7. The French left in exile: *Quarante-huitards* and Communards in London, 1848–80

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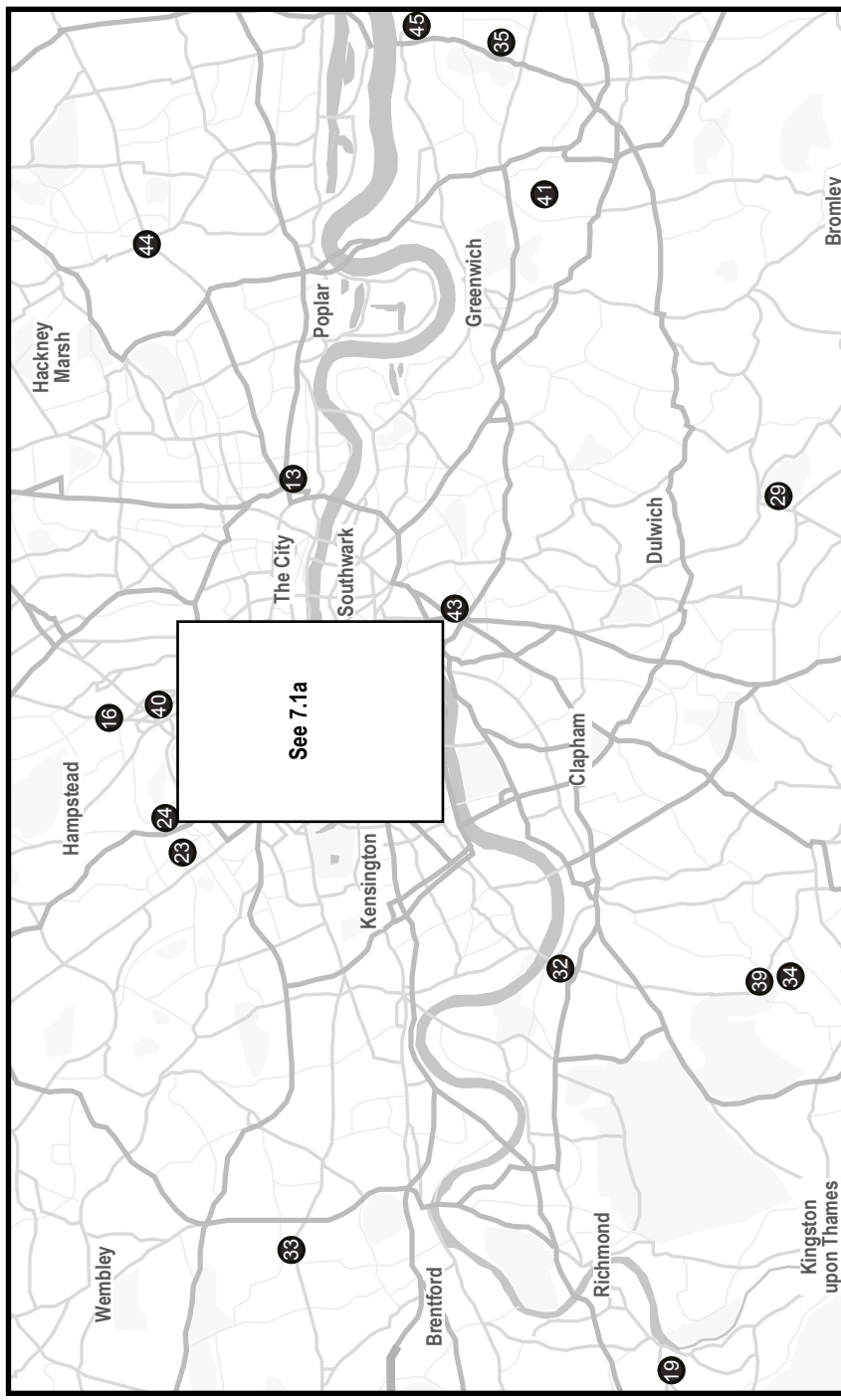
Political defeat in France and political asylum in London

For over thirty years in the latter half of the nineteenth century, London was home to hundreds, and at times thousands, of French revolutionary, republican and socialist exiles. These refugees were drawn from across two generations and were associated with periods of intense political instability in France. During their time in London, they had a significant impact on the life of the city, transforming several of its neighbourhoods into essentially French enclaves, infused themselves into certain sectors of London's economy, blended into particular social milieux, and greatly affected the shape and trajectory of political radicalism in the capital.

The first generation of exiles during the period under study consisted of supporters of the French revolution of February 1848, the Second Republic founded that year, and members of the left-wing *démocrate-socialiste*, or *démoc-soc*, political party, an alliance of radical republicans and socialists. These refugees came to Britain in several waves, with the first arriving in the summer of 1848. In June that year, the closure of the 'national workshops', a work programme for the unemployed, sparked an uprising across much of Paris. This rebellion was bloodily stamped out and many of the rebels fled France, arriving in London shortly after the fighting ceased. The violence of these 'June Days' quickly led to a search for scapegoats, and France's increasingly conservative constituent assembly stripped Louis Blanc, a noted socialist, prominent figure in the February revolution and member of the republic's provisional government, and Marc Caussidière, head of Paris's provisional police force during the revolution, of their parliamentary immunity. Both men fled to London before they could be convicted of inciting the uprising. A year later, in the spring of 1849, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, who had been elected president of the Republic in December 1848, curried favour with French Catholics by sending the army to Rome to crush the revolutionary government there and restore the pope (Pius IX) to his temporal throne. Incensed, Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, a leader of the 1848 revolution and head of the *démoc-soc* party, moved for Bonaparte's impeachment and organized a protest for 13 June. The authorities responded

Map 7.1a. Places mentioned in the text (Base map: London *c.*1850)



Map 7.1b. Places outside central London mentioned in the text (Base map: 2013)

by declaring a state of siege, suppressing leftist newspapers, and issuing arrest warrants. Ledru-Rollin, dozens of *démoc-soc* representatives and many of their followers quickly fled to London.

But by far the biggest wave of refugees arrived in the winter of 1851–2. On 2 December 1851, rather than step down after a single presidential term, as mandated by the constitution of 1848, President Bonaparte overthrew the Second Republic in a coup. Soldiers flooded the streets, the legislature was dissolved and many of Bonaparte's prominent *démoc-soc* opponents were arrested and expelled from the country. Armed resistance to the coup soon started in Paris and spread across France, particularly to areas of *démoc-soc* strength in the centre and south. The uprising, which involved nearly 100,000 people, was crushed and the Bonapartists instituted a harsh system of repression. Many rebels fled, while others were expelled, placed under house arrest or sent to penal colonies in Algeria and Cayenne. Some escaped these colonies and prisons and made their way into exile. Thus, in the months after the coup, thousands of French exiles joined their compatriots from 1848 and 1849 in London. Many others followed, preferring self-imposed exile to life under Bonaparte. For the purposes of this chapter, we will refer to this generation of exiles as *Quarante-huitards*, a term often used in the nineteenth century to signify their support for the revolution of 1848 and the republican regime that it established.

A new generation of refugees arrived in London in 1871. That year, the Paris Commune emerged in the aftermath of France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, when a monarchist-dominated National Assembly, based at Versailles, took a series of measures that seemed to be hostile to Paris and to threaten the new Third Republic. The Commune, popularly elected by the people of Paris and dominated by an amalgamation of radical republicans, Jacobins, socialists, Blanquists and anarchists, chased out the regular army, declared itself autonomous and promptly began running its own affairs. The government at Versailles could not countenance this and the regular army crushed the Commune's forces in May. Rebels were then executed en masse and, for years to come, the police hunted and arrested suspected Communards, who were tried by military courts. Fleeing abroad was often the only alternative to the firing squad, prison or transportation to the desolate penal colony in New Caledonia. Thousands of Communards therefore retraced the steps taken by the *Quarante-huitards* twenty years earlier.

