f. 6
No. 9. Naked children with fruit.	2 f. 0	2 f. 0

	No. 10.		
The picture of a man.		3 f. 0	2 f. 6
	No. 11.		
The picture of a Russian ambassador sitting.		3 f. 6	2 f. 6
	No. 12.		
A man's head.		1 f. 0	1 f. 0
	No. 13.		
St. Laurence on a gridiron, with other figures near him.		2 f. 6	3 f. 6
	No. 14.		
The flagellation of our Lord.		6 f. 0	6 f. 0
	No. 15.		
The picture of a man.		1 f. 0	2 f. 6
	No. 16.		
The picture of an old woman supposed to be Tintoret's mother.		3 f. 0	2 f. 6
	No. 17.		
The picture of a man.		3 f. 0	2 f. 6

No. 1.
By Raphael Urbin.
A round piece of three feet and a half in diameter,
representing the Virgin Mary sitting on a chair with Christ
in her lap, and St. John near her.

No. 2.
The Virgin Mary, Christ, and St. John in a landskip. 4 f. 0 2 f. 10

No. 3.
Our Saviour upon mount Tabor with all his disciples. 1 f. 6 1 f. 0

By Cigoli.
The martyrdom of St. Stephen. 5 f. 6 4 f. 6

By Corrosellis.
The Virgin Mary, our Lord, and two angels.

No. 1.
By Guido.
A large piece wherein the four seasons are represented under
the form of four naked women, and three angels. 5 f. 0 7 f. 0

No. 2.
Another large piece containing the baptism of our Saviour

by St. John. There are five large figures in this picture.	8 f. 6	8 f. 0
No. 3.		
The picture of a Sybil.	6 f. 6	5 f. 0
No. 1.		
By Manfredi.		
A large piece wherein many soldiers and women are feasting, and others playing at cards.	4 f. 6	6 f. 0
No. 2.		
A gipsy, with six other figures.	5 f. 0	7 f. 0
No. 1.		
By Fetti.		
A piece representing blindmen, containing four figures in a landskip.	1 f. 11	2 f. 4
No. 2.		
A thief near some ruins.	2 f. 6	2 f. 0
No. 3.		
The sower of the gospel with three other figures in a landskape.	2 f. 0	1 f. 6
No. 4.		
The prodigal son.	2 f. 6	1 f. 6
No. 5.		
The lost sheep.	2 f. 6	1 f. 6
No. 6.		
The debtor of the gospel, containing nine small figures and a building at a distance.	2 f. 6	1 f. 11
No. 7.		
The husbandman of the gospel, containing seven figures and a dog.	2 f. 6	1 f. 11
No. 8.		
The vision of St. Peter, wherein all kinds of animals are seen in a sheet.	3 f. 0	2 f. 3
No. 9.		
Jacob's Dream.	2 f. 0	1 f. 6
No. 1.		
By Leonardo Da Vinci.		
Herodias with the head of John Baptist in a charger.	3 f. 1	1 f. 6

No. 2.		
The Virgin Mary holding our Saviour, St. John and two other figures by.	1 f. 6	1 f. 8
No. 3.		
The Virgin Mary, Christ, and St. Ann, playing with a lamb.	3 f. 3	2 f. 6
No. 1.		
By Spagnolet.		
The conversion of St. Paul.	3 f. 0	5 f. 0
No. 2.		
The head of St. Peter.	3 f. 0	2 f. 3
No 1.		
By Gentileschi.		
A Magdalen lying at her length in a grotto, leaning on a skull.	5 f. 6	8 f. 0
No. 2.		
The Virgin Mary, our Saviour, and St. Joseph sleeping.	5 f. 6	8 f. 0
By Baglioni.		
St. Francis dying, and two angels comforting him.	5 f. 0	4 f. 6
No. 1.		
By Giosseppino.		
St. Michael fighting with the devils.	2 f. 6	2 f. 0
No. 2.		
A copper-piece, whereon two small figures in a landskape.	1 f. 6	
No. 3.		
The conversion of St. Paul.	1 f. 6	2 f. 0
No. 1.		
By Cantareni.		
Cain and Abel, with an altar, &c.	5 f. 6	4 f. 0
No. 2.		
Pluto and Proserpine.	6 f. 0	4 f. 0
No. 1.		
By Pordenone.		
Sampson and the Philistines, being about twenty figures.	5 f. 0	7 f. 0
No. 2.		
The prodigal son returning to his father, the architecture and		

landskape very good. N.B. See Aedes Walpolianæ, p. 38.	5 f. 5	8 f. 11 1/2
By Michael Angelo. A man in torture.	6 f. 0	4 f. 0
By Rubens. A large piece, being a landskape full of figures, horses, and carts.	5 f. 0	7 f. 7
No. 2. The picture of the queen regent of France, sitting under a canopy.	1 f. 9	2 f. 0
No. 3. A piece representing winter, wherein there are nine figures.	4 f. 0	7 f. 0
No. 4. Another large piece, wherein are several gods and goddesses of the woods, and little Bacchus's.	5 f. 4	7 f. 6
No. 5. Another ditto of Cimon and Iphigenia. There being in this picture three naked women and a man in a landskape.	7 f. 6	10 f. 9
No. 6. A fish market, wherein our Saviour and several other large figures are painted.	9 f. 3	13 f. 9
No. 7. A wild boar hunting, wherein several huntsmen on foot and on horseback are represented.	5 f. 6	6 f. 0
No. 8. Medusa's head.	2 f. 6	4 f. 0
No. 9. A naked woman with a hermit.	1 f. 0	2 f. 6
No. 10. The dutchess of Brabant with her lover.	3 f. 0	2 f. 9
No. 11. The three graces with fruit. N.B. Sir James Thornhill bought this picture at Paris, which was sold here after his death.	3 f. 0	2 f. 6
No. 12. The evening in a small landskip.	2 f. 0	2 f. 0

