

1988

## Disillusionment with the French Revolution The Case of the Scottish Physician John Moore

Henry L. Fulton

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Fulton, Henry L. (1988) "Disillusionment with the French Revolution The Case of the Scottish Physician John Moore," *Studies in Scottish Literature*: Vol. 23: Iss. 1.

Available at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/ssl/vol23/iss1/5>

This Article is brought to you by the Scottish Literature Collections at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Studies in Scottish Literature* by an authorized editor of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact [digres@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:digres@mailbox.sc.edu).

*Henry L. Fulton*

**Disillusionment with the French Revolution  
The Case of the Scottish Physician John Moore**



Reflecting in December, 1794, on the degeneration of the French Revolution, John Moore wrote:

Those men . . . who consider freedom as the greatest of human blessings, who have a strong sense of the miseries that flow from desperation, who behold with indignation the cruelty and arrogance with which dastardly power and unfeeling rank often treat the weak and the ingenious . . . men of this description beheld the beginning of the French Revolution with that complacency, which the expectation of seeing a large portion of their fellow creatures relieved from oppression naturally communicates. They saw the degeneracy with disappointment, grief, and horror; but were unwilling to lose the hope that some rational system of freedom . . . would arise out of the chaos of anarchy and bloodshed which it had produced . . . . <sup>1</sup>

In this passage Moore recounts in capsule the history of his own sentiments toward France the past twenty years. Among all the literary figures in Great Britain in the 1790's who were deeply concerned with the progress of the French Revolution, Moore was probably the oldest and had the longest, most continuous acquaintance with France; his sentiments were the most frequently modified or confirmed by travel, they evolved over the longest period, and proved ultimately to be the most ambivalent. His sentiments toward

the revolution were not consistent; this is due primarily to the fact that he visited Paris during the fall of 1792, when several atrocities took place. This visit shattered his dreams and high expectations for France. And some aspects of his high hopes hung on.

The only systematic treatment of Moore's attitude toward the French Revolution is a very capable article by Professor Alain Morvan of the Université de Lille, published in 1981.<sup>2</sup> Morvan's article deals exclusively with Moore's published statements about developments in France. With his conclusions this author has little quarrel, although it is possible to infer from them that Moore had always been more politically conservative and cautious all his life than further evidence will show. Only when we examine Moore's private papers from the early 1790's do we realize that notwithstanding Moore's reservations about the revolution in his later works, the Scottish-born physician was formerly further to the left of the Foxite Whigs and had adopted a position close to Paine which, in his printed statements, he ultimately was compelled to abandon.

Dr. John Moore (1729-1802) was a native of Glasgow, bred to medicine, who moved with his family to London midway through his life, and retired from active practice. The last twenty-five years of his life he wrote fiction and travel for the popular reading market. His love affair with the French people dates back to 1749 when, at the age of nineteen, he went to Paris to study medicine. He toured France the following summer with his cousin Tobias Smollett before settling down to two decades of medical practice and family life in Glasgow, during which he probably visited France on several occasions, particularly because his daughter was being educated in a convent-school in Calias. He was next in France for a month in 1772 as tutor and companion to the Duke of Hamilton; they settled in Geneva for two years, during which time they vacationed in southern France. In 1776 Moore was back in Paris for several months, as his tour of duty with the duke drew to a close. From then on we cannot place him with certainty again in France until August of 1792, as physician and companion to the Earl of Lauderdale. The two Scotsmen remained in the country for five stormy months.

Moore's feelings about France, its institutions and its people, can be traced principally through three works dealing with French affairs: a book of travels published in 1779, a journal covering the five months of 1792 and published the following year, and a final work in 1795 whose intent was to explain to the English reader how the revolution actually

began and precisely why it deteriorated into despotism and anarchy.<sup>3</sup> From the earliest of these works one can see that while Moore entertained deep reservations about the indifference of the monarchy toward its subjects and the lack of accountability of the king, Moore was a genuine Francophile. He was well read in its literature, which he frequently quoted in his own writings (his favorite author was La Rochefoucauld), and he remained fluent in French all his life. From the start he marvelled at the gaiety of the people, their wonderful spirits, and their insouciance. But no matter how ardent a lover of the French people Moore was, or how enlightened and enthusiastic he might once have been about the early developments of the revolution in France, the events of 1792 proved too much for his most sanguine sentiments, and his last published thoughts on French affairs represent a sober reappraisal of those French manners and national character he had come to love as a younger man.

