

(Un-)Settling Exile

*Imagining Outposts of the French Emigration
across the Globe*

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In 1806, François René de Chateaubriand, whom the French Revolution had turned into one of the most-traveled Frenchmen of his time, had an unsettling encounter in Palestine. He was presented to Frère Clément, a former Capuchin from Mayenne who lived in a monastery next to the Church of the Nativity. The monk, refusing to adhere to the 1790 civil constitution of the clergy, had been deported to Spain and from there was sent by his order as a missionary to the Holy Land. There, he hoped to “obtain by the merit of my Savior’s crib the power to die here without ... thinking of a country where I am long forgotten.”¹

The two émigrés, who had known the world from Niagara Falls to Jerusalem, were not the most extreme cases of mobility induced by the French Revolution. Farther east, we find Antoine de L’Étang, former master of the stables at Versailles. After his emigration, he took up the same function with the British East India Company at Fort William in Calcutta before moving into the service of the Saadat Ali Khan II in 1809, overseeing the wazir’s stud at Lucknow.² As for Gabriel Louis Marie Huon de Kerilleau, former secretary to Louis XVI and, as rumor had it, illegitimate son of Louis XV, he first moved to England, where he enlisted as a private in the army, then joined the

¹ François René de Chateaubriand, “Voyage pittoresque et historique de l’Espagne; par M. de Laborde, *Mercure de France*, 4 juillet 1807,” in *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem et de Jérusalem à Paris* (Paris, 2011), 863–78, 871. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

² Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, *Engaging Scoundrels: True Tales of Old Lucknow* (New Delhi, 2000), 12–13.

New South Wales Corps, arriving in Australia in 1794 and establishing himself as a landowner.³

These cases document the existence of a French diaspora that faced revolutionary exclusion and reached far beyond Europe. Decisions about leaving France in critical moments of the revolution were highly dynamic, and the choice of a place of exile was often a pragmatic if not contingent matter. Yet, over time, the original idea of a temporary migration aiming at the earliest possible return to France changed. With the military successes and political setbacks of the French Republic, the temporal horizons of exile expanded, and its geographical scope broadened accordingly.

The growing global French émigré presence in the 1790s can be attributed to several factors. First, the advances of the Revolutionary Army led many European powers to tighten their accommodation policies, forcing tens of thousands of émigrés to leave territories close to the French border, such as the Habsburg Netherlands, northern Italy, and southern Germany.⁴ Many of these émigrés moved to Britain, which, through its opposition to the French Republic, became the “last boulevard of Old Europe” for many French exiles by the later 1790s.⁵ Second, numerous émigrés chose to go to the United States, doing so out of political sympathies, biographical continuities, or commercial interests.⁶ The young American republic hosted an important community of French adherents to the constitution of 1791. Those émigrés who had already taken part in the War of Independence were even Atlantic migrants in two senses. Finally, like the French Revolution, French emigration spanned the entire French colonial empire. Émigrés with colonial possessions who wanted to leave Europe sought to save their fortunes in the Caribbean. Likewise, colonial planters escaping from the Haitian Revolution and

³ Anny P. L. Stuer, *The French in Australia* (Canberra, 1982), 44; G. P. Walsh, “Gabriel Louis Marie Huon de Kerilleau (1769–1828),” in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/huon-de-kerilleau-gabriel-louis-marie-2215/text2877>.

⁴ Friedemann Pestel and Matthias Winkler, “Provisorische Integration und Kulturtransfer: Französische Revolutionsemigranten im Heiligen Römischen Reich deutscher Nation,” *Francia* 43 (2016): 137–60.

⁵ *Mercure Britannique*, 1798, Préface, VIII; Kirsty Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution: Émigrés in London, 1789–1802* (Basingstoke, 1999); Juliette Reboul, *French Emigration to Great Britain in Response to the French Revolution* (Basingstoke, 2017).

⁶ Doina Pasca Harsanyi, *Lessons from America: Liberal French Nobles in Exile, 1793–1798* (University Park, PA, 2010); François Furstenberg, *When the United States Spoke French: Five Refugees Who Shaped a Nation* (New York, 2014).

unrest on the Lesser Antilles resettled within the Caribbean or moved toward the North American continent.⁷

Over time, however, with the prospect of a foreseeable return to France vanishing, these multidirectional migrants became a subject of debate among the émigré communities and their host societies. On the one hand, in the words of Pierre Victor Malouet, an important intermediary between continental émigrés, colonial refugee planters in London, and the British government, the exiles – “living from foreign charities being persecuted from place to place” – represented a humanitarian challenge for their hosts.⁸ On the other hand, prolonged exile became a political risk, if not a public safety one. François Dominique de Reynaud de Montlosier, a close political ally of Malouet, warned the Habsburg government about the danger of abandoning “this multitude of active and enterprising people without home and property prowling eternally around their country, always disposed to pour their despair, energy, and talents into domestic troubles.”⁹

This chapter explores a central émigré response to this humanitarian and security challenge: the establishment of global settlement projects reaching from North America and the Caribbean to North Africa, the Russian Empire, and Australia. Either planned as organized schemes or merely imagined in smaller émigré circles, these settlements aimed to provide large groups of destitute exiles with a material livelihood and, at the same time, a politically autonomous and socially demarcated existence that would allow them to preserve their habits and identities. Even when a return to France seemed impossible, a precarious exile did not include assimilation into the host societies, since émigrés, in most cases, were not immigrants. Although these settlement projects spanned the globe, the specifics of their geographical and political conditions, to say nothing of the native inhabitants of the various regions, were regarded as largely insignificant, since the settlements served the principal purpose of solving the émigré problem.

⁷ Carl A. Brasseaux and Glenn R. Conrad, eds., *The Road to Louisiana: The Saint-Domingue Refugees, 1792–1809* (Lafayette, LA, 1992); Nathalie Dessens, *From Saint-Domingue to New Orleans: Migration and Influences* (Gainesville, FL, 2007), and her chapter in this volume; Ashli White, *Encountering Revolution: Haiti and the Making of the Early Republic* (Baltimore, MD, 2010).

⁸ Balliol College, Oxford (hereafter, BCO), Mallet Family Papers (MP), no. 11, Pierre Victor Malouet to Jacques Mallet du Pan, January 18, 1798.

⁹ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Frankreich Varia 52, François Dominique de Reynaud de Montlosier to Johann Amadeus Franz de Paula von Thugut, August 17, 1795.

Émigré settlements were interchangeable across space. They need to be understood, first of all, as spatial imaginaries that responded to the revolution and the impossibility of return. Therefore, I argue that planning global émigré outposts represented both a discursive reality and a communicative strategy. The very act of speculating about going to North America or Crimea helped the émigrés to strengthen cohesion among their communities, maintain a shared sense of belonging, and mobilize military and humanitarian support in host countries. The relocation of tens of thousands of people made for a powerful mental image that gave the émigrés a particular relevance in European politics, colonial empires, and beyond as they assimilated political exile to settler colonialism, creating a form of imperial engineering and political experimentation.¹⁰

The broad geographical perspective on French emigration taken in this chapter connects with the global turn in scholarship on the French Revolution. In the context of the broader Age of Revolutions, this more encompassing view places the revolutionary Atlantic at center stage, shifting the focus from Western Europe to the Caribbean.¹¹ As has become increasingly clear, the Age of Revolutions was not confined to the Atlantic world, and the revolutionary wars that were understood as global warfare not only encompassed the colonial empires but also mobilized regimes in the Islamic world.¹²

Given the ongoing historiographical reinterpretation of the Age of Revolutions, it is remarkable that the 150,000 or so émigrés who left revolutionary France after 1789 have received so little attention to date. In

¹⁰ Lorenzo Veracini, "Introduction: Settler Colonialism as a Distinct Mode of Domination," in Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism* (London, 2017), 1–8; Christoph Marx, "Settler Colonialism," *European History Online*, www.ieg-ego.eu/marxch-2015-en.