Numerically, the refugee population in Britain was small but not insignificant. It peaked in 1852, in the aftermath of Bonaparte's coup, at around 4,500.[1] Most of these exiles, however, did not remain long, and

[1] Figure quoted in B. Porter, *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 16, n. 9.

from 1853 Britain's exile population stabilized at around 1,000, with 800 in London.[2] These numbers remained roughly constant until Bonaparte issued an amnesty in 1859, of which about half the refugees took advantage.[3] In the 1860s, a core of around 400 exiles remained, resolutely awaiting the end of the Second Empire. When this came in 1870, the majority returned to France, but a few decided to settle in London permanently. In 1871–2, roughly 1,500 adult male Communards took refuge in London, accompanied by at least 600 wives and 1,200 children.[4] As the 1870s wore on, probably a few hundred Communards left Britain, with a mini-exodus occurring after Belgium liberalized its asylum policies in 1874.[5] But the bulk of the Communards remained until a partial amnesty was issued in 1879, followed by a complete amnesty in 1880.

The nuclei of both cohorts initially consisted of young, though not overly youthful, men. Sylvie Aprile has posited that the typical French exile during the Second Empire was between thirty-five and fifty years old, while Paul Martinez has calculated that around three-quarters of the incoming Communards were in their twenties and thirties.[6] This, of course, changed as time went on and the refugees often returned to France after they had passed into middle age. Both groups were also largely male, despite the presence of a few famous female refugees like the socialist and feminist activist Jeanne Deroin and a number of wives and daughters of male exiles. Because many refugees had been prominent leaders and important functionaries of the Second Republic and Commune, professional politicians, civil servants, journalists, lawyers, doctors and, after 1871, National Guard officers were overrepresented in the exile populations.[7] Yet there were substantial numbers of working-class refugees in both generations. Thousands of ordinary people had risen up against Bonaparte in 1851 or resisted the Versailles government in 1871 and also required safe haven from the repression that followed defeat. Thus, as Charles Hugo noted, the more famous and prominent refugees were accompanied in their exile by a 'legion'.[8]

There was also a significant degree of personal overlap between the two groups of exiles. Indeed, a few prominent refugees were members of both.

[2] TNA, HO 45/4816, police report of 19 March 1853.

[3] S. Aprile, *Le Siècle des exilés: bannis et proscrits de 1789 à la Commune* (Paris, 2010), p. 124; A. Calman, *Ledru-Rollin après 1848 et les proscrits français en Angleterre* (Paris, 1921), p. 190.

[4] P. Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees in London' (unpublished University of Sussex PhD thesis, 1981), p. 109.

[5] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 112.

[6] Aprile, *Siècle des exilés*, p. 112; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 117–19.

[7] For the disproportionate number of professional men among both sets of exiles, see Aprile, *Siècle des exilés*, pp. 112, 260.

[8] C. Hugo, *Les Hommes de l'exil* (Paris, 1875), p. 162.

Some *Quarante-huitard* exiles, like Christophe Benoît, Alexandre Besson, Jean Baptiste Bocquet, Pierre Malardier, Félix Pyat and Pierre Vésinier, became involved in the Commune after returning to France, and were therefore forced to seek asylum in London once again in 1871.[9] Moreover, a number of Communards were the sons of earlier exiles. Thus, Camille Barrère, who as an infant had accompanied his exiled father Pierre to London in 1851, was obliged to return twenty years later as a refugee in his own right.[10] Similarly, Frédéric Cournet, a refugee from June 1848, was succeeded in exile by his son and namesake Frédéric Etienne Cournet in the 1870s.[11] And, as we will see, some of the *Quarante-huitards* who remained in Britain mingled significantly with their younger compatriots.

These refugees chose Britain as their asylum for several reasons. First, they were free to do so. Britain had no regular entrance restrictions in this period and anyone, regardless of national origin, could come to the country and stay indefinitely. Moreover, the few extradition treaties that Britain had with its neighbours intentionally excluded political offences. The Alien Act of 1848 did briefly allow ministers to remove foreign individuals deemed threatening to the state, but potential deportees could still make appeals to the Privy Council, and the act lapsed, having never been used, in 1850.[12] So throughout this period, the government had no legal means of barring or expelling the exiles.[13] Second, the exiles were able to continue their political activism in Britain. The country's free press and protections of speech meant that the exiles could issue manifestos and propaganda, while the right to free assembly allowed exile political associations to flourish. Indeed, the political latitude enjoyed by the exiles even extended, in practice if not in law, to assassination conspiracies. In 1858, when Felice Orsini, co-operating with French exiles in London, attempted to assassinate Napoleon III, the French government demanded that Britain clamp down on the refugee population. Yet Palmerston, the then prime minister, was unable to push through legislation transforming conspiracy to murder from a misdemeanour to a felony, and his ministry collapsed after the Commons censured the government's willingness to truckle to

[9] Aprile, *Siècle des exilés*, pp. 263–5; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 75–7.

[10] For the Barrère family, see G. Ferragu, 'Anglophones, anglophiles, anglomanes?', in *La France et l'Angleterre au XIX^e siècle: échanges, représentations, comparaisons*, ed. S. Aprile and F. Bensimon (Paris, 2006), pp. 541–59.

[11] For the elder Cournet's experience in exile, see C. Hugo, *Les Hommes de l'exil*, ch. 2. For the younger, see Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 495.

[12] B. Porter, 'The asylum of nations: Britain and the refugees of 1848', in Freitag, *Exiles from European Revolutions*, pp. 43–56, at p. 44.

[13] Porter, *Refugee Question*, pp. 143–4.

Bonaparte's demands.[14] The subsequent Derby government then charged one of Orsini's co-conspirators, Simon Bernard, with accessory to murder. Bernard was acquitted when the jury heeded his lawyer's advice to 'not pervert and wrest the law of England to please a foreign dictator!'[15] The exiles were therefore protected by a strain of patriotic libertarianism in Victorian Britain's political culture which made perceived or conspicuous concessions to foreign despotic governments nearly impossible. By 1871, this was so well known that the French government did not bother to request the extradition of even the most notorious Communards.[16]

This all contrasted sharply with other potential refuges, which tended to be small and to share borders with France. The French government was therefore able to pressure states like Belgium, Switzerland and Piedmont into passing restrictive legislation against the exiles.[17] Those hoping to remain politically active had little choice but to come to Britain. As John Sanders, the Metropolitan Police's main agent in charge of exile affairs, explained in 1852: 'They cannot reside in any other Country. The Governments of Belgium and Switzerland are ordering all those known in their respective Countries away, unless they obtain a special order from the Government, they then are placed under the surveillance of the Police. They prefer coming to England'.[18]

Within Britain, London was by far the most attractive refuge. Its huge size and economic importance meant that it offered better employment prospects than other British cities. Meanwhile, its physical proximity to France combined with its role as the centre of British politics, the press and the publishing industry made it an ideal base from which the exiles could continue their political activism. Finally, the pre-existing presence of a French exile community from 1848 meant that, for each successive wave of refugees, London was the logical first port of call. Newly arriving exiles could be sure that there they would find French-speaking company,

[14] Porter, *Refugee Question*, pp. 182–3.

[15] Quoted in G. J. Holyoake, *Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life* (2 vols., 1892), ii. 32–3. Records of the trial exist in the City of London, Corporation of London Record Office, item CLA/047/LJP/04/003.

[16] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 55.

[17] For examples, see J. B. Boichot, *Souvenirs d'un prisonnier du coup d'état sous le Second Empire* (Leipzig, 1867), pp. 5–6; M. Dessal, *Un Révolutionnaire Jacobin: Charles Delescluze, 1809–71* (Paris, 1952), p. 141; C. Lévy, 'Les proscrits de 2 décembre', in *Les Républicains sous le Second Empire*, ed. L. Hamlin (Paris, 1993), pp. 15–31, at p. 25; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 55; M. Nadaud, *Mémoires de Léonard*, ed. M. Agulhon (Bourganeuf, 1895; Paris, 1976), pp. 408–9; J. Tchernoff, *Le Parti Républicain au coup d'état et sous le Second Empire, d'après des documents et des souvenirs inédits* (Paris, 1906), p. 120.

[18] TNA, HO 45/4302, police report of 13 Feb. 1852.

political sympathizers, familiar faces and perhaps a helping hand. London was consequently an 'almost irresistible magnet for the refugees'.[19] The rest of this chapter will therefore examine the physical, socio-economic and political spaces that the exiles occupied while in London, as well the impacts that the city and refugees had on one another.

