

**ITALIAN ANARCHISTS IN LONDON
(1870-1914)**

Submitted for the Degree of PhD

Pietro Dipaola

Department of Politics

Goldsmiths College

University of London

April 2004

Abstract

This thesis is a study of the colony of Italian anarchists who found refuge in London in the years between the Paris Commune and the outbreak of the First World War. The first chapter is an introduction to the sources and to the main problems analysed. The second chapter reconstructs the settlement of the Italian anarchists in London and their relationship with the colony of Italian emigrants. Chapter three deals with the activities that the Italian anarchists organised in London, such as demonstrations, conferences, and meetings. It likewise examines the ideological differences that characterised the two main groups in which the anarchists were divided: organisationalists and anti-organisationalists.

Italian authorities were extremely concerned about the danger represented by the anarchists. The fourth chapter of the thesis provides a detailed investigation of the surveillance of the anarchists that the Italian embassy and the Italian Minister of Interior organised in London by using spies and informers. At the same time, it describes the contradictory attitude held by British police forces toward political refugees. The following two chapters are dedicated to the analysis of the main instruments of propaganda used by the Italian anarchists: chapter five reviews the newspapers they published in those years, and chapter six reconstructs social and political activities that were organised in their clubs.

Chapter seven examines the impact that the outbreak of First World War had on the anarchist movement, particularly in dividing it between interventionists and anti-interventionists; a split that destroyed the network of international solidarity that had been hitherto the core of the experience of political exile. Chapter eight summarises the main arguments of the dissertation.

Contents

Acknowledgements	p. 4
List of Abbreviations	p. 5
List of Figures	p. 6
Chapter 1. Introduction	p. 7
Chapter 2. Exile in the History of Italian Anarchism: London, an Overview	p. 21
Chapter 3. Italian Anarchist Groups in London	p. 38
Chapter 4. The Surveillance of the Italian Anarchists in London	p. 112
Chapter 5. Italian Anarchist Newspapers in London	p. 157
Chapter 6. Politics and Sociability: the Anarchist Clubs	p. 210
Chapter 7. The First World War: the Crisis of the London Anarchist Community	p. 238
Chapter 8. Conclusion	p. 255
Sources and Bibliography	p. 264

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Carl Levy, for his indispensable advice and guidance throughout the thesis. I would like also to thank Piero Brunello and Claudia Baldoli for important suggestions during the research.

The scholarships offered by the Art and Humanities Research Board (Postgraduate Award 2000-2001) and by the Institute of Historical Research ('Isobel Thornley Research Fellowship, 2001-2002') have made this research possible. I am particularly grateful to Barbara Dolce for her indispensable help. Morgan Falconer and John Reynolds have given substantial support with my written English.

Special thanks to Peter Eade, Matteo Favaretti, Tiziana Siffi, Romina Vegro, and the mythical 97 St. Asaph road. Finally, special thanks to my family in Italy: Costantino, Velica, Ruggero, Davide and Niccolò.

List of Abbreviations

ASMAE	Archivio Storico Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome
AL Pol. Int.	Ambasciata di Londra Polizia Internazionale
ACS	Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome
CPC PS	Ministero degli Interni, Casellario Politico Centrale Ministero degli Interni, Divisione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza
IISH	International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam
PRO	Public Record Office, London
HO CRIM	Home Office Criminal Court of Justice
b.	Busta
f.	Fascicolo

List of Figures

T. 3.1. Table of Italian anarchists in England 1870-1914	p. 92
<i>Illustrations</i>	
III.3.1. Leaflet distributed on occasion of the celebration of the First of May by the Anarchist-Communist groups.	p.106
III.3.2. Leaflet distributed on occasion of the celebration of the First of May by the <i>La Libera Iniziativa</i> group.	p.107
III.3.3. Leaflet promoting the opening of the <i>Università Popolare Italiana</i> in 1902.	p.108
III.3.4. Leaflet promoting the opening of the International University in London in 1905.	p.109
III.3.5. Programme of courses at the International University in 1905.	p.110
III.3.6. Leaflet in favour of Ettore and Giovannitti.	p.111
III. 4.1. Malatesta's code.	p.117
III. 4.2. Leaflet against the spy Gennaro Rubino.	p.152
III. 4.3. Photograph of Ennio Belevi, Enrico Defendi, Luigia Defendi, and Giulio Rossi.	p.153
III. 4.4. Picture of Giulio Rossi, Luigia and Enrico Defendi.	p.154
III. 4.5. Malatesta's leaflet against Belevi.	p.155
III. 4. 6. Leaflet issued by the Malatesta Release Committee.	p.156
III.5.1. Leaflet announcing the publication of <i>La Rivoluzione Sociale</i> .	p.208
III.5.2. Programme of a <i>soirée</i> to raise funds for the newspaper <i>L'Internazionale</i>	p.209
III. 6.1. Picture of Ferruccio Mariani, Cesare Cova and Felice Felici.	p.232
III. 6. 2. Flyer advertising the theatrical play <i>La Congiura</i> .	p.233
III. 6.3. Programme of a social evening in New Cross, London.	p.234
III. 6.4. Balance sheet of the <i>International Working Men's Society</i> in 1909.	p.235
III. 6.5. Programme of concerts at the Athenaeum Hall in 1899.	p.236
III. 6.6. Flyer advertising Malatesta's lecture in July 1906.	p.237
III. 7.1. Leaflet promoting a rally in favour of Masetti.	p.254

List of Figures

T. 3.1. Table of Italian anarchists in England 1870-1914	p. 92
<i>Illustrations</i>	
III.3.1. Leaflet distributed on occasion of the celebration of the First of May by the Anarchist-Communist groups.	p.106
III.3.2. Leaflet distributed on occasion of the celebration of the First of May by the <i>La Libera Iniziativa</i> group.	p.107
III.3.3. Leaflet promoting the opening of the <i>Università Popolare Italiana</i> in 1902.	p.108
III.3.4. Leaflet promoting the opening of the International University in London in 1905.	p.109
III.3.5. Programme of courses at the International University in 1905.	p.110
III.3.6. Leaflet in favour of Ettore and Giovannitti.	p.111
III. 4.1. Malatesta's code.	p.117
III. 4.2. Leaflet against the spy Gennaro Rubino.	p.152
III. 4.3. Photograph of Ennio Belevi, Enrico Defendi, Luigia Defendi, and Giulio Rossi.	p.153
III. 4.4. Picture of Giulio Rossi, Luigia and Enrico Defendi.	p.154
III. 4.5. Malatesta's leaflet against Belevi.	p.155
III. 4. 6. Leaflet issued by the Malatesta Release Committee.	p.156
III.5.1. Leaflet announcing the publication of <i>La Rivoluzione Sociale</i> .	p.208
III.5.2. Programme of a <i>soirée</i> to raise funds for the newspaper <i>L'Internazionale</i>	p.209
III. 6.1. Picture of Ferruccio Mariani, Cesare Cova and Felice Felici.	p.232
III. 6. 2. Flyer advertising the theatrical play <i>La Congiura</i> .	p.233
III. 6.3. Programme of a social evening in New Cross, London.	p.234
III. 6.4. Balance sheet of the <i>International Working Men's Society</i> in 1909.	p.235
III. 6.5. Programme of concerts at the Athenaeum Hall in 1899.	p.236
III. 6.6. Flyer advertising Malatesta's lecture in July 1906.	p.237
III. 7.1. Leaflet promoting a rally in favour of Masetti.	p.254

Chapter 1

Introduction

This dissertation investigates the activity of Italian anarchists in London from the second half of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the First World War.

Many Italian anarchists conducted their political activity in exile, wandering throughout Europe and overseas. These peregrinations and the settlement of Italian anarchists in several European and overseas countries were part of the long tradition of political exile that characterised the history of Italian socialism from its beginning until the downfall of Fascism and the end of the Second World War. Indeed, since the beginning of the *Risorgimento*, the most charismatic exponents of Italian socialism had to spend long periods of their lives in foreign countries. Giuseppe Mazzini, who was forced to reside abroad for about thirty years, represents the historical exemplar of the Italian political refugee. However, almost all principal figures of Italian socialism and a myriad of lesser known activists shared the same lot and experienced exile. According to Donna Gabaccia's analysis of the biographies collected in Franco Andreucci and Tommaso Detti's *Il movimento operaio*:

Over a third of Italy's most prominent pre-war labour activists fled into exile one or more times. Except for a handful, all were men. Anarchist exiles were 57 percent in 1870s, 63 percent in the 1880s, and 21 percent in the 1890s. During the 1890s and early 1900s, socialist exiles increased rapidly to 74 percent.¹

This fact had a remarkable influence on the development of socialist ideas both in Italy and in other countries, since one of the most important consequences of nineteenth century exile was the dissemination of revolutionary ideas in Europe and overseas.² As underlined by Degl'Innocenti:

¹ Donna Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (London: UCL Press, 2000), p. 109.

² 'Nell'800 gli esiliati politici sono i vettori classici delle idee rivoluzionarie attraverso l'Europa e l'oltremare. Essi conservano in genere una grande mobilità e una grande disponibilità all'azione ovunque si trovino in esilio. La dinamica e la diffusione delle idee socialiste rientra nello schema classico di un movimento a doppio senso: da un lato i rifugiati politici diffondono le loro convinzioni nei paesi che li accolgono, da un altro chi rientra da un asilo coatto o volontario importa le idee e le esperienze con le

Il socialismo delle varie scuole si forgiò in gran parte nel mondo dell'esilio e trasse da questo l'incentivo verso la massima diffusione prima all'interno dell'Europa (...) e poi dall'Europa verso le Americhe lungo gli itinerari dell'emigrazione.³

Exile affected profoundly the Italian Socialist and Communist parties in the first half of the twentieth century. Many leaders of Italian left-wing parties matured politically during the anti-Fascist emigration, and this experience influenced their activity after the war.⁴

For almost a century, the Italian anarchists played a central part in this experience:

Some labour activist exiles (like those of the Risorgimento) also formed their own distinctive diasporas, allowing us - for example - to speak of Italian anarchism as a transnational ideology unbound by migration and spreading wherever Italy's anarchists went.⁵

The Italian anarchists spread their activities in many countries all over the world: in the majority of European countries, as well as in the United States, in Argentina, in Brazil, in Egypt, in Tunisia and in the Balkans.⁶ Giuseppe Fanelli introduced Bakuninism in Spain where he organised the first section of the First International in 1864.⁷ Between 1885 and 1889 Errico Malatesta and Pietro Gori played a significant

quali si è familiarizzato' (George Haupt, 'Il ruolo degli emigrati e dei rifugiati nella diffusione delle idee socialiste all'epoca della Seconda Internazionale', in *Anna Kuliscioff e l'età del Riformismo*, Rome: Mondo Operaio, Edizioni Avanti!, 1978, pp. 59-68).