¹¹ See, for example, Lynn Hunt, "The French Revolution in Global Context," in David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds., *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c.1760–1840* (Basingstoke and New York, 2010), 20–36; Paul Cheney, Alan Forrest, Lynn Hunt, Matthias Middell, and Karine Rance, "La Révolution française à l'heure du global turn," *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 374 (2013): 157–84; Suzanne Desan, Lynn Hunt, and William M. Nelson, eds., *The French Revolution in Global Perspective* (Ithaca, NY, 2013); Matthias Middell and Megan Maruschke, eds., *The French Revolution as a Moment of Respatialization* (Berlin, 2019).

¹² Stig Förster, "The First World War: Global Dimensions of Warfare in the Age of Revolutions, 1775–1815," in Roger Chickering and Stig Förster, eds., *War in an Age of Revolution, 1775–1815* (Cambridge and New York, 2010), 101–15; Flavio Eichmann, *Krieg und Revolution in der Karibik: Die Kleinen Antillen, 1789–1815* (Berlin, 2019); Pascal Farges, *French Revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire: Political Culture, Diplomacy, and the Limits of Universal Revolution 1792–1798* (Oxford, 2017); Ian Coller, *Muslims and Citizens: Islam, Politics, and the French Revolution* (New Haven, CT, 2020).

the 1790s, as R. Darrell Meadows has emphasized, thousands of French Creoles, émigrés, and citizens were constantly on the move between the Caribbean, France, and the American continent, facing revolutionary upheaval both in the colonies and the metropole.¹³ On the trajectories of their travels, French émigrés interacted with exiles from other revolutions, including Caribbean refugees, American Loyalists, Knights of Malta, and exiles from Geneva. For these reasons, recent scholarship has started to recast the Age of Revolutions as an “age of emigrations” or “age of refugees,” in which several hundred thousand political migrants – with the French émigrés being the largest group – interacted in the Atlantic space but also far beyond.¹⁴ They competed for resources, collaborated to increase their political significance, and pondered their options for resettlement.

Building on these connections within the age of emigrations, this chapter introduces four areas where extra-European émigré settlement projects were planned by political exiles and sparked the imagination of their adversaries. The first section reconsiders émigré colonies in the United States, where French exiles were to serve as frontier agents in Franco-American speculative ventures. Through the lens of emigration, I enlarge the traditional scope of American frontier history by considering the revolutionary situation in France. I show how the settlements’ overall failure resulted from the settlers’ highly idealized view of America, their socially conservative organization, and the limited timespan of their exile.

The second section focuses on the connection between London as the primary European destination for French émigrés and revolutionary Saint-Domingue. I discuss schemes designed to bring the émigrés to the Caribbean to help suppress the slave insurrections and to repel the Revolutionary Army that would also absorb other exiles. Furthermore, I show how the military failure of the British Army in the Caribbean shifted migratory dynamics toward Trinidad and Canada. The third section looks beyond the Atlantic world toward settlement projects that

¹³ R. Darrell Meadows, “Engineering Exile: Social Networks and the French Atlantic Community, 1789–1809,” *French Historical Studies* 23 (2000): 67–102.

¹⁴ Maya Jasanoff, “Revolutionary Exiles: The American Loyalist and French Émigré Diasporas,” in Armitage and Subrahmanyam, eds., *Age of Revolutions*, 37–58; Jan C. Jansen, “Flucht und Exil im Zeitalter der Revolutionen: Perspektiven einer atlantischen Flüchtlingsgeschichte (1770er–1820er Jahre),” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 44 (2018): 495–525; Friedemann Pestel, “The Age of Emigrations: French Émigrés and Global Entanglements of Political Exile,” in Laure Philip and Juliette Reboul, eds., *French Emigrants in Revolutionised Europe: Connected Histories and Memories* (Basingstoke, 2019), 205–31.

provided further options in response to expulsion and political or military setbacks. In the Southern Hemisphere, for example, relocation could be imagined as deportation by French republicans who sought to ban the émigrés from their political and geographical horizon. This area also saw probable migratory links between political exile and the coerced migration of convicts. The fourth section discusses how ideas about relocating the émigrés to extra-European areas shifted when the possibilities for a return to France grew under Napoléon Bonaparte, particularly in relation to the French colonization of North Africa. I argue here that the global imaginaries of exile turned into a political challenge for France's post-revolutionary regimes. In the conclusion, I highlight the émigrés' relevance for global approaches to the French Revolution and offer new perspectives on the global dimensions of émigré settlement and the associated impact on early nineteenth-century French politics.

COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE AND SOCIAL RESTORATION: ÉMIGRÉ SETTLEMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

The three émigré settlements on the US frontier served émigré self-identification but were also tied up in local backcountry conflicts and land speculation.¹⁵ In different ways, the settlements in Gallipolis (Ohio), Azilum (Pennsylvania), and Castorland (New York) were commercial enterprises that offered the promise of social organization beyond revolutionary exclusion. Émigré visions of America were largely informed by Enlightenment readings. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Marquis de Condorcet, and the physiocrats' tracts, particularly Michel Guillaume St. Jean de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782), offered readers seemingly uncorrupted rural societies in idealized views that appealed to opponents of the revolution.¹⁶ From Paris, prospective émigrés imagined the American frontier as an immediately available and accessible space between revolutionary France and the United States. This dreamy

¹⁵ François Furstenberg, "The Significance of the Trans-Appalachian Frontier in Atlantic History," *American Historical Review* 113 (2008): 647–77; Michael A. Blaakman, *Speculation Nation: Land Mania in the Revolutionary American Republic* (Philadelphia, PA, 2023).

¹⁶ Suzanne Desan, "Transatlantic Spaces of Revolution: The French Revolution, Scioto mania and American Lands," *Journal of Early Modern History* 12 (2008): 467–505, 472–75; Catherine T. C. Spaeth, "America in the French Imagination: The French Settlers of Asylum, Pennsylvania, and Their Perceptions of 1790s America," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 38 (2008): 247–74, 255; Janet L. Polasky, *Revolutions Without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World* (New Haven, CT, 2015), 56–57.

perspective led them to disregard important practical considerations, such as local environmental and climatic conditions, property rights vis-à-vis American speculators and Indigenous populations, and US politics. In fact, the Ohio and Scioto region, in the late 1780s and early 1790s, was the site of strong tensions and violent confrontations between Native Americans, land companies, and the American military.¹⁷ French aristocrats, however, imagined North America as an agrarian utopia that would allow them to regain or preserve their property, social status, lifestyle, and political convictions. American émigré settler colonies differed from other emigration projects in that information about them was disseminated early on, already in the very first months of the revolution. Therefore, as they materialized, they were able to attract émigrés who traveled directly from France to the United States. Later projects, in contrast, were usually set up from exile and aimed to recruit émigrés who were already living outside of France.

