

A “*coup d’État*” in Jersey? Rethinking the Jersey expulsions of 1855¹

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In the autumn of 1855 thirty-nine political refugees from France, Hungary, Poland and the German and Italian states were summarily expelled from the island of Jersey, a crown dependency of the United Kingdom. Having published provocative criticisms of the British government in their newspaper *L’Homme*, they were removed by order of Jersey’s Lieutenant-Governor Sir James Frederick Love, who had the full backing of a British government itself under pressure from France to remove this concentration of political dissidents near its shores. These were the only explicitly political deportations of foreign nationals from any portion of the British Isles between 1823, when government powers to expel aliens granted under a succession of Aliens Acts during the wars of 1793-1815 were used for the last time, and 1914, when “enemy aliens” were detained and repatriated during the First World War². They garnered significant attention, not least because Victor Hugo and his sons were among the expelled, and provoked a backlash of protest from the refugees’ supporters in Jersey and Britain that lasted into 1856, the echoes of which resonated in British politics for years.

This episode, though it involved only a few dozen refugees and remains obscure to non-specialists, has attracted some attention from historians of exile. Studies of the refugee diasporas of the post-1848 era have often included the community in Jersey, which Bernard Porter characterized as “a kind of encampment [...] for some of the wilder” exiles attached to the larger refugee groupings in London³. Similarly, closer investigations of individuals like Hugo or the Polish socialist Zeno Świętosławski explore the refugee social milieu in which these figures lived⁴. Such biographical works of course focus on the expulsions as important, dislocating moments in the lives of their subjects. More emphasis still has been placed on the agitation against the expulsions and the wider significance of those protests in British politics. Since they lasted only a few months and failed in their immediate aim of reversing the expulsions, Kenneth Hooker argued that the “significance of these protest meetings, as expressions of English public opinion, was very slight”, a sentiment echoed by Porter, who thought that they revealed an underlying precariousness to the refugees’ security in both Britain and Jersey⁵. In contrast, Margot Finn and Miles Taylor both noted that the agitation brought together a new cross-class alliance of liberals and radicals, though Finn underlined the internationalism inherent in British sympathy for refugees while Taylor understood them as

¹ Some of the research for this article was made possible by a Leverhulme Research Fellowship. My thanks to the Leverhulme Trust for its support.

² On expulsions under the Aliens Acts, which lapsed in 1826, before and after the wars, see John Rowland Dinwiddy, « The use of the Crown’s power of deportation under the Aliens Act, 1793-1826 », in *Radicalism and Reform in Britain, 1780-1850*, London, The Hambledon Press, 1992, ch. 8.

³ Bernard Porter, *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979, p. 19. See also Sylvie Aprile, *Le siècle des exilés : bannis et proscrits de 1789 à la Commune*, Paris, CNRS éditions, 2010, p. 121-122; Fabrice Bensimon, « The French exiles and the British », in Sabine Freitag (ed.), *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2003, ch. 6; Thomas C. Jones, *French Republican Exiles in Britain, 1848-1870*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2010, p. 54-8, 114-15, and *passim*.

⁴ Peter Brock, « A Polish “Proscrit” in Jersey » », *Société jersiaise, Bulletin annuel*, XVI, 1954, no. 2, p. 179-194; Kenneth Ward Hooker, *The Fortunes of Victor Hugo in England*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1938, ch. 6; Graham Robb, *Victor Hugo*, London, Picador, 1997, ch. 15; Philip Stevens, *Victor Hugo in Jersey*, Phillimore, Chichester, 1985.

⁵ Kenneth Ward Hooker, *The Fortunes...*, *op. cit.*, p. 132; Bernard Porter, *The Refugee Question...*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

inculcating British revulsion to the reactionary governments of continental Europe and helping to build a more isolationist attitude, “liberalism in one country”, in the nascent Liberal Party⁶.

More recently, Caroline Shaw has argued that the agitation should be remembered for its effects on the politics of asylum in Britain⁷. Faced with the challenge of defending a relatively unpopular group of exiles, pro-refugee campaigners argued not that the exiles’ plight made them sympathetic, but that asylum was a right embedded in Britain’s history and constitution. While she is right that support for open asylum was more deeply embedded in Victorian Britain’s political culture than earlier historians like Porter have realized, and the Jersey expulsions helped to strengthen this phenomenon, Shaw overestimates the novelty of these ideas in 1855⁸. As I have written elsewhere, arguments that asylum was a right embedded in the British constitution, confirmed by historical tradition and by statute and common law, were older and gained increasing currency during debates about extending the Aliens Acts in the 1810s and 1820s⁹. Reaction to the Jersey expulsions certainly helped to popularize the notion of a right of asylum, but its intellectual roots were deeper and more complex than the crisis of 1855¹⁰.

Rather than continue this focus on the expulsions’ direct impact on British politics, this article examines some more neglected aspects of their aftermath. It delineates the expellees’ own understanding of the expulsions, traces their movements after 1855 and demonstrates the ultimately ephemeral, though by no means insignificant, nature of their banishments. The exiles denounced their expulsions as the “*coup d’État à Jersey*”. This described not only the summary and purportedly unconstitutional nature of the expulsions, a topic covered well by Shaw, but was a deliberate reference to Louis Napoleon Bonaparte’s *coup d’État* of 2 December 1851 which destroyed the republic founded in 1848 and ushered in the Second Empire of the newly crowned Napoleon III. The exiles were convinced that the French emperor was behind the expulsions and by pressuring the British and Jerseyan authorities into executing his will he had effectively brought his violent and lawless reign to Jersey. This theory dovetailed with the exiles’ own largely republican and vociferously anti-Bonapartist political assumptions, but it was also a politically useful narrative for them. It afforded an opportunity for well-publicized defiance to tyranny and bolstered the exiles’ self-images as noble martyrs in the cause of freedom. It was also adopted by many of the exiles’ British supporters, since it was compatible with a well-established liberal and radical constitutional patriotism that was increasingly suspicious of European despots¹¹. Yet from a distance, the expulsions appear far more limited than their critics often suggested. Indeed, the exiles turned down the chance to fight them in court, preferring the romantic glory of being driven into yet another exile to the prospect of a dry and lengthy legal contest. They could do so in part because the expulsions were restricted to Jersey. Britain as a whole remained a unique

⁶ Margot Finn, *After Chartism: Class and Nation in English Radical Politics, 1848-1874*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 177; Miles Taylor, *The Decline of British Radicalism, 1847-1860*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 257.

⁷ Caroline Shaw, « Success in a failed campaign: The French refugees of Jersey and the making of an abstract “Right to Refuge” », *Journal of British Studies*, 57, 2018, no. 3, p. 493-515. For her wider analysis of refuge in nineteenth-century Britain, though not Jersey, see *Britannia’s Embrace: Modern Humanitarianism and the Imperial Origins of Refugee Relief*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015.

⁸ She also makes more straightforward errors, consistently collectively labelling the expellees « French » though more than a quarter were of other nationalities and claiming that none of the expelled were allowed to return to Jersey when in fact their banishments were rescinded in 1859 and several resettled there permanently.

⁹ See my « Définir l’asile politique en Grande-Bretagne (1815-1870) », *Hommes et migrations*, 2018, no. 1321, « Les mots de l’exil dans l’Europe du XIX^e siècle », p. 12-21.