What impressed Moore about the French, in the 1770's, was their elegance, their easy manners, and their good breeding--especially as seen in Paris.

Politeness and good manners . . . may be traced, though in different proportions, through every rank, from the greatest of the nobility to the lowest mechanic. This forms a more remarkable and distinguishing feature in the French national character, than the vivacity, impetuosity, and fickleness, for which the ancient as well as the modern inhabitants of this country have been noted. -- It certainly is a very singular phaenomenon that politeness, which in every other country is confined to people of a certain rank in life, should here pervade every situation and profession.<sup>4</sup>

Later in this section Moore mentions with approval the lack of vulgarity, even in the lowest orders. Another aspect of the French character that surprised him was the loyalty everyone showed toward a monarchy that "is raised in [France] so very high, that it quite loses sight of the bulk of the nation."<sup>5</sup> In spite of this distance, Moore observed that the typical French citizen was "nevertheless attached to [the king] by a sentiment of equal respect and tenderness; a kind of affectionate prejudice independent of his real character . . . . They consider him as their friend, though he does not know their persons . . . and as their benefactor, while they are oppressed with taxes . . . . They magnify into important his most indifferent actions; they palliate and

excuse all his weaknesses . . . ."<sup>6</sup> In other places Moore remarks on the abuse of power, the concentration of ostentatious wealth in the capital and Versailles, the comparatively poor economic condition of agricultural workers in the provinces--which he contrasts with their blind loyalty to the monarch. In hindsight one can find Moore in 1779 recording many instances of social injustice that were called to account during the revolution; but in spite of this, Moore felt only wonder and affection for this nation while at the same time he questioned whether the lot of the typical citizen would ever improve to the level of his British counterpart.

There is evidence in his last book on France that Moore may have been closely following developments in prerevolutionary France as early as the fall of 1788, when it was determined that the States-General would have to be summoned to vote more revenue. The events of the summer of 1789 shocked him along with everyone else. Frederica Lock recalled Moore's particular enthusiasm in July when he first received word of the attack on the Bastille. On the night of the 27th, when he came out to her husband's estate at Norbury Park to spend the weekend, he talked of little else.<sup>7</sup> His monarchist hosts must have found him tiresome. For the next six years developments in France and the British reaction to them so totally absorbed his mind that he began in 1790 to keep a journal devoted almost exclusively to political reflections.<sup>8</sup> The fall of the Bastille on top of the convocation of the States-General filled him and many others with the highest hopes that this amiable people would soon enjoy the liberties and privileges the British had enjoyed since 1688. Moreover, Moore came to believe, as did many disestablished intellectuals, that the British Parliament would come to imitate several acts the assemblies in France proposed and modernize its franchise as well as repeal the outdated Test and Corporation Acts.

Moore's sympathy for the initial stages of the French Revolution, though it was very like many others' of that period, can be described as a particularly Scottish perspective. The late Leo Gershoy once defined Moore as "the complete English liberal"<sup>9</sup> for uttering sentiments like these:

Let the princes be distinguished by splendour and magnificence; let the great and the rich have their luxuries; but in the name of humanity, let the poor, who are willing to labour, have food in abundance to satisfy

the cravings of nature, and raiment to defend them from the inclemencies of the weather!

If their governors, whether from weakness or neglect, do not supply them with these, they certainly have a right to help themselves.-- Every law of equity and common sense will justify them, in revolting against such governors, and in satisfying their own wants from the superfluities of lazy luxury.<sup>10</sup>

The man whose feelings about natural law were so strongly shaped by Locke was the son of an early Moderate minister of the Scottish kirk and an evangelical mother. Moore's liberalism has roots in his rejection of his mother's severely religious regimen in Glasgow, his Scottish university education (particularly his medical training), his love of reading, the broadening experience of extensive foreign travel, and a sense of feeling alien and somewhat disenfranchised in London, which he shared with many Scots of that period. Moreover, in a general way, he was intellectually the heir to egalitarian sentiments characteristic of all distinctively Reformational environments, i.e. the civil freedoms of Geneva and the Presbyterian polity of his native land. When he moved with his family to London in 1777, however, it took him a while to find his niche, the political group with whom he felt most comfortable.

