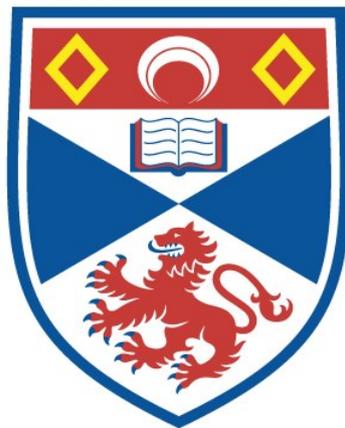


'THOSE SCANDALOUS PRINTS': CARICATURES OF THE ELITE IN
FRANCE AND BRITAIN, C.1740-1795

Natalee Eleanor Maureen Garrett

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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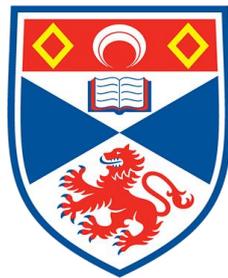
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'Those Scandalous Prints': Caricatures of the Elite in
France and Britain, c.1740-1795

Natalee Eleanor Maureen Garrett



University of
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
at the University of St Andrews

December 2020

**‘Those Scandalous Prints’:
Caricatures of the Elite in France and Britain,
c.1740-1795**

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University of
St Andrews

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Abstract

This thesis explores caricatures of elite individuals produced in France and Britain between 1740 and 1795. It argues that the urban public spheres of France and Britain were increasingly critical of the elite in this period, and that caricatures were a significant means of expressing this criticism. It is a comparative study of British and French caricatures, analysing the similarities in popular urban attitudes towards the elite in both countries, and the ways in which these attitudes were visually depicted.

The eighteenth century saw significant expansion of a public sphere which facilitated widespread discussion about the social and political makeup of society in both countries. Scholarship of eighteenth-century European caricature has largely focused on 1789-1800. By examining sources which cross from the *ancien régime* and into the early years of the French Revolution, it becomes possible to explore how shifting popular attitudes towards the elite were manifested in visual culture.

By analysing recurrent motifs in British and French caricatures, this study argues that the reiteration of these motifs constituted a ‘language’ by which caricaturists communicated with viewers in a visual format. In doing so, it identifies, and assesses the significance of, the following key themes: the development of the urban public sphere, the emergence of a modern celebrity culture, and changing cultural attitudes towards the elite.

The thesis contributes to recent historiography on eighteenth-century celebrity and the public sphere by exploring how caricatures participated in the development of these cultures, particularly in the capital cities of London and Paris. It also considers the extent to which British and French caricatures contributed to contemporary popular discourse on the purpose and traditional roles of elite members of society.

Overall, the thesis argues that caricatures were a crucial mode of public discourse on the socio-political elite in France and Britain between 1740 and 1795.

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Fig.3.36 James Gillray, 'Monstrous craws, at a new coalition feast' (1787) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.3.37 Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, 'Montrés vous citoyens, l'Occasion est belle Pour acheter la paix portés votre vaisselle', (1759), Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957. Acc. No: 675.339.

Fig.3.38 Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, 'Nous l'avons vü en 1774. miserablement trainant dans la Crotte', (1774?) Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957. Acc. No: 675.294.

Fig.3.39 Anon. 'Gargantua du siecle...' (1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.3.40 Anon. 'Cidevant grand couvert de Gargantua moderne en famille'(1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.1 Anon. 'Cowardice Rewarded or the Devil will have his due' (1756) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.2 Anon. 'Merit and Demerit made Conspicuous; Or the Pillers of the Publick Prov'd' (1756) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.3 Anon. 'WITHOUT. From the London Evening Post of Saturday June 11, 1757' (1757) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.4 Anon. 'The hungry mob of scribblers and etchers' (1762) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.5 Anon. 'The political brokers or an auction a la mode de Paris' (1762) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.6 Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, 'Ce chevalier est si-bette quil faut quil soit beau', (c 1740-c 1775) Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957. Acc. No: 675.112.

Fig.4.7 James Gillray, 'Anticipation, or the approaching fate of the French commercial treaty' (1787) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.8 William Dent, 'Don Carlo. Portuguese Plenipoextraordinary' (1787) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.9 James Sayers, 'The Chamber of Commerce, or L'Assemblée des Not-ables Anglois'(1787) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.10 Anon. 'The commercial treaty; or John Bull changing beef and pudding for frogs and soup maigre!' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.11 Anon. 'The treaty of commerce or new coalition' (1787) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.12 Anon. 'Un bon averti en vaut deux' (c.1780-90) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.13 Anon. 'Lallégorie est assez claire, pour se passer de comentaire : Mercure simbole du commerce est étranglé par un cordon parlant' (1788) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.14 James Gillray, 'Alecto and her train, at the gate of PandæMonium:-or-The recruiting sarjeant enlisting John-Bull, into the Revolution Service.' (1791) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.15 James Gillray, ‘A Democrat, -or Reason & Philosophy’ (1793) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.16 James Gillray ‘Dumourier dining in state at St James's, on the 15th of May, 1793.’ (1793) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.17 James Gillray, ‘The genius of France triumphant, -or- Britannia petitioning for peace. -Vide, The Proposals of Opposition’ (1795) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.18 James Gillray, ‘France. Britain. Freedom. Slavery’ (1789) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.19 William Dent, ‘Constitutional Danger, or, A sure way to stop the progress of Pain’ (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.20 William Dent, ‘Spirit of aristocracy enforcing reform, or, the rights of Kings maintained’ (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.21 Anon. ‘Billy in hast going to consult his old friend concerning the war’ (1794) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.22 James Gillray, ‘The French Invasion –or- John Bull bombarding the Bum-Boats’ (1793) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.23 Richard Newton, ‘Louis Dethron’d!’ (1792)© Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.24 James Gillray, ‘Taking Physick, or the News of Shooting the King of Sweden!’ (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.25 James Gillray, ‘Fatigues of the Campaign in Flanders’ (1793)© Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.26 James Gillray, ‘Pantagruel's victorious return to the court of Gargantua. After extirpating the soup -meagres of Bouille Land.’ (1794) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.27 Richard Newton, ‘Arming in the Defence of French Princes’ (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig.4.28 Anon. ‘Le Géant Iscariotte aristocrate’ (1789) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.29 Anon. [Fuite des émigrés, représentés en animaux, dans des carrosses] (1789-90) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.30 Anon. ‘Le Chasseur patriote’ (1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.31 Anon. ‘Fi donc Mr l'emigrant vous foirez en vannant eh ! vite un essuye main’ (1790/2) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.32 Anon. ‘Je chie, sur les aristocrates’ (1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.33 Anon. ‘Revue générale du petit Condé’ (1792) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.34 Anon. 'L'aristocrate, a l'agonie prioit la mort de l'epargner. Bon, bon, dit elle, a quoi te sert la vie ? si tu ne peux plus y régner' (1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.35 Anon. [Aristocrates en enfer] (1792) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.36 Anon. 'Menagerie nationale' (1792) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.37 Anon. 'Le Charlatan politique : ou le léopard apprivoisé'(1794) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.38 Anon. 'La Grande aiguiserie royale de poignards anglais : le fameux Pitt aiguissant les poignards' (1794) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.39 François Godefroy, 'Le jongleur Pitt' (1794) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Fig.4.40 Anon. 'Nouvelles a la cour de la Grande Bretagne ou Mr. Pitt annonçant a sa majesté le [sic] Révolution en Hollande' (c.1795-8) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Introduction

Preface

On 10 December 1791, London print shop owner Samuel Fores published a caricature by the artist Isaac Cruikshank, entitled: ‘The first interview or the presentation of the Prusian [sic] pearl’ (fig.0.1). The print was one of dozens published in London that year which commented on the marriage of the Duke of York to Fredericka of Prussia. To contemporaries, the print was likely no more noteworthy than any of the hundreds of satirical prints published in Britain in 1791, many of which chose as their topic the socio-political elite of British society. For this thesis, however, ‘The First Interview’ occupies an important position for a number of reasons. Not only does the print demonstrate a satirical, visual commentary on a notable event, such as a royal marriage, but it also demonstrates the interconnectivity of British and French caricature production in the eighteenth century. For, although the ‘The First Interview’ was one of many comments on the Duke of York’s marriage, it enjoyed a second life in a copycat French-made version: ‘La Boîte à Pandore’ (fig.0.2), published in Paris c.1792-3.

Scholars in the field of caricature studies have long conjectured on the existence of a transfer of British caricatures to France, and these two prints demonstrate without doubt that British-made prints crossed the Channel in the 1790s and inspired French satirical artists of the Revolution.¹ Thus, these two prints embody one of the core pathways of enquiry in this thesis: the extent to which British and French caricatures mirrored each other in the

¹ Amelia Rauser and Michel Melot both make reference to British caricatures sold at the Parisian residence of the Duc d’Orléans, the Palais-Royal, in the 1780s. Amelia Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked; Irony, Authenticity, and Individualism in Eighteenth-century English Prints* (Newark, 2008), p. 129; Michel Melot, ‘Caricature and the Revolution: the Situation in France in 1789’, in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 28.

eighteenth century. This comparison allows for an exploration of the cultural ties between the two nations, as well as the similarities in visual representations of elite members of society.

The content of the two prints also relates to the historical trend examined within this thesis, which analyses contemporary perceptions of the elite as a social group, and on an individual basis. While the British print makes fun of the royal family's alleged avarice, the French-made image uses the outline of the Cruikshank caricature to express ideas which are indicative of popular attitudes to the French royal family in 1792/3. In 'La Boîte à Pandore', the doll-like woman emerging from the box is not a promise of financial gain for the family she is to marry in to, as in the British model; she is, in fact, a personification of the evil which emitted from Pandora's Box in the Greek myth. The woman is Marie-Antoinette, former Queen of France, and the caricaturist has pinpointed her entry into the royal family in 1774 as a key moment of tragedy in the narrative of recent French history. An examination of the different meanings contained within the duplicate images therefore demonstrates how a simple premise like that of royal matrimony could be manipulated and altered by artists to reflect the political events and sentiments of a given moment in time.

The French version is particularly indicative of its production date of 1792/3, for while visual criticisms of the Queen of France were virtually unknown before the beginning of the Revolution in 1789, they increased significantly in the succeeding four years. As is well known, the royal family's escape attempt in June 1791 soured popular perceptions of the monarchy in France, making a vitriolic image such as this both legally possible and highly in demand with the Parisian public. What is less well known are the ways in which French printmakers drew on the visual precedents created by the country's longstanding archenemy: Britain. In contrast to the severe message of the French version, Cruikshank's original print played upon several long-running themes in British caricature of the 1780s and 1790s: the royal family's avarice and the many amorous indiscretions of the royal princes. Although the

same in outline, these two prints had dramatically different purposes which reflected both the ideas of their creators and the people for whom the prints were made. The prints therefore represent the third aspect of enquiry in this thesis: the value of caricatures as expressions of popular sentiment in the eighteenth century, and their value as source material for scholars of the period. Taken together, these two nearly identical prints denote the movement of caricatures across the English Channel, attitudes to the monarchies of Britain and France in the early 1790s, and how caricatures were used to communicate thoughts about the political events of a particular historical moment: features which mirror the lines of enquiry in this thesis.

This introduction includes the main aims of the project, information on the source material used, and a consideration of pertinent methodology. Key historiography for the thesis is also explored in depth here, namely, regarding the study of caricatures, the nobility, and the public sphere and celebrity culture. It concludes with an overview of chapter content and a summary of the thesis.

Project aims

This thesis examines caricatures produced in Britain and France between 1740 and 1795 in order to explore contemporary urban perceptions of the socio-political elite of each nation from a visual perspective. The period 1740 to 1795 was a time of significant caricature production in both Britain and France, with caricature production and consumption concentrated in the capital cities of London and Paris. The thesis does not look beyond 1795 because the political situation in France changed so drastically with the implementation of the Directory that discussions of an elite would require a complete reconfiguration of analysis. Within the period 1740 to 1795, this study analyses how the nature of caricatures developed

in Britain and France, and the socio-political events which may have inspired caricatures to express different opinions towards the elite. The art form of caricature itself is considered by examining recurrent themes and motifs that appear in these satirical images, and the purpose which these recurrent themes served in expressing attitudes to the socio-political elite.

The term “elite” is used to refer to royalty, nobility, and political leaders who functioned as the social and political elites of France and Britain in this period. The word “elite” is an anachronistic one; it is not how the individuals depicted in the caricatures would have referred to themselves, nor is it a term used by the caricaturists who depicted these individuals. The term “elite” is used in order to describe the diverse but socially and politically powerful groups who form the central focus of the caricatures examined in this thesis. The concept of the “elite” is here informed by the content of the caricature prints themselves, rather than simply through a distinctive sociological concept of an “elite.” In Britain, the social and political elites were often closely intertwined, as the majority of political leaders in the period were of noble descent.² Two British politicians feature frequently in this thesis: Charles James Fox and William Pitt the Younger. Fox was the son of a baron and the grandson of the Duke of Richmond, while Pitt was the son of the Earl of Chatham, who was known as “the Great Commoner” for much of his tenure in office.³ Despite their undoubtedly privileged upbringings, neither of these men were members of the nobility, yet their long-term political leadership thrust them into the spotlight of the capital, and caricaturists clearly viewed them as members of an elite political group that defined much of British policy between 1780 and 1820. In ancien régime France, the political and

² Stephen M. Lee, ‘Parliament, Parties and Elections (1760-1815)’, in H.T. Dickinson (ed.), *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Malden, 2002), p. 70.

³ This thesis follows the lead of Frank O’Gorman in referring to Fox and his supporters as ‘Whigs’, and Pitt and his supporters as ‘Tories’. These labels were not necessarily accepted by the individuals in question, but they are necessary for clarifying the political divisions in Britain in the latter half of the eighteenth century. See Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997).

social elite were similarly connected, as the elite world centred on the court at Versailles and the many offices of the crown.⁴ However, the French Revolution caused a rupture in this familial and dynastic connection between social and political elites, as the new political elite were from non-noble families. The concept of nobility is a particularly complex one in the eighteenth century, and this study is sensitive to the different aspects of this social group in each nation. Although the thesis highlights stereotypical images of the noble classes as produced in the period, it would be remiss to pretend that these stereotypes applied to all who bore a noble title in eighteenth-century Britain and France. By necessity, the thesis focusses most on those highly visible members of the social and political elites in each nation: members of the royal family, political figures, courtiers, and celebrated nobles of the day. This elite body greatly inspired caricaturists, as attested by the thousands of surviving prints which take the social group as their central subject matter. As the chapters which comprise this thesis will demonstrate, this inspiration could be the product of intense political opinions, or of a desire to produce an entertaining portrait of members of society's elite. We will see that, although often mocking, not all caricatures aimed to criticise elite individuals, let alone the social group to which they belonged.

The manner of depicting the socio-political elite in caricatures could be as diverse as the social group itself. While some caricatures were pointed, personal attacks on public figures of the elite, others were broader, generalised critiques of the elite as an amorphous political group. These differences in style and purpose are examined in order to understand the popular perception of the elite and the potential impact of these images on viewers. Due to the social and political connections of the monarchy and the nobility in each nation, the thesis analyses both groups under the heading of "elite". There is however careful

⁴ For a recent study of offices and venality in ancien regime France, see William Doyle, *France and the Age of Revolution: Regimes Old and New from Louis XIV to Napoleon Bonaparte* (London, 2013).

consideration of the ways in which caricatures of the French and British monarchy often differed from those depicting their respective nobilities in terms of style, content and tone. Significantly, the monarch could often be used in visual culture as a stand in for the government of a country, or for the country itself. This thesis focusses primarily on caricature prints which depict and satirise the monarchs of France and Britain as individuals, rather than as symbols of the state, but it must be acknowledged that the status of the monarch meant that even individualised satirical images of the sovereign were highly political in nature.

Caricature was not a static art form, but one which evolved to respond to political occurrences which engaged public interest; it is not possible to blanket caricatures with terms such as “radical” or “conservative”, as the intent and meanings of prints are open to interpretation. Acknowledging the evolving nature of caricature, I analyse the extent to which caricatures of the elite changed stylistically and topically between 1740 and 1795. The thesis also considers why these changes occurred when they did, and what may have prompted caricaturists to utilise certain motifs or ideas at a given moment in time. By examining satirical images of the elite, I aim to add to historiographical understandings of the elite, popular political culture, and the role that caricature played in the formation of public opinion in eighteenth-century Britain and France.

Once a source material neglected by historians and art historians alike, caricatures have inspired dozens of scholarly works in the past twenty years. British caricatures of the eighteenth century have been at the heart of three scholarly monographs published in the past five years, which examine contemporary notions of national identity, race, and literary tropes via the medium of caricature.⁵ French caricatures had their greatest surge in scholarly

⁵ John Richard Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints, 1740-1832* (London, 2015); Temi Odumosu, *Africans in English Caricature 1769-1819: Black Jokes, White Humour* (London, 2017); David Francis Taylor, *The Politics of Parody; a Literary History of Caricature 1760-1830* (New Haven, 2018).

popularity during the 1989 bicentennial anniversary of the French Revolution, but studies of French satirical images of the eighteenth century have continued to emerge in the last decade.⁶ One of the most notable aspects of this thesis which sets it apart from other recent studies of eighteenth-century caricature is its analysis of French and British caricatures side by side. The only recent work to analyse eighteenth-century caricature beyond the bounds of a single country is *The Efflorescence of Caricature*, a consideration of the art form's reach in Europe and the Americas.⁷ Although this edited volume looks to caricatures in many nations, it does not, however, utilise a comparative model to analyse how caricatures moved and developed in the eighteenth century, a feature which is central to the current study. By comparing the caricature traditions in both Britain and France, I aim to underline the similarities that the two nations shared in regard to visual representations of their respective political cultures.

This comparative, cross-Channel approach similarly distinguishes this work from scholarly studies of public opinion in the eighteenth century, which typically take a pan-European angle, or evaluate on a nation-by-nation basis.⁸ Additionally, recent studies of public opinion in the eighteenth century continue to place greater emphasis of the expansion of a text-based public sphere, following Habermas's pioneering work on the development of this crucial aspect of the "modern" society.⁹ Although undoubtedly a worthwhile avenue of historical inquiry, the persistent focus on textual sources as evidence of public opinion has

⁶ Antoine de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire* (Paris, 1988); James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988); Colin Jones, Juliet Carey, and Emily Richardson (eds.) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 2012); Claire Trévien, *Satire, Prints and Theatricality in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 2016).

⁷ Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011).

⁸ Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 2009); Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, 1994); Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1998).

⁹ James van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001); Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: the Causes Célèbres of pre-Revolutionary France* (London, 1993); Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (trans. Thomas Burger) (Cambridge, 1989).

raised criticisms from scholars who support visual culture studies.¹⁰ This thesis aims to emphasise the value which visual sources can bring to studies of public opinion in the eighteenth century, and it challenges the idea that the eighteenth-century public sphere rested on textual ephemera.

Similarly, studies of the socio-political elite in France and Britain are separated in scholarship, with the French monarchy and nobility engendering a far greater volume of studies than their British counterparts.¹¹ Although mentioned in many wider historical studies of eighteenth-century society in Britain and France, the monarchy and nobility rarely inspire scholarly inquiry on their own, and historical inquiry into popular perceptions of the two groups are scarce.¹² Given the prominence which elite individuals held in eighteenth-century society, both socially and politically, the lack of dedicated historical inquiry into their popular reputation is surprising. By looking at satirical, visual sources, I believe that it is possible to form a strong concept of how these elite groups were envisaged in the popular imagination of the capital cities of Paris and London. By weaving these three core strands of inquiry together, this thesis charts new territory for historical studies of caricature, public opinion in the eighteenth century, and perceptions of the elite in eighteenth-century Europe.

¹⁰ Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France* (London, 2001), p.3.

¹¹ See Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret, *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: from Feudalism to Enlightenment*, trans. William Doyle (Cambridge, 1985); Mathieu Marraud, *La Noblesse de Paris au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris, 2000); Jay M. Smith (ed.), *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches* (Pennsylvania, 2006); Chad Denton, *Decadence, Radicalism, and the Early Modern French Nobility: the Enlightened and Depraved* (London, 2017). For studies on the British nobility, see for example: Timothy McInerney, 'The Better Sort: Nobility and Human Variety in Eighteenth-Century Great Britain', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 38:1 (March, 2015), pp. 47-63; Donna T. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: the Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2013). For a study of European nobility see Jerzy Lukowski, *The European Nobility in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2003).

¹² William Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies in the Age of Revolution* (Oxford, 2009) is a rare example of a text which analyses contemporary reactions to the nobility.

Sources

The core primary source materials used in this thesis are caricatures produced in either France or Britain from c.1740 to 1795, as this fifty five-year period saw a significant growth of political caricature production in each nation. The years 1760 to 1820 have been denoted “the Golden Age” of caricature in Britain by historians, causing a distinctive neglect not only of the many images produced prior to 1760, but also of those published before 1780.¹³ In French historiography, the “Golden Age” of caricature is often considered to have occurred between 1848 and 1910, decades after the period studied here.¹⁴ Although the Bicentennial of the French Revolution in 1989 saw a flurry of publications examining visual culture of France in the 1790s, historiography of French satirical prints remains most focussed on the nineteenth century.¹⁵ This thesis nonetheless advocates for the advantages of analysing images which, although not considered to belong to a “Golden Age” of caricature, are crucial for enhancing historiographical understanding of the medium and its expressions of popular opinions.

The British images used herein date from 1740 to 1795, continuously, but an uninterrupted chronological range of French satirical prints does not exist. The reason for the absence of published French caricatures is connected to issues of contemporary censorship, and is discussed in depth in the section on caricatures, below. All French caricatures dating from c.1740 to c.1775 are sourced from the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures tant Bonnes que Mauvaises*, a personal and unpublished compendium of satirical images commenting on

¹³ Mike Goode, ‘The Public and the Limits of Persuasion in the Age of Caricature,’ in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 117.

¹⁴ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 45.

¹⁵ For studies of nineteenth-century French caricature see Robert Justin Goldstein, *Censorship of Political Caricature in Nineteenth Century France* (Kent, Ohio, 1989); David S. Kerr, *Caricature and French Political Culture 1830-1848: Charles Philipon and the Illustrated Press* (Oxford, 2000).

French Court society.¹⁶ The *Livre de Caricatures* was created by Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, an accomplished botanical artist and embroiderer to King Louis XV, whose work at the court of Versailles informed many of his depictions of socially and politically elite individuals in ancien regime France.¹⁷ Saint-Aubin's view of the court of Versailles and the French nobility is that of an outsider, for Saint-Aubin belonged to the Third Estate of France; his perspective is, however, that of an educated and well-off member of that social class. Saint-Aubin was also a Parisian by birth, and he continued to reside in the capital when not attending court as embroiderer to the King. The *Livre de Caricatures*, much like British caricatures of the period, and the French Revolutionary caricatures of the 1790s, was conceived of in an urban environment. The manuscript *Livre* is currently located in Waddesdon Manor, Oxfordshire. Although Saint-Aubin wrote captions for many of his images, the *Livre de Caricatures* was also annotated in the nineteenth century by the artist's grandson-in-law, Pierre-Antoine Tardieu: in some instances, the suppositions and dates noted by Tardieu are dubious.¹⁸ As caricatures from the *Livre de Caricatures* were unpublished, it is more challenging to pinpoint their relationship to public opinion regarding the elite. Throughout the thesis I emphasise how these unpublished images show evidence of their creator's engagement with social and political events. From this evidence, I would argue that the *Livre de Caricatures* is indicative of a tradition of satirical imagery in pre-Revolutionary France which did not survive because of the impact of censorship which prevailed during the ancien régime. Although its position is unique, the *Livre de Caricatures* offers a significant

¹⁶ Historiography of the *Livre de Caricatures* primarily comes from Colin Jones, Juliet Carey, and Emily Richardson (eds.), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures: Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 2012).

¹⁷ Colin Jones and Juliet Carey, 'Introduction', in Jones, Carey, and Richardson (eds.), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures*, pp. 6-9.

¹⁸ For an in-depth discussion of the book's provenance, see Colin Jones and Emily Richardson, 'Archaeology and Materiality', in Jones, Carey and Richardson (eds.), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures*, pp. 31-53.

contribution to this study of visual expressions of sentiment about the elite, and so it is analysed alongside published caricatures.

Published caricatures from the French Revolutionary period (1789-1795) are drawn from the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and Musée Carnavalet. British images are sourced from the collections held at the British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings, the Lewis Walpole Library, and Yale Center for British Art.

Approximately one hundred and sixty individual images are analysed or referenced in the course of this thesis. Due to the volume of extant source material, it is unavoidable that British caricatures should ultimately outnumber their French counterparts. The thesis aims, however, to balance analysis of these images on national lines as evenly as possible to facilitate comparative study. Of the thousands of satirical images that were produced in both France and Britain from 1740 to 1795, one hundred and sixty is an admittedly small number. The images examined in this thesis are those that are most pertinent to understanding contemporary perceptions of the socio-political elite and their visual representation by caricaturists.

The core arguments and analyses put forward by this thesis are grounded in the caricature sources, yet it would be remiss to ignore the volume of valuable textual primary sources which provides supporting evidence of popular opinion. Newspapers, for example, are a primary source which have been well-conserved from the eighteenth century to the present, and in many cases, caricaturists were inspired by articles they read in the press. Caricatures, although a visual source, are also partially textual in nature due to their relation with politics, the press and concepts of public opinion.¹⁹ In addition to providing information

¹⁹ The relationship between caricature and literature has been explored by David Taylor in *The Politics of Parody; a Literary History of Caricature 1760-1830* (Oxford, 2018).

necessary to the reading of satirical images, newspapers provide another means by which to comprehend public reactions to certain events and persons. Contemporary British newspapers are sourced primarily from the British Museum, and the online Burney Collection, while French newspapers come from the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Where available, and where relevant, private correspondence is also employed in order to comprehend personal responses to satirical prints and political events. In relation to images created in pre-Revolutionary France, clandestine literature including pamphlets, ballads and satirical poetry are examined as part of a subversive political culture that was stifled by royal censorship prior to 1789. This subversive French material is sourced from the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the British Library. Additionally, British state papers with information on loyalist or radical societies are sourced from the British Museum, and The National Archives, Kew. All of these diverse sources are necessary to form a comprehensive and historically valuable understanding of public opinion and the socio-political cultures of Britain and France between 1740 and 1795.

Caricatures

The most prevalent arguments in the historiography of eighteenth-century caricature are those on issues of the legality of prints, the social makeup of their viewership, and the cost and availability of the prints. In each of these areas, there is a distinct diversity of opinion between scholarship of British caricature and scholarship of French caricature.

Caricature and the law

For much of the eighteenth century, British-made caricatures of the elite were able to avoid legal prosecution in a way that newspapers and written ephemera could not. Diana Donald has argued that caricatures enjoyed a privileged position, as the handful of lawsuits which proceeded against caricatures in the 1750s tended to draw greater attention to the prints in question, potentially embarrassing the plaintiff even more than the original print itself.²⁰ I would argue, further, that the distinct language of caricatures granted the prints a level of ambiguity of intent which even a seasoned lawyer would have struggled to overcome. As caricaturists never properly named their intended targets, the difficulty of proving that a plaintiff was in fact the individual depicted in a print deterred many court cases. The apparent impunity of satirical images to depict even the King himself sets them apart as a unique and vital historical source; newspapers and pamphlets would not have evaded prosecution if they had depicted the nobility or royalty as did the caricaturists, and thus their opinions must always be considered as circumscribed by law. While Donald acknowledges the overall lack of lawsuits directed at caricature prints in Britain, she does however note that the legal immunity of British caricatures was put in jeopardy during the wars of Revolutionary France.²¹ This study has also found that, despite the apparent legal impunity of caricatures, many British prints in the period 1740 to 1795 were not signed by their artist: of the ninety-six caricatures examined here, exactly half clearly state the name of their artist. However, the vast majority of British caricatures examined include the name of the publisher or place of publication; this was required by law as part of the Engraving Copyright Act of 1734.²² The

²⁰ Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (London, 1996), p. 15.

²¹ Donald, *Age of Caricature*, p. 147.

²² Herbert M. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth: a Study of the Ideographic Representation of Politics* (Oxford, 1974), p. 41.

frequent lack of the caricaturist's name perhaps highlights concern about legal reprisals, however rare, and it also makes it difficult to examine the identities of these artists.

The censorship laws of absolutist ancien régime France did not allow for a public culture of visual satire like that of Britain in the eighteenth century.²³ Evidence of pre-Revolutionary caricature is certainly scarce, and this may be taken as an indication that caricature did not exist as a mode of public discourse in France prior to 1789. However, I would suggest that caricature *was* a form of “popular” expression in pre-Revolutionary France for two reasons. Firstly, the movement of caricatures from Britain to France in the 1770s and early 1780s has been established by historians.²⁴ It seems logical to suggest that individuals interested in purchasing satirical prints targeting the British political system could have been inspired to create caricatures which commented on the politics of France. Secondly, the eighteenth-century Parisian bookseller Siméon Prosper Hardy made explicit reference in 1768 to the police force of Paris rapidly concealing and removing controversial placards and images which had been pasted up in public areas.²⁵ Hardy's account tantalisingly suggests a tradition of subversive visual commentary in Paris which was not mass-produced or circulated as in Britain, and which had only fleeting opportunities to appeal to the city's public before the authorities removed it.

Despite censorship laws, the *Mémoires Secrets* recorded, for example, that in 1788 satirical prints were pasted on walls in numerous streets of Paris. One such caricature featured ‘English commerce’ in the shape of a cow which a Dutchman is milking, while a Frenchman fills his bucket and an ‘Anglois dans la plus profonde tristesse’ looks on; the

²³ Melot, ‘Caricature and the Revolution’, p. 25.

²⁴ Robin Eagles suggests that a clandestine satirical print trade in France even caused some French prints to cross the Channel and be adapted for use by British caricaturists. Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society 1748-1815* (London, 2000), pp. 23-4.

²⁵ Simeon Prosper Hardy, *Mes Loisirs, ou Journal d'Événements Tels qu'ils Parviennent a ma Connaissance*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1789), p. 355.

writer surmises that the police have tacitly consented to the selling of an engraving so ‘injurieuse...aux Anglois’.²⁶ These records from Hardy and the *Mémoires Secrets* would certainly explain the deficit of extant public caricatures produced in France prior to 1789—they were not circulated as prints, and therefore could not have survived to be archived in museums, libraries, or personal collections. Indeed, this thesis examines only two satirical French prints which were published before the fall of the Bastille. There is unquestionably a deficit of published French caricatures produced before the Revolution in archives, but this does not mean that scholars are entirely bereft of source material. The Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures tant Bonnes que Mauvaises* is a rare example of pre-Revolution French caricature, and despite its individuality, it is possible that the book formed part of a wider historical tradition of caricature in ancien régime France.

From 1789, caricatures became an important aspect of revolutionary culture. They were commissioned by the Committee for Public Safety, sold in shops throughout Paris, and appeared in publications such as *Pere Duchesne*.²⁷ However, Revolutionary caricatures were never entirely free, as a censor was appointed in July 1789 to regulate caricatures.²⁸ The Revolution’s political atmosphere allowed for caricatures to be published and widely distributed to the French public, so long as the content of the images did not commit the new crime of ‘lèse-nation’.²⁹ It is perhaps no surprise that a great many French Revolutionary caricatures targeted the monarchy and the nobility, two institutions which began to gain negative connotations from 1789 onwards.

²⁶ Pidansat de Mairobert and Mouffle d’Angerville (eds.), *Mémoires Secrets pour Servir à l’Histoire de la République des Lettres en France, depuis MDCCLXII jusqu’à nos Jours; ou Journal d’un Observateur*, vol. 12 (London, 1788), p. 68.

²⁷ James Cuno, ‘Introduction’, in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 14.

²⁸ Melot, ‘Caricature and the Revolution’, p. 25.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Circulation figures and the cost of caricatures

A frequently highlighted problem with regard to using eighteenth-century caricature as source material is a serious lack of hard evidence about their circulation figures and cost. This is a particularly important consideration for the thesis, as both values are naturally called upon to provide evidence of the popularity and audience of prints. The closest that British caricature historiography has come to establishing real figures of circulation is Charles Press's record of *production* figures. Press states that between 1761 and 1770, 1033 prints were produced in England, with over 45% of that figure produced in 1770 alone.³⁰ Between 1770 and 1780, total production was 964 individual prints, with production figures increasing towards the end of the decade; these figures are certainly balanced with the known satirical print holdings at the British Museum, which number approximately ten thousand produced from 1760 to 1820.³¹ Yet these impressive figures give a distorted view, because they tell us only the number of individual prints which were produced and *available* for public sale, not the number of copies sold. The average print runs of British caricatures were about five hundred, far lower than newspapers. Even this evidence is not enough to establish a tangible numerical audience for these prints, because in some instances, entire runs of offensive plates could be bought up by concerned parties (often the royal family), which may have encouraged enterprising artists to create large runs of offensive prints in order to enhance their earnings.³² Thus, establishing concrete circulation figures for British prints is simply not possible.³³

³⁰ Charles Press, 'The Georgian Political Print and Democratic Institutions', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 19, no.2 (1977), p. 229.

³¹ *Ibid.*; Donald *The Age of Caricature*, p. 1.

³² Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, p. 15.

³³ *Ibid.*

In France, the public market for satirical prints did not appear until 1789, with the fall of the Bastille. As discussed previously, a tradition of censorship limited expression of French public opinion, and thus only circulation figures of caricatures produced from 1789 onwards exist. Although Antoine de Baecque suggests more than six hundred prints created between 1789 and 1792 exist in museums today, Lynn Hunt has estimated that over 20,000 copies of prints produced during the ‘Revolutionary era’ can be found in the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Musée Carnavalet.³⁴ De Baecque estimates average print runs of only 200 for the majority of Revolutionary satirical prints, although this thesis does analyse propaganda prints which enjoyed print runs of over 2,000 each.³⁵ One of the greatest methodological challenges of French caricatures is their lack of information; few prints provide dates or places of publication and the drastic political fluctuations of the early 1790s meant that almost 90% of prints were not signed by their artist.³⁶ These deficits of information mean that it is very difficult to suggest the annual circulation figures of French caricature, or to quantify caricature’s popular appeal in Revolutionary France based on sales alone.

In response to this empirical gap, historians of caricature largely argue that purchasing was not the sole means by which contemporaries interacted with these images. As Vic Gatrell has observed, we can ask the same questions about the impact of prints on public opinion as for textual source material, such as newspapers and books.³⁷ Thus, a lack of circulation figures does not nullify the usefulness of prints as primary evidence. In regard to the availability of prints, it has been suggested that their cost throughout the period 1760 to 1800 would have made them a foolish luxury for the poorer members of British society, a fact

³⁴ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p.13; Lynn Hunt, ‘Engraving the Republic’, *History Today*, 30 (1980), p. 13.

³⁵ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 27.

³⁶ Hunt, ‘Engraving the Republic’, p. 14.

³⁷ Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London*, (London, 2006), p. 14.

which unsettles the notion of caricatures as entertainment specifically created for the lower classes. After all, caricature was a trade like any other, and artists needed to earn money for their work. For France, however, historians have disagreed about the financial availability of Revolutionary prints. While Antoine de Baecque asserts that they cost anywhere from five to fifteen *sous*, a substantial portion of an average artisan's daily wage of twenty to fifty *sous*, Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle state that by 1789 average prints could cost as little as 'a few *sous*', making them available to poorer citizens.³⁸

Considering these discrepancies regarding the cost of prints, it is significant that the manner in which books, pamphlets, and newspapers were consumed in metropolitan society in this period was decidedly different to modern habits. Coffee houses were often raucous with sounds of numerous self-proscribed orators reading from newspapers or books for a captive audience, many of whom either could not read, or could not afford reading material.³⁹ Similarly, it was not necessary for one to purchase a caricature print in order to view it. 'Le Gourmand' (fig.0.3) portrays the King and Queen of France eating dinner in a tavern in the midst of their attempted escape of 1791, and the walls of the dining room are adorned with satirical prints. In addition to the prints posted on the walls, or shared among customers at coffee houses and taverns, Mike Goode has highlighted the fact that in London folios of satirical prints could be rented for an evening's entertainment at a price that would have been reasonable to the "middling sort", not just the aristocracy.⁴⁰ In France, a common mode of circulation was that of hawkers, who advertised and sold prints throughout the streets of Paris

³⁸ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p.27; Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle, *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth-Century France* (London, 2008), p. 37.

³⁹ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago, 1997), p. 187.

⁴⁰ Goode, 'The Public and the Limits of Persuasion', p. 118.

on behalf of an established caricature shop, thus broadening the net of potential customers and viewers.⁴¹

Historiography of British caricatures has recently begun to look at the geographical layout of print shops in London as evidence of the social background of potential consumers.⁴² Most caricatures produced post-1780 contained information on the artist, publisher, the precise date of publication and even the address of the print shop. The location of print shops gives clues as to the social class of clientele that a publisher hoped to attract. For example, the various locations of the print shops owned by Hannah Humphrey, one of the most successful publishers of caricatures in the late eighteenth century, shows a strong association with the Piccadilly neighbourhood of London, an area of burgeoning middle-class wealth and respectability in the period. The print shops of Samuel Fores, another successful publisher, similarly centred on the Piccadilly area, and a 1795 print (fig.0.4) from his shop declares that he has ‘lately filled up his exhibition in an entire novel stile [sic] admittance one shilling. Folios lent’, suggesting an interested clientele willing to spend money to view his catalogue of prints.

Undoubtedly the most accessible method of the circulation of caricatures to the urban lower classes referenced by historians of both French and British caricature is that of the print shop window. Contemporary prints have shown the allegedly common urban scene of people from all social groups congregating at the caricature shop to view images for free. Prime examples of this phenomenon are an untitled British print by J. Elwood (fig.0.5), and ‘Le Joli Moine’ (fig.0.6), which show print shop windows in London and Paris filled with vibrant caricatures designed to attract an audience. The print shop window hypothesis has been

⁴¹ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 25.

⁴² Cindy McCreery highlights the profusion of successful printshops in London’s West End. Cindy McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze: Prints of Women in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2004), p. 25.

supported by Mike Goode, Jeremy Black and Antoine de Baecque.⁴³ However, this notion has been questioned, most pointedly by Eirwen Nicholson, who argues that the satirical prints depicting shop window scenes cannot be considered entirely accurate or truthful.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, this thesis has found concrete contemporary evidence of satirical prints being displayed in London print shop windows. An article in *The Times* newspaper published on 19 December 1792 made direct reference to the perceived impact of print shop windows, declaring of the arrest of notable publishers that ‘we are extremely glad to find that some stop is at length attempted to be put to the sale of those scandalous prints which have long disgraced the windows of our public streets.’⁴⁵ Although this statement does not enlighten us about the number of print shops freely displaying wares in their windows, it nonetheless emphasises that this manner of displaying satirical prints *did* occur in the capital to an extent that merited a publicised reference to its perceived social impact.

The ‘intended’ audience of prints

Historiography of British caricature is extremely diverse on the question of the social identity of caricature’s intended audience, in contrast to historiography of French caricatures. The notion of the intended audience of British caricatures has been most recently raised by John Richard Moores, who strongly advocates for a predominantly noble audience.⁴⁶ In contrast, Tamara Hunt has argued that the intended audience of caricatures changed in the eighteenth century, with prints produced from the 1780s onwards aimed more at the middling sort in Britain than those produced in the 1760s and 1770s, which appealed most to an elite

⁴³ Goode, ‘The Public and the Limits of Persuasion’, p. 118; Jeremy Black, *Culture in Eighteenth-Century England: a Subject for Taste* (London, 2005), p. 104; de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 44.

⁴⁴ Eirwen E.C. Nicholson, ‘Consumers and Spectators: The Public of the Political Print in Eighteenth-Century England’, *History*, 81:261 (January 1996), p. 17.

⁴⁵ *The Times*, London, 19 Dec. 1792, p. 3.

⁴⁶ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 12.

audience.⁴⁷ Cindy McCreery suggests that even lower class people would have actively engaged with these images, an engagement made possible by the proliferation of printshops and periodicals which expanded the market for caricatures to those with limited means.⁴⁸ This thesis argues against the idea that caricatures were intended only for an elite or well-educated audience, and it contests the notion that historians must only consider the intended audience of a specific print, as in most instances the intended audience were those who could afford to purchase the print. Instead, I consider the reach of caricatures to be far beyond those who paid to own or view the images.

The social strata of caricature audiences in Britain were diverse, but the reach of caricatures was geographically circumscribed by the location of print shops, which were primarily based in London, and other large regional centres such as Bath and Edinburgh. Excluding those privileged individuals who could order prints to be delivered to them in more rural areas, the audience of caricatures in eighteenth-century Britain was predominantly urban. That prints were primarily produced, displayed, and sold in London does not impose as great a limitation on their cultural impact as may be expected: Diana Donald has pointed out that the London population was neither fixed nor isolated, as people of various social classes travelled regularly to and from the capital, causing a movement of cultural items as well as ideas.⁴⁹ Cindy McCreery has highlighted records by contemporaries from London and beyond which state that people travelled to print shops specifically to view prints, while Tamara Hunt points to prints being circulated beyond London, such as those sold by booksellers in Leeds and Birmingham.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull; Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003), p. 233.

⁴⁸ McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze*, pp. 30-1.

⁴⁹ Donald, *Age of Caricature*, p. 19.

⁵⁰ McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, pp.26-7; Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, p. 16.

Historians of French caricature are unanimous in asserting that caricatures produced during the Revolution were for an urban audience, a mixture of poor and middling earners all eager to participate in the political upheaval of the nation. Specifically, Antoine de Baecque has stated that it was ‘a very Parisian trade’, one which could be available to the very poorest workers, but which was aimed at the easier market of reasonable wage-earners.⁵¹ Claire Trévien argues that by 1790 prints were marketed for a ‘working-class audience.’⁵² Lynn Hunt similarly theorises that wealthy ‘professionals’ bought expensive publications of ‘historical tableaux’, whilst ‘the popular classes’ preferred to purchase caricatures and prints of sans-culottes.⁵³ Additionally, Claude Langlois suggests that as Paris had a monopoly on caricature production, it was capable of using those caricatures to spread its own view of the Revolution to the provinces, suggesting a movement of caricature across France.⁵⁴ In both Britain and France, caricature was a popular expression of political culture, one which could appeal to the elite as well as to the lower sorts in large cities. When indicating a ‘British public’ or a ‘French public’ as they pertain to caricature consumption, this thesis is referring to a predominantly urban public centred in the capital cities of London and Paris which nonetheless provides a substantial cross section of the social classes in each country.

So little is known about the identities of consumers and viewers of caricature prints, that there is a potential danger of homogenizing them under the uninformative heading “non-elite”.⁵⁵ Whilst the thesis aims to consider popular attitudes to the elite as depicted in caricatures, distinguishing the attitudes and perceptions of certain popular social groups is very difficult: contemporary records discussing the prints are notoriously rare.⁵⁶ The thesis

⁵¹ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 27.

⁵² Trévien, *Satire, Prints and Theatricality*, p. 36.

⁵³ Hunt, ‘Engraving the Republic’, p. 14.

⁵⁴ Claude Langlois, ‘Counterrevolutionary Iconography’, in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 44.

⁵⁵ Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 2008), p. 27.

⁵⁶ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 3.

works on the premise that a variety of people from different social backgrounds in Paris and London viewed and engaged with the prints, but quantifiable evidence of these people cannot be definitively established. The difficulty of identifying the social identity of the public who viewed caricatures is one of the most pressing methodological challenges when using eighteenth-century caricature, for the identity of viewers directly relates to the impact of caricatures on society and their comprehensibility for uneducated individuals.

Political literacy and persuasion

Establishing the ‘intended’ audience for caricature prints is mirrored in historiography by attempts to understand the extent to which this audience could comprehend the content of the images. Chapter One of this thesis specifically analyses the manner in which British and French caricaturists drew on popular fixed cultural symbols to depict elite individuals, yet even with these symbols, caricature audiences were required to possess a certain degree of political literacy in order to appreciate the caricaturist’s work. Historiography of French Revolutionary caricatures contends that prints published in Paris during the early years of the Revolution were specifically targeted at a non-elite audience, and there is a consensus that caricature audiences possessed the requisite political literacy to appreciate the prints.⁵⁷ Indeed, Lynn Hunt has argued that visual culture such as caricatures were particularly influential among the lesser-educated and illiterate citizens of France during the Revolution, because they were an important means of spreading political information and fixing a collective memory of events.⁵⁸ Claude Langlois has emphasised that the repetitive use of specific motifs in French Revolutionary caricature gave the prints an ‘incantatory aspect’

⁵⁷ Hunt ‘Engraving the Republic’, p. 14; Trévien, *Satire, Prints and Theatricality*, p. 36.

⁵⁸ Lynn Hunt, ‘The Political Psychology of Revolutionary Caricatures’, in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 33.

which would have deeply influenced popular perceptions of political events.⁵⁹ As with British caricatures, Revolutionary caricatures were rooted most deeply in the capital, where the political upheavals and changes of the French Revolution were a part of everyday life for the city's inhabitants. The infamous Flight to Varennes, for example, inspired dozens of caricatures mocking the French royal family, and the details of these caricatures were based on the ignominious return of the king and his family as witnessed by thousands of Parisian onlookers.⁶⁰ Therefore, the question of political literacy required for the appreciation of caricatures produced in France during the Revolution is answered by the extent to which politics suffused every aspect of Parisian life from 1789 until the close of the century.

Historians of British caricature have also analysed the relationship between caricatures and political literacy in the eighteenth century, with scholars such as Eirwen Nicholson and H.T. Dickinson casting doubt on political literacy among the lower classes.⁶¹ Tamara Hunt has disputed this viewpoint, pointing to contemporary records which make clear the passion for news and politics that was observed even among shoeblacks and artisans in London, groups of whom clubbed together to buy a morning newspaper.⁶² John Richard Moores similarly points to the large print runs of political works by Paine, Burke, and others, which he suggests show a rising literacy and political awareness in the lower orders in Britain in the late 1780s.⁶³ Contemporary concern among loyalist groups in Britain in the 1790s underlines a contemporary belief that caricatures of elite individuals such as the king were understood by a broad spectrum of London society, thus making the prints 'exciters to rebellion' in the eyes of government informants.⁶⁴ Further consideration of political and

⁵⁹ Langlois, 'Counterrevolutionary Iconography', p. 43.

⁶⁰ Annie Duprat, *Les rois de papier: la caricature de Henri III à Louis XVI* (Paris, 2002), p. 90.

⁶¹ Nicholson, 'Consumers and Spectators', p. 17; H.T. Dickinson, *Caricatures and the Constitution, 1760-1832* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 15.

⁶² Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, p. 10, p. 318.

⁶³ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 6.

⁶⁴ London, British Museum. BM Addit MSS 16927, 'Original letters', Letter from J.Fanshaw, Chandos St., Cavendish Square, London, 7 December 1792, fol. 27.

visual literacy in the eighteenth century prompted Richard Clay to argue that images were ‘a resource for informal adult education’, and the often public display of caricatures would have encouraged debate and analysis among those viewing the images.⁶⁵ Moores contends that the crowded print shop window was a site of discussion and debate, wherein more educated or politically literate individuals would have ‘read aloud the textual elements of the designs for the benefit of others engaged in this activity of collective enjoyment, in the same way that occurred with newspapers and other documents.’⁶⁶ Moores also suggests that ‘the more visually literate individual might also explain the “allusive iconography” to fellow observers’; these perspectives still impose limitations on the geography of caricature prints within urban areas, but they nonetheless suggest methods by which political literacy could be shared among viewers at a printshop window.⁶⁷

Attempting to get a clear picture of audience understanding and political literacy is a significant area of debate for historians of British caricature in the eighteenth century, and as with many aspects of caricature historiography, there is a variety of opinions. Although Tamara Hunt has questioned whether literacy and political literacy were necessary for understanding and enjoying prints, this thesis argues that some degree of political literacy *was* necessary to appreciating caricature prints of elite individuals, as so many of the prints examined in this thesis are inherently political in nature.⁶⁸ The thesis instead follows Hunt’s argument which demonstrates the political literacy of a wide section of the London population in the second half of the eighteenth century, a literacy created by the widespread influence of newspapers and pamphlet literature which dissected the political and social

⁶⁵ Richard Clay, ‘Riotous Images: Representations of Joseph Priestley in British Prints During the French Revolution’, *History of Education* 37 (2008), p. 594.

⁶⁶ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 6.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, p. 12.

events of Britain for an interested public.⁶⁹ The thesis also shares Moores's conceptualisation of the conversation and shared knowledge that was a significant aspect of the public life of caricature prints in print shop windows, taverns, and coffee houses.

The comprehensibility of caricature prints has often been considered side by side with analysis of their ability to influence and shape public opinion. Chapter Four of this thesis examines caricature prints which were commissioned by French and British governments as propaganda during moments of conflict, yet the success of these prints in changing public opinion remains questionable because it is difficult to establish the impact of caricatures without written records of people's responses to them.⁷⁰ Mike Goode has recently argued that caricaturists felt a need to influence public opinion, and the rapidity with which prints were produced and displayed gave them an opportunity to 'shape social attitudes and current political events as they unfolded.'⁷¹ Moores has similarly pointed to the rapidity of print production, which allowed them to capture 'contemporary concerns and opinions,' but he expresses scepticism about their ability to condition public opinion.⁷² Significantly for this thesis, however, is Moores's argument that, in an era before photographs, caricatures of notable members of society could have fixed perceptions of that individual in the public mind: 'the power of the eighteenth-century caricature has greater potency because this was the only representation of public figures that many people ever saw.'⁷³ Goode acknowledges that influencing public opinion was a challenge for British caricaturists in the eighteenth century, as their 'persuasion' was based on humour and mockery, rather than a rational attempt to shape people's opinions about a certain event or group.⁷⁴ M. Dorothy George

⁶⁹ Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, p.10.

⁷⁰ Moores argues that few people recorded their responses to caricatures because of the crude humour often contained in the images. Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 3.

⁷¹ Goode, *The Public and the Limits of Persuasion*, p. 117.

⁷² Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 14.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁷⁴ Goode, *The Public and the Limits of Persuasion*, p. 117.

argued that caricatures were not only successful in shaping public opinion, but that they also reflected prevailing public sentiment in order to boost their sales.⁷⁵ Richard Clay, in analysing images of Joseph Priestly, argued that ‘numerous Britons’ in the eighteenth century believed that prints represented *and* shaped audience’s opinions.⁷⁶ This thesis therefore considers the ability of caricatures to shape public opinion as part of their ‘artistic brief’, which was sometimes successful and sometimes unsuccessful.⁷⁷ In spite of this uncertainty about persuasion, the thesis contends that caricatures are a valuable source for historians to gauge public opinion and cultural shifts because caricatures engaged with and reflected popular sentiments.

Caricatures, like all cultural objects, did not have a single meaning, but rather their meaning was interpreted differently by people from different walks of life. While certainty about the impact and comprehensibility of caricature prints will likely remain allusive for scholars, this thesis agrees with Gatrell’s assertion that caricatures were ‘cultural barometers’ which provide insight into public opinion at a specific moment in time.⁷⁸ This thesis analyses caricatures as valuable cultural expressions of attitudes on the socio-political elite of eighteenth-century France and Britain.

Summary

The historiography examining the legality, cost, and audience of caricatures during the eighteenth century is well established, both in Britain and in France. Caricatures were intrinsically linked to the social and political environments of the capital cities of London and

⁷⁵ M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature: a Study of Opinion and Propaganda* (Oxford, 1959), vol. 1, p. 1.

⁷⁶ Clay, *Riotous Images*, pp. 585-7.

⁷⁷ Goode, ‘The Public and the Limits of Persuasion’, p. 117.

⁷⁸ Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, p. 11.

Paris, a distinction which underlines the urban and unquestionably *political* nature of these prints. In Britain, the visual and satirical nature of caricature prints appears to have largely shielded the medium from legal restrictions, while in Revolutionary France caricatures were allowed to flourish, although they were subject to the validation of a censor. While historians of British caricatures remain divided about their intended audience, and indeed the audience who could *afford* the prints, the evidence of images on display in taverns and shop windows demonstrates their reach at all levels of London society. In ancien régime France, the lack of published caricatures makes it challenging to guess at the social identity of those who may have created or disseminated prints, and the lack of historiographical consideration reflects this deficit of information. The main source of pre-revolutionary French caricatures in this thesis, the *Livre de Caricatures*, was created by an educated member of the Third Estate whose role as court embroiderer allowed him access to gossip both in the capital and at Versailles.⁷⁹ In France, the consensus is that Revolutionary caricatures were absolutely directed at non-noble audiences, whether “middle” sort, or “lower” sort, and the cost of Parisian prints ultimately reflects this lower-earning audience. While historians of French caricature argue that political literacy was shared by a wide proportion of the Parisian populace, historians of British caricature have debated the extent to which less educated or illiterate individuals could understand the political references included in prints. As evidenced by historians’ extensive discussions about eighteenth-century caricatures as source material, there are clear possibilities and limitations. Highlighting the potential shortfalls in information regarding the impact of satirical prints on the general populace of either France or Britain is important, yet even without unanimous agreement on this subject, it can be

⁷⁹ See Colin Jones and Juliet Carey, ‘Introduction’, in Jones, Carey and Richardson (eds.), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures*, pp. 1-28.

argued that caricatures were and are significant cultural barometers of their contemporary public spheres.

The public sphere and celebrity culture

Introduction

This thesis contributes to studies of eighteenth-century public opinion and the public sphere by asserting the value of visual source material in analysing these theories. As a primary consideration of the thesis is the manner in which the upper classes of each nation were *perceived* by the lower classes, it is necessary to comprehend the methods by which public opinion could be voiced and shaped in the period examined. The field of celebrity culture is linked to concepts of the public sphere, and it is of particular import to this thesis, as many caricatures relied upon the notoriety of an individual in order to engage with potential customers.

The public sphere and public opinion

As with caricature, the realities of public opinion in Britain and France differed greatly, and historiography naturally reflects this difference. The theory of the public sphere was introduced by Jürgen Habermas in 1962, wherein he argued that the concept of public opinion began to develop significantly in eighteenth-century Europe primarily by way of the growth of public discourse, particularly via the mediums of newspapers and books.⁸⁰ Whilst there have been several historiographical challenges to Habermas' prevailing theory, the most

⁸⁰ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, 1989).

significant for this thesis is Joan B. Landes's critique that Habermas dismissed images by prioritising textual sources as evidence of enlightened, liberal societies.⁸¹ This textual bias is one shared by many historians, but by thoroughly analysing satirical images, I show that they played an important role in informing the socio-political perceptions of the non-noble people of eighteenth-century Europe, many of whom could not read lengthy articles or books. This thesis argues that claims that textual sources were the primary means of creating a public sphere are misleading and incorrect, but it acknowledges textual sources as highly useful markers for historians wishing to decipher and understand graphic satire.

Closely related to studies on the public sphere are those studies which have aimed to understand better the concept of public opinion in eighteenth-century European societies. From this standpoint, the historiography agrees that Britain and France operated under very different cultural norms which affected the dissemination of so-called popular opinion. As in studies of the public sphere model, much of the existing historiography in the field of public opinion is based on textual sources, particularly newspapers. Hannah Barker, a historian of eighteenth-century press, has argued that the practice of viewing newspapers as the most efficient means of influencing public opinion is one which has survived from ancient regime France to present-day historiography.⁸² This historiographic dependence on newspapers, a textual source, is unsurprising given the wealth of information that they possess and their vast output, particularly in Britain. Analysis of the public opinion of eighteenth-century France cannot, however, rest solely on newspaper sources, as until the Revolution, France had only one newspaper, the official *Gazette de France*, although some French-language newspapers were smuggled into France from Switzerland and the Netherlands.⁸³ In contrast to the

⁸¹ Landes, *Visualizing the Nation*, p. 11.

⁸² Hannah Barker, 'Introduction', in Hannah Barker (ed.), *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760–1820* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 1.

⁸³ Bernadette Fort, 'Voice of the Public: the Carnivalization of Salon Art in Pre-Revolutionary Pamphlets', 32:3. *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Special Issue: The French Revolution in Culture (Spring, 1989), pp. 368-394; Sara

situation in France, fifty-three newspapers were published in London by 1776, while dozens of provincial newspapers flourished across Britain.⁸⁴

Significantly for this thesis, the French public sphere made up for lost time during the Revolution, with over 200 newspapers published between 1789-1799, while at this time British journalists faced increasing legal pressure from the government.⁸⁵ Considering the limits imposed on newspapers by state censorship in both Britain and France at certain points of the eighteenth century, this thesis calls into question the reliance which historians have placed upon newspapers as strong indicators of public opinion. Whilst this thesis does analyse excerpts from British and French newspapers in order to contextualise the contents of contemporaneous caricatures, it does not view newspapers as a more convincing or reliable source of public opinion than the caricatures themselves. Caricatures are a valuable form of the expression of public opinion, and it is one of the overarching aims of the thesis to demonstrate the value of visual sources to historiography of public opinion in the eighteenth century.

Celebrity Culture

Several studies on celebrity and fame culture in eighteenth-century Europe have appeared in recent years, and the eighteenth century has been pinpointed as the moment when modern celebrity emerged.⁸⁶ A society in which gossip and scandal could be spread by the media was

Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs- the Causes Célèbres of Pre-Revolutionary France* (London, 1993); Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (London, 1982), p. 143.

⁸⁴ Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society 1685-1855* (New York, 2000), p. 156.

⁸⁵ Hugh Gough, 'The French Revolutionary Press', in Hannah Barker (ed.), *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760-1820* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 182; Gary Dyer, *British Satire and the Politics of Style: 1789-1832* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 71.

⁸⁶ Brian Cowan, 'News, Biography, and Eighteenth-Century Celebrity', in *Oxford Handbooks Online*, ed. Thomas Keymer, general ed. Colin Burrow (Oxford, 7 September 2016), <<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935338.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935338-e-132>> [accessed 17 August 2020]; Claire Brock, *The Feminization of Fame, 1750-1830*

integral to forming the notion of celebrity, a state in which someone is known by those beyond their circle of acquaintance. Thus, ideas of celebrity culture and the public sphere in the eighteenth century are closely linked. This thesis argues that many caricatures of the elite are indicative of a distinctive culture of fame in eighteenth-century Britain and France, as the publics of both countries were increasingly interested in knowing their royal and noble families in an intimate way. The press played a significant role in developing and facilitating the rise of a celebrity culture, particularly in Britain, but while published images have been considered as valuable by some scholars of celebrity culture, caricatures have not been given due consideration.⁸⁷

Much extant scholarship on celebrity culture has examined the prominence of the cultural elite, such as theatre actors and actresses, as well as authors, but there is minimal consideration of how the social and political elite of Britain and France were involved in this celebrity culture, nor indeed how their reputations were impacted by a culture which did not acknowledge traditional social boundaries.⁸⁸ As will be shown, caricaturists, particularly in Britain, had no scruples about revealing the intimate details of even the royal family. In France, Lynn Hunt argued that caricatures paved the way for the executions of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette by overriding the traditional deference shown to the monarch and his family.⁸⁹ The impact of celebrity culture and caricatures on the socio-political elite was significant because the elite quite literally lost control of their representations, something

(Basingstoke, 2006); Matthew Kinservik, *Sex, Scandal and Celebrity in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (2007); Antoine Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, 2017); Sharon Marcus, *The Drama of Celebrity* (Princeton, 2019).

⁸⁷ Antoine Lilti, for example, examines a small selection of caricatures depicting Emma Hamilton, but he ultimately concludes that caricature 'had an ambivalent relationship to celebrity'. Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, p. 66.

⁸⁸ See for example, Laura Engel, 'Stage Beauties: Actresses and Celebrity Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century,' 13:12, *Literature Compass* (Dec., 2016), pp. 749-761. Clara Tuite, *Lord Byron and Scandalous Celebrity* (Cambridge, 2015).

⁸⁹ Hunt, 'Political Psychology', pp. 33-4.

which had been key to their social and political status.⁹⁰ For example, when the monarch could be represented by ordinary people or for the entertainment of the public, then he necessarily lost some of the prestige reserved for his position. Scholarship of celebrity culture in the eighteenth century would benefit from a consideration of how society's social and political elite were incorporated into this increasingly popular mode of visual expression which encouraged a familiarity between viewers and those depicted.

Summary

For much of the eighteenth century, the public spheres of France and Britain operated in different ways. While public opinion could be voiced through a profusion of newspapers, pamphlets and caricatures in Britain, censorship in ancien régime France limited the development of a public sphere built on published works. Nonetheless, in both nations, an increasing interest in the private lives of elite individuals points to the development of a celebrity culture, and this thesis will examine how satirical prints played a key role in this emergent culture of fame.

The elite: monarchy and nobility

Introduction

Studies of popular perceptions of the French monarchy in the eighteenth century have been strongly influenced by the theory of “desacralisation”. By contrast, no overarching analysis

⁹⁰ For example, scholarship has pointed to the control which Louis XIV exerted over his own image as sovereign in contemporary texts and visual culture. See Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven, 1992).

exists for British monarchy in the period. Traditionally, historiography of the nobility in the eighteenth century has focussed on examining the structural makeup of the social group and the similarities between the nobility of various European countries.⁹¹ Scholarship of the nobility in the eighteenth century is weighted more towards France than Britain, and scholarship of the French nobility has considered contemporary perceptions of the social group more so than historiography of the British nobility.⁹² This thesis is unique in that it analyses contemporary perceptions of the nobility through a visual medium, an analysis which contributes to cultural and social historical studies of the nobility. The thesis also adds to existing historiography on the nobility by comparing popular perceptions of the social group from two separate nations. This comparison allows for analysis of the similarities in contemporary attitudes towards the nobility in eighteenth-century France and Britain.

The theory of “desacralisation”

In 1982, Robert Darnton argued that scandalous and contraband *libelles* circulating in France in the 1770s and 1780s prepared for the Revolution by ‘desanctifying the symbols and deflating the myths that had made the monarchy appear legitimate in the eyes of its subjects.’⁹³ The *libelles* were closely related to the graphic arts that criticised Louis XVI and his family, with one often inspiring the other; Antoine de Baecque has subsequently argued that Revolutionary caricature documents this “desacralisation” to a far greater extent than did the subversive pamphlets that informed Darnton’s original thesis.⁹⁴ However, the term “desacralisation” has been manipulated in its adaptation to caricature historiography: where

⁹¹ See for example Jerzy Lukowski, *The European Nobility in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2003).

⁹² Studies of the French nobility include Chaussinand-Nogaret’s *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century*, Mathieu Marraud, *La Noblesse de Paris au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris, 2000), and Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined: the Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, 2005).

⁹³ Darnton, *The Literary Underground*, p. 147.

⁹⁴ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 44.

Darnton quite literally described the King of France losing his sacred status, the concept of “desacralisation” has also been used to explain how public perception of the monarchy gradually became more negative. James Cuno argued that caricatures damaged the reputations of the monarchy and the nobility, but he does not suggest that these groups were ever viewed as sacred.⁹⁵ This thesis similarly turns away from religious connotations of the term “desacralisation”, and instead analyses how caricaturists diminished elite culture by contrasting the actions of the contemporary elite with the idealised versions of the nobility and monarchy.

Although the theory of religious “desacralisation” has its supporters, there are also several historians who feel it has been accorded too much impact.⁹⁶ Most notably, William Doyle contested the theory on the grounds that ‘no such process can be demonstrated convincingly, and [...] it is not in fact necessary for explaining the overthrow of the monarchy.’⁹⁷ However, this thesis argues that while it will never be possible for historians to definitively pinpoint the exact moment that Louis XVI ceased to be a worthy King in the eyes of his subjects, it *is* possible to note when popular ideas of the monarchy began to change in a way that suggests a process of “desacralisation” or loss of respect if only one is paying attention to the right sources. Taken alone, the pamphlets which Darnton relied upon for his original argument do not convincingly support a widespread notion of “desacralisation” in pre-Revolutionary France, but this thesis argues that caricatures had a significant impact on the perception of the monarchy, an impact which was eventually bolstered by the financial support that Revolutionary governments showed to printmakers.

⁹⁵ James Cuno, ‘Introduction’, in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 17.

⁹⁶ Thomas E. Kaiser, ‘Enlightenment, Public Opinion and Politics in the Work of Robert Darnton’, in Haydn T. Mason (ed.), *The Darnton Debate: Books and Revolution in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 191-2; Daniel Gordon, ‘The Great Enlightenment Massacre’, in Mason (ed.), *The Darnton Debate*, p. 151.

⁹⁷ William Doyle, *France and the Age of Revolution: Regimes Old and New from Louis XIV to Napoleon Bonaparte* (London, 2013), p. 3.

This thesis also departs from the traditional French association with the “desacralisation” theory by applying the term to contemporary textual and visual depictions of George III of Great Britain. A theory of “desacralisation” has never been explicitly applied to the British monarchy in this period, yet Marilyn Morris has argued that a ‘demystification’ is discernible in anti-monarchical rhetoric of the 1790s in Britain, a rhetoric that was exacerbated by financial hardship and governmental repressions.⁹⁸ In comparing depictions of George III and Louis XVI using the lens of “desacralisation”, it becomes evident that this process could have varying effects on the reputation of the king as an individual, and on the monarchy as an institution. Many caricatures which could be said to have “desacralised” George III in fact enhanced popular interest in him as an individual, which in turn encouraged popular support during his battle with mental illness, and his position as a personification of British spirit during the Wars with Revolutionary France. This comparison of the impact which satirical material could have on the reputations of monarchs suggests that “desacralisation” could be positive or negative, depending on the surrounding political circumstances.

Scandal and parasitic nobility

The eighteenth century saw widespread discussions about the social and political roles of the nobility in Britain and France. In France particularly, textual and visual sources grappled with the traditional image of the Second Estate and its contemporary reality from the 1750s onwards, with the Revolution marking the greatest volume of works critical to the nobility. In

⁹⁸ Marilyn Morris, *The British Monarchy and the French Revolution* (New York, 1998), p. 174.

Britain, perceptions of the nobility were influenced by the press and their focus on elite scandal and vice.

The nobilities of Britain and France had different roles to play in the eighteenth century; where British nobles formed an aristocracy that tied titles to seats in Parliament, the French nobility was largely divorced from political decisions as a result of the country's absolutist regime.⁹⁹ This concept has been reiterated by other historians, many of whom argue that the largely apolitical nature of the nobility in France ultimately defined its fate, and encouraged the stereotype of the parasitic courtier.¹⁰⁰

As demonstrated by Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret in his examination of the French nobility of the ancient regime, the nobility was not a homogenous group, but rather one defined by numerous strata based upon wealth and location. Significantly, Chaussinand-Nogaret stressed that only around 160-200 noble families lived in the lap of luxury at Versailles- the 'useless parasites'- whilst at the far end, thousands of noble families were so poor that only their titles and tax exemptions distinguished them from the local peasantry.¹⁰¹ In contrast with this measured analysis of the makeup of the French nobility, we will see that most Revolutionary caricatures depicting the nobility are extremely generalised, and would imply that every member of the social order was guilty of the same sins.¹⁰² This thesis has also found that earlier popular discussions of noble identity, such as caricatures in the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures* and ancien régime ballads and pamphlets, similarly depicted the stereotype of the idle nobleman. These pre-Revolutionary examples suggest that the strongly

⁹⁹ Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁰ David Bien, 'Aristocracy', in Rafe Blaufarb, Michael S. Christofferson and Darrin M. McMahon (eds.) *Interpreting the Ancien Regime: David Bien* (Oxford, 2014), p. 62; Gail Bossenga, 'Society' in William Doyle (ed.), *Old Regime France, 1648-1788* (Oxford, 2001), p. 58.