³ Maurizio Degl'Innocenti, *L'esilio nella storia contemporanea*, in Maurizio Degl'Innocenti (ed.), *L'esilio nella storia del movimento operaio e l'emigrazione economica* (Manduria: Pietro Lacaita editore, 1992), p. 26.

⁴ '...se i leader dei partiti di sinistra e di centrosinistra dell'Italia post-fascista si sono affermati come tali nell'esilio, se dall'esilio provengono parte cospicua dei gruppi dirigenti dei partiti da noi considerati, se larga parte dello schieramento politico italiano è soggetto nel dopoguerra a una dialettica che risente fortemente e in qualche caso in maniera determinante (si pensi al frontismo) delle esperienze maturate dai partiti dell'antifascismo militare del ventennio, tutto ciò vuol dire che l'esilio antifascista ha nella storia d'Italia contemporanea ruolo meno marginale di quello cui vorrebbe relegarlo certa odierna storiografia revisionista...' (Fedele Santi, *L'esilio nella storia del movimento operaio e l'emigrazione economica*, in Maurizio Degl'Innocenti (ed.), *L'esilio nella storia del movimento operaio*, pp. 185 - 203).

⁵ Donna Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, p. 107.

⁶ See: Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in exile', in *Annali della Fondazione Luigi Einaudi* 15, (1981), p. 246.

⁷ 'Era éste un hombre como de 40 años, alto, de rostro grave y amable, barba negra y poblada, ojos grandes negros y expresivos, que brillaban como ráfagas o tornaban el aspecto de cariñosa compasión según los sentimientos que le dominaba. Su voz tenía un timbre metálico y era susceptible de todos las inflexiones apropiadas a lo que expresaba, pasando rápidamente dal acento de la cólera y de la amenaza contro explotadores y tiranos, para adoptar el del sufrimiento, lástima y consuelo, según hablaba de las penas del explotando, del que sin sufrirles directamente les comprende o del que por un sentimiento altruísta se complace en presentar una idea ultrarevolucionaria de paz y fraternidad'. (Anselmo Lorenzo, *El proletariado militante*, Mexico: ed. Vertice, 1926, pp.19-20). See also Max Nettlau, *La Première Internationale en Espagne (1868-1888)*, (Dordrecht: D. Reide, 1969). A recollection of Fanelli by

role on the development of anarchism in Argentina.⁸ Giuseppe Ciancabilla, Luigi Galleani and Carlo Tresca were active in the United States: the first from 1898, the second from 1901 and the third from 1905.⁹ Giovanni Rossi, one of the last representatives of utopian anarchism, founded the *Colonia Cecilia* in Brazil in 1890.¹⁰ In Geneva, Luigi Bertoni was the director of *Il Risveglio-Le Reveille*, ‘uno dei maggiori organi dell’anarchismo internazionale’¹¹ and one of the most long-lasting anarchist newspapers: it was published for forty years from 1900 to 1940.¹² The Internationalist Niccolò Converti went to Tunisia in order to avoid twenty months’ imprisonment because of his collaboration in Malatesta’s newspaper *La Questione Sociale* in 1887. There he founded and directed *L’Operaio. Organo degli anarchici di Tunisi e della Sicilia*. With the advent of Fascism, Luigi Fabbri expatriated to Uruguay, in Montevideo, where he published the periodical *Studi Sociali*.¹³ Gigi Damiani lived in Brazil from 1899 to 1919.¹⁴ There, he published the newspaper *Barricata* and was politically active until his expulsion to Italy. Camillo Berneri escaped to France because of persecution by the Fascists; then he fought in the Civil War in Spain where he was assassinated in 1937.

Malatesta in: ‘Giuseppe Fanelli’, *Pensiero e volontà*, n. 11, 16 September 1925. Republished in: Errico Malatesta, *Pensiero e volontà e ultimi scritti, 1924-1932* (Geneva: Edizioni del “Risveglio”, 1936), pp. 187-193.

⁸ Osvaldo Bajer, ‘L’influenza dell’immigrazione italiana nel movimento anarchico argentino’, in *Gli italiani fuori d’Italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d’adozione 1880-1940* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1983), pp. 531-548; Zaragoza Ruvira, ‘Anarchism et mouvement ouvrier en Argentine à la fin du siècle’, in *Le mouvement social*, n. 103, April-June 1978, pp. 14-17.

⁹ Ciancabilla was exiled to Zurigo in 1897 and later to France. In 1898, he was in the United States, where he founded *L’Agitatore*. For a period he directed *La Questione Sociale*, afterwards he founded *L’Aurora* and in 1902 the weekly *La Protesta Umana. Rivista di scienze sociali, letteratura ed arte*. Luigi Galleani suffered several periods in prison. In 1894, he sought to organise an anarchist association in Genoa and Sampierdarena. Condemned to three years’ imprisonment under art. 248 (‘associazione a delinquere’), he was sent for 5 years of forced domicile to Pantelleria, from where he was able to escape, with the help of Niccolò Converti, in 1898. He went to Cairo and then to London, from where, after few months, he departed for the United States in 1901. Director of *La Questione Sociale*, in 1903 he founded *La Cronaca Sovversiva*.

¹⁰ See Giovanni Rossi, *Appello per la fondazione di colonie socialiste sperimentali*, in Pier Carlo Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin a Malatesta. 1862-1892* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1972), pp. 337-341. Gosi, R. *Il socialismo utopistico. Giovanni Rossi e la colonia anarchica Cecilia* (Milan: Maiozzi, 1977).

¹¹ Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell’anarchismo. Periodici e numeri unici anarchici in lingua italiana pubblicati all’estero (1872-1971)*, vol. I, tome 2 (Florence: CP, 1976), p. 245.

¹² For the political emigration in Switzerland see also: Stefania Ruggeri, *L’emigrazione politica attraverso le carte della polizia internazionale conservate presso l’Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri*, in Carlo Brusa and Robertino Ghirighelli, *Varese: emigrazione e territorio: tra bisogno e ideale. Convegno internazionale. Varese 18-20 maggio 1994* (Varese: Edizioni Latina, 1994). Marc Vuilleumier, *Les exilés en Suisse et le mouvement ouvrier socialiste (1871-1914)*, in Degl’Innocenti (ed.), *L’Esilio*, pp. 61-80. On Bertoni see: Giampiero Bottinelli, *Luigi Bertoni: la coerenza di un anarchico* (Lugano: La baronata, 1997).

¹³ Luce Fabbri, *Luigi Fabbri. Storia di un uomo libero* (Pisa: BFS, 1996), pp. 175-203.

¹⁴ Edgar Rodrigues, *Os anarquistas: trabalhadores italianos no Brasil* (São Paulo: Global Editora, 1984).

For the Italian anarchist diaspora, the United Kingdom and London in particular, were essential landmarks.

Italian anarchists found refuge in the United Kingdom from the last years of 1870s onward. Their presence in this country grew progressively because of the increase of international persecution. While countries which used to give asylum to political refugees, such as France and Switzerland, changed their policy in front of the growth of the anarchist danger during the 1890s, England never refrained from giving asylum to religious and political refugees, although in 1905 a bill was introduced to restrict admittance in the United Kingdom. Thus, Italian anarchists developed there a community that lasted without interruption up to the Second World War.

London was significant for the contacts between the Italian anarchists and other anarchists from all over the world. Michael Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, Sergei Nechaev, Stepniak, and Varlaam Cherkezov¹⁵ arrived there from Russia; Rudolf Rocker and Johann Most from Germany; Charles Malato, Louise Michel, and Emile Pouget from France; Ricardo Mella, Tárrida del Mármol, Pedro Vallina from Spain; Errico Malatesta, Francesco Saverio Merlino, and Pietro Gori from Italy. Max Nettlau as well spent several years in London. Consequently, for a long period, London gave hospitality to ‘la più forte e qualificata concentrazione di anarchici di tutte le nazionalità’¹⁶, with a remarkable influence on the development and elaboration of anarchist theories, thought, and ideology.

The Paris Commune and the First World War represent the historical periodisation of this dissertation: two international episodes that influenced the Italian anarchist movement profoundly, especially from an ideological point of view.

The events of the Commune were crucial for the growth of anarchism in Italy, as Carlo Cafiero, Andrea Costa and Errico Malatesta, leaders of Italian anarchism, remembered in their writings. Indeed, especially for young people, the Commune represented the ideological passage from the nationalism of *Risorgimento* to the socialism of the First International. Giuseppe Mazzini was one of the firmest opponents of both the Commune and the First International. The struggle between Mazzini and Bakunin to achieve political hegemony over the working class in Italy was based on different interpretations of the meaning of the Paris Commune. At that time Mazzini

¹⁵ When Cherkezov appears as author, the different spellings are maintained: Cherkezoff, Tcherkesoff, and Tcherkesov.

¹⁶ Pier Carlo Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani nell'epoca degli attentati* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1981), p. 74.

was living in London and this dispute had reverberations in the exile Italian community, among whom, only few years later, the anarchists were to find refuge.

The outbreak of the First World War had a crucial impact on the experience of the exile. The war destroyed the international solidarity that was the basis of exiles' political activities. Moreover, the First World War caused a deep ideological schism within the international anarchist community. It reached its highest point in February 1916, when Peter Kropotkin and other eminent anarchists published the 'Manifeste des Seizes',¹⁷ in which they publicly supported the war and the *Entente* against German imperialism. This ideological rupture affected also the Italian anarchist community in London and their leaders. Errico Malatesta, Emidio Recchioni, Carlo Frigerio opposed the war; others, on the contrary, supported Kropotkin's point of view.

This dissertation analyses both practical and ideological aspects of the activity of the Italian anarchists in the United Kingdom: their every day life as well as their ideological thought and its development. The second chapter examines the reasons that forced the Italian anarchists to take the path of exile and the social and historical context that they found on their arrival in London. The third chapter describes the community of anarchist exiles between 1870 and 1914 and their political activity. The fourth chapter focuses on the methods employed by Italian and English police to observe, monitor and contain their activities. The fifth and sixth chapters are closely connected. They analyse the political presence of the Italian anarchist community particularly through their clubs and newspapers. The seventh chapter focuses on the debate about the First World War and its consequences. The eighth chapter, the conclusion, rehearses the arguments of this dissertation.