An historian has recently classified the British sympathizers of the French Revolution as either radical Whigs, Dissenters, a "disparate group of humanitarians" who belonged to no identifiable group, or the populist radicals who chose Paine as their spokesman.<sup>11</sup> From a reading of his private journal during the period before he went to Paris, one can make a case for placing Moore among any of these groups, including even the disciples of Tom Paine; one can detect even occasional sympathy for Pitt. But Moore increasingly distrusted the growing power of the monarchy after the Regency crisis and at the same time condemned those "placemen" who derived their livelihood solely from the royal bounty. He also turned against an old friend, Edmund Burke. The most celebrated publication of the early years of this decade, Burke's *Reflections*, Moore observed in his journal, "is highly Relished by the Bishops, Lords of the Bedchamber, and the Courtiers in general . . . Torryism is in my opinion the Natural bent of the the English Nation--they are attracted by the Splendour of Royalty, & without much Piety they have a kind of Blind Affection for the Church."

It is tempting to place Moore among the "disparate humanitarians" because during this period when the followers of Fox and other activists joined clubs and associations to avow their principle, he seems to have belonged to none of the well-known political societies his friends did.<sup>12</sup> When Moore first came to London, his newest friends were probably from the Scottish medical community, particularly James Hunter, with whom his son James Carrick was studying; in the mid-1780's he associated more with the survivors of Dr. Johnson's circle--Mrs. Piozzi, Burke, Reynolds--as well as the rowdy circle at Devonshire House. But by 1788 the group he fit in best with was the Dissenters; among his closest friends and dinner companions we find Helen Maria Williams (a protégé, really), the playwright Joanna Baillie, Henry Fuseli, Mrs. Barbauld, and especially the poet Samuel Rogers. Among the politicians Moore was still closely associated with the followers of Fox, in particular the Earl of Lauderdale, Charles Grey, the Reverend Richard Price, Joseph Priestley, the MP William Smith, in addition to officials in the Foreign Office where Moore's son Francis was a clerk. Moore also knew Paine.

From 1789 to 1792, then, Moore frequently expressed those sentiments toward events in France that identified him with Dissenters. His partiality for the revolution was so well known in London that we find the *Critical Review* speaking of him in 1793: "As our author is well known to have been a warm admirer of the French revolution in its earlier stages . . . many have been afraid to take up the present publication, lest they meet in it those opinions which are now become obnoxious," and then goes on to assure its readers that in the published version of Moore's journal, these opinions no longer prevail. Similarly, the *British Critic* states, "They who are acquainted with Dr. Moore, the spirit of his writings, and the connections he has chiefly cultivated, will not suppose that he is inclined with any intemperate warmth to the side of the aristocracy in France," but assures their readers that that is where he ends up. And the *Monthly* said, "Some reflections and sentiments occur in this volume, which appear to be inconsistent with ideas that have been formerly entertained by Dr. Moore."<sup>13</sup> The moment of his change of heart was his sojourn in France; after this, he lost all his enthusiasm, while still retaining a high level of interest and curiosity.

The readiest way to appreciate the shifts in Moore's attitude toward developments in France is to follow the record of his feelings toward the French people generally and

also toward the French monarchy. Nowhere in his journal and correspondence, prior to August, 1792, does Moore cite anything in the course of the revolution--not even the reckless confiscation of ecclesiastical property--that induced him, in the manner of Burke, to condemn all the proceedings in Paris. On the contrary, despite whatever he had heard from the many British visitors or the numerous *émigrés*, or had read in the papers, Moore's confidence in the successful conclusion of the deliberations of the National Assembly, particularly the adoption of a constitution under which all the citizens in France would enjoy full and equal rights, remained strong. After characterizing for Samuel Rogers the revolution as "the most compleat triumph over tyranny" he had ever known, he declared"

I always loved the French as an ingenious and Amiable People; I now admire them As real & enlightened Franks-- and am not Surprised--as Many have Seem [sic] to be, that the National Assembly have made so little progress towards the Establishment of a Steady free constitution, but I wonder that they have made so Much.