¹⁰¹ Chaussinand-Nogaret, *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 52-3.

¹⁰² Bossenga, 'Society', p. 58.; Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies*, p. 20.

anti-noble prints which emerged at the beginning of the Revolution were visual expressions of a long-running negative perception of the nobility in French society.¹⁰³

Questions about the function and purpose of the nobility do not appear as frequently in British visual culture of the eighteenth century as they did in France. In examining caricatures of the British nobility, it is clear that in spite of the significant political power with which many of the British nobility were imbued, as a social group they were frequently targeted by caricaturists. Diana Donald equates this rise in legitimate, publicly expressed condemnation as a result of the lapse of laws which traditionally protected the reputation of the nobility.¹⁰⁴ Despite the profusion of pamphlets, newspapers, and caricatures which revealed the foibles of society's elite, there are few studies which examine representations or popular perceptions of the British elite in the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁵

In examining these public expressions of criticism, we will see that caricatures of the British nobility as a whole tended to focus on financial or sexual scandals. E.P. Thompson argued that the parasitism of the British nobility was not challenged by any of the lower sort before the final three decades of the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, scholarship examining perceptions of the British nobility often focuses on the 1790s as an area of study for social and political mass discontent, yet these critiques and mockeries of the elite can certainly be traced to much earlier in the period if caricatures are examined. For example, Donna Andrew has argued that pamphlets and newspapers were increasingly used by opponents of aristocratic vice from the 1770s onwards as a means of trying individuals in the court of

¹⁰³ This argument is in contrast to those of Jay Smith, who argues that anti-noble rhetoric emerged in the immediate circumstances of the Revolution. Jay M. Smith, 'Nobility after Revisionism', in Jay M. Smith (ed.), *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches* (Pennsylvania, 2006), p. 2.

¹⁰⁴ Donald, *The Age of Caricature*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ Amanda Goodrich, *Debating England's Aristocracy in the 1790s: Pamphlets, Polemics and Political Ideas* (Woodbridge, 2005) is one example.

¹⁰⁶ E. P. Thompson, 'Eighteenth-Century English Society: Class Struggle without Class?' 3:2, *Social History*, (May, 1978), p. 142.

public opinion when the real law was seen to be inadequate.¹⁰⁷ Although Andrew does not consider satirical prints in her study, an examination of British caricatures produced between 1740 and 1795 will reveal that noble scandal was a frequent motif across the period, suggesting a contemporary fascination with the private lives of society's elite .

Summary

It is impossible to ignore the fact that, by 1795, Britain still possessed a nobility, whilst France did not. Nonetheless, when examining the realities and intricacies of the French nobility during the ancient regime, it is important not to be drawn into the temptation of reading their actions and popular perceptions teleologically. As Doyle states, 'nobody dreamed of executing Louis XVI in 1789', nor indeed, was France awash with calls to completely abolish the nobility in 1789.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, it is similarly necessary to avoid dismissing public criticism of the British aristocracy as inconsequential simply because one *knows* that they as a social class survived the turbulence of the eighteenth century. This thesis argues that, despite their differing fates, the nobilities of France and Britain were perceived in very similar ways by caricaturists and satirists in the eighteenth century, who focussed on elite scandal and the traditional role of the nobility in society.

This thesis will chart the shifting nature of public responses to the nobility over a period of fifty-five years, but without doubt the most significant period of change occurred in the 1790s, as a result of the French Revolution. As we will see, these visual representations of the nobility were largely grounded in engrained cultural ideals and motifs about this social group which begin to emerge as early as the 1740s. Rather than a growing wave of negative

¹⁰⁷ Donna T. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: the Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2013), p. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Doyle, *France and the Age of Revolution*, p. 3.

sentiment towards the nobility which erupted in the final decade of the century, caricatures demonstrate a persistent tradition of criticism levelled at society's elite from 1740 until 1795. Due to censorship and the limitations of the public sphere, we find that this criticism could not always be widely expressed in published works or even in visual form, but it was always present.

Methodology

The research questions developed in this thesis were originally inspired by noting the similarity between British and French political culture in the late eighteenth century. In both countries, humorous, satirical caricatures emerged as part of the expanding contemporary public sphere in a manner they never had before. My initial exploration of these similarities, however, also drew attention to several stark *differences* between British and French caricature in the eighteenth century: the volume of work produced, the style, the iconography, the freedom (or not) of expression, and of course, *what* each tradition was depicting and for what purpose. The primary methodological considerations for this thesis are those connected to the comparative nature of the subject matter, and the use of visual culture in History.

Comparative history

Recent scholarship has asserted that comparative history considers not only differences, but also similarities.¹⁰⁹ Historians currently practicing comparative history are well aware of the dual nature of the methodology and utilise it to the full. Indeed, as Chris

¹⁰⁹ Nancy L. Green, 'Forms of Comparison', in Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (eds), *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (New York, 2004), p. 47.

Wickham argues, a historical study without comparison runs the risk of assuming that one national case is 'the norm'.¹¹⁰ For example, in this thesis the relative freedom of British caricaturists in this period could lead to the assumption that that this was normal throughout Europe, but when compared with France, we see that the British case was not the standard. Comparative methodology is also useful for this thesis because it encourages the consideration of how the societies of Britain and France expressed their attitudes towards the elite, and how far the caricature tradition is similar between the two nations. Despite these evident advantages, one of the greatest challenges of this thesis is its comparative nature, for despite the fundamental similarities between British and French caricature, the actual source material available is very uneven.

Firstly, the quantity of relevant British-made caricatures representing the nobility and monarchy is far greater than the corresponding French images, a fact that immediately creates a necessary decision about which sources will be abandoned or favoured in the process of writing the thesis. Secondly, as discussed previously, the press conditions differed so much in France and Britain for the majority of the eighteenth century that even the time periods from whence the images came will not be perfectly symmetrical. Whilst British images may be extracted from 1740 to 1795 without pause, the French images examined herein will date from c.1740 to c.1775 (the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures*) before resuming once again in 1789 at the beginning of the French Revolution. This temporal discrepancy is difficult to reconcile, perhaps even more so than the simple fact of numerical inequality, and yet to ignore the potential for useful comparative work on this basis seems unfounded. As Raymond Grew has argued, 'Comparative analysis, like the architect's compass, is no less useful a tool of design when the legs on which it stands are of unequal length'; here the French leg is

¹¹⁰ Chris Wickham, *Problems in doing Comparative History* (Southampton, 2005), p. 2.

certainly “shorter” than its British counterpart, but no less valuable.¹¹¹ Indeed, Nancy Green suggests that ‘asymmetrical archives should, in fact, be an integral part of a reflection on similarity and difference itself’.¹¹² In this thesis, the asymmetry of the French and British caricature archives emphasises the differences in political expression between the two nations, but this asymmetry certainly does not preclude a valuable comparison of both source bases.

Transnational history

As this thesis compares expressions of public opinion in two separate nations, it also looks to recent offshoots of comparative methodology, namely transnational history, for methodological insights. Transnational history and *histoire croisée* have developed from comparative history in order to add consideration of national interconnections and transfers to “traditional” comparative methodology.¹¹³ Given the close cultural connections of French and British caricature, and close relationships maintained between the elite of the two nations, a consideration of the connectivity between France and Britain in this study is just as important as analysis of their differences and similarities. Decades before the formal establishment of transnational history as a methodological approach, Marc Bloch had argued that the most fruitful type of academic comparison ‘is to make a parallel study of societies that are at once neighbouring and contemporary, exercising a constant mutual influence’; for to search only for similarities and differences between neighbouring nations is to miss vital cultural

¹¹¹ Raymond Grew, ‘The Case for Comparing Histories’, *The American Historical Review*, 85:4 (Oct., 1980), p. 767.

¹¹² Green, ‘Forms of Comparison’, p. 50.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 658. Notable and recent studies of transnationalism in history include: Bernhard Struck, Kate Ferris & Jacques Revel ‘Introduction: Space and Scale in Transnational History’, *The International History Review*, 33:4, (2011), pp. 573-584, and Patricia Clavin, ‘Defining Transnationalism’, *Contemporary European History*, 14: 4, Theme Issue: ‘Transnational Communities in European History, 1920-1970’ (Nov., 2005), pp. 421-439.

information.¹¹⁴ Britain and France had been strongly linked by culture, war, fashion, and diplomacy long before the eighteenth century. This thesis shows that the “hey-day” of caricature from 1740 to 1795 created new cultural connections between the two neighbouring countries at a time when public perception of politics and social strata was changing.

The transfer of art forms occurred both in the importation of British caricatures to France, as well as in the French images which readapted the contents and concepts of British prints for French political commentary. Citing *histoire croisée*, Jürgen Kocka theorises that the interrelations between compared nations should ‘become part of the comparative framework by analysing them as factors that have led to similarities or differences, convergence or divergence between the cases one compares.’¹¹⁵ In an examination of transnational cultural movement between Britain and France at certain points of time in this period, caricatures are a wonderful method of demonstrating how the movement of political or cultural ideals could affect the “receiving” culture. For example, the radicalism of the French Revolution not only impacted the tone of British caricature, but it also had a significant impact on their legality, a factor which in 1795 saw them affected by similar restrictions that those that had limited pre-Revolutionary French caricature.

European transnational history has most often been applied to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as eras when the concept of nationalism emerged.¹¹⁶ Benedict Anderson has argued that the rise of national identity is built upon a society in possession of a significant public sphere, a phenomenon that he attributes in Europe to the rise of literacy in the nineteenth century.¹¹⁷ This argument suggests that the concept of nation could not have

¹¹⁴ Marc Bloch, ‘A Contribution Toward a Comparative History of European Societies’, trans. J.E. Anderson, in Bloch, *Land and Work in Mediaeval Europe: Selected Papers by Marc Bloch* (New York, 1969), pp. 47-8.

¹¹⁵ Jürgen Kocka, ‘Comparison and Beyond’, *History and Theory*, 42:1 (Feb., 2003), p. 44.

¹¹⁶ C. A. Bayly, ‘AHR Conversation: On Transnational History’, *The American Historical Review*, 111:5 (Dec., 2006), p. 1442.

¹¹⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983), p. 36.

been substantial before the literacy boom of the nineteenth century, because without literacy large portions of society would not have comprehended the concept of “nation”, nor would they have been an active part of it. However, both Linda Colley and David Bell have challenged this idea. Colley’s *Britons* established that a strong sense of British national identity emerged in the eighteenth century, whilst Bell’s *Cult of the Nation* argued that an existing concept of French nationality and nationhood was definitively re-shaped in public discourse in the early years of the French Revolution.¹¹⁸

Visual culture

In addition to methodological connections to comparative history and *histoire croisée*, the thesis also contributes to recent studies in visual culture. In spite of their (often) crude nature and simplicity of artistic execution, caricatures are both an art form and a socio-political discourse that is intrinsically connected to historiographical studies of culture and specifically visual culture. Sarah Barber has argued that the works of pioneering visual culture scholars Michael Baxandall and Svetlana Alpers changed the ‘aesthetic’ considerations of Art History towards a means of studying art and images that requires analysis of wider cultural context.¹¹⁹ Thus, visual culture is a fruitful mode of analysis for both Art History and History scholars.

Debates about the value of visual culture in eighteenth century historiography have been focussed on Habermas’ theory of the public sphere, and the extent to which this public sphere relied on images or texts.¹²⁰ While this thesis asserts that visual culture is an important facet of the eighteenth-century public sphere, it is also crucial to remember that the context of

¹¹⁸ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (5th edition, London, 2009); David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (London, 2001).

¹¹⁹ Sarah Barber, ‘Fine Art: the Creative Image’, in Sarah Barber and Corinna Peniston-Bird, *History Beyond the Text: a Student’s Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources* (London, 2009), p. 18.

¹²⁰ Landes, *Visualizing the Nation*, p. 11.

a visual source must be considered in order to fully utilise it to a historical advantage. As Ludmilla Jordanova asserts, historians must analyse visual sources in much the same way that they examine literary sources. For example, expecting visual sources to ‘reflect’ the past is a dangerous over-estimation of the connection between art and life.¹²¹ Caricatures were, by nature, primarily humorous and satirical; reality was rarely a caricaturist’s top priority. Indeed, it is important that any analysis of caricatures takes into consideration the fact that images often distorted the appearance of people and events. The intended purpose of a print can be very difficult for a historian to ascertain, as some images were specifically commissioned by persons wishing to criticise a public figure, whilst others were created from scratch by the enterprising artist whose motives could be personal and complex, or merely financial.

In the unique case of the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures*, the audience of the images was a small group of the artist’s trusted intimates, not paying customers, but the mere creation of these images involved acts of careful observation and representation.¹²² The artist’s perception of people and events is in itself a rich repository of source material for historians, even without a quantifiable idea of a public audience. The distortion of reality by caricaturists is useful for historians because it is evidence of contemporary ideologies and mentalities.¹²³ In this thesis, the distortion which caricaturists carried out in depicting the elite provides us with evidence of how contemporary popular mentalities could be conveyed via a visual medium, and how these distortions were used by artists to denote the identities of individuals and of the social group as a whole.

¹²¹ Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in Practice* (2nd ed., London, 2006), pp. 164-5.

¹²² Daniela Bleichmar, *Visible Empire: Botanical Expeditions and Visual Culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2012), p. 10.

¹²³ Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: the Use of Images as Historical Evidence* (London, 2001), p. 30.

Summary

The comparison between French and British caricature will contribute to studies in comparative and transnational history by demonstrating how caricatures provide evidence of cultural connections between the two countries, and how these cultural connections could be impacted by contemporary political events such as warfare or revolution. The interconnections between British and French caricatures, both in terms of their style and circulation, have not been analysed in prior historiography. This thesis argues that such a comparison is valuable for understanding the nature and purpose of caricatures in a given political moment. This comparison also allows the thesis to probe how public opinion and national identity could be connected in popular discourses in eighteenth-century France and Britain.

The central methodological claim made by this thesis is that visual culture is a source material that provides crucial information about social and political ideals, to the same extent as literary sources. As dual visual and textual discourses, caricatures offer a significant and unique repository of popular opinion in eighteenth-century France and Britain. In spite of the debates and challenges raised by the source material, caricatures are a useful and vital means of comprehending contemporary socio-political and cultural attitudes to a wide variety of topics, particularly perceptions of the elite in each nation.

Thesis structure

Chapter One examines the artistic creation and content of satirical prints produced in Britain and France between 1740 and 1800. From this large corpus of caricatures, a recurrent motif of transformation appeared in sources across the period of study, prompting an inquiry into why this mode of visual expression had such enduring popularity in caricatures. Chapter One

frames this transformative motif as a means of exploring not only the stylistic connections of British and French prints, but also as a method of probing how exactly contemporaries of all social backgrounds could have comprehended these images. The chapter examines various examples of the transformative motif as it applied to elite individuals, and in doing so questions the purpose of this motif for caricaturists. It also queries whether this recurrent motif was intended as a means of clarifying the content of caricatures, or of concealing their true meaning from authorities, a difference in purpose which was highly dependent on the socio-political milieu in which the caricature in question was produced.

Chapter Two analyses the extent to which caricature prints demonstrate contemporary, popular interest in the political spheres of France and Britain. The chapter focuses on political scandals and disputes of the elite, and analyses how caricatures of these events impacted on the image of the elite. The first section considers how caricaturists critiqued royal men who failed to fulfil their political role, often as a result of a flawed personality or the influence of female companions. The second section analyses why caricaturists often focused on the female companions of political leaders, and argues that this was not merely a misogynistic criticism of women's role in politics, but a means for artists to conceal direct criticisms of the male political leaders. Overall, the chapter aims to underline how caricatures appealed to an "audience" which was eager for details of the political transgressions of the ruling elite, and how interpretations of these transgressions reflected the state of contemporary politics.

Chapter Three considers how caricatures challenged entrenched ideals of the purpose and function of the elite in their respective nations by presenting viewers with an alternative view of the contemporary elite. The first section considers how satirical prints and texts raised the concept of the elite's purpose in society, a purpose which generally centred around the martial and moral qualities traditionally attributed to the social group. Section two

examines prints which purport to lift the curtain on the personal lives of the elite, a stylistic device which not only allowed for criticism of individuals, but which also fed a growing form of celebrity culture in the period. The third section considers the numerous caricatures which depict the supposed vices of the elite; this section aims to not only highlight the prevalence of images like this, but also to query their intended function, which is generally presumed to be entirely negative. Overall, the chapter aims to highlight the existence of a dual image of the elite, which was made up of the idealised version of its members, and the images of them created by caricaturists as part of an emergent celebrity culture.

Chapter Four explores satirical visual responses to three key events in Franco-British relations during the eighteenth century: the Seven Years' War, the Commercial Treaty of 1786, and the French Revolutionary Wars. In looking at these three events, the chapter examines not only the way in which the socio-political elite were depicted by satirists, but also the way in which the respective governments of France and Britain used visual propaganda to influence their people during these challenging events. The chapter charts the rise of caricature as a mode of state propaganda from the Seven Year's War in the 1750s until the Revolutionary Wars in the 1790s, and queries why caricature became such a popular mode of expression towards the end of the eighteenth century. The chapter considers the extent to which caricaturists focused on the shortcomings of the elite during these moments in history, often with a distinct focus on the conflict between elite identity and emergent ideals of national identity.

Summary

'Those Scandalous Prints' analyses caricatures produced in France and Britain between 1740 and 1795 in order to examine how the socio-political elite in each nation were depicted in a

visual form of popular expression. The thesis considers how caricatures depicting the elite in each country changed at various points in this fifty-five-year period as a result of contemporary social and political events. It aims to underline the role of caricatures themselves as vehicles for expressing popular perceptions of the elite, and how caricatures can be incorporated into wider studies on public opinion in the eighteenth century. By comparing caricatures of the elite in France with those of Britain, the thesis highlights the similarities in cultural expression which the two countries experienced even when they were separated by conflict, as well as the ways that they differed. In analysing all of these elements, the thesis offers valuable new insights into studies involving public opinion, perceptions of the elite, and the impact of caricature in eighteenth-century Britain and France.

Chapter One: Transforming the Elite

Introduction

The manner in which eighteenth-century British and French caricaturists expressed attitudes to the elite can tell us much about the way that this social group was perceived in the public sphere. From examining French-made and British-made prints throughout the period of 1740 to 1795, it becomes clear that certain motifs were popular with caricaturists in both nations. One of these recurrent motifs was transformation. As an artistic motif, transformation in caricatures could change people into animals, objects, or classical figures. This chapter examines not only the meanings behind the transformative imagery used by caricaturists and what it tells us about contemporary attitudes to the elite, but also how the intent behind these motifs could vary based on the historical moment and place in which the print was created. By examining these motifs, the chapter aims to demonstrate how this specific kind of imagery operated in prints: as clarification of the print's sentiments, or as a means of obscuring unflattering critiques of society's elite from legal repercussions.

The chapter begins by analysing four examples of individual social and political elites who became associated with a specific visual motif. In each case, the motif resulted from a wordplay on their names, denoting the individual without need of additional explanatory text. I argue that this visual wordplay was a clever and mocking way by which caricaturists communicated the individual's identity without explicitly naming them, thus protecting the prints from censorship or legal restrictions. The second section looks at three distinctive motifs which appeared in British and French prints of the elite: the Janus figure, *singerie*, and *crucheries*. This section not only considers the meaning behind these three distinctive motifs, but also the connections which they reveal between British and French visual culture, and ancien régime and Revolutionary French visual culture.

The third and final section analyses a variety of prints which employed the motif of animal transformation in depictions of British and French kings and queens: George II, George III, Louis XVI, and Marie-Antoinette. The association between a certain animal species and each individual is analysed, and I argue that the moment of a print's production had a significant impact on the transformative motif which a caricaturist chose. The section considers how the people of Britain and France interpreted different species of animals based on fables, biblical tales, and earlier artworks. For each caricature examined, I consider the meaning of the transformative motif and its purpose, as well as how the transformative motif functioned for a specific print.

Crucial to this chapter is an examination of how transformative imagery could be used by caricaturists to denote specific elite individuals in a manner which would have been instantly recognisable to viewers of varying educational backgrounds. In considering these viewers, we will have recourse to the term "public", a term whose ambiguity presents a challenge for this chapter, and for the thesis as a whole; when used, "public" is intended in the broadest sense, to imply people of the "middling" and "lower" social backgrounds in eighteenth-century Britain and France, particularly those in urban communities, who were most likely to be in contact with caricature prints.¹

By enquiring into the content of caricatures depicting the socio-political elite, this chapter connects to one of the central considerations of caricature historiography, namely, the extent to which caricatures could have been understood by uneducated individuals who formed part of the urban public.² The historiographical debate over audience understanding of British caricatures has endured for decades, with historians such as Charles Press and

¹ John Brewer suggested the term "urban publics" when describing those most likely to interact with caricatures in Britain. John Brewer, *The Common People and Politics, 1750-1790* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 41-3. Historiography of French Revolutionary caricature emphasises the central role of the Parisian populace in the art form's popularity. See Antoine de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire* (Paris, 1988).

² For further exploration of these historiographical debates, see the Introduction.

Robert Hole arguing that caricatures were comprehensible even to those who were uneducated.³ However, Roy Porter challenged the concept of caricature as a universally-comprehended medium, arguing that prints could only have been deciphered by those familiar with contemporary politics and with Biblical and Classical learning.⁴ In a recent monograph on English satirical prints, John Richard Moores has similarly argued that whilst images were generally more accessible to the illiterate members of society than textual media, caricatures could nonetheless contain complex iconography that would have surpassed the general knowledge of an uneducated viewer.⁵

In contrast with historiography of British caricature, historians of French caricatures are largely agreed that satirical prints produced during the French Revolution were completely accessible to lower class urban citizens. Indeed, James Cuno argued that French caricatures were specifically aimed at the Third Estate of French society.⁶ The poor levels of literacy in France at the outbreak of the Revolution led Lynn Hunt to assert that caricatures and other political images were vital for spreading the Revolutionary cause throughout Paris and beyond.⁷ Both of these arguments presume that uneducated, illiterate audiences in France would have understood the political messages and nuances of the images circulating the capital, a view that historians of British caricature continue to contest. This chapter aims to reconcile this split in caricature historiography by demonstrating that both British and French made caricatures could contain simple iconography that appealed to educated and uneducated viewers alike. In analysing how transformative imagery connects to audience understanding

³ Charles Press, "The Georgian political print and democratic institutions", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 19:2 (1977), p. 218; Robert Hole, 'British counter-revolutionary popular propaganda in the 1790s,' in Colin Jones (ed.), *Britain and Revolutionary France: Conflict, Subversion and Propaganda* (Exeter, 1983), p. 58.

⁴ Roy Porter, 'Prinney, Boney, Boot', *London Review of Books* (20 March 1986), p. 19.

⁵ John Richard Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints 1740-1832* (London, 2015), p. 5.

⁶ James Cuno, 'Introduction', in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 17.

⁷ Lynn Hunt, 'The Political Psychology of Revolutionary Caricatures', in Cuno, *French Caricature and the French Revolution*, p. 33.

of caricatures, this chapter takes note of John Rogister's assertion that historians of caricatures must attempt to capture the mindset of contemporary viewers of these prints.⁸ Although it is not possible to entirely uncover the mindset of the "public" in eighteenth-century Britain and France, this chapter argues that British historiography has been wrong to suggest that caricatures were too complex for all uneducated members of urban society.

The chapter emphasises how transformative imagery was used in caricatures to clarify the identity of the individual without the necessity of naming them directly, but it also argues that this imagery could act as a buffer between the print and any legal accusations of slander. The freedom to mock political and social leaders in the public sphere with impunity varied greatly in both Britain and France at various points between 1740 and 1795.⁹ In analysing the transformative imagery of each print, this chapter considers how far the moment of their creation impacted on the purpose of this imagery. The examples from the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures* which are examined in this chapter underline how caricature could be used to obscure meanings which may have offended individuals in high places. The *Livre de Caricatures* was unpublished, and therefore it did not attempt to appeal to an audience beyond the artist's intimates, but rather transformative motifs in the *Livre* can be considered as the foundation of an "in joke" shared between Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin and his family.

The expression of caricaturists via transformative imagery had a dual purpose: to clarify the identity of the people depicted for those who were familiar with the motif, or to hide meaning from prying, censorious eyes. In many instances, both purposes apply for prints, whether they were published or unpublished. Even in the relative freedom of Britain in

⁸ John Rogister, 'Decoding the Livre de Caricatures' in Colin Jones, Juliet Carey, and Emily Richardson (eds.) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures: Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 2012), p. 56.

⁹ For more information on censorship and caricatures in Britain and France, see the Introduction.

the 1770s, a small number of court cases against caricatures did occur, but the difficulty of proving that the defendant was indeed the individual depicted quashed any hope of an enduring legal curb on caricature production.¹⁰ Transformative imagery was flexible, and the images examined in this chapter highlight how caricatures could convey critical opinions about the socio-political elite in ways which both evaded censorship and encouraged a more socially varied audience. This audience did not necessarily interpret the prints precisely as the caricaturist intended, but this does not mean that they failed to understand some of the central points of mockery or criticism which the caricatures attempted to convey.¹¹

In analysing the repetition of a transformative motif, this chapter also aims to draw attention to the stylistic similarities of expression which were present in British and French caricatures, even before any known movement of the art form between the two nations.¹² Analysis of this shared iconography requires a consideration of the meanings behind specific transformative motifs in each country, and how far this transformative imagery was an expression of the freedom or restriction of caricature production at a given moment in time. The preponderance of object and animal transformations is evident in both French-made and British-made satirical prints produced between 1740 and 1795, suggesting a common ideology behind the use of this particular symbolism in depictions of the monarchy and nobility. This similarity of content emphasises the value of examining British and French caricatures side by side, for their shared iconography suggests a common mode of expressing contemporary attitudes to the elite across two societies with different social and political makeup.

¹⁰ Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (London, 1996), p. 15.

¹¹ John Brewer argues that the emerging British public sphere in the eighteenth century opened up various media to individuals who engaged with their content in new ways which differed from educated, privileged consumers. Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago, 1997), p. 428.

¹² Amelia Rauser pinpoints the 1780s as the first clear instance of British caricatures being sold to the Parisian public. Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked; Irony, Authenticity, and Individualism in Eighteenth—Century English Prints* (Newark, 2008), p. 129.

The chapter also considers why transformative motifs were so popular in British and French caricature, and why caricaturists returned to the same motifs repeatedly when depicting the elite. The repetitive nature of satirical prints has been noted by historians of both French and British caricatures, most of whom see this repetition as an attempt at persuasion or the establishment of stereotypes.¹³ I would argue that the repetition of transformative motifs was an example of the “language” of caricature, which allowed artists to convey an idea or an individual with minimal accompanying text. As noted above, caricaturists could reuse certain motifs because they relied upon rapid recognition and understanding of audiences in order to attract paying customers. Transformative imagery also allowed caricaturists to mock the elite using established cultural ideals of certain animals and objects. That this iconography appears in pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary French, as well as in British, caricature of the elite suggests a common ideology of mockery and critique that was shared by artists in both countries.

One of the most recurrent motifs in British and French caricature was the transformation of a human into an animal, and the negative cultural connotations of this type of artwork began long before the eighteenth century. Simona Cohen has argued that animal symbolism in the Renaissance worked on ‘the premise that immorality reduces man to an inferior and degraded state, transforming him from a human into a beast.’¹⁴ That caricaturists repeatedly used this transformative motif to depict elite members of society underlines the criticism and mockery which elites could engender in eighteenth-century Britain and France. Amanda Goodrich has argued that the British elite were most criticised in the outpouring of popular discourse produced in the wake of the French Revolution, but analysis of caricatures

¹³ Claude Langlois, ‘Counterrevolutionary Iconography’, in Cuno *French Caricature and the French Revolution*, p. 43; Mike Goode, ‘The Public and the Limits of Persuasion in the Age of Caricature,’ in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 122.

¹⁴ Simona Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art* (Boston, 2008), pp. 203-4.

shows that criticisms of the British elite existed in popular discourse as early as the 1740s, and transformative imagery was part of the caricaturist's arsenal.¹⁵ John Shovlin has challenged historiographical arguments that criticisms of the French nobility emerged only in the pre-Revolutionary period of 1788-9.¹⁶ Instead, Shovlin traces a convincing history of what he terms "anti-nobilism" which appears in texts from the middle of the eighteenth century, an idea which is supported by the works of Sarah Maza and Marisa Linton.¹⁷ From a visual perspective, this pre-revolutionary anti-noble discourse is certainly expressed in the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures*, and transformative imagery forms an important facet of Saint-Aubin's critiques of the elite.

It is difficult to ascertain the depth of popular discourse which critiqued the French socio-political elite prior to 1788, but fragments of this discourse endure in the works of diarists such as Simeon Prosper Hardy.¹⁸ It is evident that the social and political elites of Britain and France faced criticism long before the French Revolution gave new weight to these critiques. It would be overstating the moral uprightness of caricaturists to claim that they associated animal metaphors with sinfulness, but it is clear that the transformation of a person into animal form remained pejorative into the eighteenth century, as it is in the present.¹⁹ Whilst a certain individual may be associated with one species in particular, other persons may be transformed into all manner of creatures based upon the will of the caricaturist. In both instances, the animal chosen plays a significant role in explaining how the individual is perceived at a given moment by the artist, and perhaps also by viewers.

¹⁵ Goodrich, *Debating England's Aristocracy*, p. 12.

¹⁶ John Shovlin, 'Toward a Reinterpretation of Revolutionary Antinobility: the Political Economy of Honour in the Old Regime', in *Journal of Modern History*, 72:1 (March, 2000), p. 63.

¹⁷ Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: the Causes Célèbres of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley, 1993); Marisa Linton, *The Politics of Virtue in Enlightenment France* (New York, 2001).

¹⁸ Simeon Prosper Hardy, *Mes Loisirs, ou Journal d'Événements tels qu'ils Parviennent a ma Connaissance*, Vol.I, (Paris, 1789), p. 355.

¹⁹ Steve Baker, *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity, and Representation* (Manchester, 1993), p. 108.

Analysing the symbolism of these transforming images will lead to two conclusions. Firstly, analysis of the prints' content will lead to a firmer understanding of *who* could have understood them, and how they evaded legal restrictions. Secondly, discussion of their content will expose some of the ways in which the prints may have affected viewers' opinions of politics and society. This latter point is important for French history because it responds to broader historiographical claims about the purported 'desacralisation' of the French monarchy. Antoine de Baecque has argued that the symbolic imagery depicting Louis XVI as a pig or a foolish child irrevocably damaged the traditional notion of the King's two bodies, spiritual and corporeal.²⁰ Taking these points into account, this chapter will argue that caricatures were also capable of negatively impacting the traditional respect accorded to not only the monarchy but also the nobility. Further, this argument relates to eighteenth-century Britain as much as to old regime France, as caricatures functioned as part of a popular discourse which critiqued and mocked the British elite across the whole of the eighteenth century. Although extant historiography on the public expressions of negative attitudes to the British elite focuses most on the 1790s, this chapter traces these critiques and mockeries of the socio-political elite to much earlier in the century; beginning with biting satirical prints published about the king in the 1740s, and exploring the continuation of the motif of transformative mockery through to the 1790s.²¹ By examining this decades-long critical discourse on the British elite, the chapter highlights how caricatures functioned as expressions of discontent with members of the ruling class.

The overarching aims of this chapter are to emphasise how these popular motifs demonstrate the manner in which caricaturists expressed ideas about the elite, the way that these various motifs functioned based on the time and place in which the caricatures were

²⁰ Antoine de Baecque, *The Body Politic: Corporeal Metaphor in Revolutionary France, 1770-1800*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Stanford, 1997), p. 8.

²¹ For an overview of historiography on perceptions of the British elite, see Introduction.

produced, and why both British and French caricatures used such similar methods of visual expression.

Part One: Transformations and Word Play

The majority of transformative French and British prints produced between 1740 and 1795 turned individuals into animals; a minority transformed them into inanimate objects such as garments and ordinary household items. Satirical images which transformed individuals into objects did so as a means of exploiting a humorous twist of the individual's name or a defining characteristic. The preponderance of object and animal transformations is evident in both French-made and British-made satirical prints produced between 1740 and 1795, suggesting a common ideology behind the use of this particular symbolism in depictions of the monarchy and nobility.

In this section, visual depictions of four individuals are examined. In each case, the individual's surname was used by caricaturists as a means of denoting that individual in a negative manner, for example, Charles James Fox's surname allowed satirical artists to accuse him of a sly nature. Of the four individuals examined in this section, two were leading male politicians, and the other two were women who, through their personal relationships with a royal man, became members of the elite. What draws all of these examples together is the way in which the motif of their surname was utilised not only as a form of criticism, but as a means of allowing satirical artists to comment critically on their behaviour without the need to explicitly name their targets. These four examples demonstrate how a repetitive and often transparent motif could allow artists to comment on elite individuals in a way that textual sources may have struggled to do in the face of legal reprisals.

Animal transformations: therianthropism and theriomorphism

As so many caricatures used animal transformations, analysing these images makes it necessary to consider what certain animals meant in contemporary British and French thought. The images which utilised animal transformation can be split into two categories: therianthropic and theriomorphic. The Oxford English Dictionary defines “theriomorphic” as ‘having the form of a beast’, while “therianthropic” means ‘combining the form of a beast with that of a man.’²² As shall be argued, the use of these two styles varied based on the comment which an artist was trying to make; for example, transforming an individual entirely into an animal relied upon clear audience understanding, because the individual’s features would not be evident. David Bindman’s analysis of how the British came to associate the French with frogs in the eighteenth century emphasises how stereotypical ideas could progress in a relatively short period.²³ In the seventeenth century, British art and literature depicted the Dutch as frogs, while the French were commonly associated with monkeys. The emergence of the French frog came about as part of new cultural discourses circulating during the Seven Years’ War. Bindman’s study demonstrates how the meanings behind symbols can change rapidly in a certain culture, and it would be remiss to presume that eighteenth-century viewers interpreted images of animals and objects as we do in the twenty-first century. The proliferation of humans transformed into animals and objects in the following images suggests a common language among satirical prints, which I believe was utilised to extend the reach of their contents to a “lay” audience.

²² Oxford English Dictionary Online. "theriomorphic, adj.". June 2020. Oxford University Press. <<https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.st-andrews.ac.uk/view/Entry/200541?redirectedFrom=theriomorphic>> [accessed 03 June 2020] Oxford English Dictionary Online. "therio-, comb. form". June 2020. Oxford University Press. <<https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.st-andrews.ac.uk/view/Entry/200538?redirectedFrom=therianthropic>> [accessed 03 June 2020].

²³ David Bindman, ‘How the French Became Frogs: English Caricature and a National Stereotype’, *Apollo*, 158:4 (2003), pp. 16-20.

In a study of animal symbolism in Renaissance artwork, Simona Cohen has argued strongly that lay understanding of animals was derived primarily from religious works, specifically bestiaries and fables.²⁴ Within medieval and Renaissance bestiaries, animals were associated with certain virtues or vices, and this is reflected in European woodcuts from the era, such as the Seven Vices series made by Hans Burgkmair the Elder. Burgkmair depicted each of the seven vices as a human with a fitting animal companion: Wrath is accompanied by a lion (fig.1.1), Gluttony by a pig (fig.1.2), and Pride a peacock (fig.1.3). This artistic device formed part of a symbolic “language” that European viewers would have understood in conjunction with religious connotations placed on animals. Although bestiaries decreased in the Renaissance, Cohen argues that their influence endures in the works of Shakespeare and Milton, and that the genre of emblematic art in the seventeenth century continued to cement popular ideas about what animals signified well into the eighteenth century.²⁵

Charles James Fox and Reynard: cunning characters

A strong case for the enduring influence of fables and Biblical concepts of animals in eighteenth-century popular art can be found in British caricatures of the Whig politician Charles James Fox. In dozens of prints published between 1780 and 1806, the motif of the fox character Reynard from Aesop’s Fables was used by caricaturists to depict the politician whose surname invited this mocking comparison. A prime example is ‘The re-electing of Reynard, or Fox the pride of the geese’ (fig.1.4), where the common play on Fox’s surname is combined with a presumed knowledge of Aesop’s fables, thus creating an association between the politician and a sly, ineffectual anthropomorphised fox in the viewer’s mind. This print was created in 1783 after Fox was appointed Secretary of State, and this particular

²⁴ Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols*, pp. 59-60.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

transformative imagery was employed by the caricaturist to undermine the credibility of Fox as a trustworthy political candidate.

Not only was Charles James Fox one of the leading British politicians during the reign of George III, he was also a prominent aristocratic public figure from the 1780s until his death in 1806. As a public figure, Fox was a prime target for caricaturists, who were quick to mock him and whose surname they were very eager to take advantage of. The holdings of the British Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings suggest that from 1781 to 1798 at least twenty-eight of these fox images were created. The vast majority of these images were theriomorphic; when the association between the politician's name and the wild animal was so evident, it was not necessary to employ therianthropic imagery. The earliest print of this kind, 'A phillipick to the geese' (fig.1.5), produced in 1781, shows a fox standing on its hind legs before a group of geese who swear their loyalty to him. The accompanying text implies that the fox is a trickster along the lines of Reynard; a politician who makes promises he has no intention of keeping. The imagery is subtle, in a style more frequently seen in prints produced in the 1760s, and without any colour. It is thus likely that the print was made and sold cheaply, suggesting an intended low-income audience.²⁶ If the print's intended audience did indeed include those from a lower-income background, it can be confidently argued that the fox motif was acting as an unequivocal indication of the politician without the need of extensive textual explanation.

In a rare example of therianthropism in 'Fox' caricatures, a 1786 print of Fox places his head on the body of a fox. 'The Fox and the Bust' (fig.1.6) is an ironic comment on Fox's influence over the Prince of Wales, a source of tension in the political landscape of Britain during Fox's tenure in politics. In the image, the fox figure has carved an accurate bust of the

²⁶ Herbert M. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth: A Study of the Ideographic Representation of Politics* (Oxford, 1974), p. 63.

Prince, but fondly laments its lack of brains, suggesting that the Prince ought to be guided by the wily fox. This comical rendering of the Prince and the politician was a comment on the well-known friendship between these two individuals. Once again, the clear rendering of the fox's body identifies the individual portrayed, should the viewer be unfamiliar with Fox's distinctive profile as rendered in dozens of prints produced in the 1780s and 1790s. That the print is labelled "Esops Fab." draws a direct link between contemporary caricature and the enduring relevance of Aesop's Fables, providing supporting evidence of the connection between fables and the motifs used by caricaturists.

The caricaturists' use of the fox to denote Charles James Fox was at its most influential during the Westminster Election of 1784 when the support of the Duchess of Devonshire for Fox encouraged a flurry of prints hinting at a sexual relationship between the pair. 'Devonia, the beautiful daughter of love & liberty, inviting the sons of freedom to her standard in Covent Garden.' (fig.1.7), 'Female influence; or, the Devons-e canvas' (fig.1.8), and 'The Queen of Clubs' (fig.1.9) all depict the Duchess canvassing for votes whilst wearing fox tails in her hat, a small detail which informs viewers whom she is supporting by repeating the Fox as a fox motif that was so prevalent in prints at this time. These images functioned as critiques of a woman believed to have stepped beyond the boundaries of her gender and social class, but they also implicated Fox in accusations that he was conducting an affair with the wife of the wealthy and influential Duke of Devonshire.

Although many of the fox-Devonshire images were subtle in invoking the connection between the Duchess and Charles James Fox, the transformative imagery takes on a more explicitly sexual tone in 'Parliament security or a borough in reserve' (fig.1.10), a print which depicts a fox peeping out from under the Duchess's skirts. These clever uses of the fox motif are a prime example of how caricature builds its own language to communicate with audiences in a simple and effective manner. In addition to the traditional association of the

fox with slyness, the Westminster election images added a new critical dimension to popular perceptions of Charles James Fox at a crucial time in his political career, by suggesting that he relied upon the support of a wealthy, married aristocratic woman. Indeed, Fox himself remarked that caricatures ‘had done him more mischief than the debates in Parliament or the works of the press,’ and satirical images equating him with a sly fox must have had a negative impact on public perception of him at a key point in his political career.²⁷

Earl of Bute- giving the Prime minister the boot

Moving back in time to the 1760s, another political figure who was most visually associated with his surname emerges in satirical prints: the Earl of Bute, a tutor of George III who used his royal influence to enhance his standing in British politics. In contrast to images of Charles James Fox, however, the Earl of Bute was not symbolically associated with an animal, but rather with an item of clothing- a boot, which phonetically echoed his surname. Analysis of the symbolism behind objects is different to that of animals; as shown, the symbolism inherent in certain species of animals was well established in Biblical and medieval artworks, but the contemporary symbolic meaning of garments can be challenging to ascertain.

In a study of the use of material culture in eighteenth-century literature, Jillian Heydt-Stevenson has shown how women’s hats, for example, functioned symbolically in novels: the garment could ‘blur the boundary between luxury and necessity’ and in doing so reveal one’s social status or aspirations.²⁸ Shoes were also important social markers, and so are capable of

²⁷ Horace Twiss, *The Public and Private Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon: with Selections from His Correspondence* (3 vols, London, 1844), p. 162.

²⁸ Jillian Heydt-Stevenson, “‘Changing Her Gown and Setting Her Head to Rights’: New Shops, New Hats and New Identities’, in Jennie Batchelor and Cora Kaplan (eds) *Women and Material Culture, 1660–1830* (London, 2007), p. 53.

telling historians much about their wearers.²⁹ Certainly, there is evidence of caricaturists using shoes to act as ciphers for specific individuals, as in James Gillray's 'Fashionable Contrasts', which comments on the nuptials of the Duke of York and his wife in 1792 (fig.1.11). However, specific kinds of shoe did not possess the same cultural symbolism as an animal or even a plant species, a fact which means that analysis of the Bute images must be considered in a different manner to prints which use animal transformations. Three decades before Gillray used shoes as a stand in for elite individuals, caricaturists of the 1760s were doing the very same thing in their depictions of George III's first minister, the Earl of Bute.

In a print entitled 'The Jack-Boot, exalted' (fig.1.12), Bute is depicted on a raised dais in front of a forlorn lion symbolising England. Bute stands inside a large black boot embellished with a Garter Star, throwing handfuls of coins at a group of fellow Scots whilst English politicians are forced from the room. The image, like many satirical prints of Bute, works on two iconographic premises: Bute's Scottish identity is frequently demonstrated in the tartan clothing and caps caricaturists envisage him wearing, and his title 'Bute' is ludicrously twisted to resemble "boot", the object which came to represent him in the language of contemporary caricature. In this particular image, Bute is imagined as the primary political figure in Britain, his large boot literally overshadowing the traditional symbol of England, the lion, which may also signify the newly-crowned King George III. Bute's supposed influence over the king was a key theme in satirical literature and prints throughout the 1760s, as political rivals sought to demonstrate that the King's favourite had 'created a "Butearchy" which he directed from behind the scenes.'³⁰ This publicised

²⁹ See Kimberly Alexander, *Treasures Afoot: Shoe Stories from the Georgian Era* (Baltimore, 2018), and Giorgio Riello, *A Foot in the Past: Consumers, Producers, and Footwear in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2006).

³⁰ Vincent Carretta, *George III and the Satirists from Hogarth to Byron* (Athens, GA, 1990), p. 79.

commentary on Bute's influence over the King clearly filtered into the medium of caricature, but this does not mean that publishing mockeries of the First Minister was without risk.

This risk is made evident by the fact that none of the Bute images examined in this chapter possess information about their creator, and only half contain scant information about a publisher or print-seller. In contrast, all of the prints about Charles James Fox, which were published between 1781 and 1786, have clear information about both artist and print-seller printed on each sheet. Much as British caricature is considered to be free in the eighteenth century, it is clear that concerns about legal repercussions endured in the 1760s, particularly if one was critiquing the King's first minister.³¹ Thus, the use of even an ill-concealed motif like that of Bute- "boot" could provide some legal security for publishers and caricaturists. As John Brewer has argued, criticism of the King's favourite may have shielded the King himself from direct criticism, but it also called into question his ability to rule the kingdom effectively, a dangerous assertion for any writer to state explicitly.³² Nonetheless, satirists dreamed of Bute getting his comeuppance, as shown in 'The Jack-Boot Kick'd Down, or English Will Triumphant' (fig.1.13), which mirrors 'The Jack-boot Exalted' by depicting Bute inside a boot. In this sequel image, however, Bute has been unceremoniously kicked off the dais by the formidable Duke of Cumberland, and the Earl's 'Scotch' influence has been ended at last.

One of the advantages of using motifs like a boot to signify Bute was that caricatures were rarely prosecuted for libel, whereas newspapers and pamphlets could expect less leniency if they were bold enough to target the king or his ministers.³³ Unlike the images of Fox, which tied his reputation to that of a character from fables, the Bute-boot motif was

³¹ Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked*, p. 51.

³² John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 122.

³³ James Van Horn Melton states that at least seventy prosecutions for sedition occurred between 1760 and 1790. In *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 32.

more reliant on the phonetic similarity between the surname and the object. The symbol of the boot denoting Bute is not a sophisticated nor particularly complex one, but it meant that caricaturists could continue to mock and criticise the King's favourite without having to be entirely explicit about whom they were depicting, giving them an advantage in the arena of public mockery not afforded to the press, and other forms of popular media.

The Poisson and the Jordan: royal mistresses and social ascendance

It was not only royal ministers who could become the target of visual satire in the eighteenth century. Women associated with the royal families of France and Britain also engendered frequent outpourings of criticism and mockery from journalists and caricaturists alike. Two figures which highlight this criticism are Madame de Pompadour, mistress of Louis XV of France from 1745 to 1763, and Dorothea Jordan, mistress of the Duke of Clarence from 1791 to 1811. In both instances, the 'common' surnames of these women were used by caricaturists and satirical writers as a means of criticising the women's moral behaviour, and their perceived social climbing. Both Pompadour and Jordan were born outside the elite, but through their adulterous relationships with royal men, they became a significant and highly visible aspect of elite culture in France and Britain, respectively. This section analyses the ways in which caricaturists and other satirists adapted the surnames of these women as a means of mocking their social pretensions, and as a way of denoting the women without explicitly naming them.

In eighteenth-century France, the core figure of criticism at Court was often the *maîtresse en titre*, the King's premier mistress. Between 1732 and 1744, Louis XV had scandalised French society by engaging in sexual relationships with four sisters from the

‘irreproachably aristocratic’ Neslé family.³⁴ Contemporary ballads reveal that knowledge of the King’s mistresses was widespread, inspiring satirical songs such as ‘Les cinq soeurs’, which can be dated to c.1743.³⁵ In 1745, however, Louis XV shocked his courtiers by making a young woman of bourgeoisie origin his *maîtresse en titre*, a role traditionally held by a woman from a noble family of ancient lineage.³⁶ A prime example of a courtier’s response to Pompadour’s appointment to this role is that of the Marquis d’Argenson, who venomously referred to the newly-created Marquise de Pompadour as ‘of the basest extractions’, despite her privileged upbringing in the salons of Paris.³⁷

D’Argenson’s hostile memoirs of Madame de Pompadour were a private record of the *maîtresse en titre*’s reception in high society, but negative comments on the Marquise also circulated in the public arena of Paris. For example, a popular ballad emerged in 1745, mocking the king for looking among the Parisian bourgeoisie for a mistress.³⁸ Rather unfortunately for Madame de Pompadour, it was widely known that her birth surname was the decidedly non-noble Poisson, and this gave rise to the *Poissonnades*. The *Poissonnades* were a series of scurrilous pamphlets and mockeries of Madame de Pompadour, playing upon her common birth name. These drew on a tradition of satirical court writings which dated back to the Regency, most notably the *Mazarinades* of the Fronde.³⁹

Although the *Poissonnades* were mainly based in clandestine pamphlets or ballads, the *poisson* motif also appeared in visual form. As with the Earl of Bute, Mme de Pompadour’s surname was widely used as a visual motif for criticising the King’s highly influential favourite. Caricature prints did not circulate publicly in France at this time due to

³⁴ Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon* (London, 2003), p. 131.

³⁵ Émile Raunié (ed.), *Chansonnier Historique du xviii Siecle*, Vol. 7, (Paris, 1879), pp. 16-17.

³⁶ William Doyle, *Old Regime France 1648-1788* (Oxford, 2001), p. 43.

³⁷ René-Louis de Voyer, Marquis d’Argenson, *Journal et Mémoires du Marquis d’Argenson*, (ed.) E.J.B. Rathery, vol.4 (Paris, 1859), p. 139.

³⁸ Raunié, *Chansonnier Historique*, Vol.7, pp. 50-3.

³⁹ Jones, *The Great Nation*, p. 131.

ensorship but, as discussed in the Introduction, it is likely that such images did so privately. Our key source for old regime French visual culture, Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin's *Livre de Caricatures tant Bonnes que Mauvaises*, certainly features several images of Pompadour.⁴⁰ In the *Livre de Caricatures*, Saint-Aubin employed transformative imagery to express his perceptions of the Marquise de Pompadour, and I would argue that these expressions were a visual manifestation of the highly public *Poissonnades*.

One of the greatest accusations laid against Madame de Pompadour in contemporary satires was her influence over the King, which was often depicted as a dangerous force. Almost twenty years after Madame de Pompadour's death in 1764, satirical critiques of her political and sexual influence over the King endured in cheaply published works like the clandestine libelle *Vie Privée de Louis XV* of 1781, which stated that the Marquise had inherited her loose morals and talent for sexual manipulation from her mother.⁴¹ Although few published satires of the Marquis can be dated to her lifetime, several images in the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures* appear to express the notion of the Marquis as an unusually influential *maîtresse en titre*. One such example is 'Pendant plusieurs années malgré l'orgueil de la pourpre Romaine les poissons estoient ce que nous avons de plus gros en France' (fig.1.14), which depicts a small man carrying an enormous green fish. This image, if it is read as an attack on Pompadour, draws attention not only to her low social status by referencing her common surname, but it also comments on her political influence. A ballad circulating in 1749 made direct reference to the *Poissonnades* in the line: "all of the fish are getting bigger", almost certainly a comment on Pompadour's rise to power and the corresponding ascendance of her family members.⁴² The motif of an engorged fish thus

⁴⁰ More of these images are explored in Chapters 2, 3 & 4.

⁴¹ Mouffle D'Angerville, *Vie Privée de Louis XV, ou Principaux Evénemens, Particularités et Anecdotes de Son Regne*, Vol.4, (London, 1781), pp. 232-3.

⁴² Raunié, *Chansonnier Historique*, Vol.7, pp. 135-9.

appears in both the *Livre de Caricatures* and a contemporaneous ballad, suggesting a common connection between this visual pun by Saint-Aubin and a public form of mockery against Madame de Pompadour.

A second *Poissonnade* from the *Livre de Caricatures* appears to focus more directly on Pompadour's supposedly low birth; 'Tout est bon pour le diable' (fig.1.15) portrays the *maîtresse en titre* as a lowly fishmonger. The plump peasant woman is depicted hawking a tray of fish while two little demons play among her skirts. Colin Jones has suggested that the image may simply be an homage to the *Cri de Paris* art series, which often portrayed street vendors in this manner.⁴³ However, once again the presence of the cipher of a fish must raise the historian's suspicions, no matter if the connection between the king's mistress and a fishmonger may seem obtuse. The Duc de Richelieu recorded that, on the day of Pompadour's official presentation to Court, the Dauphin ridiculed her 'bourgeoise language' and referred to her as a 'grisettes'.⁴⁴ The term for a shop girl who had neither wealth nor a good upbringing, 'grisettes' had strongly derogatory connotations, not least because it usually also denoted a young woman of loose morals.⁴⁵ The term, however, perfectly sums up the Dauphin's attitude to Pompadour, as well as the attitudes of many others who were perhaps less vocal about their distaste for this new member of elite French society.

The *Poissonnade* images may be merely coincidental, yet the frequent appearance of the fish motif in the *Livre de Caricatures* is suspect, especially given Pompadour's political and social position in the 1740s and 1750s. The device of the fish was a perfect means for Saint-Aubin to criticise his patroness's social climbing without making his intentions entirely

⁴³ Jones, 'Madame de Pompadour', p. 22.

⁴⁴ Louis François Armand Du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu, *Mémoires du Maréchal Duc de Richelieu, Pair de France, Premier Gentilhomme de la Chambre du Roi, &c. pour Servir à l'Histoire des Cours de Louis XIV, de la Régence du Duc d'Orléans, de Louis XV, & à celle des Quatorze Premières Années du Règne de Louis XVI, Roi des François, & Restaurateur de la Liberté*. Vol.8 (London, 1790), p. 161.

⁴⁵ Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: a Cultural History of the French Enlightenment*, (London, 1994), p. 159.

obvious if the book were to fall into the wrong hands. By creating a satirical tradition which played directly on Madame de Pompadour's bourgeoisie family name, individuals such as Saint-Aubin who created visual or verbal *Poissonnades* expressed contemporary unease about the movement of non-noble individuals into the elite circles of the court at Versailles. The Saint-Aubin images of Pompadour demonstrate how transformative imagery could not only connect to contemporary popular culture, such as ballads and pamphlets, but they also show how a caricaturist could use this imagery to conceal the identity of influential elites whom they wished to critique or mock.

In contrast with France, in eighteenth-century Britain there was no role of 'chief mistress', and George III was well-known and respected for his marital fidelity. The same could not, however, be said of his sons, especially the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Clarence, both future Kings of Great Britain as George IV and William IV respectively. The affairs of both princes were frequent fodder for the satirist's pen, but Clarence's long-term mistress was a particular favourite of caricaturists, and her depictions in satirical prints are a perfect example of the use of word play in caricature. Although not a member of the elite by birth, Mrs Jordan, much like Mme de Pompadour, became a figure of particular public significance in part due to her relationship with a member of the royal family. Mrs Jordan also enjoyed significant public attention, both positive and negative, due to her successful acting career.⁴⁶ The Duke of Clarence and Mrs Jordan maintained an extra-marital relationship for over twenty years between 1791 and 1811, and ultimately had ten children; their relationship was not a secret, and the press was not afraid to criticise, as *the Times* tartly stated in 1794: 'Mrs Jordan can say more than most women. She has five children, and they have three fathers all alive and well.'⁴⁷

⁴⁶ See Claire Tomalin, *Mrs Jordan's Profession* (London, 1994).

⁴⁷ *The Times*, (London, 12 March 1794), p. 3.

Caricaturists participated in the media criticism of Clarence's mistress, and their most common motif was the image of a chamber-pot, for which "jordan" was a popular slang word.⁴⁸ 'Fording the Jordan' (fig.1.16) combines the visual of a chamber pot with the insinuation that Clarence is paying Mrs Jordan for her time. The large chamber-pot in which Clarence stands bears a half-naked image of a woman (supposedly Mrs Jordan), whilst an inscription on the chamber pot reads "1000l a year for the use of the Jordan." James Gillray was the first to utilise the giant chamber-pot image in November 1791, with a print that actually transformed Mrs Jordan into a chamber-pot (fig.1.17). The Duke's head and shoulders disappear inside a large crack in the chamber-pot's material, likely a sexually explicit reference to the couple's relations. The Duke's naval coat adorned with the Garter star hangs on a coat rail nearby, ensuring that readers comprehend the stature of the man debasing himself with a Covent Garden actress.

Not all caricaturists were willing to simply mock Clarence and his mistress, indeed others echoed the disapproval of *The Times* by criticising this evidence of loose morality within the royal family. 'The Contrast' (fig.1.18) juxtaposes the Duke of Clarence's "burning shame or adulterous disgrace" with the "nuptial glory" of his brother the Duke of York. Clarence and Mrs Jordan are shown embracing at an open window, beneath which hangs the image of a chamber pot overlaid with an anchor, an ironic coat of arms. In addition to expressing moral indignation at the conduct of the Duke of Clarence and Mrs Jordan, caricatures were evidently also eager to reiterate the extreme difference in the social standing of this romantic pairing, and the motif of the chamber pot allowed them to consistently denigrate Mrs Jordan's social aspirations.

⁴⁸ Oxford English Dictionary Online. "jordan, n.1". June 2020. Oxford University Press. <<https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.st-andrews.ac.uk/view/Entry/101660?rkey=YjYnui&result=1&isAdvanced=false>> [accessed 03 June 2020].

Summary

These images of royal mistresses in France and Britain worked on a similar premise; the original, lowly social status of the individual and her perceived sexual immorality are mocked via an unfortunate play on her surname, which was associated in contemporary parlance with a dirty or demeaning object. Although the images of Mme de Pompadour existed only in the private work of the *Livre de Caricatures*, they clearly connected to contemporary satirical ballads and *Poissonnades* of the 1750s and 1760s, which utilised the *maîtresse-en-titre*'s birth name as a means of critiquing her astonishing social ascendance and her increasing influence on French politics. In contrast, the images of Mrs Jordan were published and freely circulated in Britain in the 1790s; the motif of the chamber pot may well have been used by artists as a means of avoiding any legal repercussions for criticising a royal mistress, but it is evident that Mrs Jordan's colourful personal life and her immoral relationship with the Duke of Clarence inspired the utilisation of the 'jordan' motif in these caricatures.

Summary of Part One

The content of eighteenth-century caricatures was not always complex, but rather the prints examined thus far demonstrate a simplicity of expression which relied upon basic wordplay to convey ideas to viewers, whether public or private. Caricaturists employed this play on words in an attempt to mock and criticise political leaders, as well as royal mistresses. The original social standing of Madame de Pompadour and Mrs Jordan undoubtedly allowed caricaturists to further denigrate their surname and the association of that name with an unpleasant creature or object. In the case of Charles James Fox, his surname tied neatly into engrained cultural associations between foxes and cunning, a motif

which allowed artists to criticise his trustworthiness as a political leader. The association between the Earl of Bute and the ‘boot’ motif is more difficult to interpret, and appears to have functioned more as a phonetic play on the Earl’s title than any distinguishable negative perception of boots. By analysing prints of these four elite individuals, it is clear that this transformative imagery existed in French visual culture in the 1750s and 1760s, and in British visual culture from 1760 until 1795.

All four of these examples demonstrate how wordplay can be incorporated into the language of caricatures as a means of denoting individuals without need of explanatory labels, which would have jeopardised the legal safety of the caricaturist. In the case of the *Livre de Caricature’s Poissonnades*, the use of a transformative motif allowed Saint-Aubin to mock and criticise the King’s mistress in a partially-concealed manner which connected with popular satirical critiques of Madame de Pompadour. The British images also demonstrate how this motif could carefully obscure the identity of those depicted, but as the associations in these images are quite simple it is probable that even uneducated viewers could have understood and appreciated them. These four examples thus emphasise the dual ability of the transformative motif: to obscure the identities of those portrayed in case of legal reprisals, and to clearly denote those identities to viewers who shared in the “language” of the caricatures.

Part Two: Janus, singerie, and cruches

Introduction

In addition to visually playing on an individual’s name, caricaturists could also employ motifs which had a longer tradition in fine art or the Classics. This section examines three types of transformative motif utilised by British and French caricatures in the eighteenth

century: the Janus figure, *singerie* and *crucheries*. None of these motifs were used by caricaturists to depict a specific individual; instead, the artists used the underlying meaning of these visual symbols to comment on the behaviour of various social and political elites. In the case of the *crucheries*, this play on the French term for ‘fool’ was used in French caricatures from the ancien régime and the Revolution, demonstrating an enduring visual expression from 1740 until the 1790s. The Janus motif was used by British caricaturists in the 1780s, and also by French caricaturists in the 1790s; this section only considers images which depicted George III and Louis XVI in this way in order to demonstrate the similarity in representations of a supposedly untrustworthy monarch, but other examples do exist. The *singerie* images in the *Livre de Caricatures* were likely influenced by fine art of the 1740s and 1750s, but they also utilised Biblical attitudes towards simians in an attempt to critique elite individuals. Each of these examples underlines the cultural inspirations which caricaturists looked to in order to mock the elite; from the Classics to fine art, to contemporary slang.

Janus images- a king with two faces

The Janus motif was built upon the notion of a god with two faces, a classical god of beginnings and endings. Yet, in British and French caricatures, this potentially complex motif is used to denote the simple idea of an individual who is deceitful. Several examples of this motif in eighteenth-century caricature comment on the behaviour of kings, and examples existed in both British and Revolutionary French caricature. ‘Le Roi Janus’ (fig.1.19), for example, clearly uses the notion of a two-faced being to imply deceit and subterfuge, as Louis XVI is depicted vowing to uphold the constitution, and in turn, swearing his allegiance to the Catholic Church, including those priests who refused to acknowledge the constitution. Images of this kind were a direct result of the flight to Varennes in 1791, which increased the

belief that monarchy was inherently deceitful because on his departure, Louis XVI left a letter decrying the Revolution after expressing support for it in public.⁴⁹ Dissimulation was a trait ascribed to the nobility in radical pamphlets produced in France at the beginning of Revolution, many of which were produced as a part of the Third Estate's attempts to balance their position in the Assembly.⁵⁰ Dissimulation was attributed to Louis XVI in public discourse only after his attempt to flee the country, when his true attitude to the Revolutionary cause was laid bare in a letter. By attempting to join with the noble émigrés, Louis XVI aligned himself with their cause, and the artists of this Janus print wished to emphasise the King's duplicity with a clear motif.⁵¹

Notably, two Janus images exist of George III of Great Britain, and they bear a striking similarity to 'Le Roi Janus'. Both 'Le double cabinet' (fig.1.20) and 'The royal Janus- or- two faces under a hood' (fig.1.21) were produced in 1784, seemingly in response to the King's interference in the dismissal of a government under Charles James Fox. As in 'le Roi Janus', the king is depicted as a two-faced being making empty promises to opposing political bodies. The intended function of these two British examples is obscure, however, as George III was never shy about revealing his inherent dislike and distrust of Charles James Fox and the Whigs.⁵² The images perhaps attack George III for overstepping his bounds as king in a constitutional monarchy, but there is no historiographical evidence to suggest that he ever entertained the possibility of siding with the Whigs. The French title of 'Le double cabinet' suggests an engrained ideal in British satirical art that inconstancy was a French trait,

⁴⁹ Annie Duprat, *Les Rois de Papier: la Caricature de Henri III à Louis XVI* (Paris, 2002), pp. 74-5.

⁵⁰ Helen Weston, 'The Light of Wisdom: Magic Lanternists as Truth-Tellers in post-Revolutionary France', in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 84; Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public*, p. 65.

⁵¹ William Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies in the Age of Revolution* (Oxford, 2009), p. 181.

⁵² O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 215.

and that by presenting these “two faces” George III was behaving in a way more befitting a French absolutist monarch.⁵³

These three images demonstrate a shared mode of expression between British and French caricaturists in the 1780s and 1790s. It is conceivable that the creator of ‘Le roi Janus’ had seen a copy of either ‘Le double cabinet’ or ‘The royal Janus’ and remade it to fit contemporary events during the Revolution. As Amelia Rauser has shown, British satirical prints were sold and displayed at the Palais Royal in Paris in the 1780s and 1790s, thus it is perfectly possible that a French caricaturist could have taken inspiration from a British-made print.⁵⁴ These Janus prints of Louis XVI and George III demonstrate how the integrity of a monarch could be questioned by caricaturists, and they show that the motif of a two-faced political leader invited expressions of contempt in moments of political uncertainty.

Summary

The Janus motif is significant because it demonstrates how Classical concepts could be adapted to a more simplistic motif which aimed to express contemporary attitudes to dishonest or immoral elites. Janus also demonstrates the inter-connectivity of French and British caricatures, for both drew on this resonant motif. From examining these images it is clear that popular knowledge of the god Janus was not necessary for viewers of these prints to comprehend the idea of a two-faced, and potentially untrustworthy individual. As with the images which transformed individuals into animals or objects, the Janus motif also allowed caricaturists to convey thorny political opinions in a manner which could confuse the identity of those depicted if the prints were the subject of legal remonstrances.

⁵³ Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, p. 46.

⁵⁴ Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked*, p. 129.

Singerie- aping the elite in France

Singerie was a popular artistic motif native to the Netherlands, where artists depicted monkeys as human beings, often richly attired and mimicking the behaviour of their simian relatives. *Singerie* gained popularity in the works of Dutch artist Frans Francken the Younger, and the genre appeared in France via the engraver Jean Bérain, and artist Claude Audran III who decorated Louis XIV's Château de Marly with *singerie* images.⁵⁵ *Singerie* made its popular debut in France in 1710, with Antoine Watteau's *The Monkey Sculptor*.⁵⁶ In Watteau's painting, the use of *singerie* is intended to humorously mock sculptors of the Academie by suggesting that even a monkey would be capable of crafting a masterpiece. Indeed, Simona Cohen argues that monkeys maintained a negative connotation in the early modern period, as they were seen to represent 'the deformed and degenerate man'.⁵⁷ This wary attitude to monkeys is reflected in the writings of the eighteenth-century French naturalist the Comte de Buffon, who described monkeys as 'degenerate human beings'.⁵⁸

Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin was likely acquainted with the tradition of *singerie*, as several such images appear in his *Livre de caricatures*, wherein the artists transforms notable court figures into monkeys. One potential victim of Saint-Aubin's fondness for *singerie* is the duc de Richelieu, a military commander during Louis XV's reign. In (fig.1.22), Saint-Aubin depicts the King in the clothing of a jockey, completely oblivious to the small monkey at his feet holding out a marshal's baton and, presumably, begging for a commission.⁵⁹ In keeping with the secrecy of the *Livre de Caricatures*, the individuals in this

⁵⁵ Bert Schepers, 'Monkey Madness in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp,' *The Rubenianum Quarterly*, 2 (2012), p. 3; Fiske Kimball, *The Creation of the Rococo Decorative Style*, (New York, 1980), p. 31.

⁵⁶ Mary D. Sheriff, *Antoine Watteau: Perspectives on the Artist and the Culture of his Time* (Newark, 2006), p. 18.

⁵⁷ Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols*, pp. 218-9.

⁵⁸ Frédéric Cuvier (ed.), *Oeuvres Complètes de Buffon*, Vol.14 (Paris, 1830), p. 104.

⁵⁹ Valerie Mainz, 'Gloire, Subversively', in Jones, Carey & Richardson (eds), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures*, p. 168.

critique of the French government in 1757 were not clearly identified by the artist, but rather by one of his grandson-in-law, who applied labels to the characters in the nineteenth century. Considering the date of the image, and small details like the fleur-de-lys on the tip of the jockey's cane which suggests that the figure is Louis XV, we can be fairly confident in identifying key court figures like Mme de Pompadour and the duc de Richelieu. By depicting the duc de Richelieu in this manner, Saint-Aubin is not only reducing the humanity of this martial leader, but he is likely also shielding the images from prying eyes, as the monkey could technically represent any number of past or imaginary military leaders in France.