Italian governments always fought the activities of the First International harshly and the Italian anarchists faced several periods of repression. Consequently, they spent long periods in prison or they found refuge in other European countries. This situation became particularly difficult after the passage of extraordinary laws in Italy in 1894. In the same period most European countries decided either to expel them from their territories or to forbid them the right of entry. Therefore, the liberal asylum regime that characterised British policy during the Victorian age facilitated the settlement of anarchists in the United Kingdom. When Italian anarchists began to arrive in the United Kingdom at the end of the 1870s, Britain held already a long tradition of hospitality to Italian political refugees. The first significant groups of exiles arrived in London at the

¹⁷ This manifesto was published in *La Bataille* in Paris, on 14 March 1916.

beginning of *Risorgimento* during the 1820s. Therefore, although significant ideological differences distinguished the groups of refugees that found refuge in London during those years, the anarchists found an extant network of relationships and organisations among political exiles. Moreover, while in Italy the *Risorgimento* activists acted mainly among the middle classes, in London, as well as in other foreign countries, the exiles of the *Risorgimento* carried out their political activity among the working classes. Thus, Italian anarchists found an Italian colony already used to radical politics.

Anarchists arrived in London in different periods, following waves of repression in Italy. Moreover, most of them did not stay in the United Kingdom permanently, but they managed to return to Italy as soon as the conditions enabled them to do so.¹⁸ In some cases, they escaped to Britain several times, as happened to Malatesta, although some of them, Emidio Recchioni for example, took up permanent residence in England, and even obtained citizenship. In spite of this frequent ‘coming and going’ of anarchist militants, their activities never ceased and the Italian anarchist movement in London maintained an active presence until 1945.

In order to understand the reasons that made such continuous activity possible, it is important to study the precise periods in which the activists were present in the United Kingdom, as well as how they organised their lives and which relationships they established in London. Indeed, the survival of exiles depended on their network of relationships and support in foreign countries, an international organisation that had to assure them the possibility to find some aid during their exile. The consciousness of the precarious condition of the exile brought anarchists to set up an extremely flexible form of organisation. Indeed while militants moved from one country to another, the organisation and the network of relationships remained.

Italian anarchists in London were not politically homogenous. In England, as well as in Italy, especially during the 1890s, there was a clear-cut distinction between ‘individualist anarchists’, supporting Luigi Parmeggiani, and ‘associationist anarchists’, led by Errico Malatesta. The rivalry between these two groups was significant, even if they occasionally collaborated. The study of these groups also allows us to understand the influence of anarchism on the wider Italian community and how fellow Italians in London perceived the anarchists.

Italian police, assisted by the embassy, kept the anarchists under continuous surveillance. Sometimes British police collaborated, although they never did it officially

because it contradicted the British concept of ‘individual freedom’. The Italian Ministry of Interior and the Italian embassy used both police agents, sent for secret missions from Italy to London, and informers who infiltrated anarchist groups. A considerable number of informers worked for the Italian embassy. De Martijs, the secretary of Italian anarchist section in London during the 1880s, was one of them. Luigi Parmeggiani, the leader of the *Anonimato* group was often suspected of being a police informer. Federico Lauria, an aged Italian music teacher, who enjoyed great esteem among both the anarchists and the Italian community, was in fact another informer employed by the Italian embassy. In 1894, Lauria made possible the capture of an Italian anarchist, Giuseppe Fornara, by the British police. Fornara and another young anarchist, Francesco Polti, were involved in a bomb plot. Their case had a vast resonance in London because it was one of the few cases in which foreign anarchists were involved in activities involving explosives in the United Kingdom. A few years later, in 1902, the discovery by the Italian anarchists of a plot organised by the Italian inspector Ettore Prina, who used Gennaro Rubino as a spy, had great repercussions among the quarrelling anarchists, the Italian embassy and the Ministry of Interior.¹⁹ On occasion, the British police attempted to undermine the anarchists. In the most famous case, involving the so-called ‘Walsall anarchists’, an Italian, Giovanni Battolla was arrested with six other anarchists on a charge of manufacturing bombs in January 1892.

The large amount of reports that these informers and secret agents sent to the Italian embassy is an important source for a study of the activity of the Italian anarchists in London. These fascinating reports need to be carefully considered. Informers were paid for their information and they easily invented or ‘transformed’ facts in order to earn their wages. Their employers were conscious of this problem, thus they often used several informers at the same time in order to compare and verify the quality of each source of information. However, when the informers found out about the presence of another informer, the reports could be heavily distorted by the rivalry that arose between them.²⁰ Therefore, all these reports must be compared to others sources, for example the letters that the anarchists wrote each other, although, for reasons of safety, they often destroyed them and thus this source is limited.

¹⁸ ‘Like the exiles of the *Risorgimento*, almost 90 percent of Italy’s exiles eventually returned home’ (Gabaccia, *Italy’s Many Diasporas*, p. 109).

¹⁹ In November of the same year, Gennaro Rubino tried to kill King Leopold I in Brussels.

²⁰ The case of the secret agent Calvo and of Inspector Prina during the ‘Rubino affair’ in 1902 exemplified this situation.

For exiled anarchists, as well as for all refugees, social and political clubs were the principal places of organisation and sociability. Clubs and societies offered mutual aid, political discussion and social life for fellow-countrymen; political debates, conferences, plays, and concerts were held in these clubs. Through these activities the anarchists collected funds to finance their political campaigns or their newspapers. The older *German Communist Workers' Educational Union*, (the CABv) in Rose Street was a model for most of the successive exiles' circles, such as the *Autonomie club* founded by Johann Most in 1878. The *Autonomie club* became a meeting point for many Italian anarchists, particularly for those linked with the *Anonimato* group. Italian anarchists organised also their own circles. Many activities were indeed held in the headquarters of *Gruppo di Studi Sociali di Londra* as well as at the *Circolo Italo-Svizzero*.

The newspapers were not only important means of propaganda, organisation and connection with the homeland, but also sources of debates and of theoretical analysis. Anarchists managed to print several newspapers, but none of them lasted very long. Some of them consisted of only one issue printed on a particular occasion. The most important were: *La Guerre Sociale* (1878); *Bollettino Socialista Rivoluzionario* (1879); *L'Associazione* (1889-90); *L'Internazionale* (1901); *Lo Sciopero Generale* (1902); *La Rivoluzione Sociale* (1903); *La Settimana Sanguinosa* (1903); *L'Insurrezione* (1905); *La Guerra Tripolina* (1912); and *La Gogna* (1912). But Italian anarchists used to write articles in other anarchist newspapers printed in London, such as *The Torch* (1895-96); *Alarm* (1896); *Freedom* (1886-1936); *Liberty* (1894-96) and *Commonweal* (1893-94).

Moreover, Italian anarchists published a considerable amount of pamphlets. Some of most famous of Malatesta's writings, such as *In tempo di elezioni*, *La politica parlamentare nel movimento socialista*, and *L'Anarchia*, were published in London.

The relationship between Italian anarchists and other anarchists and anti-parliamentary socialist groups throughout all this period, and the establishment of contacts between Italian and foreign anarchists are other crucial issues. These contacts brought several mutual theoretical influences. In London the major leaders of different countries could organise several meetings or circles to discuss and debate their ideas, with a considerable influence on the development of theoretical analysis. Meetings in circles, pubs, or restaurants were common. For example: 'After the deportation of leading anarchists from Spain in 1897 - Ricardo Mella and Tárriada del Mármol - joined Malatesta, Cherkezov, Kropotkin, Max Nettlau, Rudolf Rocker, John Turner and the occasional London labour leader in a free floating *conversazione*. Little documented,

these informal discussions modified the participants' anarchist ideas and introduced British trade unionists to anti-statist socialism'.²¹

These contacts were not merely restricted to meetings or circle discussions. Italian anarchists 'were active in the Social Democratic Federation, the Socialist League, the Anarchist groups and even the 'first' Fabians'.²² Francesco Saverio Merlino collaborated with Peter Kropotkin in the first group of *Freedom*, edited by Charlotte Wilson from 1886. 'His role in the *Freedom* group discussions of anarchist-communism and the organisation of labour in 1887 and 1888 shows that he was then still a committed anarchist'.²³ When he was living in London Merlino had the possibility to hold discussions with George Bernard Shaw, William Morris and Eduard Bernstein.²⁴

Errico Malatesta had close contacts with anarchist, labour and trade union militants. He followed the activities of British trade unions and was particularly impressed by the London's dock strike of 1889. Thanks to his deep knowledge of British trade unionism he could examine both its positive and negative aspects, particularly those arising from the danger of greater bureaucracy in the labour movement. This contributed to the development of his ideas about the organisation and the political role of labour and trade unions in Italy. He used the experience he achieved in Britain when he published the newspaper *L'Agitazione* in Ancona in 1897, and later when the Italian anarchists led the *Unione Sindacale Italiana*.²⁵

Silvio Corio was another Italian anarchist who had close contacts with British political world. For several years, he was Sylvia Pankhurst's companion, and with her he published the *Workers' Dreadnought*, and *New Times and Ethiopia News*. Moreover, Silvio Corio had contacts with the journalist Guy Bowman, leader of the British Syndicalist Educational League. Silvio Corio always maintained his relationships with British political circles and promoted anti-Fascist political campaigns during the 1920s. The importance of Italian anarchists' links with other socialist organisations in Britain was demonstrated by the massive demonstrations organised in order to oppose the deportation of Errico Malatesta in 1912. Figures from the British left, British trade

²¹ Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in London: the Era of Dynamite', in Lucio Sponza - Arturo Tosi (eds.), *A Century of Italian Emigration to Britain 1880-1980s. Five essays*, Supplement to *The Italianist*, 13, (1993), p. 28.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 25.

²³ Hermia Oliver, *The International Anarchist Movement in Late Victorian London* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p. 45.

²⁴ 'Si può dire che durante gli anni trascorsi a Londra, in un ambiente culturale di prim'ordine e a contatto con la più progredita civiltà industriale e commerciale del tempo, Merlino scopre la sua vera vocazione di studioso e di teorico' (Pier Carlo Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin a Malatesta 1862-1892*, Milan: Rizzoli, 1969, p. 220).

unions leaders, including Tom Mann, James MacDonald and Guy Bowman, attended these demonstrations.