The Gallipolis project arose when two agents of the Scioto Land Company arrived in Paris in 1788. They acted on behalf of the Ohio Company, which had been granted preemptive rights to large areas in the Scioto region in southeastern Ohio by the American Congress. *Sciotomanie* caught Paris in full revolutionary effervescence. Quickly, the company adapted its prospectus, which had originally promised a new life “under a well-established and free government” and instead appealed to the “large number of people who have lost their status due to the present revolutions.”¹⁸ By February 1790, some 100,000 acres of land had been sold. Though *Sciotomanie* caught on among all classes of society, a group of troubled aristocrats usurped the project, as it promised compensation for the rupture of the traditional social order brought about by the French Revolution.¹⁹

The two leaders of the Paris “Sciotomaniacs” were Jean Jacques Duval d’Eprémessnil, counsellor at the Paris Parliament and son of the former French governor of Madras, and Claude François Adrien de Lezay-Marnésia, a proponent of civilizational regeneration in America.

¹⁷ Jocelyne Moreau-Zanelli, *Gallipolis: Histoire d’un mirage américain au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 2000), 357–66.

¹⁸ Desan, “Transatlantic Spaces,” 479; Moreau-Zanelli, *Gallipolis*; Véronique Church-Duplessis, “Aristocrats into Modernity: French Émigrés and the Refashioning of Noble Identities,” PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2016, 40–64; Benjamin Hoffmann, “Introduction,” in Claude-François de Lezay-Marnésia, *Letters Written from the Banks of the Ohio*, trans. Alan J. Singerman (University Park, PA, 2017), 1–41.

¹⁹ Moreau-Zanelli, *Gallipolis*, 146–55.

Together, they assembled the largest shareholders in the Société des Vingt-Quatre, which put forth an imagined vision of an American model-world for French aristocrats.²⁰ What later became Gallipolis was first planned as Newpatrie – a hierarchical settlement with a church, hospital, French schools and a university, printing press, and administrative as well as judicial institutions.²¹ Artisans and the laborers needed for farm work were assigned to live in a segregated establishment, despite having come to the settlement in the hope of liberty and tax reduction. The agrarian enterprise was to remain entirely French; there was no mention of integration into American society.

The socially conservative character of the Scioto project quickly sparked polemics among opponents of aristocracy. Imagining how the disempowered elites would create a faux ancien régime in Ohio – complete with heraldry, castles, *gabelle* (tax on salt), and *lettres de cachet* (orders of imprisonment) – became a popular subject for satire. Camille Desmoulins depicted an aristocratic micro-society competing for the biggest dovecote or practicing *jus primae noctis* among its subjects.²² Like “Coblentz,” the ill-reputed gathering place of the Royalist and military emigration near the 1791/92 Franco–German border, from where rumors circulated about political and moral debauchery, Scioto served as symbol for anti-aristocratic critique.

The approximately 500 settlers who finally set out for Gallipolis were, however, mostly commoners. Many of them left the settler track on the East Coast, none of the castles of Newpatrie were ever built, and Duval d’Eprémèsnil was ultimately guillotined. The conditions they encountered in the purchased territory proved disastrous. The settlers unwrapped their marquetry furniture and silver chandeliers in rudimentary wooden cabins. The native populations refused to give up their land. Violence and illnesses took their toll on the arrivals; and French wigmakers, jewelers, and wood turners, who had suffered back home from the destitution imposed by their noble employers, proved inept at land clearing.²³ Around 1800, with the number of émigrés decreasing, American settlers began to take over Gallipolis.

²⁰ Desan, “Transatlantic Spaces,” 482. Though the actual criterion of distinction was property ownership and not noble birth, this would hardly have made a difference in America, given the social rank of the major shareholders. Hoffmann, “Introduction,” 15.

²¹ Desan, “Transatlantic Spaces,” 481; Moreau-Zanelli, *Gallipolis*, 198–99.

²² Moreau-Zanelli, *Gallipolis*, 217–34; Desan, “Transatlantic Spaces,” 486–93; *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, March 8, 1790.

²³ Moreau-Zanelli, *Gallipolis*, 346–54.

Azilum, the second émigré outpost, was situated on the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania and courted the thousands of émigrés from metropolitan France and Saint-Domingue who had taken refuge in Philadelphia. The two initiators were, once again, high-ranking politicians: Antoine Omer Talon had been chief justice of the criminal court in Paris, and, like his collaborator, Louis Marie de Noailles, a member of the Constituent Assembly. Both were constitutional monarchists who fled to America after the downfall of the French monarchy in 1792. That being the case, they were able to supervise the building activities on the ground. Moreover, Noailles could rely on his American connections as a veteran of the American War of Independence.²⁴

With all classes of settlers residing in one community, Azilum was more inclusive than the original Scioto project, though the elite members of this second settlement chose new arrivals and generally preferred those who were of or close to their own rank. As the name suggested, Azilum was again designed as an exclusively French enterprise; contact with Americans was to be kept to a minimum.²⁵ In its structure, Azilum reflected the social background, identity, and habits of its inhabitants as well as the political situation in France. Archaeological excavations have documented the inhabitants' drive for refinement and their quest for an aristocratic lifestyle, as expressed through architecture, furniture, and clothing, as far as this was possible under frontier conditions.²⁶ In particular, the construction of Georgian-style houses was out of keeping with the conventions of American settlements in the vicinity. As an ideal neoclassicist émigré town, Azilum had a multistory *Grande Maison* in its center. Symbolically assuming the place of a palace, it was primarily used for social gatherings of aristocratic émigrés who refused to deviate from their received ideas about fashion and sociability. The building may also have had a political function in this colony of monarchists without a monarch. Rumors circulated that Azilum would serve as a refuge for Marie Antoinette or later the young Louis XVII, should they manage to escape from prison.²⁷

Unsurprisingly, the living conditions of the 150 to 200 inhabitants were again unfavorable, though the colony fared slightly better than other French settler projects. Utopian notions of an agrarian community

²⁴ Spaeth, "America," 248, 253.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 264.

²⁶ Rob Mann and Diana D. Loren, "Keeping Up Appearances: Dress, Architecture, Furniture, and Status at French Azilum," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 5 (2001): 281–307.

²⁷ Spaeth, "America," 260–61.

clashed with the necessities of hard farm work. The founding of Azilum was closely linked to the wave of emigration triggered by the downfall of the monarchy and the beginning of the Reign of Terror, and the colony came to an end around 1800 when those émigrés returned to France.²⁸

The third project, Castorland in northwest New York, was the least developed yet most inclusive endeavor, politically and socially speaking.²⁹ In 1793, after the execution of Louis XVI, the Compagnie de New York, another Franco–American speculative venture, dispatched two French commissaries to America. Simon Desjardins and Pierre Pharoux were architects and engineers who considered themselves émigrés in search of “tranquility and true liberty.”³⁰ Convinced that they would be joined by thousands of like-minded compatriots, alongside planters fleeing from Saint-Domingue, they started clearing land at the American–Canadian border. Unfortunately, in the 1790s, Castorland’s workers were wiped out by yellow fever, and the settlement never hosted more than twenty families.³¹ New arrivals often came with unrealistic expectations: “They saw Castorland as a Normandy, or the environs of Paris, and they thought that they only needed to come and settle.”³² The settlement lingered on into the nineteenth century, when a more systematic colonization from France and other countries finally took place.