The *singerie* symbolism appears in another image from the *Livre de Caricatures*, 'Il part pour hanovre' (fig.1.23), which once again challenges a viewer's ability to distinguish the duc de Richelieu in the image. The monkey in this image wears a tricorn hat, a suitable garment for the commander of the French navy, and it also wears the Order of St Louis, an honour bestowed on only the foremost members of French society. The reduction of this military commander to an ape literally filling his boots with spoils is a harsh criticism both of the individual man and of French military policy during the Seven Years' War.⁶⁰ These criticisms could not be legitimately recorded on paper, even in one's private sketchbook, and so Saint-Aubin's utilisation of the *singerie* motif acted as both joke and shield in his comments on the duc de Richelieu. As Simona Cohen has demonstrated, apes were associated with avarice in many woodcuts and prints of the seven deadly sins produced during the Renaissance; it is therefore possible that the use of *singerie* in these images is intended not only to dehumanise the duc de Richelieu but also to comment on his avaricious nature.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Hubert Cole states that Richelieu earned a reputation for looting and pillaging whilst on campaign during the Seven Years War. Cole, *First Gentleman of the Bedchamber: the Life of Louis-François-Armand, Maréchal Duc de Richelieu* (London, 1965), pp. 226-8.

⁶¹ Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols*, p. 22.

Another individual who was depicted in the *Livre de Caricatures* using the *singerie* motif was Saint-Aubin's patroness, Mme de Pompadour. In 'Pomade pour les levres' (fig.1.24) a monkey festooned in pink ribbons stares intently into a gilded mirror as it applies makeup to its bottom. This image appears to take inspiration from Pompadour's use of her daily toilette as a court ceremony which was attended by courtiers eager for her favour.⁶² In turning her toilette into a seat of power, Pompadour pointedly united the two facets of her persona as *maîtresse en titre*: aesthetically beautiful and politically powerful. Such behaviour, unsurprisingly, attracted much criticism, and it is perfectly possible that 'Pomade pour les levres' is Saint-Aubin's own critique of this controversial ritual. As with any satirical image, conjecture is to be expected from viewers, and the annotation (in Charles-Germain's hand) 'Inventée par Madame la Marquise de Cr...' confuses the identity of the humanised monkey further. However, the proliferation of pink bows and roses adorning the monkey certainly do little to sever the comparison to the Fogg portrait of Pompadour, which was painted by Francois Boucher in 1750 and exhibited at the Academy.⁶³ The annotation: 'Marquise de Cr...' may well be an attempt to divert any suspicion if the book had fallen into the wrong hands, a common feature of the sensitive material in the *Livre de Caricatures*.⁶⁴

By reducing the powerful *maîtresse en titre* to a monkey, Saint-Aubin succeeds in commenting on her social status, as she apes her superiors by dressing as a noblewoman. In this single image, Saint-Aubin also expresses sentiments about Pompadour's sexuality, femininity and her influence over the French Court, attitudes which were also expressed in ballads which clandestinely circulated Paris in the 1740s and 1750s. One such ballad, for example, bemoaned the political and martial failures of France in 1749, declaring: "I saw the

⁶² Jones, 'Madame de Pompadour: the Other Cheek', p. 23.

⁶³ For analysis of the Fogg portrait and its impact, see Melissa Hyde, 'The Makeup of the Marquise: Boucher's Portrait of Pompadour at her Toilette', *The Art Bulletin* 82:3 (Sept. 2000), pp. 453-75.

⁶⁴ Wine, 'Madame de Pompadour', p. 182.

scepter fall at the feet of Pompadour”, a double-entendre which suggests that the King’s infatuation with Pompadour’s charm had led him to relinquish his role as sovereign in her favour.⁶⁵

Summary

The use of *singerie* in the *Livre de Caricatures* underlines Saint-Aubin’s status as a court embroiderer, who mixed with the fine art world of Paris. As the motif of an ape functioned in contemporary thought to denote an immoral and avaricious individual, it is unsurprising that Saint-Aubin utilised the motif when depicting two of the most significant members of the French elite. While *singerie* was used to criticise the avarice of the duc de Richelieu and his desire to rise in the French military, the image of Pompadour used *singerie* to mock one of the Marquise’s most distinctive seats of power: her toilette. For Pompadour, the *singerie* seems to suggest that she is aping the behaviour of royal women, and perhaps even usurping some of the king’s own rituals. By adapting the artistic motif of *singerie* to his caricatures, Saint-Aubin, was able to comment on the behaviour of elite individuals without revealing their identity and thus jeopardising his own safety.

Les Cruches- crackpots and fools

Madame de Pompadour’s phenomenal influence over king and country is a frequent motif in the *Livre de Caricatures*, and in expressing attitudes to the *maîtresse en titre*, Saint-Aubin demonstrates a strong imagination for using symbolism to both conceal identities and to mock the individual depicted. One transformative motif used by Saint-Aubin which

⁶⁵ Raunié, *Chansonnier Historique*, Vol.7, pp. 140-3.

particularly reiterates the value of word play in caricature, and the connection between satirical images of the ancien régime and those of the Revolution are “crucheries.” In ‘hebien! toutes les cruches ne sont pas la’ (fig.1.25), Saint-Aubin employs a play on the French word “cruche” which not only refers to a jug, but also to a fool. In the image, the parlementaires of Paris have been transformed into jugs, suggesting that the assembly is little more than a meeting of fools. The female figure lurking behind the President of the assembly is likely intended to represent Pompadour, in yet another critique of her widespread influence. This image, dated 1763, was likely a response to the financial measures introduced by Controller-General Bertin which were rejected by the Paris parlement, sparking several months of remonstrances from the capital’s parlements and those in other areas.⁶⁶ Although Saint-Aubin’s personal opinion of the parlements cannot be known for certain, this image clearly aimed to reduce the powerful institution by mocking its foolish magistrates and their apparent connection to the King’s mistress.

The visual pun of the “cruche” endured in French visual culture of the eighteenth century, as it reemerged in satirical prints published during the French Revolution, and two notable examples chose as their targets Louis XVI and George III, respectively. In ‘Le masque levé: ah! Le cruchon’ (fig.1.26), a print published in Paris in 1791, Louis XVI is shown in all the finery expected of a King, from the ermine-lined red cloak, to the sceptre that symbolised kingship. However, the impressive image of the sovereign is seriously eroded when one sees that Louis is lifting away the “mask” of his face to reveal what lies beneath: a jug. Coupled with the broken sceptre, this revelation that the King is, under everything, a fool, completely derides the notion of a respectable monarch. In essence, the print argues that the outward shows of royal finery are, in the case of Louis XVI, a means of covering up the

⁶⁶ Perrin Stein, ‘Vases and Satire’, in Jones, Carey, and Richardson (eds.) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures*, p. 314.

foolish man who calls himself king. The date of 1791 could suggest that the print was a response to the monarchy's attempted flight from France in June of that year, an event which soured the Parisian populace's attitude towards the royal family, and indeed to the notion of a constitutional monarchy in France.⁶⁷ By revealing the king as a "cruche", the print expresses contempt for the notion of a divinely sanctioned ruler, thus making a strong case for the theory of a "desacralisation" of the French monarch.

The connection between kingship and the "cruche" motif appeared three years later, when the Revolutionary artist Jacques-Louis David applied the iconography to a print attacking George III and an imagined British army. In 'L'armée des cruches' (fig.1.27), the bodies of the King and his men are transformed into jugs, but their heads remain visible. Extending the motif of transformation, David depicts Prime Minister Pitt as the turkey leading the King into battle, whilst a goose bringing up the rear is intended to represent Charles James Fox. As this print was commissioned specifically by the Committee for Public Safety with a run of a thousand copies, David's caricature of the British reveals the French Revolutionary government's interest in caricature as a medium for propaganda, a concept examined further in Chapter Four.⁶⁸ The print also demonstrates the value of transformative imagery, as not only does the use of jugs ridicule George III and his soldiers as "fools", but the transformation of Pitt into a turkey is yet another play on words, as the French words "dindon" (turkey) and "dandin" (dupe) are phonetically similar.⁶⁹ That both George III and Louis XVI were depicted in this way in the 1790s underlines the extent to which Revolutionary caricature worked to undermine the legitimacy of monarchy.

⁶⁷ William Doyle, *France and the Age of revolution: Regimes Old and New from Louis XIV to Napoleon Bonaparte* (London, 2013), p. 122.

⁶⁸ Albert Boime, 'Jacques-Louis David, Scatological Discourse in the French Revolution, and the Art of Caricature' in Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution*, p. 69.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 69-70.

Summary

The play on words in these images, converting the vernacular meaning of “cruche” to its visual counterpart, echoes the transformations of Mrs Jordan into the chamber-pot in the 1790s which were examined earlier in the chapter. These transformative motifs clearly connect the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures*, to satirical art of the French Revolution in the 1790s, and to caricatures in Britain across the eighteenth century. Transformative imagery thus played a role in the expression of popular and political ideas in both France and Britain, at frequent points across a fifty-year period of significant political upheaval in both countries. The recurrent use of this imagery demonstrates not only similarities between French and British visual culture of the eighteenth century, but also the utility of a motif which allowed for both exposition and concealment of elite identities.

Summary of Part Two

The motifs examined in this section came from a variety of sources: Classical mythology, Dutch fine art, and vernacular French language. Yet despite their potentially complex or exclusive origins, each of the examples analysed here underline the simplicity of meaning which these motifs held in caricatures of the socio-political elite. The Janus images are particularly interesting because of the connections they reveal between British caricatures of the 1780s and Revolutionary French caricatures, while the “crucheries” images show a continuation of French visual culture from the ancien régime to the Revolution. As with the images analysed in section one, the prints examined here are examples of how caricaturists could comment upon the actions and personalities of elite individuals without explicitly naming them. The true thrust of an artist’s critique lay in the motif which they chose to use,

be it a deceitful two-faced god, a greedy ape, or a foolish jug, and these motifs could be used to mock multiple members of the socio-political elite.

Part Three: Transformations and royalty

Introduction

Part One of this chapter looked at four elite individuals who were consistently depicted using a specific transformative motif which reflected their name. This section widens the scope of enquiry to examine a variety of caricatures which utilise transformative imagery to express ideas about royal individuals. While Part One analysed images which played on the name of an elite individual, this section looks at examples of caricature which fixed upon a certain animal as means to comment on the personalities and behaviours of British and French royalty. For example, George III's stubborn nature inspired caricaturists to depict him as an ass in numerous images dating from the 1780s until the close of the century. I argue that the animal motif used was not only an inherent insult to the royal individual in question, but it was also intended to tacitly comment on a defining feature of that individual.

The White Horse of Hanover: monarchical favouritism and national pride

In the eighteenth century, the British monarch was also King of Hanover, and this split of duties encouraged a significant amount of negative publicity in Britain. Newspapers and pamphlets railed against the financial burden of the Hanoverian kingdom and its impact on Britain in the first half of the eighteenth century, never more so than during the War of Austrian Succession. The Battle of Dettingen in 1743 produced several satirical prints criticising the behaviour of George II and the Hanoverian troops. One image (fig.1.28) in

particular sums up the notion of the King's favour towards Hanover, depicting him as a white horse, the symbol of Hanover, astride an emaciated lion intended to represent England. The style of this print is typical of the colourless, emblematic images that circulated in Britain from the 1740s until the brighter caricatures of the 1780s became the norm. Satirical prints from this earlier phase of British caricature were often highly detailed, and packed with symbolism, which emphasises the continuity of the symbolic nature of caricature art throughout the period. These prints of George II highlight for historians that the victory of the Battle of Dettingen was not capitalised on by the Allied army, a failure of media culture which led to criticisms from the British people.⁷⁰ Indeed, the *Daily Gazetteer* of 15 July noted that many taverns and coffee houses in the capital contained 'battle criticks' who cast doubt on the Allies' victory and the British monarch's participation.⁷¹ Jeremy Black suggests that discontent with the battle and accusations that George II wore a Hanoverian sash were encouraged by the Earl of Stair, who resigned his military post shortly after the Battle.⁷² What should have been a triumphant victory for the King became tainted by his hereditary association with Hanover, and he was thus transformed into the very symbol of Hanover by caricaturists wishing to critique him for a lack of British patriotism.

The motif of the white horse of Hanover reappeared in satirical prints throughout George II's reign. An untitled print from 1755 (fig.1.29) depicted the king as a white horse fretting over the fate of Hanover while the Duke of Newcastle expresses reluctance to pursue war against France. Accusations of favouritism towards Hanover continued to the end of George II's reign. Printed in 1757 'The Crab Tree or the Epilogue to the Recruiting Serjeant' (fig.1.30) perfectly sums up the attitude to the king's divided loyalties, as the image shows boatloads of English apples being sent to Hanover, whilst the emblematic white horse

⁷⁰ O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 88.

⁷¹ *Daily Gazetteer*, London, 15 July 1743, p. 1.

⁷² Jeremy Black, *George II: Puppet of the Politicians?* (Exeter, 2007), p. 181.

remains pampered in England. The transformation of George II into the white horse of Hanover is a perfect example of how a heraldic device could be manipulated by caricaturists to underline what they considered a particular political issue, without the need to depict the king directly.

Also an Elector of Hanover, George III largely escaped accusations of favouritism towards his German territories. At his coronation, George III delighted the British press by declaring that ‘born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of BRITON.’⁷³ This display of patriotism did not, however, spare the king from the ignominy of caricature. Vincent Carretta has argued that George III inherited a ‘tradition of royal satire’ from the Restoration, but the tradition took on new life during George III’s reign. Indeed, George III was one of the most widely caricatured individuals of his reign, with dozens of prints produced from 1760 to 1820.⁷⁴ Although the connection between the king and Hanover was rare in caricatures after 1760, ‘The Hanoverian horse and British lion’ (fig.1.31), published in 1784, shows that British citizens had not forgotten the Germanic origins of George III or his predecessor. In the print, the horse of Hanover tramples on the Magna Carta and threatens the British lion; the print is a comment on the dissolution of parliament in 1784 when George III was moved to action by a personal hatred of Fox, but it also functions as a criticism of the king’s allegedly un-British attitude to the constitution, which the caricaturist seeks to highlight in this image.⁷⁵

From examining these caricatures, it is evident that the white horse of Hanover endured for more than forty years as a transformative motif which British caricaturists could use when expressing discontent about the intentions and behaviour of the Hanoverian kings at

⁷³ *London Evening Post*, London, 18 Nov. 1760 – 20 Nov. 1760, p. 2.

⁷⁴ Carretta, *George III and the Satirists*, p. 1.

⁷⁵ Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (2nd ed., Oxford, 1998), p. 559.

specific moments of political tension. Although the visual motif of a white horse was not inherently derogatory, as were most animal transformations in satirical prints, the motif was used by British artists to emphasise the Hanoverian connection which was frequently viewed as prejudicial to British military and political interests in the eighteenth century. In these prints it is clear that the white horse motif also allowed artists to voice criticisms about the monarch without identifying him directly, an important feature which underlines the fact that even caricaturists had to tread lightly when criticising the monarch, be it in the 1740s or the 1780s.

The Ass: despot or dupe?

When utilising animal symbolism to express attitudes to George III, British caricaturists largely favoured transforming the king into an ass, an emblem without the hereditary connotations of the white horse of Hanover, but one that was widely associated with stubbornness. In the earliest example of this type of transformation, published in 1763, 'The Opposition' (fig.1.32), George III is depicted as a hybrid, an approximation of the English lion with an ass's head. The creature is pulled in two directions by Bute and a group of opposition politicians. Bute declares that he can 'make ye animal do as I please', whilst the opposition complain that the King is 'an obstinate Creature, he'll be guided by none but that d[amne]d Scotchman, & his villainous gang.' In this print the ass motif serves to illuminate the King's stubbornness, a character trait which was read by caricaturists as part of his questionable devotion to Bute, and his reluctance to trust other politicians, as Charles James Fox would later discover.

The image of George III as an ass reappears in several prints published from the 1760s to the 1780s. In 'The Royal Ass' (fig.1.33), a donkey wearing a crown is led by a

tartan-wearing satyr towards Rome. Despite a publication date of 1780, the satyr in this print is undoubtedly intended to be Bute, who had been removed from political power some seventeen years prior.⁷⁶ In this print the idea of a stubborn ass is replaced with a quiescent one, so devoid of individual thought and will that it is being led towards Catholicism. A similar image published in 1780 depicts the King as a crowned ass once again, this time ridden by Lord Amhurst, a high-ranking military commander (fig.1.34). The ass stands over a bill entitled 'Protestant Petition', and a snake inscribed 'Gordon' twines around its left foreleg. The images were most probably inspired by the proposed Catholic Relief Bill of 1778, which was violently opposed in the Gordon riots in London, an outpouring of volatile public opinion.⁷⁷ Both of these images depict the King as a passive animal, guided in religious and political directions that it ought to contest. Interestingly, they are in direct contrast to earlier satirical prints of the king as a wilful ass that overstepped the constitutional grounds on which British monarchy existed, demonstrating how the intent of a transformative motif could shift over time to express contemporary opinions.

The motif reappeared in 1784, in 'Robin Hood's victory over Pam, the K-g's immaculate champion, on Constitution Hill' (fig.1.35), where George III appears in a therianthrope image, with his head on the body of an ass. The image depicts Pitt astride the ass, his sword struck from his hand by Charles James Fox who rides a bull labelled 'John Bull.' This image plays upon the tradition of George III's 'favourite minister', as Pitt's fallen sword is a Scottish broadsword inscribed 'a gift from the Thane', a reference to Bute's former influence on the King. The message of this image is simple: Fox is on the side of the Englishman, the stereotypical 'John Bull', whilst Pitt fights to uphold the king's prerogative and in doing so takes Bute's place as favourite minister. These images indicate a lesser focus

⁷⁶ Carretta, *George III and the Satirists*, p. 81.

⁷⁷ John Archer, *Social Unrest and Popular Protest in England, 1780-1840* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 58-9.

on the King's Hanoverian responsibilities, but his transformation into an ass is nonetheless a biting criticism of both his personal character and his political behaviour as they were understood by caricaturists and, potentially, the British public who saw these prints. By depicting the king in this manner, caricaturists not only commented on his perceived personal traits, but they also used this motif to express discontent about the monarch's policies in a mocking fashion which undermined the king's majesty in a way that reduced the risk of legal ramification for the print-seller.

Le Cochon- the sovereign and the swine

In 1791, a series of caricatures appeared in France which transformed King Louis XVI into a pig. These images appeared only after the disastrous flight to Varennes in June 1791, when the French royal family attempted to flee the capital for the border town of Montmidi. The "cochon" caricatures have been analysed by Antoine de Baecque, who argued that the caricatures served to underline the 'impotence' of the king.⁷⁸ Annie Duprat has argued that the popular depictions of Louis XVI as a pig after 1791 were logical because they rested on contemporary perceptions of the pig as a humble farm animal.⁷⁹ From an analysis of the "cochon" prints, I would argue that these mocking images had a significant impact on the cultural image of the king, as in reducing him to a farmyard animal, they reduced his prestige as sovereign. Additionally, they are evidence that public opinion in France was not quite ready to condemn its king in 1791, even after his attempted escape. In fact, several of the images which transform Louis XVI into a pig appear to place greater emphasis on the behaviour of his wife, Marie-Antoinette than on the king himself.

⁷⁸ de Baecque, *The Body Politic*, p. 8.

⁷⁹ Duprat, *Les Rois de Papier*, p. 31.

The “cochon” images did not just seek to degrade the king, but they also functioned on the premise that viewers would comprehend the status of the specific animal and how it related to Louis’s new status in the wake of the French royal family’s failed escape attempt. This certainly appears to be the case in ‘Famille des cochons ramenée dans l’etable’ (fig.1.36), which reimagines the ignoble return of the royal family to Paris after their attempted escape. In reality, the king and his family were escorted back to the capital under armed guard, but even though the Convention had attempted to quell reports that the king had fled, the Parisians lining the streets refused to remove their hats as the royal coaches passed.⁸⁰ In the print, the royal family are reduced to sitting on a straw-covered cart, their individually recognisable faces attached to the bodies of pigs. Louis XVI, wearing his customary blue sash, stares quietly out of the image, the very picture of an impotent king. This print certainly supports the arguments of de Baecque and Duprat, as all of the members of the French royal family appear powerless.

The king’s political impotence was articulated in other satirical prints, including ‘Cette leçon vaut bien un fromage, sans doute!’ (fig.1.37), wherein Louis is shown as a pig seated on a throne, completely unaware that his crown has been knocked off as he is offered a large wheel of cheese by courtiers. The presence of a woman behind the throne likely hints at his wife, Queen Marie-Antoinette. This image demonstrates the extent to which post-Varennes images placed the blame squarely on Marie-Antoinette’s shoulders, and depicted Louis as a misguided, but largely innocent, simpleton.⁸¹ Despite his attempted flight, caricaturists appear to have tacitly acknowledged that Louis XVI was not the mastermind behind the escape attempt. Jeremy Popkin has argued that a reluctance to fully condemn the

⁸⁰ David Jordan, *The King’s Trial: the French Revolution vs. Louis XVI* (London, 1979), p. 79.

⁸¹ De Baecque, *The Body Politic*, p. 68.

king was evident even in the radical Parisian press until mid-1791, when patience for the king's behaviour ran out.⁸²

In another satirical print produced in 1791 (fig.1.38), Louis XVI is again depicted as a pig, his crown being removed by a bird of prey, which is perhaps intended to represent the Habsburg eagle, the symbol of Marie-Antoinette's family. In addition to shifting blame onto the queen, this image can also be read as an embodiment of the theory of desacralisation of Louis XVI.⁸³ In this print, the King has not only been stripped of his status as a human, but he has also lost his crown and the political, legal, and spiritual power that it represents. Although this print was published before the monarchy was abolished in France in 1792, it seems to express the idea that Louis XVI is no longer worthy of holding the position of King of the French after his attempted betrayal of the Revolutionary cause.

The motif which transformed the King into a pig existed in visual culture, and in pamphlet literature published in 1792. One pamphlet described a creature known as the 'royal Veto' in insulting language: 'This animal is about five feet five inches tall. It walks on its hind feet, like men... It is a drunkard and does not stop drinking from the time it rises til when it goes to sleep...it is 34 to 36 years old, was born in a pigsty called Versailles, and it was given the nickname of Louis XVI.'⁸⁴ This pamphlet, alongside the above satirical prints, can be taken as evidence of a decline in popular perceptions of the legal and spiritual power of the monarch.⁸⁵ Roger Chartier has convincingly argued that the separation of king and divinity in the language of the Cahiers de doléances made possible later ridiculing of the king in popular discourse.⁸⁶ I would argue that these "cochon" prints and pamphlets are strong

⁸² Jack R. Censer, *Prelude to Power: the Parisian Radical Press, 1789-1791* (Baltimore, 1976), p. 114.

⁸³ Robert Darnton, *Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (1996), p. 216.

⁸⁴ François Dantalle, *Description de la Menagerie Royale d'Animaux Vivans, Établie aux Thuilleries, Près de la Terrasse Nationale* (Paris, 1792), p. 2.

⁸⁵ De Baecque, *The Body Politic*, p. 71.

⁸⁶ Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Linda G. Cochrane (Durham & London, 1991), p. 113.

examples of this popular ridiculing of the monarch, for they literally reduced him from a powerful human being to a lowly farm animal.

Furthermore, these images which depicted Louis XVI as a pig must have impacted popular perception of the absolutist monarch, particularly one who had endeavoured to spread his glorious portraits throughout his kingdom.⁸⁷ It is not possible to argue that every person who saw the caricatures of the king transformed into a pig associated it with a notion of political impotence, but it is perfectly conceivable that they understood the degrading meaning behind the image. As Simona Cohen has argued, pigs were ‘associated in Christianity with baseness, filth, wickedness and voracity’, a perception which continued to be reiterated in Western Europe in the Renaissance and beyond.⁸⁸ That artists had the freedom to publish images of this kind after centuries of strict royal censorship must have affected the Parisian people’s perception of *what* exactly a monarch was, and the ridicule expressed in these images is a powerful example of the role of visual culture in the media of the Revolution.

The “cochon” images examined highlight two key aspects of French caricature of the royal family after 1791: firstly, the diminution of Louis XVI’s status as king, and secondly, a persistent focus on Marie-Antoinette’s influence over her husband.⁸⁹ The French caricaturists who created the “cochon” prints of their sovereign were, knowingly or unknowingly, adding to a tradition of animal transformation which had dominated British caricature for decades. The choice of a pig as the symbol with which Louis XVI was most visually identified after 1791 evidently drew on a cultural perception of this animal as distinctly negative and degrading.

⁸⁷ Jordan, *The King’s Trial*, p. 82.

⁸⁸ Cohen, *Animals as Disguised Symbols*, pp. 220-1.

⁸⁹ This argument is explored further in Chapter 2.

The Hyena: the bloodthirsty queen of France

In the period 1789 to 1793, Louis XVI was frequently depicted as a pig in French caricatures, while his wife Marie-Antoinette was most frequently transformed into an exotic and violent creature, the hyena. Given Thomas Kaiser's convincing argument that the Parisian public became obsessed with the concept of an Austrian Committee headed by Marie-Antoinette, one might have anticipated that the queen would be represented by the Habsburg eagle, a clear indicator of her origins.⁹⁰ However, the choice of the hyena as an animal which represented the queen is significant, because it was a creature capable of devouring France, just as popular discourse increasingly believed Marie-Antoinette was attempting to do with the fictitious Austrian committee. Significantly, as with the "cochon" prints of Louis XVI, it was the flight to Varennes which heralded the beginning of Marie-Antoinette's transformation into a hyena in visual satire. From 1791 alone, there are four surviving images of the Queen's very recognizable face attached to the body of a hyena: 'Fiéz vous a ces declarations' (fig.1.38), 'Son excellence M.la Baronne de Korf' (fig.1.39), [Untitled] (fig.1.40), and 'Les deux ne font qu'un' (fig.1.41). This repetition of the same imagery may appear to indicate a lack of creativity on the part of Parisian caricaturists, however their aim was not only to entertain the people, but to "educate" them on the true nature of the monarchy by reiterating the same derogatory images until they were fixed in the public consciousness.

Of the four images depicting Marie-Antoinette as a hyena, 'Les deux ne font qu'un' is worthy of particular note, as it literally unites the King and Queen in one animal body, echoing the "Janus" images examined earlier in the chapter. Unlike images critiquing the King and Queen of Britain which frequently depicted the pair together, the French press often

⁹⁰ Thomas E. Kaiser, 'Who's Afraid of Marie-Antoinette? Diplomacy, Austrophobia and the Queen,' *French History*, 14:3 (2000), pp. 241-71.

divided Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, usually in order to further demonize the latter. In this image, however, the royal couple are inseparable, they are literally “one body”, suggesting a certain contamination of the king’s sacral body by an Austrian. Louis, drawn here as a goat, is given horns to mark his status as a cuckold, but it is his physical connection to the hyena-queen which is most significant, for it declares to viewers that the king is responsible for the sins of his wife, and vice-versa. In essence, this image, although still a personal attack, moves to enhance political opposition to monarchy as a whole, not merely the scapegoated queen. The reduction of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette to these animals in satirical prints undoubtedly undermined the detached, impressive image that French royalty had sought to spread among its subjects since the reign of Louis XIV.⁹¹

Summary of Part Three

The examples analysed in this section underline the use of transformative imagery in caricatures depicting royalty in both Britain and France in the eighteenth century. However, the purpose or function of this motif could vary based on the political circumstances of a print’s production. The motif of the white horse of Hanover was utilised by British caricaturists as a means to express frustration with their monarch’s dual role as King of Britain and Hanover. This motif was utilised most during the campaign of 1744, when George II’s actions inflamed popular sentiment against the Hanoverian kingdom. Although the white horse motif was applied at least once to George III, this monarch was most commonly associated with an ass in caricatures, a motif which could flexibly accuse the king of obstinacy and gullibility, depending on the matter at hand. Louis XVI’s transformation into a pig in French satirical artwork and pamphlets in 1791 was an expression of derision for

⁹¹ Julian Swann, ‘Introduction: the Crisis of the Absolute Monarchy’, in Julian Swann and Joel Felix (eds.), *The Crisis of the Absolute Monarchy: France from Old Regime to Revolution* (Oxford, 2013), p. 21.

a monarch who had attempted to escape from his own country, yet many of the ‘cochon’ images appear to suggest that Louis XVI was more dupe than mastermind in the Varennes plot. In contrast, the conterminous images of Marie-Antoinette, combining the body of a hyena with a Medusa-like head, stoked popular negativity against a foreign queen who was increasingly perceived as a dangerous force in French politics.

Despite slight variances in symbolic meaning, the use of animal transformation in each of these examples was clearly intended to mock and criticise the royal individual depicted. As Simona Cohen argued, the reduction of a person to an animal was in itself derogatory, and the caricatures examined here underline the extent to which the animal chosen was significant. Caricaturists chose animals which had an inherent meaning in popular culture because they wished to convey a specific vision of that royal individual to their potential customers. The ability to transform a king or queen in this manner, and display or sell the image publicly, nullifies any sense of French or British monarchies enjoying a vaunted or sacred status in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Conclusion

The use of transformative imagery in eighteenth-century British and French caricatures served three main functions: to mock the individuals depicted, to communicate with as wide a spectrum of the population as possible, and to legally protect the caricaturists. The satirical prints examined in this chapter were produced in France and Britain, from the 1740s to the mid-1790s, and their targets were kings, queens, politicians, and royal mistresses. This chapter has sought to explore the longevity, scope and popularity of the transformative motif in both British and French caricature. As demonstrated, some instances appeared to be an opportune manipulation of a political favourite’s surname, whilst others

relied upon the accepted notion of commonly shared iconography by depicting prominent social and political figures as animals or objects traditionally associated with vice or mockery. That this iconography was used at various points between 1740 and 1795 to express attitudes to the French and British elite underlines the existence of an enduring public discourse which was determined to comment upon the behaviours of the elite as a social group, or as individuals significant to society.

The repetition of this iconography is an example of the formation of a notable “language” of caricatures, one which crossed between France and Britain, prior to and during the French Revolution. Although some scholars have cast doubt on the ability of iconographical caricatures to reach uneducated or lower-class audiences, this chapter has endeavoured to demonstrate the simplicity of representation that many satirical prints contained. While images frequently contained a large amount of information to be unpicked, the core meanings were often on the surface. As the images examined in this chapter demonstrate, not all satirical prints were dense with Classical and complex iconography, but many were crafted with a simple artistic premise. It is evident from examining the content of these selected images that even individuals with a limited classical or literary education could have comprehended the intentions of the caricaturist in depicting an elite individual.

In addition to considering the content of prints, and their potential viewership, this chapter has explored the extent to which this transformative imagery could act as a means for caricaturists to express controversial ideas about socio-political elite individuals, ideas which may have incurred legal action if they were made explicit. The images from the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures* are a fine example of this aspect of transformative imagery, for although the premise of the caricatures examined here were generally simplistic, the method of transformation itself could confuse the identity of those depicted. Similarly, in British caricature, particularly those produced in the political turbulence of the 1790s, transformative

motifs would likely have saved many a caricaturist from legal repercussions if they attacked a royal individual or influential minister. Without concrete evidence that a caricature was targeting a specific individual, legal proceedings against caricature stumbled, and this chapter has demonstrated how transformative motifs allowed caricaturists to express controversial ideas about the social and political elite.

Chapter Two- The Political Stage

Introduction

‘We are become a *Nation of Statesmen*. Our *coffee-houses* and *taverns* are full of them.’¹

Published in London in 1729, over a decade before the beginning of our current era of study, this dry comment on the widespread interest in politics opines that the expanding media culture of the eighteenth century allowed urban British people from a widening range of social groups to interact with the political sphere. In France, also, the growing media culture of the eighteenth century saw an increase in the discussion of political information that had hitherto been occluded from the public eye.² Where the previous chapter focussed upon the iconography and “language” of satirical prints, this chapter analyses the ways in which this established language was put into action as a means of dissecting the contemporary political spheres and political individuals of France and Britain, often for the benefit of a deeply interested public. While still holding the question of audience diversity and understanding in mind, this chapter will consider the manner in which caricatures demonstrate a contemporary interest in the political elites of each nation in a way which influenced and reflected a growing culture of fame in the public spheres of each country.

This chapter analyses how caricatures of political events and personal dramas can reveal cultural attitudes to elite individuals whose position placed them in the centre of the political stage. By representing political elites in a satirical, visual format, caricatures brought these elites closer to the urban public. The determined focus on the political life of the nation which these caricatures convey reveals the depth of contemporary interest held even by those

¹ *Craftsman*, London, 4 Oct. 1729, p. 1.

² Simon Burrows, *Blackmail, Scandal, and Revolution: London's French Libellistes, 1758-92* (Manchester, 2006), p.17.

outside the political sphere, who may have purchased, viewed, or even created the satirical prints in question.³ This widespread interest in politics is revealed in caricatures and textual sources such as pamphlets produced in France and Britain as early as 1740. As both Britain and France were monarchies for much of the eighteenth century, royalty held a highly visible and important place in society. The caricatures and pamphlets certainly articulated much of the importance attributed to the monarchy, as royalty featured prominently in both visual and textual sources across the period 1740 to 1795. A lack of published caricatures of Louis XV makes necessary an exploration of the popular *libelles* that circulated in Paris during his reign and that of his successor; while these *libelles* were not visual modes of the French public sphere, they shared a satirical tone as seen in caricatures of Louis XVI and George III. By analysing the representations of royal political power in caricatures and pamphlets, this chapter shows the increasingly prominent role of the monarchy on the public political stage of each nation, beginning in the 1750s with Louis XV and his mistresses, and culminating with George III and Louis XVI in the 1790s.

The first section of this chapter examines caricatures which purported to reveal the political and private idiosyncrasies of ruling monarchs. This section explores popular discourse on Louis XV and Louis XVI of France, as well as George III of Britain, for all three of these kings inspired large amounts of public discussion during their reigns. These monarchs also serve as strong examples of the notion of fame in the eighteenth century, as each king was avidly discussed and displayed in the urban public spheres of their kingdoms. Analysis of caricatures and other forms of public discourse reveal a continuous interest in the

³ The identity of most French revolutionary caricaturists remains uncertain, but identifiable British caricaturists usually belonged to the 'middling sort.' Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (London, 2006), p.84.

monarchy between 1740 and 1795, but moments of political turmoil or scandal often inspired a greater volume of public discussion about the monarch.

The second section of this chapter looks at the women who were pinpointed in caricatures as threats to the established political order in Britain and France. Anxiety about female influence in the body politic in Britain was focussed most on those women who fulfilled the obscure concept of ‘the public woman’, a woman who transgressed the stereotypical notion of the home as a woman’s proper place.⁴ The individuals examined in this chapter are some of the most famous royal women of the period, and their individualisation in prints underlines a continuous contemporary concern about the position of ‘visible’ women in the royal families of France and Britain. This section argues that caricaturists used these influential women as a means by which to critique the political leaders with whom they were associated, a motif which appears particularly in times of significant political crisis in France and Britain.

As with the majority of images examined in the previous chapter, almost all of the images analysed here are depictions of individuals; there are few generalised images of an amorphous elite. The frequent focus on individuals in these caricatures is indicative of a burgeoning notion of “fame” in eighteenth-century Britain and France, as the publics of both countries increasingly became interested in knowing their royal families in an intimate way. Fame or celebrity culture has received avid attention from scholars of the eighteenth century, many of whom argue that this century marks the beginning of a ‘modern’ culture of celebrity.⁵ Much extant scholarship looks to theatre actors and actresses, as well as authors,

⁴ Cindy McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze: Prints of Women in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2004), p. 22.

⁵ Brian Cowan has diplomatically argued that celebrity was not invented in the eighteenth century, but rather that it flourished as a result of the growing media culture of this era. Brian Cowan, ‘News, Biography, and Eighteenth-Century Celebrity’, in *Oxford Handbooks Online*, ed. Thomas Keymer, general ed. Colin Burrow (Oxford, 7 September 2016),

but there has been minimal consideration of how the royal families of Britain and France were involved in this celebrity culture.⁶ As monarchs and their families occupied specific and important political roles in eighteenth-century France and Britain, the term “celebrity” is problematic, as it suggests an individual, ‘well-known for their well-knownness.’⁷ The term “fame culture” is thus used in this chapter to consider the ways in which caricatures and other forms of popular discourse presented royalty to the general public. The concept of celebrity culture will be considered in Chapter 3, which examines caricatures of social elites in France and Britain.

In a recent work, Antoine Lilti has argued that cheap reproductions of portraits were a crucial facet of celebrity culture in the eighteenth century, a means for people to intimately “know” a celebrated individual without ever seeing them in reality.⁸ Lilti does not analyse caricatures, yet they were just as pivotal in allowing the public to “see” famous figures as were portrait engravings. Unlike these engravings, which were often released for public sale by the individual in question, caricatures were produced without the prior consent of those depicted, thus forming an alternative representation of that individual in the public sphere. Although Lilti argues that ridiculous images could ‘humanize the public man’ in a positive fashion, this argument faces challenges when the public individual in question is a member of the royal family, whose “humanization” could come into conflict with their political role.⁹

Discussions about the relationship between power and representation are relevant to this chapter, as caricatures of royalty undermined the official representations and

<<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935338.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935338-e-132>> [accessed 17 August 2020].

⁶ See for example, Laura Engel, ‘Stage Beauties: Actresses and Celebrity Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century,’ *Literature Compass*, 13:12 (December, 2016), pp. 749-761. Clara Tuite, *Lord Byron and Scandalous Celebrity* (Cambridge, 2015).

⁷ Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: a Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York, 1961).

⁸ Antoine Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, 2017), p. 18.

⁹ Lilti, *Invention*, p. 19.

performativity of the crown that were sanctioned for public viewership in pageants, celebrations and tokens.¹⁰ In tandem with other forms of media such as newspapers, pamphlets, ballads and novels, caricatures presented their contemporary public sphere with an alternate and potentially critical view of the most important political institution in the country. Even in ancien régime France, where state censorship attempted to control scandal sheets and unauthorised publications prior to 1789, various types of media circulated among a people desperate for information about political and royal scandals in their country.¹¹

No one among the political elite was safe from the sharp pen of the caricaturist, as this chapter demonstrates; all were placed under an intense scrutiny by artists who were eager to highlight abhorrent or irregular behaviour that could impact on the body politic. The monarchies of Britain and France naturally occupied important positions in the political and public spheres of their nations. Scholarship on the British monarchy of the eighteenth century has centred on the “success” or “failure” of Hanoverian kingship, whose secularity has been juxtaposed with the ‘divine right’ monarchy of the Stuarts.¹² Hannah Smith and J.C.D. Clark have both argued that, despite alterations in performativity, the Hanoverian monarchy retained its position at the heart of British political and cultural life throughout the eighteenth century.¹³

This chapter pinpoints the reign of George III for examination, when the so-called ‘Golden Age’ of caricatures occurred between 1760 and 1820. By examining prints of George III and his immediate family, this chapter adds to studies on the impact of fame

¹⁰ See T.C.W Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford, 2002).

¹¹ Sarah Maza’s *Private Lives and Public Affairs: the Causes Célèbres of Ancien Regime France* (Berkeley, 1993) demonstrated the popularity of trial briefs as a mode of popular discourse in ancien regime Paris.

¹² Hannah Smith, *Georgian Monarchy: Politics and Culture, 1714-1760* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 61-2.

¹³ *Ibid.*; J.C.D. Clark, ‘The Re-enchantment of the World? Religion and Monarchy in Eighteenth-century Europe’, in Michael Schaich (ed.), *Monarchy and Religion: The Transformation of Royal Culture in Eighteenth-century Europe* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 41-78.

culture on British monarchy in the early-modern and modern period.¹⁴ This chapter analyses caricatures of George III, his wife and his mother to argue that popular discourse on the British monarchy between 1760 and 1795 combined political and personal content to appeal to audiences. As the monarchy stood ‘at the centre of the political stage’, it is evident that this prime position also made it an enticing target for enterprising caricaturists, not all of whom intended to bolster support for this political institution nor for the individuals who represented it in the public mind.¹⁵ British caricaturists repeatedly depicted members of the royal family because they and their behaviours were of interest to the public.

French historiography of the monarchy in the eighteenth century has been heavily influenced by the theory of desacralisation, which posits that the sacred power of the French monarchy was destroyed by a decades’ long campaign of denigration in popular and private discourse.¹⁶ This chapter does not posit a prior sacral quality of French monarchy, and instead looks towards Roger Chartier’s suggestion that an ‘affective rupture’ occurred between the French monarchy and the French people in the mid eighteenth century.¹⁷ Certainly, the concept of sustained public criticism of the French monarch is supported by satirical prints and other forms of public discourse which circulated in France prior to the Revolution.

In contrast with Linda Colley’s view of British caricature as largely positive for the royal image in the 1790s, it is evident that caricatures produced in France during the French Revolution likely worsened the already precarious position of that country’s monarchy at the precise moment when British royal family were benefitting from an upsurge in popular

¹⁴ See for example, Kevin Sharpe, ‘Sacralization and Demystification: the Publicization of Monarchy in Early Modern England’, in Jeroen Deploige and Gita Deneckere (eds), *Mystifying the Monarch: Studies on Discourse, Power, and History* (Amsterdam, 2006), pp. 99-115.

¹⁵ Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997), p. 130.

¹⁶ For more on the desacralisation theory in French historiography, see Introduction.

¹⁷ Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Linda G. Cochrane (Durham & London, 1991), p. 122.

support.¹⁸ Analysis of the dichotomy of perceptions of the British and French monarchies in this chapter underlines how the reception and impact of caricatures could differ based on political circumstances. It cannot be argued that caricatures categorically worsened public perception of royalty, but rather it may be argued that they allowed for greater public discussion of the monarchy, which could be both positive and negative in tone.

Drawing on Habermas' famous public sphere, I argue that highly politicised and individualised prints of the kind examined here are proof of the free exchange of political information among the urban populace.¹⁹ Contributing to the works of visual culture scholars such as Joan Landes, the freely exchanged political information analysed in this chapter is in visual rather than textual form.²⁰ In both Britain and France, satirical prints functioned as a medium through which those excluded from political life could participate in politics, if only as spectators of an elite game into which they would never be invited. Traditionally, historiography has highlighted the 1790s as a watershed of popular politics in France and Britain, but there is significant evidence of public involvement in politics long before the dawn of the French Revolution, and this chapter highlights this earlier political discourse.²¹ As analysis of images depicting George III and his wife will demonstrate, personal and potentially damaging information about the nation's rulers was already available to the discerning British customer as early as the 1760s, while the censorship of ancien régime France failed to quell rampant discussions of the private life and political failures of Louis XV as early as the 1740s.

¹⁸ Colley, *Britons*, p. 214

¹⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, 1989), p. 87.

²⁰ Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-century France* (London, 2001).

²¹ For example, see Emma Vincent Macleod, *A War of Ideas: British Attitudes to the Wars Against Revolutionary France 1792-1802* (Aldershot, 1998) and Mike Goode, 'The Public and the Limits of Persuasion in the Age of Caricature', in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), pp. 117-36.

By examining caricatures of royal individuals, this chapter highlights the ways in which satirical prints demonstrate genuine interest in the private lives and political roles of the elite in eighteenth-century Britain and France.

Part One: Expectations of Kingship

Politically speaking, the role of the monarchy differed in France and Britain in the eighteenth century. While France maintained a system of absolutism up to the outbreak of revolution in 1789, Britain's constitutional monarchy balanced the monarch's authority against that of an elected parliament. Despite this apparent discrepancy in terms of sovereignty, the British crown nonetheless exercised significant influence over parliament, and was an important cultural and political power.²² Analysis of visual sources demonstrates that, between 1740 and 1795, the Kings of France and of Britain in the eighteenth century frequently drew the critical gaze of satirists. As a significant component of the emergent public sphere, caricatures acted as an outlet for popular representations of the monarch, representations which operated beyond the remit of the sovereign and, in France, beyond the law. In caricature prints, kings were repeatedly displayed in a manner that suggested they were failing to uphold the image of majesty expected of them. This section analyses the different ways in which caricaturists voiced discontents with individual monarchs; from accusations of infidelity to tyranny, and unsuitability for a politically powerful role, caricatures formed part of a popular discourse that dissected the private lives of kings.

²² Melton, *The Rise of the Public*, p. 23.

Louis XV- negligence and tyranny

In the theory of an absolutist monarchical system, control of the royal image was the sole remit of the sovereign. In reality, the royal image became part of the public sphere in Louis XV's reign, as a result of the king's reluctance to perform important public rituals and participate in the court ceremonial inaugurated by his predecessor.²³ By refusing to depict himself as a public sovereign, Louis XV ultimately encouraged the growth of a public discourse about him which developed in Paris. The image of the king ceased to be decided by him, but was rather created by his subjects in satirical pamphlets, ballads, and images, many of which evaded the strict French censorship laws of the 1750s and 1760s. Many of these discussions of the sovereign centred on his personal and political foibles, painting an alternative and largely negative view of the sovereign in the public sphere.

Analysis of caricatures shows that Louis XV's private life was not only discussed beyond the Court, but also that it was often depicted as directly harmful to his responsibilities as king. Due to censorship and the king's well-known determination to prosecute all who committed *lèse-majesté*, there is no evidence of satirical prints of the monarchy circulating publicly in France during Louis XV's reign.²⁴ However, the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures*, alongside ballads and pamphlets, form a basis of satirical material in this chapter.²⁵

Popular discourse on Louis XV reveals an enduring concern about the king's many mistresses, and the influence that they wielded in the political workings of the kingdom. As

²³ Chartier, *Cultural Origins*, p. 134. Antoine Lilti notes a disenchantment with the court ceremonial among nobles during Louis XV's reign. Lilti, *Invention*, p. 2.

²⁴ John Rogister, 'Decoding the *Livre de Caricatures*', in Colin Jones, Juliet Carey, and Emily Richardson (eds.) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 2012), p. 56.

²⁵ Although not examined here, Lisa Jane Graham has analysed novels of the 1750s and 1760s which critique Louis XV as a sovereign. Graham, 'Fiction, Kingship, and the Politics of Character in Eighteenth-Century France', in Jeroen Deploige and Gita Deneckere (eds), *Mystifying the Monarch: Studies on Discourse, Power, and History* (Amsterdam, 2006), pp. 139-58.

discussed in Chapter One, widespread concern about Louis XV's mistresses was expressed in France as early as 1744, when public debate in Paris raged about the King's decision to renounce his mistress after falling seriously ill during a military campaign in Metz.²⁶ If published satirical prints of Metz were created, they do not appear to have survived in historical archives. Yet the ballads recorded in the *Chansonnier Historique* give historians some indication of the public interest in the perceived juxtaposition of Louis XV's prestigious public image and his immoral personal life. For example, one ballad dated c.1743 ironically compared Louis's "conquest" of his many mistresses with the historical victories of past kings of France, a barb which deliberately contrasted the martial and political triumphs of former kings such as Louis XIV with Louis XV.²⁷

Our primary satirical visual source for the reign of Louis XV also reflects a preoccupation with the king's martial role. The Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures* contains several images which stress contemporary concern about the King's split attentions between matters of war and government, and those of the bed chamber.²⁸ For example, 'Brave a quatre poils' (fig.2.1) depicts a knight in full armour, standing with hand on his hip. The posture of this figure calls to mind a famed portrait of Louis XIV from 1701, which was displayed at Versailles, and reprinted by engravers across Europe (fig.2.2).²⁹ The title of the caricature adds to its mockery, as the term 'quatre poils' meant a type of very soft velvet, a fabric more associated with luxury than warfare.³⁰ The juxtaposition of the posturing knightly figure and

²⁶ Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon* (London, 2002), p. 129.

²⁷ Émile Raunié (ed.), *Chansonnier Historique du xviii Siecle*, (10 vols, Paris, 1879), vii, pp. 16-7.

²⁸ In a recent article, Julian Swann has similarly argued that the conflict between Louis XV's romantic affairs and his role as a warrior king was widely discussed by the French public. See Swann, 'Roi de Guerre ou Roi de Paix? Louis XV and the French Monarchy, 1740-1748', *French History*, 34:2 (June, 2020), pp. 161-90.

²⁹ The original portrait is Hyacinthe Rigaud, *Portrait de Louis XIV en Costume de Sacre* (1701) Musée du Louvre, Paris.

³⁰ Valerie Mainz, 'Gloire, Subversively', in Colin Jones, Juliet Carey and Emily Richardson (eds), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 2012), p. 165.

the caption combine to mock Louis XV's attempt to fulfil the expected martial role which was considered vital for monarchs and the nobility in eighteenth-century Europe.³¹

Although undated, the image is probably a reference to Louis XV's inglorious campaign of 1744, which terminated with the dramatic (and temporary) renunciation of his mistress, the Duchess de Chateauroux. It is likely that Saint-Aubin created the image in response to his own attitude (and perhaps the attitude of others) towards the King's behaviour at Metz, which not only undermined his role as a Christian King, but also his political role as a victorious warrior-king. Although the incident at Metz saw the establishment of the nickname "Louis le Bien-aimé", contemporary ballads that circulated in Paris appeared to mock this optimistic title. One such ballad earnestly insists that Louis 'is not an ordinary hunter' for he 'chased his enemies, death, and a female companion all at once, a feat which the composer dramatically compared to the greatness of Alexander of Macedonia.³² This ironic image of Louis XV traversed visual and verbal popular culture in France in 1744, revealing the extent of popular commentary on the clash between the king's military responsibilities and his personal life.

In addition to discussions of his martial abilities, Louis XV's reputation for withdrawing into his private life and ignoring his political duties was a frequent trope in literature from the 1740s until the king's death in 1774. In 1772 the *Gazetier Cuirassé* argued that the King's ministers 'only leave him the liberty of sleeping with his mistress, stroking his dogs and signing marriage contracts.'³³ This comment is, primarily, a criticism of the over-weening power of the king's ministers, but it also insinuates that Louis XV was rather content with this state of affairs, which allowed him to avoid his political duties as sovereign. Louis

³¹ Swann, 'Roi de Guerre', p. 163.

³² Raunié, *Chansonnier Historique*, vol.7, p. 41.

³³ Charles Theveneau de Morande, *Le Gazetier Cuirassé ou Anecdotes Scandaleuses de la Cour de France 1772* (London, 1772), p. 30.

XV's determination to forge a private life at Court encouraged the fabrication and spread of rumours about him, and the *Livre de Caricatures*, participates in this commentary on the king's desire for a private life and its conflict with his public role.

The print 'J'ay bien de la peine a gouverner mon Empire' (fig.2.3) depicts a homely peasant cooking a meal in a dilapidated shack. This seemingly ambiguous image has been interpreted as a visual example of the phrase 'fiddling while Rome burns'.³⁴ Here, Louis XV ignores the pressures of monarchical rule and adopts the guise of a humble chef. This motif demonstrates Saint-Aubin's knowledge of his sovereign's pastimes, as a published comment on Louis XV's penchant for cooking did not appear until 1781, with the publication of the *Vie Privée de Louis XV*.³⁵ The popular *Vie Privée* stated that the king liked to prepare small meals and hot drinks for intimate guests in his suites, something which the author condemned as 'a mean kind of amusement' unbecoming of a king.³⁶ It seems that Saint-Aubin, who as *Brodeur du Roi* had more access to the King than most other French subjects, was repeating rumours at Court that suggested the King was acting in a manner inappropriate to his station.

Louis XV's determination to retain a private life at Versailles naturally produced whispers from courtiers, who, like the French public, expected a regal "performance" from their sovereign at all times.³⁷ Court rumours abounded particularly in regard to the king's sexual conquests, which 'seemed squalid and dangerous' because they were conducted in private chambers or in the notorious Parc aux cerfs.³⁸ These affairs not only called into question the king's adherence to the Catholic faith, but they also led to accusations that the

³⁴ Katie Scott, 'Saint-Aubin's Jokes and their Relation to...', in Colin Jones, Juliet Carey and Emily Richardson (eds), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 2012), p. 370.

³⁵ Mouffle d'Angerville, *Vie privée de Louis XV ou Principaux Événemens, Particularités et Anecdotes de son Règne* (London, 1781), Vol.1, p.39.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, p. 128.

³⁸ Jeffrey Merrick, 'Sexual Politics and Public Order in Late Eighteenth-century France: the Mémoires Secrets and the Correspondance Secrète,' *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 1:1 (Jul., 1990), p. 77.

king was unduly influenced by his mistresses, a fact which naturally raised concerns about the political stability of France.

This notion of the *maîtresse-en-titre*'s exceptional power of influence at court is expressed in the *Livre de Caricatures* image 'LES TALENS DU JOUR' (fig.2.4) On the right, a woman works at an embroidery frame, whilst a statue of a cherub hands another frame to a well-dressed man. At the man's feet lie a host of objects intended to symbolise masculine endeavour in the arts, sciences, and military: a palette, a globe, and a sword. The image may be a general criticism of men at the court of Louis XV, who were perceived as being 'feminised' by their 'soft' lives at Versailles.³⁹ Unusually, Saint-Aubin appears to have provided the date of this image's production: 1758 is engraved on the statue's pillar. The cherub's similarity to a sculpture commissioned by Madame de Pompadour suggest that the image is intended as a very pointed critique of the King, who is being led away from his duty and even his identity as a learned man by his mistress.⁴⁰ The sword, cast aside in favour of womanly pursuits during one of the worst years for France's military efforts at the start of the Seven Years' War further condemns Louis's role in defending and ruling the nation. In this image, Saint-Aubin mocks the feminised pursuits of the court elite, and of the king himself, calling in to question his ability to rule effectively.

A large amount of popular discourse during Louis XV's reign paints an image of an uninvolved sovereign, but there is also evidence of responses to the king's overt expressions of his sovereign will. Although the absolutist monarchical regime implied that sovereignty resided within the body of the king alone, this idea was consistently challenged in Louis XV's reign.⁴¹ One of the most famous of these challenges occurred in the 1750s, when the

³⁹ Lisa Jane Graham, *If the King Only Knew: Seditious Speech in the Reign of Louis XV* (London,2000), p. 234.

⁴⁰ Juliet Carey, 'The King and his Embroiderer', in Jones, Carey and Richardson (eds), *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures*, p. 264.

⁴¹ Bailey Stone, *Reinterpreting the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 33.

Crown and the Parlements quarrelled over issues relating to taxation and the ongoing debate over Jansenism, a Christian sect which had been condemned by the papacy in 1713.⁴² The Jansenist issue captured public attention, in no small part because parlementaires were quick to use pamphlets, newspapers and legal briefs to appeal their case before the ‘general public’. In an attempt to defend its actions, the Crown also became intensely involved in something of a public propaganda war. This act inadvertently opened up the inner workings of France’s politics to Parisians of various social groups, who henceforth persisted in participating in discussions of the kingdom’s political sphere.⁴³

The politically-astute Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin also commented on the clash between the parlements and royal prerogative in his *Livre de Caricatures*. In ‘Pour la plus grande Gloire de dieu’ (fig.2.5) Saint-Aubin depicts a wheel of fortune, which appears to fluctuate between the anti-Jansenist clergy and the Parlement of Paris. In this image, an Abbé sits triumphantly atop the wheel, which crushes a parlementaire in its path. Interestingly, it is not the King pushing this wheel, but rather his maîtresse-en-titre, whom Saint-Aubin may have believed to be swaying the King’s opinion to oppose the parlements. The King’s apparent plot to play the parlements and the church against one another highlights a measure of the public anxiety about the scope of absolutist rule. Certainly, Saint-Aubin seems to have been wise to this underhanded method of governance, but whether he was genuinely critical of the King’s manoeuvrings remains uncertain. It can be said with some certainty, however, that the monarchy’s clash with the parlements dramatically changed the landscape of the French ‘public sphere’, particularly in the capital. Certainly, the public ‘battle’ between

⁴² Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined: the Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-century France* (Ithaca, 2005), p. 130.

⁴³ David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (London, 2001), p. 56.

Crown and Parlement led to the opening up of politics to many inquisitive French people, Charles-Germain de Saint Aubin among them.⁴⁴

Summary

The images, pamphlets and ballads examined in this section all emphasise a significant public discourse on the King of France between 1740 and 1774. Critiques of Louis XV's personal kingship appear to have peaked during times of political or martial conflict, such as the Seven Years' War. Despite legal restrictions on the French public's right to discuss the king or his policies, the caricatures and texts examined above underline how the many aspects of the king's private and political behaviours were scrutinised by a wider public sphere. Louis XV's disengagement with public ceremony did not quieten these popular discussions about the sovereign, but rather it appears to have encouraged clandestine discourse to circulate among a people who hungered for information about their king. The exposition of Louis XV's infidelities and his martial and political failures jarred with the scant "official" images and representations of the king which were sanctioned by the crown, allowing for a public discourse critical to the monarchy to flourish.

Louis XVI- royal power and the Revolution

Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin appears to have stopped illustrating his *Livre de Caricatures* in 1775, one year after the death of Louis XV. Although the reason behind Saint-Aubin's decision not to caricature Louis XVI remains unknown, this decision nonetheless leaves a significant gap in the production of caricatures depicting the King of France between

⁴⁴ Jones, *The Great Nation*, p. 265.

1775 and c.1788. If any caricatures of Louis XVI were produced during this time, they likely followed the clandestine mode of the *Livre de Caricatures*, and remain unknown to historians. Public discussions of the king, however, continued in ballads and publications such as the *Mémoires Secrets*, all of which continued to serve a public interest in the private and political lives of the monarch.⁴⁵

Unlike his predecessor, Louis XVI did not garner criticism for infidelity or un-Christian behaviour, but his relationship with his wife remained popular fodder for gossip from their marriage in 1770 until the birth of their first child, seven years later.⁴⁶ During the early years of the Revolution, Louis XVI's eventual position as a constitutional monarch ensured his status as a figure of key interest, and he was depicted in numerous prints, either positive or critical. As the preceding examination of the public discourse on Louis XV has shown, popular criticism of the King of France was not a new phenomenon brought on by the Revolution. All of the extant caricatures of Louis XVI were published after 1788, yet prints in the early years of the Revolution did not necessarily demonise the king. This reluctance to critique the king directly was evidence of an engrained social tradition, as even the radical Parisian press showed a positive attitude towards Louis XVI in 1789 and 1790.⁴⁷ This positive attitude changed dramatically in the wake of the Flight to Varennes.

On 21 June 1791, the royal family of France attempted to flee from Paris for a border town named Montmedy. Prior to fleeing the capital, Louis XVI penned a letter explaining his position and renouncing all support for the Revolution and the new constitution which he had sworn to uphold. Much has been made of the Flight to Varennes by historians; Mona Ozouf and Timothy Tackett both argue that this was a turning point not only for the political

⁴⁵ See Jeffrey Merrick, 'Sexual Politics and Public Order in Late Eighteenth-century France: the *Mémoires Secrets* and the *Correspondance Secrète*, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 1:1 (July, 1990), pp. 68-84.

⁴⁶ Antoine de Baecque, *The Body Politic: Corporeal Metaphor in Revolutionary France, 1770-1800*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Stanford, 1997), p. 35.

⁴⁷ Jack Censer, *Prelude to Power: the Parisian Radical Press, 1789-1791* (Baltimore, 1976), p. 111.

makeup of the Revolution from 1791 onwards, but also for the survival of the monarchy.⁴⁸ Varennes was not only a significant turning point for popular perceptions of the royal family, but it was also a crucial moment for the production of caricature prints during the French Revolution, yet caricatures responding to the event have not received the attention due to them by historians. The Flight inspired a deluge of dozens of caricatures mocking and criticising the royal family, even as official statements from the National Assembly (unsuccessfully) attempted to persuade the French people that the monarch had been “abducted.”⁴⁹ Caricatures of the Flight to Varennes exposed the king’s betrayal of the constitution, challenging the Assembly’s attempts to exculpate him. Varennes was not only a turning point for French revolutionary politics or for popular attitudes to the monarchy, it was also a turning point for caricatures as a medium of public opinion.

While caricature prints do not express a consistent critique of Louis XVI prior to the Flight of Varennes, this does not mean that the king was without critics.⁵⁰ However, it was not until the year 1791 that an explosion of prints expressing popular suspicion appeared. In depicting the Varennes incident, French caricaturists found a balance between humour and deep insult, portraying the king alternately as a swine, a child, or even the queen’s lackey; in all instances, the king was condemned as unfit to rule France as a constitutional monarch. At least six individual prints depicting the king as a child can be dated to June 1791, and the similarity of their representations emphasises the overwhelming response of caricaturists to Varennes. A prime example of this motif is ‘He hu! Da da!’ (fig.2.6), which goes so far as to rob the king of speech, reducing him to a toddler who sits upon a toy horse, banging a drum

⁴⁸ Mona Ozouf, *Varennes la Mort de la Royauté* (Paris, 2011); Timothy Tackett, *When the King Took Flight* (Cambridge, MA, 2003).

⁴⁹ Noah Shusterman casts doubt on the “gullibility” of the French people, arguing that copies of Louis’s damning letter circulated in Paris within days of the royal family’s return. Shusterman, *The French Revolution : Faith, Desire, and Politics* (London, 2014).

⁵⁰ Ambrogio Caiani argues that Louis XVI’s determination to maintain traditional court ritual aroused suspicion because it indicated an unwillingness to accept the changes wrought by the Revolution. Caiani, *Louis XVI and the French Revolution, 1789–1792* (Cambridge, 2012), p. 8.

as Marie-Antoinette pushes him towards Montmedy. The town of Montmedy is visually represented by the image of a mountain – ‘mont’- with a clock denoting midday ‘midi’, a play on the phonetic pronunciation of the place name. This image is notable because of the martial imagery clearly contained within it, – the king astride a steed beating his drum – a feature which connects it to the Saint-Aubin prints which mocked Louis XV’s status as a warrior. In this print from 1791, the king is not merely a child, he is a child playing at being a soldier-king, and therefore a figure of ridicule.

Unlike his predecessors, Louis XVI never fought on the battlefield, and the closest involvement with war during his reign was that of the American Revolution. Although Louis XVI enjoyed a brief boost of popular support in his role as the liberator of America and a ‘warrior-king,’ it appears that by 1791, the concept of the king as a warrior was a subject for laughter.⁵¹ ‘He hu! Da da!’ and other prints of this kind can therefore be interpreted as a ruthless mockery of Louis XVI’s short-lived image of a martial hero. His decision to eschew the martial prowess that characterised his predecessors in their public personas may well have led to rumours in 1787 that the king frequently broke down and sobbed as he struggled to cope with the kingdom’s collapsing finances.⁵² The public revelation of the king’s childish emotional outbursts at court implied that the king was unable to rule effectively and provide decisive leadership to his country at a time of economic crisis.⁵³

From Court gossip to satirical pamphlets and satirical prints, the king’s martial and masculine qualities were under repeated assault in popular discourse after 1788. This is emphasised once more in the image ‘Troc pour troc’ (fig.2.7) which was also produced

⁵¹ Jones, *The Great Nation*, pp. 307-8.

⁵² Pidansat de Mairobert and Mouffle d’Angerville (eds.), *Mémoires Secrets pour Servir à l’Histoire de le Republique des Lettres en France depuis 1762 jusqu’à Nos Jours* (London, 1783), vol.35, p. 428.

⁵³ The image of Louis XVI as an indecisive ruler was put forward in an early history of his reign, begun in 1793 but first published in 1801: Jean-Louis Soulavie, *Mémoires Historiques et Politiques du Règne de Louis XVI, depuis son Mariage jusqu’à sa Mort*, 6 vols (Paris, 1801).

following the Flight to Varennes. In addition to his traditional blue sash and smart outer coat, the King wears a barber's apron, an incongruous garment for a man of his social standing. Significantly, material reminders of his status- a crown or sceptre- are nowhere to be seen. This image likely emerged from widely-circulated rumours that Louis XVI had fled Paris disguised as the valet of the Baroness de Korf (Marie-Antoinette in disguise).⁵⁴ That the King was apparently willing to act as a common servant reiterated the notion that he was no longer fit to hold the title of monarch, and this comically ridiculous motif was used by caricaturists as a means of reiterating the king's betrayal of the constitution.

The proliferation of critical caricatures produced in response to Varennes adds weight to arguments that the French monarchy suffered through a process of "desacralisation" during the closing decades of the eighteenth century.⁵⁵ Louis XVI's behaviour at the time of the Flight to Varennes did not destroy all respect that the people of France held for the institution of monarchy, but it is evident that images such as this reduced the French people's respect for their monarch.⁵⁶ By questioning his masculinity and fitness as a political leader, prints such as these demonstrate how Louis XVI's personal attributes inadvertently had a negative impact on the influence and status of the French monarchy as a whole at a critical point in the political realignment of the Revolution.

After Varennes, public debate raged about what should be done with Louis XVI. Caricatures appeared to argue that the king was no longer fit to rule. One example of caricatures questioning Louis XVI's capability was published in late 1791, where the king is shown throwing a child-like tantrum in his comfortable prison at the Tuileries. Much like the

⁵⁴ Annie Duprat, *Les Rois de Papier: la Caricature de Henri III à Louis XVI* (Paris, 2002), p. 90.

⁵⁵ Robert Darnton, *Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (London, 1995), p. 216. For challenges to this theory of desacralisation, see William Doyle, *France and the Age of Revolution: Regimes Old and New from Louis XIV to Napoleon Bonaparte* (London, 2013).

⁵⁶ Mona Ozouf, argues that the institution of monarchy was severely impacted by Varennes. Ozouf, *Varennes la Mort*, pp. 234-6.

images depicting Louis as a child being pushed to Montmédy by his wife, the image ‘La grande colère de Capet l’ainé’ (fig.2.8) is intent on casting the former king in a profoundly negative light. This hysterical behaviour was perhaps only imagined by the caricaturist, but it played upon popular gossip from the likes of the *Mémoires Secrets* which had already highlighted the king’s emotional volatility during the financial crisis of 1787.⁵⁷ The image not only equated Louis with an infantile tantrum, but it may also suggest a streak of “madness” that would render him utterly unsuitable for governing the nation.

The image also strongly contrasts with pro-royal images and pamphlets released in the early 1790s. Although few of these exist today, Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle have argued that their main aim was to depict Louis as a devoted father, despite his imprisonment.⁵⁸ (Fig.2.8) obliterates this notion of the idealised father-figure by depicting Louis as deranged. The satirical prints portraying Louis XVI after the Flight to Varennes inverted the reassuring and powerful image of the Father-King on which much of the pro-royalist propaganda was based during the Revolution, casting the monarch’s political role into question.

Summary

The many derogatory images of Louis XVI which criticised his status as sovereign were designed to diminish his esteem in the eyes of the French people during a period of increasing tensions between constitutional monarchists and republicans in France. The Flight to Varennes not only inspired caricaturists, but it also shifted the way that the Revolution and the monarchy existed in 1791 and after. Most significantly for this study, Varennes was a

⁵⁷ Mairobot and d’Angerville, *Mémoires Secrets*, vol.35, p. 428.