With a little time I am persuaded *Ça ira à la dernière* perfection--and they have my best wishes.<sup>14</sup>

Likewise at a dinner at the barrister Thomas Erskine's, when talk turned toward the revolution, some of Erskine's guests inveighed against it "as if the Nation [of France] were to lose by it." Moore responded boldly; "I express'd my Sentiments Strongly on the other Side, and Said in my opinion it was the greatest blessing that ever happened to France, & I was convinced would render them a Richer, Greater, & a happier People than ever."

Moore was hardly alone in his enthusiasm, but it became politically risky by 1792 to speak with such tolerance of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. For example, in a speech before Commons on 15 April, Fox declared that he "admired the new constitution of France, considered it altogether as the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty, which had been erected on the foundations of human integrity in any time or country." As L.G. Mitchell says, this generous remark moved Fox dangerously close to where Paine and Priestley stood, and it was held against him for the rest of his life.<sup>15</sup> Later that spring, after the French king had declared he would recognize and approve the new constitution, Moore was immensely pleased, especially because

so many in London had fondly believed that a counter-revolution would save the king from making such a humiliating concession. "This gives pain to many people in Gt Britain," he recorded on 4 May, "who dread some innovation here--& to Some other Merely because having repeatedly foretold an antirevolution they are angry that their prediction is not accomplished. It affords me great joy that So fine a People as the French are Now a free People, & I sincerely wish their example may be followed all over the World."

Moore's resentment of the Tory bias in the government after 1789 was echoed in his disaffection for the monarchy in France, as recorded in his journal. His ideal for France was a constitutional monarchy like his own; the flight of the French king to Varennes in 1791 threatened this ideal and seemed to imply that one of two things were likely to come of it: a restoration of the *ancien régime* as before, or a fully republican government. The latter he preferred to the former, but he was inclined toward limited sovereignty in any case. On 25 June, when he received the news that stunned all of Europe, he mistakenly assumed that the royal family was safe in Brussels.

The Sensations occasion'd by this news is Strong and various. The Lovers [of] Kings and Courts rejoice, and wish the Restoration of the fugitives in all their former power & Splendour--the Lovers of general Freedom hope that the National assembly will be able to compleat a free government in Some form or another whether by declaring that the King has abdicated by his flight, and chusing another in his Stead, With that limited Power which they think expedient for the public good, as was done in England at the Revolution, or whether they may prefer a Republican form. It is my most earnest wish that all the attempts of those who wish to restore the former odious despotism [?] may terminate in their disgrace & disapointment [sic].

Paine's return to London brought forth from Moore on 21 July his most radical statement with regard to monarchies and representational government. The preceding November Paine had fled to France to avoid persecution for libel. But he had come back, disgusted with the National Assembly because as yet it had not dethroned the king and put him on trial. Moore and he had undoubtedly dined together and discussed the situation. "This [man]," Moore wrote of Paine then, "has an inveterate [aversion] to Monarchy & is Zealous to have it

over thrown all the World over . . . . He is convinced that Mankind would be happier by the Republican form of Government." Moore, surprisingly, seems to have agreed with this position, though with one caution:

For my part I Suppose that the Republican form may be the best on the whole which is not quite proved, Still I imagine we ought not to push thro' bloodshed & a Civil war to attain it, if a Mild limited Monarcy is in our power without bloodshed--[However,] the difference between a free Government & a Dogmatic one is so Great that the former can hardly be purchased by Mankind at too high a price.

When we consider Moore's eventual retreat in his published writings to a preference for a constitutional monarchy on the British model, we must conclude that during this period Moore had allowed himself to become completely caught up by the spirit of the times--as Wordsworth, James Mackintosh, and Godwin did, who also modified their positions after the events of 1792-93. For a brief while, however, Moore forgot he was sixty-two and thought and felt about the revolution as though he were a younger man.