The First World War caused a deep schism in internationalist co-operation. Anarchist and socialist camps were both internally divided by their attitudes towards the war. In 1915 an international manifesto against the war was published and signed by several anarchists: the Italians were Malatesta, Recchioni, Frigerio, Calzitta, Bertoni, Bersani and Savioli. This manifesto criticised the distinction between ‘offensive war’ and ‘defensive war’, a distinction assumed by Kropotkin as well as by all socialist interventionists. One year later, the ‘Manifeste des Seizes’ sealed the break among the anarchists. In London Errico Malatesta wrote several articles to contrast Kropotkin’s point of view; and those published by *Freedom* were particularly important. Within the Italian anarchist community, several anarchists followed Malatesta’s position: among them Enrico Defendi, Emidio Recchioni, Pietro Gualducci. They addressed their anti-war propaganda especially to young people to convince them to desert from the army and they provided them with false medical certificates to get them exempted from service.

After the end of the First War World, in 1919, Errico Malatesta, the leader of Italian anarchism concluded his long history of exile and returned to Italy, where he received a triumphal welcome by many Italians.²⁶ However, another chapter in the history of the Italian community in London began. In 1921, a section of the Italian *Fasci* Abroad, one of the firsts created outside Italy, opened in London.²⁷ Soon a dramatic conflict was to begin within the Italian community and Italian anarchists joined the socialists and the communists in the fight against Fascism.²⁸

²⁵ On British’ influence on Malatesta’s labour strategy see: Levy, ‘Malatesta in Exile’, pp. 271-285.

²⁶ Carl Levy, ‘Charisma and Social Movements: Errico Malatesta and Italian Anarchism’, *Modern Italy*, III, 2, 1998, pp. 205-217.

²⁷ On the exportation of fascism to the Italian colony in London: Claudia Baldoli, *Exporting Fascism. Italian Fascists and Britain’s Italians in the 1930s* (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2003).

²⁸ See: Alfio Bernabei, *Esuli ed emigrati nel Regno Unito, 1920-1940* (Milan: Mursia, 1997).

Literature and archival review

The history of Italian emigration has been extensively covered. The most recent and comprehensive study on the phenomenon is the two-volume work on *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana. Partenze* (2001) and *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana. Arrivi* (2002), edited by Piero Bevilacqua, Andreina De Clementi, and Emilio Franzina. Another account in English is *Italy's Many Diasporas* by Donna Gabaccia (2000), which gives a synoptic overview of Italian migration and emphasises its importance both for Italy and for the host countries. The history of Italian emigrants in the United Kingdom in the nineteenth century has been studied by Lucio Sponza in *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain: Realities and Images* (1988). Sponza explored the life of the Italian colonies in the United Kingdom, particularly that of London, describing the material conditions of the immigrants and their social and regional backgrounds. Further studies on the same theme are those by Terri Colpi *The Italian Factor. The Italian Community in Great Britain* (1991) and *Italians Forward. A visual History of the Italian Community in Great Britain* (1991). The Second World War has been studied by Sponza in *Divided Loyalties. Italians in Britain during the Second World War* (2000). Alfio Bernabei focused on the activity of the Italian anti-fascists in the United Kingdom in *Esuli ed emigrati italiani nel Regno Unito 1920-1940* (1997), concentrating on one individual, Decio Anzani. Claudia Baldoli instead, in *Exporting Fascism. Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930s* (2003) analysed the Fascist policies toward the Italian colonies in Britain in the pre-war years.

The relationship between political exile and labour migration is the common thread of the essays edited by Maurizio Degl'Innocenti in *L'esilio nella storia del movimento operaio e l'emigrazione economica* (1992). The editor's contribution 'L'esilio nella storia contemporanea' and that by Fedele Santi 'L'esilio nella storia del movimento operaio e l'emigrazione economica' are the most interesting for this dissertation. This subject has also been discussed in *Gli italiani fuori d'Italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paesi d'adozione, 1880-1940*, edited by Bruno Bezza (1983). Political refugees in the United Kingdom and their political and cultural impact are analysed by Bernard Porter in *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics* (1979).

The relationships between political and labour migration during the Risorgimento is analysed by Donna Gabaccia in 'Class, Exile, and Nationalism at Home and Abroad: the Italian Risorgimento', published in *Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States* (2001), edited by Gabaccia and Fraser Ottanelli. No recent studies have appeared on Italian refugees in London during the *Risorgimento* and many aspects still need to be investigated. In the 1930s Emilia Morelli dealt with the topic by studying Mazzini's life in her book *Mazzini in Inghilterra* (1938). Other works on this subject appeared in *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento* (1954): 'L'emigrazione politica italiana del Risorgimento' by Galante Garrone and 'La circolazione delle idee' by Franco Venturi. Venturi provided another relevant contribution on this aspect in 'L'Italia fuori d'Italia', in *Storia d'Italia, dal primo Settecento all'Unità* (1973).

The most comprehensive surveys of Italian anarchism in the nineteenth century are the essential *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin a Malatesta 1862-1892* (1969) and *Storia degli anarchici nell'epoca degli attentati* (1974 and 1981) both by Pier Carlo Masini. The more recent *Il sol dell'avvenire. L'anarchismo in Italia dalle origini alla Prima Guerra mondiale* (1999) by Maurizio Antonioli and Pier Carlo Masini is a history of the main trends that characterised the anarchist movement (individualism, organisationalism and syndicalism). *Il socialismo anarchico in Italia* (1959) by Enzo Santarelli is a classic book on the subject, although it is strongly influenced by the ideological beliefs of its author. *L'anarchismo in Italia, fra movimento e partito: storia e documenti dell'anarchismo italiano* (1984) by Adriana Dadà is a valuable work for the original documents published in it. A major project sponsored by several universities in Italy is the collection of biographies of Italian anarchist militants published in *Dizionario Biografico dell'Anarchismo Italiano* (2003). The first volume has been published at the end of 2003, while the second volume is due to appear in 2004. Other useful reference works are: *Il movimento operaio italiano. Dizionario biografico 1853-1943* (1975-1979) by Franco Andreucci and Tommaso Detti, and Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo. Periodici e numeri unici anarchici in lingua italiana pubblicati all'estero (1872-1971)* (1972).

The most valuable works in English are *Italian Anarchism 1864-1892* (1993) by Nunzio Pernicone and Carl Levy's chapter 'Italian Anarchism, 1870-1926' in D. Goodway (ed.) *For Anarchism. History, Theory, and Practice* (1989). The influence of Italian anarchism on both the history and culture of Italian socialist and labour

movement until the 1920s has been examined by Carl Levy in *Gramsci and the Anarchists* (1999).

An overview of British anarchism during the period covered by this research can be found in John Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse* (1978) and Hermia Oliver, *The International Anarchist Movement in Late Victorian London* (1983). Some consequences of the presence of foreign anarchists in England have been studied by Bernard Porter in *The Origins of Britain's Political Police* (1985) and, more extensively, in *The Origins of the Vigilant State* (1987). An interesting work on the London clubs is by Stan Shipley, *Club Life and Socialism in Mid-Victorian London* (1983).

The monumental biography of Malatesta by Giampietro Berti, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano e internazionale* (2003) provides, although with some minor inaccuracies and lacking British sources, a broad account of Malatesta's activity in London. Carl Levy treated this subject in two articles. 'Malatesta in exile', published in *Annali della Fondazione Luigi Einaudi* (1981), is an extensive account of the years that Malatesta spent in London analysing political, ideological and material aspects. It also investigates how the permanence in the United Kingdom and the contact with the London exiles' community influenced Malatesta's thought. The article describes the contacts that Malatesta kept with his fellow countrymen and his daily life during exile and it gives information on other Italian anarchist exiles in London at that time. The second article, 'Malatesta in London: The Era of Dynamite', in *A Century of Italian Emigration to Britain 1880-1980s. Five Essays* (1993) focuses on the development of Malatesta's thought during the 1890s. It also considers Malatesta's relationship with other foreign anarchists and with socialist and British labour militants and intellectuals.

Primary sources on Italian anarchists are kept in several Italian archives. At the Archivio Centrale di Stato in Rome, the collection of *Casellario Politico Centrale* provides materials gathered by the police about individual militants. The analysis and cross-referencing of those records have provided a large amount of information. The collection of *Ministero dell'Interno. Divisione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza* stores the monthly reports sent by the police inspectors of the Italian embassy in London to the Foreign Ministry. The *Ministero di Grazia e Giustizia. Affari Generali* has copies of newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets published by the anarchists in London. The *Archivio Storico e Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri* is another valuable archive. The

collections of *Polizia Internazionale*, *Ambasciata Londra*, Serie Politica P, and *Serie Z contenzioso*, provided exceptionally interesting documents. However, despite all the efforts made by the personnel to maximise the quality of the service, the extremely reduced resources made available by the Foreign Ministry to the management of the archive, greatly limited the availability of sources.

The International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam represents an indispensable source for the study of anarchism. The immense archive of the anarchist historian Max Nettlau is an invaluable source of anarchist documents. Indeed Nettlau collected them during his life from the individuals discussed in this dissertation. Luigi Fabbri, Paul Brousse, Emidio Recchioni, and other collections provided other useful documents. Moreover, with the exception of *La Gogna*, the Institute holds the entire collection of the newspapers published by the Italian anarchists in London.

The Public Record Office in Kew holds documents concerning the activity of Italian anarchists, in particular in the files of the Home Office correspondence. The records of the Criminal Court provide documents concerning trials in which Italian anarchists were involved. Although the British police kept all the anarchists in London under continuous surveillance, apparently no record of this activity has been kept.

At the Newspaper Library in Colindale and in the British Library it is possible to find many issues of the newspapers published by anarchists in London, as well as some of their leaflets and pamphlets. Moreover, the British Library holds the entire collection of the individualist newspaper *L'International*.

In the next chapter I will present a synoptic overview of the Italian anarchist community in London.

Chapter 2

Exile in the History of Italian Anarchism: London, an Overview

...i cavalieri erranti
son trascinati al nord
e partono cantando
con la speranza in cuor.¹

The origins of Italian anarchism were deeply influenced by the persecution that Italian governments put into practice in order to repress the activities of its militants. This strategy of repression was based on several special measures taken by the different governments in power, both of the Right and of the Left, and carried out by the police and security forces. The most effective measures were preventive detention, which compelled some anarchists to spend many months in jail before trial, laws against the press, and finally, the most threatening among them, the *domicilio coatto* (forced domicile) and the *ammonizione* (admonishment).²

Originally, the laws concerning forced domicile and admonishment were promulgated against common criminals, in particular to fight *brigantaggio* (banditry), but, after the Left gained power in 1876, they were directed especially against the anarchists. Indeed, the government did not grant the status of political activist to the Internationalists; instead, it regarded them as an ‘association of malefactors’.³ This

¹ Pietro Gori, *Addio Lugano Bella*. Quoted in *Addio Lugano Bella, antologia della canzone anarchica in Italia* (I dischi del sole - Edizioni del Gallo, no date).