The head of an old woman.	No. 13.		
		1 f. 8	1 f. 4
Mary and Martha.	By Voyett.		
		5 f. 6	6 f. 0
Jupiter and Iö, with Juno in a cloud.	No. 1.		
	By Holbein.		
The picture of Madam de Vaux.	No. 2.		
		1 f. 6	1 f. 0
A man sealing a letter. N.B.	No. 3.		
		1 f. 6	
The picture of Henry VIII. king of England.	No. 4.		
		2 f. 0	2 f. 0
The picture of a man coloured.	No. 5.		
The picture of Erasmus. N.B.	No. 6.		
		1 f. 0	1 f. 0
A small picture of queen Mary of England.	No. 7.		
A small picture of the Duke of Norfolk.	No. 8.		
A banker in his compting-house, with people coming to borrow of him.	By Quintin Matsys.		
		4 f. 3	5 f. 0
A large piece of Apelles painting a naked Venus, containing all the instruments of a painter, nine great figures and a dog.	By Jos. Van Wingen.		
		7 f. 0	6 f. 5
The picture of a young man.	By the Canon of Utrecht.		
		1 f. 2	1 f. 0
A Cleopatra coloured.	By Roland Lacy.		
The picture of a queen.	By Gennet.		
		1 f. 6	1 f. 6

No. 1. By Snyder.		
A large piece representing a boar hunting.	7 f. 0	11 f. 0
No. 2.		
Another small piece, whereon grapes are represented.	1 f. 0	1 f. 0
No. 1. By Stanwick.		
The prospect of a jail out of which St. Peter is taken away by an angel. There are in this piece several figures of soldiers sleeping.	5 f. 0	8 f. 6
No. 2.		
A small piece representing the same history.		
By Fr. Bastian.		
The picture of Charles the bold, duke of Burgundy.		
By Sotto Cleeve.		
The picture of a man.	2 f. 0	2 f. 0
No. 1. By Antonio More.		
The picture of a man.		
No. 2.		
The picture of William Kaye.	3 f. 6	2 f. 6
No. 4.		
The picture of a musician.	2f. 6	2 f. 0
No. 5.		
A small picture.		
No. 6.		
The Picture of a man.	3 f. 9	3 f. 7
By Longpiere.		
The picture of an old peasant holding a stick in his hand.	2 f. 0	1 f. 6
No. 1. By William Kaye.		
The picture of Antonio More.	3 f. 0	2 f. 0
No. 2.		
William Kaye's own picture.	1 f. 3	1 f. 3
No. 3.		
A small picture.		

No. 4.
A head.

No. 5.
Another small head.

No. 6.
Two pictures, the one being that of a man, and the other that of a woman.

By Holderness
The picture of an old woman with a skull. 2 f. 5 2 f. 5

No. 1.
By Rottenhammer.
A small piece representing musick with several musical instruments in a landscape.

No. 2.
Another ditto representing Diana and her nymphs naked with Acteon and his dogs. There are in this picture seven figures in a landscape. 1 f. 0 1 f. 0

By Cornelius Kettel.
A large piece representing the virtues and vices, wherein there are several large figures. 4 f. 6 7 f. 0

By Mostart.
A piece representing winter, and a troop of thieves attacking a coach. There are in this picture several figures, beasts, carts, houses, &c. 4 f. 0 6 f. 0

By Hunthorst.
A large piece representing a tooth-drawer with many figures, &c. round him. 5 f. 0 7 f. 0

No. 1.
By Hempson.
Three small pieces.

No. 2.
The calling of St. Matthew by our Saviour, wherein seven large figures and other small ones are represented. 3 f. 6 4 f. 6

By Jos. Van Cleeve.
The picture of a man sitting on a chair. 2 f. 0 1 f. 9

By old Pourbus.
A small picture of the old duke of Brunswick. 1 f. 6 1 f. 0

By Collaert.		
Two pictures of two young men.	1 f. 3	1 f. 0
By Paroceil.		
A sea with several ships upon it.	3 f. 0	4 f. 6
By Coxis.		
Our Saviour carrying his cross.	4 f. 0	2 f. 10
No. 1.		
By several other excellent masters.		
An old man and a naked woman tied to a rock.	3 f. 3	2 f. 3
No. 2.		
The Virgin Mary, our Saviour, and St. Ann, with four other figures.	1 f. 9	1 f. 3
No. 3.		
The picture of a man.	2 f. 0	1 f. 6
No. 4.		
The Virgin Mary with St. Andrew and St. Katherine.	3 f. 6	4 f. 0
No. 5.		
A piece representing the appearance of our Saviour to Magdalen, with St. John and an angel.	4 f. 0	5 f. 0
No. 6.		
Another large piece representing Venus lying down in a wood, a Satyr, and a Cupid; as also a huntsman and his dogs, the whole being in a landscape.	6 f. 4	13 f. 0
No. 7.		
A pricked piece of gilded copper, representing the judgment of Paris.		
No. 8.		
A small head of Melanchthon.		
No. 9.		
Another small head with a cap on.		
No. 10.		
The head of our Saviour.	1 f. 0	1 f. 0
No. 11.		
The picture of an abbot with a surplice on, sitting before a table.	4 f. 0	3 f. 0
No. 12.		

A small picture of the duke of Bourbon.

No. 13. The holy family with St. John.	4 f. 0	5 f. 3
No. 14. St. Cecilia playing upon a harp.	4 f. 3	3 f. 0
No. 15. The Virgin Mary and our Saviour.	2 f. 6	2 f. 6
No. 16. The holy family with St. John.		
No. 17. Lucretia with two other figures.	5 f. 0	4 f. 0
No. 18. Venus, Mercury, and Cupid.	5 f. 4	3 f. 2
No 19. A charity.	2 f. 3	1 f. 6

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Figure 1 Anthony Van Dyck
The Continence of Scipio, 1620-21
Oil on canvas, 183 x 232 cm
Christ Church, Oxford



Figure 2

Titian
La Gloria (The Trinity), c.1553-54
Oil on canvas, 346 x 240 cm
Museo del Prado, Madrid



Figure 3

William Larkin,
George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, c.1616
Oil on canvas, 204 x 119 cm
National Portrait Gallery, London



Figure 4

William Larkin
Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke, c. 1615
Oil on canvas, 213 x 126 cm
Private collection