London during the first years of the French Revolution was, apparently, an extremely heady time. "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive," Wordsworth reminds us. For Moore to have been in France at that time would have been very heaven. His opportunity did not come until late summer of 1792 when, after the Earl of Lauderdale had been involved in two matters of "honor," first with the Duke of Richmond, and then with Benedict Arnold, it was determined that the hot-tempered Scottish nobleman should leave the country for a while, accompanied by his physician. Moreover, the earl was ill, and travel to the south of France was recommended. Moore and the earl reached Paris 7 August, three days before the attack on the Tuileries, and remained on French soil until mid-December. Thus Moore was in the city during the September massacres and also was able to witness the gradual restriction of free, open discussion in the Legislative Assembly and the Jacobin Club by the mobs in the galleries, who were manipulated by the Commune, the new Left, and Marat. To say that his enthusiasm was blighted by what he saw is to exaggerate somewhat, but we shall see that his feelings were considerably altered by what he witnessed. If he did not lose all enthusiasm for the principles of revolution, he lost faith in the French people whom he once loved.

Moore arrived in Paris at an extremely critical time, for as one of his contemporaries noted, "The Revolution before the 10th of August was as different from the Revolution after that day as liberty and slavery."<sup>16</sup> Just before the attack on the Tuileries, each section in the city had chosen delegates to form a revolutionary commune to oppose the legally established commune that controlled the city. On 9 August, the new commune threw out the old one, seized control of the national guard, and replaced its commander, the Marquis de Mandat, with the brewer Santerre. Then they attacked the Tuileries, the residence of the king and the royal family. Power was passing out of the hands of the once-revered assembly, which would soon vote its own dissolution, and into the hands of special power groups swayed by leftist leaders with their own agendas. If there had been any point at which the French would have settled for, in Moore's own words, "a Mild, limited Monarchy," that point was irrevocably passed, and the odious and despicable despotism of the *ancien régime* was being replaced by the tyranny of the "sovereign" people. Moore saw instances of this everywhere.

For example, the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly that August had become so loud and chaotic, that one in retrospect no longer wonders why so many delegates, especially those on the right, gradually departed in disaffection. "The noise and disorder were excessive," Moore reported 9 August; "fifty members were vociferating at once: I never was witness to a scene so tumultuous; the bell, as well as the voice of the president, was drowned in a storm, compared to which, the most boisterous night I ever was witness to in the House of Commons, was calm." Adding to the confusion every day was the clamor from the galleries, which could match any din on the floor. Moore was told that the voices were all "plants"--"with directions who and what they are to applaud and condemn." (Females were especially selected because they were noisier and less inhibited.) Such *clagues* could even threaten those deputies who did not vote their way. For example, early in his visit Moore was witness to the heated debate over the loyalty of Lafayette. The night the motion to question the general failed, the opposition was so incensed that several deputies who opposed accusing him were insulted as they left the assembly; one of them, Vaublanc, was nearly killed. Others were attacked in the streets by persons wearing the uniform of the National Guard, and one barely escaped with his life when he identified himself as a member of the Legislative Assembly.

Another was lifted off the ground amid cries of "à la lanterne!" The following morning, when these complaints were reported to the gallery, the spectators cheered.<sup>17</sup>

Moore saw intimidation all around him. The walls of the city were plastered with "addresses to the people" directed against certain deputies, accusing them of being "infected with aristocracy"; some of these posters were signed by Marat. Even in the provinces occurred similar incidents of disorder, where the ordinary citizen was seriously threatened by those who differed with him. One morning in Clermont Moore heard that a soldier, marching to the front ("so much cannon fodder," in Moore's view), had apparently been insulted by a bystander, and his comrades came close to putting the mild offender to death. He escaped, so the unit contemplated killing the magistrate who assisted his escape. (He too escaped.) The original offender was eventually discovered ten leagues away, brought back, and beheaded by the company fighting for the citizen's liberties.<sup>18</sup>