² Admonishment was an administrative procedure based solely on a police statement. Therefore there was no trial and it was impossible for the accused to defend himself in front of a junior magistrate. People under admonishment suffered notable restriction of personal freedom and every violation was severely punished. Moreover, the Ministry of Interior could send people under admonishment to ‘forced domicile’. A man under admonishment was ‘un prigioniero a piede libero’ (Armando Borghi, *Mezzo secolo di anarchia 1898-1945*, Naples: E.S.I., 1954, p. 32). On the forced domicile and the admonishment see: Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism. 1864-1892* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 130-33; Vittorio Lollini, *L’Ammonizione e il domicilio coatto* (Bologna: Fratelli Treves, 1882); Ambra Boldetti, ‘La repressione in Italia: il caso del 1894’, *Rivista di storia contemporanea*, VI, n. 4, (October 1977), pp. 481-515; G. Sacchetti, ‘Controllo sociale e domicilio coatto nell’Italia crispina’, *Rivista storica dell’anarchismo*, III, n.1, 1996, pp. 93-104. See also: Ovida, ‘The legislation of fear’, *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 56, 1894, pp. 552-561.

³ Canto dei malfattori: ‘Ai gridi ed ai lamenti/di noi plebe tradita/la lega dei potenti/si scosse impaurita/e prenci e magistrati/gridarono coi signori/che siamo degli arrabbiati./dei rudi malfattori!/ Folli non siam nè tristi/nè bruti nè birbanti/ma siam degli anarchisti/pel bene militanti;/al giusto e al vero mirando/strugger cerchiam gli errori/perciò ci han messo al bando/col dirci malfattori!/ Deh t’affretta a sorgere/o sol dell’avvenir:/vivere vogliamo liberi/non vogliamo più servir...’. Words by A. Panizza, music of anonymous, 1892. Quoted in *Addio Lugano Bella, antologia della canzone anarchica in Italia* (I dischi

occurred in particular after the insurrection carried out by the Internationalists in the Matese region in Southern Italy, in 1877. The government of the Left replied with a repressive campaign that ‘reduced the Italian Federation to little more than a memory within three years’.⁴

Those legal measures were increased and largely used under Crispi’s government during another wave of violent repression that hit anarchist organisations during the 1890s. The failed attempt on Crispi’s life by Paolo Lega on 16 June 1894, followed a week later by the assassination of the French President Sadi Carnot by the Italian anarchist Sante Caserio allowed the Italian Prime Minister, ‘the Mussolini of the time’⁵, to promulgate the first of July three special laws against the anarchists. That started the period remembered by the anarchists as the ‘*dittatura Crispina*’.⁶

The first of these three laws (number 314) was directed against criminal offences committed with explosives and against incitement to commit explosions. The second (number 315) aimed to control and suppress the subversive press, in particular in order to prevent anarchist political organising among soldiers. The third law, the ‘Provvedimenti eccezionali di pubblica sicurezza’, restricted freedoms of association and expression, facilitating the practice of sending political activists to ‘forced residence’.⁷

When the socialist deputy Andrea Costa explained the new resolutions to the Chamber, he stated:

...Non è più necessario che trattisi di persona ritenuta pericolosa per la sicurezza pubblica; non è più necessario che sia intervenuta una condanna od anche un provvedimento per un reato qualsiasi. Basta che trattisi di persona che abbia manifestato il deliberato proposito di commettere vie di fatto contro gli ordinamenti sociali (art.3); ovvero che appartenga ad associazioni o riunioni che abbiano per oggetto di sovvertire per vie di fatto gli ordinamenti sociali (art.5).⁸

del sole - Edizioni del Gallo, no date).

⁴ Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism*, p. 129.

⁵ Emidio Recchioni’s letter to Max Nettlau, 26-09-1931, IISH, Max Nettlau Archive, Correspondence (microfilm n. 60-61).

⁶ As Vernon Richards remembered in an interview for the documentary ‘Dangerous Characters’, Channel 4, 1987.

⁷ Pier Carlo Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani nell’epoca degli attentati* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1981), pp. 53-66.

⁸ Report by Costa at the Chamber, 15 July 1894, quoted in Raffaele Majetti, *L’anarchia e le leggi che la reprimono in Italia* (Caserta: Stabilimento tipografico Elzeviriano, Domenico Fabiano editore, 1894), p. 53.

The authorities largely used this law against socialists and republicans as well, taking advantage of the vagueness of its definition, as Costa himself underlined in his speech.⁹ More than 3,000 anarchists were detained in islands such as Favignana, Lampedusa, Pantelleria, Ustica, Lipari, Ponza, Ventotene, and the so-called ‘Italian Spielberg’, the fortress of Porto Ercole.¹⁰

The number of *coatti* increased so sharply that the Government was compelled to find new room to segregate them. A penal colony was opened at Assab, in Africa, where:

...colla severità della disciplina alla quale i coatti di Assab saranno sottoposti, si spera di poter incutere un salutare terrore agli altri condannati al domicilio coatto che restano nel continente e troncane le fila di criminose associazioni.¹¹

During these recurrent periods of severe repression, for the Italian anarchists ‘the only way to escape [...] was to go underground or flee into exile’.¹²

The countries where most anarchists found refuge were France,¹³ Switzerland and Belgium, but some of them emigrated to the United States while others established small communities in the Balkans, in the Levant and in South America.¹⁴

⁹ ‘Le difficoltà incontrate nella redazione di questa formula sono dimostrate dai molti tentativi fatti prima di concretarla, dagli studi che l’hanno preceduta, dalle critiche e dalle discussioni alle quali ha dato luogo. Non si può, infatti, disconoscere che essa è riuscita alquanto vaga e lascia largo campo all’apprezzamento, specialmente per quanto riguarda *gli ordinamenti sociali ...*’ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism*, p. 288. See Pietro Gori, *Il Canto dei coatti*: ‘Addio compagni addio,/sorelle spose, madri;/ la società dei ladri/ ci ha fatto relegar/sepolti in riva al mar./Siamo coatti e baldi,/per l’isola partiamo/ e non ci vergogniamo/perché questo soffrir/è sacro all’avvenir. Ma la sublime Idea/che il nostro cor sorregge/sfida la infame legge/ che ai cari ci strappò/ e qui ci incatenò. A viso aperto i diritti/ al popolo insegnammo/e a liberar pugnammo/ da tanta iniquità/l’oppressa Umanità. Sognammo una felice/ famiglia di fratelli/perciò fummo ribelli/contr’ogni sfruttator,/contr’ogni oppressor./Vedemmo l’alba immensa/ de le speranze umane;/lottammo per il pane/ e per la libertà/contr’ogni autorità./Vi giunga, o plebi ignare,/ da questa fossa infame/del freddo e de la fame/sdegnoso, incitator/quest’inno del dolor./O borghesia crudele,/tu non ci fai paura:/ la società futura/per la tua gran viltà/te pur condannerà./Ma voi, lavoratori,/voi poveri sfruttati,/per questi relegati/rei di bandire il Ver/avrete un pio pensier!/ Addio, dolente Italia,/d’illustri ladri ostello,/di tresche ree bordello,/stretti a la nostra fé/oggi partiam da te./Ma un dì ritorneremo/più fieri ed implacati,/finchè rivendicati/non sieno i diritti ancor/d’ogni lavorator./Straziate, o sgherri vili,/le carni, i corpi nostri,/ma sotto i colpi vostri/il cor non piegherà./L’idea non morirà’. In: *Addio Lugano Bella, antologia della canzone anarchica in Italia*.

¹¹The unhealthy climate, extremely dangerous for the prisoners as well as for the warders, and the heavy cost for the transport of *coatti* compelled Italian government to close this colony a few months after its opening. (see: Ambra Boldetti, ‘La repressione in Italia’).

¹²Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism*, p. 134.

¹³‘In una lettera sequestrata al Cafiero ed inviata dal consolato in Marsiglia al Ministero degli Esteri l’11 aprile 1881, l’anarchico vedeva proprio nella Francia l’unico rifugio sicuro per l’avvenire, qualora la Svizzera avesse diminuito il diritto d’asilo’, (Stefania Ruggeri, *Fonti per la storia del movimento operaio in Italia presenti nell’Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri. Il fondo ‘Polizia Internazionale*, in *Il movimento socialista e popolare in Puglia dalle origini alla Costituzione (1874-1946)*, a cura di Fabio Grassi e Gianni C. Dollo, vol. II, Bari-Lecce, Istituto “Vito Mario Stampacchia”,

However, the countries where the anarchists expatriated varied according to political events, change of governments and to the international pressures that were imposed on their hosts. This happened especially after the period of assassinations and murders throughout Europe in the 1890s. Countries with a remarkably long tradition of asylum such as Switzerland, which since the period of the First International used to give hospitality to a large number of refugees (among whom Cafiero, Bakunin, and Kropotkin), began to expel the anarchists. Indeed, after the killing of Sadi Carnot, president of France, by Sante Caserio, the Federal Swiss Council decreed the capture and the subsequent expulsion of the Italian refugees. Pietro Gori and sixteen other Italian anarchists were arrested and expelled from the Confederation. During his days in prison awaiting for expulsion Pietro Gori wrote the song that became the anthem of the Italian anarchism: 'Addio Lugano Bella'.¹⁵

Expelled from Switzerland, Pietro Gori and the other anarchists,¹⁶ after searching for refuge elsewhere in Europe, eventually landed in the United Kingdom, at that time the only country where a refugee could feel relatively safe. Therefore, although England 'was a refugee's last choice rather than his first',¹⁷ a remarkable number of Italian anarchists found shelter in the United Kingdom, chiefly in London.

England became an important centre of political emigration because of its traditional policy of liberal asylum, which made England unique among European countries. The tradition of free access to the country was deep-rooted in British culture, because it was tightly linked with the idea of free trade and based on the knowledge of the advantage of learning skills from foreigners. Furthermore, the acceptance of political refugees was based on 'principle'.¹⁸ Since immigration did not seem to cause

1986, p. 145). The letter is quoted in ASMAE, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Polizia Internazionale, 1881 correspondence.