¹⁰ For more on the refugees’ opposition to the expulsions as part of continuing campaigns in favour of the right of asylum during the 1850s, see Thomas C. Jones, *French Republican Exiles...*, *op. cit.*, p. 157-66.

¹¹ This culture is explored in Jonathan Parry, *English Liberalism, National Identity and Europe, 1830-1886*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

asylum in Europe and there was no threat of the exiles' repatriation to the continent. The refugees were therefore able to relocate to nearby Guernsey and London and resume lives and activities similar to those they had left in Jersey. Jersey itself remained open to all refugees other than the thirty-nine specific individuals expelled in 1855 and new exiles continued to join those that had remained. Yet in one very important sense the “*coup d'État*” charge was accurate. The expulsions were done by executive fiat. They could therefore be easily undone by a more sympathetic Lieutenant-Governor, as indeed happened in 1859, less than four years after they were issued. It was therefore ironically one of the exiles' and their supporters' main complaints about this “coup”, its arbitrary nature, that brought these, the only political expulsions of foreigners from the Victorian British Isles, to an end, restoring Jersey's place as an unfettered asylum for future generations.

The exiles in Jersey and the expulsions

In the years after the failure of the 1848 revolutions, thousands of disappointed revolutionary, radical, republican, nationalist and socialist exiles from across Europe sought asylum in Britain. Aside from its physical proximity to the continent, the country had no significant immigration restrictions and the Aliens Act of 1848, which granted ministers power to expel individual foreigners, lapsed in 1850 without having been used¹². This made Britain an attractive destination, as did its vaunted liberties of the press, of speech and of assembly. As reaction swept the continent, other, smaller potential refuges such as Belgium and Switzerland were pressured by neighbouring states into censoring or expelling resident refugees¹³. In 1852 John Sanders, the Metropolitan Police officer often tasked with investigating exile affairs, noted of Britain's growing refugee population: “They cannot reside in any other country. [...] They prefer coming to England¹⁴”. The vast majority of these refugees went to London but a significant minority settled in Jersey.

Jersey was an appealing asylum for several reasons. Most prosaically, it was comparatively cheap, and several destitute refugees relocated there from London for the lower cost of living¹⁵. For those determined to remain politically active, its location twenty-two kilometres west of the Cotentin Peninsula and its commercial connections to towns like Granville and St Malo made it an ideal location for smuggling propaganda, people and money in and out of Europe generally and France in particular¹⁶. For the French, the island, which had come to the English crown in 1066 as part of the Duchy of Normandy, was also more culturally amenable than London. Official business, many newspapers and most place names were in French and Jersey's related local language, Jèrriais, was still widely spoken. Coinage in French denominations still circulated widely enough for *L'Homme* to be sold in francs and sous. For Hugo, the Channel Islands were “*des morceaux de France tombés dans la mer et ramassés par l'Angleterre*¹⁷”. Jersey also had a long history of asylum, most famously sheltering Huguenots during the French religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and royalist and clerical émigrés, including the author François-René de Chateaubriand, during the French

¹² The Aliens Act was 11 & 12 Vict. c. 20. On its non-usage, see *Papers of the House of Commons*, 1850, vol. XXXIII, p. 688.

¹³ Archives générales du royaume, Brussels, ministère de la Justice, police des étrangers, dossiers généraux I 160/243, 248, 250 and 887.

¹⁴ John Sanders, police report, 13 Feb. 1852, the National Archives, London, Home Office Papers (HO) 45/4302. All police reports cited hereafter were by Sanders.

¹⁵ Police reports, 28 Sept., 14 and 22 Oct. 1852, HO 45/4547A; Luigi Pianciani, « History of the expulsion of the exiles from Jersey », *Reasoner*, 4 Nov. 1855, p. 253.

¹⁶ Police report 22 Oct. 1852, HO 45/4575A.

¹⁷ Victor Hugo, *L'archipel de la Manche*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1883, p. 33.

Revolution¹⁸. The early nineteenth century saw the arrival of exiles from further afield, including hundreds of veterans of the failed liberal and nationalist uprisings in the 1820s and 1830s in Spain, Italy and Poland¹⁹. A small contingent of Polish exiles led by Świętosławski were thus already on the island when the revolutions of 1848 broke out. For several exiles in the 1850s, the romantic appeal of following in the footsteps of these previous exiles was great, particularly for Hugo who read about Chateaubriand's sojourn in Jersey before he arrived²⁰.

Jersey's constitutional arrangements also made some exiles regard it as a particularly safe asylum. As a crown dependency, Jersey's foreign relations and military affairs were controlled by Britain but the island did have significant domestic autonomy. It was divided into twelve parishes, each with an assembly and an elected Connétable who ran the local budget and police force. The island's legislature, the States, was made of these Connétables and judicial and Anglican Church officials (Jurats and Rectors, respectively), but no directly elected representatives²¹. The Lieutenant-Governor was the island's chief executive, tasked with Jersey's defence, appointed by London from the ranks of the army. This local particularism and autonomy was mistaken by some exiles for effective independence and the island's peacefulness and elected "honorary police" for liberalism. Adèle Hugo, Victor's wife, wrote to a friend in 1852 that "C'est le pays libre par excellence. Nul contrôle n'est exercé. Le gendarme, le sergent de ville sont inconnus. [...] C'est un pays, ainsi que tu le vois, qui se gouverne lui-même, et quoique île anglaise, ne permet pas à l'Angleterre d'intervenir dans ses affaires". Hugo put it more simply: "Vous savez, on est libre ici²²."

Thus, by the early 1850s, Świętosławski's Poles were joined by disappointed advocates of Hungarian, German and Italian independence and unity and, especially, French republicans exiled for resisting the coup of 1851. The exact number of these exiles, collectively called the "proscrits" in Jersey, is difficult to decipher. In 1852 Love estimated that 200-300 of those banished by Bonaparte were in Jersey along with a further 500 malcontents who now found "France too hot for them²³". Sanders was more cautious estimating "the number of real political Refugees residing in the Island to be 189²⁴". This number quickly fell as many moved to Britain, died, were granted individual amnesties or took advantage of British government funds offered to exiles wishing to travel to America²⁵. By 1853 Sanders reduced this to 126, though his tally of 108 French, 10 Italians and 8 "Hungarians and Germans" included no Poles and so must have undercounted the true figure. In 1854, he counted 83 French refugees but offered no

¹⁸ For general histories, see Fernand de Schickler, *Les Églises du Refuge en Angleterre*, 3 vols., Paris, 1892, vol. 2, chs. 16-21; William Eugene de Faye, « Huguenots in the Channel Islands », *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society*, XIX, 1954, no. 2, p. 28-40; *Balleine's History of Jersey. Revised and Enlarged by Marguerite Syvret and Joan Stevens*, Chichester, 1981, p. 216; Kirsty Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution: Émigrés in London, 1789-1802*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1999, p. 98; Régis de Estourbeillon, *Les familles françaises à Jersey pendant la Révolution*, Nantes, 1886.

¹⁹ « Accounts of financial assistance given to Spanish and Italian refugees living in Jersey by the British Government, with list of recipients, includes; copies of letters from Colonel H Touzel to Major General Lord Fitzroy Somerset concerning the same », 1828-1831, Jersey Archive, St Helier, A/B/3; Polish paylists in the National Archives, London, Treasury Papers 50/81-97 and Papers of the Paymaster General 53/2-8.