The exiles' London

Physically mapping the exiles' place in London is fairly straightforward. From 1848 to 1880, the great majority of them settled in a contiguous area stretching through Covent Garden, Seven Dials, Soho and, increasingly after 1871, the blocks just north of Oxford Street and west of Tottenham Court Road. These areas offered relatively inexpensive accommodation and so attracted the bulk of the poorest refugees and those left short of resources after their abrupt departures from France. Because it was the chief residence of the refugees, the area in and around Soho also became the centre of exile social and economic life. The exiles founded numerous businesses there, including a *Quarante-huitard* bookshop in Great Queen Street, the Hôtel de Progrès in Great Chapel Street, the Pharmacie Française in Greek Street, and the famous Communard patisserie, Maison Bertaux, also in Greek Street and still flourishing today.[20] Institutions of exile sociability were also based in these neighbourhoods, from the freemason Grand Loge des Philadelphes, housed in the Eclectic Hall in Denmark Street, to charitable organizations like the Société Fraternelle des Démocrates-Socialistes à Londres headquartered near Soho Square or the Communard soup kitchen in Newman Passage, just north of Oxford Street.[21] As the recognized centre of refugee life, Soho was usually the first stop for new exiles arriving in London. Thus, after Bonaparte's coup, the socialist schoolteacher Gustave Lefrançais sought out an exile-run tavern in Rathbone Street and the expelled *démoc-soc* legislators Pierre Malardier, Martin Nadaud and Victor Schoelcher spent their first night in London in a hotel in Gerrard Street. Similarly, after the crushing of the Commune, many Communards flocked to F. Lassassie's barber shop in Charlotte Street.[22]

[19] Porter, *Refugee Question*, p. 19.

[20] *L'Homme*, 10 and 24 Oct. 1855, p. 4 of both issues.

[21] A. Prescott, 'The cause of humanity: Charles Bradlaugh and freemasonry', *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, cxiii (2003), 15–64, at p. 30; Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, p. 36; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 136.

[22] G. Lefrançais, *Souvenirs d'un révolutionnaire* (Brussels, 1903), pp. 190–1; Nadaud, *Mémoires*, p. 410; *La Correspondance de Victor Schoelcher*, ed. N. Schmidt (Paris, 1995), p. 156; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 77.

Of course, not every French exile in London lived in and around Soho. In the early 1850s, notable colonies of refugees sprang up in Whitechapel, Smithfield and Lambeth.[23] From 1871, a few dozen Blanquists, attracted by the presence of Karl Marx, gathered in Kentish Town. Yet disputes between some of these Communards and Marx, mostly over the breakdown of the International Working Men's Association, caused this colony to dissipate somewhat after 1873.[24] Some of the wealthier exiles also spread out into the leafier districts of west London. Blanc lived in Upper Montagu Street, just west of Baker Street, while Schoelcher maintained residences in both Chelsea and Twickenham, and, during his two decades of exile, Ledru-Rollin moved at least seven times between various addresses in Brompton and St. John's Wood.[25]

Exile reactions to London were extremely diverse. Some, and those that have attracted the most historical attention, were extremely harsh. In 1850, Ledru-Rollin published his *Decline of England*, where he condemned Britain's unconscionable levels of political and economic inequality and predicted the country's imminent internal collapse, warning that 'The barbarians for England are those hordes of men who raise their withered hands towards heaven, demanding bread'.[26] He dedicated a significant proportion of the book to highlighting the horrors of London slum life.[27] For material, he drew directly on Henry Mayhew's celebrated exposés of London poverty that were then appearing in the *Morning Chronicle* and would soon be collected into the famous book *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851). Ledru-Rollin's heavy reliance on Mayhew was derided by the British press, which wrote him off as an unoriginal sensationalizer of more nuanced sources.[28]

London was similarly pilloried by Jules Vallès, a former member of the Commune's ruling council and editor of its most important newspaper, *Le Cri du peuple*. In his 1876 *La Rue à Londres*, Vallès, like Flora Tristan and Ledru-Rollin before him, savaged almost every aspect of English life, from boys whistling in the street to the colour of the buildings. Although he deplored London's lack of facilities for illicit sex, he also lamented that English women were 'shocking' in their willingness to pet on park benches,

[23] Lefrançais, *Souvenirs*, p. 191.

[24] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 146–7. For the International Working Men's Association and the exile community, see below.

[25] Hugo, *Les Hommes de l'exil*, p. 328; Schmidt, *Correspondance de Schoelcher*, pp. 40, 45; Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, pp. 273–4.

[26] A. Ledru-Rollin, *The Decline of England*, trans. E. Churton (1850), p. 10.

[27] Ledru-Rollin, *Decline of England*, pp. 124–88.

[28] See, e.g., *The Times*, 6 June 1850, p. 4.

that the climate made them 'stupid' and 'frigid', and that, after their early twenties, they went off 'like game'. Worse still were the feminists; 'eccentrics', who in his view, were 'neither man nor woman'. He was appalled by the lack of class militancy among London workers, which set them apart from their French counterparts, a rift that encompassed 'the furious fog that resents the sun … the duel between beer and wine!'[29]

More prosaic, or petty, complaints were also common among the exiles. As the Russian exile Alexander Herzen wryly noted:

> The Frenchman cannot forgive the English, in the first place, for not speaking French; in the second, for not understanding him when he calls Charing Cross Sharan-Kro, or Leicester Square Lesesstair-Skooar. Then his stomach cannot digest the English dinners consisting of two huge pieces of meat and fish, instead of five little helpings of various ragouts, fritures, salmis and so on. Then he can never resign himself to the 'slavery' of restaurants being closed on Sundays, and the people being *bored to the glory of God*, though the whole of France is bored to the glory of Bonaparte for seven days in the week.[30]

But this sort of familiar republican Anglophobia was not ubiquitous among the refugees. Schoelcher distanced himself from Ledru-Rollin, writing in the *Morning Advertiser* that 'to ally … a whole party with this or that idea of one of its members, however honest or however eminent that member may be, is carrying solidarity much farther than is reasonable or than I can accept'.[31] Other refugees wrote glowing accounts of life in London. Alphonse Esquiros, a socialist author and *démoc-soc* legislator, marvelled at the city's technological and engineering feats, as well as the material benefits these bestowed upon Londoners of all classes:

> The inhabitant of London has already at his orders more railways than exist in any capital of the world, and he commands a network of electric wires ever ready to transmit his messages and wishes from one place to another for a few pence. To several railway stations drinking fountains are attached, which pour out for him gratis the purest and freshest water. All along the line he can purchase for a trifle newspapers, in which men dare to say everything.[32]

Rather than finding London overwhelming or alienating, Esquiros saw an exhilaratingly diverse city filled with opportunity: 'There is a species of

[29] J. Vallès, *La Rue à Londres*, ed. L. Scheler (Paris, 1950), pp. 2, 3, 7, 90–1, 164–8, 174–7, 184–5, 223.

[30] A. Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts: the Memoirs of Alexander Herzen*, trans. C. Garnett, rev. H. Higgens (4 vols., 1968), iii. 1048.

[31] *Morning Advertiser*, 30 Dec. 1853, p. 3.

[32] A. Esquiros, *The English at Home: Essays from the 'Revue des Deux Mondes'*, *Third Series*, trans. L. Wraxall (1863), pp. 369–70.

charm and dizziness in studying all the phases of human life, whose variety is inexhaustible'.[33]

Arthur Rimbaud, who had fled to London to avoid police enquiries into his tenuous connections with the Commune, was similarly effusive. He was 'delighted and astonished' by the 'energy', the 'tough' but 'healthy' life, the fog, which he likened to a 'setting sun seen through grey crêpe', and the drunkenness and vice, which made Paris seem provincial.[34] Several exiles also appreciated London's cultural and intellectual amenities. Schoelcher enjoyed 'tak[ing] in the very beautiful concerts which are both well composed and well executed'.[35] Nadaud used the British Museum's reading room to familiarize himself with British history and economic theory, knowledge on which he later drew to publish several books after his return to France.[36] Rimbaud, too, spent much time in the reading room, where he composed a poem which was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and wrote the great work of Franglais, *Illuminations*. The Crystal Palace also attracted wide acclaim. Esquiros praised it as a wondrous temple of modern, secular knowledge.[37] Even Victor Hugo, who detested London and spent his exile in the Channel Islands, tersely recorded of one of his few trips to the metropolis: 'Crystal Palace, merveille. Tussaud, *humbug* (supercherie)'.[38]

The French colonization of these areas did not go unnoticed. Charles Dickens's *Household Words* referred to the area in and around Soho as a new Patmos, a reference to the Greek island where the apostle John was supposed to have been exiled:

> The Patmos of London I may describe as an island bounded by four squares; on the north by that of Soho, on the south by that of Leicester, on the east by the quadrangle of Lincoln's Inn Fields (for the purlieus of Long Acre and Seven Dials are all Patmos), and on the west by Golden Square.[39]

Although the refugees who populated London's 'great *champ d'asile*' were drawn from numerous European countries, the French denizens of these neighbourhoods were distinctive and unmistakeable.