¹⁴ Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in Exile', *Annali della Fondazione Luigi Einaudi*, XV, (1981): pp. 245-280.

¹⁵ 'Addio Lugano bella,/o dolce terra pia;/scacciati senza colpa/gli anarchici van via./E partono cantando/con la speranza in cuor./Ed è per voi sfruttati,/per voi lavoratori/che siamo ammanettati/al par dei malfattori!/Eppur la nostra idea/è solo idea d'amor./Anonimi compagni,/amici che restate,/le verità sociali/da forti propagate./E` questa la vendetta/che noi vi domandiam./Ma tu che ci discacci/con una vil menzogna,/repubblica borghese,/un dì ne avrai vergogna./Noi oggi t'accusiamo/in faccia all'avvenir./Banditi senza tregua andrem di terra in terra/a predicar la pace/ed a bandir la guerra./ La pace fra gli oppressi/la guerra agli oppressor!/Elvezia il tuo governo/schiavo d'altrui si rende,/d'un popolo gagliardo/le tradizioni offende./E insulta la leggenda/del tuo Guglielmo Tell./Addio cari compagni,/amici luganesi/addio bianche di neve/montagne ticinesi,/i cavalieri erranti/son trascinati al nord/e partono cantando/con la speranza in cuor'. Pietro Gori, *Addio Lugano Bella, antologia*.

¹⁶ The other anarchists were Riccardo Bonometti, Domenico Borgessiani, Luigi Radaelli, Edoardo Milano, Cini ed Enrico Defendi (PRO, HO, 144/587/B2840C, *Foreign anarchists coming to U.K. 1892-1906*).

¹⁷ Bernard Porter, *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics* (Cambridge University Press: 1979), p. 2.

¹⁸ This was different for the political refugees, who did not give an economic return to the British

substantial problems, the British government did not pass any legislation in order to regulate it, except under very particular circumstances. In this way, from 1826 to 1905, apart from a gap due to the revolutions of 1848-50, all immigrants, either refugees or not, enjoyed complete free access to the United Kingdom.¹⁹

Furthermore, British legislation on extradition made England safer than other countries for political refugees.²⁰ Indeed, British law did not authorise extradition for discussing political ideas or holding unorthodox opinions, as the English delegate explained at the International conference to fight anarchism held in Rome in 1898:

Ces considérations ont pour base le caractère de la loi Anglaise. [...].
 Cette loi ne reconnaît pas l'expulsion ni des indigènes ni des étrangers, et les opinions qui ne vont pas jusqu'à l'excitation au crime ne saurient être la base de la poursuites judiciaires [sic].
 On ne soumet pas non plus à la surveillance de la police les personnes contre lesquelles on ne peut alléguer qu'elles ont l'intention de commettre un crime, ou d'exciter à des actes criminels.
 Le principe doit également être maintenu qu'on ne peut extraditer pour un crime qui est réellement un délit politique.²¹

Since the law was based on the presumption of innocence, there was no possibility for legal intervention before a crime was actually committed, as the same delegate explained at the conference: 'We do not persecute opinions. The only question with us is, is there crime or not?'.²²

The issue of extradition was one of the main reasons why the British delegation at this conference decided to abstain from the final resolution. Foreign governments could obtain the extradition of political opponents from the United Kingdom only requesting it for common crimes. The correspondence between the Italian Minister of Interior and the embassy in London shows how often the Italian authorities dealt with this problem.

industry. There were many disadvantages in the acceptance of political refugees: most of them were poor, they had not special skills, they could create domestic problems if they joined local left-wing movements (as the Chartists, for example), and they provoked diplomatic difficulties with other countries. The motivation to accept this kind of aliens was that it was required by principle'. (Porter, *The Refugee Question*, p. 6).

¹⁹ 'England once possessed an Alien Act passed as measures of national defence during the war with revolutionary France. After the restoration of peace their provision had been steadily eroded, until nothing more was required than the production of a passport by the immigrants and a declaration by the captain of the ship of their presence on board. Finally the requirement of the passport had been removed, and the captain's declaration had been allowed to fall into abeyance' (Elie Halévy, *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century*, London: Benn, 1961, vol. 5, p. 373).

²⁰ 'Like all the best British freedoms, this policy of asylum was maintained not by law, but by the absence of laws' (Porter, *The Refugee Question*, p. 3).

²¹ Sir P. Curie to the Marquess of Salisbury, 23 December 1898, PRO, HO 45/10254/X36450/9.

²² Sir P. Curie to the Marquess of Salisbury, 6 December 1898, PRO, HO 45/10254/ X36450/19.

In spite of urgent requests from other European countries, England never accepted the idea of enacting laws dealing specifically with political refugees in order to prevent their entrance to the country or to allow for their expulsion. This was due to different reasons. In particular, one of the unquestionable principles of British legislation was the general application of any law. Moreover, the British government refused to pass laws under pressure from other countries, since this was understood as an unacceptable interference in British domestic affairs.

British policy toward immigration changed completely with the introduction of an Aliens Act in 1905. Even during the last years of the nineteenth century British public opinion had supported the passage of an act that would prohibit the immigration of destitute aliens. This was especially the case after a large wave of Jewish immigrants from Russia arrived in the UK and settled in London's East End in the wake of government backed pogroms. Moreover, because the supporters of an Aliens bill believed that the increase in socialist and anarchist activities in London was a direct consequence of immigration, this act was meant to 'raise the material position of the poor, and to ward off the revolution'.²³ The myth of London as the secret centre for the plots of international anarchists, added to the stereotypes about Italians and Jews as dangerous and violent people who, in the common imagination, were seen as 'criminal and anarchists', played its role.²⁴ Although attempts to introduce laws regulating immigration were rejected by Parliament twice, in 1894 and in 1903, eventually an Act came into force on 1 January 1906. With the introduction of the Aliens Act, the poor were no longer granted the possibility to enter the country unless they could demonstrate that they were able to provide for their own means of subsistence. This was not applicable to those who could prove that they were refugees fleeing political or religious persecution. In this way, even though the right of asylum had been partially safeguarded, it lost its most important characteristic: no longer automatic, it became discretionary, since the victims of political or religious persecution were requested to prove their status. Moreover, a new power established by the Act allowed the Home Office, with the permission of a law court, to expel immigrants convicted of a common crime, and this endangered exiled anarchists. The community of Italian anarchists dealt with the consequences of this bill very soon. As early as August 1905, the British police arrested two Italian anarchists, Adolfo Antonelli and Francesco Barberi, for publishing

²³ Bernard Gainer, *The Alien Invasion* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1972), p. 102.

²⁴ About Jewish immigration to England see J. Garrard, *The English and the Immigration 1880-1910* (London-New York-Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971).

and distributing the anarchist newspaper *L'Insurrezione* on 29 July, the anniversary of the assassination of King Umberto I by Gaetano Bresci. According to the prosecutor this paper justified the crimes of assassination and incitement to the murder of the sovereign heads of Europe. The two anarchists were sentenced respectively to nine and ten months of hard labour. The Italian inspector in charge of the surveillance of anarchists in London at that time wrote in his monthly report to the Italian Ministry of Interior:

Una certa ansietà esiste fra gli an. circa alla sorte di Antonelli e Barberi, ad ultimata pena.

Alcuni, ad esempio Cova, dicono che certamente saranno espulsi, ch  furono condannati secondo la Legge comune; senza che nella sentenza fosse fatta menzione, essere il loro un reato politico (ci  corrisponde al vero).

Altri, come Malatesta obiettano che la legge non ha valore retroattivo, il che   soltanto parzialmente vero, perch  essa dice che possono essere espulsi tutti gli stranieri che subirono condanne in Inghilterra.²⁵

The same inspector gave details of the intention of the anarchists to oppose this bill.

Ad ogni modo   certo che, se l'Antonelli ed il Barberi saranno espulsi, avverranno proteste. Malatesta   deciso di fare dell'Antonelli "Un Test Case"(come dicono qui) vale a dire un caso legale che stabilisce un precedente con forza di legge; qualunque sia la decisione del Magistrato.²⁶

In a previous report the inspector had written:

Mi si riferisce che si stia formando un gruppo segreto ad iniziativa di compagni anarchici italiani residenti in Francia, d'accordo col Malatesta, per preparare il terreno ~~e la possibilit ~~ nel caso di espulsioni tanto dalla Francia, come dall'Inghilterra, sia per un aiuto, come pure per segnalare al pubblico tali fatti, per mezzo della stampa.²⁷

Several years later, in 1912, Malatesta himself was nearly extradited to Italy after being sentenced to five months' imprisonment because the spy Bellelli had accused him of criminal libel. The British Government had to reconsider this decision due to international pressure and the mass demonstrations held in Malatesta's support in London .

²⁵Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, December 1905, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

²⁶*Ibidem*

²⁷Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, October 1905, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b.22,

Nevertheless, at least until the beginning of the twentieth century, the sojourn of the Italian anarchists in London continued a long tradition of hospitality.

The first significant groups of Italian refugees moved to London during the 1820s, because of the repression that followed the failure of the revolutions in Naples and Piedmont in 1820-21. In that period, the Italian refugees together with the Poles were the largest community of exiles in London. To overcome the great difficulties that characterised the life of all refugees, Italian exiles could take advantage of the widespread Italophilia prevalent in the educated middle and upper classes in Britain during the era of Romanticism.²⁸ Since then, ‘mai anteriormente e mai in periodo posteriore l’Italiano venne tanto largamente letto in Inghilterra quanto negli anni venti del secolo XIX’.²⁹ Because the Italian language was considered an essential part of education for the professional and upper classes, many Italian exiles could easily find jobs as language teachers. In this way they had the possibility to forge linkages with cultural élite and political circles and defend the Italian cause. By the 1830s, this community of Italian refugees became ‘uno dei centri più attivi e influenti della nostra emigrazione in Europa’.³⁰ Some of these Italians eventually integrated themselves into English life, and obtained important positions within society. Antonio Panizzi became director of the British Museum; Antonio Gallenga was professor at the University College and, few years later, foreign correspondent for *The Times*; Gabriele Rossetti, whose nieces were to publish many years later the anarchist newspaper *The Torch*, became professor of Italian at King’s College.