On the material level, all three settlements suffered from their speculative nature and the problems resulting therefrom: they failed to secure shareholders’ property rights, they failed to attract an adequate number of settlers, those who did come were unprepared for an agrarian life in the United States that differed dramatically from aristocratic landownership in France, and the duration of their exile proved too brief. Although the idea presented itself, no serious attempt was made to develop these settlements into the nucleus of an émigré state that would later join the United States.³³

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 266.

²⁹ Simon Desjardins and Pierre Pharoux, *Castorland Journal: An Account of the Exploration and Settlement of New York State by French Émigrés in the Years 1793 to 1797*, transl. John A. Gallucci (Ithaca, NY, 2010); John A. Gallucci, “From Crèvecoeur to Castorland: Translating the French-American Alliance in the Late Federalist Era,” *European Journal of American Studies* 6 (2011), <http://journals.openedition.org/ejas/8920>; Christophe Le Fahler, “Castorland, une colonisation française dans l’État de New York, 1790–1860,” in Soazig Villerbu, ed., *La France et les Amériques entre révolutions et nations 1776–1871* (Rennes, 2021), 133–45.

³⁰ Desjardins and Pharoux, *Castorland Journal*, 68.

³¹ Moreau-Zanelli, *Gallipolis*, 416.

³² Desjardins and Pharoux, *Castorland Journal*, 288.

³³ Laurence J. Kenny, “The Gallipolis Colony,” *Catholic Historical Review* 4 (1919): 415–51.

Despite failing economically, the borderland settlements succeeded in one important respect: once they were placed on the émigrés' mental map, they provided an alternative to revolutionary expropriation, thereby strengthening aristocratic social identity and legitimizing nobility, even if many prospective settlers ultimately stayed in France or migrated within Europe.

ÉMIGRÉ COLONIALISM IN SAINT-DOMINGUE AND CANADA

One group of exiles the American settlements hoped to attract were highly mobile Creole or absentee planters from Saint-Domingue who had lost their possessions both in the Caribbean and in France. Several hundred of these "dual" émigrés gathered in London, which had developed into the leading forum for lobbyism among émigrés with strong links to the continental French diaspora.³⁴ As the center of the British Empire, London also provided the basis for imperial émigré projects that were a direct consequence of the Haitian Revolution.

In the mid-1790s, under growing military constraints, London émigré planters and the British government discussed émigré settlements as a military strategy for supporting the British intervention in Saint-Domingue and as a solution to the risk of a definitive loss of colonial possessions. Convinced that the slave insurrections could be suppressed and the intervention of French revolutionary troops pushed back, the exiled planters made important concessions to their British hosts as they offered the economic power of the world's most productive sugar colony. The fact that they had mortgaged their colonial possessions to London commercial houses increased the pressure on British authorities to act on their behalf.³⁵ Moreover, the Caribbean planters in London interpreted the confusing situation of competing interests in the colonies as a power vacuum, and this pushed them to mandate first Guadeloupe and Martinique, and then Saint-Domingue, under British authority.³⁶

³⁴ David Geggus, *Slavery, War and Revolution: The British Occupation of Saint Domingue, 1793–1798* (Oxford, 1982); Friedemann Pestel, *Kosmopoliten wider Willen: Die "mon-archiens" als Revolutionsemigranten* (Berlin, 2015), 255–98.

³⁵ Carl L. Lokke, "London Merchant Interest in the St. Domingue Plantations of the Émigrés 1793," *American Historical Review* 43 (1938): 795–802; Carl L. Lokke, "New Light on London Merchant Interest in Saint Domingue," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 22 (1942): 670–76.

³⁶ Charles Frostin, "L'intervention britannique à Saint-Domingue en 1793," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 50 (1962): 293–365; Geggus, *Slavery, War and Revolution*, 46–48; Pestel, *Kosmopoliten*, 265–69; Eichmann, *Krieg und Revolution*, 87–96.

These were unprecedented measures that affronted the republican French authorities as well as the Bourbon monarchy in exile, the Spanish interventionists, and the rival factions of colonial planters. The end goal of this secession remained deliberately opaque; so long as war in the Atlantic persisted, the Saint-Domingue planters deliberated a return to France as well as an accession to the British Empire, wide-reaching domestic autonomy, free trade, or even independence from the colonial powers – albeit in a manner different from the slaves’ radical self-emancipation, which ultimately led to Haitian independence. The plantation economy and slave labor remained the socioeconomic pillars of the planters’ secessionist project. From the mid-1790s, the danger of a British retreat from Saint-Domingue due to the steep military and financial costs of the intervention, together with the crumbling First Coalition against the French Republic, put the London émigrés under pressure.³⁷ Alternative options to dwindling British support had to be considered, including extra-European solutions to the émigré question. In this situation, Malouet, the representative of the Saint-Domingue planters to the British government, argued that the fate of the colony and the planters had wide-ranging economic consequences for European trade and industry far beyond colonial powers.³⁸ Given the entangled distribution chains of colonial goods, which extended to Swedish copper mining and the textile industry in Silesia, the colonies represented a “factory of subsistence and work for the European society” and therefore a “co-property of all peoples.”³⁹

A new military intervention in Saint-Domingue in the mid-1790s provided a new opportunity for émigré troops in the service of the coalition. At the brink of being dismissed or involved in the disastrous outcome of the Quiberon Expedition, an attempt by French émigré royalists to land at the Breton coast in support of the Vendée revolt, troops were presented with an additional option: a move to the Caribbean. “Such of the Emigrants as will not serve on the Continent from the fear of being assassinated, if taken prisoners, will cheerfully enter to serve in St Domingo,” Malouet wrote to the British secretary of war.⁴⁰ Sending émigrés from Europe to Saint-Domingue would support British forces,

³⁷ David Geggus, “The Cost of Pitt’s Caribbean Campaigns, 1793–1798,” *Historical Journal* 26 (1983), 699–706.

³⁸ Pestel, *Kosmopoliten*, 261–65.

³⁹ *Journal de France et d’Angleterre*, February 10, 1797.

⁴⁰ The National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA), WO 1/60, 416–17, Malouet to Henry Dundas, July 18, 1794.

as well as metropolitan and colonial émigrés, and boost the European industries that depended on Caribbean commodities.

This double humanitarian and economic emergency provided the background for a plan that Malouet, together with his fellow émigré Marquis de Bouillé, proposed to the British government.⁴¹ Bouillé, a former general, intended to raise a corps of 20,000 émigrés, mainly Quiberon survivors and members of the Prince de Condé's émigré corps. They were to support the British troops stationed in Saint-Domingue, in the western part of Hispaniola, against the French Republican Army and the slave insurrectionists.⁴² Moreover, after Spain concluded a peace between the French Republic and Spanish Santo Domingo, which occupied the eastern part of Hispaniola and passed under French authority in 1795, these émigré troops could also be used to take possession of the entire island.