[33] A. Esquiros, *The English at Home*, ed. and trans. L. Wraxall (2 vols., 1861), i. 116.

[34] G. Robb, *Rimbaud* (2000), pp. 184, 194.

[35] Victor Schoelcher to Ernest Legouvé (no date) (Schmidt, *Correspondance de Schoelcher*, p. 255).

[36] M. Nadaud, *Histoire des classes ouvrières en Angleterre* (Paris, 1873), pp. viii–ix.

[37] A. Esquiros, *Religious Life in England* (1867), pp. 196–7.

[38] *Lettres: Victor Hugo, Victor Schoelcher*, ed. J. Gaudon and S. Gaudon (Charenton-le-Pont, 1998), p. 184, n. 1.

[39] *Household Words*, 12 March 1853, p. 26.

> Here are Frenchmen – ex-representatives of the people, ex-ministers, prefects and republican commissaries, Prolétaires, Fourierists, Phalansterians, disciples of Proudhon, Pierre le Roux [*sic*] and Cahagnet, professors of barricade building; men yet young, but two-thirds of whose lives have been spent in prison or in exile.[40]

These neighbourhoods had essentially become a European, and especially French, space. As the radical journalist Adolphe Smith recalled in 1909, 'the caricaturists inevitably associated the foreigner with Leicester Square, and it is in this neighbourhood that are still to be found the greatest number of foreign shops, restaurants, cafés, and hotels'.[41]

The exiles' social and economic life in London

Socially, the exiles occupied a number of niches in London. Economically, they were often able to continue their previous scholarly or artisanal pursuits, or found work by meeting London's brisk demand for French cooking, tailoring and language instruction, whether they had experience in those trades or not. Still, poverty was rife and, with it, demoralization and despair. To counteract these problems, the refugees constructed a vibrant miniature civil society for themselves in their Soho enclave. Yet they were not wholly insular, and many achieved high levels of social integration with particular segments of British society.

As we have seen, many exiles had been journalists and professional politicians. Some of these men of letters struggled to survive by the pen. Exile newspapers, with the notable exception of the Jersey-based *L'Homme*, usually folded fairly quickly, as did a planned French cultural centre in Bloomsbury.[42] Yet some did successfully make a living through scholarly pursuits. Blanc spent much of his exile completing his mammoth history of the French Revolution and was delighted that 'the *British Museum* contains upon the French Revolution many precious documents, many sources, of which no historian has yet availed himself'.[43] Schoelcher produced a biography, *The Life of Handel*, which met with considerable critical and commercial success.[44] Jean Philibert Berjeau, co-founder of the radical

[40] *Household Words*, 12 March 1853, pp. 25, 27.

[41] A. Smith, 'Political refugees', in *London in the 19th Century*, ed. W. Besant (1909), pp. 399–406, at p. 399.

[42] R. Tombs and I. Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy: the French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (2006), p. 387.

[43] *Louis Blanc's Monthly Review* (Oct. 1849), p. 128.

[44] V. Schoelcher, *The Life of Handel*, trans. J. Lowe (1857); Schoelcher expressed satisfaction with the book's reception in a letter to Victor Hugo on 19 May 1857 (see Gaudon and Gaudon, *Lettres: Hugo, Schoelcher*, pp. 171–2).

Vraie république, authored and edited numerous texts and periodicals on bibliophilia. François Tafery, former publisher of the radical *L'Oeil du peuple* in the Vendée, set up a printing press in Islington.[45] Other scholarly-inclined exiles were invited to give lectures to London's various local literary societies, as when Nadaud lectured in Ealing on French and British history.[46] Blanc was contracted by the Marylebone Literary and Scientific Society to lecture on France in the eighteenth century and received the considerable sum of £25 per appearance for his efforts.[47]

Many exile artisans and manual labourers also continued in their old trades. Nadaud, who had been a mason before turning to politics, was hired to do building work at sites all over London and as far out as Foots Cray in Bexley, near Sidcup.[48] Benoît Desquesnes, a local *démoc-soc* leader from Valenciennes who had previously studied art and sculpture in Paris, received commissions not only to paint individual portraits, but to assist in the sculpting of the decorations for the Crystal Palace.[49] Similarly, the Communard sculptor Jules Dalou, who would later create the statue of the Triumph of the Republic in Paris's Place de la Nation, received a commission for the royal mausoleum at Frogmore in Windsor Park.[50] A number of Communard engineers, printers and ceramic makers were able successfully to start their own companies in London.[51]

In some trades, there was strong demand for French labour. The prestige of Parisian cooks, cobblers and tailors was particularly high, and many provincial exiles working in these sectors falsely claimed to hail from Paris, even if they had never before set foot in the capital.[52] Others decided to enter these trades for the first time after arriving in London. The former artist and cartoonist Georges (Labadie) Pilotelle or Pilotell, for example, became a successful ladies' dress designer and also a theatrical designer, memorably creating the costume for the 'super-aesthetical' poet Bunthorne in Gilbert and Sullivan's operetta *Patience*.[53] Caussidière became a wine merchant whose customers included the lieutenant-governor of Jersey.[54] Two members

[45] Prescott, 'The cause of humanity', p. 36.

[46] Nadaud, *Mémoires*, pp. 435–7.

[47] L. Loubère, *Louis Blanc: his Life and Contribution to the Rise of French Jacobin-Socialism* (Evanston, Ill., 1961), p. 127.

[48] Nadaud, *Mémoires*, p. 415.

[49] B. Desquesnes, *Esquisse autobiographique d'une victime du coup d'état du 2 décembre, 1851, crime et parjure de Louis Bonaparte* (Blackpool, 1888), p. 25.

[50] B. Tillier, *La Commune de Paris, révolution sans images?* (Seyssel, 2004), pp. 273–4.

[51] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 143.

[52] Lefrançais, *Souvenirs*, p. 192.

[53] Information kindly supplied to the authors by Mr. A. E. Bohannon, Pilotelle's grandson.

[54] TNA, HO 45/4547A, police reports of 26 and 28 Sept. 1852.

of the Commune's council, Auguste Serailler and Jules-Paul Johannard, engaged in the typically Parisian manufacture of artificial flowers.[55] French language lessons were also in high demand among London's 'well-bred English men and women' and many exiles became freelance language tutors.[56] The *Quarante-huitards*, arriving shortly after the European-wide disturbances of 1848, occasionally faced stiff competition in this sector from French domestic servants, who did not offend the political and aesthetic sensibilities of London's respectable classes: 'They often preferred these latter to the dreadful exiles, those enemies of order and religion and *wearing a full beard*'.[57] Fortunately for the exiles, these prejudices seem to have dissipated as the years passed and tutoring became one of the more reliable sources of income for refugees like Rimbaud and Paul Verlaine who offered their lucky customers 'LEÇONS de FRANÇAIS, en français – perfection, finesses'.[58]

A surprising number of exiles also secured posts in Britain's schools and universities. Nadaud began teaching French at a number of small private schools in Putney and Ealing in 1855, before transferring in 1858 to the preparatory military academy in Wimbledon, where he taught French and history until his return to France in 1870.[59] Pierre Barrère also taught at Wimbledon, before taking up a lecturing position at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.[60] Britain's military academies seem to have been particularly fertile ground for the exiles. When Barrère joined Woolwich, two of his fellow exiles, Esquiros and Joseph Savoye, were already employed as examiners.[61] They were succeeded in the 1870s and 1880s by General La Cécilia, Hector France and Pierre Barrère's son, Camille.[62] Sandhurst, meanwhile, employed first the *Quarante-huitard* Alfred Talandier and later the Communard Jules Andrieu.[63] Back in the heart of London, Dalou taught at the Royal Academy of Art, while Bocquet was hired by University College London twice, first as an exile during the Second Empire and again after fleeing the destruction of the Commune.[64]

[55] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 143.