In January 1837, Giuseppe Mazzini, the refugee who had the greatest impact on the Italian community during the first half of the nineteenth century, arrived in London. For thirty years he played a crucial role in the world of the exiles and became the most prominent personality among both Italian and foreign political refugees. He was able to use the Italian network of political exiles as the basis for his agitation for Italian national independence. During his long permanence in England he set up innumerable projects, even when he was financially hard pressed. He employed great efforts in creating a network of relationships with British politicians and intellectuals in order to spread support for the unification of Italy. He also established contacts with British Chartism,

²⁸‘Si andò allora accumulando quel capitale di simpatia, di interesse, di reciproca conoscenza che venne poi speso e messo in opera nei decenni del Risorgimento’ (Franco Venturi, ‘L’Italia fuori d’Italia’, in *Storia d’Italia. Dal primo settecento all’unità*, Turin: Einaudi, 1973, vol. III, p. 1195).

²⁹ *Ibidem*

³⁰Galante Garrone, ‘L’emigrazione politica italiana del Risorgimento’, in *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento*, XLI, 1954, pp. 223-242.

the New Model Trade unionists, secularists and other reformers in the labour and co-operative movements.

Plotting forays to Italy with other exiles and British supporters, Mazzini also worked actively within the Italian colony in London, which suffered from great poverty. In 1840, he organised the *Unione degli operai italiani* as a section of the *Giovine Italia*, probably in opposition to the explicitly socialist *Arbeiterbildungsverein*.³¹ The newspaper of Mazzini's association, *L'Apostolato popolare*, which served as instrument of education and propaganda, showed clearly Mazzini's views about the 'education' of the working class and the necessity of collaboration between social classes. At the same time he organised a free school for the children of the Italian community, most of whom were employed as organ-grinders and worked up to 11-12 hours a day.³² The school was based at n. 5, Greville Street (off, Leather Lane, Holborn) in the middle of the extremely depressed district of Holborn. Mazzini remembered the opening of the school in this way:

Le scuole hanno ad essere una leva dell'Associazione. Voi altri avete il difetto di vedere le cose complicatissime, mentre io trovo che l'azione la semplifica in un modo strano. Il problema per fondare una scuola a Parigi si riduce a questo: trovare tanti uomini della Giovine Italia che vogliano spendere un'ora della sera ogni giorno, o ogni due giorni, insegnando l'a. b. c. e qualche cosa altro ai lor fratelli poveri; più spendere qualche decina di franchi in una sala: non altro: cominciata la Scuola, o per meglio dire, dichiarata la volontà di cominciarla, voi trovate sottoscrizioni che bastano. Non verranno allievi? Dimando scusa: gli organisti di Londra, etc. non sono di pasta diversa da quei di Parigi: i nostri discutevano intrepidamente come voi fate se vi sarebbero dodici o sedici allievi: ho aperta la scuola e sono duecento. Or sapete come ho aperta la Scuola? senza un soldo: con una Circolare che diceva: parecchi Italiani hanno deciso et.; il Direttore è il signor tale; le sottoscrizioni sono di mezza corona mensile, etc. Sono venuti allievi e sottoscrizioni; se mi fermava a studiare chi potrebbe stabilirla e come potrebbe stabilirsi, non esisteva a quest'ora.³³

This school produced two newspapers, *Il Pellegrino* and *L'Educatore*. It achieved remarkable success, and its example was followed in other countries.

These activities were interrupted after Mazzini left to Italy in order to take his part in the revolutions of 1848. Mazzini was forced to return to his refuge in London after the fall of the Roman Republic, of which he was president, in 1849. In this period

³¹ Enrico Verdecchia, 'Tedeschi e italiani: rapporti e contrasti tra due comunità nell'esilio londinese', *Bollettino della Domus Mazziniana*, 1996, p. 181.

³² About the organ-grinders, see R. Paulucci di Calboli, *I girovaghi italiani in Inghilterra ed i suonatori ambulanti* (Città di Castello: Lapi tipografo editore, 1893).

³³ Giuseppe Mazzini, 'Lettera a Giuseppe Lamberti, 26 1842', *Scritti editi ed inediti*, vol. XXIII, pp. 77-78.

the number of political refugees who escaped to the United Kingdom from the European reaction reached probably its apogee during the Victorian age.

The support for the cause of the unification of Italy was very strong also among the working classes, as the visit of Giuseppe Garibaldi in London in April 1864 showed:

London stands for seven hours on its feet awaiting its guest; the triumphant ovations increase with every day; the appearance in the streets of the man in the red shirt calls forth an outburst of enthusiasm, crowds escort him from the opera at one o'clock in the morning and at seven in the morning the crowds meet him in front of Stafford House. Working men and dukes, lords and seamstresses, bankers and High Church clergymen; the feudal wreck, Derby, and the relic of the February Revolution, the republican of 1848; Queen Victoria's eldest son and the barefooted crossing sweeper born without father or mother, vie with one another in trying to capture a handshake, a glance, a word.³⁴

During the second part of his exile, Mazzini's activities included the creation of the *Comité Démocratique Européen Central* with Ledru-Rollin in 1850. Mazzini also founded the 'Italian Working Men's Association of Mutual Progress' which in 1864 counted 350 members. On 13 December 1865, this Association joined the 'International Workers' Association' (the First International) with great enthusiasm.³⁵ At this time Mazzini probably believed that he could influence this new radical internationalist organisation.³⁶

³⁴ Alexander Herzen, *The memoirs of Alexander Herzen* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968) vol. III, pp. 1253-54.

³⁵ This manifesto was read by G. P. Fontana, vice-president of the 'Italian Working Men's Association of Mutual Progress', at the central council meeting of the International on 3 January 1865: 'To the central council of the International Working Men's Association. Friends, the Association instituted for mutual progression amongst the Italian working men residing in London give their full approbation to your aim and method. They enter your compact and pledge themselves to the fulfilment of the duties contained in it. A bond of union has been formerly established at the recent working men's congress at Naples between most of the Italian working men's associations. A central direction has been elected and we have no doubt that we now do, will be done at no distant period by that central direction for the bulk of our Italian confederate brothers. To establish a general practical brotherhood, a general unity of aim amongst the working men of all nations, to promote everywhere and on the same basis their moral, intellectual and economical improvement, to embrace according to opportunities afforded all the important questions affecting the condition of working men, from taxation, electoral reform and political rights to mutual relief societies, co-operation and educational institutions (for this must be your aim), is no doubt a bold attempt fraught with difficulties requiring time and a persisting unconquerable activity on our part; still it is a grand moral and truly religious aim. It elevates our tastes from the inferior narrow ground of local interests; it points out the dawning of a new era which will cancel inequalities, compulsory ignorance, the present wage system, and [which will promote] the substitution of equal duties and rights for all, true national education and the association system for producing and consuming. It is the thing to be attempted and therefore we do join you. May our union last for ever!'. Members of the council of the Italian Working Men's Association of Mutual Progress were D. Lama (president), G. P. Fontana and C. Setacci (vice-presidents), A. Vaccansi (treasurer), G. Geninazzi, F. Fenilli, F. Solustri, Gintini, Biloshy, and Velati (councillors), dr. G. Bagnagatti (secretary). See Institute of Marxism Leninism, *General Council of the First International 1864-1866* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1965), pp. 1-61.

³⁶R. Hostetter, *The Italian Socialist Movement. Origins (1860-1882)*, (New York-London-Toronto: 1958),

Mazzini's role in the constitution of the I.W.A. is well known.³⁷ On 28 September 1864, his delegates Domenico Lama and Major Louis Wolf, members of the Italian Working Men's Association, attended the inaugural meeting of the International Workers' Association held in St. Martin's Hall. Wolf was elected to the sub-committee that wrote the draft of the constitution of the I.W.A. Later this draft was rewritten and significantly changed by Karl Marx. Domenico Lama, the president of the Association, was named also secretary of the council of the I.W.A. Fontana, who put forward the request of joining the International, was elected a member of the committee. Eight Italian Londoners were present at the General Council in December 1864, among them, Setacci and Aldovrandi, respectively vice-president and councillor of the 'Association'.

Mazzini and the other Italians withdrew from the I.W.A. after Karl Marx and other currents overshadowed them. In the last years of his life, Mazzini's activities were focused on the fight against Michael Bakunin and the growth of the First International in Italy. Dissatisfaction with the new Italy among young people, due to the fact that the outcome of the national unification had little effect on pressing social problems, was growing.³⁸ This became evident after the experience of the Paris Commune, which had an enormous influence among young socialists but which Mazzini opposed harshly, especially in articles in his newspaper *La Roma del Popolo*.

The fight within the International was crucial for the rise of Italian socialism and for the transition from the nationalism of the Risorgimento to a social revolutionary ideology, and marked the decline of Mazzini's political influence in the peninsula.

This fight had widespread repercussions within the Italian Left, which divided and split Mazzini's group. Indeed the most important members of Italian Internationalism came from Mazzini's ranks: Osvaldo Gnocchi Viani, Malatesta, Caporusso, Saverio Friscia, Celso Ceretti, Gambuzzi, Francesco Natta, Leoncavallo, Fanelli, Francesco Piccinini, and Vincenzo Pezza.

p. 72.

³⁷See Nettlau, *Bakunin e l'Internazionale in Italia dal 1864 al 1872* (Geneva: Edizioni del "Il Risveglio", 1928); Nello Rosselli, *Mazzini e Bakunini. Dodici anni di movimenti operaio in Italia (1860-1872)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967), (1st ed. 1927).

³⁸ 'Mazzini e Garibaldi continuavano ad essere idolatrati dalla gioventù più avanzata, che avrebbe voluto averli come capi e guide, ma trovava sempre più difficile il seguirli. Poiché Mazzini di fronte all'irrompere delle nuove tendenze si irrigidiva nel suo dogmatismo teologico-politico e scomunicava chi non credeva in Dio; e Garibaldi, il quale voleva persuadere se stesso e gli altri di stare sempre alla testa del progresso, diceva e disdiceva ed in fondo non capiva nulla. Da ciò il disagio morale ed intellettuale, che aggiunto all'incertezza ed all'impotenza politiche teneva agitata e scontenta la migliore gioventù italiana. In tale condizione degli spiriti un uomo come Bakunin, con la fama di grande rivoluzionario europeo che l'accompagnava, con la sua ricchezza e modernità di idee, con la sua foga e la forza avvincente della sua personalità, non poteva non fare impressione su coloro che lo avvicinarono' (Errico Malatesta, preface to Nettlau, *Bakunin e l'Internazionale*, p. 20).