²⁰ François-Victor Hugo, *La Normandie inconnue*, Paris, Pagnerre, 1857, p. 18; Auguste Vacquerie, *Les miettes de l'histoire*, Paris, 1863, p. 241-358; Graham Robb, *Victor Hugo, op. cit.*, p. 310.

²¹ For a description of these institutions and their evolution, see Peter Hunt, *A Brief History of Jersey*, St Helier, Société jersiaise, 1998.

²² Quoted in Sheila Gaudon, « Anglophobie? », in Anthony R. W. James (ed.), *Victor Hugo et la Grande-Bretagne*, Liverpool, Francis Carins, 1986, p. 54.

²³ James Love to William Jolliffe, 24 August 1852, HO 45/4013.

²⁴ Police report, 7 Sept. 1852, HO 45/4547A. Underline in the original.

²⁵ Receipts for this latter are in The National Archives, London, Metropolitan Police Papers 2/43. Love was ordered to limit those leaving this way to "only dangerous characters", presumably to contain costs. See Edmund Hammond to Henry Fitzroy, 18 Oct. 1854, HO 45/5180.

estimates of the other nationalities.²⁶ These incomplete tallies did not include the family members, friends and political sympathizers that accompanied the official *proscrits* into exile, so by 1855 Jersey's total refugee population probably remained above 100.

This was a highly politicized population. It contained a degree of ideological diversity ranging from General Adolphe Le Flô, a monarchist exiled for resisting the coup, to Joseph Déjacque, who wrote his anarchistic tract *La question révolutionnaire* before leaving Jersey in 1854²⁷. But the great majority hewed to the *démocrate-socialiste* tradition of republicanism that emerged in France from early 1849. Inveterately republican, they supported universal male, and occasionally female, suffrage and advocated significant social reform through voluntary co-operatives and state-provided education, credit, infrastructure and assistance for those unable to work. They were also simultaneously nationalist and internationalist, supporting the causes of national independence from Europe's multinational empires and unity for peoples divided into petty states, but looked forward to a future of international republican cooperation and even federation, a worldview summed up in the slogan "*la république démocratique, sociale, et universelle*"²⁸. They formed organizations like the *Comité révolutionnaire des démocrates socialistes réfugiés à Jersey*, which embraced refugees of all nationalities, and the local branch of the *Commune révolutionnaire*, a French exile club led in London by Jean-Baptiste Boichot, Marc Caussidière and Félix Pyat and run in Jersey by the journalists and revolutionary club leaders Eugène Alavoine, Alphonse Bianchi and Jean Colfavru²⁹. These organizations and prominent individual exiles produced a stream of books, pamphlets and other propaganda, usually printed at the *Imprimerie universelle*, set up by Świętosławski in 1852 at 19 Dorset Street. From November 1853, the *Imprimerie* published *L'Homme*, a weekly newspaper primarily edited by the French journalist Charles Ribeyrolles with financial backing from the Italian exile Luigi Pianciani³⁰. More generally, the exiles sustained their social and political community through regular meetings, banquets commemorating key revolutionary anniversaries and politicized funerals for their dead at the Dissenters' cemetery of Macpela, five kilometres north of St Helier.

In response to this nearby hostile community, the French government increased naval patrols near Jersey, tightened port security and complained to Britain about the refugees' activities³¹. Love, a veteran of Waterloo, worried France might respond to the perceived threat of the exiles by invading Jersey, as had happened as recently as 1781. He was also convinced that the refugees were turning Jersey's young into "Red Republicans"³². He therefore repeatedly asked for Sanders to be sent to Jersey to spy on the refugees. But Sanders's reports consistently portrayed the exiles as too poor and disorganized to pose a real danger and the

²⁶ Police reports, 19 March 1853, HO 45/4816 and 26 April 1854, HO 45/5180.

²⁷ Joseph Déjacque, *À bas les chefs ! Écrits libertaires (1847-1863)*, Thomas Bouchet (ed.), Paris, La Fabrique, 2016, p. 59-95.

²⁸ For an account of the emergence and impact of this tradition, see Thomas C. Jones, « French republicanism after 1848 », in Douglas Moggach, Gareth Stedman Jones (eds), *The 1848 Revolutions and European political thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018, p. 70-93.

²⁹ Jean-Baptiste Boichot, *Souvenirs d'un prisonnier d'État sous le Second Empire*, Leipzig, C. Musquardt, 1867, p. 94

³⁰ Sylvie Aprile, « Voices of exile: French newspapers in England », in Sabine Freitag (ed.), *Exiles from European Revolutions...*, p. 88-102; Thomas C. Jones, « Rallier la république en exil : *L'Homme* de Ribeyrolles », in Thomas Bouchet, Vincent Bourdeau, Edward Castleton, Ludovic Frobert, François Jarrige (eds.), *Quand les socialistes inventaient l'avenir : presse, théories et expériences, 1825-1860*, Paris, La Découverte, 2015, p. 348-60; Thomas C. Jones, Constance Bantman, « From French republicanism to anarchism: 50 years of French exilic newspaper publishing », in Constance Bantman, Ana Cláudia Suriana da Silva (eds.), *The Foreign Political Press in Nineteenth-Century London: Politics from a Distance*, London, Bloomsbury, 2017, p. 91-111.

³¹ John Turnbull to Earl Granville, 26 Jan. 1852 and Henry Addington to Granville, 31 Jan. 1852, HO 45/4013.

³² Love to George Grey, 4 Aug. 1855, HO 45/6188.

government in London considered Love's fears overblown, rejecting a plan to give the French a list of refugees in Jersey as "quite out of the question"³³.

This dynamic changed in 1855. In April a failed attempt to assassinate Napoleon III by Giovanni Pianori, an Italian exile living in London and incensed at France's occupation of Rome in support of papal temporal power, forced the British to take threats to the emperor more seriously and Sanders was dispatched to investigate rumoured connections between Pianori and the Jersey exiles³⁴. The Franco-British alliance in the Crimean War also now made good relations between the countries paramount. By August the Prime Minister Lord Palmerston wrote that "these French exiles ought to be sent away from the Channel Islands where they are doing far more mischief to France and to England than they could accomplish in London"³⁵. Love suggested using a 1635 order in council that gave the Lieutenant-Governor the right to summarily expel resident aliens and the Home Secretary George Grey gave permission to expel exiles that "threaten the loyal and peaceable population".³⁶ Sanders's reports became more pessimistic, highlighting the exiles' "violent" language against Napoleon III, criticisms of the Franco-British alliance and attempts to convert Jersey's workers to socialism and republicanism, concluding that "their conduct here is infamous in the extreme"³⁷. After articles appeared in *L'Homme* that denounced the war and alliance and claimed that Bonaparte had deserved the Pianori *attentat*, Grey told Love that this justified at least Ribeyrolles's expulsion³⁸.