The deterioration of the recently constituted authority in the aftermath of the attack on the Tuileries and the September massacres provided for Moore a striking contrast to the traditional rule of the *ancien régime*. "All tyranny is intolerable," he wrote; but the reaction against monarchical tyranny had gone so far that another tyranny had taken its place, and "if the French cannot find the means of subjecting the people within the limits of law, they will gain nothing by their revolutions . . . . One particular circumstance renders Le Peuple Souverain a more formidable tyrant than any other: namely--that all other tyrants are in some respect personally answerable for their actions, which is some restraint on them; whereas the Peuple Souverain indulge their caprice or fury without any restraint whatever."<sup>19</sup>

At the same time Moore experienced a growing sympathy for the plight of the royal family, which after the condescension toward royalty usually found in Moore's writings, comes as a surprise. It begins, of course, with the attack on the Tuileries, the massacre of the Swiss Guards whom Louis had ordered not to return fire, the sickening bonfire of their corpses the day after, the exposure of the royal family to the Legislative Assembly to which they resorted for safety, and their lonely isolation in the Temple thereafter. During the hearings into the conduct of the Swiss Guards, the king, queen, their son and daughter, and other attendants were present, crammed into the secretary's loge. Moore's eyes were naturally drawn toward them, and the

contrast between their former eminence and their present helplessness fascinated him.

From the place in which I sat I could not see the King, but I had a full view of the Queen and the rest of the Royal Family. Her beauty is gone! No wonder. She seemed to listen with an undisturbed air to the speakers. Some times she whispered to her sister-in-law, and to Madame de Lamballe; once or twice she stood up, and, leaning forward, surveyed every part of the hall. A person near me remarked, that her face indicated rage and the most provoking arrogance. I perceived nothing of that nature . . . . On the whole, her behavior in this trying situation seemed full of propriety and dignified composure. I know not whether the height from which this unhappy Princess has fallen, and her present deplorable condition, may not make me view her with additional interest and partiality . . . .

Then Moore recounts the miserably confining condition in which the whole party, including the children, were obliged to listen, every day, throughout the month, to the ongoing debates over precisely what happened at the Tuileries. They were allowed just one adjacent room to themselves, where they ate and slept, etc. "It must seem strange," Moore went on, "the whole Assembly being witness to the uncomfortable and indecent situation of the Royal Family for so long a space of time, that none proposed to remedy it."<sup>20</sup>

Moore never went so far as to exclaim that "ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened [the queen] with insult,"<sup>21</sup> but as the raucous debates continued through the fall, he became increasingly absorbed in the wretchedness of Louis and his queen, especially when they were confined in the Temple.

Great misfortunes interest the mind like great virtues. I do not believe that, during the short stay I proposed to make in France, I should have thought of going to Versailles, had the Royal Family been living there in the same splendour I have seen them surrounded on former occasions: but the cruel reverse they now experience, has seldom been absent from my thoughts since the 10th of this month; and although there was little chance of getting even a glimpse of them, I was attracted to the Temple because they are confined within the walls.

Thus his narrative of the rest of the year often included materials that drew the sympathy of his readership toward symbols that had never attracted his interest before. One of his most memorable descriptions is the ghastly account of the execution and subsequent mutilation of the Princess Lamballe, whose head, hacked from her body, was stuck on a pike and paraded before the windows of the queen during the September massacres. These and other scenes convinced the writer that the king and queen were basically just the victims of circumstances, incapable of the malice and intrigue attributed to them by the enemies of monarchy.

From all that I have heard . . . [the king] is a man of integrity, devoid of ambition, but with an uncommon share of indolence; whose disposition is better than his understanding, and his understanding superior to his conduct; whose inclinations are naturally benevolent; whose opinions are generally just, but whose actions are sometimes improper, because they are influenced by those who possess less rectitude than himself.

So the worst one could say about Louis was that he frequently followed poor counsel, and reacted to the major developments of the revolution rather than caused them.