[56] Porter, *Refugee Question*, p. 22.

[57] 'On préfère de beaucoup ces derniers aux affreux proscrits, ennemis de l'ordre et de la religion et *portant toute leur barbe*' (Lefrançais, *Souvenirs*, p. 193).

[58] Robb, *Rimbaud*, pp. 208–9.

[59] Nadaud, *Mémoires*, pp. 429–43.

[60] Ferragu, 'Anglophones', p. 545.

[61] Nadaud, *Mémoires*, p. 447.

[62] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 139–40, 300, 512.

[63] S. Aprile '"Translations" politiques et culturelles: les proscrits français et Angleterre', *Genèses, sciences sociales et histoire*, xxxviii (2000), 33–55, at p. 36; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 301.

[64] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 75, 477, 496.

Edouard Vaillant, one of the original agitators for the Commune and a member of its council, also found employment at UCL, where he taught medicine.

Yet many refugees were unable to procure work at all and accounts of extreme misery abound in exile memoirs.[65] Poverty caused many to abandon London altogether. By March 1853, only fifteen months after Bonaparte's coup, the Metropolitan Police estimated that some 3,000 refugees had already departed Britain's shores.[66] The bulk of these returned to France, their families and quietly apolitical (or, at best, clandestinely political) lives. They were able to do so either through the partial amnesties and commutations issued by Bonaparte in the early 1850s, because they had personally pleaded for clemency, or because they had voluntarily fled the chaos and violence of 1848–52 and had not been officially proscribed.[67] A smaller, but still sizeable number gave up on Europe entirely and went to start new lives in the United States. Some, like the Soho-based Breymond in 1852, asked the British state to assist their passage. 'I come in the name of several French political refugees, who, like myself, beg you to provide us the means of passing to America where we wish to use our hands; which is impossible for us here'.[68] The British government was willing to oblige, not least because the exiles' presence in London complicated its diplomatic relations with Bonaparte's regime.[69] It therefore discreetly provided exiles who asked for assistance with free, one-way passage to New York.[70] By 1858, approximately 1,500 French and other refugees had made their way to America at the British taxpayers' expense.[71] From about 1873, there was a similar decrease in London's Communard population, as refugees dispersed

[65] Some notable examples include Hugo, *Les Hommes de l'exil*, pp. 161–6; Lefrançais, *Souvenirs*, pp. 209–10; and Nadaud, *Mémoires*, p. 414. See also Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 57–61.

[66] TNA, HO 45/4816, police report of 19 March 1853.

[67] For examples, see Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, p. 189; Lefrançais, *Souvenirs,* pp. 160–1, 223; V. Wright, 'The coup d'état of December 1851: repression and the limits to repression', in *Revolution and Reaction: 1848 and Second French Republic*, ed. R. Price (1975), pp. 303–33, at pp. 325–6.

[68] TNA, HO 45/4302, letter from Breymond, 3 Jan. 1852: 'Je viens au nom de plusieurs réfugiés politiques français, qui, ainsi que moi, se trouvent dans la misère, vous prier de nous faciliter les moyens de passer en Amérique où nous désirerions utiliser nos bras; ce qui nous est impossible ici'. The name may also be 'Breymoud', as his handwriting is somewhat difficult to decipher. Nothing further is known of him.

[69] The best account of the refugees' problematic role in Britain's diplomatic relations remains Porter, *Refugee Question*.

[70] Tickets were to be issued 'without public notice being taken' (see TNA, HO 45/4302, memorandum by 'G' (most likely Earl Granville) [n.d., 1852]).

[71] Porter, *Refugee Question*, p. 161.

to such destinations as the United States, South America, New Zealand and the Communard enclaves in Brussels and Switzerland.[72]

Physical deprivation, cultural disorientation and political defeat often bred demoralization. The Communard Poncerot (full name not known) coined the term 'l'exilité' to describe the unique sense of dislocated ennui that afflicted the exiles.[73] This was compounded by the fear of police spies, who came over in great numbers from France to monitor the exiles or to act as agents provocateurs.[74] Misery and mistrust could engender violent conflict, as when Emmanuel Barthélemy killed the elder Cournet in a duel in Egham in 1853.[75] Thus mutual assistance and solidarity were necessary to combat the deprivations of exile life. Refugees often assisted one another in securing or locating work. Blanc and Pierre Barrère, for example, alerted Nadaud to his first teaching opportunity, and it was the recommendation of Tristan Duché that secured posts for both Barrère and Nadaud at Wimbledon.[76] More directly, a number of Communard-run ceramics, engineering and printing concerns were staffed exclusively by refugees, and one musical instrument maker in Georgiana Street, Camden Town, employed at least fifteen other exiles.[77] But by far the most common form of exilic mutual assistance was charity for the indigent and unemployed. The most significant organization dedicated to these ends was the Société Fraternelle des Démocrates-Socialistes à Londres founded in 1850. This organization, which featured prominent refugees like Blanc, Caussidière, Charles Delescluze and Ledru-Rollin, raised numerous charitable subscriptions from British and French benefactors. Despite its successes in alleviating the worst exile misery, it was undermined by internal squabbles and was defunct by 1860.[78] In the first few years after 1871, similar efforts were undertaken by the Société des Refugiés de la Commune.[79] Meanwhile, exile organizations not specifically dedicated to charity also occasionally provided relief. The Philadelphes ran a free, French-language medical dispensary while the Imprimerie Universelle dedicated the proceeds of many of its publications to indigent exiles.[80] And,

[72] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 206.
[73] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 206.
[74] TNA, HO 45/4547A, police report of 19 Sept. 1853.
[75] Hugo, *Les Hommes de l'exil*, pp. 30–8.
[76] Ferragu, 'Anglophones', p. 545; Nadaud, *Mémoires*, pp. 429–30, 437–8.
[77] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 142–3.
[78] The Société Fraternelle is mentioned in numerous sources, but a good comprehensive account appears in Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, pp. 35–6, 70, 140–8. It may have re-emerged with the influx of Communards in 1871 (see Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 84, 99).
[79] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 135ff.
[80] Prescott, 'The cause of humanity', p. 36; For examples of Imprimerie publications raising money for indigent exiles, see V. Hugo, *Discours sur la tombe du citoyen Jean Bousquet,*

in 1871–2, there was a general outpouring of charity from the remaining, and usually well-established, *Quarante-huitards* to the incoming wave of Communards.[81]

Such charitable ventures formed a central part of the refugees' vibrant, ad-hoc civil society. This included clubs like the Cercle d'Etudes Sociales which, from its headquarters in Francis Street, 'developed an ambitious programme of educational and discussion meetings which included English lessons, research into the causes and content of the Commune and the establishment of a newspaper reading room'.[82] Similar roles were taken on by the refugees' various freemason lodges. Elements of the exile press sought to 'preserve and tighten links between the exiles' and *L'Homme* therefore dedicated significant column-space to advertisements for exile businesses, services, products and events.[83] There were also attempts to educate the exiles' children. Jeanne Deroin, a former headmistress in Paris, opened a boarding school for 'daughters of fellow exiles' in 1861. A decade later, a new school for the Communards' children gained wide support in the refugee committee, including a £100 loan from La Cécilia. Unfortunately, both of these initiatives failed, the former because Deroin charged exceedingly low fees and the latter due to sadly typical squabbling among its administrators and benefactors.[84] More casually, exile social life was marked by a succession of banquets, tea parties, dances, raffles and various fundraising events for needy refugees. Funerals provided a grimmer impetus for sociability, and often included long processions and rousing eulogies urging exile solidarity.

British reactions to the exile community varied. The government, with a few notable exceptions like the Orsini affair, was usually content to leave the exiles more or less alone. The Metropolitan Police did set up a new 'foreign branch' to keep regular tabs on their activities, an illiberal first for the force.[85] But even here, the Met's chief undercover agent, the bearded and French-speaking Sanders, repeatedly informed his superiors that Britain had little to fear from the refugees.[86] In the wider public, a few feared and

proscrit, mort à Jersey. Prononcé le 20 avril 1853, au cimetière de Saint-Jean (Jersey, 1853); and V. Hugo, *Discours sur la tombe de la citoyenne Louise Julien, morte à Jersey. Prononcé le 26 juillet 1853, au cimetière de Saint-Jean* (Jersey, 1853).

[81] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 76–7.

[82] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 220.