Then on 10 October *L'Homme* printed a "*Lettre à la reine d'Angleterre*", previously read at a public meeting in London by Pyat, criticizing Victoria for legitimating Napoleon III on a recent state visit to Paris. By embracing an unworthy ally she had "*tout sacrifié, dignité de reine, scrupules de femmes [...] le rang, la race, le sexe, tout jusqu'à la pudeur*"³⁹. Love called a meeting for 13 October in the Queen's Assembly Rooms "in order that the Loyal people of Jersey should have an opportunity of expressing their indignation at the insult offered to her Most Gracious Majesty" and posters soon appeared urging "*vous tous qui respectez le sexe*" to attend and "*manifester votre réprobation, votre mépris, votre dégoût*". Two thousand people attended, passing resolutions denouncing the letter, and Love cited this indignation as a danger to "public peace", ordering Ribeyrolles, Pianciani and Alexandre Thomas, "the editor, the proprietor, and the vendor of this most infamous paper", off the island⁴⁰. In response, Hugo penned a *Déclaration*, signed by thirty-four other exiles, denouncing these expulsions and daring the government: "*Et maintenant expulsez-nous!*"

This was posted across the island and appeared in *L'Homme* on 24 October with a note of support from Świętosławski. An irritated Palmerston ordered Love to remove the signatories, commenting that "The Question now is whether these Islands belong to us or to Victor Hugo"⁴¹. Love sent out the Connétables and police to inform the signatories to leave by 2 November.

³³ Love's requests for Sanders and Sanders's reports are in HO 45/4547A, 4816, 5180, 5260, and 6188. Joliffe to Love, 10 Nov. 1852, HO 45/4547A.

³⁴ Police reports in the National Archives, London, Foreign Office (FO) 519/171 and 172 and HO 45/6188.

³⁵ Memorandum by Lord Palmerston, 14 Aug. 1855.

³⁶ Love to Grey, 7 Aug. 1855, Henry Waddington to Love, 15 Aug. 1855, HO 45/6188.

³⁷ Police report, 5 Oct. 1855, HO 45/6188.

³⁸ Waddington to Love, 10 Oct. 1855, HO 45/6188.

³⁹ « *Lettre à la reine d'Angleterre* », *L'Homme*, 10 Oct. 1855, p. 2-4.

⁴⁰ Love to Waddington, 14 Oct. 1855, with attached copies of expulsion order and indignation meeting minutes and police report, 14 Oct. 1855, with attached poster advertising meeting, HO 45/6188. The original text lacks the usual French accents.

⁴¹ *L'Homme*, 24 Oct. 1855, p. 1; Love to Waddington, 21 Oct. 1855, and Palmerston to Grey, 23 Oct. 1855, HO 45/6188.

The expelled mirrored the national and social profile of the wider exile community. The majority, twenty-eight, were French. Five were Polish, three Italian and one German, one Hungarian and one Austrian. Disproportionately drawn from the professional classes, they included writers like Hugo and his two sons, journalists such as Ribeyrolles and Jules Cahaigne, doctors like Barbier and Franck and the lawyer Mathieu Roumilhac. Some, like the shoemakers Arsène Hayes and Antoine Fomberteaux, came from artisan backgrounds. By age they ranged from François-Victor Hugo at twenty-seven to Cahaigne at nearly sixty⁴². Although all the expelled were adult men, the exodus included women and children. Hugo was joined by his wife and daughter, both named Adèle, and his longtime mistress Juliette Drouet. Édouard Bonnet-Duverdier's Jersey-born wife Henriette and daughter Magueritte accompanied him into exile and Préveraud was joined by his wife and son⁴³. The total exodus from Jersey therefore numbered around fifty, cutting the island's exile population in half.

The theory of the “*coup d'État à Jersey*” and its uses

Having regarded Jersey as a safe asylum, combining the well-known constitutional liberties of the British mainland with a jealously guarded local autonomy, the exiles were outraged by the expulsions. Their sudden misfortune was explained as the “*coup d'État à Jersey*”. This term was coined in an article in *L'Homme* by Ribeyrolles, Bonnet-Duverdier, Pianciani and the Hungarian colonel Sándor Teleki protesting Love's original three expulsions. It referred in part to the summary nature of the expulsions. Ribeyrolles, Pianciani and Thomas had simply been ordered to leave without recourse or clear justification. This was unworthy of a constitutional state: “*Pas de formule écrite, pas de motifs, pas de raisons [...] une fièvre de dictature*”. Indeed, the resolutions passed at the indignation meeting demanding reprisals against the exiles had revealed that the people of Jersey were abandoning their own liberty. “*Elle dit que Jersey, pays libre sous l'institution anglaise [...] qu'elle cède à l'autorité militaire ses privilèges, ses traditions, ses vieilles libertés historiques, pour que le sabre décide et puisse, à son caprice, frapper l'étranger*⁴⁴.” Similarly, in a widely publicized account, Hugo claimed to have compelled the Connétable of St Clement parish to admit that his *Déclaration* had not violated Jersey's laws and that the expulsions were essentially criminal⁴⁵. Jersey had lapsed into lawless despotism. As Ribeyrolles, Pianciani, Bonnet-Duverdier and Teleki claimed “*Le pays d'asile est fermé [...] Jersey n'existe plus*”.

The exiles immediately suspected that this “*coup*” was linked to that of 1851. Napoleon III was the Jersey exiles' *bête noire*, despised for his destruction of the French and Roman Republics and seen as a principal pillar in Europe's new reactionary order. Cahaigne, Hugo and Ribeyrolles had written polemical histories of Bonaparte's coup which were printed in Jersey and smuggled into France⁴⁶. The presence of police spies in Jersey had confirmed Bonaparte's continued ire against them and towards the exiles generally⁴⁷. This made many

⁴² Biographical profiles of many of the exiles are available in Jean Maitron (ed.), *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français*, vols. 1-3, Paris, Éditions ouvrières, 1964-1966.

⁴³ For some of the family details of the refugees and the logistics of their departures, see Charles Hugo, *Les Hommes de l'exil*, *op. cit.*, ch. 14.

⁴⁴ Charles Ribeyrolles, Édouard Bonnet-Duverdier, Luigi Pianciani, Sándor Teleki, « Le coup d'État à Jersey », *L'Homme*, 17 Oct. 1855, p. 3.

⁴⁵ « The Jersey outrage. Interview between Victor Hugo and the Connetable of St. Clement's », *Daily News*, 5 Nov. 1855, p. 3; « Le coup d'État de Jersey. Victor Hugo et le Connétable de Saint-Clément », *L'Homme*, 17 Nov. 1855, p. 1-2. The Connétable denied the report: John Le Neveu to the editor of the *Daily News*, 12 Nov. 1855, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Jules Cahaigne, *La Couronne impériale, satire*, Jersey, Imprimerie universelle, 1853; Victor Hugo, *Napoléon le petit*, London, Vizetelly, 1852; Charles Ribeyrolles, *Les bagnes d'Afrique : histoire de la transportation de décembre*, London, Jeffs, 1853.

⁴⁷ See the anonymous warning pamphlet *L'agent de police Hubert*.

expect that he would eventually act against them. In a discussion about the Pyat letter before its publication, Hugo claimed that Bonaparte wanted “*trouver un prétexte pour vider Jersey, ce rocher poétique qui travaille l’imagination de la France*” and would take the opportunity to ensure “une expulsion des proscrits de Jersey⁴⁸”. His *Déclaration* therefore blamed France for the expulsions, listed Bonaparte’s crimes and warned “*Le coup d’État vient de faire son entrée dans les libertés anglaises, l’Angleterre en est arrivée à ce point : proscrire des Proscrits. Encore un pas, et l’Angleterre sera une annexe de l’Empire français, et Jersey sera un canton de l’arrondissement de Coutances*⁴⁹”.