Figure 5

William Larkin
Susan Villiers, Countess of Denbigh, c. 1615-16
Oil on canvas, 201 x 117 cm
Private collection



Figure 6

Marcus Gheeraerts
Sir Thomas Parker, c. 1620
Oil on canvas, 213 x 135 cm
The National Trust, Saltram House



Figure 7

John de Critz
James I, c.1605
Oil on canvas, 201 x 118 cm
Private collection

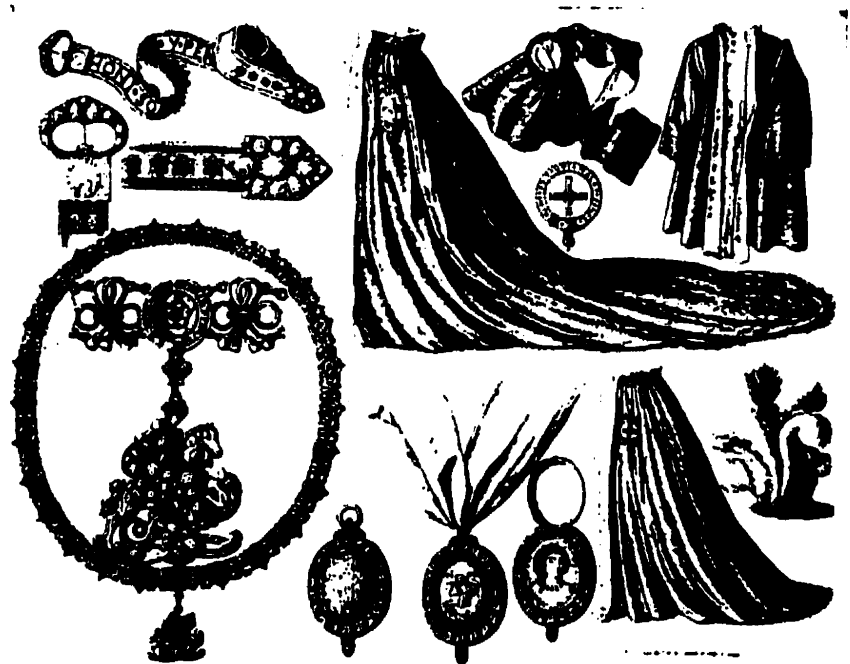


Figure 8

Wenceslaus Hollar
The Regalia of the Order of the Garter, 1672
Etching



Figure 9

**Hans Eworth
Sir John Luttrell, 1550
Oil on panel, 110.5 x 84 cm
The Courtauld Institute of Art, London**



Figure 10

Anthony Van Dyck
Sir George Villiers and Lady Katherine Manners as Adonis and Venus,
1620-21
Oil on canvas, 224 x 164 cm
Derek Johns Ltd., London



Figure 11 Anthony Van Dyck
Venus and Adonis, 1618-20
Oil on canvas, 175 x 175 cm
Location unknown



Figure 12 **Titian**
***Girl in Furs*, c.1535**
Oil on canvas, 96.5 x 63.5 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 13 Raphael
Mercury and Psyche, 1518-19
Fresco
Villa Farnesina, Rome



Figure 14

Albrecht Dürer

Young Couple threatened by Death (The Promenade), 1498

Engraving, 19.2 x 12 cm

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge



Figure 14a Michel Lasne
Promenading Couple on a Terrace, c. 1620
 Engraving
 Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, Paris



Figure 15

Peter Paul Rubens
George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, 1625
Chalk and ink on paper, 38.3 x 26.6 cm
Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna

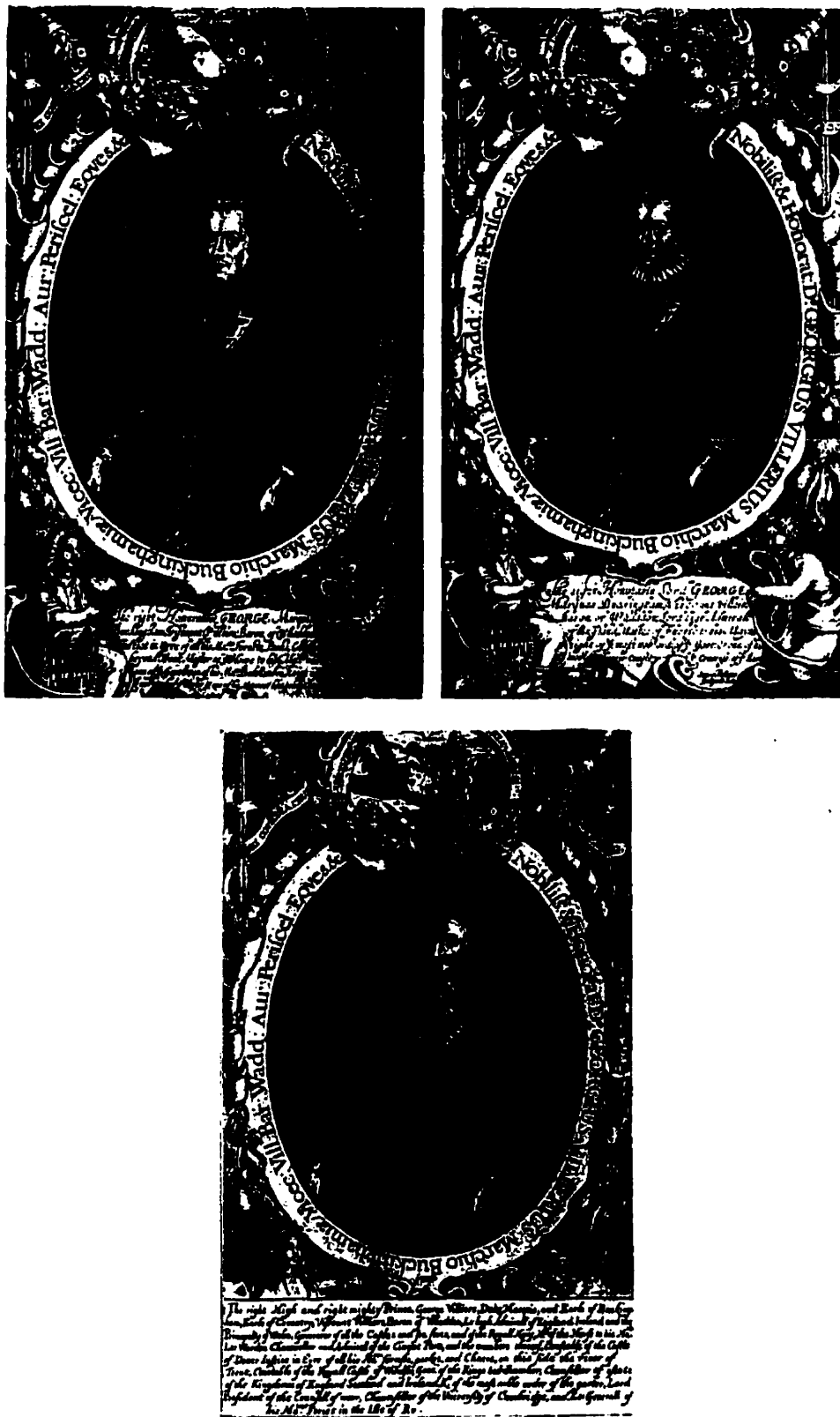


Figure 16

Simon de Passe
 George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, 1619-20
 Engraving, states I, II and IV, 19.3 x 11.4 cm
 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford and Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge



Figure 17 **Peter Paul Rubens**
Katherine Manners, Duchess of Buckingham, c. 1625
Chalk on paper, 36 x 26.5 cm
Gräphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna



Figure 18

Anthony Van Dyck
Katherine Manners, Duchess of Buckingham
Oil on canvas, 74 x 57 cm
The Duke of Rutland, Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire

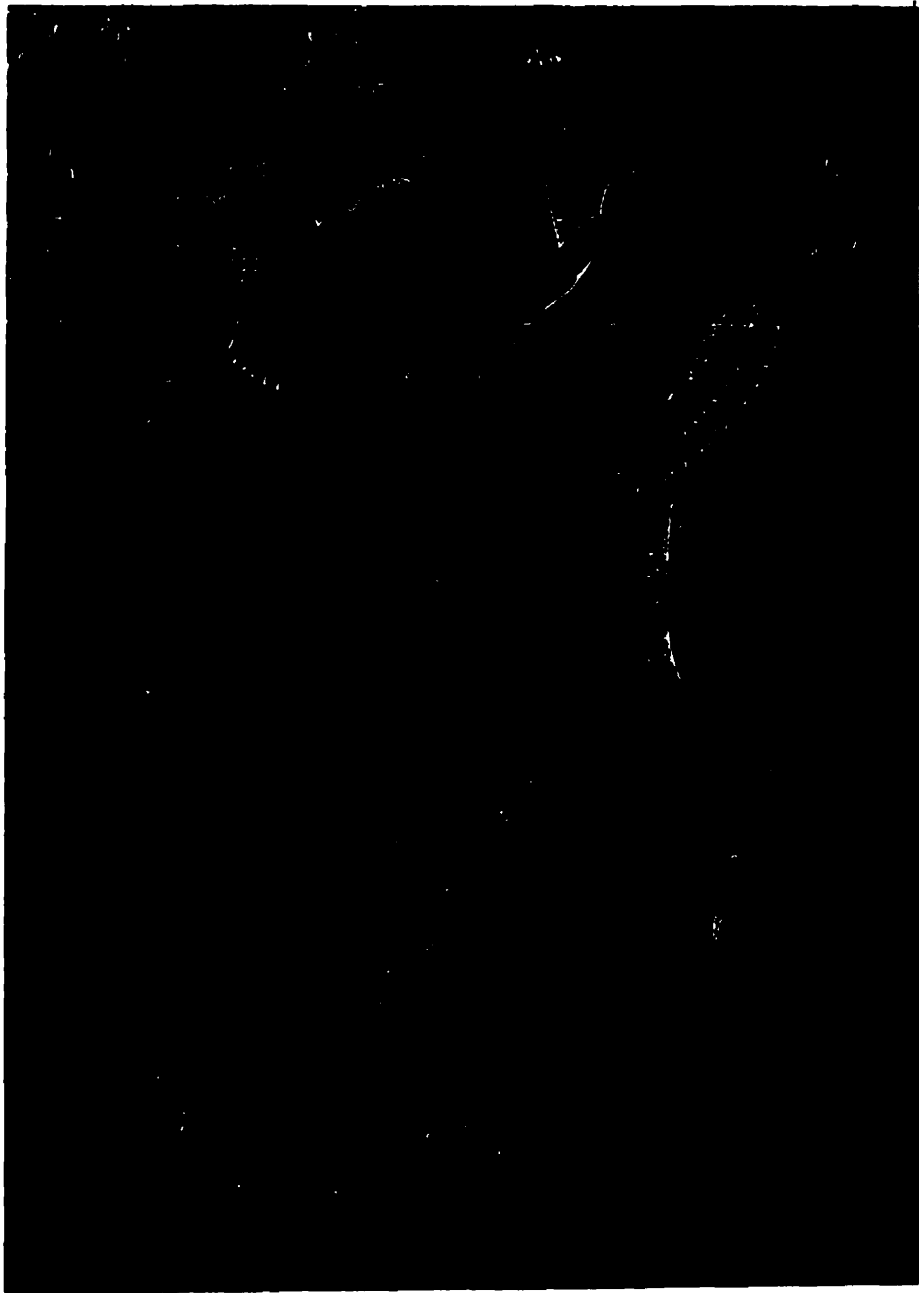


Figure 19

Peter Paul Rubens

Rubens and Isabella Brant in the Honeysuckle Bower, c. 1609

Oil on canvas, 179 x 136 cm

Ältere Pinakothek, Munich



Figure 20

Peter Paul Rubens
Hélène Fourment in a Fur-Cloak (Het Pelsken), 1638-40
Oil on panel, 175 x 96 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 21 **Peter Paul Rubens**
Francesco Gómez de Sandoval y Royas, Duke of Lerma, on Horseback,
1603
Oil on canvas, 289 x 205 cm
Museo del Prado, Madrid