[83] S. Aprile, 'Voices of exile: French newspapers in England', in Freitag, *Exiles from European Revolutions*, pp. 149–63, at p. 152.

[84] P. Pilbeam, 'Deroin, Jeanne (1805–1894)', *ODNB*; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 253–5.

[85] B. Porter, *Plots and Paranoia: a History of Political Espionage in Britain, 1790–1988* (1992), p. 92.

[86] TNA, HO 45/3518, police report of 1 Nov. 1851; HO 45/4302, police report of 13 Feb. 1852; HO 45/4816, police reports of 5 March and 8 Nov. 1853.

loathed the revolutionary aspect of the exiles' politics, including Thomas Macaulay who informed a friend that if he had been in charge of France, the suppression of the 'June Days' would have been far bloodier.[87] The great bulk of the established press took a more nuanced view. While *démoc-soc* politics were by no means popular with papers like *The Times*, their right to asylum was undeniable and it was a credit to Britain that it offered refuge to all, regardless of their politics.[88] Similarly, although *The Economist* abhorred the 'atrocities of the Commune's last acts', it recognized that those acts were political and therefore non-extraditable.[89]

The exiles also enjoyed more fulsome support. A few well-known exiles worked their way into London high society. Blanc, already relatively famous for his political writings when he arrived in London, 'did not hesitate to accept invitations to dine among the members of English high society. The cosmopolitanism of their dinner parties was an exhilarating pleasure, and he appeared at them, wrote Carlyle, "looking as neat as if he had just come out of a bandbox"'.[90] Esquiros, who spent much of his exile writing books and articles on British culture, was soon able to 'move freely in English literary and intellectual circles where he became acquainted with John Stuart Mill, Dickens, and Frederick Temple, then Headmaster of Rugby and subsequently Archbishop of Canterbury'.[91] Schoelcher frequented the liberal salons of John Chapman and Arethusa Gibson.[92] Dalou, who commented that the 'English welcome us with open arms', integrated into leading artistic circles and soon attracted commissions from wealthy benefactors.[93] After Frederic Harrison introduced him into London's leading literary circles, Camille Barrère began writing articles for the *Graphic*, *Echo*, *World* and *Fraser's Magazine*.[94]

The exiles also had political sympathizers from whom they received financial aid, assistance with the publication, dissemination and translation of their works, and positive press coverage. Some of this support came from

[87] F. Bensimon, 'The French exiles and the British', in Freitag, *Exiles from European Revolutions*, pp. 88–102, at p. 94.

[88] Porter, *Refugee Question*, p. 7.

[89] Quoted in M. Lenoir, 'Regards croisés: la représentation des nations dans la caricature, Allemagne, France, Royaume-Uni, 1870–1914' (unpublished University of Bourgogne M.A. dissertation, 2002), pp. 200–1.

[90] Loubère, *Louis Blanc*, p. 181.

[91] S. Beynon John, 'Alphonse Esquiros: a French political exile in Merthyr and Dowlais in 1864', *Merthyr Historian*, iii (1980), 112–23, at pp. 115–16.

[92] G. S. Haight, *George Eliot: a Biography* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 98–9; C. L. Cline, 'Disraeli and Thackeray', *Review of English Studies*, xix (1943), 404–8, at pp. 404–5.

[93] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 299–300; Tillier, *Commune de Paris*, p. 188.

[94] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 300.

the intelligentsia. Blanc and J. S. Mill developed a close friendship and dined together often at Mill's home in Blackheath, discussing ideas and reviewing one another's work.[95] For Britain's small but influential school of Positivists, most notably E. S. Beesly, Richard Congreve and Harrison, the Commune represented an important theoretical and historical breakthrough of truly popular and direct self-government, the welcome incorporation of the working classes into political life, and a reassertion of local autonomy against an overweening centralized state.[96] They therefore became important patrons for the Communard refugees, for whom they ran an evening school in Francis Street and provided free English classes.[97] Harrison also raised multiple charitable sums and placed over 100 exiles in various forms of employment.[98] Radical politicians and MPs often provided similar assistance. Joseph Cowen used the international reach of his family's business to aid the exiles in their propaganda-smuggling operations, and he and Mill donated money to Simon Bernard's legal defence fund in 1858.[99] Similarly, the Communards' cause was defended in Parliament by MPs like Jacob Bright, Charles Dilke, A. J. Mundella and George Whalley.[100] Finally, as we will see in more detail below, the exiles developed close links to a number of radical British activists and elements of the popular press. Notable among these was George Jacob Holyoake who, from his 'Fleet Street House' at 147 Fleet Street, printed exile pamphlets, acted as one of the principal vendors of *L'Homme*, and sold portraits and busts both by and of the refugees.[101]

Exile activism and London as a transnational political space

With these contacts, the exiles were able to place themselves at a unique intersection on London's political map. As members of the French republican

[95] Bensimon, 'The French exiles', p. 96; J. Morley, *Recollections* (2 vols., 1917), i. 52; R. Reeves, *John Stuart Mill: Victorian Firebrand* (2007), pp. 241, 309. Some of their correspondence is published in J. S. Mill, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill* (33 vols., Toronto, 1963–91), xiv–xvii. See also Blanc's affectionate obituary of Mill in L. Blanc, *Questions d'aujourd'hui et de demain* (5 vols., Paris, 1873–84), iii. 329–53.

[96] For a collection of Positivist, and other, defences of the Commune and Communards, see *The English Defence of the Commune*, ed. R. Harrison (1971).

[97] Smith, 'Political refugees', p. 401.

[98] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 65–6.

[99] E. Rowland Jones, *The Life and Speeches of Joseph Cowen, M.P.* (1885), p. 16; Newcastle, Tyne and Wear Archives (hereafter TWA), Cowen collection, 634/A617, Alfred B. Richards to Joseph Cowen, 12 July 1858.

[100] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 55.

[101] M. Finn, *After Chartism: Class and Nation in English Radical Politics* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 118.

and socialist Left, new participants in Britain's domestic radical tradition, and founding members of the emerging pan-European internationalist movement, the refugees significantly contributed to London's emerging role as a transnational political space and international laboratory of ideas.

The *Quarante-huitards* used London as a base to continue their struggle against Bonaparte. Chief among the societies they formed to undermine the Second Empire were the Commune Révolutionnaire (CR), the Société de la Révolution (SR) and the Union Socialiste (US).[102] The CR and US were officially socialistic, while the SR adhered to a strictly non-socialist radical republicanism.[103] All three organizations issued propaganda and employed highly innovative strategies to smuggle material into France. Desquesnes recalled one operation in which busts of the French empress were manufactured in Britain and stuffed with seditious material before being exported to France.[104] The CR and SR also sent agents into France to build up the domestic resistance to Napoleon III. This latter strategy was risky and some prominent exiles, like Delescluze and Jean Baptiste Boichot, were captured and imprisoned on clandestine trips.[105] Nevertheless, the CR successfully established a number of cells across France.[106] These organizations peaked in the early and mid 1850s. Financial strains forced the US to fold in 1852, while the other two organizations seem to have lasted until the end of the decade.[107] By that point, and especially after the amnesty of 1859, declining numbers sapped the refugees' political momentum. Nevertheless, through the 1860s, a number of prominent and intransigent exiles, including Blanc, Esquiros, Nadaud, Pyat and Schoelcher remained in London, where they continued to issue individual critiques of Bonaparte's regime.

The Communards were less ambitious. Despite early, quixotic interest in resuscitating the Commune, their hopes were focused not on upending the Third Republic, but on receiving amnesty from it. After the republican electoral victories of 1876 made an amnesty seem possible, the Communards began a spirited campaign pleading their case to their political allies in France, including some former refugees like Blanc.[108] For the partisans of the

[102] Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, p. 135; Boichot, *Souvenirs d'un prisonnier*, pp. 8–9; A. Müller Lehning, 'The International Association (1855–9)', *International Review for Social History*, iii (1938), 204, 207; *Leader*, 5 June 1852, p. 529.

[103] Lehning, 'International Association', p. 204; *Leader*, 12 June 1852, p. 557; Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, p. 135.

[104] Desquesnes, *Esquisse autobiographique*, p. 22.

[105] Dessal, *Révolutionnaire jacobin*, p. 109; Boichot, *Souvenirs d'un prisonnier*, pp. 11–13.

[106] Lehning, 'International Association', p. 217.