This interpretation resonated with the exiles’ British supporters. As Shaw and I have shown elsewhere, liberal and radical figures across Britain often couched their opposition to the expulsions in terms of defending British constitutional liberties. In the mid-Victorian era, threats to those liberties were often seen as emanating from the despotic governments of neighbouring states and their willing collaborators amongst the British elite. This made the exiles’ account of a conspiracy between Bonaparte, Palmerston and Love a highly potent one, particularly since Palmerston had tarnished his own constitutionalist and patriotic credentials in 1851 when as Foreign Secretary he had praised Bonaparte’s coup as a restoration of “order”. The events of 1855 seemed to confirm his willingness to sacrifice British liberty to foreign despots and proved the validity of worries expressed by figures like Richard Cobden and John Bright that the Crimean War and Franco-British alliance would erode Britain’s constitutional governance⁵⁰. The notion of the “*coup d’État à Jersey*” dovetailed smoothly with these concerns and it was adopted by journalists like George Julian Harney, who produced a series of articles on “The Jersey *coup d’État*” for the *Reasoner*, and George and Edward Reynolds, who called the expulsions “Louis Napoleon’s Attempt to Expel the French Exiles from England” and an “Attempt to Bonapartise England⁵¹”. Similarly, at a London protest, Washington Wilks was applauded when he claimed that “no one could doubt” that Bonaparte was the mostly likely “author of the recent expulsion” and at Newcastle the future MP Joseph Cowen took it as accepted fact that the expulsions “have been taken at the instigation of the despotic ruler of a neighbouring nation⁵²”. These claims were purportedly proven by the translation and publication in English of the exiles’ own eyewitness testimonials⁵³.

Yet there was a contradiction in the exiles’ promoting of this interpretation. Whether it was Love, Palmerston or Bonaparte that was ultimately responsible for the expulsions, it was unclear if they were legal. Several Jersey lawyers encouraged the exiles to challenge the expulsions in court and sympathetic organs like the *Daily Press* offered to start a collection for their legal fees. But the exiles recoiled at the prospect of pleading for their right to stay. There was the risk that this strategy could backfire, conferring legitimacy on Love’s actions if the

⁴⁸ Adèle Hugo, *Le journal d’Adèle Hugo*, 4 vols., Paris, Minard, 1968-2002, vol. 4, p. 369.

⁴⁹ Victor Hugo, « Déclaration », *L’Homme*, 24 Oct. 1855, p. 1.

⁵⁰ Miles Taylor, *The Decline of British Radicalism*, *op. cit.*, p. 257. For broader context, see Jonathan Parry, « The impact of Napoleon III on British politics, 1851-1880 », *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, sixth series, XI, 2001, p. 147-175.

⁵¹ George Julian Harney, « The Jersey coup d’État », *Reasoner*, 16 and 23 Dec. 1855, p. 301 and 309, and 6 and 20 Jan. and 17 Feb. 1856, p. 5, 21, and 53; George W. M. Reynolds, « Louis Napoleon’s attempt to expel the French exiles from England », *Reynolds’s Newspaper*, 21 Oct. 1855, p. 6, and Edward Reynolds « Attempt to Bonapartise England », *Reynolds’s Newspaper*, 21 Oct. 1855, p. 7.

⁵² « The Jersey exiles », *Daily News*, 13 Nov. 1855, p. 5; Copy of the resolutions of the public meeting held in Newcastle, 12 Nov. 1855, Tyne and Wear Archives Services, Newcastle, Cowen Collection, A400. Identical resolutions were passed in Paisley on 3 December, Cowen Collection A438.

⁵³ « M. Pianciani’s Statement », *Daily News*, 22 Oct. 1855, p. 3; Luigi Pianciani, « History of the expulsion of the exiles from Jersey », *Reasoner*, 4 Nov. 1855, p. 253-4; Charles and François-Victor Hugo, « M. Victor Hugo and M. Le Neveu », *Daily News*, 16 Nov. 1855, p. 5; Ernest Jones, *The Letter of the Jersey Exiles to the Queen of England, to which is Added the Declaration of M. Victor Hugo and Others*, London, Truelove, 1855.

refugees' case was defeated⁵⁴. But it was also a matter of pride. After the indignation meeting, Hugo declared “*Notre dignité ne nous permet pas de rester dans une ville où des injures contre nous sont placardées sur tous les murs*”⁵⁵. In rejecting the pleas of his Jerseyan friends urging him to stay, Ribeyrolles insisted “*Je ne veux pas diminuer ma position en plaidant devant une cour*”⁵⁶. The exiles' politics also disinclined them from a protracted and technical legal battle over the proper use of executive power in the Jersey constitution. Bonnet-Duverdier argued that as republicans they should not recognize the courts' authority, while Hugo couched his position in patriotic terms: “*Disputer le terrain pied à pied, aller devant la cour, protester contre le gouverneur, recevoir ou donner des coups*” was an essentially English tactic, but “*il y a une manière supérieure à la manière anglaise, citoyens, c'est la manière française*”. As French republicans, they should stand on principle: “*Les Anglais sont dans la loi ; nous, Français, nous sommes dans le droit*”⁵⁷.

Some, like François-Victor Hugo, went so far as to frame this preference for dramatic exodus over legal resistance as a free choice, declaring that they had left Jersey not on Love's orders, but “*sur l'ordre du devoir*”⁵⁸. They could of course afford this choice, knowing that expulsion from Jersey did not mean returning to the continent. But it also bolstered the image of the exile as the heroic martyr, relentlessly persecuted but unbending in principle. Refugee writing before 1855 had already meditated on the theme of exile as a time of stoic contemplation and preparation for future struggle and the circle around Hugo experimented with photography, smuggling romantic pictures of the great man in exile awaiting his moment to return⁵⁹. The expulsions confirmed and built on this mythology. Hugo told his son Charles that the controversy was “*plus heureux pour la gloire du journal L'Homme*”, while he referred to this as “*mon troisième exil*”, having previously been banished from France in 1851 and Belgium in 1852. His daughter called the expelledes “*proscrits-proscrits*”⁶⁰. Similarly, when it relaunched in London, *L'Homme* announced that “*Expulsés de Jersey par la violence militaire, nous venons tenter une dernière épreuve dans la métropole de l'empire britannique, et demander à la constitution-mère la dignité de l'asile et la liberté de la pensée qu'on ne trouve plus dans ses colonies*”⁶¹. Exile memoirs often recounted the story of the expulsions in detail, emphasizing the injustice inflicted on the exiles at the suspected order of Bonaparte. Twenty years later, the biggest chapter by far in Charles Hugo's *Les Hommes de l'exil* was on the “*coup d'État à Jersey*”⁶². As the Russian exile Alexander Herzen quipped, “Hugo's move from Jersey to Guernsey, it appears, more than ever persuaded himself and his friends of his political significance, though it might, one would have thought, have convinced them only of the opposite”⁶³.

The limits and end of the expulsions

⁵⁴ Adèle Hugo, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 401.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 395.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 400-401.