⁵⁸ Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle, *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth-century France* (London, 2008), p. 86.

turning point for caricaturists, who were inspired by the event to participate in popular discourse in a concerted and powerful manner. Months after the drama of Varennes had subsided, caricaturists continued to query the king's position in the body politic, even resorting to calling his sanity in to question. Just as caricatures of Louis XV depicted the king as an immoral individual who did not live up to contemporary ideals of sovereignty, caricatures of Louis XVI revealed the unreliability and instability of an individual who was supposed to exist at the centre of the new political order.

George III- tyrant, madman, farmer

In contrast with France in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the British public sphere was technically open to popular discourse on the monarchy, although there were instances wherein George III pressed charges against his critics.⁵⁹ Caricaturists played a significant role in representing the king to the British public from the beginning of his reign in 1760 until his death in 1820. The position which George III occupied in the British public sphere emphasises the emergent notion of fame in the period, as every aspect of the king's life was laid bare in satirical prints. This long period of caricatural representation emphasises the evolution of public sentiment towards the monarchy, which developed from frequent accusations of tyranny between 1760 and 1780, to concerns about the king's madness and the looming threat of republicanism in the 1780s and 1790s.

A strong example of the popular discourse which accused George III of tyranny can be found in responses to the American War of Independence. The King's determination to pursue war despite waning public and ministerial support was documented by caricaturists as

⁵⁹ For example, in 1764, the editor of *North Briton*, John Wilkes, was arrested for publishing seditious material about the king. See Arthur H. Cash, *John Wilkes: the Scandalous Father of Civil Liberty* (New Haven, 2006).

evidence of controversially tyrannical behaviour.⁶⁰ In (fig.2.9), published anonymously in 1779, the King is shown on the back of an agitated horse, 'America', as he attempts to control it using various implements of torture.⁶¹ George's determination to subdue America was translated into outright tyranny by caricaturists; in addition to (fig.2.9), another image published in 1779 expressed this negative attitude towards the king's clash with the government. In 'Behold the man' (fig.2.10) a simple image of George III in profile is given new meaning by the addition of a large turban, a motif which played upon contemporary notions of 'oriental despotism.'⁶² These prints which were produced in response to the loss of the American colonies underline an aspect of popular discourse which followed George III for the first two decades of his reign: that of tyranny and a blatant disrespect for the British constitution.⁶³

Interestingly, a later political scandal which personified George III's exertions of the royal prerogative appears to have been viewed rather differently by the popular press. In 1783 Charles James Fox came to power leading a coalition government with Lord North. However, George III was determined to end this arrangement swiftly; Fox's relationship with the Prince of Wales and his vociferous opposition to the passing of the Royal Marriages Act of 1772 had made him an enemy in the King's eyes.⁶⁴ The King exerted tremendous pressure on the House of Lords to ensure that Fox and North would fail in passing their East India Bill; when the Lords blocked the bill, the King dismantled the coalition government and appointed William Pitt as a Prime Minister of a minority government.⁶⁵ Far from inviting accusations of tyranny, the King's actions were applauded in newspapers and he was 'hailed as a saviour of

⁶⁰ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 554-6.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Colley, *Britons*, p. 214.

⁶³ O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 204.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁶⁵ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 562.

the constitution.’⁶⁶ Even caricaturists appeared to support this move- or, at the very least, to find it amusing- as images tended to demonise Fox and his coterie rather than the King. In ‘Dissolution’ (fig.2.11) the King chases Fox and two of his followers, North and Burke, off a cliff. The King stands in a chariot, a bolt of lightning in his hand drawing parallels to the wrath of Zeus. Another print, ‘George and the Dragon’ (fig.2.12) likens the King to the legend of Saint George, while Fox, Burke and North become a multi-headed monster that must be vanquished by the monarch. Of course, it is entirely possible that these images are intended to be tongue-in-cheek; to read them at face value is to potentially misrepresent them, but it is clear enough that the King is not being depicted as a tyrant in these images, even if his “heroics” appear slightly overexaggerated.

This change in interpretation of the king’s unconstitutional actions demonstrates how public perception of a sovereign’s political actions could change over even a short period of time. While the king’s heavy-handed response to the American Revolutionary war was considered tyrannical by caricaturists, his exertion of the royal prerogative at the end of 1783 was widely portrayed by newspapers and caricatures as an act that “saved” Britain from an unsavoury government. This positive view of the king’s severe political actions can be connected to the conclusion of the American Revolutionary Wars in September 1783, just three months before Fox was dismissed from office in favour of William Pitt. The king’s popular reputation was thus buoyed by the resolution of the controversial British-American conflict of which he had been such an ardent supporter, and his dismissal of an unpopular politician was widely celebrated in British print culture.

In the late 1780s there occurred a significant shift in popular attitudes to the king, as his struggle with mental illness greatly impacted on the political life of Britain during the

⁶⁶ Carretta, *George III and the Satirists*, p. 256.

Regency Crisis of 1788-9. The Regency Crisis inspired caricatures of several royal individuals, including the Prince of Wales, and Queen Charlotte, as both competed to hold the powers of the regent. Several images produced at this time raised the motif of a helpless king, but rather than condemnations of George III's inability to rule, I argue that these prints can be read as part of a nationwide interest in the king's recovery. A prime example is 'Royal dipping' (fig.2.13), which depicts the King- naked and without his powdered wig- taking a dip in the sea at Weymouth on the advice of his physicians. The image revolves around a publicised story that a troupe of musicians had struck up a tune of 'God Save the King' as George III entered the water- even in this delicate, private moment, his identity as sovereign was not forgotten.⁶⁷ The grandeur of 'God Save the King' is juxtaposed with the king's confused, caricatured features. As always, the impact of a caricature on public opinion is uncertain: Tamara Hunt sees this print as damaging to the sovereign's reputation, but I argue that it was more likely to inspire empathy in viewers than mockery.⁶⁸ Certainly, this image does not imbue George III with an aura of majesty, but this is possibly a case of mistaken intention. The revelation of this intimate moment in the king's recovery could have been interpreted in a variety of manners by those who viewed the image, from empathy to amusement.

A survey of caricatures depicting George III in 1788 and 1789 reveals that few satirists appear to have utilised his mental illness against him. This was a reflection on public sentiment concerning the king at the time; the king's health was a serious issue which engaged popular interest in Britain for many months. It was one thing for caricaturists to deride the King for character defects such as his miserliness or stubbornness, but to mock him

⁶⁷ Fanny Burney recorded the incident in her diary, although the king's sojourn at Weymouth was also reported in the press. See Frances Burney, *The Diary and Letters of Frances Burney*, ed. Sarah Woolsey (Boston, 1880), vol.2, p. 149.

⁶⁸ Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull; Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003), p. 66.

for a medical condition quite beyond his control was perhaps considered too harsh, and likely to be unpopular with the public. The majority of British newspapers provided brief updates on the King's health to their readers every day throughout the Spring of 1789.⁶⁹ On 20 February 1789, the first page of the *World* newspaper declared, in block capitals: 'The King is perfectly and completely recovered', before proceeding to divulge the king's conversations with his ministers and the return of his physical fitness.⁷⁰ The *Times* reported a few days later 'information [which] must be most pleasing to the public at large', namely of the impossibility of George III suffering a relapse.⁷¹ Although an incorrect diagnosis, the paper's wording emphasises the popular awareness of and interest in the king's health, which was also expressed through public demonstrations and addresses across Britain.⁷² It appears, therefore, that although the king's frightening mental illness jeopardised his status as king, it also made him a figure of empathy, one which spurred on a sense of protectiveness from the British people.⁷³ There was not a market for British caricatures mocking George III's insanity. By 1791, however, satirical artists in France present us with a direct contrast: the example of Louis XVI discussed above (fig.2.8) demonstrates how satirical artists could use fits of rage or madness to further denigrate the public reputation of an already questionable sovereign.

Prints such as 'Royal Dipping' emphasise the challenge of interpreting the intended message of a caricature. The question of a caricaturist's intent arises in an image produced by Richard Newton, a prolific caricaturist who frequently targeted the royal family and government in the 1790s. In 'The False Alarm' (fig.2.14) a bare-headed king sits in his nightgown, chattering to his wife about a dream wherein his breeches were set alight. Queen

⁶⁹ For example, the *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, London, 1 January, 1789 – 3 January 1789; *The Times*, London, 2 January 1789.

⁷⁰ *World*, London, 20 February 1789.

⁷¹ *The Times*, London, 25 February 1789.

⁷² Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe*, p. 61.

⁷³ Colley, *Britons*, p. 238.

Charlotte patiently inspects the garment in question and assures her husband that all is well. Once again, this image seems to diminish the king somewhat; here, he is almost child-like as he seeks comfort after a distressing nightmare, but there is also an amusing and even touching sense of domesticity to the image. The media focus on the domestic aspect of the royal family undoubtedly contributed to George III's reputation as 'the first middle class monarch' from the 1780s onwards, a time when caricatures were appealing increasingly to a middle-class audience who appreciated a morally upstanding king.⁷⁴

Much as the daily updates on the king's recovery provided readers of British newspapers with a detailed look into the royal family's life, this print by Richard Newton similarly fed public curiosity about the King's illness. The general public were literally afforded a view into the royal family's private life, albeit a view created by a caricaturist, and this bred a sense of intimacy that is characteristic of the burgeoning notion of fame in eighteenth-century Britain.⁷⁵ Rather than attempts to convey him as an unsuitable or irresponsible ruler, images of George III's mental illness should instead be understood as part of a nationwide interest in both his recovery and the particulars of his family life, reflections of the way that famous figures such as the king were depicted in contemporary mass media.

The private life of the monarch was also at the core of the 'Farmer George' images which appeared from 1770 onwards, but in contrast with the more positive public image of the king during his illness, the 'Farmer George' motif could signify either amusement at the king's eccentricities or strong criticism of his failure to stand as a political leader. The first example of 'Farmer George' (fig.2.15), printed in 1771, shows the King in his nightgown, gazing at the stars as his children play happily around him. At first glance, this print can

⁷⁴ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago, 1997), p. 21. Tamara Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003), p. 233.

⁷⁵ Fred Inglis, *A Short History of Celebrity* (Princeton, 2010), p. 59.

appear a mild-mannered satire on a scatter-brained figure of authority. However, the image can also be read as a calculated attack on the King, who is likened to a farmer neglecting his “flock” (both his rambunctious children and his people) to pursue whimsical hobbies such as astronomy. The portrait of the King’s former advisor, the Earl of Bute, in the background is a clear indication that the caricaturist believes royal power resides outside the body of the current monarch. As such, the image is a perfect example of the dichotomy which characterises the ‘Farmer George’ prints: they can be interpreted as gently mocking the King’s ‘average’ pastimes, or as genuine criticisms of a monarch who (apparently) could not focus on the most important matter of all- ruling the country, a concern popular in images of George III’s contemporary, Louis XV of France.

The ‘Farmer George’ trope flourished especially in the political turmoil of the 1790s, perhaps a response to the rise of radicalism in Britain in response to the French Revolution. One example (fig.2.16) shows a grossly caricatured King carrying milk in pails and shouting like a common street vendor. The image’s title: ‘The Windsor Milkman, or anything to turn a penny’ suggests that the caricaturist intended to mock the King’s perceived parsimony. Carretta has highlighted that images of a domesticated monarch such as this were a tacit warning that George III needed to emphasise the full, spectacular power of monarchy in the face of encroaching ‘French’ radicalism.⁷⁶ This point is well illustrated by another print, also produced in 1792, which sees ‘Farmer George’ and his wife selling milk to a gaggle of astonished peasants (fig.2.17). The criticism of George’s lacking ‘majesty’ is encapsulated in the country yokel who gazes at the King and cries: ‘Oh lud! Oh lud! He is nothing but a man!’ This idea is a radical one, for if the King is ‘nothing but a man’, one must ask what is it

⁷⁶ Carretta, *George III and the Satirists*, p. 294.

that separates him from any of his countrymen, and what gives him a right to influence the political and legal arenas of Britain.

The timeliness of the print's production, June 1792, emphasises how events of the French Revolution echoed in caricatures of the British royal family. The impact of the French Revolution on British radical culture has been examined by historians such as John Archer and Mark Philp, with both emphasising the role that printed works played in spreading radical and conservative ideologies in Britain.⁷⁷ British newspapers assiduously recounted the developing tensions between Louis XVI and the National Assembly between 1789 and 1793. For example, after the Flight to Varennes in 1791, the *Times* stated categorically 'it is a fact now proved beyond contradiction that the French king has been prisoner to the mob since the 6th October 1789.'⁷⁸ The production date of (fig.2.17) on 20 June 1792, coincided with a period of mounting tension between Louis XVI and the people of Paris, news of which was faithfully reported to the British public.⁷⁹ The mounting anti-royal sentiments in France in the latter half of 1792 were based upon the idea of Louis XVI as 'nothing but a man', and the anonymous artist behind this print may have been making a pointed, radical suggestion that George III was no different from his French counterpart.

Summary

The notion of a 'middle-class' monarch may have been perceived as positive by the middling sort in Britain, but these prints of 'Farmer George' demonstrate that the symbol of a domesticated sovereign could become negative when political events such as warfare called

⁷⁷ John Archer, *Social Unrest and Popular Protest in England, 1780-1840* (Cambridge, 2000); Mark Philp (ed.), *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics* (Cambridge, 1991).

⁷⁸ *The Times*, London, 30 June 1791.

⁷⁹ Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, pp. 239-40.

for a more powerful image of the monarchy in the public sphere. It is certainly possible to argue that these later Farmer George images were a warning about the king's position and the threat of republicanism, but many of these images can also be read in a far more positive light, as examples of public interest in the King as an individual, rather than merely a symbol of political authority. Where satirical prints depicting royal fits of rage and childish behaviour likely exacerbated negative attitudes to Louis XVI in 1791 and 1792, similar prints of George III from the 1770s until the 1790s appear to have had a different effect. The most negative images of George III abounded at the beginning of his reign, and these prints tended to focus on the king's attitude to the political constitution of Britain. However, rather than simply focussing on the ability of the king to rule, British caricaturists began in the 1780s to divulge interesting aspects of the monarch's personal life which, although potentially damaging to his role as sovereign, may have succeeded in elevating him in the eyes of his subjects.⁸⁰ There are certainly parallels between satirical prints of George III, and those of Louis XVI, yet images of the latter commenced at a moment of great political instability, and they served to worsen the French public's attitude towards their monarch rather than improve it.

Summary of Part One

Each of the caricatures discussed in this section formed a significant part of the urban public sphere in the moment when they were produced. Although the content of the caricatures varied from king to king, they all demonstrate the manner in which public discourse and popular representations of the monarchy developed in the period 1740-1795. In Louis XV's reign, discussions about the king's private life and political role were largely underground or

⁸⁰ This effect has been characterised as part of "modern" celebrity culture: the inclusion of information about the private lives of famous individuals in popular discourse often causes members of the public to forge emotional responses to that individual. Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity*, p. 10.

clandestine, reflecting the contemporary strictures of censorship which limited the full expansion of a public sphere capable of commenting on the sovereign in any way it pleased. For the first fourteen years of Louis XVI's reign, public discourse about the sovereign appears to have remained clandestine, and caricatures actively commented on the king only after the Flight to Varennes. In contrast to his French counterparts, George III of Britain was publicly caricatured from the beginning of his reign, and analysis of these images shows that many of the earliest caricatures addressing the king's political character were unfavourable. This negative representation of George III appears to have evolved during the 1780s and 1790s, with more positive and highly personal depictions of the king coinciding with deep public interest in his health and the stability of the nation in the face of the French Revolution. For Louis XV and Louis XVI, the personal dimension of caricatures and other modes of satirical public discourse was just as critical as the political, as their sexual relationships and personal foibles were interpreted by caricaturists to denote individuals who threatened the stability of the body politic. The caricatures of these three kings highlight the public interest in both the political role of the monarch, and the individual who wore the mantle of kingship; regal distance was no longer a conceivable achievement in the growing, mediatised public sphere of the eighteenth century.

Part Two: women and the political stage

In a study of visual representations in the French Revolution, Joan Landes has demonstrated how women came to be diametrically opposed with public political activism, even as the female figure of Liberty became the symbol of the French Revolution itself.⁸¹ This chapter builds upon arguments made by Landes and Cindy McCreery by arguing that the focus on

⁸¹ Landes, *Visualizing the Nation*, pp. 10-11.

queens and mistresses in British and French satirical prints was not merely a misogynistic criticism of women's role in politics, but a means for artists to conceal direct criticisms of the male political leaders, whose status may have made satirists hesitant to directly attack their political decisions. The following caricatures were produced between 1745 and 1793, and they all depict women of particular political significance: queens and royal mistresses.

Despite spanning a broad period of almost fifty years, these caricatures underline a continuous contemporary concern about the impact of women on contemporary politics, and the way in which this concern also linked to criticisms of the politically powerful men with whom these women were associated.

Madame de Pompadour- mistress and diplomat

Between 1740 and 1774, criticisms of women infiltrating politics via the king's bed focussed on three of Louis XV's *maîtresses-en-titres*. The most prominent was Madame de Pompadour, who occupied the position of *maîtresse-en-titre* from 1744 until her death twenty years later.⁸² The official position of *maîtresse-en-titre* was well-established in France before Louis XV ascended the throne, but Pompadour's influence extended beyond the bedchamber in a manner that challenged contemporary gender roles, and extant political policies in France. As with Louis XV himself, few published satirical prints of Pompadour remain, as she was protected by the same censorship laws that restricted discussion of the King in public. However, the Queen and her allies played a role in spreading rumours to the Court and beyond about Mme de Pompadour's corruption of the political order.⁸³ These rumours appear to have caught the attention of the *brodeur du roi*, Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin,

⁸² Burrows, *A King's Ransom*, p. xiv.

⁸³ Marisa Linton, 'Virtue rewarded? Women and the Politics of Virtue in 18th century France. Part I', *History of European Ideas*, 26:1 (2000), p. 38.

and his *Livre de Caricatures* contains at least a dozen images which can be read as criticisms and mockeries of Pompadour's political interference.

It is evident that Saint-Aubin was well aware of the risks involved in mocking this powerful woman: two images appearing side-by-side in the *Livre de caricatures* cleverly equate Mme de Pompadour with the dreaded Bastille prison. (Fig.2.18) which reimaged the ancient fortress as the emblem of the Marquisate of Pompadour, and 'Passe partout de la Bastille' (fig.2.19) which depicts a heart-shaped spinning top balancing upon a plinth with three towers. Inscribed on the plinth is the year that she became *maîtresse-en-titre*, and the three towers, which mimic the coat of arms of the Marquisate of Pompadour. The strong implication in these images is that Mme de Pompadour is perfectly capable of acquiring the keys of the ancient fortress to dispose of anyone who displeases her. The King, reduced to a heart-shaped toy, is robbed of his sovereign right to issue *lettres de cachet*, a controversial form of imprisonment without trial. The strong emphasis on Pompadour's influence on the judicial system in these images can be read as an indication of a tradition of criticising those ministers and individuals who held sway over a king, rather than critiquing the sovereign himself. These two images not only express Saint-Aubin's awareness of the danger of critiquing a *maîtresse-en-titre* in his sketchbook, but they also insinuate that Madame de Pompadour's power was so great that it matched the legal capabilities of an absolutist monarch.

Saint-Aubin also emphasises this aspect of Pompadour's tenure as *maîtresse-en-titre* by exploring her involvement in the controversial Franco-Austrian alliance of 1756, and her many 'creatures'- individuals whom she had manipulated, patronised, or formed strategic 'alliances' with. France and Austria had been traditional enemies for decades, but the War of

Austrian Succession saw a dramatic change in the political landscape of Europe.⁸⁴ When Prince von Kaunitz, Austrian ambassador to the French court, wished to cement an alliance between his home country and France, he looked to Mme de Pompadour for assistance. As he noted in 1751 ‘the royal mistress’s way of thinking is serious business in this country.’⁸⁵ Kaunitz was not exaggerating; all courtiers at Versailles, whether happily or grudgingly, admitted that Pompadour was the “principal canal” to grace and favour.⁸⁶ Pompadour’s role in the diplomatic negotiations is depicted humorously in ‘Alliance force, qui quitte p rit’ (fig.2.20), which imagines Pompadour and the Austrian diplomat Count von Starhemberg precariously balancing on a small island. The title of the image suggests a certain scepticism about the new Franco-Austrian alliance on the part of the artist, and places the alliance’s success entirely on the shoulders of the two caricatured figures holding on to each other for dear life.

Historiography agrees that the Franco-Austrian alliance was deeply unpopular with the French people, and condemnation of the alliance often reflected on those individuals at court who were believed to have brokered it, the foremost of which was Mme de Pompadour.⁸⁷ Mme de Pompadour’s guilt was bolstered by false letters created by Frederick the Great in a bid to destroy the alliance, but Frederick’s deception only circulated in court and diplomatic circles, and there certainly appears to be a dearth of popular discourse which singles out Pompadour as the alliance’s broker.⁸⁸ This information makes Saint-Aubin’s visual representation of the alliance all the more significant, for they reveal the extent to

⁸⁴ Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 4.

⁸⁵ A.W. von Kaunitz, *Correspondance Secrete Entre A.W. von Kaunitz-Rietberg et le Baron Ignaz de Koch, 1750-2*, ed. H. Schlitter (Paris, 1899), p. 167.

⁸⁶ Julian Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754-1774* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 54.

⁸⁷ Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, p. 4.

⁸⁸ Frederick fabricated personal letters between Pompadour and the Empress of Austria, Maria Theresa, in an attempt to discredit the alliance. Thomas Kaiser, ‘The Austrian Alliance, the Seven Years’ War and the Emergence of a French ‘National’ Foreign Policy, 1756-1790’, in Julian Swann and Joel Felix (eds.), *The Crisis of the Absolute Monarchy: France from Old Regime to Revolution* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 172-4.

which Saint-Aubin's position at court allowed him to learn political information which few others outside the elite would have been aware of. That Saint-Aubin knew of Pompadour's role in the Austrian alliance may also, however, suggest that the notion of keeping sensitive political information within elite political circles was impossible, even with the prevailing notion in the 1750s of state politics being the king's business alone.⁸⁹

Mme de Pompadour's influence extended beyond diplomacy and to other members of the court, who became known as her "creatures". One of Pompadour's creatures was the Comte de Clermont, a Prince of the Blood whose career originally lay in the Church. Two images in the *Livre de caricatures* comment on the Comte's controversial elevation to Commander-in-Chief of the French army in Bohemia during the Seven Years' War. This elevation appears to have been associated with Pompadour's influence, as in 'L'église est prevoyant' (fig.2.21) a woman leads a man off the page, presumably to the battlefield. The man's wooden pattens and fool's hat certainly do not encapsulate the traditional image of a knight, suggesting scepticism about Clermont's appointment so high up in the army's ranks.⁹⁰ The connection between Clermont and the king's mistress was also expressed in a contemporary ballad, which commented on Clermont's appointment: 'You will command the army, brave Clermont, you have good reputation, a very great name. But you must please Pompadour!'⁹¹ These lyrics express a similar attitude which Saint-Aubin reiterates in his many images of Madame de Pompadour, namely that her will had become law in France, and that her "creatures" could succeed only if they pleased her.

The second image (fig.2.22) which comments on Clermont's appointment is significant because it clearly demonstrates a connection between the Saint-Aubin *Livre de*

⁸⁹ Keith Michael Baker, 'Politics and Public Opinion Under the Old Regime: Some Reflections,' in Jack Censer and Jeremy Popkin (eds.), *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France* (London, 1987), p. 210.

⁹⁰ Edmond Barbier voiced scepticism of Clermont's promotion. Barbier, *Chronique de la Régence et du Règne de Louis XV (1718–1763)*, (Paris, 1857), vol.7, p. 4.

⁹¹ Raunié, *Chansonnier Historique*, vol.7, pp. 291-2.

Caricatures and popular culture. The image's title 'Moitié plumet, moitié rabat', is identical to the opening lines of a ballad which can be dated to 1758, the year in which Clermont was appointed General.⁹² The ballad attacks Clermont's failure as an abbot and as an educated gentleman, and it casts doubt on his martial abilities. The ballad concludes that Clermont is nothing more than an "august title" with no other commendations to his name or character. Just as the ballad highlights Clermont's unusual "career", Saint-Aubin's print similarly comments on the abbé's suitability for the role of general by depicting him in court clothing, wearing half a bishop's hat and holding both a martial baton and a bishop's crozier. This bizarre combination of social roles is explained by the ghostly and uncoloured outline of a woman who grasps the Comte's crozier and appears to whisper in his ear. This image suggests Pompadour's incredible control over Princes of the blood, princes of the Church *and* the French army; it appears that there is no area of French political life that she does not have access to. That a woman from outside the Second Estate was capable of exerting such influence over state and Court politics was evidently an unusual occurrence, one which we can see inspired Saint-Aubin on numerous occasions. This view of Mme de Pompadour was no doubt encouraged by her noble rivals at court, but that it filtered down into private works like Saint-Aubin's caricatures, and public discourse such as ballads, emphasises the mobility of political information and gossip in ancien régime France.

Marie-Antoinette- the "evil" queen of France

The French notion of female influence escaping its traditional bounds continued long after the death of Mme de Pompadour in 1764. Louis XV's last *maîtresse-en-titre* Mme du Barry was also deeply entangled in court politics during her short tenure, but she does not appear to

⁹² Raunié, *Chansonnier Historique*, vol.7, p. 299.

have inspired Saint-Aubin as did her predecessor, nor are there any extant caricatures of her.⁹³ The age of royal mistresses ended with the ascension of Louis XVI in 1774; in stark contrast to his grandfather, Louis XVI was known to be faithful to his wife, Marie-Antoinette.⁹⁴ According to the *Mémoires Secrets*, the mere sight of the King speaking with a beautiful young woman at dinner reportedly distressed “good patriots” who recalled Louis XV’s lascivious ways.⁹⁵ Given the association of the *maîtresse-en-titre* as a woman who interfered in court politics, this concern is unsurprising. However, Louis XVI’s domestic fidelity did not bolster his popular reputation quite as much as the *Mémoires Secrets*’s dramatic anecdote would have one believe. As the court was devoid of a powerful female figure who could offer patronage to courtiers in need, a role typically adopted by the *maîtresse-en-titre*, attention naturally turned to Marie-Antoinette. Unfortunately for aspirant courtiers, the Queen had a controversial habit of limiting her personal and financial favours to a small group of friends, many of whom were not considered to be of the highest rank of the nobility.⁹⁶

Daniel Wick has argued that Marie-Antoinette’s favour towards newer nobles resulted in the circulation of derogatory pamphlets and songs targeting the Queen, most likely at the behest of the court grandes.⁹⁷ Simon Burrows, on the other hand, attributes a great deal of this material to the coterie of the Comte de Provence, Louis XVI’s brother and heir until the birth of the Dauphin in 1781.⁹⁸ Regardless of which noble clique financed or encouraged pamphlets against the Queen, it is evident from examining Revolutionary caricatures that

⁹³ Charles Théveneau de Morande frequently discussed Du Barry in his *Le Gazetier Cuirassé: ou Anecdotes Scandaleuses de la Cour de France*, (London, 1772).

⁹⁴ Merrick, ‘Sexual Politics’, p. 81.

⁹⁵ Mairobot and d’Angerville, *Mémoires Secrets*, vol.4, p. 289.

⁹⁶ Daniel Wick, ‘The Court Nobility and the French Revolution: the Example of the Society of Thirty’, in Peter Jones (ed.), *The French Revolution in Social and Political Perspective* (London, 1996), p. 220.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁹⁸ Burrows, *Blackmail, Scandal, and Revolution*, p. 70.

these pamphlets had a significant impact on popular discourse of Marie-Antoinette and her political role for many years.

The censorship of ancien régime France may not have been able to stifle these whisperings completely, but there are certainly no satirical prints of the queen which can be dated before 1789 with any certainty. Nonetheless, it appears that revolutionary caricatures “inherited” the subversive material of clandestine pamphlets in the 1780s, thus creating a continuous link between satirical works of the ancien régime and those of the revolution.⁹⁹ Certainly, many revolutionary prints of Marie-Antoinette focus on her political machinations, perhaps indicating a connection to the *libelles* attacking her unjust favouritism at Court in the 1780s. According to Lynn Hunt, the queen’s role as a highly visible woman participating in the public sphere ignited fears about the interference of women in politics.¹⁰⁰ But, as demonstrated here, this concern had already been expressed in satirical songs and clandestine images of Mme de Pompadour several decades prior.

Marie-Antoinette’s real move into active political meddling in 1787 coincided with fears of a secret “Austrian committee”.¹⁰¹ In a remarkable move, the Queen oversaw the implementation of her “candidate” Brienne to the position of Principal minister in spite of the King’s reluctance. Her subsequent attendance at a meeting of the Conseil d’Etat in 1788 appears to have captured the imagination of caricaturists, one of whom shortly after issued a print entitled ‘La reine donne le serment de l’ordre a ses courtisans dans son conseil d’etat’ (fig.2.23). In this image, it is the queen who gives a rousing speech to *her* courtiers at *her* state council. The Queen’s prominence in the image- dressed in her characteristic finery and grand hairstyle- create the illusion that France is ruled by Queen Marie-Antoinette, not by her

⁹⁹ Antoine de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire* (Paris, 1988), p. 40.

¹⁰⁰ Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (London, 1992), p. 90.

¹⁰¹ Thomas E. Kaiser, ‘Who’s Afraid of Marie-Antoinette? Diplomacy, Austrophobia and the Queen,’ *French History*, 14:3 (2000), p. 263.

husband, Louis XVI. This print unequivocally places French political life in the hands of a woman and in doing so it expands upon the anxieties expressed in earlier critiques of Mme de Pompadour's unusual and unnatural political power. Of course, an image depicting this topsy-turvy world where women rule must necessarily encourage other satirists to suggest the methods by which these women have come to possess such power. Also issued in 1789 by an anonymous artist, 'Sois satisfaite il va rejoindre Maurepas' (fig.2.24) suggests that Marie-Antoinette was responsible for the poisoning of the Comte de Maurepas, one of her greatest political enemies at Court. Accusations of poisoning were part of a larger smear campaign which also accused Marie-Antoinette of siphoning off French funds for her Austrian relatives, as well as sharing delicate diplomatic information with her brother, the Holy Roman Emperor.¹⁰²

Much like Mme de Pompadour, criticisms of Marie-Antoinette's political involvement focussed on her ability to manipulate the King to her own ends, a concept which highlighted the king's weakness and inability to rule alone. Perhaps the greatest event that illustrated this manipulative ability was the Flight to Varennes; although the king was partially blamed for the Flight, images of him as a child emphasised Marie-Antoinette's leading role in the escape attempt. Three rather similar images emerged in June 1791, all by anonymous artists, and all depicting the queen leading or even carrying the King towards the Austrian border. In (fig.2.25) Marie-Antoinette is aided by a female demon who pushes the blind King to follow his wife's encouragements. 'Fuite du roi' (fig.2.26) emphasises Marie-Antoinette's Austrian heritage using a large black eagle which swoops down upon the fleeing royal family. In 'Enjambée de la sainte famille' (fig.2.27) the Queen has become gigantic in form, so large that she can carry her husband and children on her back as she steps between the Tuileries Palace and Montmédy. This image is particularly detailed: not only does the

¹⁰² Kaiser, 'Who's Afraid of Marie-Antoinette?', p. 270.

queen brandish a sceptre as she makes her inhuman “leap” across the void, but the key players in the notorious Diamond Necklace Affair stand beneath her billowing skirts, a reminder of her past “transgressions.”¹⁰³

In ancien régime France, the king embodied the state, and the idea of the king as a figure who embodied the French nation endured in the early years of the Revolution. This ideology therefore explains how popular discourse of the Queen’s dominance over her husband was extended to represent her dominance over the entire kingdom. One anonymous print expresses this contemporary anxiety about the position of the queen in the ‘new’ political set up of revolutionary France: ‘Un peuple est sans honneur et mérite ses chaînes, quand il baisse le front sous le sceptre des reines’ (fig.2.28). Produced in 1791, it is possible that this print is an example of widespread contemporary belief that the Flight to Varennes was the queen’s plot.¹⁰⁴ This image is quite different to the others examined, as it was not only commissioned as a frontispiece for a political pamphlet, but it also does not attempt to portray Marie-Antoinette individually. Rather, the image attacks the stereotype of dangerous queens who seize power through violence and sexual manipulation, a trope which endured in French history from the early modern era.¹⁰⁵ The queen in the image is shown to be half serpent, suggesting the unnatural rule of queens, an idea reiterated by the sight of the queen stabbing her husband whilst he sits on the throne. This image connects to Marisa Linton’s argument that Marie-Antoinette combined in the minds of the French people ‘the political power of a queen with the sexual power of a mistress’; in this image, the queen possesses

¹⁰³ The Diamond Necklace Affair and its impact on the royal family’s popularity has provoked debate among historians. Simon Burrows recently demonstrated that pamphlets addressing the ‘affair’ were not published until after the outbreak of revolution in 1789. See Burrows, *Blackmail, Scandal, and Revolution: London’s French Libellistes, 1758-92* (Manchester, 2006).

¹⁰⁴ In fact, the idea was formed and executed by Louis XVI and the Baron de Breteuil. See Munro Price, *The Fall of the French monarchy: Louis XVI, Marie-Antoinette and the Baron de Breteuil* (London, 2002).

¹⁰⁵ The pamphlet to which the image belonged was Louise-Félicité Guinement de Keralio Robert, *Les Crimes des Reines de France depuis le Commencement de la Monarchie jusqu’a Marie-Antoinette* (Paris, 1791), an early history of the queens of France.

both kinds of power, to the detriment of the people.¹⁰⁶ Although the image is a comment on *all* queens who overstep their traditional bounds, it is likely that Marie-Antoinette's controversial reputation specifically encouraged the artist to create this image in 1791.

Similarly to images of Mme de Pompadour, these revolutionary prints which attacked Marie-Antoinette were very clear in their expression of a woman overruling the sovereign, often to the serious detriment of the French people. This motif appears in prints from the ancien régime and well into the Revolution, demonstrating a connection between pre-revolutionary and revolutionary satirical art. Popular discourse and visual depictions of Mme de Pompadour and Marie-Antoinette also highlight how court intrigues and rivalries could filter down to those outside elite circles, creating a sense of celebrity which opened up the closed world of the court to the wider French public. Satirical prints of Mme de Pompadour and Marie-Antoinette not only highlight contemporary concerns about powerful females, but they also underline an enduring, popular desire to place greater blame on the king's female companions than on the king himself.

Augusta, Dowager Princess of Wales- a political love affair

The prevalence of satirical images targeting the political influence of women at the Court of Versailles does not have a direct counterpoint in eighteenth-century Britain. To begin with, the British 'Court' was not comparable in size to Versailles, nor indeed was it viewed as a hub of cultural distinction as was the French court.¹⁰⁷ The difference between women at the French court and women at the British court was acknowledged by contemporaries, and a strong stereotype in Britain held that Frenchmen had been 'feminised' by their overbearing

¹⁰⁶ Linton, 'Virtue Rewarded?', p. 39.

¹⁰⁷ Colley, *Britons*, p. 203.

mistresses and salon hostesses.¹⁰⁸ This is not to suggest that female members of the British royal family escaped the notice of caricaturists; George III's mother, the Dowager Princess of Wales, appeared in dozens of prints published in the 1760s that suggested she enjoyed an intimate relationship with the First Minister, the Earl of Bute. Although the veracity of claims about the relationship between Bute and Princess Augusta has divided historians, rumours of a sexual relationship can be traced to 1755.¹⁰⁹ However, the pair's noticeably warm relationship in 1755 was likely a result of Augusta's secret appointment of Bute as tutor to her son, the future George III. Although this gossip originated in court circles, it eventually spread to wider London society, and emerged in satirical prints at the beginning of George III's reign. Bute's appointment as Prime Minister in 1762 provoked a public discourse about his alleged relationship with Princess Augusta, as prints such as 'The Wanton Widow' (fig.2.29) and 'The Loaded Boot' (fig.2.30) both published in 1762, reveal.

This motif endured for several years, as another satirical image, 'You have him ma'am, in the right Kew' (fig.2.31) published in 1768, combines the Dowager Princess's illicit affair with political meddling, as she is shown leading her blindfolded son the King by his nose whilst her lover watches on approvingly. Satirical prints of Bute and Augusta can be read as 'implicit attacks' on George III, and this particular image appears to show the extent to which caricaturists were willing to critique the king at this point in his reign.¹¹⁰ Indeed, this image is not dissimilar to the prints published of Louis XVI of France in 1791, which suggested that he had been tricked into a political quagmire by his wife; in both cases, the king is portrayed as an unwitting and foolish victim of untrustworthy individuals. The Bute-Augusta images also make an interesting contrast with the contemporary claims about Mme

¹⁰⁸ Moores, *Representations of the French*, p. 177.

¹⁰⁹ John Bullion, 'The Origins and Significance of Gossip about Princess Augusta and Lord Bute, 1755-1756', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 21 (1992), p. 250.

¹¹⁰ Carretta, *George III and the Satirists*, p. 64.

de Pompadour which were expressed in popular discourse in France. Augusta was evidently considered to inhabit a position of some power, as the mother of the king, but these prints appear to suggest that Bute is actually the influential individual in this situation. Rather than being portrayed as a woman who exerted too much influence over the king, British caricaturists seem to have used Augusta as a means to highlight the moral corruption and ambition of her alleged lover, the Scottish Earl of Bute.¹¹¹

Queen Charlotte- queen consort or queen regent?

George III's wife, Queen Charlotte, also appeared in many satirical prints, most of which focussed on her alleged miserliness and love of money.¹¹² Prior to 1788, prints of Queen Charlotte rarely hinted at any kind of political interference, but she did feature alongside her husband in several Farmer George images. In October 1788, the *Public Advertiser* criticised various contemporary European queens for meddling in politics, before declaring 'our Queen is contented with the humble yet substantial virtues of domestic life, and was never known to interfere in matters of State.'¹¹³ This depoliticised view of Charlotte changed dramatically during the Regency Crisis of 1788-9. As George III was judged incapable of ruling during his first bout of madness in 1788, political debate raged over how the Regency should be apportioned. The Whigs supported their close friend the Prince of Wales, but he was ultimately granted only temporary executive power. In a move that departed from traditional expectations, the Queen was awarded control of the privy purse and the royal household, including the person of the King himself.¹¹⁴ Certain portions of the press

¹¹¹ Linda Colley sees contemporary focus on Bute and Augusta as not only concern about immorality, but also about the role of a Scot in the royal family. Colley, *Britons*, p. 123.

¹¹² These prints are analysed in Chapter Three.

¹¹³ *Public Advertiser*, London, 22 October 1788.

¹¹⁴ M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature: a Study of Opinion and Propaganda* (Oxford, 1959), vol.2, p. 199.

responded to this alleged injustice with vigour. On 19 January 1789, following the passing of the Regency Bill, the *Morning Herald* argued that it allowed the queen responsibilities and powers beyond what she was due.¹¹⁵

It was not only newspapers which questioned this distribution of power; MP Edmund Burke expressed his unease at the Queen possessing the ability to manage the King's household and the privy purse.¹¹⁶ Caricaturists were also quick to attack the influence accorded to the Queen by Prime Minister Pitt. One of the earliest images addressing this alliance of queen and minister appeared on 20 December 1788, at the very beginning of debates on the powers of the Regent. In 'The Prospect Before Us' (fig.2.32), the Queen is shown stepping on a banner decorated with the Prince of Wales's seal, a sign of maternal betrayal and the usurpation of the heir to the throne. Leading the queen is her lady-in-waiting Mrs Schwellenberg, who holds the mace and purse of the Lord Chancellor. Prime Minister Pitt follows behind the Queen, seemingly holding onto children's leading strings which attach to the queen's gown. The half-crowns floating above the queen's and Pitt's heads emphasise their shared plot for power, but the fact that the queen is being led by her German lady-in-waiting and guided by Pitt could suggest that the caricaturist was willing to acknowledge that the queen may have been misled by these untrustworthy advisors.

The Regency scandal was again analysed in 'Wierd Sisters' (fig.2.33), as James Gillray portrayed politicians Pitt, Henry Dundas and Edward Thurlow watching with interest as the moon rises. The moon's two faces are George III, sleeping and in shade, and Queen Charlotte, who smiles as the light shines upon her. This image literally depicts the waning of George III's power and the 'waxing' of the queen's, a controversial concept. Whether or not Queen Charlotte relished her enhanced influence remains unknown, but the popular response

¹¹⁵ *Morning Herald*, London, 19 January 1789.

¹¹⁶ *The Times*, London, 7 February 1789.

to her appointment suggests a deep uneasiness at the notion of a queen consort exercising any kind of control in British life. Although Charlotte was largely praised during her reign as a humble, dutiful wife and supporter of British industry, it is evident that societal expectations circumscribed her place in the “public sphere” and any attempt to venture beyond that boundary was quickly attacked by the press and caricaturists.¹¹⁷

In spite of the turbulent press coverage of the Regency Bill, which evidently brought to the fore concerns about the political power of an elite woman, Queen Charlotte was not repeatedly attacked for political interference during her tenure as queen consort. Indeed, the queen was often contrasted with fashionable Whig ladies like the Duchess of Devonshire; where the queen was usually depicted as ‘a superb maternal model’, individuals like Devonshire were considered to be too absorbed in fashion, society, and politics to fulfil their “duty” as wives and mothers.¹¹⁸ However, a eulogy written on Queen Charlotte’s death undermined this optimistic view of her image as a retiring queen, as it voiced scepticism at the suggestion that she did not interfere in politics, something ‘refuted not only by all probability, but by what politicians themselves have shewn.’¹¹⁹ It seems that, although the dramatic Regency crisis was the only event which inspired caricaturists to criticise the queen’s involvement in politics directly, she was nonetheless known to exert her influence behind the scenes in a manner which invited censure.

¹¹⁷ Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (2nd ed., Oxford, 1998), p. 582.

¹¹⁸ McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze*, p. 198. For a study of the Duchess of Devonshire’s political involvement, see Amelia Rauser, ‘The Butcher-Kissing Duchess of Devonshire: Between Caricature and Allegory in 1784’, in *Eighteenth-century Studies*, 36:1 (Fall, 2002), pp. 23-46.

¹¹⁹ *The Examiner*, London, 22 November 1818.

Summary of Part Two

Caricatures of politically influential elite women in Britain and France shared several similar attributes. As the eighteenth-century political sphere relegated these women to a secondary place behind their royal partners or sons, caricatures commenting on their political involvement were largely negative, couched in terms of sexual immorality or manipulation, and a means of directing sensitive political criticism away from sovereigns. Despite the fact that George III, Louis XV, and Louis XVI were all criticised for their own failings in popular discourse, it seems that satirical artists also looked to place blame for political crises on other individuals close to the throne. However, these royal women did not only act as shields for the sovereign in public discourse; as highly visible members of elite society, these women naturally experienced the same burgeoning fame culture as did their kings. Significantly, historiography has shown that these four women *were* involved to some extent in the political scandals in which they were implicated by public discourse, although caricatures did not hesitate to take liberties with the truth of a situation if it did not suit their own agenda or that of their commissioners. The caricatures examined in this section therefore underline the extent of state politics moving via royal courts into the public sphere, a movement which demonstrates the depth of popular interest in political scandals and their key players.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how caricaturists responded to various aspects of the monarchical political sphere which they deemed unacceptable, unusual, or entertaining: tyrannical, neglectful, or laughable kings, and royal women with political power that defied contemporary gender roles. This method of criticising the ruling elite is an expression of the public sphere at work, as it is often possible to trace the spread of political information from

royal courts to popular urban discourse. The caricatures examined in this chapter also emphasise the growing culture of fame in the latter half of the eighteenth century, a culture which encompassed the royal families of France and Britain.

Although France was an absolute monarchy until 1789, individuals like Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin were carefully watching and dissecting the development of important political events and changes to the key players at Versailles long before the Revolution. With the heralding of the Revolution, politics became more open and available to the public of France than ever before, and the prints attacking Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette demonstrate how the royal family fell under increasing popular scrutiny as ideas of a republic gained traction. In Britain, despite the vaunted constitution, most people were still unenfranchised, and political power resided in a narrow group of privileged individuals over which the monarch retained significant influence.¹²⁰ Popular discourse on the British monarchy, like that of France, fluctuated over time, but despite a rocky beginning to his reign, George III appears to have emerged as a generally sympathetic figure in caricatures of the 1780s and 1790s. Prints targeting his wife and mother underline the similarities between French and British popular discourse of the period, which depicted influential women as a negative force in politics and also as a means of critiquing the monarch indirectly.

The images examined in this chapter demonstrate a significant public interest in the political spheres of both France and Britain throughout the eighteenth century, and caricaturists worked hard to cater to this consumer market. Although political circumstances in both nations varied during the era in question, the aspects of the body politic which caricaturists chose to focus on is revealing: the influence that women connected to Kings could exert in the political sphere, and the unedifying concept of an incompetent ruler or one

¹²⁰ O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 126.

who could easily become tyrannical if left unchecked by other members of the body politic. The institution of monarchy garnered significant popular attention in France and Britain in the eighteenth century because it remained at the centre of the political stage in an era of growing fame culture.

Chapter 3- The Elite Unmasked

Introduction

We are in the middle of a satirical song epidemic. They have made some up about everyone at court, men and women alike; French license has even extended to the king. I myself have not been spared. Although this country is fond enough of malice, the songs are so flat and in such bad taste that they are successful neither with the public nor high society.¹

Despite the strength of censorship in eighteenth-century France, this excerpt from one of Queen Marie-Antoinette's letters to her mother in 1775 illustrates that a strong culture of satire existed both at the Court of Versailles and beyond, among 'the public.' Although Marie-Antoinette assures her mother that the satirical songs are 'flat' rather than malicious, she highlights their pervasive subject matter: not even the King himself is spared in this outburst of satirical amusement. The songs to which the Queen refers in this private letter were created by courtiers, members of the French nobility who prized their ability to turn a "bon mot" in order to entertain other people living at the Palace.² This position of physical closeness to the King granted the nobility an opportunity to mock their sovereign, an opportunity that would have been branded *lèse-majesté* in a member of the Third Estate.³ Despite the threat of legal repercussions, however, non-elite members of both French and British society in the eighteenth century participated in a culture of satire which spanned music, literature, and images.

¹ Alfred Ritter von Arneth (ed.), *Marie-Antoinette: Correspondance Secrète Entre Marie-Thérèse et le Comte Mercy-Argenteau avec les Lettres de Marie-Thérèse et de Marie-Antoinette* (Paris, 1875), vol.2, p. 404.

² Julian Swann, 'Politics and Religion', in Colin Jones, Juliet Carey, and Emily Richardson (eds.) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 2012), p. 150.

³ Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-century France* (Cambridge, 1994).

The French satirical prints examined in this chapter, and in the thesis at large, were not created by privileged members of society. The Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures*, the only extant collection of ancien régime caricatures, was created by an educated member of the Third Estate for his own amusement and the entertainment of close family and friends. Although some of the satirical prints of the French Revolution may have been influenced by rumours and literary attacks germinated at Versailles, the prints were made by members of the Third Estate for the Third Estate.⁴ While historians of British caricatures have argued that the socio-political elite were active participants in the print trade, both providing commissions and acting as customers, the vast majority of British prints in the period were created by artists, not noblemen, for whom the act of caricaturing was seen to be unfair and in bad taste.⁵

The involvement of socio-political elites in the production of satirical prints remains uncertain, but it is evident that the elite were themselves very popular as topics in this artform in the eighteenth century. In their representations of the social and political elite, it can be argued that satirical prints essentially created an alternate visual identity for the elite in both France and Britain, sometimes with the assistance of members of that social group, and sometimes without their participation. This chapter argues that, by visually presenting the private lives of the socio-political elite to the inquisitive eyes of those within and without their social group, caricatures purported to reveal the true nature of members of this social group. Where the previous chapter examined only individuals closely related to the monarchy, this chapter considers depictions of both royal individuals and nobles, as caricatures depicting the private lives of the elite were motivated more by ideas of notoriety

⁴ Lynn Hunt 'Engraving the Republic', *History Today* 30 (1980), p. 14.

⁵ Dominic Hardy, 'Caricature on the Edge of Empire: George Townshend in Quebec,' in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 15. See John Richard Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints 1740-1832* (London, 2015), and Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-century London* (London, 2006).

and scandal than simply political power. By focussing on how and why caricaturists frequently represented elites in the eighteenth century, this chapter contributes to an overlooked aspect of French and British historiography of the eighteenth century: that of contemporary attitudes towards the monarchy and nobility as social groups and individuals.⁶

The first section of this chapter considers how satirical prints and texts raised the concept of the socio-political elite's purpose. In France, the traditional image of the noble warrior and feudal lord endured until the early years of the Revolution, and individuals deemed to have fallen short of their societal purpose were attacked by satirical writers and, occasionally, by other members of the Second Estate. The French royal family, too, were expected to behave in certain ways, and when they did not uphold the regal image, they were prone to attack from the nobility as well as the grub street writers. In Britain, the elite were deeply entwined with the royal family, but divisions in parliament often coloured the content of satirical prints. Nonetheless, royal and noble excesses and misdemeanours were frequently laid bare by caricaturists who were largely undaunted by libel laws. This section contributes to historiography which argues that discontentment with the nobility appeared increasingly in public discourse from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, as caricatures demonstrate a consistent, cross-Channel discussion about the merits and failures of the socio-political elite.⁷

The second section looks to those images and texts which claimed to divulge the intimate details of the elite's private lives: marital problems, family life, and the idiosyncrasies of individuals. British prints were especially voyeuristic; not even royal

⁶ Amanda Goodrich highlights a lack of studies into representations of the nobility in eighteenth-century Britain. Goodrich, *Debating England's Aristocracy in the 1790s: Pamphlets, Polemics and Political Ideas* (Woodbridge, 2005). Mita Choudhury argues that a social interpretation of the French Revolution has discouraged in-depth analysis of the nobility and their representations: Choudhury, 'Women, Gender, and the Image of the Eighteenth-century Aristocracy', in Jay M. Smith (ed.), *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches* (Pennsylvania, 2006), p. 170.

⁷ For Britain, see Goodrich, *Debating England's Aristocracy*, and Donna T. Andrew, 'Cultural Skirmishes in 18th Century England: the Attack on Aristocratic Vice', *History Compass*, 12:8 (2014), pp. 664-71. For France, see John Shovlin, 'Toward a Reinterpretation of Revolutionary Antinobility: the Political Economy of Honour in the Old Regime', in *Journal of Modern History*, 72:1 (2000), pp. 35-66.

princes were spared the indignity of being drawn *in flagrante delicto*, and celebrity culture was crafted by the caricaturist's pen. In ancien régime France, the intimate details of the elite were frequently divulged by cheap pamphlets such as the *Vie Privée de Louis XV* and the *Mémoires Secrets*, although the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures* does provide a visual dimension to this type of satire. During the Revolution, satirical prints purported to lift the curtain on royal and elite life, with often negative connotations. This section argues that, by revealing the intimate lives of political and social elites, caricaturists created a false sense of familiarity between the elite and those non-elites who viewed the prints, a familiarity which challenged contemporary distinctions between the classes. Prints of this nature may have served to make the individuals depicted more sympathetic to some viewers, while others likely invoked condemnation, a phenomenon influenced by the cultural moment of a print's production.

Section three analyses satirical works which claimed to reveal the vices of the elite as a social group. From ostentatious fashion to greedy money-grabbing, the socio-political elite in both nations were consistently tarred with the brush of vice by satirical artists. This section aims to not only highlight the prevalence of images like this, but also to query their intended function and their impact on popular perceptions of the elite. It is too simple to argue that all images of this nature were intended to morally condemn the elite, as we know that the middling and lower sorts were quite capable of similar 'sins.' However, the ability of the elite to set an example for those of a lower social standing was a frequent reproach of morality literature in the period, and many prints reflect this concern about the 'spread' of elite delinquency, even as they display it before the public.⁸

⁸ Robert Hole points to morality tracts by writers such as Hannah More. Hole, 'British Counter-revolutionary Popular Propaganda in the 1790s', Colin Jones (ed.), *Britain and Revolutionary France: Conflict, Subversion and Propaganda* (Exeter, 1983), pp. 67-8.

In all of these sections, this chapter emphasises how caricatures functioned to make the elite quite literally visible to society at large, as well as considering the way this visibility manifested and for what purposes. The attitudes towards the elite which caricatures expressed vary greatly in tone, from moralistic censure to mockery, dependent upon the historical moment of a print's production and the individuals depicted. By examining caricatures which purported to reveal the true nature of the socio-political elite to the urban public, this chapter will consider the extent to which caricatures shaped or reflected popular urban attitudes towards the elite. Among historians of eighteenth-century British and French history who examine perceptions of the elite, there is a tendency to focus on the last ten to twelve years of the decade, when the events of the French Revolution most noticeably challenged the position of nobility in European society.⁹ This chapter analyses a wider sample of popular discourse on the elite, including prints produced across the five decades between 1740 and 1795 to offer a more comprehensive consideration of visual and popular representations of the monarchy and nobility.

The notion of fame culture and caricatures was examined in relation to the institution of monarchy in the previous chapter. This chapter adds to studies of celebrity culture in the eighteenth century by asserting that caricatures functioned as a medium of this culture in their documentation of the social elite. The focal point occupied by the social elite of France and Britain in satirical prints reveals a social or "class" aspect of celebrity culture: while artists, writers and actors could become celebrities, caricatures reveal a deep interest in aristocratic

⁹ For example, Jay Smith, argues that Revolutionary discontent with the nobility emerged as a result of the political events of 1788, not before this period. Smith, 'Introduction: Nobility After Revisionism', in Jay M. Smith (ed.), *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches* (Pennsylvania, 2006), pp. 1-18. Amanda Goodrich similarly focuses her study on attitudes towards British nobles within the period 1790-1800. Goodrich, *Debating England's Aristocracy*. Linda Colley also argues that public criticism of the British elite was exceptionally rare prior to the 1780s. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (5th ed., London, 2009), p. 154.

and noble scandal which has not been thoroughly considered in celebrity culture studies.¹⁰ Scholars of French caricatures have emphasised the power of this medium to represent the social and political elite in a dangerous fashion during the Revolution.¹¹ Analysing caricatures from ancien régime and revolutionary France in addition to caricatures from Britain c.1740-1795, this chapter argues that an emergent “celebrity” culture lowered society’s elites to the discerning and potentially critical gaze of the middling and lower sorts. By distorting images of the socio-political elite, caricatures, in concert with other forms of popular discourse, chipped away at the traditional deference to which the monarchy and nobility were accustomed.

Elite identity in eighteenth-century France and Britain was asserted in a variety of ways, from liveried servants and carriages, to grand houses, and portraiture.¹² Spectacular costume and exorbitant expenditure were also distinctive markers of the socio-political elite in both France and Britain, and caricatures addressing these elite markers are examined here. The British and French elite chose to express themselves and their ideals in a variety of ways, but this chapter is specifically interested in how these ideals and representations were seized upon and, in many cases, manipulated by satirists.¹³ In other words, this chapter considers visual representations of the elite which were fashioned by non-elites, a perspective which reveals a different view of the monarchy and nobility than do official modes of representation. Satire of this kind is not only capable of manipulating identities, but also of

¹⁰ For studies on celebrity in relation to theatre and literature, see: Laura Engel, ‘Stage Beauties: Actresses and Celebrity Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century.’ *Literature Compass*, 13:12 (Dec., 2016), pp. 749-761; and Clara Tuite, *Lord Byron and Scandalous Celebrity* (Cambridge, 2015).

¹¹ Antoine de Baecque argues that visual representations of the elite allowed for the social group’s ultimate destruction. De Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire* (Paris, 1988), p. 41. See also, Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-century France* (London, 2001).

¹² William Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies in the Age of Revolution* (Oxford, 2009), p. 9. For an analysis of the role of portraiture in eighteenth-century Britain, see Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-century England* (London, 1993).

¹³ Recent historiographical studies of the French nobility include Mathieu Marraud, *La Noblesse de Paris au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris, 2000) and Jay M. Smith (ed.), *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches* (Pennsylvania, 2006).

forging them; where the elite attempted to forge their own identity and impress it upon the rest of society, satire could attempt to alter this identity, and in doing so encourage the formation of a conscious identity among ‘the people’ in opposition to that elite identity.¹⁴ An excellent example of this phenomenon is described by Chantal Thomas, as she elucidated the way in which French satirical writers invented a version of Marie-Antoinette that bore little resemblance to the woman herself. Although Marie-Antoinette paid little attention to public opinion, Thomas argued that the ‘caricatured double’ created by the enterprising pamphleteers came to represent the Queen in the public eye- ultimately with fatal consequences.¹⁵ It cannot be argued that all popular discourse was successful at shaping public opinion in this way, but the satirical prints and pamphlets examined in this chapter are united by their attempts to craft an identity for the elite, one which the elite as a whole may not have supported, appreciated, or even acknowledged.

Caricatures in particular provided an alternative view of the social and political elite, a view that could be mocking, censorious, or even aggressive. This expression of negativity towards the elite did not exist on paper alone in the eighteenth century: the British elite had to endure frequent outbursts and mockeries from the lower classes, while in ancien régime France, rural protests in the 1770s and 1780s, and popular discourse on seigneurial obligations encouraged anti-noble sentiments.¹⁶ The French elite, of course, came under greatest criticism during the Revolution, and historical scholarship has paid greater attention to attitudes towards the French nobility than to the British socio-political elite.¹⁷ Jay Smith

¹⁴ Mark Knights and Adam Morton, ‘Introduction’, in Mark Knights and Adam Morton, (eds.), *The Power of Laughter and Satire in Early Modern Britain: Political and Religious Culture, 1500-1820* (Woodbridge, 2017), p. 1.

¹⁵ Chantal Thomas, *La Reine Scélérate: Marie-Antoinette dans les Pamphlets* (Paris, 1989), p. 10.

¹⁶ Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997), p. 119. Paul R. Hanson, *Contesting the French Revolution* (Chichester, 2009), p. 28. James Goldsmith, *Lordship in France, 1500-1789* (New York, 2005), pp. 205-23.

¹⁷ For a recent study on the French nobility, see Chad Denton, *Decadence, Radicalism, and the Early Modern French Nobility: the Enlightened and Depraved* (London, 2017).

has argued that attacks on the elite during the French Revolution were not deeply-rooted, but rather a result of specific circumstances of the Revolution.¹⁸ At first glance, it could appear that anti-noble sentiment emerged only after 1788, but as shall be demonstrated in this chapter, satirists were slowly chipping away the gilded veneer of the elite long before the *Cahiers de Doléances* were released. Despite their careful self-fashioning and their desire to emphasise their separation from the rest of society, the elite in both France and Britain simply could not remove themselves from the piercing gaze of ‘the public’.

In Britain, satirical prints worked in concert with pamphlets and, to a slightly lesser extent, newspapers, to peel back the curtain on the real lives of the elite. In France, the exposition of the elite in prints did not take off until the Revolution, although the *Livre de Caricatures tant Bonnes que Mauvaises* remains an important exception to this rule. Despite the gap in French prints between 1774 and 1789 approximately, a thriving market of satirical literature has been examined by Robert Darnton in a number of publications.¹⁹ No amount of censorship appears to have been capable of stopping the thirst for information in French and British society. The starring role played by the elite in satirical works is significant; as satire provided a rare means for ‘the masses’ to engage in criticism of those who were financially and politically superior.²⁰

It would be going too far to suggest that all of the prints depicting the elite were intended to be condemnatory; some prints were clearly produced simply to induce benign laughter in viewers, whilst others may only have served to make the excesses of noble life seem more appealing to those on the outside.²¹ Caricatures were a visual mode of satire, and

¹⁸ Smith, ‘Nobility after Revisionism’, in Smith, *The French Nobility*, p. 2.

¹⁹ Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Harvard, 1982); Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York, 1996).

²⁰ Antoine de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire* (Paris, 1988), p. 27; Rosemary Baker, ‘Satirical Prints as a Source in English Social History’, *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 39:3 (Summer, 1982), p. 134.

²¹ Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, p. 146.

as such their function often echoed their literary counterparts.²² Satire has been identified by scholars as a key aspect of the formation of common identities in the eighteenth century, but the ability of satire to encourage reform has also been questioned in recent studies.²³

Particularly pertinent to this chapter is Mark Knights' argument that satire was a perfect mode for attacking corruption in the eighteenth century, as it allowed for the attack of individuals rather than simply systemic corruption.²⁴ Although Knights considers only literary satire, this chapter demonstrates that individualisation in caricatures could also act as a means to critique corruption or immorality among the elite.

As a mode of satire, caricature was capable of producing both laughter and moralistic censure; this duality of impact was dependent on the work of the caricaturist and the moment of a print's production. Due to a distinct lack of historical records addressing caricatures, it is impossible to argue categorically that viewers interpreted a caricature in a certain manner. This chapter rather balances analysis of caricatures of the elite between these two aspects of humour and censure. What is undeniable is the interest in elites as a social group and on an individual level; their private lives, extravagant behaviour, and immoral conduct consistently inspired caricaturists from the 1740s beyond the close of the eighteenth century.

In sum, caricatures created alternative representations of British and French elites which operated beyond the remit of elite individuals, and which challenged the lofty position of the nobility and monarchy in contemporary society. By depicting the private lives and

²² Andrew Bricker identifies a 'migration' of satire into visual media in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century. Bricker, 'After the Golden Age: Libel, Caricature, and the Deverbalization of Satire', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 51:3 (Spring, 2018), p. 306.

²³ Mark Knights and Adam Morton argue that satire was crucial to the formation of social identities in 'Introduction' in Mark Knights and Adam Morton (eds.), *The Power of Laughter and Satire in Early Modern Britain: Political and Religious Culture, 1500-1820* (Woodbridge, 2017), p. 1. Andrew Bricker casts doubt on the ability of satirical literature to encourage reform. See Bricker, "'Laughing a Folly Out of Countenance": Laughter and the Limits of Reform in Eighteenth-century Satire', in Knights, & Morton (eds.), *The Power of Laughter and Satire*, pp. 152–172.

²⁴ Mark Knights, "'Was a Laugh Treason": Corruption, Satire, Parody and the Press in Early Modern Britain,' in Knights and Morton, *The Power of Laughter and Satire*, p. 195.

immoral behaviours of elites in a visual format, caricatures allowed non-elites to view nobles and royal individuals in an unofficial and intimate capacity. As forms of satire, caricatures could possess tones of either moral censure or laughing mockery, and these differences in tone were often decided by the content of the print and the historical moment in which they were created. The caricatures examined in this chapter highlight the central cultural position which elites occupied in eighteenth-century Britain and France, and the ways in which emerging celebrity culture cemented this position.

Part One- Great Expectations

Introduction

From 1740 onwards, caricatures, in concert with pamphlets and ballads, encouraged popular discourse on the purpose of the socio-political elite of France and Britain. In both countries, the nobility were expected to fulfil specific roles, roles which were often rooted in historical tradition. In France, warfare was the special reserve of the monarch and his nobility, and this traditional view increasingly came into conflict with elite behaviour in the eighteenth century. In Britain, the onus on society's elite was political leadership and the upholding of the British constitution, and those who were seen to flaunt these expectations were roundly criticised by caricaturists. While British caricaturists tended to hold up individual members of the elite for censure, French popular discourse often discussed the merits and problems of the nobility as a social order; individualised critiques of noble conduct were quite unusual, both in the 1750s and 1760s, and during the Revolution.

By analysing caricatures, it becomes evident that the nobility were most critiqued for failing to meet traditional expectations, which varied between the two countries. Caricatures in this section range from 1740 to 1795, and across this period it is clear that certain aspects

of elite behaviour enjoyed particular attention at certain moments in time. For example, caricatures and pamphlets criticising the French nobility are clustered around the periods 1750-1760, and later, between 1788 and 1793 when the French Revolution increasingly attacked nobility as a social order. In Britain, criticisms of unconstitutional acts by noble ministers appeared consistently throughout 1740 and 1795, but the greatest volume of prints addressing these social discontents emerged during the political turmoil of the French Revolution, between 1790 and 1795. All of the caricatures in this section contributed to contemporary discourse on the place of the nobility in French and British society.

The French nobility- ideals and traditions

Satirical prints produced in eighteenth-century France and Britain form the core basis of inquiry in this thesis, but they were not the sole visual representation of the social elite in the era. On the contrary, wealthy members of society diligently utilised the talented portrait artists at their disposal to craft their own image of themselves. Art historians of the eighteenth century such as Amy Freund and Marcia Pointon have demonstrated the manner in which commissioned portraits could be utilised to cement an individual's position in society.²⁵ Freund in particular emphasised the extensive 'visual vocabularies' available to men purchasing portraits of themselves. For example, a portraiture style favoured by male nobles in France was one that emphasised the connection between nobility and martial service to the monarch; a battlefield might serve as a dramatic backdrop to the heroic individual, but interior images provided an opportunity to highlight the family's wealth and influence.²⁶ The rather more 'traditional' martial portraits also distinguish an aspect of French nobility which

²⁵ Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-century England* (1993).

²⁶ Amy Freund, 'Sexy Beasts: the Politics of Hunting Portraiture in Eighteenth-century France,' *Art History* (2019), p. 41.

surfaces in literature throughout the eighteenth century: nostalgia for the past. In *L'ami des hommes*, published in 1759, the marquis de Mirabeau instructed his readers to ignore the dazzle of the Court Grandes and instead think of the nobility as it had been in the past- a vital part of feudal society, wherein the nobleman fought for the King and also protected his serfs.²⁷

This clash between past ideals and present realities is central to the consideration of French satirical prints in this section. The eighteenth century saw a definitive shift in the French nobility, as the wealthier sort abandoned their country estates and moved to the Court or Paris to live a life of luxury and entertainment.²⁸ This alteration in the traditional makeup of the French nobility was highlighted by writers such as Alexandre Deleyre , who in 1774 argued that ‘nobility is nothing but an odious distinction when it is not founded on real services truly useful to the state, such as defending the nation against invasions and conquest’, services which Deleyre found lacking in the contemporary French nobility.²⁹ Deleyre was by no means alone in this view: since the 1750s, French writers and artists had been participating in an ongoing debate about the purpose of the nobility in France, a discussion that appeared in printed works, images, and other media.³⁰ Disgruntled sentiments towards the nobility arose again in the Cahiers de Doléances of 1789, when feudal rights were questioned because the holders did not fulfil the required military service.³¹ However, it would be incorrect to argue that *all* members of the Second Estate fell into the stereotype of Court Grande and absentee feudal lord; many members of the Second Estate used the Cahiers de Doléances to themselves call for reforms of the monarchy, the justice system, and the

²⁷ Victor de Riquetti, marquis de Mirabeau, *L'Ami des Hommes, ou Traité de la Population* (7 vols, Avignon, 1759), vol.1, pp. 69-79.

²⁸ Gail Bossenga, ‘A Divided Nobility: Status, Markets, and the Patrimonial State in the Old Regime’, in Jay M. Smith (ed.), *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches*, (Pennsylvania, 2006), p. 53.

²⁹ Alexandre Deleyre, *Tableau de l'Europe* (Amsterdam, 1774), p. 92.