[107] Lehning, 'International Association', p. 201; Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, pp. 135–6.

[108] For the refugees' lengthy campaign for an amnesty, see Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 311–26. For a thorough account of the amnesty debate, see J. T. Joughin, *The*

Commune, whose revolt in 1871 had been less against the Third Republic per se than against its perceived betrayal by the Versailles government, an amnesty was sufficient for their reintegration into French political life. Many republicans of 1848, by contrast, could not abide an imperial regime and were determined to remain in London until Bonaparte's fall, hence their greater seditious activism and longer exile.

At the same time, a number of exiles became involved in, and decisively shaped, several of London's most iconic radical movements. Among these was Chartism, which, despite its anticlimactic Kennington Common demonstration in 1848, persisted into the 1850s, particularly in London under Ernest Jones. Blanc and Caussidière, for example, helped George Julian Harney to set up his *Democratic Review* newspaper in 1849, where he dedicated much space to favourable coverage of the exiles and translations of their works and speeches.[109] More extensively, the CR and Jones's International Committee (IC), set up to 'deal with international questions', began a campaign of official co-operation in 1855, holding joint events and issuing propaganda together.[110] Margot Finn has argued, somewhat controversially, that this contact infected London Chartism with an explicitly socialistic character, visible with individuals like Harney, whose *Democratic Review* was succeeded by the *Red Republican*.[111]

A number of other radical movements also attracted exile participation. Jules Lechevalier, a refugee from 1849, joined the co-operative efforts of Britain's Christian socialists, led by Charles Kingsley, John Malcolm Ludlow, Frederick Maurice and others. Lechevalier gave lectures in support of the cause across London and founded a Central Co-operative Agency to promote consumers' co-operatives. Disputes over the allocation of resources, however, led to a bitter falling out with figures like Ludlow, and Lechevalier abruptly returned to France in 1854.[112] In contrast to this theologically inspired push for social reform, other exiles established links to Britain's secularist movement. The *Quarante-huitard* Victor Le Lubez

Paris Commune in French Politics, 1871–80: the History of the Amnesty of 1880 (Baltimore, Md., 1955). For Blanc's role in the amnesty, see S. Aprile, 'Louis Blanc, un des pères fondateurs de la "vraie République"', in *Louis Blanc: un socialiste en république*, ed. F. Démier (Paris, 2005), pp. 171–81, at pp. 175–8; and Loubère, *Louis Blanc*, p. 228.

[109] Finn, *After Chartism*, p. 121. For examples, see the (monthly) issues of the *Democratic Review* between June 1849 and Aug. 1850.

[110] For an account of the IC, see Lehning, 'International Association', pp. 212–22.

[111] Finn, *After Chartism*, ch. 3 *passim*. For a rebuttal of this interpretation, see M. Taylor, *The Decline of British Radicalism, 1847–60* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 111–14.

[112] For his own account of these events, see J. Lechevalier, *Five Years in the Land of Refuge* (1854). For Ludlow's less than flattering view of Lechevalier, see J. M. Ludlow, *John Ludlow: the Autobiography of a Christian Socialist* (1981), pp. 186–7, 233–4.

joined a secularist organization in Stratford and became close with Charles Bradlaugh, president of the National Secular Society, where Le Lubez's rousing renditions of the Marseillaise were highly popular.[113] There was also a high degree of interchange between the secularists and the exiles' masonic lodges, which had dropped all references to deities and dedicated their work 'Au nom de la Raison de la Fraternité Universelle'.[114] Bradlaugh and Austin Holyoake joined the Philadelphes, and the lodge founded new branches in Woolwich and Stratford which attracted overwhelmingly freethinking British memberships.[115] The movement for franchise reform also drew in a number of exiles. In July 1866, Blanc attended the famous 'monster' demonstration in favour of reform in Hyde Park.[116] Joseph Collet, meanwhile, was a member of Bronterre O'Brien's National Reform League and dedicated much space in his English-language *Working Man* newspaper to covering and promoting the movement.[117] Le Lubez joined the famous Reform League, serving on its executive council between 1867 and the organization's official winding down in 1869.[118]

The aftermath of the 1867 Reform Act saw a burst of ultra-radical activity in London which drew in representatives of both refugee generations. The most famous of these was the Land and Labour League, an organization founded in 1869 that vigorously pushed for universal male suffrage, progressive taxation, free education, land nationalization and other radical causes.[119] Lassassie joined the league and occasionally addressed its 'Sir Robert Peel' branch.[120] Le Lubez was a founding member of its executive committee and occasionally acted as treasurer.[121] At the same time, Britain's republican movement was flourishing in London. One republican organization, the International Democratic Association (IDA), which counted Le Lubez

[113] Prescott, 'The cause of humanity', p. 57, n. 75; E. Royle, *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans: Popular Freethought in Britain, 1866–1915* (Manchester, 1980), pp. 140, 201.

[114] Prescott, 'The cause of humanity', p. 36.

[115] Prescott, 'The cause of humanity', pp. 30, 36.

[116] Louis Blanc to *Le Temps*, 24 July 1866, in L. Blanc, *Dix ans de l'histoire de l'Angleterre* (10 vols., Paris, 1879–81), vi. 261–6.

[117] S. Coltham, 'English working-class newspapers in 1867', *Victorian Studies*, xiii (1969), 159–80, at pp. 164, 173–5; R. Harrison, *Before the Socialists: Studies in Labour and Politics, 1861–81* (1965), p. 92.

[118] *Daily News*, 4 July 1867, p. 3; *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 10 Nov. 1867, p. 8 and 21 Feb. 1869, p. 5; 'Special meeting of the executive committee of the Reform League, 12 March 1869', in *The Era of the Reform League: Selected by Gustav Mayer*, ed. J. Breuilly, G. Niedhart and A. Taylor (Mannheim, 1995), p. 300.

[119] Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, pp. 216–17, 229.

[120] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 77.

[121] H. Collins and C. Abramsky, *Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement: Years of the First International* (1965), p. 165; Royle, p. 200; Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, p. 237.

among its members, warmly welcomed the advent of the Paris Commune, denounced the Versailles government and compared the Communards' plight to that of the *Quarante-huitards*: 'We recognize in you the pioneers of progress and the architects of a new and purer social state; whilst we regard your oppressors, the men of Versailles, as the worthy disciples of the Man of December, and as the cowardly and mercenary instruments of European despots'.[122] After the Commune collapsed, the IDA served as one of the main sources of British support for the Communard refugees.[123] Some of these latter, like Jacques Chilmann, head of the nineteenth *arrondissement*'s municipal council during the Commune, subsequently joined the ubiquitous Le Lubez in the IDA's successor organization, the Universal Republican League.[124]

Finally, the French refugees were crucial to London's emergence as the centre of a new, pan-European internationalism. This began in 1850, when Ledru-Rollin, together with an international group of prominent exiles in London, including the Pole Arnold Darasz, the Hungarian Lajos Kossuth, the Italian Giuseppe Mazzini and the German Arnold Ruge, formed the Comité Central Démocratique Européen.[125] These refugees were convinced that the revolutions of 1848 had failed because of a lack of international revolutionary co-ordination and proposed that collective action would reverse their defeats. Until its collapse in the late 1850s, the Comité utilized Ledru-Rollin's *Voix du proscrit* newspaper for propaganda, sent agents into Europe 'pour organiser l'opinion républicain' and, through its 'Shilling Subscription for European Freedom', raised money for the cause and provided a degree of leadership for Europe's scattered revolutionaries.[126] Another attempt at international political co-ordination occurred in 1856, when the CR, Jones's International Committee and a number of German and Polish refugees formed a new International Association (IA). Unlike the Comité, this organization was explicitly socialist, and hoped to establish a 'Universal Democratic and Social Republic'.[127] It was also explicitly feminist, and women such as Deroin addressed its meetings.[128]

[122] *Bee-Hive*, 22 Apr. 1871, p. 13.
[123] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 25–6, 30, 35.
[124] Harrison, *Before the Socialists*, p. 237; Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 491.
[125] Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, pp. 95–6.
[126] On propaganda, see Dessal, *Revolutionnaire jacobin*, p. 153. For the point on agents, see Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, p. 97. The subscription's announcement can be found in TWA, Cowen collection, 634/A151. For its cancellation, see Cowen's and Linton's notice of 23 Dec. 1852, repr. in the *English Republic* newspaper on 1 Jan. 1853, pp. 212–13. For the Comité's collapse, see Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, p. 123.
[127] From the IA's statutes, quoted in Lehning, 'International Association', p. 263.
[128] Lehning, 'International Association', p. 228.