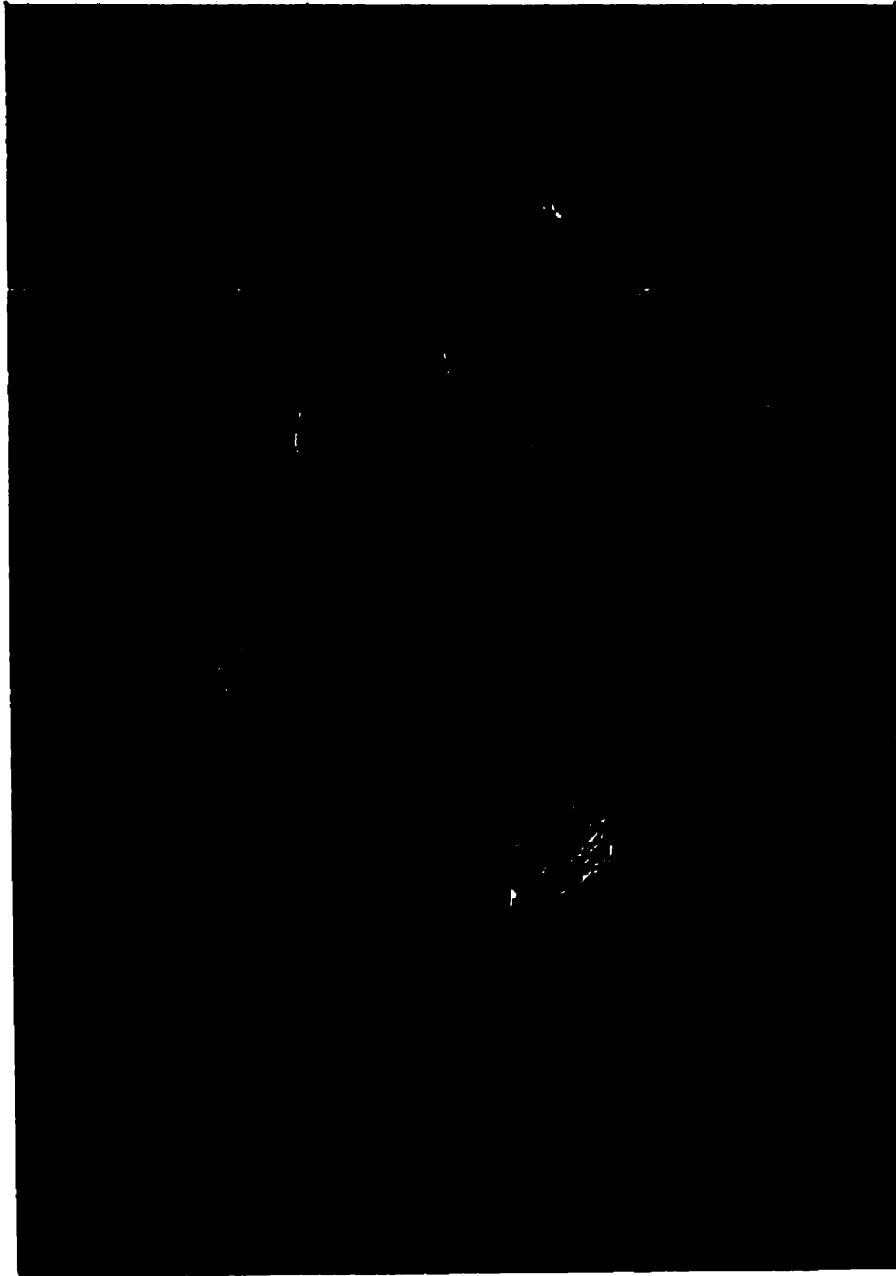


Figure 22 **Peter Paul Rubens**
***The Felicity of the Regency*, 1622-25**
Oil on canvas, 394 x 295 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris



Figure 23 **Peter Paul Rubens**
The Return of the Mother to her Son (Peace is confirmed in Heaven),
1622-25
Oil on canvas, 394 x 295 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris

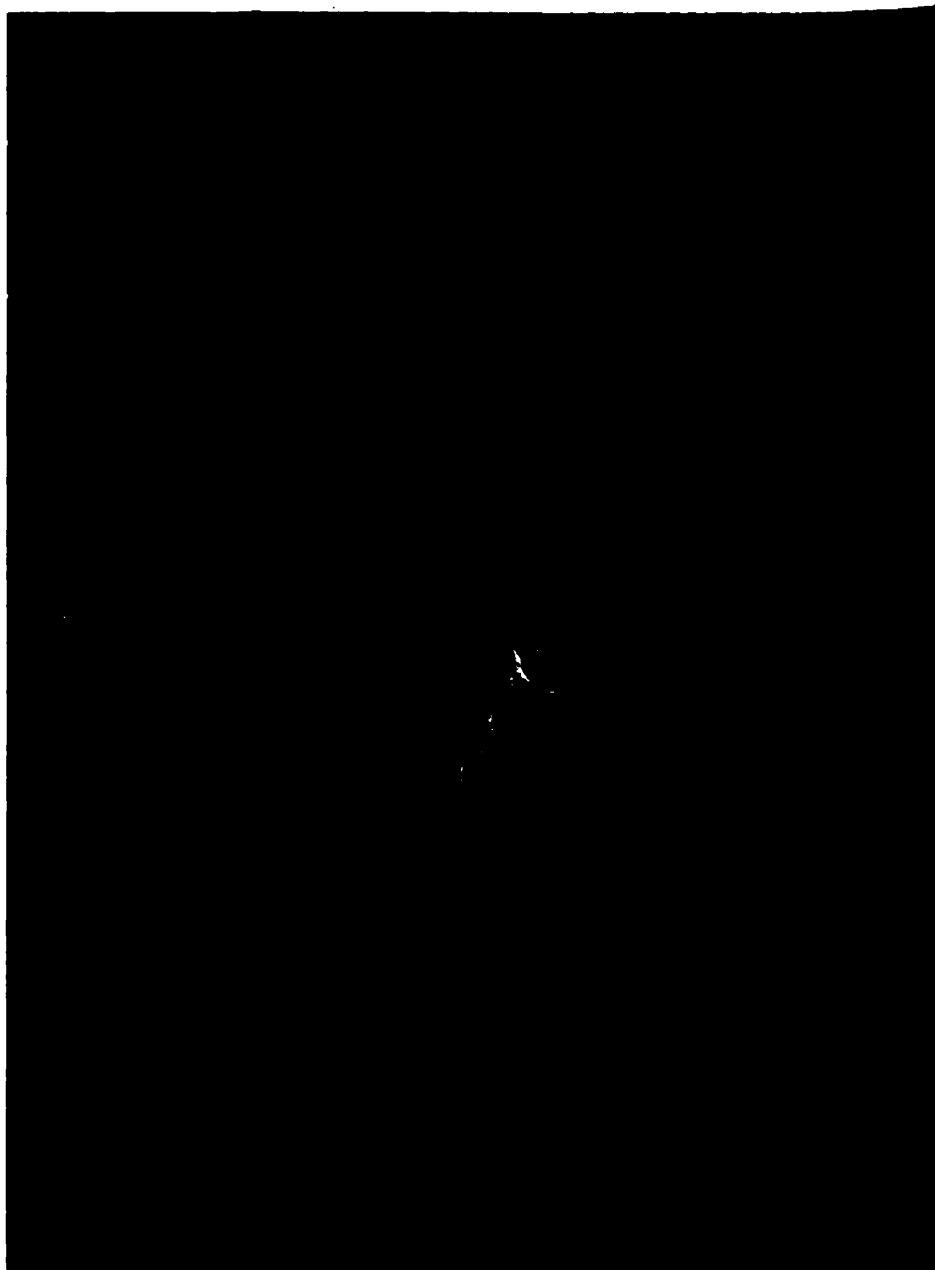


Figure 24 **Peter Paul Rubens**
***The Treaty of Angoulême*, 1622-25**
Oil on canvas, 394 x 295 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris



Figure 25 **Peter Paul Rubens**
Equestrian Portrait of George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, 1625-27
Oil on canvas, 315 x 344 cm
The Earl of Jersey, Osterley Park, Middlesex (destroyed 1949)

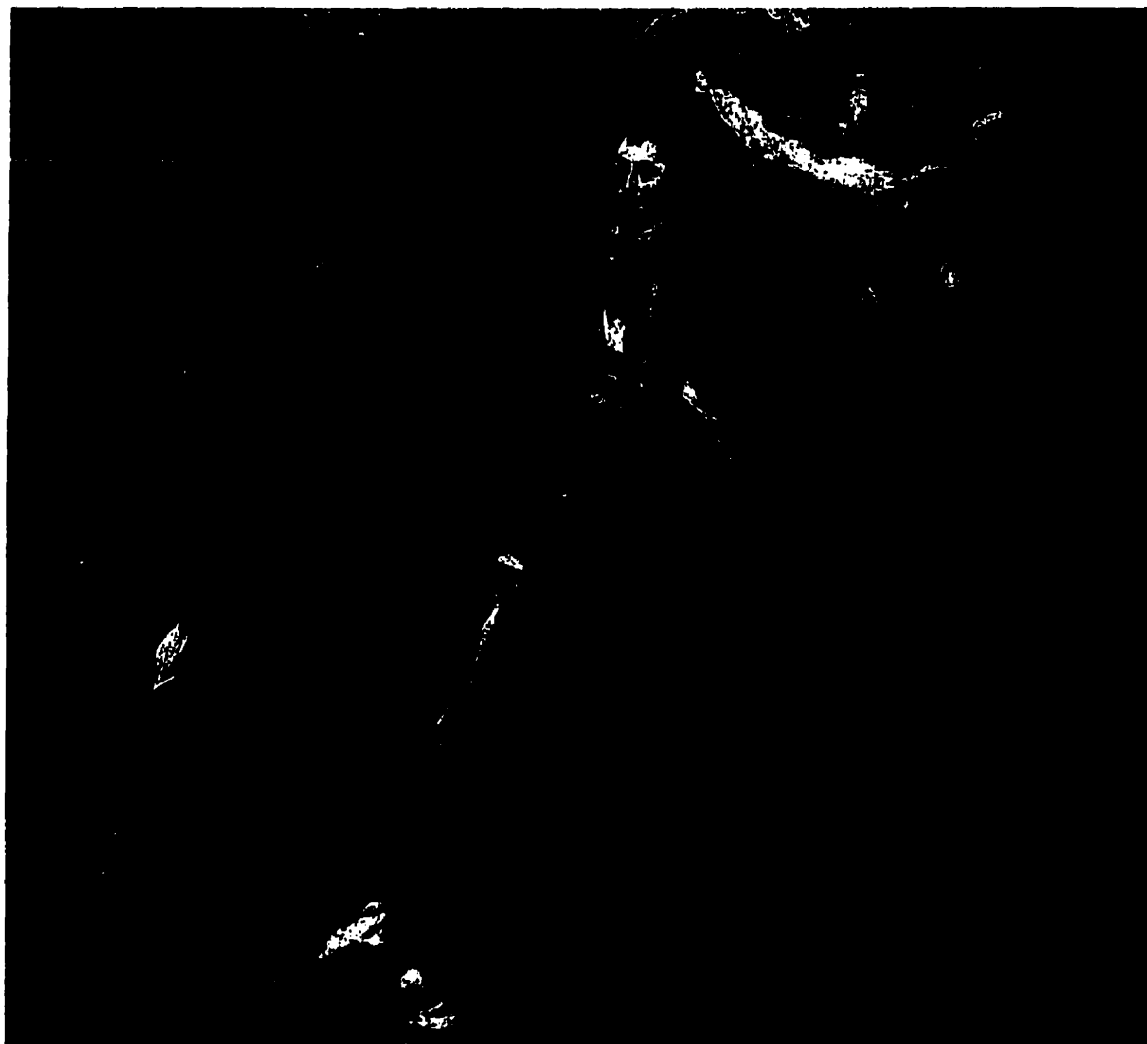


Figure 26

Peter Paul Rubens

Modello for the Equestrian Portrait of George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, c.1625-27

