



The Rise and Fall of Robert Walpole

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Studienarbeit aus dem Jahr 2009 im Fachbereich Anglistik - Kultur und Landeskunde, Note: 1,7, Universität Leipzig (Anglistik), Veranstaltung: 18th Century britain, Sprache: Deutsch, Abstract: "THERE never was a man, whose actions and character have been more earnestly and openly canvassed, than those of the present minister, who, having governed a learned and free nation for so long a time, amidst such mighty opposition, ... " (http://www.econlib.org/library/LFBooks/Hume/hmMPL47.html)

These words were written by David Hume in 1742 to describe one of the central figures of eighteen's century Britain-Robert Walpole. Walpole is considered the first Prime Minister of Great Britain, although the position "Prime Minister" had no recognition in official use at the time. He has headed various government offices on his way to the top of Parliament until he reached it as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1721. Walpole dominated English politics from 1722-1742. His governance period was a powerful era in British history, an era of prosperity and peace. He deliberately cultivated a frank, hearty manner, but his political subtlety has scarcely been equaled. But who was this intelligent, zealous and energetic man? How was he able to reach the top of the Ministry and remain there for the longest spell in history? And what caused the downfall of a rather successful man?

These are the central questions covered in this paper. First part of it will be about the early life of Robert Walpole. Afterwards I will have a closer look inside his early political career and subsequently I want to focus on his rise to power. Third and fourth part of the paper I will develop his premiership under George I and George II. In the last part I want to have a look at the last years of premiership und simultaneously I will try to work out the reasons for his downfall.



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