The IA was impressively active in the late 1850s, holding events like a celebration of the tenth anniversary of the 1848 revolutions in the John Street Scientific Institution, and running a quadrilingual newspaper, the *Bulletin de l'International*, from its headquarters in High Holborn.[129] Yet, as was so often the case with exile organizations, internal disputes over administration and doctrine, and the fear of police spies destroyed the IA's cohesiveness and by 1859 it collapsed.

London's most famous and influential organization of this type was the International Working Men's Association (IWMA). Founded in 1864 in St. Martin's Hall and headquartered first in Greek Street and then at 256 High Holborn, the IWMA embraced an internationally and ideologically diverse membership. Several French exiles were crucial to its early history. Bocquet and Le Lubez attended the inaugural meeting, Le Lubez helped to shape its organizational structure by successfully proposing a plan for 'a central commission in London representing all the affiliated national sections', and Collet's bilingual *International Courier* operated as the IWMA's semi-official newspaper until it folded in 1867. But the exiles, who hoped to use the IWMA to agitate against Bonaparte, soon clashed with other Internationalists, including Marx, who thought that a more circumspect approach would facilitate the International's expansion into French territory. This dispute ultimately caused a rift in the IWMA and most of the French refugees resigned from its official general council. Through their autonomous 'London French' branch, they continued to propagandize against Bonaparte, who responded by clamping down on the IWMA branches in France. The IWMA therefore severed all relations with the 'London French' branch, which remained active into the early 1870s and helped to give rise to the IDA and Universal Republican League.[130]

Meanwhile, in 1871, Marx authored *The Civil War in France*, a robust defence of the Commune and vitriolic denunciation of Versailles, on behalf of the IWMA's general council. The council also organized charitable relief for the incoming Communard refugees, several hundred of whom joined the organization after arriving in London, including Vaillant, who served as an important ideological ally for Marx in the organization.[131] During

[129] *Bulletin de l'Internationale*, 1 March 1858, p. 1; Lehning, 'International Association', pp. 227–8.

[130] International Working Men's Association: General Council, *The General Council of the First International: Minutes* (5 vols., Moscow, 1963–8), i. 443; general council meetings of 2 Oct. 1866 and 16 Apr. 1867, in *General Council: Minutes*, ii. 42, 111; general council meeting of 10 May 1870, in *General Council: Minutes*, iii. 236; Collins and Abramsky, *Karl Marx*, pp. 36–7, 101–4, 135–6, 195, 251, n. 1; Coltham, pp. 175–6.

[131] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 161–2; Collins and Abramsky, *Karl Marx*,

the first year of their exile in London, the IWMA provided a focal point for Communard activity and the means by which many of them hoped to strike back at the Versailles government. Those hopes were, of course, disappointed and organizational disputes soon led some refugees to form an autonomous branch called the Section Française de 1871, which, like the 'London French' branch before it, was critical of the general council.[132] The IWMA itself soon self-destructed at its 1872 congress in The Hague. Despite these fissures, the International, which owed so much of its early vitality to the French exiles in London, became an inspiration to many future attempts to build pan-European political institutions.

Throughout the decades the exiles deliberately blended these different political traditions together. *Quarante-huitards* like Blanc and Schoelcher attempted to justify the revolution of 1848 to a British audience and to cast French socialist politics in a light acceptable to British liberals.[133] In the 1870s, Communards like Camille Barrère did much the same with their own actions and experiences during the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune.[134] Many exilic works were also translated rapidly into English by friends of the refugees like Holyoake, Harney and Lascelles Wraxall.[135] The refugees also attempted to transplant what was best about Britain into France's political discourse. Thus Nadaud, who had watched the construction of London's Tube with astonishment, campaigned long and vigorously for a Paris *métro*, which finally began construction in 1898, the year of his death.[136] Moreover, many exiles were cognizant of the debt they owed to Britain's asylum, assembly and press rights (even Vallès admitted that London had taught him 'what liberty is'), and wanted the Third Republic to enshrine these civil liberties into law.[137] Britain's labour movement was also deemed worthy of emulation. Talandier therefore translated texts on co-operatives and Nadaud wrote histories of Britain's workers' associations in order to inspire French workers.[138] More abstractly, but with huge

pp. 264, 267.

[132] For an exhaustive account of the Communard refugees and the IWMA, see Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', ch. 6.

[133] L. Blanc, *1848: Historical Revelations. Inscribed to Lord Normanby* (1858); *Louis Blanc's Monthly Review*, Nov. 1849, pp. 134–5; *The Times*, 10 Apr. 1852, p. 7.

[134] For his journalistic endeavours, see Ferragu, 'Anglophones', p. 553. For an example of an account of his time as a functionary during the Franco-Prussian War written for a British audience, see his 'Six Months of Prefecture under Gambetta', *Fraser's Magazine*, Nov. 1872, pp. 651–66.

[135] Wraxall translated Esquiros's *The English at Home*.

[136] Nadaud, *Mémoires*, pp. 515–16.

[137] L. Blanc, *Discours politiques (1847 à 1881)* (Paris, 1882), pp. 221, 401; Nadaud, *Histoire*, pp. 181–2; Vallès, *La Rue à Londres*, p. 250.

[138] Aprile, 'Translations', pp. 36, 49; Nadaud, *Histoire*; M. Nadaud, *Les Sociétés des ouvrières*

consequences for the political development of France, the returning Blanquist Communards who had fraternized with Marx in London played a major role in the introduction of Marxism into France.[139] And while the defeats of 1848–52 and 1871 genuinely spurred the French left to try to build a truly international politics, one of the main appeals of organizations like the Comité Central, the IA and the IWMA remained their potential to achieve political change in Paris. The exiles' involvement in and intermixing of these diverse political currents helped to make Victorian London a truly transnational ideological and political space, a role that it would maintain well into the twentieth century.

Legacies of the exile community in London

The exiles left a lasting mark on London. A number of them chose to remain in the city even after they had been amnestied. Wealthy refugees like Ledru-Rollin and Schoelcher maintained their London residences and spent their post-exile years hopping back and forth across the Channel.[140] Others remained on a more permanent basis. Deroin, who found Britain's political atmosphere more congenial to female participation than France's, stayed in London and moved among the city's feminist, radical and socialist circles until her death in 1894.[141] Hector France remained at his post at Woolwich until 1895, and the law practice opened by the Communard Lefèvre-Roncier stayed open for some time.[142] Other familiar exile establishments, like Lassassie's barber shop or the shop of the Communard greengrocer Victor Richard, remained open into the 1880s and 1890s.[143] Some, like Pilotelle, started families in London and settled down. This remnant of the exile population was large enough that there was still a recognized 'French colony' between Fitzroy and Soho Squares at least until the early twentieth century. This area therefore provided a familiar haven for later generations of French visitors to London, and the anarchist refugees of the 1890s were immediately drawn to it.[144] Moreover, as the century turned and the children of the refugees, many of them born in London, came of age, this 'colony' was increasingly assimilated and contributed to the Franco-British

(Paris, 1873).

[139] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 247.

[140] Calman, *Ledru-Rollin*, pp. 251–2, 274; Schmidt, *Correspondance de Schoelcher*, p. 312, n. 1.

[141] Aprile, 'Translations', p. 43; Pilbeam, 'Deroin'. For more on Deroin, see Máire Cross's contribution to this volume.

[142] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', pp. 416, 512, 536.

[143] Martinez, 'Paris Communard refugees', p. 77, Aprile, *Siècle des exilés*, pp. 266, 271.

[144] Aprile, *Siècle des exilés*, pp. 266, 271. For the anarchist exiles, see Constance Bantman's chapter in this volume.

rapprochement at the turn of the twentieth century. When, for example, President Emile Loubet made a state visit to London in 1903 to cement the budding Entente Cordiale, he met the 'French colony' in London, some of whom told him proudly that they were 'children of political exiles' who had lived in 'this great country' for half a century.[145] No doubt among them were children, or grandchildren, of *Quarante-huitards* and Communards who had by then become pillars of London society and defenders of the growing cross-Channel friendship.

[145] Tombs and Tombs, 'That sweet enemy', p. 441.