Oil on panel, 44.5 x 49.2 cm

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas



Figure 27 **Isaac Oliver**
***Henry, Prince of Wales*, c. 1610**
Oil on Canvas, 228.6 x 116.2 cm
Private collection

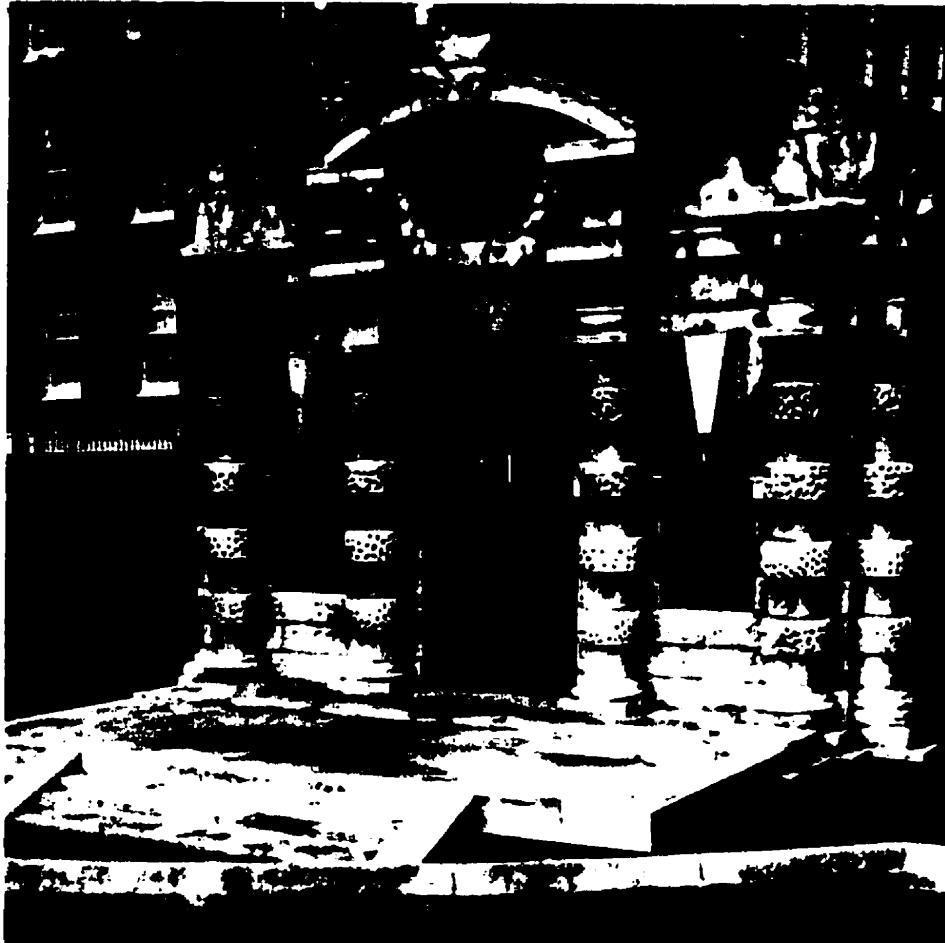


Figure 28 *York House, the Water Gate, c.1626*
Victoria Embankment, London



Figure 29 *The Garden Gate*, c. 1616-21
Rubens House, Antwerp



Figure 30

Peter Paul Rubens

The Apotheosis of the Duke of Buckingham

Oil on canvas, 541 x 498 cm

The Earl of Jersey, Osterley Park, Middlesex (destroyed 1949)



Figure 31

Peter Paul Rubens
Sketch for the Apotheosis of the Duke of Buckingham
Oil on panel, 63.5 x 63.5 cm
National Gallery of Art, London



Figure 32

Balthazar Gerbier

George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, 1618

Watercolour on vellum, 12.4 cm oval

The Duke of Northumberland, Alnwick, Northumberland



Figure 33 Charles Anthony after Nicholas Hilliard (attr.)
Great Seal of James I, 1603
Wax, 15 cm diameter
Public Record Office, London



Figure 34 **Balthazar Gerbier**
George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham
Oil on panel, 75 x 63 cm
Private collection



Figure 35 Gerrit Van Honthorst
The Dentist
Oil on canvas, 147 x 219 cm
Gemäldegalerie, Dresden (lost)



Figure 36

Gerrit Van Honthorst
Apollo and Diana, 1628
Oil on canvas, 357 x 640 cm
The Royal Collections, Hampton Court Palace



Figure 37

Gerrit Van Honthorst
Sketch for Apollo and Diana, 1628
Ink, wash and chalk on paper, 38 x 58 cm
Boymans Museum, Rotterdam



Figure 38 **Orazio Gentileschi**
***Mary Magdalen*, 1623-25**
Oil on canvas, 163 x 208 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 39

Daniel Mytens
George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, c.1626
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Figure 40

Cornelius Jonson
George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, c. 1618-19 (detail)
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Figure 41

Cornelius Jonson
George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, c. 1620
Oil on canvas
Private collection



Figure 42

Cornelius Jonson
George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham, c. 1624
Oil on canvas, 85 x 65 cm
The Royal Collections, Windsor Castle



Figure 43

Hans Holbein
Christina of Denmark, Duchess of Milan
Oil on panel, 179 x 82.5 cm
National Gallery of Art, London



Figure 44

Giambologna
Samson and a Philistine, c. 1565
Marble, 210 cm high
Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Figure 45 Titian
Ecce Homo, 1543
Oil on canvas, 242 x 361 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 46 Jacopo Bassano
Noah's Ark
Oil on canvas, 122 x 152 cm
Národní Galerie, Prague



Figure 47 Guido Reni
The Four Seasons, c. 1615-20
Oil on canvas, 170 x 221 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