Given the unfavorable situation in Europe, the next challenge consisted of securing a material existence for the destitute émigré army in the Caribbean itself. Malouet intended to use the émigrés for the reconstruction of the colonial economy in the former Spanish territories.⁴³ In a hierarchical scheme, officers and nobles were to receive parcels for cultivating sugar in the plains and contingents of slaves provided by the remaining French planters. In contrast, commoner soldiers would cultivate coffee, tobacco, and cotton in the less-fertile mountain regions on common property in order to earn money to buy slaves afterward.

Lacking British support and facing resistance from planters who resented Malouet's influence, this Saint-Domingue scheme never materialized, yet neither did it evaporate. Around the British evacuation in 1797–98, Malouet was approached by a knight from the Order of Malta, who explained that his group, under French pressure, faced expulsion from their Mediterranean island. The Maltese offered to recruit three to four thousand men to accompany the émigrés to the Caribbean and provide military protection in place of the British. Their intention seems to have been to set up a more-or-less autonomous planter commonwealth. Malouet welcomed this peculiar combination of chivalry, Christianity, colonialism, and slavery as the new solution

⁴¹ TNA, WO 1/63, 259–89, François Claude de Bouillé to Dundas, August 8, 1795.

⁴² TNA, WO 1/63, 243–54, Malouet, *Observations on the Treaty of Peace between France and Spain*, August 1795.

⁴³ TNA, WO 1/63, 309–28, Malouet, *A Plan for Establishing the Emigrants in St Domingo*, August 19, 1795.

to the situation in Saint-Domingue.⁴⁴ Though this initiative, again, came to nothing, it is illustrative of the types of cooperation engendered between different groups of exiles who faced political and material destitution in the age of emigrations. Through such plans, French émigrés and their collaborators demonstrated that they represented a critical mass of political and military actors who could not be simply marginalized.

The British evacuation of Saint-Domingue now being imminent, the War Office and the London planters explored options for those planters who either planned to leave Saint-Domingue or were unable to secure a livelihood in European exile. One scenario called for resettling planters in the Mississippi region, where they would be merged into the larger community of Saint-Domingue planters who had already settled around the Gulf of Mexico. Alternatively, Malouet suggested that the planters be offered land that Britain had recently conquered from Spain in Trinidad – a rather attractive option, since these émigrés, in addition to retaining the property rights granted to them, could also take their slaves with them more easily.⁴⁵

The third option was Canada. Drawing on the previous relocation of Loyalists from the thirteen colonies, the British government was willing to give land to the French émigrés. Malouet's fellow exile Jean Charles de Montalembert had developed a settlement plan similar to the earlier project in Saint-Domingue. Montalembert planned to install staunch monarchists next to a republic, thus securing the border between the British Empire and the American federation. Convinced of the protective effect of French émigrés against revolution and democracy, Malouet confirmed to Secretary of War Henry Dundas: "You will found a colony of royalists in a country surrounded by republics."⁴⁶

Finally, it was another émigré, Joseph de Puisaye, the instigator of the disastrous Quiberon Expedition and the leader of the Chouans in Brittany, who planned to bring no fewer than 20,000 émigrés and royalists from western France to Upper Canada.⁴⁷ In a region populated

⁴⁴ TNA, WO 1/67, 744, Malouet to Charles de Thuisy, December 6, 1797.

⁴⁵ Pestel, *Kosmopoliten*, 293.

⁴⁶ TNA, WO 1/67, 835, Malouet to Dundas, December 24, 1797.

⁴⁷ Narcisse Eutrope Dionne, *Les ecclésiastiques et les royalistes français réfugiés au Canada à l'époque de la Révolution, 1791-1802* (Québec, 1905), 132-40; Maurice Hutt, *Chouannerie and Counter-Revolution: Puisaye, the Princes and the British Government in the 1790s* (Cambridge, 1983), 555-73; Marcel Fournier with Pierre Le Clercq, *Les Français émigrés au Canada pendant la Révolution française et le Consulat: 1789-1804* (Québec, 2015), 136-40; Church-Duplessis, "Aristocrats," 64-75.

mainly by British Loyalists, he envisaged a settlement based on feudal structures, vassalage, and seigneurial dues. When Puisaye went to Canada in 1798, the Loyalist magistrate and businessman Richard Cartwright welcomed such a “valuable accession to the higher and antidemocratical society.”⁴⁸ Puisaye then negotiated with Mohawk leader Thayendanegea (also known as Joseph Brant) about land acquisition and, remarkably, encountered sympathy among the Indigenous population, who had fought on the British side in the American War of Independence. The émigrés were said to have suffered like them “in the [very] same [anti-French] Cause.”⁴⁹ Upper Canada’s Executive Council, however, dismissed the proposal; the few French settlers split up, and Puisaye retired to Niagara.⁵⁰

As with Saint-Domingue, but also serving as a refuge for émigré priests, Canada played an important role as a potential refuge throughout the 1790s. What made émigrés attractive as settlers within the British Empire, even if they did not perceive themselves as explicitly anti-American, was their monarchical–Loyalist profile. Nonetheless, Canada’s distance from France and Europe, its harsh climatic conditions, the changing attitudes of the authorities, and, not least, the reversals in the Revolutionary War meant that only a hundred or so émigrés eventually moved to the Canadian provinces.

BEYOND THE REVOLUTIONARY ATLANTIC:
SETTLEMENT PROJECTS IN THE RUSSIAN
EMPIRE AND AUSTRALIA

The migratory repercussions of the Haitian Revolution were global. They reinforced the French émigré presence in Canada, the United States, and North America’s frontier regions. Yet, Atlantic unrest ultimately extended the émigrés’ mental maps, leading them to look toward other regions of the world. They did so, however, without carefully considering – at least not initially – the actual living conditions that prevailed in those places. As the example of the Russian Empire and Australia demonstrate, here again it was the contingency of exile triggered by the revolutionary wars and penal colonialism that led to the expansion of spatial imaginaries and, in part, migratory practices.

⁴⁸ Hutt, *Chouannerie*, 567.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 570.

⁵⁰ Dionne, *Les ecclésiastiques*, 146–52; Fournier, *Les Français émigrés*, 144–53.

This expanded geographical orientation is illustrated by an epistolary exchange between Malouet, Montlosier, and Jacques Mallet du Pan, a leading political analyst of the revolution. The topic of their correspondence was exile in peripheral world regions.⁵¹ Given the high number of émigrés in the United States, Mallet du Pan remained skeptical about political conditions there and feared political unrest in the wake of George Washington's foreseeable death. Whereas Malouet favored a settlement in the American South, Mallet du Pan preferred the southern Russian Empire. Despite their geographic, climatic, and sociopolitical differences, both proposed projects had common features. They seemed to be inspired by North American frontier settlement projects, and émigrés imagined these areas as both devoid of revolutionary convulsions and available for colonization: "no indigenes, little populace" and no "commotions Europe is exposed to."⁵² Montlosier ultimately considered a plan put forth by a friend who was in favor of St. Petersburg. The plan called for recruiting peasants from border regions to France. The objective was to install them on land granted by Tsarina Catherine II on Crimea. Anticipating possible benefits from quasi-colonial or feudal structures, Montlosier speculated: "If there is revolution, I remain there; if counterrevolution takes place, I return to France; [meanwhile] I remain [on Crimea] and enjoy my habitation as the others enjoy their habitation in Saint-Domingue."⁵³ In contrast to France, parts of Europe, and the Caribbean, these peripheral regions had one decisive advantage: émigrés and their supporters considered them habitable.