³⁰ Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined: the Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-century France* (Ithaca, 2005), p. 104.

³¹ J.Q.C. Mackrell, *The Attack on 'Feudalism' in Eighteenth-century France* (London, 1973), p. 2.

army.³² In other words, despite frequent criticism of the nobility as an amorphous group, certain of its members were not behaving as contemporary literature portrayed them, but rather they were eager to reassert themselves as active participants in the political and social life of France. Many of the caricatures and pamphlets examined in this section were created by and for non-elite viewers, who were perhaps more eager to indulge in media which purposefully demonized the elite as morally corrupt and unworthy of their position in the Second Estate of French society.

The French nobility were under attack by writers as early as the 1750s, and they were also increasingly scrutinised at Court, as the requirements for presentation before the King became steeper and steeper between 1750 and 1789.³³ This courtly interest in the pedigree of noble families appears to have been mocked in a satirical image by Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin. In (fig.3.1), Saint-Aubin voices scepticism about the supposed purity of noble lineage in the French court when he imagines the family tree of a distinguished noble house. The lack of foliage suggests a failing family tree, but the true critique of the merits of noble genealogy is expressed by the objects decorating the tree. On the branches can be seen medals, ducal coronets and bishop's mitres: all marks of noble prestige and success. However, the shallow roots of the tree reveal the true origins of this ancient noble line, on the lower branches hang bags of money, while peasant clogs and turnips are hidden in the dirt. This image, like many satirical drawings, is not easy to interpret. It is possible that Saint-Aubin is mocking the pretensions of an ancient, established noble family, who with their success have forgotten the toil of their distant ancestors. The drawing may also be read as an attack on the purchase of ennobling offices which allowed wealthy individuals of the third

³² Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret, *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: from Feudalism to Enlightenment*, trans. William Doyle (Cambridge, 1985), p. 139. Nobles also sought to improve agriculture and industry in the period: see Peter Jones, *Agricultural Enlightenment: Knowledge, Technology, and Nature 1750-1840* (Oxford, 2016).

³³ Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon* (London, 2002), p. 252.

estate to buy their way into the nobility after a short period of carrying out ‘duties’ for the monarch, a controversial aspect of the nobility which was widely debated in the eighteenth century.³⁴ Regardless of its specific targets, the image certainly appears to express a certain scepticism about the nobility’s claims to superiority; as Saint-Aubin demonstrates, even the most successful of court *grandes* must have had peasant-stock somewhere in their family tree. Saint-Aubin obliterates any notion of a long genealogical history of martial valour in this view of the nobility; the base of all family trees begins with toil and peasant labour.

The ideal of the *noblesse militaire* also appeared in ballads in the 1750s, with one panegyric work from 1750 describing them as ‘defenders of the state’, whose ‘glory is their instinct.’³⁵ Mirroring contemporary discussions about the martial nature of the nobility, Saint-Aubin’s satirical images express his criticism of the nobility with regards to their military pretensions. In this, he was certainly not alone, as one of the most popular works decrying the waning military valour among the elite was written by a member of the Second Estate. The Chevalier d’Arcq was so disturbed by the notion of the French nobility engaging in commerce that he had published in 1756 *La Noblesse militaire, ou la patriot Française*, a pamphlet which reinforced the nobility’s duty to continue the martial legacy of their ancestors.³⁶ This pamphlet can be read as part of an attempt by the French nobility to redefine the functions of their social group as it came increasingly under attack by philosophes, historians, and lawyers.³⁷ Although none of these professions, Saint-Aubin appears to have been more than willing to weigh in on this debate- at least, in the relative privacy of his own sketchbook. Chapter Two explored how Saint-Aubin took aim at Louis XV’s public image as

³⁴ For more on ennobling offices in the ancien regime, see Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies*, and Guy Chaussinand-Nogaret, *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: from Feudalism to Enlightenment*, trans. William Doyle (Cambridge, 1985).

³⁵ Émile Raunié (ed.), *Chansonnier Historique du xviii Siecle*, (10 vols, Paris, 1879), vol. 7, pp. 173-4.

³⁶ Chevalier d’Arcq, *La Noblesse Militaire, ou la Patriot Francois* (Paris, 1756).

³⁷ Sarah Maza, ‘Luxury, Morality, and Social Change: Why There Was No Middle-class Consciousness in Prerevolutionary France,’ *Journal of Modern History*, 69:2 (June, 1997), pp. 199-229.

a warrior-king, but Saint-Aubin's commentary on France's martial exploits also extended to courtiers.

Many of Saint-Aubin's critiques of military individuals centre around the Seven Years' War and its disastrous outcome for France. A prime example is 'L'ane de Rosbach' (fig.3.2) which depicts the Prince de Soubise, a "creature" of Madame de Pompadour, as an ass. The French army's shocking defeat at Rosbach led to Soubise's dismissal, and Saint-Aubin is likely making a pointed remark about court nobles who unsuccessfully attempted to recapture the glory of their feudal ancestors. Not only is Soubise transmogrified into an ass, but his hooves are painted red, undoubtedly a reference to the glamorous, red-heeled shoes favoured by the elite as they walked the halls of Versailles.³⁸ The message in this image appears to be that the Court grandes of Versailles had departed so extensively from the traditional martial values of their noble ancestors that their interference in contemporary conflicts was deeply detrimental to the success of the French state.

Although historians of the French nobility have tended to focus on the years after 1788 as the greatest examples of anti-noble rhetoric, the images and texts examined here demonstrate that the French nobility was critiqued, discussed, and caricatured as early as the 1750s. While no evidence of published caricatures depicting the nobility appeared at this point in time, Saint-Aubin's private images demonstrate how caricatures could incorporate contemporary popular discourse. The position of the French nobility in the eighteenth century was being scrutinized by philosophes, popular ballads, caricatures, and nobles themselves. What each of these formats demonstrates is a concern about the contemporary role and

³⁸ Valerie Mainz, 'Gloire, Subversively', in Colin Jones, Juliet Carey, and Emily Richardson (eds.) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 2012), p. 173.

purpose of the nobility in French society, a concern which would periodically return to the fore well into the Revolution.³⁹

The British elite- enemies of the constitution?

It was not only the French nobility whose rights and functions were questioned or even mocked by wider society. Their British brethren were also under scrutiny by the press and by caricaturists, who did not hesitate to vocalise dissatisfaction with the country's elite.⁴⁰ A significant difference between the French and British elites must here be acknowledged: whereas members of the British nobility held political sway in Parliament and 'pocket boroughs', the French nobility of the eighteenth century enjoyed no such political institution.⁴¹ Yet, the political power of the British political elite did not deter caricaturists from targeting them, either as a social group or individually.⁴² British prints were mostly individual depictions of elites, with the political leaders of the Tories and Whigs garnering the most commentary from caricaturists determined to highlight unconstitutional behaviour.

An early example of popular discourse on British socio-political elites is the speech made by the twice Lord Mayor of London, William Beckford to the House of Commons in 1761. Highlighting his definition of the 'sense of the *people*', Beckford described the nobility thus: 'As to your nobility, about 1200 men of quality, what are they to the body of the nation? Why, Sir, they are subalterns, I say... They receive more from the public than they pay to it.'⁴³ This speech pre-dates the American Revolution by more than a decade, and the French Revolution by almost thirty years, yet Beckford's perspective on the makeup of British

³⁹ Chapter Four examines Revolutionary prints of the French nobility.

⁴⁰ Jeremy Black, *Culture in Eighteenth-century England: a Subject for Taste* (London, 2005), p. 80.

⁴¹ Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies*, p. 34.

⁴² Baker, 'Satirical Prints as a Source of English Social History', p. 134.

⁴³ London, British Museum, BM Add. MSS.38334, ff.29 seq. Speech by William Beckford in the House of Commons, 13 Nov. 1761.

society is distinctly radical. Of course, the speech of one highly influential and extremely wealthy MP cannot be said to represent a commonly-held view of society, but it nonetheless highlights the way in which the British nobility came under scrutiny from the middling sort. Satirical images played an important role in continuing this mockery and criticism of the elite in British society. The advent of the French Revolution saw this tradition take on new life as revolutionary ideals of equality spread across the Channel. Caricaturists leapt at the opportunity to highlight the financial and political transgressions of society's leaders, most of whom were of noble or genteel stock.⁴⁴

John Richard Moores has argued that British caricaturists often used the French nobility and monarchy as a means to express political anxieties about their British counterparts.⁴⁵ This was certainly the case, but caricaturists did not shy away from portraying the British elite themselves, and figures like Prime Minister William Pitt and opposition leader Charles James Fox became common currency in discussions of ministerial corruption from the 1780s onwards. One of the most frequent accusations laid against the two political leaders was their relationship with the Crown; the Whigs were critiqued for attempting to shear the monarchy of its constitutional role, whilst William Pitt and his supporters were accused of being too closely related with the king.⁴⁶

In 1783 and 1784, numerous prints emerged which accused the Whigs, and particularly their leader Charles James Fox, of behaving in a manner which threatened the British constitution. These prints were produced in response to the Foxite's short-lived role in power in 1783, a role which was rescinded after they failed to secure majorities in the House of Lords for their East India Bill. Although some popular discourse in defence of the East

⁴⁴ Patricia Phagan (ed.), *Thomas Rowlandson: Pleasures and Pursuits in Georgian England* (London, 2011), p. 12.

⁴⁵ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 211.

⁴⁶ Frank O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997), p. 216.

India Bill emerged, on the grounds that the crown and the East India company had acted unlawfully, caricatures overwhelmingly presented Fox and his supporters in a negative light.⁴⁷ Prints such as ‘Carlo Khan dethron'd or Billy's triumph’ (fig.3.3) and ‘The political balloon; or, the fall of East India stock.’ (fig.3.4) circulated in Britain, depicted the East India Bill as a politically provocative and avaricious scheme designed by the Whigs in order to undermine the prerogatives of the crown. The perceived attitude of the Whigs towards the royal prerogative, which was enshrined in the constitution, appeared in numerous caricatures in 1783 and 1784. In ‘State miners’ (fig.3.5) Fox and several of his fellow Whigs can be seen literally chipping away at the foundations of the monarchy. Another image produced in 1784 (fig.3.6) looked to Britain’s troubled past for inspiration, and drew parallels between Fox and the republican leader Oliver Cromwell. All of these images played upon contemporary concerns about the relationship between parliament and king, a delicate balance which determined the vaunted political stability of Britain.

The Whigs were not the only elite politicians who were scrutinised by caricaturists. William Pitt was one of the most caricatured figures in British caricature’s ‘golden age’, and one of his earliest appearances depicted him as a saviour of the British constitution. ‘In memory of Monday Decemr 17th 1783’ (fig.3.7) portrayed Pitt as a heroic figure vanquishing the ‘monstrous’ Whigs; Pitt’s weapons, a sword and a shield emblazoned with the British flag, hark back to historic images of the elite as warriors who defended Britain from external threats. In this image, Pitt defends the British constitution from an internal threat, the Whigs. Pitt’s role as hero was temporary, however, and the events of the French Revolution, combined with rising radicalism in Britain, led to popular discourse which questioned Pitt’s tyrannical behaviour. In ‘A bugaboo’ (fig.3.8), published in 1792, Richard Newton appears to echo a heroic model for Pitt, by depicting him with sword in hand. However, in this print, Pitt

⁴⁷ See for example, *Public Advertiser*, London, 28 Nov., 1783.

is sitting on the back of a greatly caricatured George III, who shouts incomprehensible slogans about treason and sedition at Pitt's encouragement. This print was one of dozens which responded to the royal proclamation issued in 1792 which greatly curbed social freedoms in Britain and threatened the burgeoning radical cause.⁴⁸ These challenges to personal freedoms do not appear to have slowed down caricaturists, as a letter from a loyalist informant in December 1792 bemoaned the 'scandalous and abominable representations' of the king, and concluded: 'I hope, therefore you will indict these Exciters to Rebellion...'⁴⁹ The more that elites like Pitt and George III challenged the constitutional rights of Britain, the greater was the response from caricaturists who sought to 'reveal' their tyrannical acts to the London public.

The juxtaposition of heroism and tyranny was again utilised in a caricature of Pitt published in 1795, when additional taxes were levied on the British people in order to fund the ongoing war with Revolutionary France. In 'The Modern Hercules' (fig.3.9), Pitt beats an overworked and overtaxed 'John Bull', the everyman figure who came to represent all British commoners in the 1790s. Pitt's club is labelled 'The Convention Bills', which referred to the 'Seditious Meetings Bill' and 'Treasonable Practice Bill', both of which severely curbed press and political freedoms in Britain by making any criticism of king or government treasonous.⁵⁰ In just over ten years, Pitt had changed from hero to oppressor, and caricaturists did not hesitate to highlight the injustices of his behaviour, even if to do so was to risk their own freedom. Although British popular discourse in the eighteenth century does not appear to have fixated on a historical or traditional view of the nobility as did French discourse in the period, it is evident that caricatures and newspapers in Britain were eager to underline the

⁴⁸ O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 245.

⁴⁹ London, British Museum. BM Addit MSS 16927, 'Original letters', Letter from J.Fanshaw, Chandos St., Cavendish Square, London, 7 December 1792, fol. 27

⁵⁰ John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide, 1793–1796* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 551–603.

expectations of conduct which followed those elite members of society whose lineage accorded them a prime position in the political makeup of the country. Pitt and Fox were evident favourites of the press and caricaturists; as rivals in the political realm, they stood in for the controversial or noteworthy acts of their political parties, which were constantly competing to defend the British constitution. When the political elite were deemed to have failed in this lofty role of defenders of the constitution, popular discourse in Britain was quick to censure them, often employing heroic and villainous motifs to classify their behaviour for viewers.

Summary of Part One

It is evident that the nobility of both nations was consistently discussed and critiqued in popular discourse from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, and as has been demonstrated, many of these discussions centred on the contributions which the contemporary elite made to British or French society. Caricatures, in concert with pamphlets and newspapers, allowed for the urban public to exert a critical gaze over the purpose and function of the nobility in contemporary society. The caricatures in this section deftly combine humour and censure, allowing viewers to view the alleged failures of the nobility with laughter or moralistic displeasure. It is clear that, whatever the response of viewers, these caricatures formed part of a wider discussion about the traditional position of elites in British and French society throughout the eighteenth century.

Part Two- Behind Closed Doors

This section examines personalised caricatures of the elite which focused on the private aspects of noble and royal life. In a recent work, John Barrell has argued that the

political strictures of Britain in the 1790s led to an increased exposition of private lives in contemporary newspapers, which tied private conduct with political stability or instability.⁵¹ However, the exposition of private lives of elite members of society had actually begun in Britain decades before the 1790s, and caricatures played a significant role in allowing a wide spectrum of British society to literally view elite life behind closed doors. In France, the *libelles* and *nouvelles a la main* which circulated in contravention of censorship laws provided a glimpse into the glittering and scandalous lives of the court grandes and royal family from as early as the 1740s. The revelations in these texts were often fuelled by court factions, which spread potentially damaging or embarrassing gossip into the capital. In the mid-eighteenth century, reputation was of exceptional importance to the French elite, and the works of clandestine pamphleteers undermined the separation between court and capital which had become a foundation of elite culture.⁵²

British caricatures also challenged the reputations of the social elite, yet, it has been argued that media such as scandal columns in periodicals like the *Tatler* and *Spectator* were widely accepted as the price of social notoriety.⁵³ Contrastingly, a recent study on scandals in British periodicals shows the extent to which public figures attacked the reputations of others, whilst often trying to defend their own: reputation evidently mattered to the social elite in Britain, as it did in France.⁵⁴ If those members of the elite burned by scandal were indeed content to disdain and ignore prints satirizing their behaviour, this did not mean that the rest of the public were similarly disinterested. From the middle of the century, British and French popular culture saw a significant growth of celebrity culture, which catered to an increasing interest in the private scandals of well-known and often influential individuals. This section

⁵¹ John Barrell, *The Spirit of Despotism: Invasions of Privacy in the 1790s* (Oxford, 2006).

⁵² Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 2009), p. 42.

⁵³ Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (London, 1996), p. 15; Julia Fawcett, *Spectacular Disappearances: Celebrity and Privacy, 1696-1801* (London, 2016), p. 9.

⁵⁴ Corinna Wagner, 'Press Scandal, Class and the Struggle for Cultural Authority in the 1790s', *Nineteenth Century Studies*, 22 (2008), p. 3.

examines caricatures which purported to lift the veil on the intimate lives of elites, particularly their marriages and family life. By visually depicting elites engaged in extra marital affairs, or living their daily lives, caricatures created a sense of familiarity between the viewer and the individuals depicted. In representing the elite in their own homes, caricatures and other forms of popular discourse created a market for scandal and moral censure which gave non-elites a chance to critically view their society's leaders in new ways.

Adultery and constancy- elite British marriages in caricature

In eighteenth-century Britain, a popular motif for satirical writers and caricaturists was the notion of a 'coterie' of elite adulteresses whose actions threatened the moral stability of society.⁵⁵ Although adultery may be expected to remain a private matter, the latter half of the eighteenth century saw a number of *causes célèbres* which added to the notion of a depraved elite, while also whetting popular appetite for sexual scandal. Two examples stand out in the period: the trial of the Duchess of Kingston for bigamy, and the Lady Worsley scandal. During her youth, the Duchess of Kingston made a name for herself by appearing semi-nude at a masked ball hosted at St James' Palace. In 1776 however, she gave satirists yet more material as she stood trial for bigamy, an event which drew thousands of viewers to the court proceedings at Westminster Hall and became a media sensation. The event was commemorated by several prints, including 'Iphigenia's late procession from Kingston to Bristol. -by Chudleigh Meadows' (fig.3.10). This image managed to combine both the scandal of her decision to marry the Duke of Kingston-upon-Hull when she was still legally married to the Earl of Bristol, whilst also reminding viewers of her turn as the almost entirely

⁵⁵ McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze*, p. 167.

disrobed Iphigenia. Incidents like the bigamy trial delighted those looking to censure elite misdemeanours, and caricaturists were eager to cater to this interest.⁵⁶

While there was great contemporary interest in the Duchess of Kingston's unorthodox behaviours, caricaturists were even more inspired by a complex tale brought to light in 1782, when Sir Richard Worsley initiated a criminal conversation trial against Maurice George Bisset. The publication of briefings from 'criminal conversation', or adultery, trials grew in popularity during the period, and as this occurred, the British public were given a (warped) sense of the 'real' goings-on in elite marriages.⁵⁷ The Worsley scandal implicated dozens of men from the nobility and gentry, as Lady Worsley accused her husband of acting as her pimp. Although the jury ultimately awarded Baronet Worsley a risible one guinea, in clear recognition of his willingness to cuckold himself, caricaturists did not waste time in depicting Lady Worsley in various lurid scenarios.

In 'A bath of the moderns' (fig.3.11) the artist employed a popular motif from the Worsley scandal, as Sir Worsley is depicted lifting a friend onto his back so that he might peep into Lady Worsley's bath house. As in this image, satirical artists generally imagined Lady Worsley as a slightly coy but ultimately willing actor in this bizarre marital set up. 'A peep into lady!!!!y's seraglio' (fig.3.12) goes even farther, as it imagines Lady Worsley entertaining a long line of distinguished lovers who wait impatiently to enter her bedchamber. Whatever the true nature of their marital dynamic, it is evident that there was extensive popular interest in the Worsley scandal, and while not all those who followed the trial with interest would have assigned such amorality to the elite as a whole, the scandal certainly served as a deeply revealing look into a formerly private sphere: the marital bedchamber.

⁵⁶ Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783* (2nd ed., Oxford, 1998), p. 585.

⁵⁷ Cindy McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze: Prints of Women in Late Eighteenth-century England* (Oxford, 2004), p. 155.

This sacrosanct sphere was frequently breached by criminal conversation trial briefs, and also by caricaturists in eighteenth-century Britain, particularly from the 1780s onwards.

Popular interest in elite adultery and marital scandal also extended to the British royal family, particularly the sons of George III. No member of the royal family had his private life more fully dissected than the Prince of Wales, whose colourful romantic life inspired caricaturists for several decades. Images like ‘An extravaganza or young Solomon besieging Fitzhubbub.’ (fig.3.13), and others depicting the Prince’s illicit marriage to the widowed Mrs Fitzherbert in 1786 demonstrate how caricatures could depict delicate subjects when even the supposedly ‘free’ press of Britain could not. In fact, caricaturists were confident enough to transgress all social boundaries by depicting the Prince of Wales and Mrs Fitzherbert *in flagrante delicto* (fig.3.14). This image shows a blatant disregard for any notion of the respect that was traditionally considered due to the royal family in Britain; by peeling back the curtain and inviting the public into the Prince’s bedchamber, the caricaturist not only humanised the future monarch, but also laid bare his moral sins.⁵⁸ The increased attention paid to royal scandal in British prints from the 1780s onwards has been identified as evidence of an expanding middle class consumer base.⁵⁹ Jonathan Mee has similarly found an increasing conflict between middle class morality and aristocratic libertine behaviour towards the end of the eighteenth century.⁶⁰ The Prince of Wales’s behaviour, although perhaps unremarkable in elite circles, was becoming unpalatable to the educated, middling sorts in Britain.

⁵⁸ Corinna Wagner highlights the Prince’s failed marriage to Caroline of Brunswick in 1795 as the beginning of concerted moral censure against the prince, but there is evidence of earlier criticisms. Wagner, ‘Press Scandal’, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁹ Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull; Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003), p. 233.

⁶⁰ Jonathan Mee, “Libertines and Radicals in the 1790s: The Strange Case of Charles Pigott I,” in Peter Cryle and Lisa O’Connell (eds), *Libertine Enlightenment: Sex, Liberty and Licence in the Eighteenth Century*, (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 185.

Certainly, not all images which attempted to reveal the intimate lives of the elite were deliberately salacious. Although ‘Future prospects or symptoms of love in high life’ (fig.3.15), published in 1795, calls attention once again to the Prince of Wales’s immorality and adultery, it is done in a manner which is intended to generate sympathy for the Princess of Wales, who is cast as the victim of an unhappy marriage. Significantly, this glimpse into the turbulent marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales is contrasted with a small portrait hanging on the wall, which is a rough copy of a 1786 print of George III and Queen Charlotte, the ‘Constant Couple.’ (fig.3.16) Although the King and Queen were by no means immune to the criticism of satirists, the king’s marital fidelity was praised in contemporary discourse, and the contrast with his son in this image supports arguments that elite prolificacy was coming under scrutiny in popular discourse in the late eighteenth century.⁶¹

In stark contrast to the caricatures which laid bare the immoral flaws and scandals of elite marriage in Britain, caricatures of King George III and his wife tended to portray the royal couple in a gently mocking manner. For example, ‘Temperance Enjoying a Frugal Meal’ (fig.3.17) opens a window into the King and Queen’s private dining room, which is shown to be rather modest. Similarly, the paired prints ‘Frying Sprats, Vide. Royal Supper’ (fig.3.18) and ‘Toasting muffins’ (fig.3.19) show the King and Queen in humble circumstances as they prepare their own simple meals. These images purport to permit the average Briton to see their monarch in his private domain, yet the effect of these images is difficult to ascertain. Historiography has debated whether images of the King’s domesticity and morality endeared him to the public, or if they instead lowered the King in his people’s eyes.⁶² Thus, while images of this nature could prove a positive contrast to the immorality

⁶¹ Colley, *Britons*, p. 238.

⁶² Vincent Carretta, *George III and the Satirists from Hogarth to Byron* (Athens, Georgia, 1990), p. 297. Tamara Hunt, *Defining John Bull; Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003), p. 239.

and luxury of other members of the fashionable elite, these prints could perhaps go too far in humanizing the King, who was required to retain some aura of power and majesty during the turbulent years of the war with Revolutionary France. The exposition of the private lives of the elite was a popular facet of the caricature trade in Britain, but its effects depended greatly on the individual and the circumstances into which the caricaturists deigned to place them.

Summary

Numerous caricatures portrayed elite marriages in Britain, particularly in the period c.1770 to 1795, when media culture began to facilitate modern notions of scandal and celebrity gossip. The examples examined above highlight the combination of moral censure and mockery that tended to characterise these images, which aimed to both entertain and scandalise viewers. It is difficult to ascertain how far images such as those depicting Lady Worsley or the Prince of Wales did genuine damage to the supposed moral superiority of the elite, but it is evident that such scandals generated significant public interest, and by visually capturing these scandals, caricaturists allowed many people to see into elite marriages. Contrastingly, the depictions of George III's marital life demonstrate the contemporary desire to know the private lives of elite figures, but these images also highlight the difficulty of interpretation. Prints of the monarch's alleged marital bliss compare favourably with those of his prolific son, but by depicting the King and Queen at home in the first place, caricaturists transgressed the traditional boundaries between private life and public role which were intended to separate the sovereign from the people. The transgression of these traditional boundaries was a by-product of the developing media culture at the end of the eighteenth century, and caricatures were an important aspect of that culture.

Scandal, adultery, and the elite in France

In France, satirical prints exposing the private lives of the elite were rather rarer than in Britain. This was perhaps due to the stifling effects of the censorship laws and the correspondingly delayed development of a French satirical print tradition. However, those interested in the intimate details of France's social elite prior to the Revolution could turn to the popular *libelles* and *nouvelles a la main* which flourished during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI. These *libelles* and *nouvelles a la main* highlight the contemporary interest in elite individuals, whose actions were inherently tied to politics in the ancien régime.⁶³ Due to the censorship laws which endured in France under the ancien régime, most of these scandalous publications were published in England or Switzerland, before being covertly brought onto the Parisian market.⁶⁴

An excellent example of a *libelle* dedicated to examining the private side of royalty is Mouffle d'Angerville's *Vie privée de Louis XV ou principaux événements, particularités et anecdotes de son regne*, published in London in 1781, just seven years after Louis XV's death. Although little is known of the author, the work provides a comprehensive view of Louis XV's reign, focusing especially on the political and martial issues of the era, as well as revealing the inner workings of the Court at Versailles. Naturally, the King and his amours are the main focus of this work, but the text also contains intimate information about other members of the ancien régime's elite. For example, d'Angerville claims that the Duc de Bourbon's sister, Mademoiselle de Charolais, had numerous affairs, and produced a child 'almost every year.'⁶⁵ He also informs readers that the Comtesse de Mailly's husband complained about her affair with the King, but was ordered to keep away from her. Mailly's

⁶³ Farge, *Subversive Words*, p. 60.

⁶⁴ Simon Burrows, *Blackmail, Scandal, and Revolution: London's French Libellistes, 1758-92* (Manchester, 2006), p. 2.

⁶⁵ d'Angerville, *Vie Privée de Louis XV*, Vol.1, p. 192

father, the Marquis de Nesle, also complained, but this was considered for show and in hopes of gaining financial recompense.⁶⁶ Whether or not these titbits of scandal are true is largely irrelevant, for by committing to them to paper and disseminating them, d'Angerville gave them legitimacy, much as British caricaturists did when imagining their elite behind closed doors.

Naturally, Louis XV's colourful private life was the focal point of this publication, with many pages being dedicated to detailed analyses of his affairs and his series of *maîtresses en titres*. Of the King's first *maîtresse en titre*, Mme de Mailly, d'Angerville is quite flattering, yet her successor (and sister) Mme de Vintimille is described as 'envious, revengeful, fond of governing and making herself feared.'⁶⁷ D'Angerville also reveals that Vintimille and Louis XV had an illegitimate son, who was known as 'demi-Louis' at Court in recognition of his startling resemblance to his father.⁶⁸ The focus on royal adultery was certainly not a unique slant for writers of *libelles*, in fact, scandals of this nature were the main source material for these works. Significantly, d'Angerville focusses a great deal of attention on analysis of Louis XV's temperament; he appears eager to paint as full a picture of the king as a man as possible. For example, d'Angerville points to the King's heavy reliance on Madame de Pompadour, arguing that he was relieved to place the burden of kingship on another's shoulders, and that Pompadour died 'with the reins of the State still in her hands.'⁶⁹ The King's obeisance to his mistress was clearly a well-known rumour, as Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin also highlighted the balance of Louis's relationship with Pompadour throughout his *Livre de Caricatures*.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ D'Angerville, *Vie Privée de Louis XV*, vol.2, p. 33.

⁶⁷ Ibid, vol.2, p.35.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid, vol.2, p.25.

⁷⁰ See Chapter Two.

As has been examined in Chapter Two, the power of women attached to the French monarch was a common motif in satirical literature and images in the Revolutionary period, also. It has been argued that this tradition was partly the reason that Marie-Antoinette became a star in the libellous and graphic *libelles* that circulated in the pre-revolutionary period; she became the symbol of a deeply corrupt court where traditional mores of absolutism were being inverted.⁷¹ The *Essais historiques sur la vie de Marie-Antoinette*, for example, was published in 1790, before the royal family became truly unpopular; yet the pamphlet goes into lurid detail about the queen's many affairs with the men and women at court.⁷² These wildly inventive texts were part of a genre that revelled in scandal, and Marie-Antoinette's supposed trysts were related to the reader with relish.⁷³

A satirical image which corresponds to this tradition is 'Je ne respire plus que pour toi' (fig.3.20). Published in 1789, the print depicts the Queen in an amorous embrace with her favourite, the Duchesse de Polignac, presumably in a private chamber at Versailles. Of course, it is highly likely that this image, and the accusations that Marie-Antoinette and Polignac shared a romantic attachment, flourished at Court, where the Queen's favouritism had soured the relationship between the royal family and many of the nobility prior to 1789.⁷⁴ This image, like the *Essais historiques sur la vie de Marie-Antoinette* pamphlet, grasped popular interest by presenting the Queen in the most lurid, common terms to titillate the paying readership; these scandalous prints and pamphlets purported to present to the public the image of the 'real' queen, who was immoral and depraved. These satirical works not only diminished the traditional status of elites by revealing their private lives, but they also

⁷¹ Burrows, *Blackmail, Scandal, and Revolution*, p. 187.

⁷² Anon, *Essais Historiques sur la Vie de Marie-Antoinette, Reine de France et de Navarre* (2 vols, Paris, 1790).

⁷³ Thomas, *La Reine Scélérate*, p. 10.

⁷⁴ Jeremy Popkin, 'Pamphlet Journalism at the End of the Old Regime', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 22:3, Special Issue: The French Revolution in Culture (Spring, 1989), p. 363.

abolished the traditional notion of deference which separated the Third Estate from the monarchy and nobility.⁷⁵

Unlike in Britain, French caricatures tended to focus on the nobility as a group, and only the royal family and certain, leading ministers were accorded individual attention. This was particularly the case from 1789, as Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette were undoubtedly the most caricatured individuals in France. Although individualisation was rarer in French caricatures, this does not mean that caricaturists did not appeal to a public interest in viewing the royal couple behind closed doors. Caricatures of the king prior to the Flight to Varennes in June 1791 were often positive, as caricaturists largely envisaged Louis XVI as a guiding light of the revolution's principles. An example of this motif is 'Le Roi expliquant a son fils les droits de l'homme' (fig.3.21), which depicts the King in the role of a father, educating his son and heir in the tenets of the new constitution.⁷⁶ This image combines a powerful message about the future legacy of the revolution and the monarch's commitment to the constitution, with an intimate look at the king's relationship with his son.

In stark contrast to images which depicted the King as a devoted father, 'intimate' prints of Marie-Antoinette tended to invent or imagine particularly immoral actions on the part of the queen. In 1789, a satirical print (fig.2.24) portrayed the queen in her apartments at Versailles, plotting with ministers to overthrow rivals. In the same year, another print (fig.3.22) purported to allow the public an intimate view of the queen and her brother-in-law, the Comte d'Artois, at confession. This image played upon a long-standing rumour, germinated at Versailles, which alleged that Artois and the queen were conducting an illicit affair, one which resulted in the birth of the dauphin in 1777. The revelation of elite private

⁷⁵ James Cuno, 'Introduction', in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 17.

⁷⁶ The motif of Louis XVI as father of the nation was also popular in counter-Revolutionary images. See Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle, *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth-century France* (London, 2008).

lives in French satirical texts and prints was largely used by artists and writers to negatively represent the individual in question by highlighting immoral behaviour. Significantly, however, prints produced in 1788/89 which praised Louis XVI's domestic virtues stand in direct contrast to his predecessor and his wife, both of whom were victims of a moralising, scandalous register which sought to worsen their reputations.

Summary

An examination of French caricatures between c.1740 and 1795 reveals that they were less likely to indulge in the personalised, celebrity culture which characterised British caricatures during this period. While hundreds of British caricatures depicted the intimate lives of a wide variety of the social and political elite, French caricatures, whether published during the Revolution, or drawn in Saint-Aubin's *Livre de Caricatures*, focussed far more on the royal family and their closest confidantes. The slower development of a discernible celebrity culture in France can be attributed to the censorship laws of the ancien régime, which may have stifled the evolution of a modern media culture which could facilitate a popular interest in elite scandal on an individual level. Of course, libelles such as the *Vie privée de Louis XV* and *Essais historiques sur la vie de Marie-Antoinette* demonstrate a market for elite scandal in the pre-revolutionary period. Although the royal family again took precedence in these works, members of the court nobility were often mentioned in the dramatic rumours and scandals which these *libelles* pedalled to wider society.

Summary of Part Two

The caricatures analysed in this section highlight an increasing cultural interest in the private lives of public individuals between 1740 and 1795. These caricatures, which circulated

alongside newspapers and pamphlets, opened up the private spheres of elite marital and familial life to a wider public. The intent of these prints appears to have varied between titillating scandal and moral censure, although the actual reactions of viewers remain unknown. For figures such as Marie-Antoinette, whose reputation suffered greatly from 1780 onwards, caricatures and pamphlets appear to have been intent on further degrading her public popularity. In Britain, the 1780s and 1790s saw a distinct juxtaposition between immoral and scandalous elite marriages such as those of the Prince of Wales and Lady Worsley, and the idyllic, if slightly dull, marriage of George III and Queen Charlotte. In all instances, these caricatures functioned as windows into private relationships, which in turn likely engendered a sense of familiarity between non-elite viewers and the elite individuals whose marriages were laid bare for an interested urban public.

Part Three- Vices of the Elite

In addition to caricatures which revealed the private lives and relationships of elites in France and Britain, the alleged vices of elite society were another popular topic in visual and literary satire throughout the eighteenth century.⁷⁷ As has been demonstrated, in both France and Britain, the socio-political elite attracted the attention of caricaturists who were eager to exploit elite scandal for the amusement or moral censure of the public. As a result, the misdemeanours of the few had the potential to become representative of the elite as a whole.⁷⁸ In a recent study, Donna T. Andrew has argued that the eighteenth century saw increased criticism of distinctly elite vices in the British media.⁷⁹ Yet Andrew does not

⁷⁷ Black, *Culture in Eighteenth-century England*, p. 136.

⁷⁸ John Richard Moores cautions against reading British caricatures of elite misdemeanours as comments upon the entire social group, but it is impossible to tell if contemporary viewers of prints responded in this way. Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 12.

⁷⁹ Donna T. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: the Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven, 2013).

explore the visual representations of these vices in depth, as does this section. A comparison with French satirical material commenting on the vices of French elites provides a perspective on the similarities between the two elite cultures in the eighteenth century, and the popular responses to this culture of vice. The vices attributed to the socio-political elite in satirical works were numerous, ranging from gambling to drunkenness. This section considers two which appear to have generated significant attention in visual culture: vanity, and avarice. Of course, these vices were not at all unique to the elite, but the hierarchical nature of British and French society did place this social group under pressure to set a positive moralistic example. As an article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1737 expressed, the noble 'not only immediately corrupts his own circle of acquaintance, but the contagion spreads itself to infinity.'⁸⁰ A similar sentiment arose in France in the period, as popular opinion began to voice scepticism about the virtue of the elite, whose rank was supposed to indicate distinguished conduct and morality.⁸¹ Satirical prints played an important role in visually representing these elite vices to the wider public for censure and entertainment.

Vanity and fashion- visualizing elite style

One of the defining features of the elite in French and British society was their dress; sumptuary laws had, for much of the eighteenth-century, ensured that the elite were easily distinguished by their clothing. In France, for example, the red heeled shoe was a conceit of the Court noble, while rouge was a 'point of honour' for noblewomen, who applied it liberally.⁸² Reflecting an emergent gendered view of consumerism, criticisms of vanity were frequently directed at elite women's fashion in both France and Britain at various points

⁸⁰ *Gentleman's Magazine*, London, May 1737, p.286.

⁸¹ Chaussinand-Nogaret, *The French Nobility*, p. 5.

⁸² Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies*, p. 9; Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, *Fashion Victims: Dress at the Court of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette* (New Haven, 2015), p. 45.

throughout the eighteenth century.⁸³ In Britain, the French invasion scares of the 1790s triggered a popular outburst against the extravagance of elite female clothing which mimicked French style, while the French court's preferences for everything *a l'anglais* in the 1780s invited criticisms of anti-French sentiment among the nobility.⁸⁴ However, images mocking the latest styles were not always hostile; some were merely poking fun at a mode of expression which few members of society could truly afford to emulate, and which served to separate the elite from the rest of society.⁸⁵

The eighteenth century saw numerous debates about the concepts of luxury and consumption, which have been examined by historians of France and Britain in the period. Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger argue that the Enlightenment saw new recognition of 'luxury' as an important aspect of economic success and modernisation, which was in contrast to traditional moralistic attitudes towards excessive consumption.⁸⁶ However, there was continued resistance to this optimistic view of luxury, because its association with the wealthy and (often) politically influential necessarily brought in a concern about public morality. From the middle of the century onwards, French writers began to critique luxury as a symptom of degenerate aristocracy and the idle rich, of whom the majority lived at the royal court.⁸⁷ Indeed, one of the most conspicuous adherents of fashionable luxury was the young queen, Marie-Antoinette, whose fondness for fashion trends invited censure even from ancient noble families at Versailles.⁸⁸

⁸³ Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace argues that the late eighteenth century saw the emergence of a deep cultural connection between women, consumption, and consumerism. Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1997).

⁸⁴ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 602. Chrisman-Campbell, *Fashion Victims*, p. 223.

⁸⁵ John Shovlin has written on the connection between the use of commodities and expressions of social and political power in ancien regime France. Shovlin, 'The Cultural Politics of Luxury in Eighteenth-century France', *French Historical Studies*, 23:4 (Fall, 2000), p. 580.

⁸⁶ Maxine Berger and Elizabeth Eger, 'Introduction', in Maxine Berger and Elizabeth Eger (eds), *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods* (Basingstoke, 2003), p. 2.

⁸⁷ Shovlin, 'The Cultural Politics of Luxury', p. 579.

⁸⁸ Thomas, *La Reine Scélérate*, p. 86.

Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin appears to have critiqued Marie-Antoinette when she was still the Dauphine, in an image dated 1774. ‘Les plus belles jupes sont ordinairement les plus mal doublées’ (fig.3.23) portrays a young woman in an extravagant court gown, but the caption implies that the individual portrayed is an example of style over substance; her beautiful costume is intended to conceal any deficiencies in the woman wearing it. As an embroiderer to the king, Saint-Aubin was keenly aware of the role of fashion and representation among the nobility at court, and this theme appears throughout the *Livre de Caricatures*. In an image which mirrors (fig.3.23), ‘Ce paladin est trop beau pour ne pas être bête’ (fig.3.24), Saint-Aubin suggests that extravagant dress among male elites was a means of covering up their stupidity, or making themselves appear more grand than they really were. Extravagant fashion was increasingly cultivated in France and Britain by the introduction of magazines such as *Magasin des modes* first published in 1785, and *The Lady’s Magazine* published from 1770, and newspaper articles which minutely described the outfits worn by society ladies. Published caricatures also participated in these popular discussions of elite fashion from the 1770s onwards, yet their tone appears to have been largely humorous, rather than explicitly moral. Elite fashion may have been an example of luxury, but caricaturists appear to have found humour in this extravagance, rather than genuine moral outrage.

One of the most extravagant styles associated with the British and French elite in the latter half of the eighteenth century was the powdered wig.⁸⁹ From the 1770s onwards, women’s wigs in particular became increasingly elaborate, dramatic, and completely impractical. The print ‘*The Vis-à-vis bisected, or the ladies coop*’ (fig.3.25), published in London in 1776, draws attention to the impracticality of the towering hairstyles, which

⁸⁹ Misty Anderson argues that responses to extravagant hairstyles and hats in Britain in the 1770s and 1780s were often centred on their threat to gender relations. Anderson, *Female Playwrights and Eighteenth-century Comedy: Negotiating Marriage on the London Stage* (New York, 2002), pp. 150–1.

required ladies to kneel or sit on the floors of their carriages so as to not destroy their hair. Prints such as 'The Flower Garden' (fig.3.26) by Matthew Darly, published in 1777, hyperbolised the enormous and intricately decorated hairstyles worn by the British elite as they strove to be at the forefront of fashion. In this fantastical caricature, the woman's elaborate hairstyle contains a folly, hedging, and a miniature gardener. In France, the trend for ever-larger hairstyles does not appear to have been directly satirised by caricatures, but it was criticised by social commentator Louis-Sebastien Mercier, who pointed out that the additional hair pieces that were required for these towering edifices usually came from deceased or diseased women; not only was this elite hairstyle ridiculous, but its source was unsettling.⁹⁰ Indeed, the print 'Troc pour troc' (fig.2.7) highlighted the contemporary preoccupation with styled hair by depicting Louis XVI dressing Marie-Antoinette's hair just before their attempted flight from Paris in 1791.

The trend of wearing feathers in these extravagant hairstyles was also mocked by caricaturists, for example 'Can you forbear laughing' (fig.3.27), which imagines a society lady surrounded by disgruntled peacocks and ostriches whose feathers have been stolen in the name of fashion. Publicly visible British women like the Duchess of Devonshire and Lady Worsley were often depicted with extravagant feathered headdresses, because they were seen as indicative of a woman more interested in fashion than her traditional role of wife and mother.⁹¹ Similarly, peacock feathers became synonymous with Marie-Antoinette in revolutionary prints like (fig.2.6 & fig.2.25) because they traditionally symbolised vanity, a trait with which the queen had been branded as early as 1780.⁹² The satirical focus on women's hairstyles is just one example of how the vice of vanity could be assigned to the

⁹⁰ Louis-Sebastien Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, (Amsterdam, 1783), vol.4, p. 124.

⁹¹ McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze*, p. 140.

⁹² Annie Duprat, *Les Rois de Papier: la Caricature de Henri III à Louis XVI* (Paris, 2002), pp. 253-5. Thomas, *La Reine Scélérate*, p. 90.

elite by writers and caricaturists; the money and idle time required to fix and maintain such hairstyles made them a powerful symbol of luxury and frivolity. By indulging in these expensive and elaborate hairstyles, elite women were marking themselves out as members of a privileged group in society, yet their depiction in caricatures reveals that cultural responses to these markers of social standing led more to ridicule or condemnation than to admiration from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards.

During the French Revolution, clothing became a distinctive mark not only of one's social standing, but also of their political allegiances.⁹³ In satirical works published between 1789 and 1793, nobles were consistently depicted in extravagant costume, intended to mark out their social status for viewers. One print (fig.3.28), for example, depicts a member of the Third Estate being ridden by a clergyman and a nobleman. In this image, however, the nobleman does not wear contemporary, fashionable garments, but rather a costume which seems to resemble the clothing worn by nobility in the seventeenth century. This detail appears to be a pointed suggestion that the nobility and its privileges were outdated, and in need of modern reform. Another print published in 1789, 'L'aristocrate' (fig.3.29) contrasts an elderly aristocratic lady, who curses the revolution, with a smirking female from the Third Estate, labelled 'La democrate'. The 'aristocrate' wears the stereotypical accoutrements of a court lady: jewels, feathers in her powdered hair, and a patch on her cheek. The 'democrate' is contrastingly dressed in simpler clothing, perhaps denoting a woman of bourgeoisie origin, who wears a head covering in place of an elaborate wig. This image not only uses style to separate the nobility from the Third Estate, but it also suggests that the Second Estate- like the elderly woman in the print- is living on borrowed time.

⁹³ Joan Landes explores representations of women in Revolutionary images; in these images, women's dress was of particular importance. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-century France* (London, 2001).

In contrast with the highly politicised world of fashion in Revolutionary France, British prints from the period tended to mock and hyperbolise the fashions of elite members of society. ‘The feminine gender’ (fig.3.30), for example, comments on the feminised style adopted by many male elites in 1787. ‘A-la-mode’ (fig.3.31), published two years later, further ridiculed the blurred gender lines of elite fashion, as although the two figures depicted wear masculine and feminine clothing, their hair and makeup appear almost indistinguishable. The title of this print also highlights the perceived influence of French fashions on the British elite, a connection which dated back to the ‘Macaroni’ craze of the 1750s which saw young British noblemen flaunting over the top costumes in London after returning from the Grand Tour.⁹⁴ Although these examples express a concern about the gender identities and, perhaps, patriotism of the elite, their general comment on elite fashion is evidently one of amusement, and viewers are invited to share in this laughter. Fashion and luxury remained significant and legitimate markers of social and political influence in the early eighteenth century, but the advent of satirical prints and the reports on elite style in newspapers and magazines meant that public discourse could dissect elite dress in new ways.

Money and monarchy- a French and British comparison

The consumption of elite fashion was naturally tied to discussions of how elites managed or made their fortunes. The finances of the elite in Britain and France attracted attention from satirical artists, and the royal families of the two nations were often the most criticised for misuse of public funds. Accusations of royal avarice reflected unfavourably on the monarchy, which, although expected to retain the splendour necessary to its position in society, was not expected to bankrupt the nation in the process.

⁹⁴ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 165.

One of the earliest and most detailed attacks of this nature was published in London in 1786, and it implicates several members of the British royal family and Prime Minister Pitt in what appears to be daylight robbery. In ‘A New Way to Pay the National Debt’ (fig.3.32), James Gillray takes aim at the allowances granted to the royal family by the new government, headed by George III’s right-hand man, William Pitt. In the image, the King and Queen emerge triumphant from the national treasury, their pockets overflowing with gold coins as Pitt presents them with yet more bullion. The most biting censure in this image is the figure in the foreground, a paraplegic beggar who is dressed in the garb of a sailor; he is perhaps a veteran of the Seven Years’ War. This sorry figure is ignored by the King, who grasps for more gold; the sentiment regarding the increase in the royal expenditure could hardly be clearer. Despite Marilyn Morris’s argument that loyalists attempted to justify royal expenditure in the period by associating outward grandeur with power, it is evident that caricaturists such as Gillray were determined to undermine this optimistic view of royal greed.⁹⁵ Significantly, a dishevelled figure in the background of the image, intended as the Prince of Wales, does not appear to have benefitted from this new financial arrangement. The Prince is approached by a lavishly dressed man, who hands him a note offering financial aid from his friend, the Duc d’Orléans. The subtle implication to this minor feature of the image is a prime example of contemporary fixation on the strong personal, political, and financial relationships shared by the elites of France and Britain.⁹⁶ That the Prince of Wales is depicted as missing out on financial gains from the government is quite unusual, as the Prince’s astronomical debts were fodder for gossip from the 1780s onwards.

Even during the financially draining Wars of Revolutionary France, the Prince’s debts remained a priority for the government. ‘The Present State of Europe- or John Bull on his last

⁹⁵ Marilyn Morris, *The British Monarchy and the French revolution* (New York, 1998), p. 67.

⁹⁶ For more on the cultural connections and friendships between the French and British elite in the period, see Robin Eagles, *Francophilia in English society, 1748-1815* (New York, 2000).

legs' (fig.3.33), for example, suggests that the Prince's extravagant lifestyle was resented by the general populace, many of whom were already paying higher taxes to fund the war effort. These examples mirror William Beckford's irate speech in 1761, when he called into question the elite's participation in society.⁹⁷ The notion of a 'parasitic' elite abounded in Britain in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and this notion fomented ideas of the elite as a separate class of people.⁹⁸ Although it has been suggested that caricatures of the British royal family during the 1790s were perhaps intended to encourage the king to take on a more impressive and regal outward appearance, it is evident that the financial excesses of the monarchy and nobility could come under serious criticism.⁹⁹

The British crown's repeated calls for financial aid did not escape the notice of caricaturists, and the King and Queen were frequently depicted as a money-hungry couple. 'The Bow to the Throne; alias the Begging Bow' (fig.3.34) is a particularly damning image, as it depicts George III and Queen Charlotte grovelling and scraping before the disgraced Warren Hastings, former Governor of Bengal, their obeisance clearly motivated by financial gain. *The Times* reported in April 1786 that Hastings was accused of bribery, and of 'many high crimes and misdemeanours', and the twenty-two articles of accusation against him were reported to include causing three separate revolutions, interfering in the inheritance of various Rajas, and creating false contracts via the East India Company.¹⁰⁰ The case was a *cause célèbre* of the day, and the King's support for Hastings inspired caricaturists, who drew a connection between the corruption of the Governor and the King.¹⁰¹ In particular, the rumoured gifting of a diamond from the Nizam of Hyderabad to George III via Hastings was

⁹⁷ British Museum, BM Add. MSS.38334, ff.29 seq. Speech by William Beckford in the House of Commons, 13 Nov. 1761.

⁹⁸ Colley, *Britons*, p. 155.

⁹⁹ Carretta, *George III and the Satirists*, p. 294.

¹⁰⁰ *The Times*, London, April 5 1786; P.J. Marshall, *The Impeachment of Warren Hastings* (Oxford, 1965), pp. xiv-xv.

¹⁰¹ Marshall, *The Impeachment of Warren Hastings*, p. 26; Richard Grenville (ed.), *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III*, (2 vols, London, 1853), vol.2, p. 154.

read as proof of the King tacitly supporting Hastings' many crimes in India. As the impeachment trial dragged on, the belief that the King and Queen accepted bribes from Hastings was reiterated in numerous caricatures, including 'Diamond eaters, horrid monsters!' (fig.3.35) which shows the King and Queen feasting on diamonds which Hastings pours into their mouths. This image is very similar to 'Monstrous craws at a new coalition feast' (fig.3.36), which was produced only a year later, in 1787. In this print, the King and Queen are joined by the spendthrift Prince of Wales, as they dine on a pot of gold labelled 'John Bull's Blood', a clear suggestion that the royal family were draining the nation's finances to a ridiculous extent.

The link between royalty and financial excess was also a prime consideration for French satirists during the reign of Louis XV; in particular, the King's fondness for women was seen as a drain on the nation's resources. For example, d'Angerville highlights how the King's *maîtresse en titre*, the Duchess de Chateauroux demanded 'that she should be put in possession of a fortune capable of placing her about any reverse.'¹⁰² Louis XV's most famous mistress, Madame de Pompadour, did not escape accusations of financial greed, as the *Livre de Caricatures* depicts her stealing silverware donated by the nobility and clergy to be melted down in an attempt to remedy the floundering state finances (fig.3.37).¹⁰³ D'Angerville also describes the notorious Parc aux Cerfs, where many of Louis XV's lesser mistresses were allegedly 'kept'; D'Angerville pondered how much money it must have cost the state to employ agents to find, beautify, and eventually pay off the young women that were to entertain the king.¹⁰⁴

Worst of all was Madame Du Barry, who was in D'Angerville's words

¹⁰² D'Angerville, *Vie Privée de Louis XV*, vol.2, p. 134.

¹⁰³ Swann, 'Politics and Religion', p. 148.

¹⁰⁴ D'Angerville, *Vie Privée de Louis XV*, vol.3, p. 18.

more expensive than all the preceding mistresses of Louis XV, and whose prodigalities and depredations, notwithstanding the misery of the people and the public calamities, were increasing to such a degree, that in a few years she would have swallowed up the kingdom, if the death of the Louis XV, had not put a stop to these enormities.¹⁰⁵

Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin appears to concur with d'Angerville's sentiments, as the image 'Nous l'avons vü en 1774. miserablement trainant dans la Crotte' (fig.3.38) likely depicts Du Barry as a pig languishing on several bags of money, even as she is being returned to the gutter after the King's death.¹⁰⁶ It was not just royal mistresses who were charged with financial greed by Saint-Aubin: the duc de Richelieu, a high-ranking army officer and courtier was also criticised for alleged greed. The duc de Richelieu had a reputation for looting and pillaging while on campaign, and Saint-Aubin appears to comment on this proclivity in 'Il part pour hanovre' (fig.1.20), as the duc is transformed into a monkey who literally 'fills his boots' with the spoils of war.¹⁰⁷ This image not only draws attention to noble greed, but it also calls into the question the French nobility's claims to martial valour and glory, as examined in section one, which are here superseded by the desire for material gain.

As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the Flight to Varennes in 1791 saw a significant breakdown in opinion of King Louis XVI, as he was implicated in the aborted attempt to flee the country with his family in June of that year. In both 'Gargantua du siecle...' (fig.3.39) and 'Cidevant grand couvert de Gargantua moderne en famille'(fig.3.40), Louis XVI is transformed into a grotesquely large being, one which demands money,

¹⁰⁵ D'Angerville, *Vie Privée de Louis XV*, vol.4, p. 275.

¹⁰⁶ Swann, 'Politics and Religion', p. 137.

¹⁰⁷ Mainz, 'Gloire, Subversively', p. 172.

supplication, and even the blood of the French people. These images are part of a wider collection of prints produced after 1789 which dehumanised the nobility by depicting them as horrifying monsters.¹⁰⁸ Gone is the positive image of a benevolent sovereign mingling happily with his people; in his stead is a monstrous creature that drains the nation dry of resources at the expense of the French people. It is evident that these two prints were determined to undermine any existing positive notions of the monarchy and its ability to have an impact on French society. By portraying Louis XVI as a monarch who literally devours his own people, these prints contributed to contemporary Parisian attitudes of 1791 which called in to question the position of the monarchy in French society.

Summary of Part Three

The vices of vanity and avarice were both attributed to the French and British elite throughout the period 1740 to 1795, and caricatures had an important role in visually representing these vices. While some prints addressing elite fashion and vanity were condemnatory, most appear to have found great humour in the extravagant and impractical fashion trends with which the elite chose to identify themselves. Only during the French Revolution does popular discourse on elite fashion appear to have become distinctly negative, as a visual and material representation of an oppressive and unjust social group. The ‘cost’ of the monarchy was a question that was considered not only in France from the 1740s until 1795, but also in Britain as early as the 1770s. Although George III and his family were never quite transformed into bloodthirsty giants, as was Louis XVI, caricatures purporting to reveal the British royal family’s love of money certainly shone an unflattering light on the monarchy and their nobility. These caricatures and satirical works which revealed elite greed suggested

¹⁰⁸ These images will be considered in Chapter Four.

that, rather than protecting or aiding the French and British people as was their duty, the monarchy and nobility were just as likely to drain the nation's finances at the expense of their people's welfare. By focussing on elite vices such as vanity and avarice, caricatures emphasised both immoral aspects of the elite, as well as aspects which seemed to separate them from the rest of society.

Conclusion

This chapter began with the much-caricatured Queen of France dismissing an outbreak of satirical songs in 1775 as little more than harmless amusement, yet within fourteen years, Marie-Antoinette was being unflatteringly depicted in satirical prints and publications that were persistently claiming to depict the real Queen to the French public. As this chapter has demonstrated, satirical prints made the elite visible to a wider portion of urban society in eighteenth-century Britain and France. In so doing, they encouraged popular discussion of elite values and of the elite's purpose in society which endured for over fifty years.

Caricatures which touched on the traditional role or position of British and French elites expressed a long-term discontent with the nobility in the eighteenth century, one which emerged in popular discourse in both countries as early as the 1740s. Those caricatures which revealed the troubled marriages and private lives of society's elite highlight contemporary interest in scandal. By depicting the elite behind closed doors, these prints created a false intimacy which eroded the traditional distance between elites and non-elites. This aspect of elite caricature underlines the expanding celebrity and media culture in both France and Britain between 1740 and 1795. Caricatures which commented on elite vices did so in tones of humour and condemnation, both of which are key aspects of satire. The tone of each print

was dependent on its moment of production, but preoccupations with elite vanity and avarice appear to have endured in both Britain and France for decades.

The prints examined in this chapter are significant because they underline the high visibility of the socio-political elite in the urban public spheres of eighteenth-century France and Britain. A popular interest in the intimate lives of the elite, whether in search of amusement, empathy or condemnation, appears to have flourished on both sides of the Channel in the latter half of the century. While the ability of caricatures to actively shape public opinion on the elite remains unclear, the caricatures examined here show that elite behaviour was increasingly open to popular discussion and mockery in the public spheres of eighteenth-century Paris and London.

Chapter Four- Patriotism and Propaganda

Introduction

‘The future will hardly conceive that the war between the English and the French is as animated on paper as it is on the seas.’¹

Written in France in 1756, four months after the beginning of the Seven Years’ War, this comment highlights the extent to which the conflict was discussed and dissected by the public spheres of France and Britain. This chapter examines three significant Franco-British events of the period 1740 to 1795: the Seven Years’ War, the Commercial Treaty of 1786, and the Wars of Revolutionary France. By examining prints produced in response to these events, it is possible to trace the development of caricature as a mode of popular political discourse which operated both for and against the governments of Britain and France. The Seven Years’ War has been recognised in recent scholarship as a significant genesis of French propaganda aimed at enhancing national sentiment.² A comparison between British and French caricatures from this period underlines the critical gaze of the public sphere in each country, which persisted in commenting on the conflict and the elite individuals who drove it. This chapter argues that the juxtaposition between elite cultural identity and national identity formed an important part of popular discourse on the Seven Years’ War, the Commercial Treaty, and the Wars of Revolutionary France.

Eighteenth-century caricature studies are dominated by the looming shadow of the French Revolution, but I argue that analysing satirical prints produced prior to the Revolution

¹ Pierre Rousseau, *Journal Encyclopédique par une Société de Gens de Lettres*, vol.6, part 3, (Liege, 15 Sept. 1756), p. 78.

² David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Harvard, 2001).

are also crucial for understanding the role of caricatures in times of national conflict, whether martial or socio-political.³ Both the Seven Years' War and the Commercial Treaty highlight the use of caricatures as a mode of public political discourse which commented on the elite and their connection to emergent national identity, a trend which continued during the French Revolution. The market for satirical prints certainly flourished on both sides of the Channel during the 1790s, as the ideological battle between Britain and France led to protracted war between the two nations. This war was waged in full view of the British and French public, and the government of each country worked hard to supply both textual and visual propaganda to their peoples, propaganda which emphasised the stark differences between the British constitution and the French republic.

During the conflict, the question of national identity became an important topic of discussion in the political and public sphere of both nations. The clash between noble identity and national identity was perhaps best expressed in the situation of the French émigrés, but in Britain too, elites with a history of Francophilia were put to the test by the declaration of war between the two nations in 1793.⁴ The French elite's *anglomanie* of the 1780s was also utilised by the Republican governments to emphasise the separation of the nobility from the French people, a separation enhanced by the scores of nobles fleeing the country and settling in neighbouring, hostile nations. The French Revolutionary Wars shone a spotlight on the political position and affiliations of the elite, but this chapter argues that earlier events such as

³ For studies in French Revolutionary caricature, see James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988); Antoine de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire* (Paris, 1988); Joan B. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-century France* (London, 2001). For British caricatures and propaganda of the 1790s, see John Richard Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints, 1740-1832* (London, 2015); Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (London, 1996); John Barrell, "'Bill Posters Will Be Prosecuted': Radical Broadside of the 1790s," *Critical Quarterly* 59:4 (Dec. 2017), pp. 54-80.

⁴ For a study on Francophilia in the eighteenth century see Robin Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society, 1748-1815* (London, 2000). For a study of *anglomanie* see Josephine Grieder, *Anglomania in France, 1740-89: Fact, Fiction and Political Discourse* (Geneva, 1985).

the Seven Years' War and the Commercial Treaty also increased popular concerns about the role of the elite as leaders of society.

Not all of the major eighteenth-century Franco-British conflicts engendered the production of print media recording public opinion. The War of American Independence, for example, is not discussed here because of a resounding lack of French source material. The Foreign Minister Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes, was determined to retain strict control over contemporary French views of the conflict, and launched a campaign of pro-war propaganda.⁵ The social and political intricacies of the American Revolution made it necessary for the French government to regulate information of American liberty, and thus material revealing French public opinion of the American Wars is extremely scarce.⁶ As a result, the Seven Years' War, the Commercial Treaty, and the Revolutionary Wars stand out as prime examples of public opinion in eighteenth-century Britain and France, and will form the focus of this chapter.

Section one of this chapter examines caricatures and satirical works produced during the Seven Years' War. The British prints examined in this section underline contemporary unease about a Frenchified British elite, as well as highlighting the attempts by the government to maintain sustained textual and visual propaganda during the Seven Years' War. French sources analysed here reveal the extensive knowledge of the conflict which filtered into the Parisian public sphere despite the Crown's attempts to limit the spread of information.

The second section examines the ways in which the public spheres of Britain and France responded to the controversial Commercial Treaty. This section considers the relationship between French and British elites in the 1770s and 1780s, and argues that

⁵ Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, p. 99.

⁶ Bailey Stone, *Reinterpreting the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 40.

contemporary knowledge of this close-knit elite community enhanced criticisms of the Treaty and its elite architects in the public spheres of each country.

Sections three and four analyse caricatures produced between 1789 and 1795, a period when both France and Britain saw a sharp increase in caricature production. Section three considers British-made caricatures of the elite, which centred on political leaders such as William Pitt and Charles James Fox, whose opposing and drastic responses to the Revolution invited censure and mockery from caricaturists. Section four analyses French caricatures, particularly popular discourse on the émigré French nobility, and the conflict between elite identity and national identity at this time. The British royal family are considered in each section, as they appear in both French and British made prints between 1791 and 1795, underlining the monarchy's central role in British identity during this turbulent period.

Members of the political elite such as William Pitt, Charles James Fox, George III, and Louis XVI all feature frequently in satirical prints produced on both sides of the Channel, emphasising their symbolic and political significance. Unnamed individuals appear most in prints produced in France during the Revolution, as the now-hated aristocracy and émigrés became largely generalised by anti-noble rhetoric sponsored by the successive Republican governments. While the social and political elite featured heavily in these images, this chapter also emphasises how political elites came to shape the production of caricature prints, and to acknowledge the utility of this art form in impacting on social and political issues which increasingly played out before a very interested public. There has been scholarly debate about the effectiveness of caricature to influence opinions, yet there is concrete evidence that both British and French governments attempted to use satirical prints for these ends during the Wars of Revolutionary France.⁷ Herbert Atherton argued that 'political prints

⁷ For a discussion of the influence of caricature, see Introduction.

were not used as propaganda in any definite and purposeful way' in the eighteenth century, an argument that this chapter seeks to refute.⁸ A more nuanced suggestion from Mike Goode acknowledges that, although prints perhaps sought to influence public opinion, they did so 'more often through distortion and name-calling than through tactics that their audience would have understood as persuasive.'⁹ Nonetheless, I would argue that the slanderous, scatological and occasionally ridiculous distortions used in satirical prints could have shifted viewers' perceptions of events.

The influence of political elites on caricatures was at its most pronounced in the 1790s, when both the British and French governments dedicated funds to satirical artists like James Gillray and Jacques Louis David in an attempt to directly shape public opinion.¹⁰ Of course, the identity of the political elite shifted drastically in France after 1789, with most noble courtiers and ministers losing their posts to men of bourgeois stock. This 'new' political elite in France quickly harnessed visual propaganda for its own ends, yet even before the French Revolution there is significant evidence of governmental interference in caricature and literary production in France (as in Britain), particularly during the Seven Years' War.¹¹ Ideals of patriotism and national identity were often at the core of these propagandistic writings and images, and how the monarchy and nobility fitted into these ideals will form a central consideration of this chapter. Building on the historiographical debate about prints and propaganda, this chapter will aim to demonstrate that each of these three events showcase

⁸ Herbert Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth: a Study of the Ideographic Representation of Politics* (Oxford, 1974), p. 67.

⁹ Mike Goode, 'The Public and the Limits of Persuasion in the Age of Caricature', in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 127.

¹⁰ de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 34. Ronald Paulson argues that Gillray's 'propaganda' often attacked both French revolutionaries and the British government. Paulson, *Representations of Revolution (1789-1820)* (London, 1983), p. 185.

¹¹ David Bell, 'Jumonville's Death, War Propaganda and National Identity in Eighteenth-century France', in Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman (eds.), *The Age of Cultural Revolutions: Britain and France, 1750-1820* (London, 2002), p. 34.

attempts by contemporary political leaders to harness caricature as a medium of propaganda, even if those attempts were not entirely successful.

As the images considered in this chapter cover a wide time span, from c.1756 to 1795, the development of style and content will be examined alongside the way in which prints depicted the elite during times of political and martial crisis. It must be noted that the volume of prints produced during each event is distinctly unbalanced, with the Wars of Revolutionary France generating far more prints in both Britain and France than did the Seven Years' War and the Eden Treaty of 1786 combined. This is indicative of the growing popularity of satirical prints throughout the eighteenth century, but it also indicates the cultural and ideological impact that the French Revolution had on British and French notions of popular opinion. In order to provide balance between the three events, this chapter incorporates textual examples of contemporary satire and popular discourse, such as pamphlets and newspapers, to explore the development of propaganda and discussions about elite and national identity. A consideration of all three events emphasises the changing nature of satirical prints and the portrayals of elites within them throughout the eighteenth century.

From examining caricatures produced during these three key events, it becomes clear that one of the greatest conflicts of the period was between the identity of social elites and the shifting ideals of patriotic, national identity. Patriotism and national identity have been examined by scholars of both eighteenth-century Britain and France in recent years, with scholars such as Linda Colley and David Bell emphasising the complex, shifting movements from national sentiment to a stronger sense of patriotism in each nation at the end of the century.¹² This chapter argues that caricatures are a vital source for analysing the phenomenon of national identity in this period, especially as it pertained to the elite of each

¹² Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (5th edition, London, 2009); Bell, *Cult of the Nation*.

country. In French studies, Bell, Peter Campbell, and Edmond Dziembowski have each highlighted the Seven Years' War as a defining moment in the birth of modern patriotism in eighteenth-century France, a development which was facilitated by the emerging public sphere' of the 1750s.¹³ While Bell and Campbell have demonstrated the ways in which royal propaganda attempted to shape French patriotism for its own glory, this chapter instead considers how satirical works depicted a distinction between elite and national identities. As shall be demonstrated, in France this attitude was deeply influenced by times of war and peace. The early 1790s, for example, saw a significant increase in attacks on elite identity, as the noble émigrés were held up as an example of the treachery of the aristocracy.

Studies of British or English national identity by Colley and J.C.D. Clark have emphasised the importance of Anglicanism and a sense of the Roman Catholic 'other' in the formation of a discernible national identity in the mid-eighteenth century.¹⁴ Colley argues that this popular attitude also spread to condemnation of the British elite's 'Francophilia', and this chapter explores this argument by examining how these attitudes were expressed in caricatures published from 1756 to the close of the century.¹⁵ Historians such as Emma Vincent Macleod and Tamara Hunt have drawn attention to the prevalence of loyalist associations and ideals in Britain in the eighteenth century, particularly during the 1790s, when the British constitution and monarchy were viewed as integral aspects of British identity.¹⁶ This chapter argues that caricatures produced in the 1790s were as likely to mock the British monarchy as they were to laud it, while politicians such as William Pitt and

¹³ Peter R. Campbell, 'The Language of Patriotism in France, 1750–1770,' *E-France: An Online Journal of French Studies*, 1 (2007), pp. 1-43; Peter R. Campbell, 'The Politics of Patriotism in France (1770–1788),' *French History*, 24 (2010), pp. 550-75; Bell, *Cult of the Nation*; Edmond Dziembowski, *Un Nouveau Patriotisme Français, 1750–1770: La France Face à la Puissance Anglaise à l'Époque de la Guerre de Sept Ans* (Oxford, 1998).