⁵⁸ François-Victor Hugo, *La Normandie inconnue, op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁵⁹ Pyat's preface in Louis Avril, *Mémoires d'un enfant du peuple*, Geneva, Bonnant, 1852, p. 3; Louis Blanc quoted in *L'Homme*, 28 Dec. 1853, p. 3. For photography, see Auguste Vacquerie's album, *Les Proscrits*, n.d. and Sylvie Aprile's notice on the photograph « Victor Hugo dans le rocher des Proscrits »: <https://asileurope.huma-num.fr/ressources-icographiques/victor-hugo-dans-le-rocher-des-proscrits>.

⁶⁰ Adèle Hugo, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 370, 405, 433-434.

⁶¹ Charles Ribeyrolles, « Une nouvelle étape », *L'Homme*, 17 Nov. 1855, p. 1.

⁶² Charles Hugo, *Les hommes de l'exil*, Paris, Lemerre, 1875, ch. 14; François-Victor Hugo, *La Normandie inconnue, op. cit.*, p. 3-20; Victor Hugo, *Actes et paroles, Pendant l'exil*, vol. 2, Paris, Michel Lévy Frères, 1875, p. 14-15; Vacquerie, *Miettes*, p. 444-64.

⁶³ Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts*, trans. Constance Garnett, vol. 3, London, Chatto and Windus, 1968, p. 1057.

Yet this martyrology obscured the strikingly limited, contingent and ephemeral nature of the expulsions. In the first instance, it seems clear that the authorities did not wish to further circumscribe asylum in Britain or the Channel Islands. Love was satisfied that the most “dangerous” exiles were now gone and was worried enough about a potential backlash to the 1855 expulsions to preclude the prospect of proceeding further⁶⁴. Meanwhile, senior figures in the British government, like Foreign Secretary Lord Clarendon and the British ambassador to France Lord Cowley, were convinced that prosecution of *L’Homme* for libelling the queen or Bonaparte would run afoul of public opinion and they rebuffed French demands for further action against the refugees⁶⁵. This ensured that the expulsions would remain a singular and ad hoc response to the particular circumstances of 1855 and that Britain would remain the exiles’ surest asylum until liberalizing political change finally swept through the continent in the 1860s.

This left the rest of the British Isles open to the expellees. About twenty, including the Hugo and Bonnet-Duverdier families, the French exiles Cahaigine, Benjamin Colin, Théophile Guérin and Hennet de Kesler, the Hungarian Teleki and the Austrian army officer A.C. Wiesener, moved forty-three kilometres northwest, to Guernsey. They were largely welcomed by a population that considered Jersey’s loss to be its gain. The *Guernsey Star* thought the expulsions “an act of extreme severity” and Adèle Hugo commented on the “*Sympathie des Guernesiais pour les proscrits*”⁶⁶. Though Guernsey’s Lieutenant-Governor had the same powers of expulsion as Jersey’s, there seems to have been no discussion of their use⁶⁷. When the local French consul objected to the expellees’ arrival, the Home Office simply replied “we must wait to see how they conduct themselves”⁶⁸.

In fact, they conducted themselves much as they had in Jersey. The Hugo household, now located in the four-story Hauteville House overlooking St Peter Port, served as a social centre for the exiles who continued to commemorate revolutionary anniversaries and sent their political writings to be published in *L’Homme*, now relocated in London⁶⁹. The exiles’ smaller numbers made more formalized activity harder to maintain, and calls for stronger organization akin to what had existed in Jersey were unsuccessful⁷⁰. Although many of the exiles would leave after 1859, the Hugo family and Kesler remained in Guernsey until Napoleon III’s defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and the birth of a new republic in 1870⁷¹. Hugo mingled with local francophones and started regularly hosting free meals for the island’s poor⁷². He maintained a kind of political activism through these years, publishing manifestoes on John Brown’s revolt in America, Garibaldi’s “expedition of the thousand” in Italy, struggles for national self-determination in Poland, Mexico, Crete, Cuba and Ireland and the international peace movement⁷³. He also had the time to revise and complete *Les Misérables*, taking a research trip to the battlefield at Waterloo. His *Travailleurs de la mer* recognized his debt to his final asylum, featuring reminders of the island’s status as a refuge threaded through the plot, with the protagonist hinted to be the son of an “émigré”, a prominent character living in a home built

⁶⁴ Love to Waddington, 27 Oct. 1855, HO 45/6188; Love to Grey, 29 Jan. 1856, HO 45/6333.

⁶⁵ Lord Clarendon to Lord Cowley, 12 Nov. 1855, FO 519/172; Cowley to Clarendon, 14 Nov. 1855, FO 519/217.

⁶⁶ « Expulsion of thirty-six political exiles from Jersey », *Guernsey Star*, 30 Oct. 1855; Adèle Hugo, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 413-14.

⁶⁷ For a previous expulsion from Guernsey, later cited as precedent for Love, see HO 45/403.

⁶⁸ This exchange is in HO 45/6193.

⁶⁹ *L’Homme*, 8 March 1856, p. 3; Édouard Bonnet-Duverdier, « Le Gouvernement de science », *L’Homme*, 8 March 1856, p. 3-4; Benjamin Colin, « Plus de gouvernement », *L’Homme*, 19 April 1856, p. 2-3.

⁷⁰ Édouard Bonnet-Duverdier, Joseph Cahagine, Auguste Bachelet, « Organisation du parti », Guernsey, 1858.

⁷¹ Kesler died shortly before the war broke out. Victor Hugo, « Sur la tombe d’Hennet de Kesler », in *Actes et paroles*, vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 320-322.

⁷² Paul Stapfer, *Victor Hugo à Guernesey*, Paris, Société française d’imprimerie et de librairie, 1905.

⁷³ Victor Hugo, *Actes et paroles*, vol. 2, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

by Huguenots and action occurring along smuggling routes used for refugees departing St Malo. The novel's dedication was therefore "*au rocher d'hospitalité et de liberté*"⁷⁴.

Meanwhile, most of the other expellees settled in London where the presence of hundreds of fellow exiles offered extended networks of sympathetic compatriots. The "*proscrits-proscrits*" integrated into this community and maintained an even higher level of political activism than their counterparts in Guernsey. Pianciani threw himself into Italian political circles, wrote a major anticlerical polemic and became close with the celebrated Felice Orsini, who had recently escaped the prisons of the Papal States and would soon attempt to assassinate Napoleon III⁷⁵. The Polish expellees, led by Świętosławski, jointly founded the socialist Polish Revolutionary Commune with London-based figures like Ludwik Oborski⁷⁶. Several of the French now collaborated directly with Pyat's branch of the *Commune révolutionnaire*⁷⁷. As in Jersey, exile political culture in London was strongly internationalist. *L'Homme*, relaunched by Ribeyrolles shortly after his expulsion and now printed by his fellow expellee Martin Fulbert, remained internationalist in its writing staff, news coverage and political analysis until it finally folded in August 1856. Refugee-run shops like the *Librairie polonaise* at 39 Rupert St sold books, pamphlets, and newspapers from across the revolutionary diaspora, including *L'Homme* and Herzen's *Étoile polaire*, as did sympathetic British establishments like George Jacob Holyoake's "Fleet Street House"⁷⁸. Świętosławski re-established his *Imprimerie universelle* at 178-179 High Holborn and as in Jersey published material by a diverse cross-section of individuals and organizations⁷⁹. This included the quadrilingual newspaper, the *Bulletin de l'Association internationale*, an organ of the International Association. Founded as the International Committee in 1855, this group brought together the *Commune révolutionnaire*, the German Communistischer Arbeiter-Bildungsverein, the Polish Revolutionary Commune, and internationally minded Chartists led by Ernest Jones. Like most other refugee organizations, it commemorated key revolutionary dates, started branches outside of London and issued a barrage of propaganda. Although it suffered from schisms and ultimately collapsed in 1859, it provided an important forum for radical and internationalist politics with the goal, shared by the Jersey expellees both in and out of its ranks, of a "Universal Democratic and Social Republic"⁸⁰. Relocation to London, though undoubtedly more expensive and culturally dislocating than Guernsey, offered the expelled a degree of social and political continuity.