Remarkably, the southern portion of the Russian Empire, enlarged by the last partitions of Poland in 1793 and 1795, became an émigré destination when the Armée de Condé relocated to the province of Volhynia. This large émigré military unit, the largest in fact, had played an important role in the run-up to the military campaign against France in 1792.⁵⁴ After being pushed back by the Revolutionary Army, it continued in Austrian and British service, although it proved more a financial burden

⁵¹ On Mallet du Pan, see Simon Burrows, *French Exile Journalism and European Politics, 1792–1814*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History, New Series 19 (Woodbridge, UK, 2000); Pestel, *Kosmopoliten*.

⁵² Malouet to Mallet du Pan, February 17, 1795, in Pierre Victor Malouet, *Mémoires de Malouet*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1874), 2: 422–23.

⁵³ BCO, MP no. 20, accompanying letter by Montlosier to Mallet du Pan to Malouet's letter to Montlosier, s.l., February 4, 1794.

⁵⁴ Frédéric d'Agay, "A European Destiny: The Armée de Condé, 1792–1801," in Kirsty Carpenter and Philip Mansel, eds., *The French Emigrés in Europe and the Struggle against Revolution, 1789–1814* (Basingstoke, 1999), 28–42.

than a supplier of military support. In 1797, Tsar Paul invited the army into his territories after his mother had made a similar offer in the Sea of Asov in 1793. In 1799, the army returned to Central Europe in the Second Coalition War before it disbanded in 1801, having declined a British invitation to serve in Egypt.⁵⁵

The conditions of émigré life in Volhynia were bleak; the lodgings for the rank and file were inadequate, and the cold made things worse. The officers welcomed by the Polish nobility fared slightly better. Given the situation, it is hardly surprising that desertion and insubordination followed.⁵⁶ This intermezzo gave Montlosier an occasion to reflect on the settlements in the southern part of the Russian Empire. Writing in his London émigré journal, he pondered the significance of the four or five thousand “children from Paris, Lyon, and Bordeaux; the Gascons, Normans, and *Champenois*” staying in their “second fatherland,” *Sarmatia*. What Montlosier imagined for this settlement in the longer term was a combination of quasi-colonial serfdom, since the local peasants were already living in a condition “nearer to animals than to humans,” and the transfer of the habits of “our gentlemen from the provinces” to Volhynia. The new Russian territories represented an opportunity to give an entire region “a new guise brought by the French.”⁵⁷

Whereas the military settlement in Volhynia originated in European alliance politics, the impetus behind the émigré presence in Australia, even more remote from France, is harder to make out. Australian migration trajectories were nonetheless linked to the Atlantic world and the British Empire. Some émigrés looked toward Australia after the failure of the Gallipolis project. Others, such as Huon de Kerilleau, became interested in joining British colonial efforts in the Antipodes during their British exile. The Chevalier de Clambe, for his part, had been residing in former French India and refused to return to the metropole when the British took over in 1793. Having entered the military service of an Indian prince, he finally set out for New South Wales.⁵⁸

Given the high social rank of these Australian émigrés and the overall connections between French exile and the British Empire, we might ask to what extent these migrants interacted with British convicts sent to

⁵⁵ Pierre Louis Auguste Ferron de La Ferronnays, *En émigration* (Paris, 1901), 109–10.

⁵⁶ Frédéric d’Agay, “L’armée de Condé et la Russie 1797–1799,” in Jean-Pierre Poussou, Anne Mézin, and Yves Perret-Gentil, eds., *L’influence française en Russie au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 2004), 429–36.

⁵⁷ *Courier de Londres*, April 6, 1798.

⁵⁸ Stuer, *The French in Australia*, 43–45.

the penal colony of Botany Bay. There are at least hints of such entanglements. In New South Wales, Huon de Kerilleau married a French-born girl who had been arrested for theft in Britain and was subsequently transported.⁵⁹ Also, when British Whig politician, opponent of the French Revolution, and émigré supporter Edmund Burke became alarmed about the neglected education of noble children in exile, he founded a French émigré school in England, explaining that the children would otherwise be “trained to Botany Bay.”⁶⁰

But to understand Australia’s full symbolic significance as the émigrés’ social, political, and moral other, we need to turn to French revolutionary discourse that imagined the émigrés’ passage to the Southern Hemisphere as an attempt to delegitimize their accommodation in Europe. French republicans also made use of the émigrés’ global itineraries to exclude them from the new nation. In late 1792, a Paris theater staged a comedy entitled *Les émigrés aux terres australes*.⁶¹ Sharing traits with earlier satires, such as *Le Parlement de Paris établi au Scioto*, the piece depicted the émigrés as having been deported by the revolutionaries to an “uncultivated country,” where they were surrounded by Indigenous *sauvages*. Pitting their “natural” virtues against the corruption of the ancien régime’s former elites, the Indigenous inhabitants finally “convicted” the émigrés and sentenced them to governance by a French sans-culotte. The *terres australes* likely referred to Madagascar, since the piece seemed to relate to a penal transportation project there that was finally voted on by the National Convention in 1793. Nonetheless, both the idea of a penal colony in Tôlanaro and the comedy were inspired by Botany Bay.⁶² Here, the *terres australes* and their Indigenous inhabitants served as a blank canvas for virtuous self-portrayals of the young French republic.

In an anonymous French brochure published in London in 1799, this strategy of othering the émigrés turned into a scenario more closely

⁵⁹ Ibid., 44.

⁶⁰ Plan for an émigré school in *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, 10 vols. (Cambridge, 1969), 8: 9; Friedemann Pestel, “Educating against Revolution: French Émigré Schools and the Challenge of the Next Generation,” *European History Quarterly* 47 (2017): 229–57.

⁶¹ Gamas, *Les émigrés aux terres australes, ou Le dernier chapitre d’une grande révolution* (Paris, 1794); Pierre Frantz, “Rire et théâtre carnavalesque pendant la Révolution,” *Dix-Huitième Siècle* 32 (2000): 291–306; Pestel, “The Age of Emigrations,” 218–19.

⁶² Allyson Jaye Delnore, “Political Convictions: French Deportation Projects in the Age of Revolutions, 1791–1854,” PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2004, 64–65; Damien Tricoire, *Der koloniale Traum: Imperiales Wissen und die französisch-madagassischen Begegnungen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna, 2018), 191–93.

related to émigré life and politics. The pro-republican piece presented a mock call by the Comte d'Artois, the brother of the current pretender to the throne, directed at "all runaways and outlaws from France, princes and valets, traitors and bandits, princesses and daughters of joy, ignorant and venal judges, bawdy and impious priests" to follow him, together with the "scum of Britain," to Australia.⁶³ Artois introduced himself as the colony's "king" under British auspices and as surrounded by a reactionary émigré cabinet. The pamphlet made use of Australia's location in the Antipodes to draw a clear line of separation from revolutionary achievements in France. Australia appeared as a "Sadian refuge," where debauchery and degradation were recompensed with Artois's favors.⁶⁴

This Manichean symmetry between revolution and emigration translated into an opposition of the two hemispheres. In this vision, Australia's new émigré capital, *Sodôme*, emerged as an anti-Paris. Artois proclaimed his government as "the model ... of the southern hemisphere, whereas the government of France will shatter the northern hemisphere."⁶⁵ From a republican viewpoint, Australia's geographical remoteness could be presented as largely disconnected from the Atlantic world, which was depicted as a theater of war and revolution. Émigrés destined for the Antipodes would virtually disappear as political and military opponents or, alternatively, they would open up a new imperial horizon for revolutionary politics. Just as the republican official press recommended that the émigrés conquer Canada to weaken the British enemy, the sans-culotte émigré leader, at the end of *Les émigrés aux terres australes*, sings a new variant of the Marseillaise, ending with the line: "May our arms liberate the universe!"⁶⁶

POST-REVOLUTIONARY PACIFICATION AND THE TURN TOWARD NORTH AFRICA

For French émigrés, Napoléon Bonaparte's coup d'état in 1799 presented new opportunities. With the closure of the émigré lists, the ever-growing number of *radiations* (removals from the émigré lists), and finally the

⁶³ Anon., *De par le Comte d'Artois, roi de Botani-Bay, Aux terres Australes et des peuplades de malfaiteurs échappés de l'échaffaud et des galères anglaises* (London, 1799), 3.