¹⁴ Colley, *Britons*; J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1660-1832* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 2000).

¹⁵ Colley, *Britons*, pp. 88-90.

¹⁶ Emma Vincent Macleod, *A War of Ideas: British Attitudes to the Wars Against Revolutionary France 1792-1802* (Aldershot, 1998); Tamara Hunt, *Defining John Bull; Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003).

Charles James Fox were repeatedly portrayed as enemies of the British constitution, and by extension, of the rights of the British public. By expanding the timescale of analysis to cover a period of fifty years, this chapter will add a new dimension to scholarship on British and French national identity in the eighteenth century, one which considers the place of elite culture and the value of caricatures as propaganda.

Part One: the Seven Years' War

Admiral Byng- trial by public opinion

Satirical images formed a relatively small portion of propaganda produced in Britain during the Seven Years' War, with newspapers and pamphlets possessing a louder voice in supplying the populace with information about the developing conflict.¹⁷ Nonetheless, dozens of prints from the period have survived in the British Museum's archives, and they provide important information about how satirical prints functioned at this earlier point in the medium's history. The middle of the century saw an increase in popular urban opinion which existed beyond the official British political sphere, and I argue that the severity of the Seven Years' War contributed to this trend.¹⁸

A prime example of the government's appeal to popular opinion during the Seven Years' War was occasioned by the loss of Minorca in 1756. This tragedy encouraged the Prime Minister, the Duke of Newcastle, to commission propagandistic pamphlets and newspaper articles which placed the blame firmly on the Admiral, John Byng, who was court-martialled in 1757 after a long campaign of public denigration.¹⁹ Such was the public

¹⁷ See Robert Spector, *English Literary Periodicals and the Climate of Opinion During the Seven Years' War* (The Hague, 1966).

¹⁸ James van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 33.

¹⁹ Spector, *English Literary Periodicals*, p. 17.

outrage against Admiral Byng that he was burnt in effigy across the country, his effigies dressed in fashionable clothing, an act which was intended to emphasise his connection to elite Francophilia.²⁰ Reports of the Admiral's orders to surrender Minorca to the French were viewed as distinctly unpatriotic, and downright traitorous. A ditty appeared in the *London Evening Post*, contrasting Admiral Byng's cowardly attitudes with that of the Lieutenant-Governor of Minorca, Sir William Blakeley, who was widely commended for his courageous defence of the island. In the ditty, Blakeley repeatedly references the King, his pride in his British identity, and distrust of the French and French culture; a direct contrast to the popular perception of Admiral Byng.²¹

The *Monitor*, a mouthpiece of the Opposition, criticised the Ministry for giving naval command to 'a woman, to an androgene or to any creature of the epicene gender.'²² Admiral Byng's perceived fashionability was particularly targeted by critics; here, his ability to command is tied up in questions of gender identity, a classic trope of wartime propaganda in Britain, which often warned of 'feminization' of the contemporary society as result of widespread Francophilia among the elite.²³ Thus it appears that the Admiral's reputation as a gentleman became bound up with tense questions about the relationship between French and British elites in wartime.²⁴

Whether or not satirical artists were directly in the pay of the ministry during this scandal remains unknown, but dozens of images took the accusations of cowardice and dereliction of duty on the part of Admiral Byng as inspiration for their own work. For

²⁰ Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 189.

²¹ *London Evening Post*, London, 15 July 1756.

²² *The Monitor*, London, 3 July 1756, p. 6.

²³ Colley, *Britons*, p.88.

²⁴ Stephen Moore argues that the British press were more concerned with the ministry's relationship with France than they were about a 'feminised' British elite. Moore, "'A Nation of Harlequins'?: Politics and Masculinity in Mid-Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of British Studies* 49 (2010), pp. 514-539.

example, 'Cowardice Rewarded or the Devil will have his due' (fig.4.1) shows the disgraced admiral being claimed by the Devil, as Justice and Neptune turn their backs on him, signalling his exclusion both from the Royal Navy and the favour of the British legal system. A not dissimilar image (fig.4.2.) reiterates Admiral Byng's spiritual and legal damnation, but it also highlights the significant cost of his actions, as demons and Frenchmen destroy statues of Britannia and empty the British Treasury. This image makes clear the division between Britain and France during the conflict, as well as emphasising that state-sponsored propaganda could filter into other mediums than those originally intended, by dint of the fact that caricaturists wished to express popular contemporary viewpoints as well as shape them. In both images, Admiral Byng is depicted in French-style clothing, with a long embroidered coat and curled, powdered wig; clearly, discussions about the Admiral's passion for French fashion and culture had crossed from textual and verbal discourse to satirical images.

Summary

The case of Admiral Byng is significant because it sheds light on cultural attitudes towards the elite in Britain, and the role of caricature in expressing these attitudes. The prints of Admiral Byng, alongside pamphlets and newspaper articles, underline the British government's desire to appeal to public opinion during a critical point in a serious conflict. By using the admiral as a scapegoat, the ministry hoped to avoid culpability for the humiliating loss of Minorca. However, the caricatures above emphasise the extent to which popular responses to Admiral Byng's failure centred on his social identity and aspirations. Portrayed as an urbane "gentleman" (rather than as a hale mariner), Admiral Byng was classified as a Francophile, a trait shared by many members of the social elite in the period. By emphasising Admiral Byng's refined clothing and manners, caricaturists called into

question those elite individuals who, like him, apparently shared a love of all things French. The popular responses to Admiral Byng's case suggest a tension between a certain form of elite identity and emergent British national identity at this time, where the latter relied upon the martial power believed to be a traditional aspect of British culture.

The Seven Years' War and the British government

The case of Admiral Byng underlines how the British government of 1757 actively participated in the burgeoning public sphere through the use of visual and textual propaganda. The two-party system of British politics meant, however, that the government itself could become a victim of visual propaganda, as the print 'Without' (fig.4.3) reveals. The image was published in the *London Evening Post* in 1757, a Tory newspaper, which suggests that this deeply negative image of the government's response to French incursions in 1757 was financed by the opposition in an attempt to undermine the ministry.²⁵ The print aims to underline the tremulous state of the British nation: American colonists are shown under attack by French and Indians, British nobles and politicians are portrayed as thieves, while soldiers and sailors are left idle due to a lack of concerted organisation in government. Thus, while the image communicates the tension between the Tory and Whig parties, it also serves to highlight discontent at the ruling order at the opening of the Seven Years' War. The Opposition's criticism of the government's response to the conflict appears to have spilled over into an allegory which attacks a wider facet of elite society, that is blamed for negligence and outright criminality. The fact that this image circulated in a highly successful (and affordable) newspaper would have ensured its widespread reach to the British public,

²⁵ Bob Harris, 'The London Evening Post and Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Politics,' *The English Historical Review*, 110: 439 (Nov., 1995), p. 1132.

many of whom were no doubt troubled by this imaginary version of contemporary affairs which presented such a negative view of society's leaders.

Propaganda flourished during the Seven Years' War, but it also continued even after hostilities came to an end. The Peace of Paris, signed in 1763, was so controversial that the new Prime Minister, the Earl of Bute, went so far as to create pamphlets and newspapers whose sole purpose was to support his ministry and its role in the peace treaty.²⁶

Contemporary commentators were aware of this move of ministerial propaganda, as publications such as the *North Briton* and the *Patriot* appeared to counteract Bute's creations. Satirical artists knowingly commented on Bute's shameless self-promotion, as demonstrated in 'The hungry mob of scribblers and etchers' (fig.4.4), which shows the Prime Minister scattering coins to his 'mob' of loyal writers. Evidently, the anonymous artist behind this print had no intention of becoming part of Bute's loyal 'mob', and as we have seen in Chapter One, the Earl became a favourite target for caricaturists during his premiership.

The Peace also encouraged satirical artists and writers to consider their erstwhile enemies, the French, and in particular the Bourbon royal family. 'The political brokers or an auction a la mode de Paris' (fig.4.5) is a perfect example, as the image shows negotiations on the Treaty of Paris. On one side, British ministers debate among themselves and look to Britannia for guidance, on the other side of the image, the French King Louis XV is shown surrounded by chattering courtiers, with his powerful mistress, Madame de Pompadour leading him by the nose. John Richard Moores has argued that British notions about the French as a people often hinged on negative perceptions of their Catholicism and their absolutist monarchy, aspects which alienated them to Britons who were proud of their Protestantism and constitutional monarchy.²⁷ This caricature suggests a likeness between the

²⁶ Spector, *English Literary Periodicals*, p. 95.

²⁷ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 113.

absolutism of the Bourbons and the monarchy of George III, as the motif of Louis XV making unsound political decisions at the behest of his mistress could be read as a jab at the new King George III being led astray by his advisor, Prime Minister Bute.²⁸ At the very least, the image suggests a certain dissatisfaction with the conclusion of the Seven Years' War, proving that Bute's propaganda was not as successful or extensive as he may have wished.

Summary

The Seven Years' War was a significant moment in the production of propaganda by the British government, which found itself having to justify defeats and peace treaties to the emergent urban public sphere. The caricatures examined here emphasise the ways in which politicians tried to branch out into propaganda, but it is evident that caricatures could also work against this propaganda, highlighting its fallibility. The images examined highlight contemporary attitudes towards elite culture and political power, which, when they were deemed inimical to the wellbeing of society as a whole, were associated in popular discourse with French fashion and tyranny.

French Propaganda and the Seven Years' War

Just as propaganda flourished in Britain during the Seven Years' War, it also abounded in France during the conflict.²⁹ This determined outpouring of state propaganda has been identified as an attempt to enhance national sentiments among the second estate in the face of enduring *anglomanie*, which was prevalent among the French nobility in the 1750s

²⁸ O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 204.

²⁹ Bell, *The Cult of the Nation*, p. 83.

and 1760s.³⁰ Literature produced during the conflict attacked everything from English attitudes, to their turbulent political system and the separation of the sexes in polite society.³¹ That this anti-English literature was directed by the royal ministry did not escape the notice of commentators such as Mouffle D'Angerville, who scathingly attacked the ministry's desperate attempts to produce works which appeared to be genuinely and overtly patriotic.³² One such publication, *Les sauvages de l'Europe*, paints a picture of the anti-Gallicism which characterised British attitudes in the period.³³ The text goes to extreme lengths to refute any idea of the English people as sage or wise, but the notion of a refined, frivolous 'national character' of France is also a key plot point.³⁴ Concerns about national values thrived in Britain as well as France during wartime, but the Seven Years' War appears to have brought with it a heavy scrutiny of the French character, and this is reflected in both visual and textual satirical sources.

Louis XV's embroiderer Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin was deeply inspired by the Seven Years' War, creating dozens of images which commented on the conflict and the key players at Court who instigated policy. Although not a published work, the *Livre de Caricatures* offers insight into contemporary perceptions of the conflict from a non-elite individual whose prestigious position at court coloured his perception of contemporary events. Echoing British concerns about elite refinement and martial values, is the image 'Ce chevalier est si-bette quil faut quil soit beau' (fig.4.6) which depicts a beautifully caparisoned knight and horse apparently setting off for battle. The precise date of the image's creation is unknown, but it is feasible that the image commented on the Seven Years' War, which was the largest conflict that France entered into whilst Saint-Aubin created his *Livre de*

³⁰ Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, pp. 92-3.

³¹ Bell, 'Jumonville's Death', p. 49.

³² Mouffle d'Angerville, *Vie Privée de Louis XV ou Principaux Événements, Particularités et Anecdotes de son Règne* (4 vols, London, 1781), vol.III, pp. 84-5.

³³ Colley, *Britons*, p. 36.

³⁴ Robert-Martin Lesuire, *Les Sauvages de l'Europe* (Berlin, 1760), p. 1; Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, p. 15.

Caricatures between c.1745 and 1775. Although certainly not a piece of propaganda, the *Livre de Caricatures* demonstrates public interest in the Seven Years' War, even as royal ministers struggled to control the information which was imparted to ordinary French citizens.

Above all, the *Livre de Caricatures* contains many images which emphasise the extreme impact that court favourites could have on France's military forces; an aspect of French political culture which consistently drew censure from contemporary commentators. The journalist Edmond Barbier reports gossip circulating Paris in August 1757 after the Comte d'Estrées was relieved of his duty as Commander of the King's army following a resounding victory on the battlefield. Barbier's record not only demonstrates how sensitive military information circulated freely in the capital, but he also underlines the public dissatisfaction at d'Estrées being overthrown in favour of the Prince de Soubise, who was rumoured to be a crony of the King's mistress.³⁵ The people of Paris were right to be concerned about this courtly manoeuvring: Soubise's forces were crushed in battle at Rosbach, a humiliating event mocked by Saint-Aubin in 'L'ane de Rosback' (fig.3.2) which depicts Soubise as an ass with red-lacquered hooves, a nod to the Prince's identity as a cosseted court noble.³⁶ The broken sword lying on the ground and the laurel wreath on the ass's head are evidence of Saint-Aubin's mockery of Soubise's pretensions to military *gloire*.³⁷

Another defeat for the French, this time at Krefeld in June 1758, was also widely attributed to the influence of Mme de Pompadour, whose 'creature' the Comte de Clermont

³⁵ Edmond Barbier, *Chronique de la Régence et du Règne de Louis XV (1718-1763), ou, Journal de Barbier* (Paris, 1857) vol.6, p. 548

³⁶ Julian Swann, 'Politics: Louis XV' in William Doyle (ed.), *Old Regime France, 1648-1788* (Oxford, 2001), p. 214.

³⁷ Valerie Mainz, 'Gloire, Subversively', in Colin Jones, Juliet Carey and Emily Richardson (eds) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures: Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 2012), p. 175.

had been promoted to Commander General of the French Army in Bohemia in 1757. 'L'Eglise est Prévoyante' (fig.4.7) not only emphasises the Comte's relationship with Pompadour, who literally leads him to the battlefield, but Saint-Aubin highlights the unsuitability of this military promotion by pointing to the Comte's former position as a bishop, as evidenced by his crozier, on which hang rabbits and birds, suggesting the Comte's proper place is in the church or with the royal hunting party. Even before Clermont's disgraceful dismissal in 1758, Barbier recorded a bon mot circulating Paris, which suggested that Mme de Pompadour should cease appointing military generals, and instead focus on appointing farmers general, the status of her benefactor and father-in-law.³⁸

Although the French government attempted to regulate gossip in Paris through censorship and the official *Gazette de France*, these private commentaries by Saint-Aubin and Barbier show that non-noble citizens of the capital were capable of gathering significant information about the war which was not included in official, government-sanctioned publications.³⁹ That courtiers and royal mistresses were consistently singled out for censure is perhaps reflective of rivalries at Court, particularly between Mme de Pompadour and the King's family, but it may also highlight popular desire to assign blame for failures on the Court nobility, without directly implicating the King himself. This tendency to avoid direct criticism of the King is perhaps a result of the concerted effort of the wartime propaganda to emphasise the impressive power of the French monarch, who embodied the French state.⁴⁰

Summary

³⁸ Barbier, *Chronique de la Régence*, vol.4, pp. 244-5.

³⁹ Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution*, (Oxford, 2009), p. 28.

⁴⁰ Jay M. Smith, *Nobility Reimagined: the Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-century France*, (Ithaca, 2005), p. 144.

French caricatures are limited during the Seven Years' War, but there is a distinct cross-over between Saint-Aubin's images and records of writers such as Barbier. It is evident from this material that the general public were deeply interested not only in the outcome of the conflicts, but also in the individuals involved, and the court factions which dictated so much of what occurred on the battlefield. Bell has emphasised the extent to which the French monarchy attempted to control propaganda during the Seven Years' War, by encouraging public idolisation of heroic Frenchmen.⁴¹ It is clear, however, that popular discourse on the conflict took on a life of its own, and the position of elite members of court were at the centre of this popular discourse because of their perceived influence on matters of State. Failures on the battlefield reflected negatively on courtiers and noblemen in the army, and Saint-Aubin's caricatures did not hold back from expressing the idea that these elites were letting down the nation and the Second Estate as a whole.

Summary of Part One

The caricatures examined in this section highlight the existence of a discernible urban public sphere in France and Britain between 1756 and 1763, one which discussed both the Seven Years' War and the elite individuals who were involved in it. These popular discussions endured despite attempts by both the French crown and the British government to stifle criticisms of martial or state policy. Figures like Admiral Byng, the Earl of Bute, the Prince de Soubise and Abbé Clermont, acted as cyphers for criticism and discussion of the conflict in popular discourse. Only in satirical attacks on Admiral Byng and the British government can we see explicit suggestions that elite individuals or institutions were directly harming the nation as a result of their incompetence or unpatriotic behaviour. However, unpublished

⁴¹ Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, p. 123.

depictions of French nobles involved in the conflict were intrinsically critical of the national sentiment of those individuals, as the historic role of the Second Estate in France demanded that nobleman serve the nation on the battlefield. Although caricatures played a minor role, the turbulence of the Seven Years' War made possible discussions about the place of elites in contemporary British and French society.

Part Two: the Commercial (Eden) Treaty

Introduction

In contrast to the conflict of the Seven Years' War, which saw Britain and France on opposing sides, the Commercial Treaty of 1786 was intended to establish a sense of mutual cooperation between the two countries. Although a very different kind of Franco-British event, the Commercial Treaty also invited a great deal of popular discourse, much of which focussed on the socio-political elites who had made the Treaty possible. The Treaty, also referred to as the Eden Treaty in historiography as an homage to its creator, William Eden, has been analysed by both French and Anglophone scholars since the beginning of the twentieth century.⁴² The vast majority of these studies focus on the economic impact of the Treaty, particularly on France and its declaration of bankruptcy in late 1787, an event which launched the calling of the Estates General and the Revolution. The economic details of the Treaty are not the point of consideration here; rather the perception of the Treaty by French and British contemporaries reveals important information about the public sphere in both nations, and the recurring argument that the elites of each nation might have produced the Treaty at the expense of the people.

⁴² See for example F. Dumas, *Étude sur la Traité du Commerce de 1786 Entre la France et l'Angleterre* (Toulouse. 1904); J. Holland Rose, 'The Franco-British Commercial Treaty, 1786', *English Historical Review* 23 (1908), pp. 709-24.

Martial rivalry endured between France and Britain for much of the eighteenth century, yet this did not prevent elites from each nation forming bonds of friendship and mutual admiration. The upper-class tradition of the Grand Tour in Britain saw scores of young men travelling to the Continent, with Paris considered one of the most important destinations. The Grand Tour was blamed for the ‘foppish’ style emergent among aristocratic youths in the 1760s, whose outlandish fashions drew criticism from commentators who saw such extravagance as counterproductive to the British spirit.⁴³ Indeed, it was not uncommon for the very national identity of these Francophile young men to be called into question.⁴⁴ A contemporary commentator, John Brown, believed that the French deliberately lured British men to their nation in order to corrupt them and destroy Britain.⁴⁵ In a study on Francophilia, Robin Eagles acknowledges the seriousness of contemporary claims that certain members of the political and social elite displayed a fondness for French culture.⁴⁶ These claims appear in commentaries on the Commercial Treaty, and again during the Wars of Revolutionary France.

The passion which British elites appeared to hold for all things French was not one-sided. The British vogue for French fashion in the 1760s and 1770s was mirrored by the emergence of *anglomanie* among the French elite in the 1780s. Josephine Grieder, in the most extensive study of *anglomanie*, argues that the French *anglomane* (male or female) was immediately recognisable by their dress, which mimicked the perceived relaxed elegance of British fashion. The simple *robe a l’anglaise* replaced elaborate gowns at Court, while gentleman preferred the *redingote* and *chapeau a la jockey*.⁴⁷ This passionate interest in all

⁴³ Colley, *Britons*, p. 88.

⁴⁴ Eagles, *Francophilia*, p. 140.

⁴⁵ John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners & Principles of the Times* (London, 1757), p. 144.

⁴⁶ Eagles, *Francophilia*, p. 7.

⁴⁷ Grieder, *Anglomania in France*, pp. 11-2.

things English extended to the most pre-eminent elites in the land: the Duc d'Orléans, the King's brother the Comte d'Artois and the Queen herself were all known *anglomanes*.⁴⁸

Even during the stressful negotiations prior to the signing of the Treaty, Marie-Antoinette continued to devote herself to English fashions and expensive British-made fabrics, a decision which a visiting British noblewoman, Lady Craven, claimed led courtiers to say that she 'does not love the French, while for foreigners she betrays a strong partiality.'⁴⁹ The fabric one wore, and the manner in which they wore it, could make a powerful statement about allegiances: as the Queen of France, Marie-Antoinette's *anglomanie* took on a more sinister, political note, and was interpreted as anti-French. Even if a noble or royal individual only wore a piece of clothing associated with their nation's great rival, it could be interpreted as unpatriotic, and responses to the Eden Treaty underline how sensitive popular discourse in the 1780s was to ideas of elite national sentiment.

Concerns about the relationship between France and Britain came to the fore in contemporary pamphlets and memoirs which circulated widely in each nation. As Orville Murphy has demonstrated in his study of the memoirs of Pierre Samuel DuPont de Nemours (1739-1817), a French architect of the Commercial Treaty, critics of the Treaty called on the historical Anglo-French rivalry, as well as recent conflicts like the Seven Years' War.⁵⁰ This argument is certainly supported by both literary and visual sources which emerged in the French and British public spheres shortly after the Treaty's implementation in 1787.

⁴⁸ Elizabeth Craven, *Letters from the Right Honourable Lady Craven, to his Serene Highness the Margrave of Anspach, During Her Travels Through France, Germany and Russia in 1785 and 1786*, (London, 1814), p. 3; Kimberley Chrisman-Campbell, *Fashion Victims: Dress at the Court of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette* (New Haven, 2015), p. 221.

⁴⁹ Craven, *Letters*, p. 45.

⁵⁰ Orville Murphy, 'DuPont de Nemours and the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of 1786', *Economic History Review*, 19:3 (Dec., 1966), p. 577.

British responses to the Commercial Treaty

In Britain, popular responses to the Treaty appeared in newspapers, pamphlets, and caricatures. Dennis O'Bryen, a playwright and political pamphleteer, dedicated a pamphlet of over one hundred pages to finding fault with the Eden Treaty, arguing that 'in the whole realm there is not one person of any age or sex whom this treaty does not deeply concern and should not sensibly interest.'⁵¹ After all, O'Bryen firmly believed that British identity and success was bound up in trade, and any commercial agreement with the nation's 'natural' enemy could only inhibit British achievements on the world stage.⁵² Significantly, O'Bryen drew his readers' attention to the political situation of Britain; he expressed a certain scepticism about the ability of the Treaty 'to transcend all partie [sic] considerations', and mused that corruption among leading politicians is entirely possible.⁵³

In Britain, popular disbelief in the ability of Whigs and Tories to work together for the common good was also expressed in a caricature by James Gillray, published in 1787. In 'Anticipation, or the approaching fate of the French commercial treaty' (fig.4.7) members of the House of Commons are depicted as a pack of hounds, tearing the Treaty to shreds, an image which not only depicts well-known figures like Charles James Fox and William Pitt in a negative light, but which also underlines the divisions within the political elite of the nation. When the Treaty was debated in Parliament in early 1787, Charles James Fox vehemently argued against its implementation, claiming that it would only strengthen the French economy.⁵⁴ In his pamphlet, Dennis O'Bryen echoed this argument from the Whig leader,

⁵¹ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Gail Baylis, "O'Bryen, Dennis (1755–1832), playwright and political pamphleteer." (23 Sep. 2004) <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-20475> [accessed 21 Oct. 2020]. D. O'Bryen, *A View of the Treaty of Commerce with France: Signed at Versailles, September 20, 1786, by Mr. Eden* (London, 1787), p. vii.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. iv.

⁵⁴ William Otto Henderson, 'The Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of 1786', in the *Economic History Review*, 10:1 (1957), p. 109.

and utilised established stereotypes of French ‘luxuries or superfluities’ to argue that the Treaty would not be of genuine advantage to the ordinary British people, who had no interest in such things; the implication being that the Treaty was for the benefit of the elite, whose Francophilia was well known.⁵⁵ William Eden himself replied to Dennis O’Byren’s pamphlet, agreeing that it was the right of the British people to discuss the Treaty at large, but he challenged the idea that the British must ‘persecute the French nation in every quarter of the globe’, and praised the fact that British and French ministers were working towards a solution to years of warmongering.⁵⁶

A satirical print published in response to Fox’s objections, ‘Don Carlo. Portuguese Plenipo-extraordinary’ (fig.4.8) is indicative of the Ministry’s desire to combat negative publicity directed at the Treaty. In the image, Fox wears a hat inscribed ‘wishing cap’ as he stabs at the French Treaty, while a roll of paper under his arm reads ‘Sketch of appointment[s] to take place on throwing out the Ministr[y] with the French [treaty]’ thus implying a plot to replace the Ministry by slandering their Treaty with France. Another print produced in 1787, ‘The Chamber of Commerce, or L’Assemblée des Not-ables Anglois’ (fig.4.9), further implicates the Whigs in attempts to stall or throw out the Treaty. In the image, a group of men with asses’ heads sit around a table, signing and reviewing documents relating to the Commercial Treaty. In the lower left corner of the image, a figure bearing a resemblance to the standard caricatured image of Fox grasps at strings attached to the noses of the asses. The image suggests that the Whigs had attempted to unduly influence members of various industries and chambers of commerce to oppose the Treaty, and although Henderson emphasises that this tactic was not successful, it did generate a petition against the

⁵⁵ O’Byren, *A View of the Treaty*, p. 40.

⁵⁶ William Eden, *A Short Vindication of the French Treaty: from the Charges Brought Against it in a Late Pamphlet, Entitled, ‘A View of the Treaty of Commerce with France, Signed at Versailles, Sept. 28, by Mr Eden’* (London, 1787), p. 1, 48.

Treaty.⁵⁷ In response to this supposed political division, an open letter from ‘a Manchester Manufacturer’ excoriated Fox and his supporters for opposing a Treaty which the manufacturer and his associates had indicated their full support for.⁵⁸ Although the author critiques a now lost pamphlet entitled ‘A compleat [sic] investigation of Mr Eden’s treaty’ as ‘a production conceived in faction’, it is exceptionally difficult to ascertain the provenance of the open letter, which could have been sponsored by the British government. Nonetheless, from all of these sources, it is evident that the divided politics of Britain remained at the forefront of popular thought, even as the country considered a commercial alliance with its old enemy.

Although British debates about the Treaty largely centred on a battle of wills between the Tories and the Whigs, caricaturists chose to implicate another group of the elite who played a role in the Treaty: the monarchy. The artist behind ‘The commercial treaty; or John Bull changing beef and pudding for frogs and soup maigre!’ (fig.4.10) utilises national stereotypes in order to emphasise the unevenness of the Treaty: while the French benefit from hearty British fare such as beef, the French can only offer up frogs and soup in return. In the image, George III and his wife Charlotte hand over British delicacies to the French king and queen, whose likenesses are based entirely on stereotypical views of how the French elite looked.⁵⁹ While a gaunt, sinister version of Louis XVI presents the British monarch with a small platter of frog’s legs, Marie-Antoinette stands behind him, with a monkey perched on her back, a popular symbol for French deceit and sexual deviance in the period.⁶⁰ Although a humorous depiction of both royal couples, the image ultimately functions as a means to

⁵⁷ Henderson, ‘The Anglo-French Commercial Treaty’, p. 109.

⁵⁸ Anon., *A Letter from a Manchester Manufacturer to the Right Honourable Charles James Fox, on His Political Opposition to the Commercial Treaty with France* (Manchester, 1787).

⁵⁹ John Richard Moores points to a sustained stereotype of the thin, gaunt Frenchman in prints from the eighteenth century. It was not until the French Revolution that caricatures began attempting to depict a strong likeness of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette. See Moores, *Representations of France*.

⁶⁰ Diana Donald, *Picturing Animals in Britain 1750-1850* (London, 2007), p. 105.

undermine the advantages of the Treaty for British interests, while suggesting that the Bourbon royal family cannot be trusted politically.

Another image, 'The treaty of commerce or new coalition' (fig.4.11) again depicts the monarchy in both nations, by depicting George III and Louis XVI toasting to their new alliance, as their countrymen reap the fruits of the Treaty: French courtiers indulge in a traditional English roast, whilst British politicians struggle to catch frogs for their supper. What is interesting about these images is the fact that neither George III or Louis XVI are mentioned in any textual sources critiquing the Treaty in France or Britain. In both nations, the focus is almost entirely on ministerial action, yet these artists have decided to emphasise the role that the monarchy inevitably played in the making of the Treaty, with both images implying a level of cooperation which may have gone beyond notions of national benefit.

France and the Commercial Treaty

Extant French source material for the Eden Treaty is not as abundant as its British counterpart; given the enduring role of censorship in French society at the time, this is to be expected. However, the defensive *Memoires* of DuPont de Nemours indicate that aversion to the proposed Treaty did exist in 1786 and 1787.⁶¹ British visitors to France, such as Arthur Young, made note of popular discontents in certain industries; Young recorded the violent reactions of Abbeville woollen tradesmen to the Treaty, while Eden noted that a French acquaintance had informed him of riots in Normandy and Bordeaux, which were instigated by manufacturers afraid of an influx of British pottery and cotton.⁶² The Chamber of

⁶¹ See Murphy, 'DuPont de Nemours.'

⁶² Arthur Young, *Travels in France During the Years 1787, 1788, 1789* (ed. M. Betham Edwards) (London, 1890), p. 8; R.J. Eden and G. Hogge, *The Journal and Correspondence of William Eden, Lord Auckland*, (4 vols, London, 1861-2) vol.1, p. 277.

Commerce of Normandy was particularly vocal, and published a resolution against the Treaty in 1788.⁶³ Indeed, Henderson argues that popular French discontent was so marked that it influenced historiography of the treaty, which has often accepted the French point of view that the Treaty was far more beneficial to Britain.⁶⁴ However, most of the French criticisms of the Treaty were published after the calling of the Estates General in August 1788, when the king invited the French people to present to him their grievances.⁶⁵ One such example, composed by Edouard Boyetet, a *conseiller d'Etat* and former General Commissioner of Commerce referred to the treaty as 'disastrous' for France, and revealed the 'sinister operations of the authors and co-conspirators of the treaty'.⁶⁶ Although Boyetet does not explicitly name those individuals, all of the authors of the Treaty were royal ministers of the Second Estate appointed by the King, thus implying that these elite individuals has organised a treaty which damaged the French economy.⁶⁷

Despite a scarcity of contemporary source material at least two satirical images commenting on the Treaty which were published prior to 1789 have survived at the Bibliothèque nationale de France. The date of production for the first image, 'Un bon averti en vaut deux' (fig.4.12) is uncertain, but analysis of the content suggests that it was created between 1783 and 1787. In this image, the allegorical figure of France is charmed by figures representing commerce and empire as a woman representing England approaches with a piece of parchment stating 'Milord offre des richesses', most likely a direct reference to the Eden Treaty. The figure of England has turned its back on a woman representing the United States, suggesting that British interest in cultivating a commercial treaty with France was a

⁶³ Anon., *Observations de la Chambre de Commerce de Normandie sur le Trait...Entre la France et l'Angleterre* (1788).

⁶⁴ Henderson, 'The Anglo-French Commercial Treaty', p. 110.

⁶⁵ Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, p. 72.

⁶⁶ Edouard Boyetet, *Recueil de Divers Mémoires Relatifs au Traité de Commerce avec l'Angleterre* (Versailles, 1789), pp. 1-2.

⁶⁷ Orville Murphy, *The Diplomatic Retreat of France and Public Opinion on the Eve of the French Revolution, 1783-1789* (Washington D.C, 1998), p. 141.

direct result of the loss of the American colonies- a loss in which France played a pivotal role. The overall message of the image is one of suspicion and concern about France being taken advantage of by a rival commercial empire, and as Marie Donaghay has argued, the notion of France as a 'victim' of the Treaty was in fact a condemnation of the actions of the nation's government, which was seen to have failed France.⁶⁸

The idea of France being victimised by the Treaty is the motif of another print, published and circulated in August 1788 (fig.4.13). The image shows the figure of Mercury representing commerce being hanged in a town square, before a sea of onlookers of varying social classes, with many wearing English-style clothing. Commerce's hands are bound by a piece of paper reading 'traite de commerce', while the scroll hanging from his feet includes words such as 'privileges' and 'droits', almost certainly condemning the ministers responsible for the Treaty and its perceived impact on the French economy.

The Eden Treaty was formally dissolved when France and Britain went to war in 1793, yet resentments continued to linger in France for many years. A pamphlet published in 1797 argued that France had absolutely no need to engage in trade agreements with other nations, as the country was capable of being entirely self-sufficient. However, the author admitted that the nation would trade with nations that did not 'try to deceive us with diplomatic and mercantile subtleties', and thus France would avoid 'being surprised by unequal conditions, presented under the appearance of equitable reciprocity, as in the treaty of 1786.'⁶⁹ The overall message of the pamphlet emphasises that the 'old' way of conducting trade agreements and peace treaties with other nations almost invariably left France vulnerable, because the royal ministers organising these diplomatic and political agreements

⁶⁸ Marie Donaghay, 'The Best Laid Plans: French Execution of the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of 1786,' in *European History Quarterly*, 14 (1984), p. 402.

⁶⁹ Louis-Pierre Anquetil, *Motifs des Guerres et des Traités de Paix de la France Pendant les Règnes de Louis XIV, Louis XV et Louis XVI, Depuis la Paix de Westphalie, en 1648, Jusqu'à celle de Versailles, en 1783* (Paris, 1797).

were not concerned with doing what was best for the nation, but rather what was best for themselves. Intended as a peaceful Treaty between hostile nations, the Eden Treaty became a source of discontent which threw into relief societal and economic issues caused by the French and British socio-political elite.

Summary of Part Two

The Commercial Treaty emerged in a period of heightened cultural connections between the French and British elite, and this aspect was commented on by contemporaries. In both nations, the Treaty raised questions about the ruling elite's intentions, and their ability to consider the needs of the country as a whole. Accusations of elite corruption and cultural 'betrayal' were seen as the core causes of the Treaty, and its implementation unleashed a significant outpouring of contestation in both nations. By this period, the freedom to comment on political treatises was possible in both Britain and France, which is a significant departure from the Seven Years' War. The influence of caricatures had grown, especially in France, as we start to see a trickle of prints emerging in 1788. This trickle would become a torrent during the Wars of Revolutionary France, when the elite were placed under the microscope like never before.

Part Three: British Caricature and the French Revolutionary Wars

Introduction

The shaky alliance that had been formed between Britain and France by the much-debated Eden Treaty was dissolved in 1793, when France declared war on Britain. The Wars of Revolutionary France marked not only a diplomatic shift in Franco-British relations, but

also a change in the way in which the citizens of each nation could express their attitudes to events. Although published caricatures had been an important facet of the British public sphere for decades, the 1790s saw a surge in caricature production. This surge may have been facilitated by the pivotal role which the elite played in the production of British caricature during the war era; not only by financing and commissioning satirical prints in line with the Ministry or the Opposition's views, but also as important figures depicted in the prints themselves. Frank O'Gorman has argued that the Wars of Revolutionary France gave the British nobility a stage on which to demonstrate their chivalry and their contributions to society.⁷⁰ As will be shown here, however, their position on this stage could have negative as well as positive results.

Francophilia, Fox and the Whigs

Wartime propaganda in Britain was largely shaped by the party politics of the nation; the Pitt administration was in power throughout the Wars with Revolutionary France, and the Opposition Whigs, led by Charles James Fox, publicly and repeatedly opposed the Ministry's response to the war and to the French Republic. The Whigs consistently challenged the Ministry in regard to the reason for declaring war on the French Republic; while the Ministry insisted it was ideological, the Whigs saw it as evidence of corruption in the British establishment.⁷¹ As a result of their opinions on revolutionary France, the Whigs- and Fox in particular- attracted the interest of caricaturists, some of whom may have been paid by the Ministry, and others who almost certainly worked independently to produce prints which reflected and shaped the public sentiment of the moment. In 'Alecto and her train' (fig.4.14) a

⁷⁰ O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century*, p. 332.

⁷¹ Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, p. 92.

print produced even before the outbreak of war, the Whigs are depicted as a dangerous group attempting to recruit the stereotypical Englishman John Bull to their radical cause.

After the declaration of war in 1793, satirical prints of Fox appear to increase in hostility: no longer is Fox an assistant recruiter for the Revolution, but in several images he has traded his British identity for allegiance to the French republic. In 'A Democrat' (fig.4.15) Fox is entirely transformed into a *sans culotte* of Paris, his hands coated with blood as he happily sings the *Ça ira*. In another image from 1793 (fig.4.16), Fox, along with a fellow Whig, Richard Sheridan, and the radical theologian Dr Joseph Priestley, wait upon the notorious French General Charles François Dumouriez at a fictional state dinner. Each wearing *bonnets rouges*, Fox and his coterie present Dumouriez with three significant dishes: a pie with a bishop's hat, a withered crown, and the head of William Pitt. Although overly dramatic and slightly humorous in tone, there is an important message about attitudes to radicalism in the period; by supporting the French revolution, the Whigs were understood to be undermining British institutions like the government, the crown and the church.

Despite condemnation of their behaviour in popular discourse, Fox and the Whigs did little to challenge accusations of Francophilia.⁷² As a result, their persistent defence of the increasingly violent events in France was translated by caricaturists into a declaration of allegiance to the French Republic. This is perfectly illustrated in the print, 'The genius of France triumphant' (fig.4.17), which imagines the Whigs capitulating to France. On the left of the image, Fox and other Whigs hand over keys to the kingdom and important documents to an allegorical figure of Revolutionary France, which has a guillotine for a head and sits on a *bonnet rouge* ironically inscribed 'Libertas'. At the Whigs' feet, the cowed figure of Britannia gives up her shield and spear, as well as a crown, sceptre, and the Magna Carta.

⁷² Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, p. 102.

This image directly accuses the Francophilic elite, and particularly the Whigs, of a desire to betray the British constitution in favour of French radicalism. In an era of rising British patriotism, this was a damning charge.

The dramatic and uncompromising nature of these three images, all created by James Gillray, could well be interpreted as evidence of paid propaganda commissioned by the Pitt administration, intent on undermining the continually oppositionist Whigs. While there is evidence that Gillray was hired by the Ministry in 1797, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not these earlier images were commissioned, or if they were simply created by the artist to generate large sales.⁷³ Unquestionably, by emphasising the connection between Foxite political opinions and the violence of the Revolution, Gillray mirrored the actions of loyalist associations across the country, which repeatedly accused radicals of being traitors to British national identity.⁷⁴ The close connections between the Whigs and France had been a recurring motif in satirical literature dating as early as the 1760s, when the Macaronis of the Grand Tour returned to Britain with new fashion and new ideas.⁷⁵ With the declaration of war between the two nations, however, admiration for French culture became controversial and unpatriotic as a result of persistent loyalist propaganda like the *Anti-Jacobin Review*.⁷⁶ By equating the Whigs with a pro-French mentality, caricaturists like Gillray had a significant impact on popular perceptions of that political group, and of the elite members of society who continued to display sympathy for French culture.

⁷³ Paulson, *Representations of Revolution*, p. 185.

⁷⁴ Gordon Pentland, 'The French Revolution, Scottish Radicalism and the "People Who Were Called Jacobins"', in Ulrich Broich, H.T. Dickinson, Eckhart Hellmuth and Martin Schmidt (eds) *Reactions to Revolutions: the 1790s and their Aftermath* (Berlin, 2007), p. 103.

⁷⁵ Moores, *Representations of France*, p. 165.

⁷⁶ Macleod states that the *Anti-Jacobin Review* sold approximately 2500 copies per week. Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, p. 182

Britain and the Revolution- Pitt the Tyrant

It would be remiss to ignore the opposing body of satirical prints which took aim at the Ministry, or rather, the Prime Minister, William Pitt. From the beginning of the French Revolution, Pitt was consistently critiqued by caricaturists who appear to have viewed his hard-line attitude to the Revolution as tantamount to a dictatorship. A prime example is ‘France, Freedom. Britain, Slavery’ (fig.4.18), published in 1789, which contrasts the political situations of the two nations shortly after the fall of the Bastille. The artist imagines a utopia of constitutional monarchy and liberty in France, as Louis XVI, holding both a crown and a cap of liberty, is carried on the shoulders of his people outside the ruin of the ancient prison. On the opposing half of the print, Pitt stands on a crushed crown carrying a flag emblazoned with weapons of torture, as the royal family and politicians cower shackled at his feet. The image may be intended as a mockery of those who complained about British freedoms, but it the print may be a prelude to a period of British history which many scholars have referred to as ‘Pitt’s reign of terror’, when the Government used forceful legal measures to curb emerging radicalism in Britain.⁷⁷ In May 1794, the government arrested leading members of British reform societies, and unsuccessfully attempted to try several of them for High Treason in 1794. The government’s actions encouraged accusations of violence and oppression inimical to the British constitution.⁷⁸ These accusations may have been encouraged by the Whigs, as it is evident from satirical images published between 1792 and 1794 that the Opposition were eager to demonise Pitt and his supporters to the fullest extent.

In 1792, the caricaturist William Dent published two prints which depicted Pitt as a violent and ruthless oppressor of British liberties. In the first print, ‘Constitutional Danger’

⁷⁷ M. Dorothy George interpreted the print as a clear attack on Pitt’s unpopular decision to move tobacco tax from customs to excise. George, *Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum: Division I. Political and Personal Satires* (12 vols, London, 1938), vol.6, p. 21. Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public*, p. 40.

⁷⁸ Barrell, “‘Bill Posters Will Be Prosecuted’”, p. 59.

(fig.4.19) the source of Pitt's tyranny is revealed as his influence over the King, who becomes a weapon that the Prime Minister uses against members of 'the Association', who stand for radical societies in Britain such as the London Corresponding Society. Significantly, Dent's caricature of Fox cowering to avoid the aim of Pitt and King perhaps suggests that the image was not intended as Whig propaganda; although not attacking the radicals, Fox is portrayed as unwilling to jeopardize his own skin in order to further the cause. Dent's second print, 'Spirit of aristocracy enforcing reform, or, the rights of Kings maintained' (fig.4.20) portrays conservative attitudes to the Revolution as the result of an aristocratic and monarchical plot. The image depicts the monarchs and leading politicians of Europe crowded around a figure of Liberty who is beheaded by Pitt- suggesting that the Ministry were not only opposed to the French Revolution, but to the concept of Liberty as it pertained to the British constitution. This image suggests a contemporary belief that, in the 1790s, the British elite closed ranks and demonstrated significant support for Pitt and his policies, which they felt to be of benefit to their social group.⁷⁹ By 1794 a large proportion of Whigs defected, leaving Fox and his 'Francophile' accomplices in a difficult political position; undoubtedly, the caricatures accusing Fox of Francophilia played a role in his political demise.⁸⁰

This is not to suggest, however, that Pitt did not receive criticism from various forms of media throughout the 1790s. Certainly, satirical artists continued to mock the Prime Minister throughout the war with Revolutionary France, suggesting either a sustained thread of Whig propaganda, or a consistent scepticism about Pitt's method of handling the conflict. In 'Billy in hast going to consult his old friend concerning the war' (fig.4.21) published in 1794, Pitt is depicted entering hell in order to converse with his 'friend' the devil. This simple

⁷⁹ H.T.Dickinson and Ulrich Broich, 'Introduction,' in Ulrich Broich, H.T. Dickinson, Eckhart Hellmuth and Martin Schmidt (eds) *Reactions to Revolutions: the 1790s and their Aftermath* (Berlin, 2007), p. 16.

⁸⁰ David Wilkinson, *The Duke of Portland – Politics and Party in the Age of George III* (New York, 2003), pp. 150-7.

device of equating the Prime Minister's war efforts with the devil is enhanced by the Cerberus figure in the right hand corner; Pitt throws coins to the creature, whose heads were likely intended to represent Britain's allies, who were considered to be untrustworthy and financially draining.⁸¹ As Macleod has shown, propaganda specifically opposing the continuation of war emerged in force in 1794, feeding off popular anti-war sentiments which stemmed from the financial burden of the conflict.⁸² Thus, this image was not only a critique of Pitt, but it is also an example of the growing body of anti-war sentiment which emerged as the conflict with Republican France dragged on.

In contrast to images of Fox and the Whigs, which centred on ideas of radicalism equalling allegiance to France, satirical prints targeting Pitt also put forth the argument that the Ministry was not patriotic in the sense that it was often an elite-controlled entity which stifled traditional British liberties and levied exorbitant taxes in order to quash radicalism. That both Pitt and the Opposition were subject to sustained public criticisms between 1789 and 1795 underlines the extent to which political elites were becoming objects of attack in popular discourse. Whether they were accused of favouring French culture and supporting the Revolution, or of exhibiting a tyranny traditionally associated in Britain with the Bourbon monarchy, it seems that the political elite were negatively depicted in the British public sphere.

The British royal family and the Wars of Revolutionary France

A great many British caricatures produced between 1789 and 1795 focussed on the nation's party politics, but the royal family also starred in a number of prints. George III

⁸¹ A.W. Ward and G.P. Gooch (eds.) *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783-1919* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1922-3), vol.1, pp. 246-51.

⁸² Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, p. 189.

featured in some factional prints during the war with Revolutionary France, as in Dent's 'Constitutional Danger', which imagined the King as beholden to the overweening powers of William Pitt. John Brewer and Emma Vincent Macleod have both argued that the 1790s saw the British monarchy become an institution that symbolized the nation itself, a true mark of 'Britishness'; the monarchy stood as a sign of stability against republican 'chaos and violence.'⁸³ This argument certainly finds credence in prints like Gillray's 'The French invasion' (fig.4.22) a scatological and ridiculous print which nonetheless equates the King physically with the British nation and with the symbolic 'everyman' figure of John Bull.⁸⁴

An examination of a wider corpus of caricatures, however, reveals that caricaturists were not always so positive about the role of the royal family in the war. Two similar images published in 1792, 'Louis Dethron'd!' (fig.4.23) by Richard Newton, and James Gillray's 'Taking Physick, or the News of Shooting the King of Sweden!' (fig.4.24) both demonstrate a tone of acerbic mockery aimed at the monarchy. These prints also bring to the fore one of the main fears of patriots in Britain: the destruction of the monarchy and the implementation of a republic, which was achieved by French revolutionaries in September 1792. In each print, Prime Minister Pitt rushes to impart the terrible news of another royal demise to George III and Queen Charlotte, who are grotesquely caricatured in both instances. In 'Taking physick' all notion of royal decorum is abandoned as Gillray presents the King and Queen in the lavatory, their fear at the possibility of their own bloody demise rendering them terrified and undignified.⁸⁵ In 'Louis Dethron'd' a panicked King and Prime Minister converse in their nightshirts while Queen Charlotte hastily hides bags of gold. The mockery in this image is

⁸³ John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago, 1997), p. 23; Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, p. 77.

⁸⁴ Linda Colley argued that this print was both 'irreverent and ennobling'. Colley, *Britons*, p. 210.

⁸⁵ Marilyn Morris argues that scatological imagery of the royal family such as this was a motif designed to highlight the vulnerability of majesty as a concept. Morris, *The British Monarchy*, p. 176.

compounded by the fact that both Pitt and George wear red nightcaps which mimic the revolutionary *bonnets rouges*.

Although both prints are largely humorous imaginings of the royal family's reactions to the French Republic's penchant for overthrowing monarchies, they also paint a slightly negative and ridiculous view of the royals by depicting them as paralysed by fear and self-interest. Anti-war media often highlighted the significant difference between the effects of conflict on the royal family, and on ordinary people; while royal soldiers such as the Duke of York were praised in the press, the sufferings of non-elite soldiers were glossed over.⁸⁶ Caricaturists appear to have responded to this imbalance by heaping ridicule on the allegedly heroic campaigns of the King's sons during the conflict with France. For example, the Duke of York's reputation for leading a wild social life in the 1780s ultimately re-emerged as a motif in caricatures produced when he was leading a trying campaign in Flanders in 1793.⁸⁷ One example is 'Fatigues of the Campaign in Flanders' (fig.4.25) which depicts the Duke and his regiment drinking and carousing in their Dutch camp. The Duke is flushed with drink, and he supports a Dutch woman on his lap while a tattered Union Jack lies under his feet. In another print (fig.4.26) by Gillray, published in 1794, the Duke is ridiculed as a drunken and hopeless 'conqueror' of Paris who is scarcely capable of standing or speaking unassisted. Rather than a conquering hero who could have instilled pride into the British public, the Duke of York is here depicted as a spoiled, reckless prince whose puerile escapades in England simply carried on when he was on military campaign. Although the Flanders campaign was not completely disastrous, the Allied Forces suffered heavy defeats as well as victories, and

⁸⁶ Macleod, *A War of Ideas*, p. 189.

⁸⁷ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 578-9.

the Duke's promotion to full general in early 1793 undoubtedly gave ammunition to satirists wishing to critique his transformation from socialite and dubious hero to General.⁸⁸

As this small sample of caricatures suggests, the position of the British royal family during the Wars of Revolutionary France was complex. While there is evidence that George III particularly emerged as a symbol of British fortitude and dependency in the 1790s, it is evident that caricaturists continued to mock the role that the king played in keeping up British morale during the drawn out and draining conflict. Images of the Duke of York, who occupied a powerful position in the British army during the Revolutionary Wars, reveal a persistent reference to his social antics during his youth. Although many social commentators praised the symbol of the British royal family during the conflict, caricatures reveal a cynical perspective which mocked any notion of the monarch or his sons as heroic military leaders. The very notion of the King himself actively participating in the war effort was mocked in the print 'Arming in defence of French princes' (fig.4.27) which shows the King in an old suit of armour kissing his wife farewell. The title of the image suggests that such an event would only occur in order to defend the French émigré princes living in Britain, as the British monarchy would only stir itself to active conflict if other royal individuals demanded it. To British radicals, the noble émigrés were a symbol of everything wrong with the French ancien régime, while even conservatives of the British public saw the émigrés as foreigners and parasites who lived comfortably in Britain instead of attempting to retake their nation. A pamphleteer, Daniel Eaton, criticised the Ministry's continued financial support of the émigré cause 'at a time when an immense body of our own poor are absolutely starving'. Eaton attributed this financial favouritism to one fact: 'the poor of England are not noble.'⁸⁹ This opinion mirrors that of 'Arming in defence of French princes', as both appear to suggest an

⁸⁸ Tony Heathcote, *The British Field Marshals 1736–1997*, (1999), p. 128.

⁸⁹ Daniel Isaac Eaton, *Extermination, or an Appeal to the People of England on the Present War with France* (London, 1793), p. 12.

Anglo-French coterie of socio-political elites whose main interest lay with members of their own social group, rather than members of their own country. This perspective may have been the exception rather than the rule, but it nonetheless challenges arguments that the Revolutionary Wars period was one which saw a determined increase of public esteem for the British royal family.

Summary of Part Three

The prints examined in this section are only a small sample of the caricatures produced in response to the French Revolution. The prints discussed were selected for their significance: they reveal certain mentalities about British political elites during the conflict; these mentalities, far from being overwhelmingly positive, were fond of mocking elite intervention in the conflict and of drawing attention to elite hypocrisy. Notions of royal heroism were mercilessly mocked by numerous caricaturists who depicted the King and his family as cowardly or negligent in fulfilling their duties of leadership in a time of crisis. The caricatures attacking Fox and the Whigs were almost certainly part of the loyalist or Ministry propaganda movements, which aimed to denigrate any individuals or groups who showed sympathy for the Revolutionary cause. Caricatures which criticised Prime Minister Pitt, however, balance the scales by reminding us that British caricaturists were rarely tamed to the role of sincere, government-sponsored propagandists. It is possible that prints of Pitt were financed by the Whigs, but it is the content of these images which is most significant: while Pitt claimed to act in the best interests of Britain and its constitution, caricaturists consistently accused him of outright tyranny, particularly when he attempted to curb their own expression through the Treasonable Practices Bill. In a time of such turbulent political conflict, the intentions and

patriotic fervour of the political elite were under scrutiny, and caricaturists played a significant role in depicting errors in their behaviour to the British public.

Part Four: French Caricature and the French Revolution

Introduction

Prior to 1789, published caricatures appear to have been a rarity in France, but the dawn of the Revolution saw hundreds of caricature prints published and dispersed in Paris and beyond. The Freedom of the Press in France declared in 1789 was restricted in April 1794, but within that five year period, newspapers, pamphlets and satirical prints abounded, eagerly commenting on the new political status quo.⁹⁰ This period particularly allowed for the changing nature of satirical prints, which emerged in 1789 as the product of independent print entrepreneurs, but which also became a vehicle for state propaganda aimed particularly at the Third Estate.⁹¹ As shall be demonstrated, Revolutionary caricature was a mode of popular discourse which did not hesitate to mock and criticise any groups or individuals who threatened the cause of the Revolution, particularly the nobility.

The émigré nobles of France

In the French context, the conflict between noble identity and national identity was made explicit on 24 June 1790, when the nobility was abolished. Those of the National Assembly who voted to dismantle the Second Estate were making a clear statement that the

⁹⁰ Michel Melot, 'Caricature and the Revolution: the Situation in France in 1789', in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 25.

⁹¹ Richard Taws, 'The Currency of Caricature in Revolutionary France', in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 95. Claire Trévien, *Satire, Prints and Theatricality in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 2016), p. 36.

concept of nobility could not survive in the new, liberated France, despite the fact that hopes for a constitutional monarchy endured for a further two years. Many nobles were vocal in their objections to this vote, as an American visitor to France remarked that the loss of noble titles ‘seems to have affected many of the Noblesse more deeply than the loss of their property.’⁹² Prior to the abolition of titles, Louis XVI had asked the Assembly to respect the ‘transmission of titles’ of an ‘honoured race’.⁹³ However, by June 1790, satirical attacks on the nobility had become more widespread, perhaps smoothing the way for the abolition of noble titles.

The production of prints such as ‘Géant Iscariotte aristocrate’ (fig.4.28) emphasised a growing sense of disillusionment with the privileged orders, or ‘aristocrats’, in the public consciousness. This print was published in 1789, and was thus a prelude to the abolition of noble titles. The image of the giant, demonic figure scouring the land was a careful piece of propaganda designed to literally demonise the noble order in France. The term ‘Iscariot’ was a partial anagram of ‘aristocrat’, as well as being the surname of the traitorous disciple Judas, and it became synonymous with aristocracy in 1789. One example of pamphlet literature invoking the aristocrat/Iscariot connection was *L’Iscariote de la France ou le député autrichien*, which argued that the demonic ‘giant’ was the offspring of Marie-Antoinette and her brother-in-law, the Comte d’Artois.⁹⁴ That the aristocratic monster was imagined as the result of an incestuous relationship between the King’s brother and his Austrian-born wife adds to the concept of the aristocracy as both unnatural and non-French.

One of the topics utilised most by French caricaturists between 1789 and 1795 was the figure of the émigré noble, which stood as an example of the betrayal of the Second

⁹² William Short to Thomas Jefferson, 25 June 1790, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Julian P. Boyd, 34 vols. (Princeton, NJ, 1953–), vol.16, p. 571.

⁹³ J. Madival and E. Laurent (eds.) *Archives Parlementaires de 1787 à 1860: Série I*, 90 vols. (Paris, 1879–), vol.12, p. 430, 4 Feb. 1790.

⁹⁴ Anon., *L’Iscariote de la France ou le député autrichien*, (Paris, 1789).

Estate and their separation from the French nation. Although some prints and pamphlets criticised different ‘types’ of émigrés, including non-juring Catholics, this study looks only at caricatures which targeted members of the nobility- the former social and political elite of France. The flight of nobles from France had begun before the decree of 24 June 1790, but it steadily increased as noble families found refuge in locations such as the Holy Roman Empire and Britain. Kirsty Carpenter highlights several specific points in time which saw peak number of émigrés departing from France: July 1789, the Flight to Varennes in 1791, and the months leading up to the September massacres.⁹⁵ The final surge of émigrés departed after legislation was passed in 1793, stripping all émigrés of French citizenship and condemning them to death if they attempted to return.⁹⁶ With this legislation, the Revolutionary government made a strong statement about the émigrés, a statement which had steadily advanced over four years from the first departure of nobles such as the Queen’s favourites, the Polignacs, in July 1789. The role of satirical prints in exposing the actions of émigrés and alienating them from the remaining French citizenry has not been considered in the scant historiography dedicated to émigré studies, despite a rich collection of source material. These caricatures reveal contemporary popular discourse on the émigrés, and of the French nobility as a whole between 1789 and 1795.

The criticism of noble émigrés began almost immediately after the first wave of departure, as a satirical print published in 1789 demonstrates. Prints attacking the émigrés emphasised their noble status, and their unwillingness to participate in the new political order. In the print (fig.4.29) nobles are portrayed as rats and dogs fleeing in their grand carriages heaped with their most precious belongings. As has been argued in Chapter One, the reduction of elites to animals was a popular iconographic method in satirical prints

⁹⁵ Kirsty Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution: Émigrés in London, 1789–1802* (London, 1999), p. xix.

⁹⁶ Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution*, p. xiv.

throughout the eighteenth century, and the artist of this image undoubtedly relied upon negative views of rats and dogs to mock the noble émigrés. Although emigration throughout the Revolutionary Wars was not limited to those of noble birth, members of the nobility made up the majority of individuals who fled prior to declarations of war with Austria and Prussia in 1792. William Doyle helpfully draws a distinction between emigration prior to the outbreak of war in 1792 and emigration afterwards: while émigrés initially fled the Revolution on ideological grounds, those who fled or attempted to flee France after 1792 would be considered ‘refugees’ in modern parlance, as peoples displaced by famine, political discord and civil war.⁹⁷ Certainly, satirical prints appear to have focussed most on noble émigrés, as prints produced in the early 1790s emphasised the cowardice or unwillingness of these social elites to become part of the new French society. This negative perspective on the nobility can be seen as evidence that printmakers were targeting working class citizens, who could contrast their own behaviour with that of the émigrés.⁹⁸ If this is indeed the case, these prints could be evidence that the government was eager to impress upon the lower classes their superiority as loyal French citizens.

The propaganda of the Revolutionary government from the Year II onwards implied that high status émigrés had abandoned their homeland at a crucial moment of its history.⁹⁹ This notion was translated into prints such as ‘Le Chasseur patriote’ (fig.4.30), which highlights contemporary concerns about the impact of emigration on the French state. In this image, a nobleman and a clergyman attempt to (literally) fly from France, but they are shot down by the so-called ‘patriotic hunter’, who chides them for stealing from the nation. Whether this is intended to refer to the literal ‘theft’ of émigrés taking their valuables with

⁹⁷ William Doyle, ‘Introduction’, in Philip Mansel and Kirsty Carpenter (eds), *The French Emigres in Europe and the Struggle Against Revolution, 1789-1814* (London, 1999), p. xvi.

⁹⁸ Trévien, *Satire, Prints and Theatricality*, p. 36.

⁹⁹ Doyle, ‘Introduction’, p. xx.

them, or simply to the betrayal which émigrés committed by dedicating themselves to political and martial plots against the French nation is difficult to ascertain.

Other prints took a decidedly scatological tone in their mockery of the noble émigrés, such as ‘Fi donc!’ (fig.4.31) and ‘Je chie, sur les aristocrates’ (fig.4.32). Despite the humorous, almost careless mockery of émigrés displayed in these prints, the French government was genuinely concerned about the impact of emigration.¹⁰⁰ This threat was made manifest in calls for war against Austria following the failed Flight to Varennes, while the numerous noble émigrés in Coblenz and Turin plotted to retake France from the Revolutionaries.¹⁰¹ Printmakers turned their attention to the armies of the émigrés, often mocking the ability of princes of the blood such as the Comte d’Artois and the Duc de Condé to act as effective military leaders. In one print, ‘Revue générale du petit Condé (fig.4.33), the artist imagines a military review of Condé’s army, which is comprised of camels, ostriches, asses and rabbits wearing military garb. The use of this animal imagery not only degrades the status of the army’s soldiers, but it also suggests that the hopes of the émigré army are as fanciful as animals taking up arms.

These are just a few examples of prints targeting the noble émigrés, as Antoine de Baecque has eloquently argued that charges against the émigrés remain ‘the true apogee of caricature art’ in the Revolutionary period, and there are too many to consider here.¹⁰² The reiteration of anti-émigré sentiments in caricature was possibly fostered by the revolutionary government, which was eager to demonise the aristocracy as thoroughly as possible; by fleeing France and threatening to invade at the head of foreign armies, the noble émigrés transformed themselves into the perfect scapegoats for noble perfidy and self-interest.

¹⁰⁰ William Doyle, *Aristocracy and its Enemies in the Age of Revolution* (Oxford, 2009), p. 263.

¹⁰¹ Paul R. Hanson, *Contesting the French Revolution* (Chichester, 2009), p. 88.

¹⁰² Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire*, p. 37.

Émigrés were the antithesis of the loyal, French *citoyen*, and caricatures played a significant role in delineating this contrast between self-serving former nobles and patriotic citizens.

Enemies of the Revolution in France

Satirical artists in Revolutionary France not only dedicated their time to denigrating noble émigrés as traitors of the French nation, but they also repeatedly emphasised the ‘death’ of the nobility in the new order of France. One example, from 1790, ‘L’aristocrate, a l’agonie prioit la mort de l’epargner’ (fig.4.34) depicts an elderly nobleman being enticed by the skeletal figure of death. A later, untitled print from 1792 (fig.4.35) carries the allusion of the nobility’s death one step further, by imagining aristocrats arriving in the fiery pits of hell. Although Richard Taws has stated that there is no evidence of state propaganda utilising satirical prints prior to 1794, the sentiments espoused in these prints are very much in line with the government’s policies, first of the abolition of noble titles in June 1790, and secondly of the threat of the émigré army which aroused such anger in 1792.¹⁰³ A final print, also produced in 1792, expresses the ideal future of the Revolutionary cause in France. In ‘Menagerie nationale’ (fig.4.36), citizens visit a zoo-like exhibition of several humans in cages. Produced when the menagerie nationale was being formed, this print cleverly substitutes vicious animals with their human equivalents: the nobility. This print reveals the popular sentiment of negativity towards nobility which grew in France during the Revolutionary period, a sentiment which was exacerbated not only by government

¹⁰³ Taws, ‘The Currency of Caricature in Revolutionary France’, p. 95.

sponsorship of propaganda prints from 1794 onwards, but that was also enhanced by the unpatriotic behaviour of the émigrés, which facilitated their villainization by Revolutionaries.

Caricaturists were particularly interested in depicting the ‘enemies of the Revolution’, and this concept applies not only to the French nobility and émigrés, but also to the British.¹⁰⁴ From 1793 onwards, there was a marked increase in attention paid by caricaturists to British political leaders, a clear suggestion that images of this nature were propaganda encouraged by the revolutionary government. What is remarkable about these images, however, is their style and content, which strongly mirrors caricature art in Britain at the time; the likenesses of leading figures such as George III and William Pitt are almost identical to those produced by the premier British caricaturist of the day, James Gillray. For example, the depictions of George III and Queen Charlotte in the French-made print ‘Le Charlatan politique’ (fig.4.37) echo those of Gillray’s caricature, ‘Taking Physick’ (fig.4.24) which was published two years prior. This similarity in style suggests a movement of caricature prints between the two nations, even at a time when relations were strained and inter-continental travel was restricted.¹⁰⁵

The content of satirical prints targeting the British political elite is also important, as it emphasises the growing enmity between the two nations following the declaration of war in 1793. As King, George III was an easy target for the Republican French, while Prime Minister Pitt was also singled out by French artists because he was considered the architect of the First Coalition which opposed Revolutionary France.¹⁰⁶ In ‘La Grande aiguiserie royale de poignards anglais’ (fig.4.38), for example, Pitt is portrayed as a smith, frantically creating and sharpening blades with the aid of the King, who humorously runs in a wheel to power the

¹⁰⁴ Ronald Paulson, ‘The Severed Head: the Impact of French Revolutionary Caricatures on England’, in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 57.

¹⁰⁵ Paulson, ‘The Severed Head’, p. 55.

¹⁰⁶ Colin Jones, ‘Introduction’, in Colin Jones (ed.), *Britain and Revolutionary France: Conflict, Subversion and Propaganda* (Exeter, 1983), p. 6.

whetstone. 'La Jongleur Pitt' (fig.4.39) again unites George III and William Pitt, with both acting as comedic figures. King George has clearly been interrupted whilst using the privy, and as he kneels in a prayer-like position, his wig and crown tip backwards off his head. Pitt is prevented from reaching the King by a *sans culotte*, who has seemingly just arrived in England on one of the boats in the background. Attached to Pitt's nose is a model of England, with a lottery note attached to the base. The print draws together several different motifs: the desperation of the British government to fund the Revolutionary Wars, the incapacity of George III and Pitt as political leaders, and the persistent British fear of a French invasion. In stark contrast to the caricatured faces of Pitt and George III, the *sans culotte* is carefully rendered, and his bare arms emphasise a strength which the British leaders do not possess.