Moore believed in September that Louis would escape the fate of Charles I because "the inviolability which the [recent] constitution gives to Louis will secure him from the same fate, whatever degree of rancour his enemies may bear him." By the end of October he was less sure. His feelings toward the queen were even more compassionate, even emotional, which is interesting, because he was certainly aware of the allegations of sexual impropriety (and the pornography) that frequently appeared with regard to her in popular pamphlets and the French press. His journal entry of 6 November speaks with almost Burkean over-statement: "The annals of the unfortunate do not record, nor has the imagination of the tragic poet invented, any thing more dreadfully affecting than the misfortunes and sufferings of Marie Antoinette queen of France, and for ages to come, her name will never be pronounced unaccompanied with execrations against the unmanly and unrelenting wretches who have treated her, suffered her to be treated, in the manner she has been." Perhaps, as Professor Morvan suggests, he unconsciously saw her and her husband as martyrs.<sup>22</sup>

Though the Lauderdale party returned to London in early December, Moore continued his journal--and delayed its

publication--in order to focus on the trial of the king. At the end of this journal he concluded with these remarks, which pull together the two themes of popular intimidation and pathos:

Terror has acted a principal part since the beginning of the Revolution--Terror first produced the emigrations, to which a great proportion of the siseries which France has suffered are owing--Terror produced the shameful passiveness in the inhabitants of Paris and Versailles during the massacres--Terror prevented sympathy form appearing in the faces of many who felt it in their hearts for the unfortunate monarch during the process, and Terror at last pronounced the sentence of his death.<sup>23</sup>

Shortly after the publication of the *Journal* in 1793, Moore began a longer, more ambitious and serious work, the *View of the Causes and Progress of the French Revolution* (1795), which drew from a considerable amount of research, reading, and interviews, especially among the *émigrés* who settled in Surrey near Norbury Park. This last treatment of French affairs, though more historical, reflects little substantial change in Moore's position which we have seen in the *Journal*. His sympathy for the royal family is frequently exhibited, and Moore takes pains to show, more than before, that in 1789 and 1791 the French king was the victim of both circumstances and self-serving "friends" who put their interests before those of the nation. Moore's attitude toward the French people, however, has become refined into sarcasm and contempt by this time.

The populace of Paris, in this last work, are simply held up to ridicule and mocked for their taste for blood, their pretensions toward liberty, and for that fickleness which Moore merely glanced at in his work fifteen years before. Though, as I say, this work is definitely more historical, attempting to outline those conditions prior to 1789 that lead to the convocation of the States General and the upheavals that followed, Moore loses his objectivity in several instances when he refers to any development that was influenced by the mobs:

That the Constitution should be accomplished . . . was at first intended. This decision of the Assembly was too wise and liberal to be approved by the multitude.

Similarly,

If the Parisians were intoxicated with love at this particular time, it must be acknowledged that they were intoxicated with rage very soon after; for it seems to be in their nature to be always intoxicated with something or other.

Noting that the Legislative Assembly had declared against a republican government in July, 1792 and changed its mind in September, he wrote,

Many events in the course of this revolution are so surprising, and so little to be looked for from what occurred immediately before, that they may be compared to the tricks of a juggler.

Elsewhere Moore faulted the peculiarity of the nation--"the wonderful rapidity with which they fly from the extremes of love to those of hatred, and from admiration to contempt"; similarly he notes that "the effect of those lucubrations was, very often to make people complain of oppression which they had never before felt, and view those with hatred whom they had before regarded with love and respect."<sup>24</sup>

This last work, speaking of the French people frequently with savagery, and condemning the deliverative bodies for disenfranchising the clergy, seizing their lands, and allowing itself to be intimidated by the mobs in the galleries, is more judgmental than the "residential journal" because it contains more information and takes a longer look at the gradual deterioration of the early ideals of liberty. His country was at war by this time with the Directory, and while supporting Fox's position that the war was unwarranted and costly, Moore eventually conceded that the duty of every British subject was "to do all in his power to defeat . . . [the] schemes [of France], and to assist his country against her." But vestiges of the francophilia lingered, still; he continued to believe faintly in the nation he had known as a younger man.