⁶⁴ Toby R. Benis, *Romantic Diasporas: French Émigrés, British Convicts, and Jews, Nineteenth-Century Major Lives and Letters* 10 (New York, 2009), 1.

⁶⁵ Anon., *De par le Comte d'Artois*, 20.

⁶⁶ *Le Rédacteur*, February 12, 1798. See also *Courier de Londres*, March 2, 1798, 143; Gamas, *Les émigrés*, 29.

wide-ranging amnesty granted in 1802, most of them returned to France under the Consulate.⁶⁷ Facing these new dynamics, imagined visions of émigré settlement underwent a transformation that reflected an ambivalence toward Bonaparte's attempts at post-revolutionary pacification. The possibility of return posed a threefold challenge: how would the émigrés define their loyalty to the new regime, how would Napoleonic France resolve the problem of sequestered and partly sold émigré property, and what role would émigrés play in Bonaparte's imperial endeavors? This challenge shifted the focus to intermediate steps and thus to liminal spaces between a return to France and the shrinking émigré diaspora. In 1800, Montlosier pointed to a solution for the dilemma that many émigrés faced after tiring years in exile:

I do not want to serve as a slave. I cannot fight as an enemy ... But even in this position, I can still remain a friend of France without being a friend of its government...., it seems possible to me to preserve, outside of France, a heart that remains friendly with France and the French. This project would basically aim at an establishment for all malcontents both inside and outside France, both among the French nobility or the royalists, on foreign ground.⁶⁸

Though Montlosier did not specify the type of establishment he had in mind, Madame de Staël believed that he and Bonaparte had discussed plans for gathering those émigrés who were reluctant to return to France in the Peloponnese, where they were to live loosely connected to French authority. "The émigrés will form a republic there, isn't this a rather juicy connection?" she asked Bonaparte's brother Joseph.⁶⁹

Such speculations were clear reactions to Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt in 1798 and the colonization plans discussed under the Directory.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Emmanuel de Waresquiel, "Joseph Fouché et la question de l'amnistie des émigrés (1799–1802)," *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 372 (2013): 105–20; Kelly Summers, "Healing the Republic's 'Great Wound': Emigration Reform and the Path to a General Amnesty, 1799–1802," in Philip and Reboul, eds., *French Emigrants*, 235–55.

⁶⁸ Bibliothèque de Genève, Geneva, Ms. fr. 212, Montlosier to Jean Pierre Louis de Fontanes, August 20, 1800.

⁶⁹ Anne Louise Germaine de Staël-Holstein to Joseph Bonaparte, April 1, 1801, in Germaine de Staël, *Correspondance générale*, 7 vols. (Geneva, 2009), 4: 362.

⁷⁰ Ian Coller, "Egypt in the French Revolution," in Desan, Hunt, and Nelson, eds., *The French Revolution*, 115–31; Jean-Claude Halpern, "L'Égypte à la fin du XVIIIe siècle: Les embarras et les incertitudes de la politique coloniale française," in Marcel Dorigny and Bernard Gainot, eds., *La colonisation nouvelle (fin XVIIIe-début XIXe siècles)* (Paris, 2018), 13–32; Carl L. Lokke and Gabriel Debien, "L'expédition d'Égypte et les projets de cultures coloniales," *Bulletin de la Société royale de géographie d'Égypte* 20 (1939): 337–56.

In his speeches at the Institut National des Sciences et des Arts in 1797, soon-to-be foreign minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord described the benefits for France of acquiring new colonies given the deteriorating situation in the Caribbean. As Pernille Røge argues, these considerations were part of a French republican imperial transition that drew on ancien régime colonial reform projects.⁷¹ However, Talleyrand's networks and discussions among returnees from exile suggest that émigrés also had a stake in the new French imperial agenda. As a former exile, Talleyrand had contacts among the London émigré planters, and, as a land speculator, he was thoroughly acquainted with the North American émigré settlements.⁷² Having been lobbied by destitute planters, he was aware that their ideas about moving into Spanish or Ottoman territories might have resonated with Montlosier's plan.

The colonial losses that accompanied the reshaping of Europe's political map during the revolutionary wars also concerned the Abbé de Pradt. A specialist on the Caribbean and Latin America, Pradt advocated the independence of the European colonies as a solution to the Atlantic revolutions.⁷³ From his own émigré experience, he also had the consequences of emigration in mind. Aware that the émigrés' return might cause other members of Europe's political elites to face destitution and expulsion, he proposed putting independent colonies at their disposal. Pradt imagined that European monarchs dethroned by French expansion could consolidate independent new states on the other side of the Atlantic: "How could princes who occupy useless and imperceptible positions in Europe be hurt if they exchanged these small sovereignties for rich and vast empires in America that are as strong and independent as their small states in Europe are dependent and weak?"⁷⁴ From this perspective, decolonization as a final consequence of revolution would make political exile altogether obsolete and contribute to consolidating peace in Europe.

On his return to France from London in 1802, Montlosier made clear that he would not be surpassed by his fellow émigré Pradt when

⁷¹ Pernille Røge, *Economistes and the Reinvention of Empire: France in the Americas and Africa, c. 1750–1802* (Cambridge, 2019).

⁷² Emmanuel de Waresquiel, *Talleyrand: Le prince immobile* (Paris, 2003); Furstenberg, *When the United States Spoke French*.

⁷³ Dominique Dufour de Pradt, *Les trois âges des colonies, ou de leur état passé, présent et à venir*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1801); David Todd, "Transnational Projects of Empire in France, c.1815–c.1870," *Modern Intellectual History* 12 (2015): 265–93.