Despite an undercurrent of mockery inherent in all satirical prints, French caricaturists were not insensible to the threat posed by the British government and its allies. In a highly detailed print, 'Nouvelles a la cour de la Grande Bretagne' (fig.4.40) fears of British reprisals against France are laid bare. Although George III is depicted with a comical expression of horror as Pitt announces the outbreak of revolution in Holland, the image is laden with references to Britain's alleged plans to conquer France. In the background hangs a map entitled 'Plan des Tyrans coalesce pour la partition de la France.' Chests and bags of gold coin litter the floor, with notes such as 'Plan pour Prendre Paris' and 'Droits divins des Rois' denoting their intended usage by Pitt and the King. These prints coincide with the High Terror period in France, which was marked by rising paranoia of a British invasion, which led to an increase in prints targeting British royal individuals and ministers.¹⁰⁷

By using satirical prints such as these for propaganda, the French government most likely aimed to mock the British political elite in much the same way as they had mocked

¹⁰⁷ Helen Weston, 'The Light of Wisdom: Magic Lanternists as Truth-Tellers in Post-Revolutionary France', in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 84.

their own monarchy and nobility. Although the British did pose a threat to the endurance and expansion of revolutionary principles, it was advantageous for government propaganda to render them inadequate and laughable, desperate to maintain wealth and regal power at all costs. Like the émigrés, British politicians and royal individuals were a significant, external threat to the success of revolutionary ideals, and so the large print runs commissioned by the Committee of Public Safety were considered money well spent on propaganda targeting those who by their nobility or British allegiance, did not belong to the French republican state.¹⁰⁸

Summary of Part Four

The period 1789 to 1795 saw a huge increase of published caricatures in France, a distinct departure from the few satirical works which circulated during the Seven Years' War and the Commercial Treaty. Caricatures were not only used as modes of popular, extra-governmental discourses, but they were also used by the government as modes of official propaganda, clear evidence of their perceived influence and significance in the public sphere. Noble émigrés formed a significant part of patriotic discourse and propaganda in the early 1790s, as they were held up as traitors to the French nation and its people. Although often overlooked by historians, caricatures contributed to this popular discourse by emphasising the émigrés' lack of patriotism, as well as visualising the permanent demise of the nobility in the French nation. It was not only émigrés and aristocrats who drew the ire of caricaturists, British leaders such as George III and Prime Minister Pitt also made frequent appearances in French caricatures which attempted to diminish and mock them for their opposition to the Revolution. The caricatures examined in this section show the emergence of caricature as a powerful mode of

¹⁰⁸ Albert Boime, 'Jacques-Louis David, Scatological Discourse in the French Revolution, and the Art of Caricature', in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 69.

popular discourse in France, one which was recognised as valuable by the Revolutionary governments as they sought to discredit the state's enemies and reveal the separation of the nobility from the patriotic nation.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the role that satirical prints played in three significant events which defined British and French relations in the eighteenth century, spanning from the mid-1750s until the mid-1790s. In addition to considering the role of satirical prints in these events, it has also endeavoured to analyse contemporary discourses which underlined tensions between elite and national identity during these politically turbulent moments. It is evident that from 1756 to 1795, caricatures became increasingly widespread methods of disseminating opinions about contemporary events in both France and Britain. The extent to which those opinions were fabricated by the ruling elite or simply intended to reflect or articulate widespread popular opinion varies from case to case depending on the political circumstances at hand. One key finding of the chapter concerns the use of propaganda over the second half of the eighteenth century. In spite of Herbert Atherton's assertion that satirical prints did not act as true propaganda in the period, the images analysed in this chapter suggest otherwise.¹⁰⁹

The effects of caricatures on public opinion were undoubtedly questionable, but it is evident that the political establishments in Britain and France eventually came to see the art form as a means of influencing popular perceptions of events. Britain led the way in this respect, developing an extensive visual tradition in response to the Seven Years' War, whereas French propaganda in the 1750s and 1760s was primarily expressed via textual

¹⁰⁹ Atherton, *Political Prints*, p.67.

media and directed to an elite readership. The Commercial Treaty saw the emergence of limited, 'popular' propaganda in France, which was primarily textual, but at least two satirical prints survive. In Britain, the government actively attempted to influence popular perceptions of the Commercial Treaty using pamphlet literature and caricatures which mocked the opposition. The Wars of Revolutionary France mark the moment when French propaganda becomes equal to that of Britain, as governments and political parties in each nation employed pamphlets and satirical prints to shape public opinion of the conflict.

This chapter has focussed on how political elites manipulated or attempted to manipulate the content of satirical prints, but the most striking feature of many caricatures in the period is how often both political and social elites feature in the images themselves. From monarchs, to politicians, to émigrés, satirical artists in both Britain and France repeatedly utilised political and social elite figures to comment on contemporary events, allowing the urban public of each nation to see the individuals whose political and social power so greatly influenced the state. Questions about the loyalty of the socio-political elite to the nation appear in French and British images and texts produced in response to the Seven Years' War and the Commercial Treaty, but it was during the Wars of Revolutionary France that caricatures distinctly highlighted contemporary tensions between the identity of the socio-political elite and emergent national identity. In France, the Revolution created a divergence between the 'new' political elite, and the former social and political elites whose allegedly unpatriotic actions inspired caricaturists' work in the 1790s. This development in caricature content emphasises the evolving concept of national identity and patriotism in the eighteenth century which David Bell and Linda Colley have so persuasively analysed.¹¹⁰ The ties between the British and French elite endured throughout the eighteenth century, in war and in

¹¹⁰ Bell, *The Cult of the Nation*; Colley, *Britons*.

peace, but those ties were also consistently interpreted as evidence of ‘unpatriotic’ sentiments which further distanced the elite from the populace.

Conclusion

This thesis has shown that caricatures were utilised as a means of commenting on the social and political elite in the urban public spheres of France and Britain between 1740 and 1795. In so doing, it has emphasised the extent to which visual culture can be used as a means of exploring eighteenth-century cultural attitudes towards the socio-political elite. This study has analysed the similarities in content and style between British and French caricatures: this analysis has provided evidence of shared cultural depictions of the socio-political elite in both nations, which often centred on questions of morality, identity, and the role that elites played in contemporary society. In tracing the development of caricature production from 1740 to 1795, I have found that they became increasingly important to governing elites who wished to shape popular perception, particularly in the sustained ideological conflict between Britain and Revolutionary France beginning in 1789. This thesis has shown that caricatures were an important visual aspect of the public sphere which encouraged greater discussion about the behaviours and actions of the social and political elite in eighteenth-century France and Britain.

Caricatures and the public sphere

This thesis has demonstrated the significance of caricatures as a mode of popular discourse in the public spheres of eighteenth-century Britain and France. In general, studies of public opinion in the era have not paid as much attention to visual sources such as

caricatures as they do to textual sources.¹ One of the greatest challenges for scholars of caricature has been the question of comprehensibility and accessibility. In historiography of British caricatures, particularly, scholarship has been divided between those who see caricatures as difficult to comprehend, and those who argue that the images were understood by both the educated and uneducated alike.² This thesis has emphasised the simplicity of expression which characterised many caricatures produced in both Britain and France in the eighteenth century; while certain motifs and artistic devices may appear complex at first, consideration of contemporary culture, art and literature suggests that many caricatures were intended to be comprehensible to a wide spectrum of society, from the elite to those of lower social standing. Additionally, the repetition of certain motifs to denote a specific individual, or to express a judgment on a person's behaviour is commonplace in French and British caricature across the period of study. This mode of visual repetition worked alongside wordplay and common motifs to create a "language" through which caricatures could communicate with viewers without the need to name specific individuals or events.

Historians of French revolutionary caricature have been largely agreed that these prints were specifically intended for a working class customer, and this study has compared similar motifs of British-made prints in order to argue that there was a shared visual culture between the lower social classes of the two countries in this period.³ I have also attempted to forge a link between revolutionary French caricature and popular discourse from the ancien régime, including the *Livre de Caricatures*. Although there is scant evidence of a pre-

¹ Joan Landes has been particularly critical of this 'text-centric' scholarship of the eighteenth-century public sphere. Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France* (London, 2001), p.11.

² For debates on the comprehensibility of British caricature, see John Richard Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints, 1740-1832* (London, 2015); Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Aldershot, 2003); Cindy McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze: Prints of Women in Late Eighteenth-century England* (Oxford, 2004).

³ For discussions about the 'audience' of French caricature, see Claire Trévien, *Satire, Prints and Theatricality in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 2016); Lynn Hunt, 'Engraving the Republic', *History Today* 30 (1980), pp. 11-7.

revolutionary French tradition of caricature, it is important to acknowledge the debt of artistic expression which revolutionary caricaturists owed to literature and ballads from previous decades. The *Livre de Caricatures* cannot be convincingly seen as a precursor to Revolutionary caricature, as there is no evidence to suggest that the book was ever made public. However, the *Livre de Caricatures* and revolutionary caricature prints shared many attitudes towards the elite, and they functioned in response to other forms of contemporary popular discourse that centred on elite society. Although caricature production may have ebbed and flowed between 1740 and 1795 as a result of censorship or politically significant events such as war, it is evident that caricatures were firmly situated in the respective public spheres of France and Britain at this time.

Caricatures and political persuasion

In the period 1740 to 1795, this study has found a growing significance of caricatures in the respective public spheres and political spheres of Britain and France. At the beginning of the era, British caricatures were an important but unofficial aspect of political and popular culture in urban society. Scholars have been sceptical about the use of caricatures as propaganda in the period; for example, Mike Goode has rightly cautioned against attributing too much influence to caricatures in eighteenth-century Britain, while Herbert Atherton downplayed suggestions that caricatures were used as propaganda in a ‘purposeful way’.⁴ This study has exposed examples of how the rival Tory and Whig parties utilised caricatures as a clandestine means of attacking opponents. It is challenging to pinpoint the actual motives behind any published British caricatures, as the inspiration or commission behind an artist’s

⁴ Mike Goode, ‘The Public and the Limits of Persuasion in the Age of Caricature’, in Todd Porterfield (ed.), *The Efflorescence of Caricature* (Surrey, 2011), p. 127; Herbert Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth: a Study of the Ideographic Representation of Politics* (Oxford, 1974), p. 67.

chosen topic is difficult to ascertain. Only in the 1790s do select caricatures become more transparent, as the ministry hired satirical artists to lambast the supposed Francophilia of the Whigs. As demonstrated, however, artists like James Gillray could ultimately not be relied upon to churn out government propaganda, and the ambiguous nature of caricature made it difficult to use as convincing propaganda.

In France, there is very little evidence of published caricatures prior to the Revolution, yet the presence of British-made prints in Paris from the 1780s onwards, and diary entries from Parisians like Edmond Barbier and Simeon Prosper Hardy, do suggest that a clandestine market in caricatures did exist prior to 1789.⁵ This study has relied upon the works of Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin to explore the relationship between elite representation and caricatures in ancien régime France. As Saint-Aubin's *Livre de Caricatures* was a private, unpublished work, it is necessary to situate it within the public sphere of Paris between 1740 and 1774. This thesis has demonstrated the links between Saint-Aubin's drawings and contemporary ballads and pamphlets, evidence that the *Livre* interacted with a contemporary urban public sphere that was deeply interested in the political and social elites of France.⁶ Only on the eve of Revolution do we see the emergence of a propagandistic mode of caricature in France, as the print 'L'allégorie est assez claire, pour se passer de commentaire' (fig.4.14) published in 1788, expressed contemporary discontent with the financial blunders of the ministry. Caricature production flourished in Paris after 1789, and the appointment of a specific 'caricature censor' in the capital points to the new political elite's understanding of the power of this mode of popular discourse. In 1793, the Committee for Public Safety

⁵ Edmond-Jean-François Barbier, *Chronique de la Régence et du Règne de Louis XV (1718-1763), ou, Journal de Barbier* (8 vols, Paris, 1857); Simeon Prosper Hardy, *Mes Loisirs, ou Journal d'Événements tels qu'ils Parviennent à ma Connaissance*, (8 vols, Paris, 1789).

⁶ The pre-eminent work on the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures* also attempts to situate the *Livre de Caricatures* within its cultural milieu, but it does not seek to forge a wider relationship with other examples of eighteenth-century caricature. Colin Jones, Juliet Carey, and Emily Richardson (eds.) *The Saint-Aubin Livre de Caricatures Drawing Satire in Eighteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 2012).

commissioned a series of caricatures by Jacques Louis David, and ordered thousands of copies to be made. While Revolutionary caricatures have been examined by art historians and historians, this study has traced the development of the French Revolutionary government's appreciation for caricature propaganda alongside the British government's conterminous interest in the use of satirical prints as state-sponsored propaganda in the 1790s.⁷ This similar development of the use of caricature as propaganda in Britain and France in the politically turbulent 1790s points to an appreciation for the artform as a mode of discourse that could- and should- be harnessed by the respective governments. Although caricature's success in shaping public opinion remains subject to debate, this thesis has argued that the visual appeal of caricatures was understood by British and French governments to be a provocative and engaging method of attempting to influence popular opinion in times of conflict.⁸

Comparing British and French caricature

The comparative nature of this study has yielded new evidence of a shared caricature culture in Britain and France in the eighteenth century. Similarities between British and French caricature centre on their modes of expression, for example the use of Janus imagery, and the frequent utilisation of animal transformations to denote elite individuals. These similarities of content are in some ways the result of centuries of shared culture, particularly literature and Christian doctrine, but they are also specific evidence of the increasing movement of caricatures between Britain and France in the period. Some scholars have already pointed to the vogue for British caricatures in pre-revolutionary France, and the two

⁷ See Antoine de Baecque, *La Caricature Révolutionnaire* (Paris, 1988); James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988).

⁸ See Goode, 'The Public and the Limits of Persuasion', pp. 117-36.

caricatures highlighted in this study's introduction (fig.0.1 and fig.0.2) are tangible proof of the inspiration that French caricaturists took from the works of British artists.⁹

The existence and role of caricatures in the two nations has also formed the basis of this comparative model, as the flourishing of British caricature between 1740 and 1795 is not directly mirrored in France, where published caricatures only appear to have emerged as a key aspect of the public sphere in 1789. Caricatures nevertheless circulated clandestinely in Paris prior to the Revolution, and this study has argued that it is very likely that Revolutionary French caricatures were inspired by ancien régime images which could not circulate legally, though there is (as yet) no concrete evidence of this phenomenon. Despite these imbalances in terms of source material, a comparison between British and French caricature reveals not only shared artistic styles and motifs, but also a shared popular, visual discourse about the social and political elite in each nation.

In both British and French caricatures, the respective monarchies play a starring role, a fact which emphasises their position as the heads of both the social and political elite in the period. The depictions of French and British kings often reflected the fluctuations of public opinion which was influenced by contemporary events. In contrast to extant assumptions, it is not possible to trace a distinctly negative trajectory for French monarchs within the caricatures, nor is it convincing to argue that George III enjoyed a largely positive public image in the 1790s.¹⁰ It is similarly challenging to posit a clear “desacralisation” or

⁹ Amelia Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked; Irony, Authenticity, and Individualism in Eighteenth-century English Prints* (Newark, 2008), p. 129; Michel Melot, ‘Caricature and the Revolution: the Situation in France in 1789’, in James Cuno (ed.), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles, 1988), p. 28.

¹⁰ Scholars of French caricature have not attempted a comparison of caricatures of Louis XV and Louis XVI, perhaps due to a lack of published sources for Louis XV. Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Kohle point to a tradition of royalist caricatures of Louis XVI produced in the early 1790s, but few examples remain. See Reichardt and Kohle, *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth-century France* (London, 2008). Marilyn Morris argues that George III became an icon of British heritage in the 1790s. Morris, *The British Monarchy and the French revolution* (New York, 1998). Linda Colley also alleges that public approbation for George III increased as a result of his association with ‘Britishness’ in caricatures and newspapers during the Wars of Revolutionary France. Colley, ‘The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation 1760-1820’, *Past & Present*, 102 (Feb, 1984), pp. 94-129.

‘demystification’ of either British or French royal individuals in this period by looking at caricatures or other examples of popular discourse. Nonetheless, caricatures did comment on serious political events involving the respective monarchs, such as the Flight to Varennes and the disastrous Wars of American Independence, pointing to cultural shifts in public perceptions of the monarch in that given moment.¹¹ British and French caricatures also shared a habit of mocking the pretensions of the social elite, as well as calling into question their role in society and highlighting the tension between elite and national identity in times of Franco-British conflict.

Categorising the elite

This thesis has pursued three interconnected strands of analysis: shifting perceptions of elites, the important role of caricatures in shaping these perceptions, and the ebb and flow of public opinion on the socio-political elite. The study has largely divided the elite into three categories: royalty, political elite, and social elite, yet these categories often overlapped both in this thesis and in eighteenth-century British and French society. In Britain, political elites such as the king and the Earl of Bute were the most frequent individualised targets for caricaturists between 1740 and c.1770, and caricaturists often responded to perceived political injustice in these images. In the 1770s, it is evident that a cultural shift occurred, as caricaturists began to increasingly delight in revealing scandalous or personal information about society’s social and political elite. While caricatures of social elites and their behaviour endured until the end of the period in question, in the 1790s political elites received enhanced

¹¹ This argument supports and expands upon Roger Chartier’s suggestion that an ‘affective rupture’ occurred between the French monarchy and the French people in the middle of the eighteenth century. Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Linda G. Cochrane (Durham & London, 1991), p. 122.

attention from critical caricaturists who were dissatisfied with the government's actions during the wars with Revolutionary France

In French caricatures sourced from the *Livre de Caricatures*, social and political elites were often conflated, perhaps pointing to the political power of court grandes during the reign of Louis XV. Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin certainly did not shy away from depicting political elites such as military generals, nor social elites like the courtiers in thrall to Mme de Pompadour. The published caricatures of the Revolutionary period rarely depicted noble individuals, but rather presented generalised and often demonised attacks on the former political and social elite of France. The identity of the political elite had changed drastically in 1789 with the creation of the General Assembly, and many members of the nobility no longer possessed the political powers to which they had once been accustomed, thus the only genuine political elite remaining in French caricature was the monarchy until 1792. In both Britain and France, there was a sustained presence of royalty in caricatures, and these depictions could focus on either social or political aspects dependent on the moment of production. For example, George III was portrayed negatively for his determination to pursue a policy of war with America in the 1770s, yet he was later depicted positively as a private, family figure in numerous caricatures between 1780 and 1795. Louis XVI was also depicted in several early Revolution prints as a father figure which combined the social and political aspects of his role as king, yet after the Flight to Varennes in 1791 this role was removed and replaced with prints that mocked his pretensions as a constitutional monarch. The attitudes that caricatures expressed towards British and French elites were not fixed, but instead were influenced by the identity of those depicted, whether social or political elite, and the extenuating political circumstances of the caricature's moment of production.

In France, the traditional image of the noble warrior played a significant role in caricatures produced in the ancien régime and during the Revolution. Across the period 1740 to 1795, there was ongoing discussion about the place of the nobility in contemporary society, and many aspects of a social as opposed to political elite were critiqued by writers and satirical artists. In particular, the contrast between the glittering but parasitic Court grande of the eighteenth century, and the feudal nobleman of the medieval period was highlighted by caricaturists and writers from the 1750s until the Cahiers de Doléances codified these complaints in 1789. The French royal family were also expected to uphold the political function of the monarchy, and when this political function was eclipsed by personal scandal or ineptitude, French monarchs were criticised in the public sphere, in spite of censorship laws. During the reign of Louis XV, clandestine pamphlets and caricatures that fixated on the king's political shortcomings focussed most on the disastrous campaign at Metz, and the deeply unpopular treaty with Austria in 1757. In the case of Louis XVI, court gossip about his marriage filtered into print in the 1770s and 1780s via publications like the *Mémoires Secrets*, but it was not until 1791 that Louis XVI was actively attacked by caricaturists for failing to uphold his role as sovereign.¹² There was a sustained popular discourse about the political shortcomings and successes of these two French kings, and this thesis has found that the central theme of this discourse centred on popular concerns about the influence of royal women such as Mme de Pompadour and Marie-Antoinette on state policy.

¹² Pidansat de Mairobert and Mouffle d'Angerville (eds.), *Mémoires Secrets pour Servir à l'Histoire de la République des Lettres en France, depuis MDCCLXII jusqu'à Nos Jours; ou Journal d'un Observateur* (18 vols. London, 1783-89).

In Britain, I have found that royal and noble excesses and misdemeanours were frequently laid bare by caricaturists who contrasted the behaviour of elites with their expected role in society. As with French monarchs, British kings were accused of allowing their personal relationships to interfere with their political role, and these accusations were most often expressed in the public spheres of both countries through criticisms of royal wives and mistresses. The British nobility did not endure similar critiques in visual media about their historic role in society, as did the Second Estate of France. However, there is evidence of British political elites garnering popular condemnation when their actions were seen to jeopardise the vaunted British constitution. Two of the most significant examples of this discourse occurred during the contested Westminster Election of 1784, and in 1793 when Britain went to war against Revolutionary France. These examples suggest that the British political elite were most likely to be attacked by caricaturists during times of significant political upheaval, and the cypher of the betrayed British constitution was one which could be levelled against both Whigs and Tories.

British and French caricatures both maintained a sustained juxtaposition of ‘ideal’ and ‘real’ elites. My findings contribute to scholarly arguments which suggest that discontentment with the nobility appeared increasingly in public discourse from the mid-eighteenth century onwards.¹³ The caricatures examined here demonstrate a cross-Channel discussion about the merits and failures of the socio-political elite. This discussion was most marked in times of political crisis, but it also endured in times of stability, suggesting a long-term Anglo-French public discourse on the role of elites in contemporary British and French society.

¹³ For Britain, see Goodrich, *Debating England's Aristocracy in the 1790s: Pamphlets, Polemics and Political Ideas* (Woodbridge, 2005), and Donna T. Andrew, ‘Cultural Skirmishes in 18th Century England: the Attack on Aristocratic Vice’, *History Compass*, 12:8 (2014), pp. 664-71. For France, see John Shovlin, ‘Toward a Reinterpretation of Revolutionary Antinobility: the Political Economy of Honour in the Old Regime’, in *Journal of Modern History*, 72 (2000), pp. 35-66.

Celebrity culture and the elite

An examination of caricatures produced in the eighteenth century also reveals a deep contemporary interest in the private lives of royal and noble individuals. This ‘celebrity’ or ‘fame’ culture emerged as a result of the growth of the public spheres of Britain and France in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In France, the clandestine circulation of pamphlets and mémoires fed a growing interest in tales about society’s social and political elite, while in Britain newspapers and caricatures charted the intimate details of elite life for an intrigued urban public. This development of a discernible celebrity culture from the middle of the century onwards allowed for greater discussion of socially visible people such as politicians, royal individuals, and nobles. Celebrity culture was particularly vibrant in London from 1780 onwards, but scholarship has largely focussed on the cultural elite, such as writers and actors rather than on the social or political elite.¹⁴ This study has found evidence of the exposition of elite private scandal beginning in the 1740s, and dramatically increasing at the beginning of the so-called Golden Age of caricature in c.1780.¹⁵ As this thesis has demonstrated, caricatures provided those lower down the social scale with tantalising- and sometimes fabricated- glimpses into the private lives of royal and noble individuals. The British royal family were particularly subjected to this mode of caricature in the period, over and above other members of the social and political elite. The exploits of the Prince of Wales from 1780 onwards are a prime example of the merging of elite status and celebrity culture, whilst George III’s battle with insanity was meticulously documented by contemporary newspapers

¹⁴ For example, Matthew Kinservik, *Sex, Scandal and Celebrity in Late Eighteenth-century England* (2007); Laura Engel, ‘Stage Beauties: Actresses and Celebrity Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century.’ *Literature Compass* 13:12 (Dec., 2016), pp. 749-761; Clara Tuite, *Lord Byron and Scandalous Celebrity* (Cambridge, 2015).

¹⁵ M. Dorothy George argued for the existence of a caricature ‘Golden Age’ in Britain between 1780 and 1820. George, *English Political Caricature to 1792: a Study of Opinion and Propaganda* (2 vols, Oxford, 1959), vol.1, p. 11.

and pamphlets in a way that erased the traditional distance between the sovereign and his people.

In ancien régime France, contemporary interest in celebrity gossip was initially catered to by textual sources such as the libelles and *nouvelles a la main* which circulated in Paris in contravention of censorship laws from the middle of the century. The revelations in these texts were often fuelled by court factions, which spread potentially damaging or embarrassing gossip into the capital. These texts have been examined in previous scholarship, but this study has emphasised the connection between these works and the clandestine images of the Saint-Aubin *Livre de Caricatures*, which commented not only on Louis XV's twenty-year affair with Madame de Pompadour, but also his perceived failures as a king.¹⁶ Elite extra-marital affairs formed an important basis of celebrity culture in both Britain and France, and the revelations of these affairs underline the moral dimension of caricatures which ignored the socially accepted distance between elites and those of lower social standing. In addition to prints and texts mocking Louis XV's many affairs, we also find accusations of infidelity and sexual deviancy levelled against Marie-Antoinette in textual sources from 1770, and in caricatures from 1789. These popular discussions of royal marital infidelity in France were used as a means of critiquing the political role of the individual in question; Louis XV's affairs were seen as evidence of his lacking regal authority, while Marie-Antoinette's were used to denigrate a foreign queen who was increasingly viewed as a threat to the French people.

In Britain, the affairs of the political and social elite were common currency for caricaturists between 1770 and 1795, and the examples in this study demonstrate the combination of moral censure and mockery which characterised many of the images

¹⁶ Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (London, 1982); Simon Burrows, *Blackmail, Scandal, and Revolution: London's French Libellistes, 1758-92* (Manchester, 2006).

addressing elite adultery. In British caricatures, moral censure of elite infidelity is at its most evident in images addressing the unhappy marriage of the Prince of Wales and Caroline of Brunswick, but caricatures of earlier affairs such as those of Lady Worsley appear to be more humorously mocking than censorious of elite behaviour. In France, the focus on elite infidelity in pamphlets and prints spanned 1740 to 1795, yet a tone of moral censure was most evident in popular discourse on the alleged infidelities of Louis XV and Marie-Antoinette. In both cases, the moralistic tone of the pamphlet or image was intertwined with a political undertone, for example, the ballads and images which excoriated Louis XV for handing over power to his *mâîtresse-en-titre* in the 1750s and 1760s. It is difficult to ascertain precisely how far images of this nature did genuine damage to the supposed moral superiority of the elite in either country, but it is evident that such scandals generated significant public interest in both Britain and France. By visually capturing these scandals, caricatures worked in concert with pamphlets and ballads to allow many people to see into the private lives of royalty and nobility in a way that challenged the traditional socio-political divisions of society. Although textual sources also played an important role in the emergent celebrity culture of Britain and France, this thesis has argued that the visual nature of caricatures allowed them in many cases to depict elite scandal in a more tantalizing manner than did other forms of media.

National identity and elite identity

This thesis has examined a body of sources, both written and visual, which highlighted tensions between elite identity and emergent ideas of national identity.¹⁷ This discussion about identity can be seen especially in caricatures produced during times of

¹⁷ This tension in eighteenth-century Britain has previously been considered by Linda Colley, but without a focus on caricatures. See Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (5th edition, London, 2009).

conflict between Britain and France, such as the Seven Years' War and the Wars of Revolutionary France. However, tensions between elite and national identities endured also in times of peace in the latter half of the eighteenth century, as with the Eden Treaty of 1786, which was negotiated during a period of strong cross-cultural mixing between British and French elites, including the French monarchy and the court *grandes* at Versailles. In all of these instances, caricaturists and satirical writers focussed on the interconnections between British and French elites, and they used this motif as a means to suggest that both social and political elites were diverging from national identity and national priorities.¹⁸ Between 1750 and 1790, most accusations levelled against the socio-political elite centred on the close relationships between French and British nobles, as well as their shared fashion style and a mutual admiration for the culture of the other country. Discussions about the potential conflict between elite and national identity became more virulent after 1789, when the shift in French politics caused concern among the British press and public. During the Wars of Revolutionary France, for example, the Whig leader Charles James Fox's empathy for the French republic provoked sustained accusations of betrayal in caricatures, whilst noble French émigrés were similarly excoriated by Parisian printmakers in the early 1790s for abandoning their homeland. This thesis has argued that elites, whether social, political, or royal, were under consistent scrutiny in the respective public spheres of France and Britain from the Seven Years' War until the Wars of Revolutionary France. The increased popular discourse and visual media on elite identity during the periods 1756 to 1763 and 1789 to 1795 make it evident that times of conflict encouraged greater discussion about the identities of the French and British elite.

¹⁸ For general studies on Francophilia and Anglomania in the period, see Robin Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society, 1748-1815* (London, 2000), and Josephine Grieder, *Anglomania in France, 1740-89: Fact, Fiction and Political Discourse* (Geneva, 1985).

Conclusion

The socio-political elite of France and Britain occupied a highly visible place in the eighteenth-century public sphere; this study has shown that caricatures played a crucial role in documenting visual representations of the elite which were accessible to a wide span of social groups in predominantly urban societies. Whether mocked for their immorality, criticised for failing to uphold traditional ideals, or accused of being unpatriotic, French and British elites were always being watched by a riveted non-elite audience whose curiosity was catered to by caricature prints. Caricatures did not exist in a cultural vacuum, but rather functioned in tandem with other forms of media in their responses to contemporary events and scandals. Caricatures were an important aspect of the urban public spheres of eighteenth-century Britain and France, and their numerous depictions of the socio-political elite form an historically significant body of cultural expression.

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Appendix I- Images



(Fig.0.1) Isaac Cruikshank, 'The First Interview or the Presentation of the Prusian Pearl' (1791) © Trustees of the British Museum



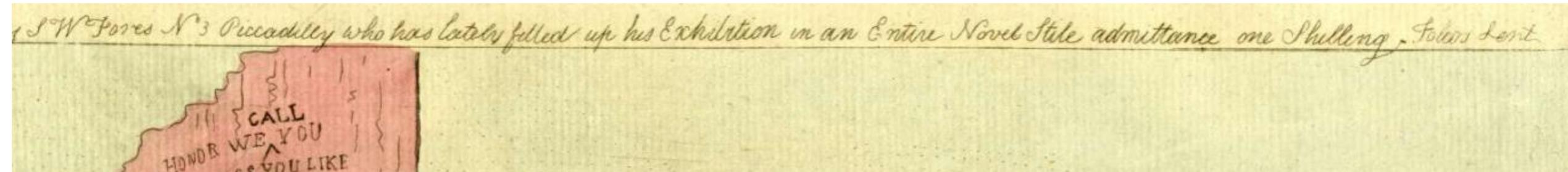
(Fig.0.2) Anon. 'La boîte à pandore' (1792/3) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.0.3) Isaac Cruikshank, 'Le Gourmand' (1791) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.0.4) Isaac Cruikshank, 'Suffolk rats protecting their cheese' (1795) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.0.4) detail



(Fig.0.5.) J[ohn] Elwood [Untitled] (1790) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.0.6) Anon. 'Le Joli Moine Profitant de l'occasion' (c.1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.1.1) Hans Burgkmair
the Elder, 'Der Zorn'
(c.1510) © Trustees of the
British Museum



(Fig.1.2) Hans Burgkmair the Elder, 'Die Fresikeit' (c.1510) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.3) Hans
Burgkmair the Elder,
'Die Hofart' (c.1510) ©
Trustees of the British
Museum





(Fig.1.4.) Anon. 'The re-electing of Reynard, or Fox the pride of the geese' (19 April 1783)
© Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.1.5) Anon. 'A phillipick to the geese' (Artist unknown. Published by E. Hedges, Cornhill 1781) © Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.1.6) George Townley Stubbs, 'The Fox and the Bust' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.7) William Carey, 'Devonia, the beautiful daughter of love & liberty, inviting the sons of freedom to her standard in Covent Garden.' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum



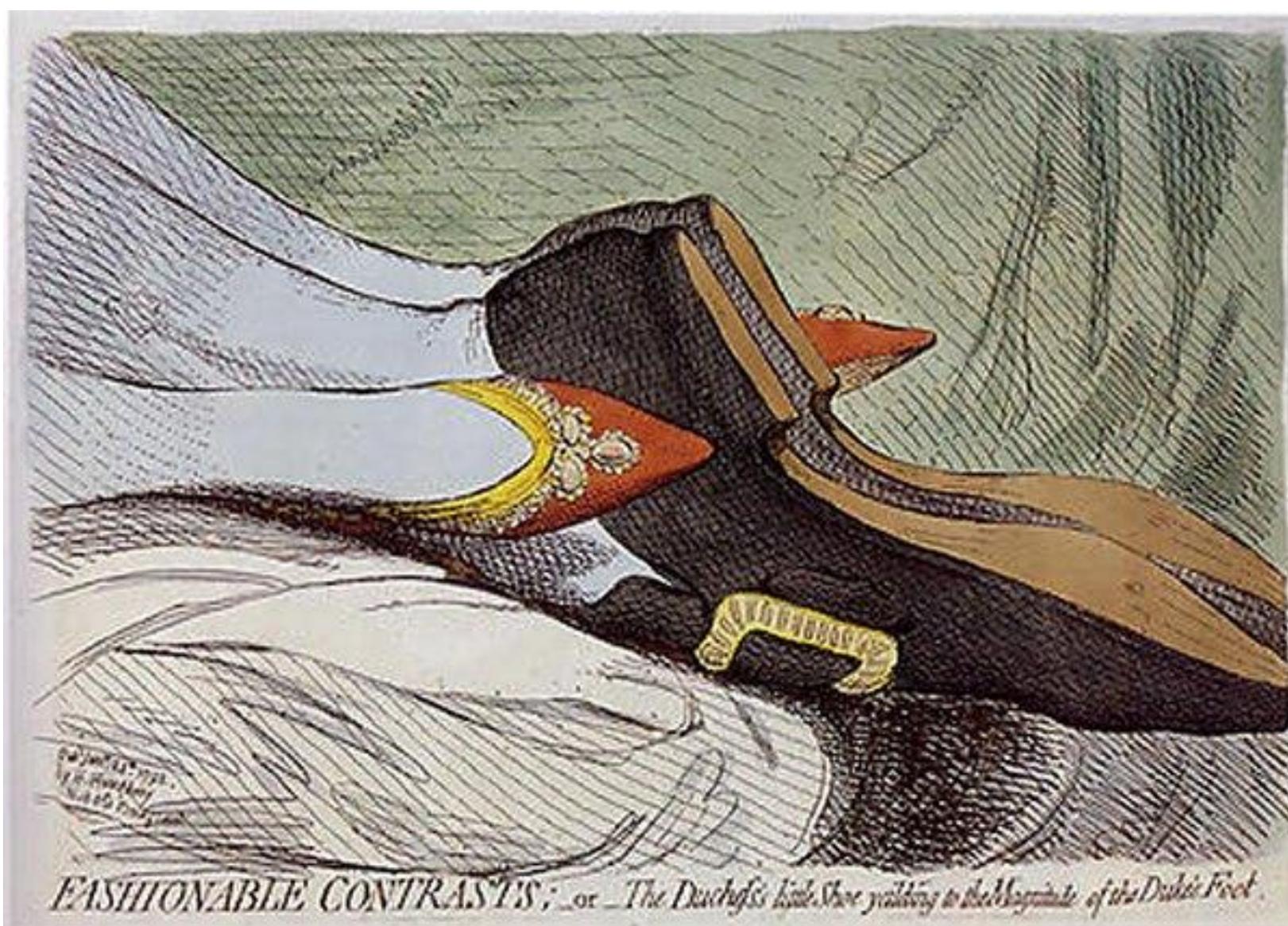
(Fig.1.8) Anon. 'Female influence; or, the Devons-e canvas' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.1.9) Anon, 'The Queen of Clubs' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.1.10) J. Barrow, 'Parliment security or a borrough in reserve' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.11) James Gillray, 'Fashionable contrasts' (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.12) Anon. 'The Jack-Boot, exalted' (1762) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.1.14) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin,
*Pendant plusieurs années malgré
l'orgueil de la pourpre Romaine les
poissons estoient ce que nous avons de
plus gros en France, 1758?, 1822-1869*

{One inscription by Tardieu}

watercolour, ink and graphite on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest of
James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.328

Photo: Waddesdon Image Library,
Bodleian Imaging Services



*Pendant plusieurs années malgré —
L'orgueil de la pourpre Romaine
Les poissons estoient ce que nous avions de
plus gros en France — la Marquise de
Pompadour l'appelait Poisson. Elle est représentée dans le bras
du Cad. de Bernis 1756.*

*Voyez l'histoire des Salles Royales
page 316*

(Fig.1.15) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin,
tout est bon pour le diable, c 1740-c
1745, 1822-1869 {One inscription by
Tardieu}

watercolour, ink and graphite on
paper

Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest
of James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.132

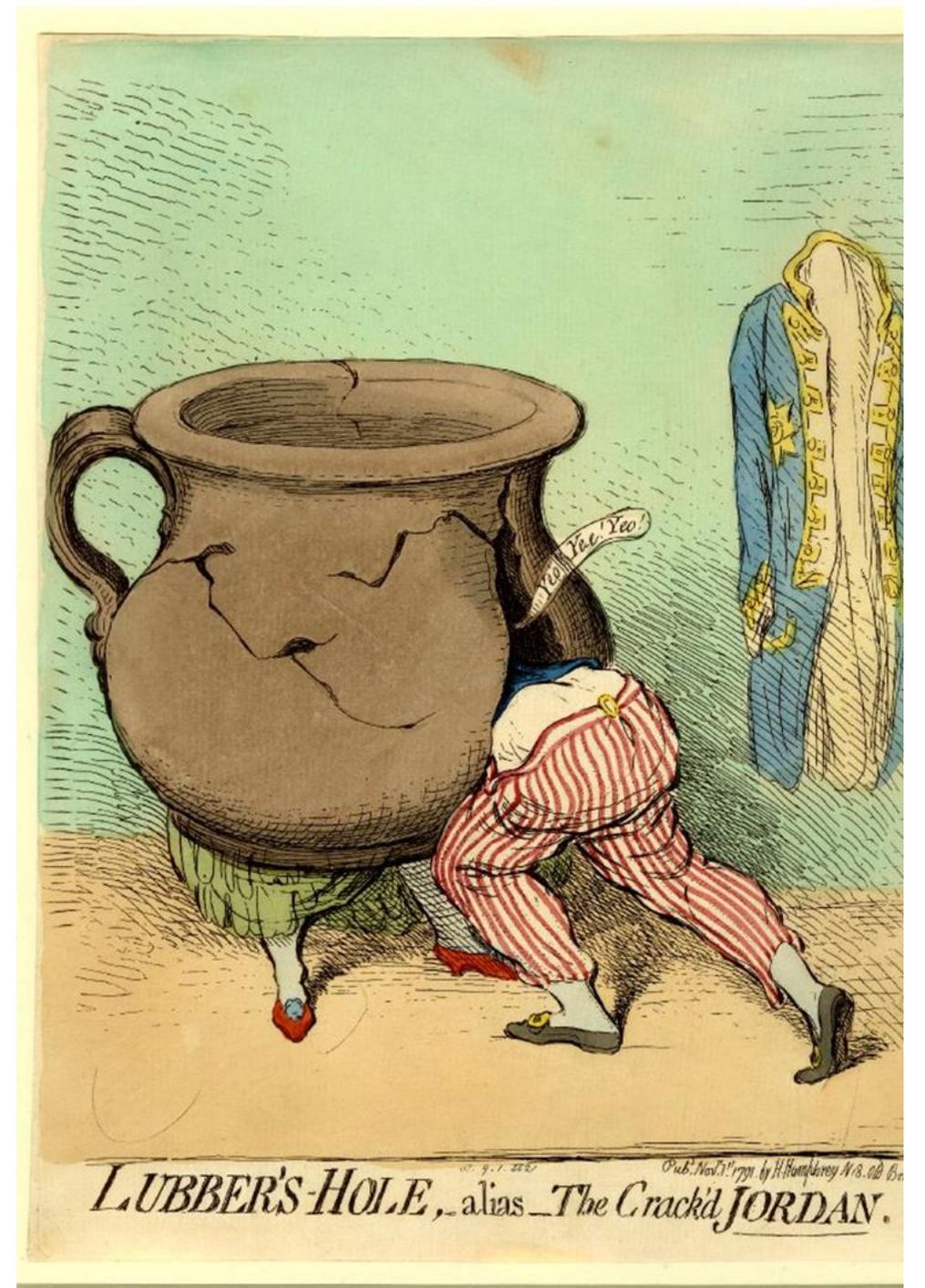
Photo: Waddesdon Image Library,
Bodleian Imaging Services

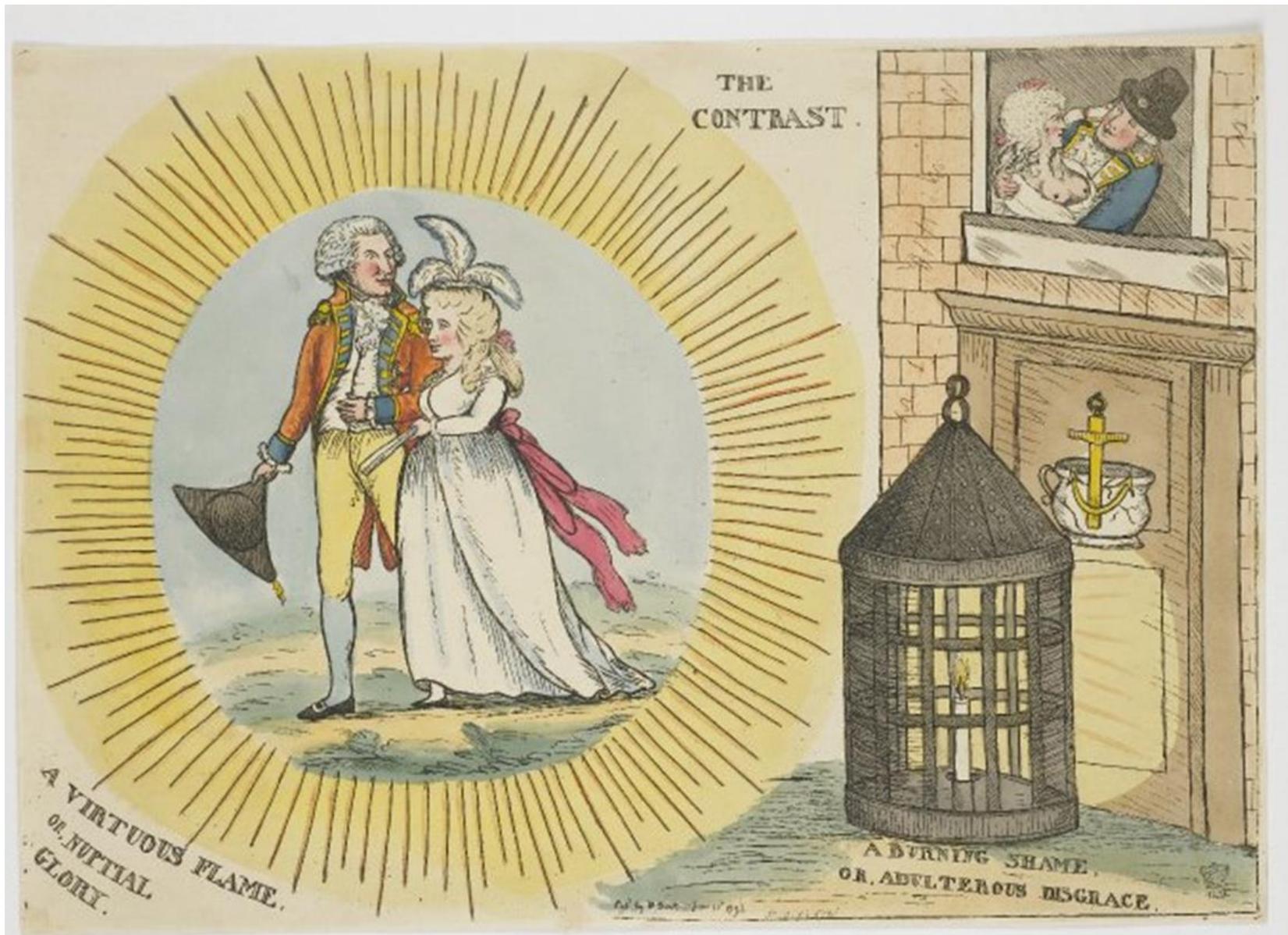


(Fig.1.16) William Dent, 'Fording the Jordan' (1791) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.17) James Gillray,
'Lubber's-hole, -alias-
the crack'd Jordan'
(1791) © Trustees of the
British Museum



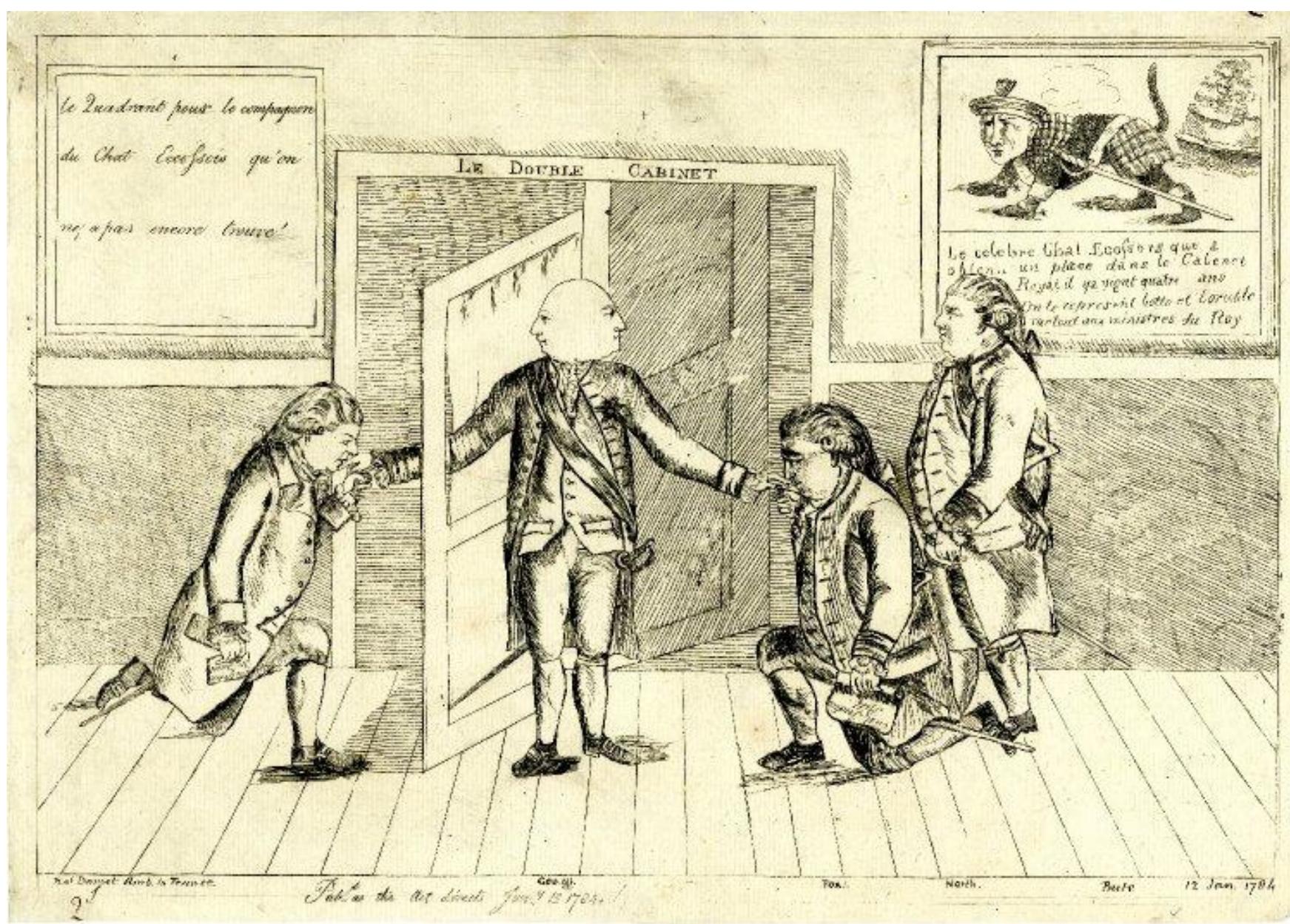


(Fig.1.18) William Dent, 'The Contrast' (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.1.19) Anon, 'Le Roi Janus, ou l'homme à deux visages' (1791)
Source gallica.bnf.fr /
Bibliothèque nationale
de France



Le Roi Janus, ou l'homme à deux visages.



(Fig.1.20) Anon, 'Le Double Cabinet' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.1.22) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Cette estampe doit estre mise a la page 150 des operations de la campagne année 1757.*, 1757, 1822
 {One inscription by Tardieu},
 ink and graphite on paper
 Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest
 of James de Rothschild, 1957
 Acc. No: 675.254
 Photo: Waddesdon Image Library,
 Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.1.23) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Il part pour hanovre*, 1757-1758, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}

Watercolour and ink on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest
of James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.300

Photo: Waddesdon Image Library,
Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.1.24) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Pomade pour les levres.*, , c 1740-c 1775 {nd}
watercolour, ink and graphite on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957
Acc. No: 675.288
Photo: Waddesdon Image Library, Bodleian Imaging Services



*Pomade pour les levres inventée par
Madame La Marquise de Cr...*

(Fig.1.25) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *he bien! toutes les cruches ne sont pas la.*, 1763, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}

watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

Waddesdon (National Trust)

Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.357

Photo: Waddesdon Image Library, Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.1.26) Anon. 'Le masque levé: ah! Le cruchon' (1791)
Source gallica.bnf.fr /
Bibliothèque nationale de
France





EXPLICATION .

N^o 1. George Roi d'Angleterre commande en personne l'élite de son Armée Royal-Cruche N^o 2. Il est conduit par son Ministre Pitt ou Milord Dindon N^o 3 qui le tient par le Nez pour mieux lui prouver son attachement. L'avant-Garde de la Royal Armée N^o 4. reçoit un échec à la porte de la Ville N^o 5. qui est occasioné par la colique de quelques sans-Culottes placés au haut de la Porte N^o 6. L'avant-Garde dans sa déroute brise les cruches, dont il ne sort que toutes sortes de Bêtes venimeuses N^o 7. qui est l'esprit qui les anime. Fox ou Milord Oie N^o 8. ferme la marche monté sur sa Trompette Angloise et qui témoin de l'échec sonne un rappel en arrière par prudence. Artillerie Angloise nouvelle N^o 9. qui a la vertu d'éteindre les incendies et de délaier les fortifications.

P23A52

4391

Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.1.27) Jacques-Louis David, 'L'armée des cruches' (1794) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.1.28) Anon. 'The H-v-n Confectioner General' (1743) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.29) Anon. [Untitled] (1755) © Trustees of the British Museum

THE CRAB TREE or the EPILOGUE to the *RECRUITING SERJEANT*



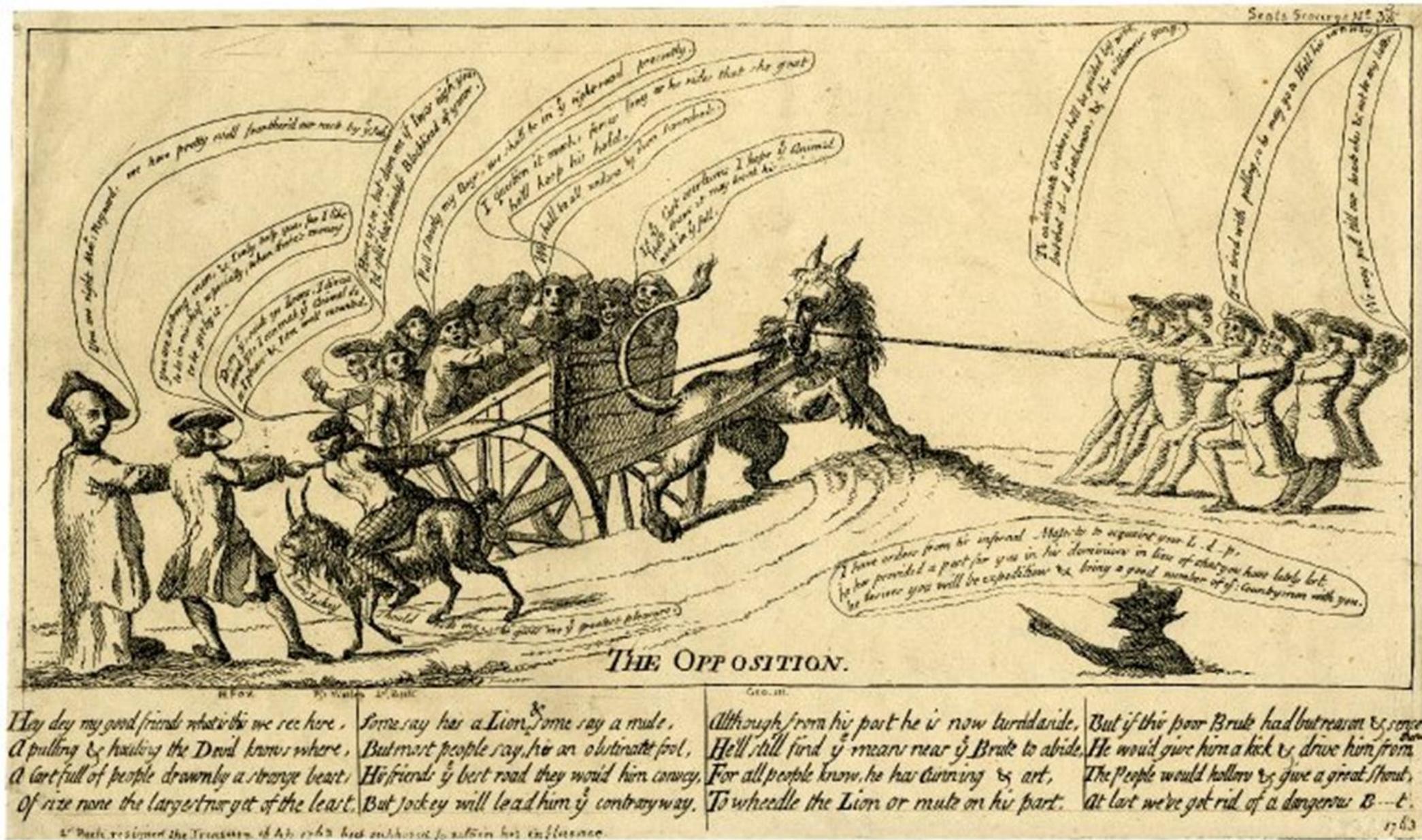
To be had at the Room facing Hungerford Strand & facing Little Suffolk Street. Hedge Lane

May 5 1757

(Fig.1.30) Anon. 'The Crab Tree or the Epilogue to the Recruiting Serjeant' (1757) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.31) Thomas Rowlandson, 'The Hanoverian horse and British lion' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.32) Anon. 'The Opposition' (1763) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.33) Matthew Darly, 'The Royal Ass' (1780) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.1.34) Anon. 'Ass
upon ass' (1780)
Courtesy of Lewis
Walpole Library, Yale
University

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(Fig.1.35) William Carey, 'Robin Hood's victory over Pam, the K-g's immaculate champion, on Constitution Hill' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.1.36) Anon. 'Famille des cochons ramenée dans l'étable' (1791)
Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.1.37) Anon. 'Cette leçon vaut bien un fromage, sans doute!' (1791)
Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.1.38) Anon. 'Fiéz vous a ces déclarations' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.1.39) Anon. 'Son excellence M.la Baronne de Korf parti furtivement de Paris dans la nuit du 20 au 21 juin 1791' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.1.40) Anon.
[Visage de Marie-
Antoinette sur un
corps de hyène]
(1791) Source
gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque
nationale de France





(Fig.1.41) Anon. 'Les deux ne font qu'un' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.2.1) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Brave a quatre poils*, 1751?-c 1775 {nd}
watercolour, ink and graphite
on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust)
Bequest of James de
Rothschild, 1957
Acc. No: 675.250
Photo: Waddesdon Image
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(Fig.2.2) Pierre Drevet
after Hyacinthe
Rigaud 'Louis le
Grand' (1714-15)
Source gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque
nationale de France



(Fig.2.3) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *J'ay bien de la peine a gouverner mon Empire*, c 1740-c 1775 {nd}, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}
watercolour, ink and graphite on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust)
Bequest of James de Rothschild,
1957
Acc. No: 675.165
Photo: Waddesdon Image Library,
Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.2.4) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *LES TALENS DU JOUR*, 1758, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}
watercolour, ink and graphite on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust)
Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957
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Photo: Waddesdon Image Library, Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.2.5) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Pour La plus grande Gloire de dieu*, 1756, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}
watercolour, ink and graphite on paper
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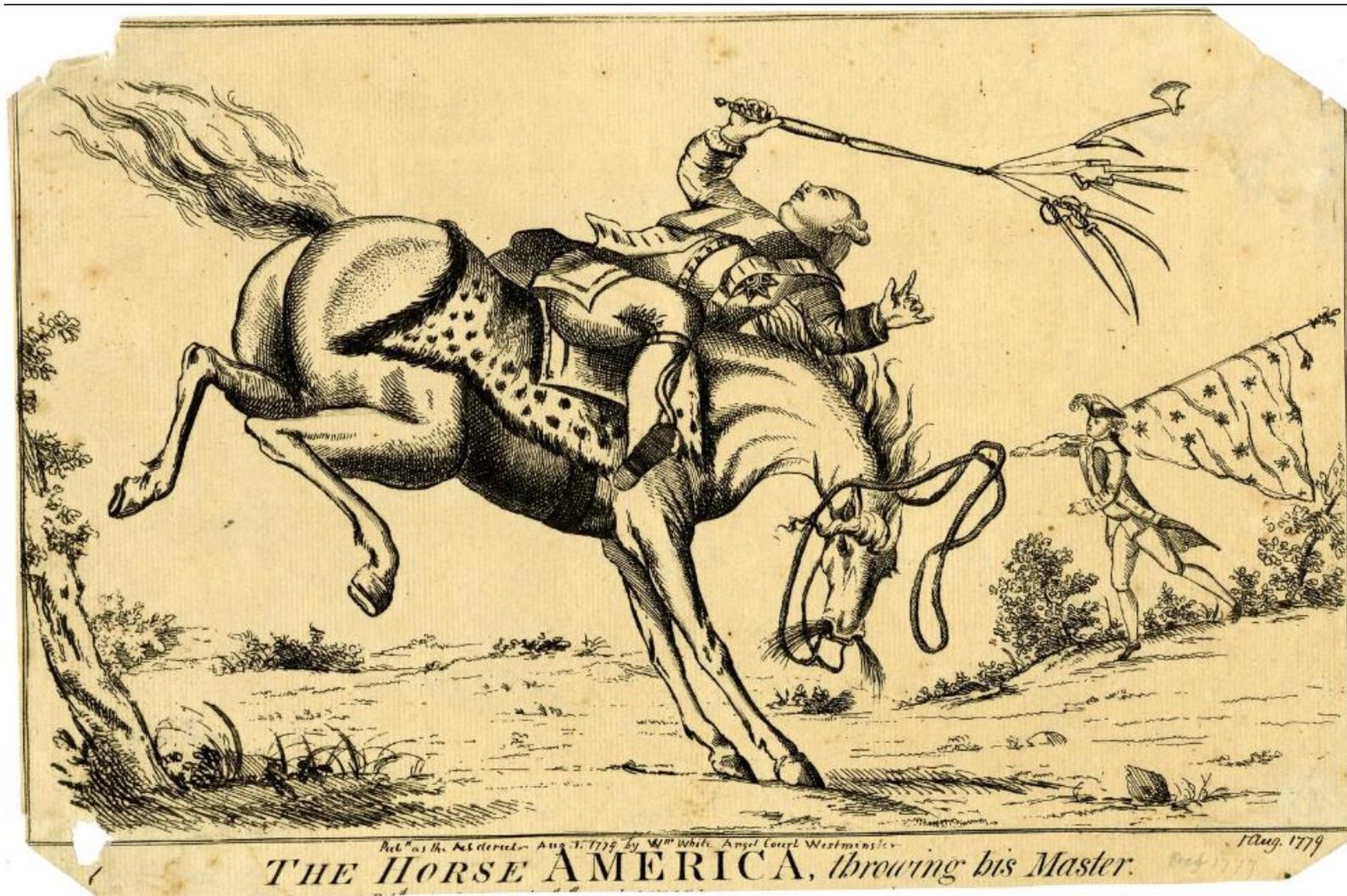
(Fig.2.6) Anon. 'He hu! Da da!' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.2.7) Anon. 'Troc pour troc...' (1791)
Source gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque nationale
de France



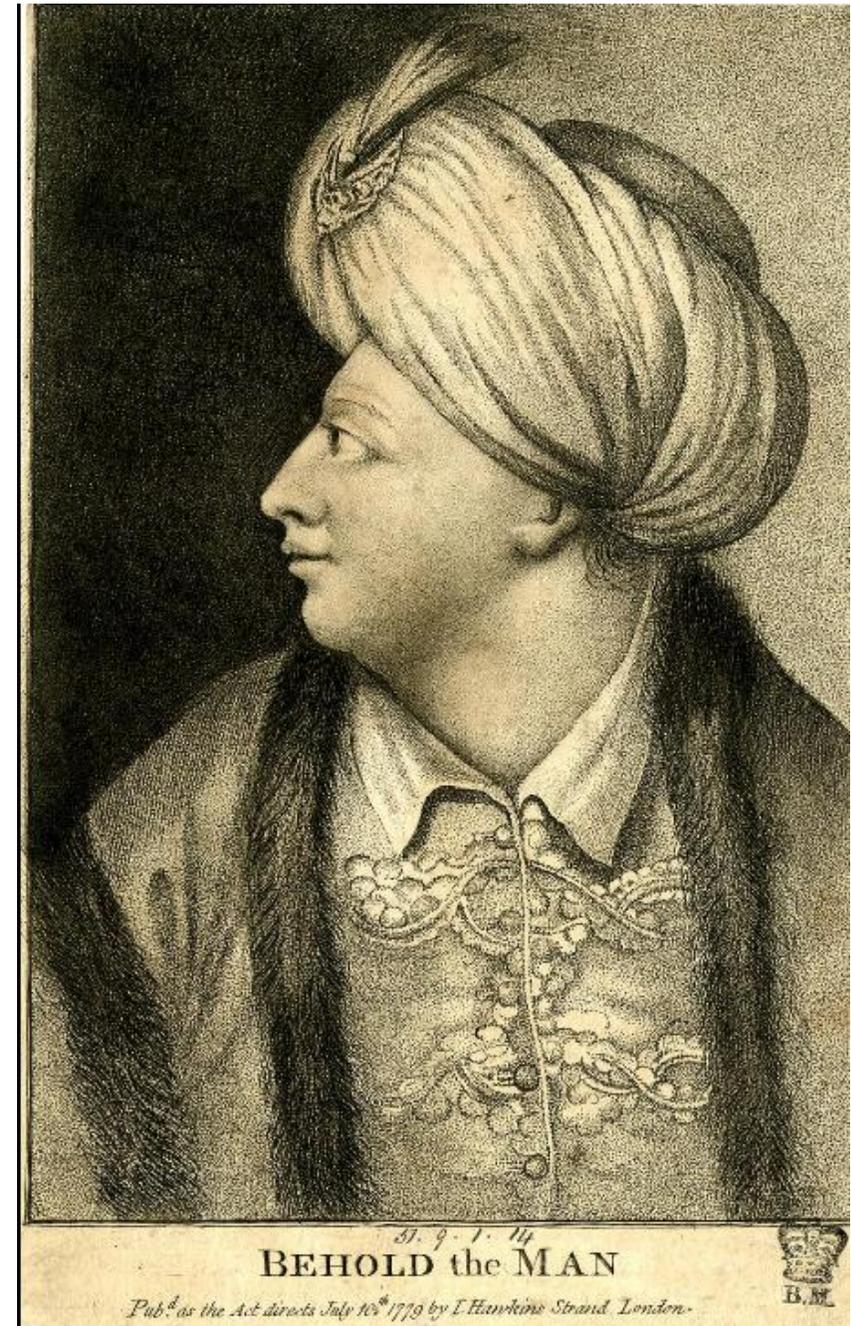


(Fig.2.8) Anon. 'La grande colère de Capet l'ainé' (1791)
Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.2.9) Anon. 'The horse America, throwing his master' (1779) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.2.10) Anon. 'Behold the man' (1779) © Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.2.11) Anon. 'Dissolution' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.2.12) Anon. 'George and the dragon' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum

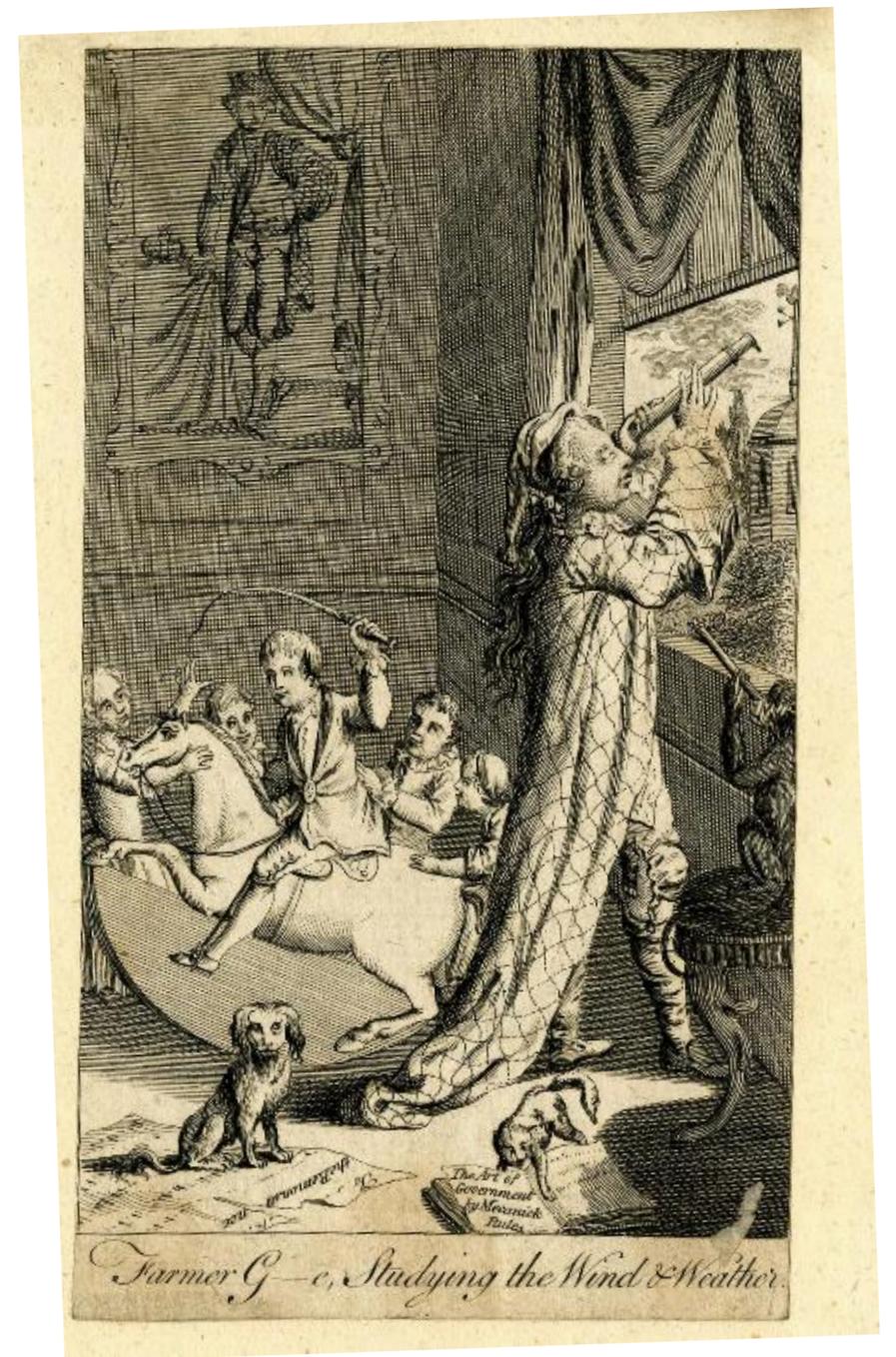


(Fig.2.13) Anon. 'Royal dipping' (1789) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.2.14) Richard Newton, 'The False alarm',(1792) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.2.15) Anon. 'Farmer G---e, studying the wind and weather' (1771) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.2.16) Richard Newton 'The Windsor Milkman' (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum



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(Fig.2.18) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *on voit bien là et ailleurs, que j'ignore comme la bastille est faite.*, 1745-c 1775, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}

watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

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(Fig.2.20) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Alliance forcée, qui quitte périt.*, 1756, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}

watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

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(Fig.2.21) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *L'Eglise est Prévoyante.*, c 1740-c 1775 {nd}, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu} watercolour, ink and graphite on paper Waddesdon (National Trust) Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957 Acc. No: 675.58 Photo: Waddesdon Image Library, Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.2.22) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Moitié plumet, moitié rabat*, 1758-1775, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu} watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

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(Fig.2.23) Anon. 'La reine donne le serment de l'ordre a ses courtisans dans son conseil d'etat' (1789)
Source gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque nationale de France

Art. 1^{er} Pag. n8.