Many therefore remained in mainland Britain into the 1860s. In London, François Taféry continued operating his printing press in Islington, the Pole François Zychon worked as a bootseller and Dr Deville carried on his medical practice, helping to save the life of the son

⁷⁴ Victor Hugo, *Les Travailleurs de la mer*, 2 vols., Bruxelles, Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et Cie, 1866, vol. 1, p. V.

⁷⁵ Filippo Mazzonis, *Luigi Pianciani: Frammenti, ipotesi e documenti per una biografia politica*, Roma, Ateneo, 1992; Luigi Pianciani, *La Rome des papes. Son origine, ses phases successives, ses mœurs intimes, son gouvernement, son système administratif*, 3 vols., Bale et Londres, Librairie Schweighauser, John Chapman, 1859; Police reports 21 Jan. and 13 Dec. 1858, FO 519/187.

⁷⁶ Peter Brock, « The Polish Revolutionary Commune in London », *The Slavonic and East European Review*, XXXV, 1956, no. 84, p. 116-28.

⁷⁷ For example, « Une parole de l'exil » by Charles Ribeyrolles, Félix Pyat, Mathieu Roumilhac, Jean Baptiste Rougée, and Alfred Talandier, London, 1857.

⁷⁸ See *L'Homme* for the *Librairie polonaise*'s offerings. Many documents relative to Holyoake's relationship to the exiles are held in the G.J. Holyoake Papers, National Cooperative Archive, Manchester.

⁷⁹ Peter Brock, « Zeno Swietoslawski, a Polish forerunner of the *Narodniki* », *American Slavic and East European Review*, XIII, 1954, no. 4, p. 585-586.

⁸⁰ Fabrice Bensimon, « The IWMA and its precursors in London, c. 1830-1860 », in Fabrice Bensimon, Quentin Deluermoz, Jeanne Moisand (eds.), « *Arise Ye Wretched of the Earth* »: *The First International in a Global Perspective*, Leiden, Brill, 2018; Christine Lattek, *Revolutionary Refugees: German Socialism in Britain, 1840-1860*, London, Routledge, 2006, ch. 7; Arthur Lehning, *From Buonarroti to Bakunin: Studies in International Socialism*, Leiden, Brill, 1970 ch. 6.

of the feminist refugee Jeanne Deroin in 1865⁸¹. Elsewhere in Britain, Roumillac, by 1862 a French teacher, moved to Brighton, while Charles Chardenal returned to Glasgow, where he had lived before coming to Jersey shortly before the expulsions⁸². Ribeyrolles remained in London until moving to Brazil 1858, producing *Le Brésil pittoresque (1859-1861)*, a survey of that country's history and society illustrated by photographs published in French and Portuguese, before dying of yellow fever in Rio de Janeiro in 1860.

Meanwhile, asylum in Jersey did not end. Those not included in Love's expulsion orders stayed and remained active. There was a politicized funeral at Macpela for the journalist Philippe Faure as early as January 1856 and the exiles continued their regular calendar of revolutionary anniversary celebrations⁸³. Love monitored these events but there is little indication that he considered suppressing them⁸⁴. New refugees also continued to arrive after 1855, including the Danish republican Paul Harro-Harring and the German radical and associate of Marx and Engels Conrad Schramm, who fully participated in refugee political life⁸⁵. After Love's retirement in 1857, an exile press re-emerged, including Colfavru's weekly *La Ligue : organe de l'opinion publique et des réformes à Jersey* which ran in 1858-1860 and the socialist theorist Pierre Leroux's periodical *L'Espérance : philosophique, politique, littéraire* of 1858-1859. Though the exile population was diminished, it was not fully true that "Le pays d'asile est fermé".

One area where the *coup d'État* theory did not overstate itself, however, was its characterization of arbitrary executive power in Jersey. Yet the expulsions were a missed opportunity to revisit this aspect of the Jersey constitution, as many wanted to challenge Love's actions. Some moved in the States that no foreigner should be expelled without judicial oversight and the lawyer George Vickery rejected the validity of the 1635 order in council that Love had cited as his authority, writing in his pamphlet *Vérité ou mensonge : loi ou violence* that this had been superseded in 1674 when Charles II granted the island a new charter⁸⁶. But with the expellees gone, no legal challenges were launched and Jersey politics were soon absorbed with other issues, notably an ongoing controversy about wider legal and constitutional issues that resulted in an 1856 reform providing for fourteen directly elected deputies to be added to the States. The expulsions therefore stood.

This was illustrated in 1856 when the Italian Eduardo Biffi surreptitiously returned from Guernsey, hoping to reunite with his Jerseyan wife and children. He was arrested and re-banished by an irate Love, and over the next two years had many petitions asking for permission to return rebuffed on Love's recommendation by London and by Godfrey Mundy, who took over as Jersey's Lieutenant-Governor in 1857⁸⁷. But the situation changed as wider shifts in politics moved Europe beyond the post-1848 era of reaction. Programmes of liberalization in Russia, France and Prussia led to political amnesties in 1856, 1859 and 1861, respectively. The *Risorgimento's* creation of a United Kingdom of Italy and the establishment of an autonomous Hungarian government through the 1867 *Ausgleich* created regimes more amenable to the exiles. Though some spurned offers of amnesty from regimes they considered

⁸¹ Alfred Hamonet, *Annuaire commercial et industriel des Français en Angleterre*, London, Jeffs, 1862, p. 68; « Frank Zychon » in the 1861 UK census; Jeanne Deroin to Martin Nadaud, 26 March 1881, archives départementales de la Creuse, Guéret, fonds Martin Nadaud, 11J 6.

⁸² Alfred Hamonet, *Annuaire commercial...*, *op. cit.*, p. 35, 65. For Chardenal in Glasgow before the expulsions, see Chardenal to Nadaud, 9 June 1854, fonds Martin Nadaud, 11J 5.

⁸³ « Death of a French Proscrit », *The Reasoner*, 3 Feb. 1856, p. 37; *L'Homme*, 15 March 1856, p. 3-4.

⁸⁴ Love to Waddington, 1 Nov. 1856, « Governor's letter book of correspondence with the Home Office and the Jersey authorities », Jersey Archive, A/A1/9.

⁸⁵ « Anniversaire de 1848, à Jersey », *Bulletin de l'Association internationale*, 1 March 1858, p. 4.

⁸⁶ Philip Stevens, *Victor Hugo in Jersey*, *op. cit.*, p. 109; Pamphlet forwarded in Love to Grey, 29 Jan. 1856, HO 45/6333.