⁷⁴ Pradt, *Les trois âges*, 3: 521.

it came to colonial imagination. Against the backdrop of France's ephemeral peace with Britain and its disastrous attempt at reconquering Saint-Domingue, Montlosier argued for North Africa as a replacement for the lost territories and trade routes in America and India. He also expressed a preference for African colonization over the costly French conquests of "some more prefectures and barley and turnip fields" on the Rhine.⁷⁵ In a memorandum to Talleyrand, he proposed profiting from political tensions with the Dey of Algiers to conquer the Maghreb. Montlosier's idea was more than a proof of loyalty to the Consulate – it also addressed the only partially settled question of émigré indemnification. Whereas any transaction between the new and old proprietors of the *biens nationaux* (confiscated properties) presented a risk to domestic peace in France, the African option promised material compensation and social reconciliation: "After a great revolution it is good to offer an exit to all resentments, a refuge to all opinions, an asylum to all behaviors. Nothing seems more adequate to me to do justice to all parties than French Africa."⁷⁶

For Montlosier, this neo-colonial project, when viewed within the broader framework of Napoleonic imperialism, not only offered a beneficial solution to the émigrés' reintegration but also provided other groups affected by the revolutionary wars, such as the Order of Malta, the chance to participate in the settlement of North Africa.⁷⁷ When the French conquest of Algiers actually took place three decades later, Montlosier's colonialism came full circle. For him, this "favor of Providence" was the final compensation for the losses of Canada, India, and Saint-Domingue.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

Reflecting on the historical significance of the French Revolution, David Bell identifies nationalism, republicanism, human rights, war and peace, and political ideology, as well as revolution itself, as "global conceptual legacies." Lloyd Kramer, surveying the historiographical

⁷⁵ *Courrier de Londres et de Paris*, August 23, 1802.

⁷⁶ Memorandum by Montlosier, August 15, 1803, cited in Henri de Miramon Fitz-James, "Le comte de Montlosier (1755–1838) pendant la Révolution et l'Empire," PhD diss., Université d'Aix-en-Provence, 1944, 154; François Charles-Roux, *France et Afrique du Nord avant 1830: Les Précurseurs de la conquête* (Paris, 1932), 427–31.

⁷⁷ Miramon Fitz-James, "Montlosier," 155.

⁷⁸ Bibliothèque Communautaire et Interuniversitaire de Clermont-Ferrand, Ms. 352, Montlosier, "Quelques vues sur l'insurrection de 1830 et sur les émeutes," July 27, 1831.

innovations in post-bicentenary scholarship, identifies race, gender, slavery, nationalism, colonialism, empires, and revolutionary movements as major fields.⁷⁹ Neither scholar mentioned migration, however. This is a striking omission, especially given the sheer number and geographical scope of the various actors on the move in the 1790s. And these mobile individuals were not just absentees from the French Revolution. By focusing on both physical mobility and migration settlement schemes, this chapter endeavors to restore agency to French émigrés in this period and to offer an alternative to seeing them primarily as victims, counterrevolutionaries, or members of an uprooted community. Their awareness of the global impact of the Age of Revolutions provided them with options for escaping the radicalizing developments in France. Through the lens of global émigré settlements, this chapter concludes by making four points about the significance of the émigrés' global imaginaries on the planned and partly realized mass relocations undertaken on their own initiative.

First, in an age of emigrations, settlement projects in North America, Saint-Domingue, the Russian Empire, and the Maghreb affirmed émigré agency as much as they represented attempts at liberation from the political, economic, and social pressures of both revolution and exile.⁸⁰ This “liberation” also applies to the revolutionary exclusion of the émigrés by imagining their transportation to the Southern Hemisphere. These projects revealed the demographic importance of the émigrés, their military potential, and their mobility, since they made the émigrés relevant both for the governments of their host countries and other groups of disrupted migrants. The attention the settlement projects received in transnationally circulating émigré pamphlets, journals, letters, and memoirs represented a communicative strategy of self-assurance at a time when the émigrés sought to mobilize support within host societies for their situation.

Moreover, the settlements highlight the strong connection between the French emigration and the British Empire. In particular, with regard to the Caribbean, the émigrés tried to turn the ongoing war and long-term Franco–British rivalry to their favor. In a more ambivalent way,

⁷⁹ David A. Bell, “Global Conceptual Legacies,” in David Andress, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution* (Oxford, 2015), 642–58; Lloyd Kramer, “Atlantic Revolution, Imperial Wars, Post-Napoleonic Legacies, and Postcolonial Studies,” in Alan Forrest and Karen Hagemann, eds., *War, Demobilization and Memory: The Legacy of War in the Era of Atlantic Revolutions* (Basingstoke, 2016), 372.

⁸⁰ On French émigré agency in the age of emigrations, see also Dessens's chapter in this volume.

their connection to British imperialism also resonated in projects on both sides of the Canadian–American border. These settlements show how émigrés drew on American Loyalism to present themselves as defenders of political and social order. Meanwhile, French support in the American War of Independence facilitated émigré accommodation in the United States and provided a trigger for sociopolitical experiments.

Second, the settlement projects make clear the extent to which global emigration options were linked to ideas of social identity and French belonging. Rather than facilitating the émigrés' integration into their new environments, the schemes largely aimed to create cohesion among the émigrés, whom they framed as “a nation taken out of the French nation.”⁸¹ The more distant the settlements were from France, the more French they tended to be in their internal organization, as the North American establishments or the Armée de Condé in Volhynia illustrate. While French emigration may appear in that light as a particular variant of settler colonialism, the émigrés continued to see themselves as representatives of a “true” France largely unspoiled by revolutionary social transformations. They imagined and organized their global establishments as hierarchical societies that would guarantee noble privileges and property. The strong connections between agrarian émigré colonialism and slavery and serfdom have to be interpreted in light of this attempt at social regeneration.

Third, the settlement projects raise the question of temporality. Moving to distant parts of the globe and working to build durable new societies did not necessarily preclude the desire to return to France. However, global experiences of emigration did not simply melt into post-revolutionary French pacification, reconciliation, and nationalization. Rather, these experiences suggest that there was a link between nineteenth-century French imperial thought and colonial politics. Napoleonic imperialism, both European and global, relied on the collaboration of former émigrés who were concerned with France's colonial situation both during and after the French Revolution. Talleyrand, Pradt, Noailles, Montlosier, Malouet, and Chateaubriand not only met and collaborated during exile, but, at least in part, offered their expertise to rebuild the French Empire with Bonaparte and later the restored Bourbons. This “French imperial meridian” points to the global entanglements of early nineteenth-century French history.⁸² Besides the case of Algiers in 1830, attempts at

⁸¹ *Journal de France et d'Angleterre*, June 2, 1797.

⁸² David Todd, “A French Imperial Meridian, 1814–1870,” *Past and Present* 210 (2011): 155–86.

reconquering “Saint-Domingue,” first in 1802 and again in 1814 during Malouet’s tenure as Minister of the Colonies, reveal the continuities between the emigration and post-revolutionary colonialism.⁸³

Fourth, and finally, the return of the émigrés paved the way for the next generation of political migrants. The Bonapartist militaries in the borderland of Alabama settled in a region where they encountered émigrés from both the French and Haitian Revolutions.⁸⁴ Viewed from this perspective, the émigrés of the 1790s also opened the global dimensions of France’s long nineteenth-century *siècle des exilés*.⁸⁵

⁸³ Jean-François Brière, *Haiti et la France, 1804–1848: le rêve brisé* (Paris, 2008); Friedemann Pestel, “The Impossible Ancien Régime Colonial: Postcolonial Haiti and the Perils of the French Restoration,” *Journal of Modern European History* 15 (2017): 261–79.

⁸⁴ Rafe Blaufarb, *Bonapartists in the Borderlands: French Exiles and Refugees on the Gulf Coast, 1815–1835* (Tuscaloosa, AL, 2005).

⁸⁵ Sylvie Aprile, *Le siècle des exilés: Bannis et proscrits de 1789 à la Commune* (Paris, 2010).