La Reine donne le serment de l'ordre à ses courtisans dans son Conseil privé

(Fig.2.24) Anon. 'Sois satisfaite, il va rejoindre Maurepas' (1789) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France





(Fig.2.25) Anon. 'A Mons Midie l'aveugle mal conduit' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.2.26) Anon. 'Fuite du Roi...' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.2.27) Anon. 'Enjambée de la sainte famille' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque nationale de France 345

(Fig.2.28) Anon. 'Un peuple est sans honneur et mérite ses chaines, quand il baisse le front sous le sceptre des reines' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France





(Fig.2.29) Anon. 'The Wanton Widow' (1762) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.2.31) Anon. 'You have got him Ma'am in the right Kew' (1768)
© Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.2.32) Thomas Rowlandson, 'The Prospect before Us' (1788) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.2.33) James Gillray, 'Wierd sisters' (1789) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.3.1) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Genealogie de Mrs de.....*, c 1740-c 1775

{nd}

ink and graphite on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust)

Bequest of James de
Rothschild, 1957

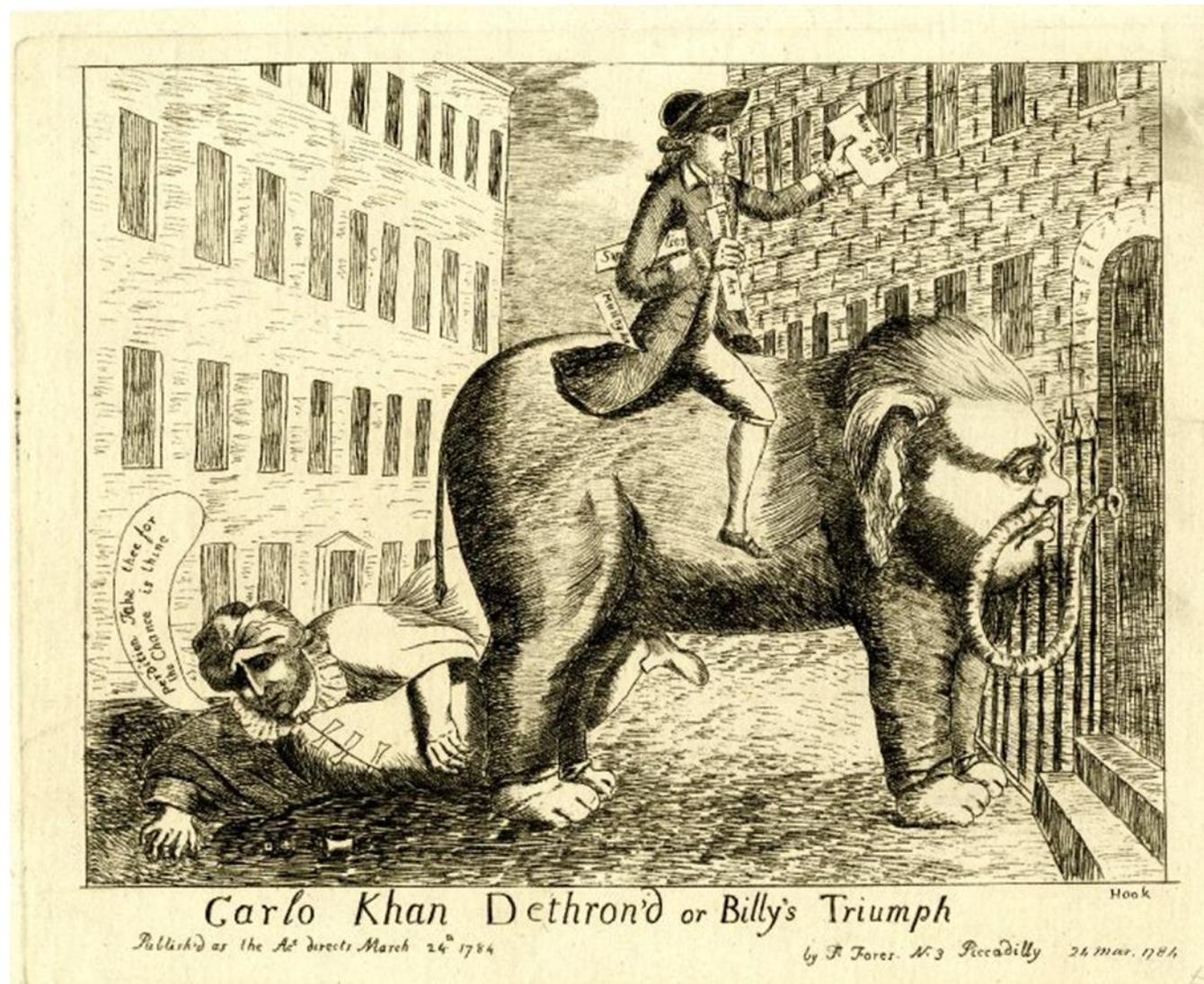
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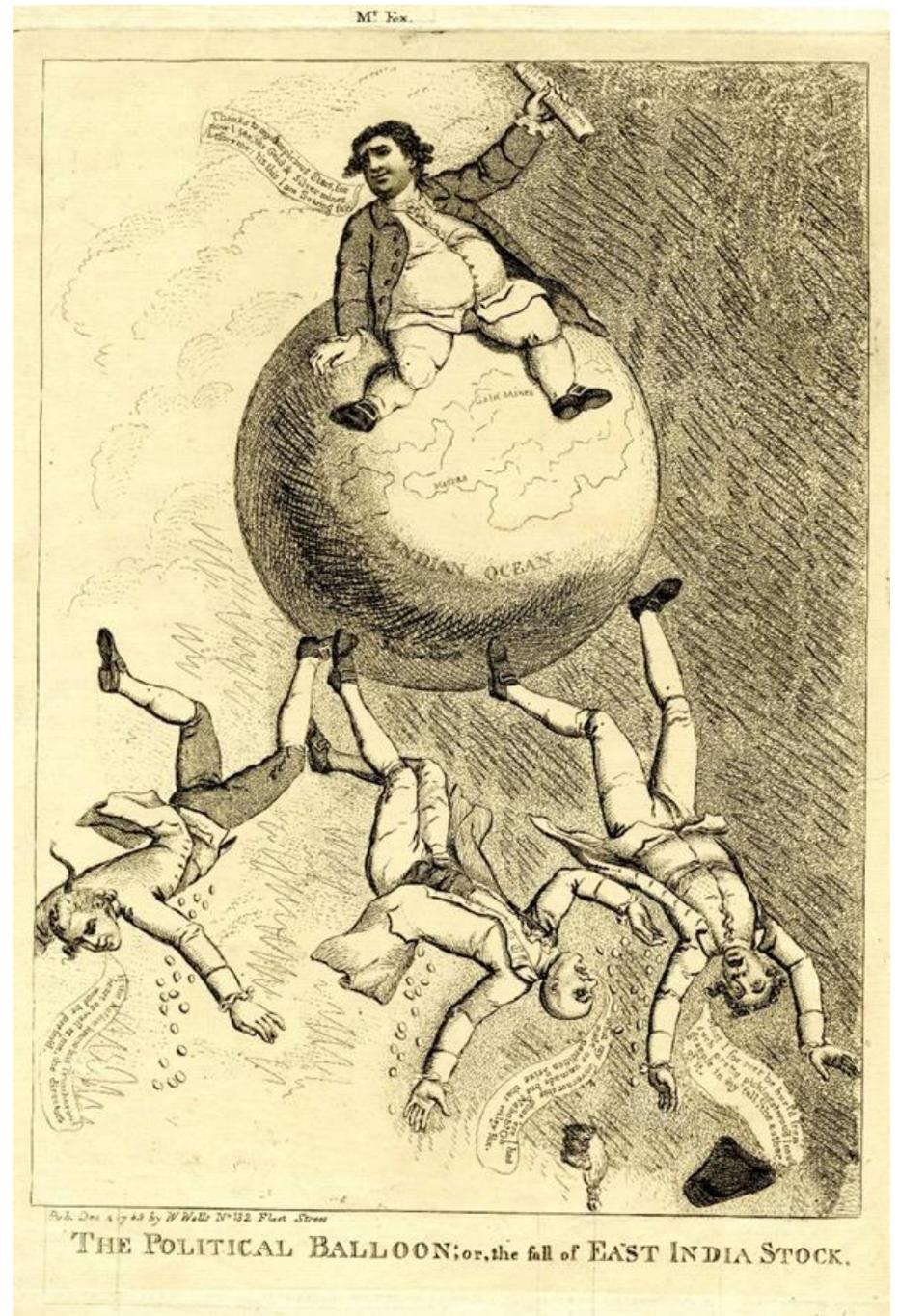
(Fig.3.2) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *L'Ane de Rosback.*,
1757, 1822-1869 {One
inscription by Tardieu}
Watercolour, ink and graphite on
paper
Waddesdon (National Trust)
Bequest of James de Rothschild,
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Photo: Waddesdon Image
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(Fig.3.3) Anon. 'Carlo Khan dethron'd or Billy's triumph' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.3.4) Anon. 'The political balloon; or, the fall of East India stock.' (1783) © Trustees of the British Museum

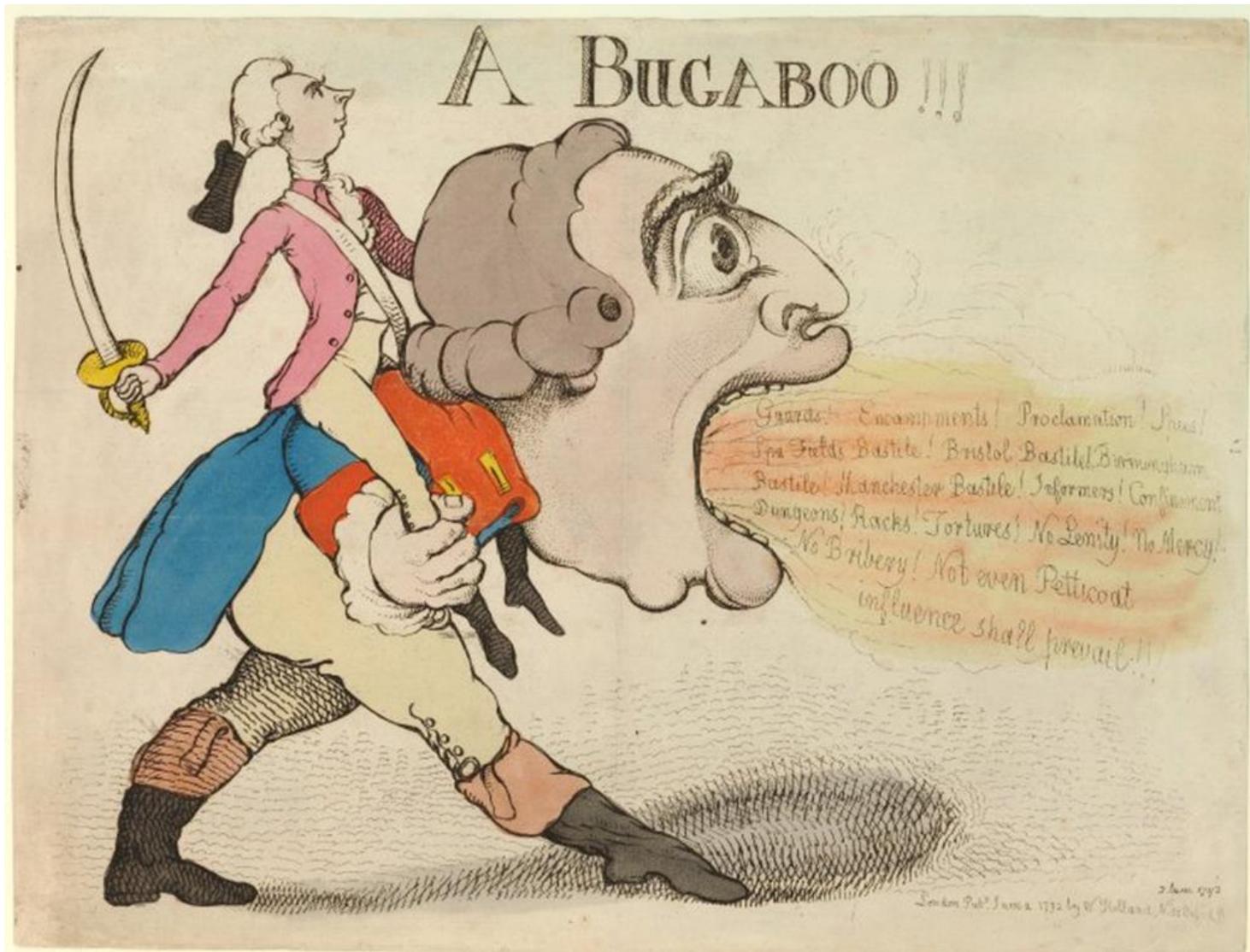


(Fig.3.6) James Sayers, 'The mirror of patriotism.' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.7) Anon. 'In memory of Monday Decemr 17th 1783' (1784) © Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.3.8) Richard Newton, 'A bugaboo!' (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.3.9) Anon. 'The Modern Hercules' (1795) © Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.3.10) John Hamilton Mortimer, 'Iphigenia's late procession from Kingston to Bristol. -by Chudleigh Meadows' (1776) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.11) Anon. 'A bath of the moderns' (1782) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.12) James Gillray, 'A peep into lady!!!!y's seraglio' (1782) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.13) Anon. 'An extravaganza or young Solomon besieging Fitzhubbub.' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.14) Attributed to George Townley Stubbs, 'His Highness in Fitz' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.15) Anon. 'Future prospects or symptoms of love in high life.' (1796)



(Fig.3.16) Anon. 'The constant couple' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.3.17) James Gillray, 'Temperance Enjoying a Frugal Meal' (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.18) James Gillray, 'Frying Sprats, Vide. Royal Supper' (1791) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.19) James Gillray,
'Toasting muffins' (1791)
© Trustees of the British
Museum



(Fig.3.20) Anon. 'Je ne respire plus que pour toi'
(1789) Source
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Bibliothèque nationale
de France



(Fig.3.21) Anon. 'Le
Roi expliquant a son
fils les droits de
l'homme' (1789-90)
Paris Musées / Musée
Carnavalet

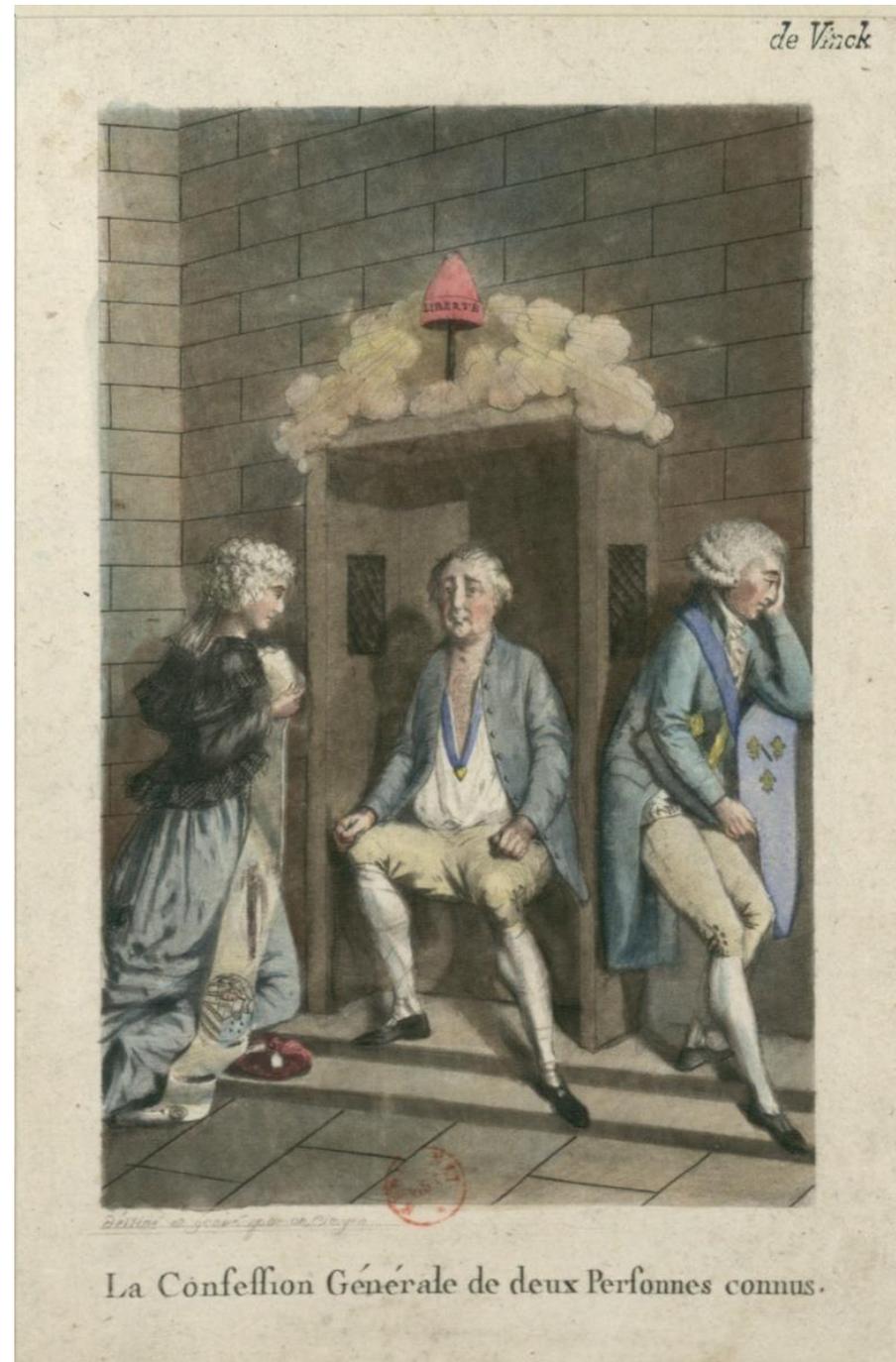
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(Fig.2.24) Anon. 'Sois satisfaite, il va rejoindre Maurepas'(1789) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.3.22) Anon. 'La
Confession générale de
deux personnes connus'
(1789)

Source gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque nationale de
France



(Fig.3.23) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Les plus belles jupes sont ordinairement les plus mal doublées*, 1774

Watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

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(Fig.3.24) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Ce paladin est trop beau pour ne pas être bête*, c 1740-c 1775 {nd}, 1763?

{Inscription}

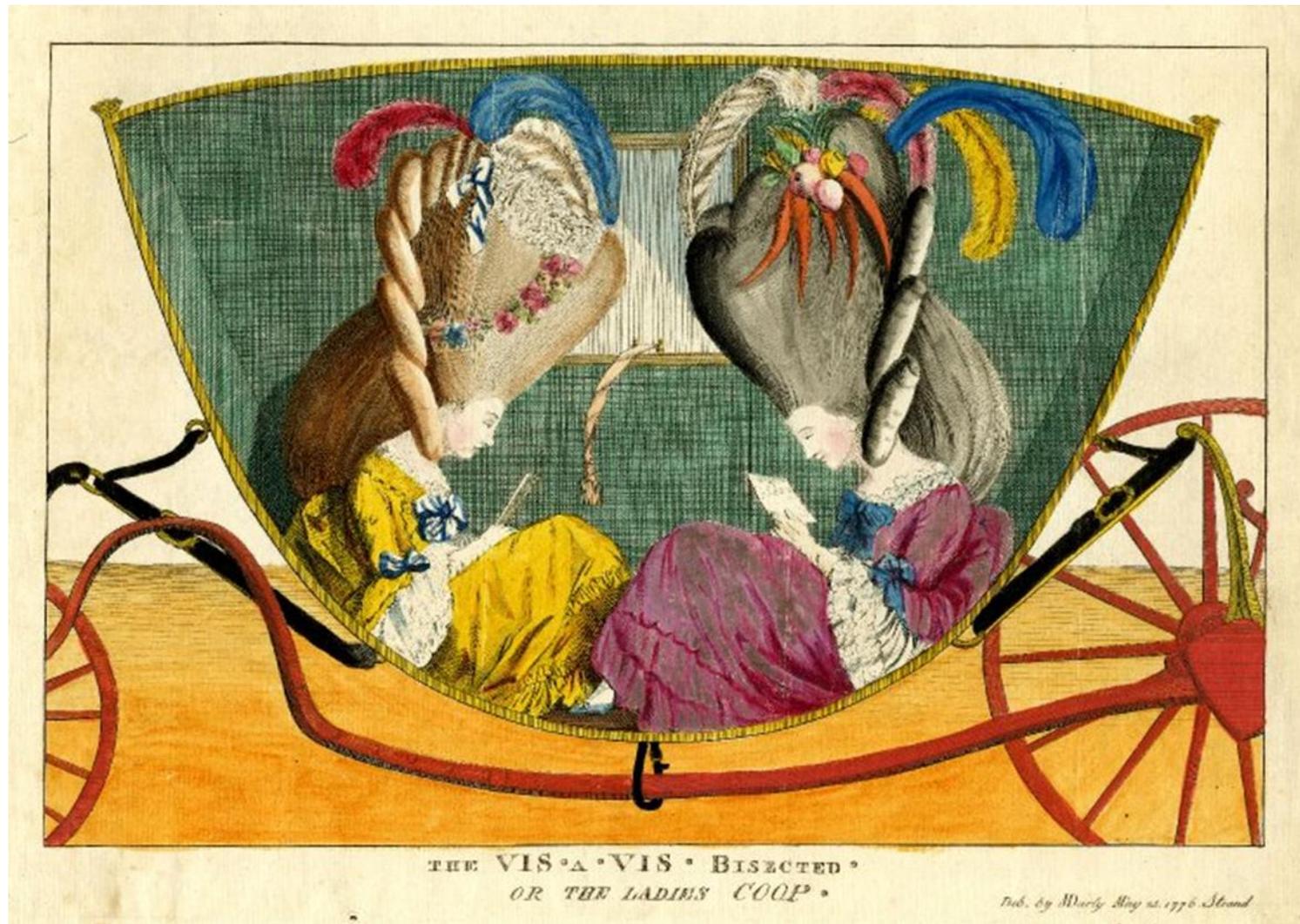
Watercolour, ink and graphite on paper pasted to the page
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Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957

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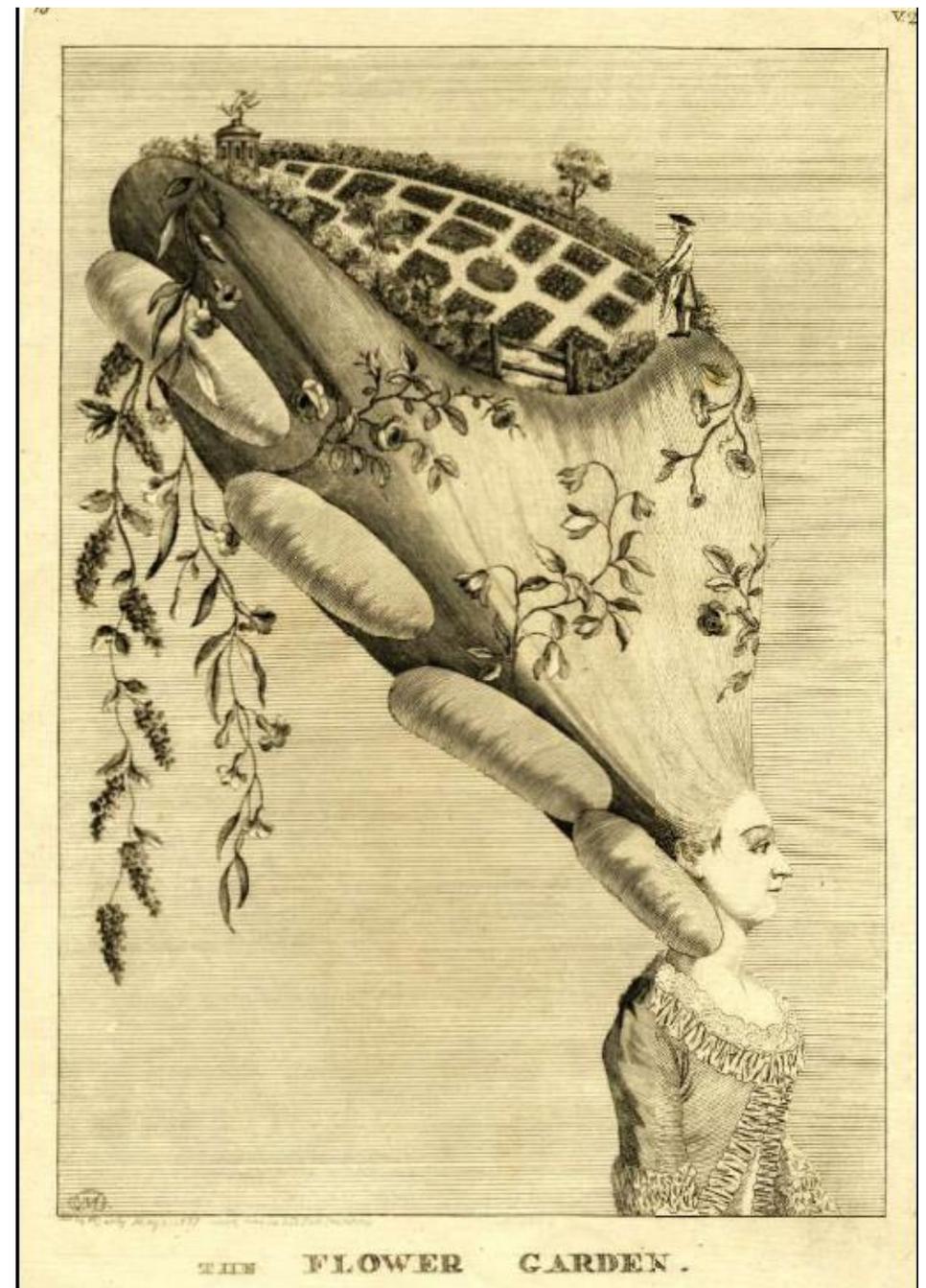
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(Fig.3.25) Anon. 'The vis-a -vis bisected, Or the ladies coop' (1776) © Trustees of the British Museum

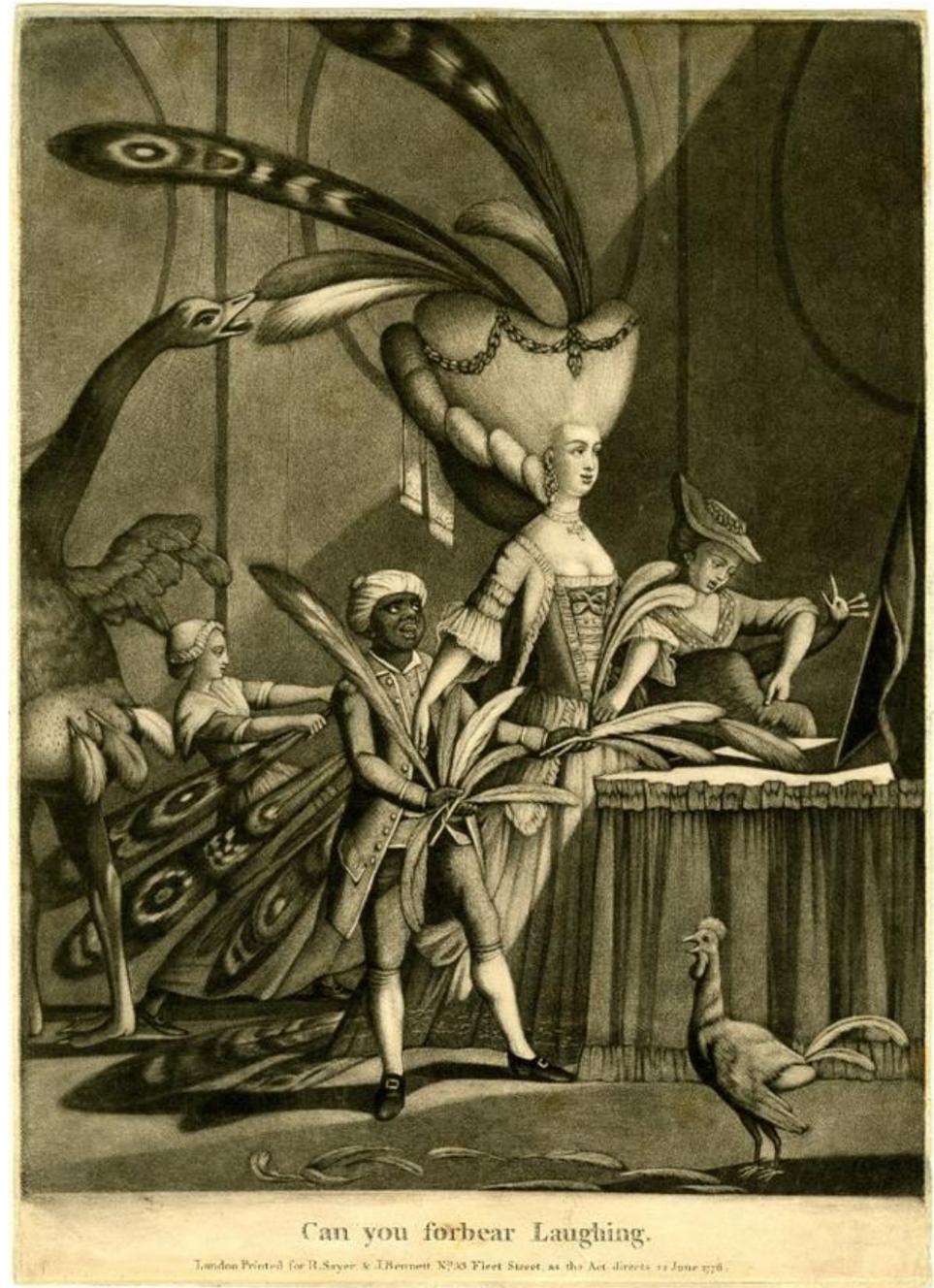
(Fig.3.26) Anon. 'The Flower Garden' (1777) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.2.7) Anon. 'Troc pour troc' (1791)
Source gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque nationale
de France



(Fig.3.27) Philip Dawe,
'Can you forbear
laughing' (1776) ©
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(Fig.2.6) Anon. 'He hu! Da da!' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/
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(Fig.2.25) Anon. 'A Mons l'aveugle mal conduit' (1791) Source gallica.bnf.fr/
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(Fig.3.28) Anon. 'A faut esperer q'eu jeu la finira ben tot' (1789) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France





Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.3.29) Anon. 'L'aristocrate' (1789) Source gallica.bnf.fr/
Bibliothèque nationale de France 384

(Fig.3.30) Anon. 'The
feminine gender' (1787)
Courtesy of the Lewis
Walpole Library, Yale
University

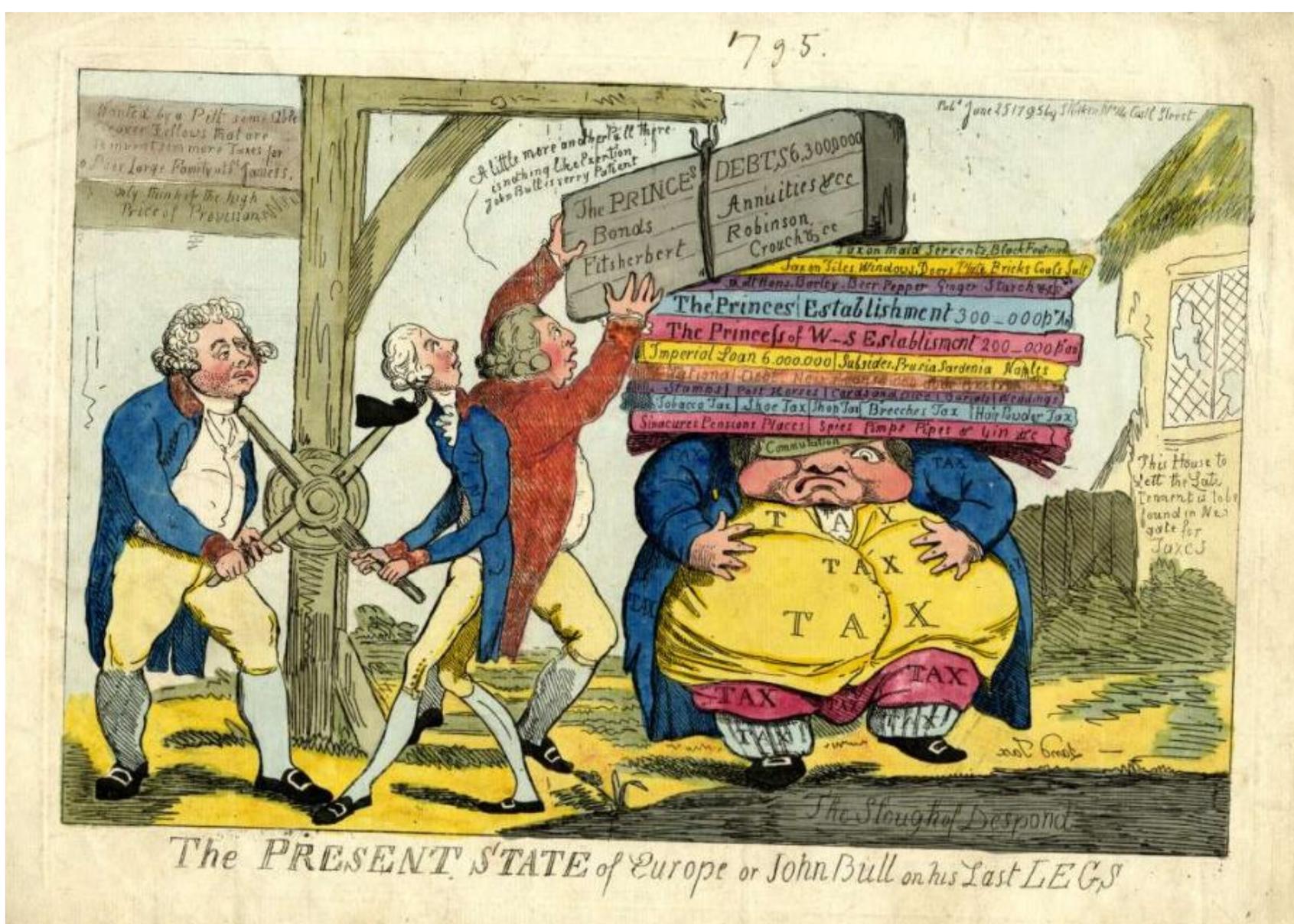
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(Fig.3.31) Anon. 'A-la-mode' (1789) Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University

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(Fig.3.32) James Gillray, 'A new way to pay the national debt' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.33) Anon. 'The present state of Europe- or John Bull on his last legs' (1795) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.3.34) James Gillray, 'The Bow to the Throne; alias the Begging Bow' (1788)
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(Fig.3.35) Anon.
'The Diamond
Eaters, Horrid
Monsters' (1788)
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(Fig.3.36) James Gillray, 'Monstrous craws, at a new coalition feast' (1787)
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(Fig.3.37) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Montrés vous citoyens, l'Occasion est belle Pour acheter la paix portés votre vaisselle*, 1759, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}

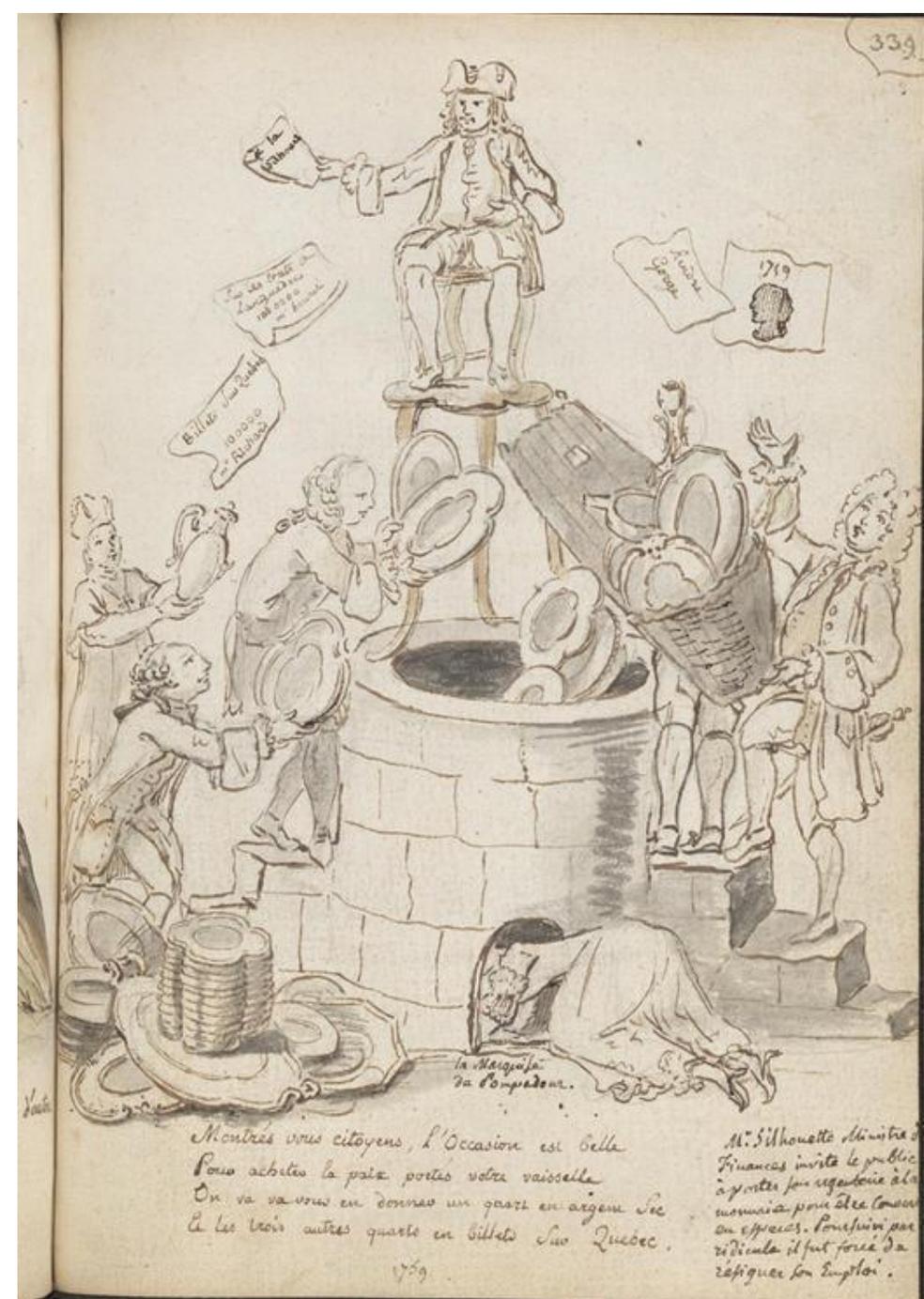
Watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

Waddesdon (National Trust)

Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.339

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(Fig.3.38) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Nous l'avons vü en 1774. miserablement trainant dans la Crotte, 1774?*

Watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

Waddesdon (National Trust)

Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.294

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(Fig.1.20) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Il part pour hanovre*, 1757-1758, 1822-1869
{One inscription by Tardieu}
Watercolour and ink on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust)
Bequest of James de Rothschild,
1957
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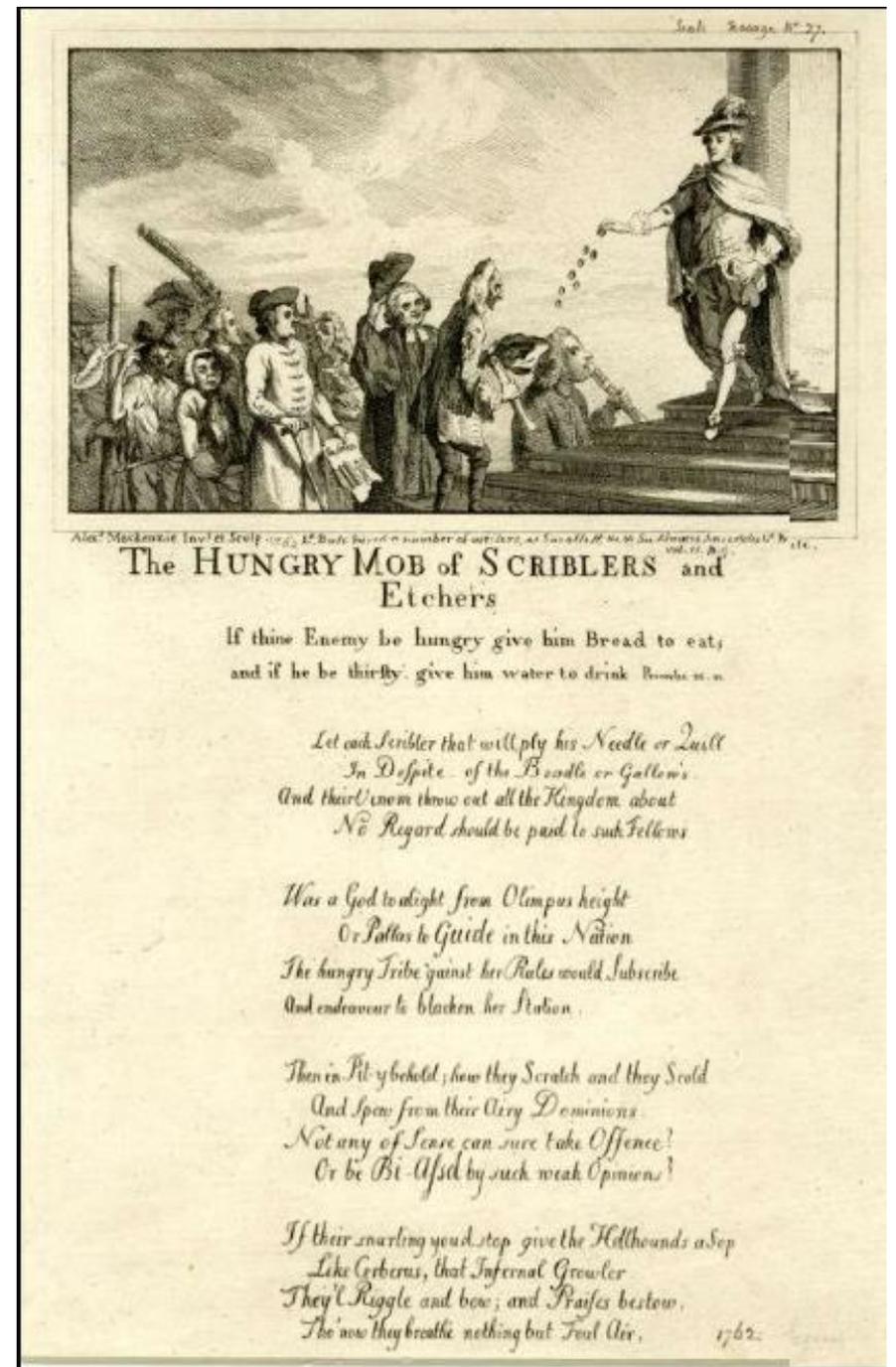
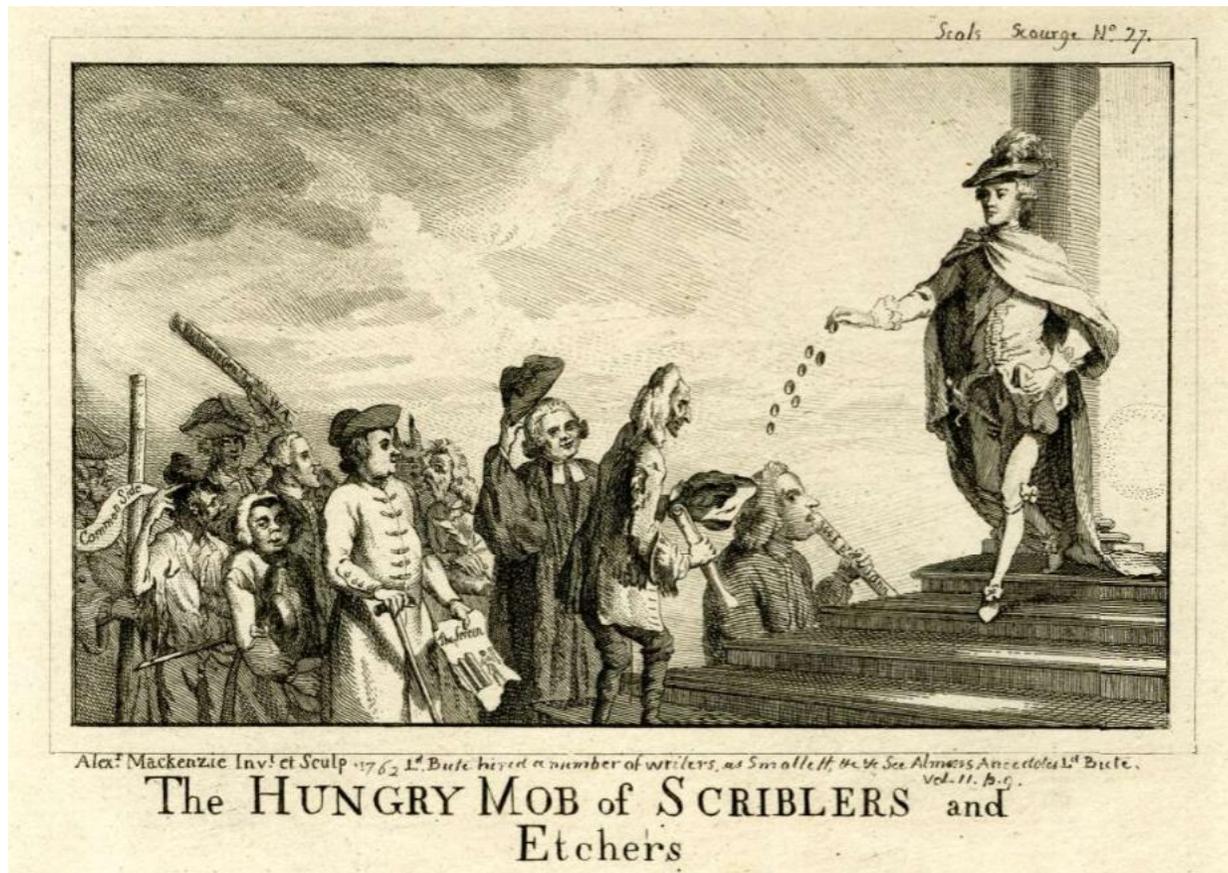


(Fig.3.39) Anon. 'Gargantua du siecle...' (1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr/ Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.4.1) Anon. 'Cowardice Rewarded or the Devil will have his due' (1756) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.4.4) Anon. 'The hungry mob of scribblers and etchers' (1762) © Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.4.5) Anon. 'The political brokers or an auction a la mode de Paris' (1762) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.4.6) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *Ce chevalier est si-bette quil faut quil soit beau*, c 1740-c 1775 {nd}, 1763? {Inscription}

Watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

Waddesdon (National Trust)

Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.112

Photo: Waddesdon Image Library, Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.3.2) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *L'Ane de Rosback.*, 1757, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}

Watercolour, ink and graphite on paper

Waddesdon (National Trust)

Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957

Acc. No: 675.309

Photo: Waddesdon Image Library, Bodleian Imaging Services



(Fig.2.21) Charles-Germain de Saint-Aubin, *L'Eglise est Prévoyante.*, c 1740-c 1775 {nd}, 1822-1869 {One inscription by Tardieu}
watercolour, ink and graphite on paper
Waddesdon (National Trust)
Bequest of James de Rothschild, 1957
Acc. No: 675.58
Photo: Waddesdon Image Library, Bodleian Imaging Services





(Fig.4.7) James Gillray, 'Anticipation, or the approaching fate of the French commercial treaty' (1787) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.4.8) William Dent, 'Don Carlo. Portuguese Plenipo-extraordinary' (1787) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.9) James Sayers, 'The Chamber of Commerce, or L'Assemblée des Notables Anglois'(1787)
© Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.4.10) Anon. 'The commercial treaty; or John Bull changing beef and pudding for frogs and soup maigre!' (1786) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.11) Anon. 'The treaty of commerce or new coalition' (1787)

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(Fig.4.12) Anon. 'Un bon averti en vaut deux' (c.1780-90) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France



(Fig.4.13) Anon. 'L'allégorie est assez claire, pour se passer de comentaire : Mercure symbole du commerce est étranglé par un cordon parlant' (1788) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.4.14) James Gillray, 'Alecto and her train, at the gate of PandaeMonium:-or-The recruiting sarjeant enlisting John-Bull, into the Revolution Service.' (1791) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.15) James
Gillray, 'A Democrat,
-or- Reason &
Philosophy' (1793)
© Trustees of the
British Museum

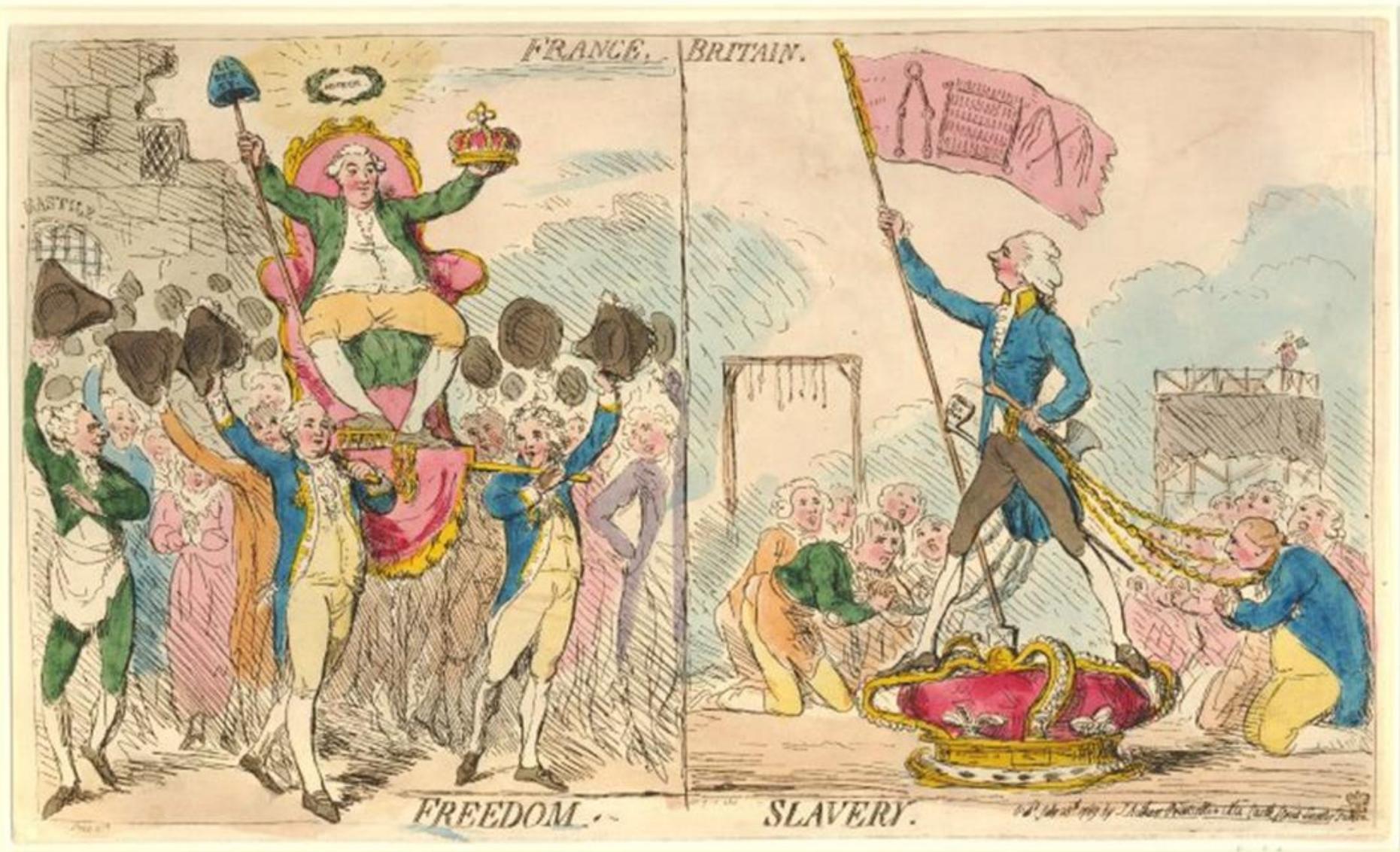


(Fig.4.16) James Gillray
'Dumourier dining in
state at St James's, on
the 15th of May, 1793.'
(1793) © Trustees of
the British Museum





(Fig.4.17) James Gillray, 'The genius of France triumphant, -or- Britannia petitioning for peace. -Vide, The Proposals of Opposition' (1795) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.18) James Gillray, 'France. Britain. Freedom. Slavery' (1789) © Trustees of the British Museum 416

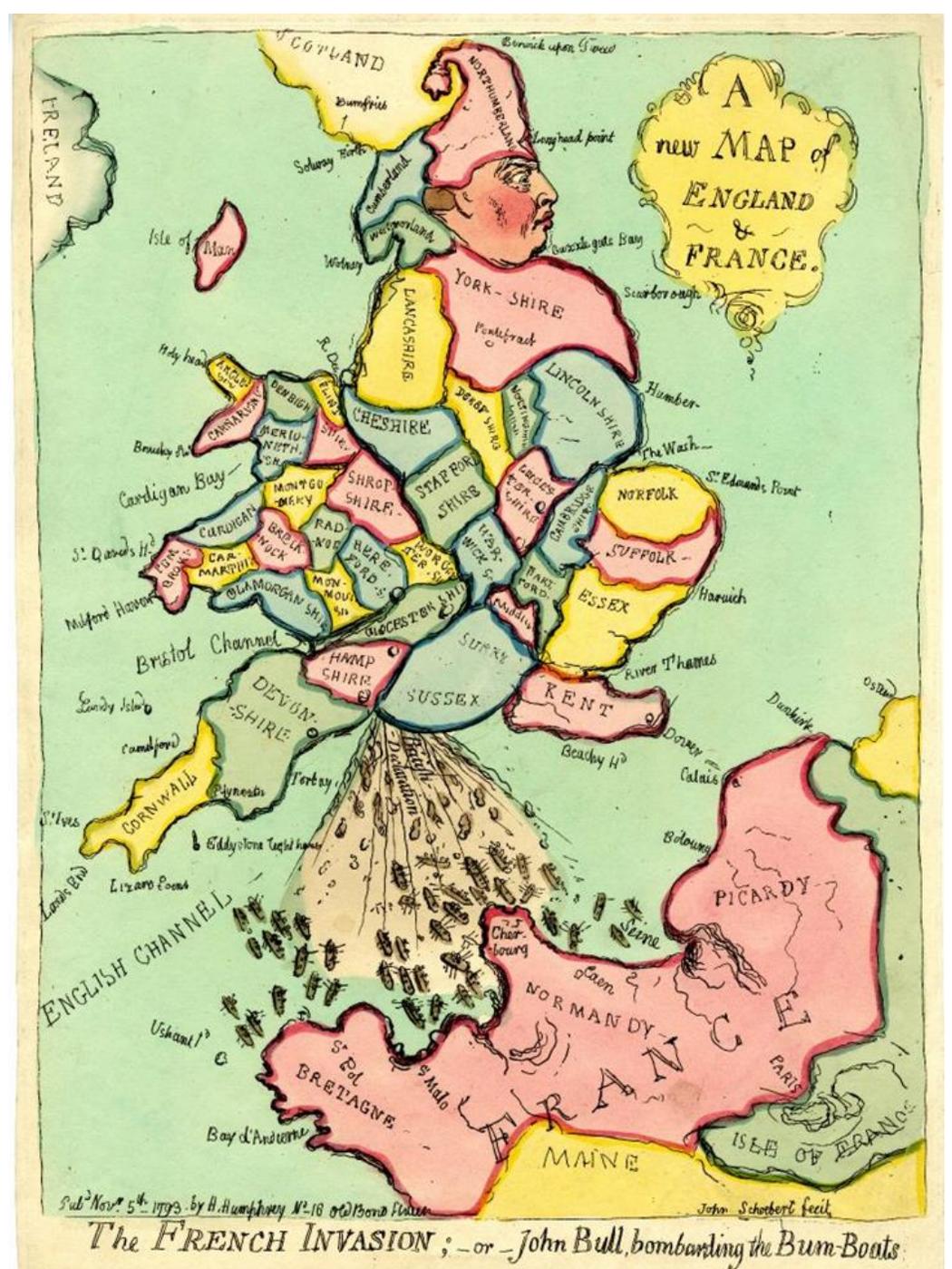


(Fig.4.19) William Dent, 'Constitutional Danger, or, A sure way to stop the progress of Pain' (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.21) Anon. 'Billy in hast going to consult his old friend concerning the war' (1794) © Trustees of the British Museum

(Fig.4.22) James Gillray, 'The French Invasion –or- John Bull bombarding the Bum-Boats' (1793) © Trustees of the British Museum





(Fig.4.23) Richard Newton, 'Louis Dethron'd!' (1792)© Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.24) James Gillray, 'Taking Physick, or the News of Shooting the King of Sweden!' (1792) © Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.25) James Gillray, 'Fatigues of the Campaign in Flanders' (1793)© Trustees of the British Museum



(Fig.4.27) Richard Newton, 'Arming in the Defence of French Princes' (1792)

(Fig.4.28) Anon. 'Le Géant Iscariotte aristocrate' (1789)
Source gallica.bnf.fr /
Bibliothèque
nationale de France





(Fig.4.29) Anon. [Fuite des émigrés, représentés en animaux, dans des carrosses] (1789-90) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.4.30) Anon. 'Le Chasseur patriote' (1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

(Fig.4.31) Anon. 'Fi donc Mr l'emigrant vous foirez en vannant eh ! vite un essuye main' (1790/2) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

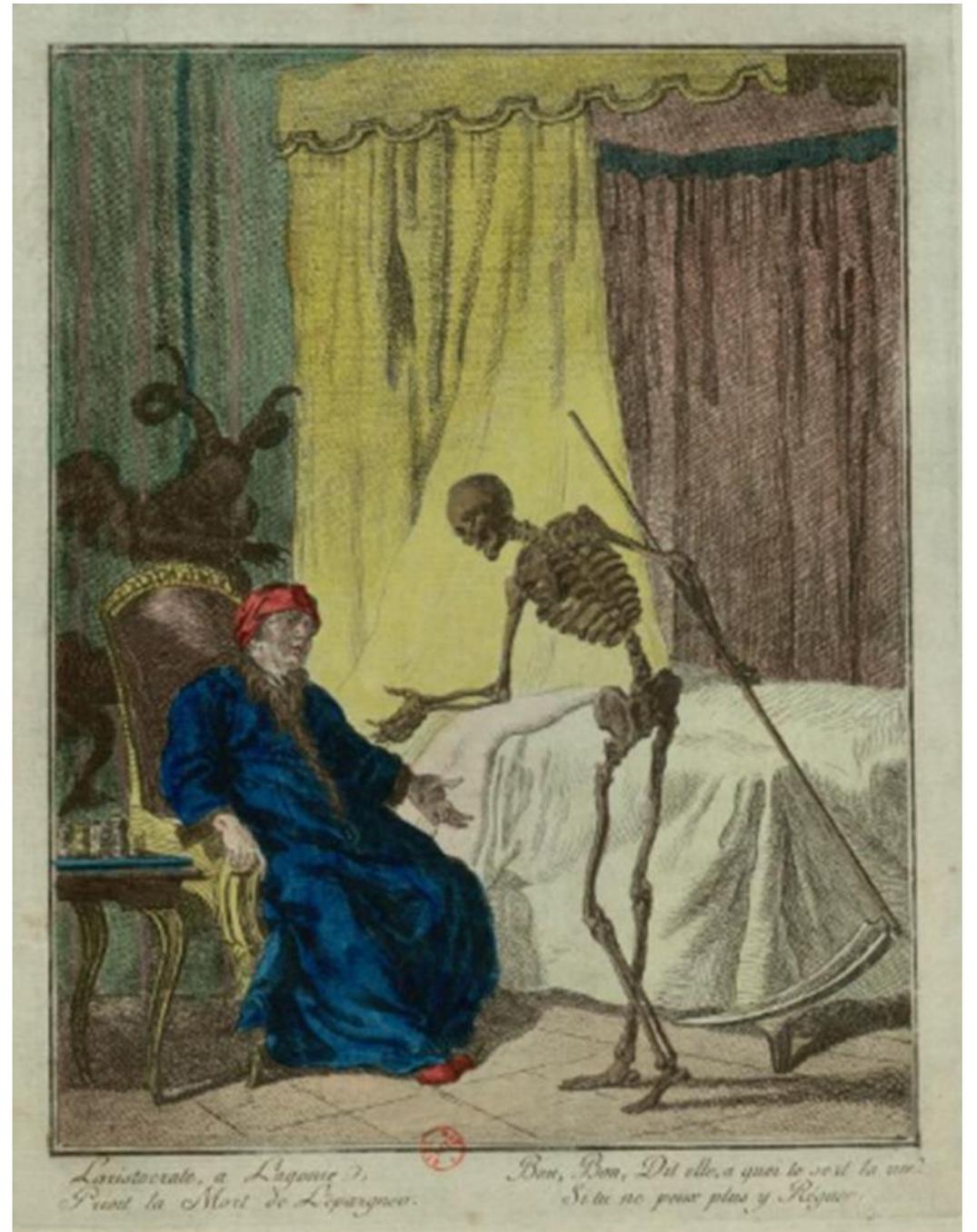


(Fig.4.32) Anon. 'Je chie, sur les aristocrates' (1790) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.



(Fig.4.33) Anon. 'Revue générale du petit Condé' (1792) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

(Fig.4.34) Anon.
'L'aristocrate, a l'agonie
prioit la mort de l'epargner.
Bon, bon, dit elle, a quoi te
sert la vie ? si tu ne peux
plus y régner' (1790) Source
gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque
nationale de France.



(Fig.4.35) Anon.
[Aristocrates en enfer]
(1792) Source gallica.bnf.fr /
Bibliothèque nationale de
France.

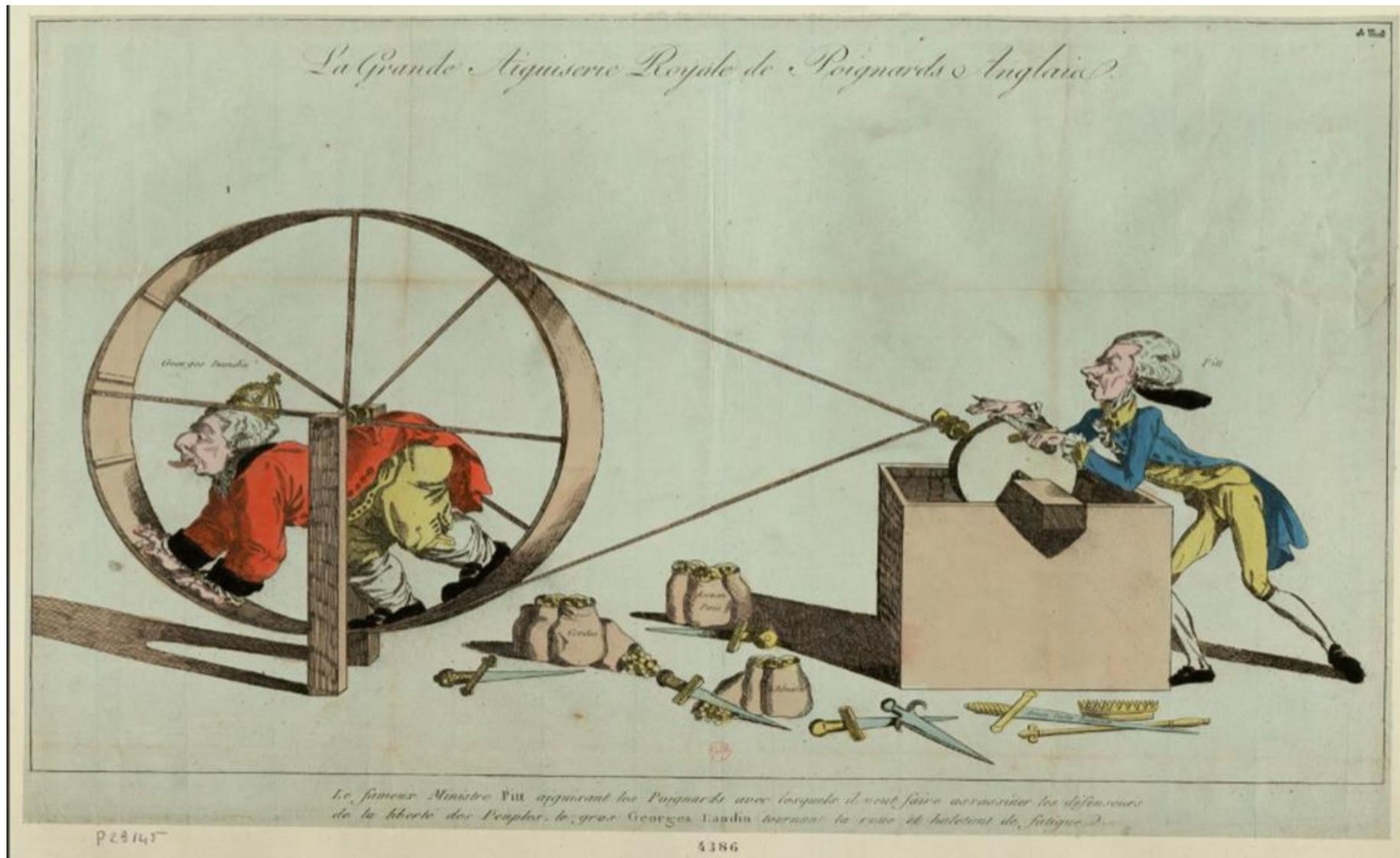




(Fig.4.36) Anon. 'Menagerie nationale' (1792) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.



(Fig.4.37) Anon. 'Le Charlatan politique : ou le léopard apprivoisé'(1794) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.



(Fig.4.38) Anon. 'La Grande aiguiserie royale de poignards anglais : le fameux Pitt aiguissant les poignards' (1794) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.



(Fig.4.39) François Godefroy, 'Le jongleur Pitt' (1794) Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

(Fig.4.40) Anon. 'Nouvelles a la cour de la Grande Bretagne ou Mr. Pitt annonçant a sa majesté le [sic] Révolution en Hollande' (c.1795-8)
Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

