
For or against the French revolution ?

❶ Edmund Burke on Queen Marie-Antoinette in his *Reflections on the revolution in France* (1790).

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the Dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she had just begun to move in, glittering like the morning star full of life and splendor and joy.

Oh, what a revolution! and what a heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream, when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her, in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honor, and of cavaliers! I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards, to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult.

But the age of chivalry is gone; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever.

❷ English satirical cartoon published on 18 November 1790 and mocking Burke in the aftermath of his *Reflections*. Burke, dressed in armour like Don Quixote, embraces the glamorous queen of France while poor old Mrs Jane Burke is weeping.



➤ Using the documents and your knowledge, explain why the English were divided about the French revolution.