⁸⁷ Biffi's petitions and official replies to and correspondence about them are in HO 45/6406.

criminal⁸⁸, others now returned. Cahaigne returned to France from Guernsey in 1859. Pianciani participated in Giuseppe Garibaldi's 1860 campaigns in southern Italy, was elected to the new Italian Chamber of Deputies in 1865 and twice served as mayor of Rome in the 1870s and 1880s. Teleki also fought with Garibaldi before returning to Hungary in 1867 and being elected to the new Diet⁸⁹.

Some assumed that the French amnesty also meant the end of the expulsions. In September 1855, Colin quietly returned and was recognized and arrested by a local Centenier, or police officer. But since he had broken no specific law and, unlike Biffi in 1856, his arrest had not been ordered by the Lieutenant-Governor, Colin was released⁹⁰. With the expulsions' continuing existence therefore in doubt, Colin wrote to Mundy to protest his treatment and Harney, who had come to Jersey in 1855 to support the expellees and then remained, wrote an editorial in his *Jersey Independent* on "The Amnesty in Jersey"⁹¹. Alongside this rhetorical reversal of his earlier articles on "The Jersey *coup d'État*", Harney claimed that a major justification for the expulsions, a concern for maintaining cross-Channel relations, had ended with the completion of the Crimean War in 1856. More importantly, was "Jersey to be less free" than France in upholding prohibitions that even Napoleon III had dropped? Mundy forwarded this to London and argued that the expulsions should be rescinded, echoing Harney that their principal justification of maintaining "friendly relations [...] during the Eastern War" no longer applied. Instead, "an act of mercy would have a good effect" and he proposed allowing the exiles to "return to, and sojourn in this island"⁹². Meanwhile, Jersey's law officers advised that the precedent of Biffi's case implied that local law enforcement could not apprehend and expel foreign nationals without explicit permission from the Lieutenant-Governor, meaning that Mundy would have to consciously and continuously renew the expulsions to keep them in effect⁹³. He declined and the expulsions lapsed. Ironically, it was the very prerogative power used to expel the refugees that, almost exactly four years later, allowed their return.

The returning expellees soon included not only Colin, but Albert Barbieux, Bonnet-Duverdier, Bouillard, Świętosławski and the long-frustrated Biffi⁹⁴. Some of these exiles and those that were never expelled stayed in Jersey for the rest of their lives. Burials at Macpela, later restored by French republican governments in the 1900s, 1950s and 1980s, continued through to Joseph Leroux's death in 1894⁹⁵. Świętosławski, who was survived by numerous Jersey-born children and grandchildren, was buried in St Helier's main cemetery at Green Street in 1875, in a grave refurbished by the Communist government of Poland in the 1950s⁹⁶.

The return to Jersey most emblematic of the expulsions' ephemerality was probably Hugo's visit in 1860. That year, Harney invited him to speak at a meeting in St Helier in support of Garibaldi's expedition to Italy. Hugo replied that he would return only if there was a

⁸⁸ « Déclaration des Polonais réunis à Londres le 8 juin 1856 », *L'Homme*, 14 June 1856, p. 1-2; Victor Hugo, « L'amnistie », 18 août 1859, in *Actes et paroles*, vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

⁸⁹ Thanks to Cedric Bail at Hauteville House, St Peter Port, Guernsey for providing information on Cahaigne and Teleki. For Pianciani, see Massimo Furioli (ed.), *Luigi Pianciani e democrazia moderna*, Pisa, Fabrizio Serra, 2008.

⁹⁰ Law officers' report, 2 November 1859, HO 45/6333.

⁹¹ Benjamin Colin to Godfrey Mundy, 1 October 1859, HO 45/6333; « The "Amnesty" in Jersey », *Jersey Independent*, 30 Sept. 1859, p. 2.

⁹² Mundy to Waddington, 13 Oct. 1859, HO 45/6333.

⁹³ Law officers' report, 2 Nov. 1859, HO/6333.

⁹⁴ « The "Amnesty" in Jersey », *Jersey Independent*, 30 Sept. 1859, p. 2; Alfred Hamonet, *Annuaire commercial...*, *op. cit.*, p. 31-32, 36, 48; Peter Brock, « Zeno Swietoslawski... », *art. cit.*, p. 586.

⁹⁵ A burial book for the cemetery is on open stacks at the Jersey Archive.

⁹⁶ The Société jersiaise in St Helier holds a file on the extended Świętosławski family.

significant petition asking him to do so “pour effacer le fameux *indignation-meeting*⁹⁷”. Harney forwarded one with 427 signatures and Hugo declared “*J’oublie absolument et j’efface autant qu’il est en moi le malentendu de 1855*”⁹⁸. On 18 June, Hugo addressed 3,000 people at the Queen’s Assembly Rooms, a larger crowd than the 1855 indignation meeting in the same location. The event raised £120 and at a banquet that evening Hugo raised a toast to Jersey, professing his love for the island. He concluded, in stark contrast to the exiles’ claims in 1855 that “*Le pays d’asile est fermé*” and “*Jersey n’existe plus*”, by praising Jersey for having the “*deux choses qui font les peuples grands et charmants [...] la liberté et l’hospitalité*”⁹⁹. That hospitality would be enjoyed by later generations, from the Communards of 1871 and religious orders that of the French Third Republic to the Belgian refugees that fled the German onslaught of 1914¹⁰⁰.

Yet despite their quick overturning, the Jersey expulsions form a rich chapter in the history of nineteenth-century exile. The theory of the “*coup d’État à Jersey*” reaffirmed the exiles’ own republican and anti-Bonapartist convictions while giving them a stage to play out the romantic theatre of political martyrdom. For their British allies, the expulsions provided substantial fodder for a particular form of radical patriotism. In relocating dozens of refugees, they also reconfigured the geography of exile. A visible exile community emerged on Guernsey, which provided the seat and even setting for one of Victor Hugo’s most prolific periods and several of his best-known works. In London, the Jersey expellees were able to connect into a set of well-established refugee communities. Several of them, perhaps most notably Świętosławski, helped to reinforce the internationalist politics of that milieu, while others took up new professions or ventured further afield. Meanwhile, the exile population on Jersey remained and began to recover. Finally, the determination and attempts of some of the expellees to return to Jersey and the burden that maintaining the banishments placed on the island’s increasingly unenthusiastic authorities all led to their rescinding and paradoxically helped to ensure that this small “*pays d’asile*” would remain open into the twentieth century.

⁹⁷ Victor Hugo to George Julian Harney, 1 June 1860, in Frank Gees Black, Renee Métivier Black (eds.), *The Harney Papers*, Assen, Van Gorcum, 1969, p. 125.

⁹⁸ Hugo to Harney, 1 June 1860, *Harney Papers*, p. 125.

⁹⁹ Philip Stevens, *Victor Hugo in Jersey*, *op. cit.*, p. 112; Victor Hugo, « Rentrée en Jersey », 18 June 1860, in *Actes et paroles*, vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 147-157.

¹⁰⁰ For French religious orders in Jersey, see the Archives nationales, Pierrefitte, F/7/12327. Records of the Belgians are in the Jersey Archive, « Papers relating to register of Belgian refugees in Jersey », A/E/11/14 and « Lists of passes to English ports delivered to aliens during the First World War with personal details, 1914-1915 », D/S/L1/1.