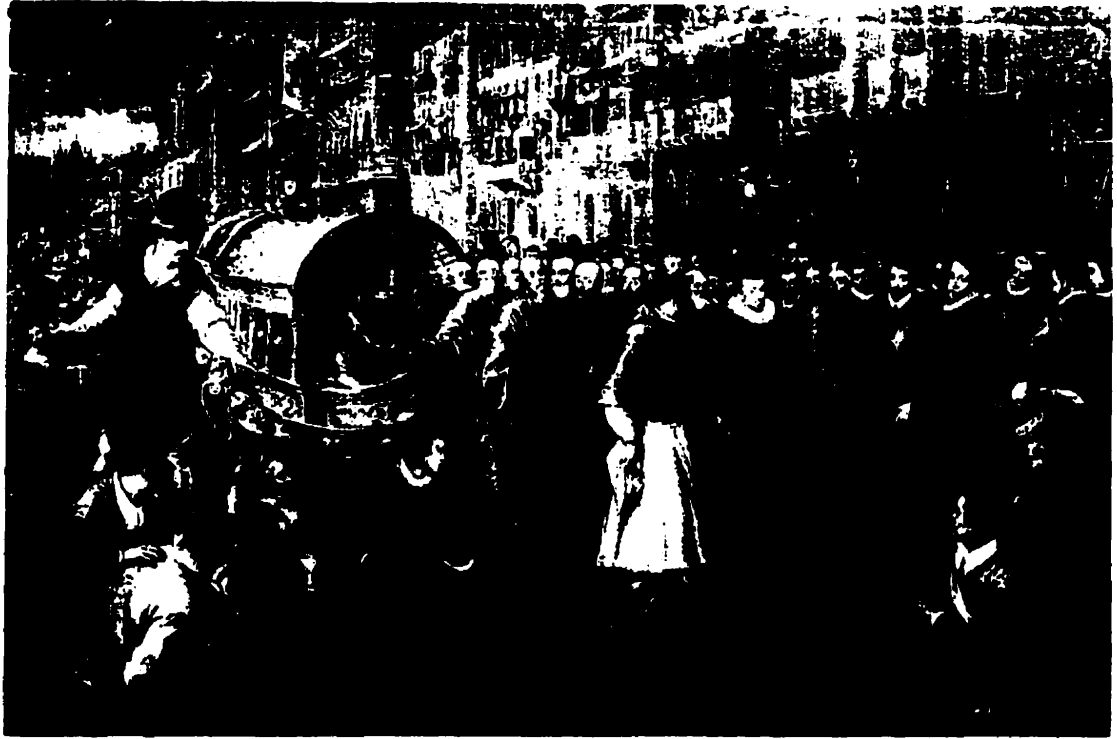


Figure 48 Jacopo Palma (Palma Giovane)
Henry III at Venice
Oil on canvas, 269 x 480 cm
Gemäldegalerie, Dresden



Figure 49 Francesco Bassano
Hercules and Omphale
Oil on canvas, 178 x 374 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 50

Titian

Georges d'Armagnac, Bishop of Rodez, with Guillaume Philandrier, 1537

Oil on canvas, 104 x 114 cm

The Duke of Northumberland, Alwick, Northumberland



Figure 51

Guido Reni
The Baptism of Christ
Oil on canvas, 263.5 x 186.5 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 52 **Peter Paul Rubens**
***Lion Hunt*, 1616-17**
Oil on canvas, 280 x 380 cm
Ältere Pinakothek, Munich

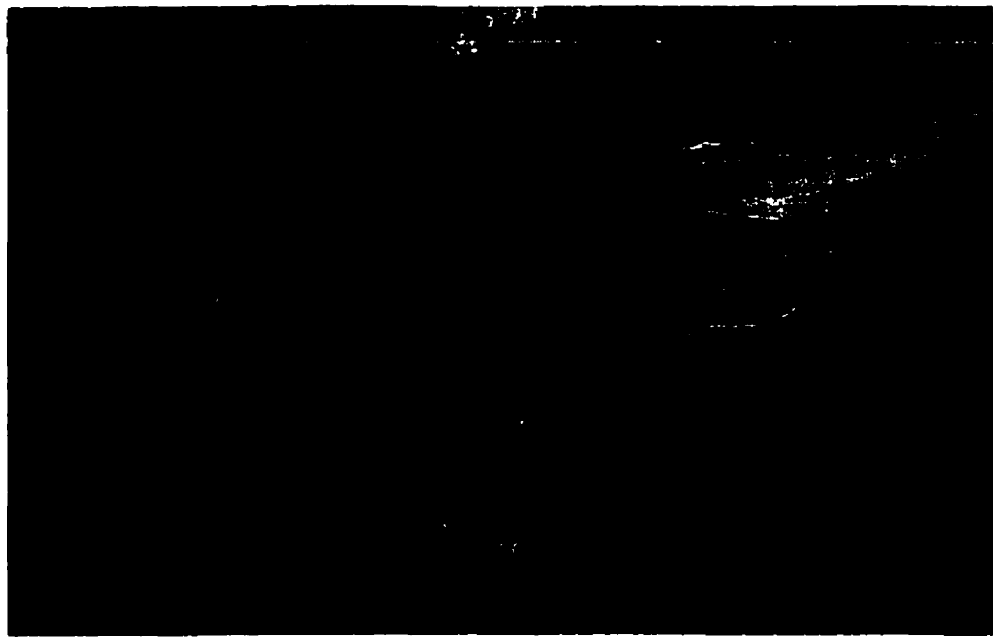


Figure 53 **Peter Paul Rubens**
***Summer*, c. 1618**
Oil on canvas, 143 x 223 cm
The Royal Collections, London



Figure 54

Peter Paul Rubens

Landscape with Boar Hunt, c. 1616-18

Oil on panel, 137 x 168.5 cm

Gemäldegalerie, Dresden



Figure 55 Peter Paul Rubens
Cimon and Iphigenia, c. 1616
Oil on canvas, 208 x 282 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 56 **Peter Paul Rubens and Frans Snyders**
The Head of Medusa
Oil on canvas, 68.5 x 118 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 57 **Peter Paul Rubens**
***Angelica and the Hermit*, c. 1625**
Oil on canvas, 43 x 66 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Figure 58 Anthony Van Dyck
Le Roi à la Classe, c. 1635
Oil on canvas, 272 x 212 cm
Musée du Louvre, Paris