

... may continue his parody to the end, and finish with exclaiming, "The occupation's gone!"<sup>14</sup> understanding Mr. Burke's horrid paintings, when the French Revolution compared with that of other countries, the astonishment will be, it is marked with so few sacrifices; but this astonishment will cease to reflect that *principles*, and not *persons*, were the meditated objects of the nation. The mind of the nation was acted upon by a higher stimulus than the consideration of persons could inspire, and sought a higher object than could be produced by the downfall of an enemy. \* \* \*

... referring to the hero of Cervantes's romance, who famously mistakes windmills for his foes the giants, means "insanely idealistic."

... *Othello* 3.3.362 (Othello's feelings about Desdemona has been unfaithful to me). "Quixote" as an adjective,

## JAMES GILLRAY

... and eighteenth century, the artist William Hogarth's success with the engraving is called his "modern moral subjects" had demonstrated that people who are willing to reproduce form the paintings of others. They could also claim the moral authority as witty social critics. Satiric prints in the tradition of Hogarth established were a thriving commercial concern by the time the young James Gillray (1757-1815) enrolled (along with William Blake) at the Royal Academy of Art. Especially popular at this time were political caricatures, the form of portraiture, deftly balanced between a grotesque one, that continues to be used to pillory public figures and their pretensions. Straitlaced foreign visitors frequently marveled at the laughing crowds that would gather around the windows of the London shops where these were displayed. By the end of the 1780s, Gillray, originally from a working-class family, had become a celebrity thanks to the verve with which he captured the likenesses of politicians—even the Royal Family—in etched prints that comically heightened the physical particularities that made them different selves. With the outbreak of the French Revolution, these images proved well suited to registering the yawning gap between the high-minded idealism of the revolutionaries and the sordid realities of their Revolution. The power that infused Gillray's depictions of French revolutionists and English sympathizers struck many as the equivalent in visual art to the verbal wit of Thomas Paine had complained about in his encounter with "Mr. Burke's paintings." It is not surprising therefore to learn that after 1797 Gillray was active in the government payroll, for assisting in the campaign to discredit the opposition. Still, with their characteristic mix of fury and glee, his prints are difficult for attentive viewers to pin down his political allegiances. Although propaganda they are not. Unbalanced, blending in a combustible way the high-minded history paintings Gillray studied at the Royal Academy and the crude energies of popular culture, these images can throw us off bal-

... reformed in France, which had grown up under the hereditary despotism of the monarchy, and became so rooted as to be in a great measure independent of it. Between the monarchy, the parliament, and the church, there is a *rivalship* of despotism; besides the feudal despotism operating locally, the ministerial despotism operating every where. But Mr. Burke, by casting the King as the only possible object of a revolt, speaks as if France were a village, in which every thing that passed must be known to its commanding officer, and no oppression could be acted but what he could immediately control. Mr. Burke might have been in the Bastille his whole life, or under Louis XVI as Louis XIV and neither the one nor the other have been that such a man as Mr. Burke existed. The despotic principles of the government were the same in both reigns, though the dispositions of the men were as remote as tyranny and benevolence.

What Mr. Burke considers as a reproach to the French Revolution of bringing it forward under a reign more mild than the preceding one, is one of its highest honors. The revolutions that have taken place in all European countries, have been excited by personal hatred. The rage against the man, and he became the victim. But, in the instance of France, we see a revolution generated in the rational contemplation of the rights of man, and distinguishing from the beginning between persons and principles. But Mr. Burke appears to have no idea of principles, when he is railing against governments. "Ten years ago," says he, "I could have felicitated France on her having a government, without enquiring what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered." Is this the language of a rational man? Is it the language of a heart feeling as it ought to feel for the rights and happiness of the human race? On this ground, Mr. Burke must compare every government in the world, while the victims who suffer under it, whether sold into slavery, or tortured out of existence, are wholly forgotten. Is power, and not principles, that Mr. Burke venerates; and under this miserable depravity, he is disqualified to judge between them.—Thus much of his opinion as to the occasions of the French Revolution.

As to the tragic paintings by which Mr. Burke has outraged his own nation, and seeks to work upon that of his readers, they are very well calculated for theatrical representation, where facts are manufactured for the sake of show, and accommodated to produce, through the weakness of sympathy, a weeping effect. But Mr. Burke should recollect that he is writing History, and not *Plays*; and that his readers will expect truth, and not the spouting rant of high-toned exclamation. When we see a man dramatically lamenting in a publication intended to be believed, that, "*The age of chivalry is gone!*" that *The glory of France is extinguished for ever!* that *The unbought grace of life* (if any one knows what it is), *the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone!*" and all this because the Quixote age of chivalry and sense is gone, What opinion can we form of his judgment, or what respect can we pay to his facts? In the rhapsody of his imagination, he has discovered a world of windmills, and his sorrows are, that there are no Quixotes to attack them. But if the age of aristocracy, like that of chivalry, should fall, and they had originally some connection, Mr. Burke, the trumpeter