How wretchedly narrowed must that man's mind be, by natural or political prejudices, who joins in the despicable cant, that France is the natural enemy of Great Britain! Can the two most enlightened nations of the world, who cultivate philosophy, all the sciences,

every liberal art, with more success than any other, be naturally enemies?<sup>25</sup>

A rhetorical hope. Moore never saw France again, nor commented explicitly on further developments in that country.<sup>26</sup> Hostilities were suspended between France and Great Britain early in 1802, but Moore died that February. What he thought of the young Napoleon we do not know, but Napoleon's government would be a far cry from the "bliss" of the early 1790's that Moore, Helen Maria Williams, Burns, and Paine were so caught up in. By this time France had passed the watershed of late eighteenth-century political idealism, and the hopes of Moore and those like him were left behind. It remains only to add, what must seem apparent to the reader by now, that at each stage of his political enthusiasm, Moore expressed himself in strong, if not exaggerated language, just as Helen Williams, Paine, and Burke did. Regardless of how matters turned out, developments in France during the 1790's brought forth the most strongly worded sentiments from every person who loved liberty and France. An overview of Moore's writings shows how difficult it was to be either objective or constant in one's view.

*Central Michigan University*

#### NOTES

1. *A View of the Causes and Progress of the French Revolution*, 2 vols. (London, 1795), I, 198-99.
2. "John Moore, témoin de la révolution française," *Etudes anglaises*, 34 (1981), 413-28.
3. *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, And Germany*, 2 vols. (London, 1779); *A Journal of a Residence in France*, 2 vols. (London, 1793); and the *View of the Causes and Progress of the French Revolution* cited above.
4. *A View of Society and Manners in France . . .*, I, 28-29.
5. *A View of Society and Manners in France . . .*, I, 33.

6. *A View of Society and Manners in France* . . . I, 38-39. Morvan aptly refers to this loyalty as a kind of "fétichisme" (John Moore, *témoignage de la révolution française*, p. 418).
7. Frederica Lock to Fanny Burney (British Library Egerton MSS. 3697, f. 132; cited with permission).
8. This unpublished journal is in the possession of Sir Mark Heath of Cambridge, and is quoted with permission. No further references to this work will be cited in these notes.
9. *From Despotism to Revolution, 1762-1789* (New York, 1944), p. 198.
10. *A View of Society and Manners in Italy*, 2 vols. 6th ed. (London, 1795), II, 151, (1st ed. 1781.)
11. Lionel A. McKenzie, "The French Revolution and English Parliamentary Reform: James Mackintosh and the *Vindiciae Gallicae*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 14 (1981), 265.
12. On the various societies lobbying for reform in Parliament or supporting the revolution see Robert Birley, *The English Jacobins from 1789 to 1802* (Oxford, 1924) and Charles B. Cone, *The English Jacobins* (New York, 1968), among other books. It is difficult to find complete and valid lists of members and contributors to these organizations, but on what I have checked at the British Library, Moore is never listed; indeed his name seems conspicuous by its absence.
13. *Critical Review*, June, 1793, p. 186; *British Critic*, July, 1793, p. 277; *Monthly Review*, February, 1794, 171.
14. Moore to Rogers, 10 February, 1791 (Rogers Papers, Library of University College, London; cited with permission. Reprinted in part in P.W. Clayden, *The Early Life of Samuel Rogers* [London, 1887], p. 159).
15. *Charles James Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, 1782-1794* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 160-61.
16. Arthur Young, cited in W.L. Renwick, *English Literature, 1789-1815* (Oxford, 1963), p. 18.
17. *Journal of a Residence in France*, I. 29, 211, 23-25.

18. *Journal*, I, 256, 338.

19. *Journal*, I, 275-76.

20. *Journal*, I, 61, 97-98.

21. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France (The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, 12 vols. [Boston, 1889], III, 331).

22. *Journal*, I, 432, 433; II, 443, 322; "John Moore, témoin . . .," p. 418.

23. *Journal*, II, 530.

24. *A View of the Causes and Progress of the French Revolution*, II, 405, 449; I, 359, 344, 103.

25. *A View of the Cause and Progress . . .*, I, 277.

26. On the extent to which Moore continued to comment on France in his later fiction, see Alain Morvan, "Peur de la France et peur de la Revolution dans les romans de John Moore" in *La Peur*, ed. Alain Morvan (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Université de Lille, 1985), pp. 113-25. I have not seen this article.