Si tentava, si domandava, si cercava, quando finalmente il Comune [sic] di Parigi... fu come il principio di una nuova vita per la quale dovevamo metterci. Ciò che era stato finallora presentimento in noi (parlo di noi, generazione cresciuta dopo la costituzione del regno d'Italia) divenne idea... Così è che, partiti dalla negazione dell'autorità divina (il grande fondamento della teoria mazziniana) si venne necessariamente e per gradi alla negazione dell'autorità umana, cioè all'anarchia.³⁹

To what extent the divisions within the Italian Workingmen's Society and the socialist world affected the Italian colony in London is difficult to say. On the one hand, Mazzini's presence in London probably limited or retarded the growth of the International within the Italian colony. On the other hand, such an important debate, with huge international consequences, could not but have some sort of influence within the Italian colony as well. This was also due to the fact that, after the fall of the Commune, London became the natural place where radicalised Italian refugees escaped.

There is some evidence that the Hotel Venezia and Bendi's public house, respectively described as Garibaldinian and Mazzinian by Adolphe Smith, in the following years became meeting points for the anarchists. Bendi's public house also became the headquarters of the radical *Romagna Society*. This did not happen to the *Mazzini and Garibaldi Club*, which, on the contrary, lost all its political connotations, so far as to include, among its honorary members, the king of Italy. The contrast between the earlier generation of the Risorgimento and the young Internationalists can be gauged by the following incident. Pietro Gori, anarchist poet and organiser, briefly a London exile too, sent to London a play which was performed in one of the anarchist clubs, based on 'un vecchio garibaldino patriotta ed il figlio anarchico'.⁴⁰

However the legacies of the earlier nationalist and republican traditions were not completely ignored by the younger generation, neither did the older generation completely shun the causes of the youngsters. For example, in 1882 Melandri, Bendi, and Lama (probably Domenico Lama) signed a statement in favour of Amilcare Cipriani.⁴¹ On the other hand, the importance of Giuseppe Mazzini's role was always acknowledged as Errico Malatesta recalled many years later:

³⁹Carlo Cafiero, 'Il socialismo in Italia. Altre osservazioni sull'opuscolo di Osvaldo Gnocchi Viani 'Le tre Internazionali', *La Plebe*, 15-16-17 January 1876, quoted in Pier Carlo Masini, *Cafiero* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1974), p. 26.

⁴⁰ Secret agent Calvo's report, London, 4 June 1894. ACS, *CPC*, b. 1519, f. (Cova Cesare).

⁴¹ 'Ho l'onore di trasmettere qui acclusi a Vostra Eccellenza i rapporti del D.M. nri 37 e 38 colla formola di una dichiarazione attualmente in giro, firmata da Melandri, Bendi e Lama ed altri per attestare che allorché Amilcare Cipriani giunse a Londra dall'Egitto, nel Novembre 1867, il medesimo aveva il braccio destro ferito, che portava sospeso al collo e che in detta epoca abitava da Vincenzo Melandri 20 Church

Noi che giovanetti ancora osammo levarci contro il Gigante e fieramente lo combattemmo per i suoi attacchi contro l'Internazionale e la Comune di Parigi, noi che di queste lotte conserviamo, e non senza orgoglio, vivo il ricordo... Noi fummo contro Mazzini per il suo modo di comprendere la lotta sociale, per la missione provvidenziale che egli attribuiva all'Italia e a Roma, per il suo dogmatismo religioso. Vi furono, come avviene sempre nel folto della mischia, eccessi ed incomprensioni da una parte e dall'altra; ma a spirito calmo noi riconosciamo che nel fondo dell'animo, nel sentimento che c'ispirava, noi eravamo mazziniani come Mazzini era internazionalista.⁴²

Italian anarchists lived in Holborn, Soho and Clerkenwell, the areas where the Italian community traditionally settled. The Italian colony in those years was generally very poor, although their poverty was alleviated by mutual aid due to the existence of a long standing and supportive community. The first Italian immigrants who moved to London for economic reasons, particularly during the period 1840 -1870, were mostly unskilled workers and their activities were mainly itinerant: most of them were organ-grinders, street peddlers, figure makers or ice-cream sellers. At the end of the century, catering became the main sector in which Italian people were employed, particularly in the Soho area.⁴³ Tito Zanardelli, one of the first anarchists who arrived in London, addressed his propaganda to these categories of workers in 1878:

Sapete voi perché siete qui a Londra? Non è certo per il piacere di vedere il Tamigi, il Palazzo di Cristallo, la chiesa di S.Paolo e l'abbazia di Westminster. Non è neppure per un capriccio artistico di ornare di statuette di gesso i caminetti dei lords e dei misters; non per iscalpellare le pietre di sotto i loro piedi; non per inondare gli orecchi di gentlemen coi fiumi di armonia che sortono dai vostri organetti e far ballare la giga alle misses intorno agli squares, e nemmeno per rinfrescare coi vostri sorbetti gli stomaci riarsi dalla birra dal gin e dal brandy dei passanti di Holborn e Oxford Street.

Voi siete venuti qui per ben altre ragioni e se voi tagliate pietre, fabbricate statuette, suonate e lavorate in gelo è perché non vi hanno insegnato a fare di meglio ed è anche per guadagnare il vostro vitto, perché nel vostro paese voi non potevate cavarvela.⁴⁴

As late as 1893 vagrancy was still seen, from a negative perspective, as the main feature of Italian immigration.⁴⁵ Indeed the large number of destitute immigrants in the

St. Soho Sqre' [sic], Italian embassy in London to the Italian Foreign Office, 23 February 1882, ASMAE, *Pol.Int.*, b. 4, f. (Divisione Affari Politici, 1 semestre 1882).

⁴² Errico Malatesta, 'Giuseppe Mazzini', in *Umanità Nova*, in Malatesta, *Scritti scelti*, vol. I, p. 324.

⁴³ On the Italian emigration to Britain see Lucio Sponza, *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century Britain. Realities and Images* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988).

⁴⁴ Zanardelli Tito, *Della utilità e dello scopo di un Circolo italiano di Studj Sociali a Londra* (London: Biblioteca del circolo di studi sociali, 1879), p. 1.

⁴⁵ 'Ci si permetta solo di gettare un rapido sguardo all'emigrazione italiana in genere. Vediamo che

Italian community raised concerns because of their possible links with revolutionary secret societies:

London, and many of our large provincial cities, are crowded with a class of Italians, who are, for the most part, non-producers. Abhorring agriculture, and in fact any settled occupation or trade, they cling to our large centres of population, and eke out an existence by means of the most degrading pursuits. There are, of course, notable exceptions.[...confectioners, cooks, waiters..] Unfortunately, the great mass of Italian emigrants differ widely from such as these. They are, for the most part, the idle, the vicious, and the destitute, the off-scouring of their own country, who, forbidden or hampered by the drastic laws now enforced in Italy against vagrancy and mendicancy, drift over to England, and here endeavour to pursue that nefarious mode of life which is denied them in the land of their birth.

Many Italians arrive in this country in an absolutely destitute condition, knowing no trade and having neither friends nor money. They apply for relief at once, and very often upon arrival go straight from the railway station to the Italian Consulate, and beg for alms. They are ignorant of the country, of its language, of its laws, and being thus unamenable to any good influences which may exist, they quickly fall into bad hands. It is one more illustration of the truth of Dr Watt's old maxim, that mischief is always found "for idle hands to do". Professional beggars lay in wait for them, and teach them how to approach with success the different charitable societies, or, worse still, they fall an easy prey to one of the secret socialistic or revolutionary leagues which abound in the metropolis. I am informed upon trustworthy authority that the number of foreign revolutionists in this country has very largely increased during the last three years, and with the object-lesson which the Mafia in New Orleans has recently presented to us, there can be no doubt that in this rapid increase of foreign revolutionary societies lurk the elements of a very grave and serious social danger.⁴⁶

The worries of British authorities and public opinion also regarded the conditions of the districts where Italians lived, in particular Holborn and Saffron Hill, where houses were overcrowded and in very precarious hygienic conditions, as the medical journal *Lancet* reported:

...the colony is very compact and where the Italian lives English rarely reside. Thus Eyre-street-hill presents the strangest aspect; and on a Sunday, when most of the Italians are at home, it is difficult to believe that this is a street in London. Fleet-court, which enters this thoroughfare, is exclusively inhabited by Italians. Not a word of English is spoken there from year's end

oggiogiorno pure, sebbene migliorate infinitamente le condizioni politiche ed intellettuali, resta pur sempre indisputata padrona, la stessa *populorum miseria, malorum genitrix*, che stampa ancora in fronte ad una gran parte della nostra emigrazione il vergognoso marchio del vagabondaggio. Mutata invero la veste, il carattere è sempre lo stesso: perché sia sotto all'attillata maglia del saltimbanco od ai panni modesti del burattinajo e del figurajo, sia sotto alla nera camiciuola dello spazzacamino od agli immondi cenci del suonatore d'organetto e dello spacciatore di gelati, migliaia dei nostri nazionali non hanno saputo da due secoli penetrare altrimenti in questo paese' (Paulucci di Calboli, *I Girovaghi italiani*, p. 30).

⁴⁶W.H. Wilkins, 'The Italian Aspect', in: Arnold White, *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain* (London: 1892), pp. 146-147.

to year's end. And, further to add to the foreign aspect of the place, the Italians, on fine, dry summer evenings, come out of the wretched houses and sleep on the smooth flag-stones of the court just as they may be seen sleeping on the church steps in Italy. On these occasions the court is so crowded with prostrate Italians that it is impossible to walk down. But a glance at the interior of the houses would suffice to show why the open street on a fine evening is preferable and far healthier [...] We now entered the house sublet to the *padrone* where he locates the organ-grinders whom he has imported from Italy, and to whom he lends the organs. The *padrone* is careful not to charge any rent for the sleeping accommodation he gives. This would convert the organ-grinders into lodgers, and compel him to come under the operation of the Common Lodging-houses Act. [...] Indeed a great portion of the present evil would at once be swept away if it were possible to compel every *padrone* to register himself as a common lodging-house keeper. As it is, the laws are set at open defiance.[...] The inhabitants were all men who go out with the organs all day long, no one remaining at home to make the smallest pretence at cleaning the place. It was admitted to us that the floors had not even been swept for two years, much less scrubbed or washed. It was not possible to see through the window-panes for the dust that had accumulated upon them. [...] The rooms contained as many double beds as could be got into them, and no other furniture whatsoever, unless we consider an occasional trunk or a barrel-organ as such. There were no washing-stands, no basins, no towels, nothing - but beds with very scanty, filthy black bedding, swarming with vermin [...]. Two, if not three, men sleep in each bed, though at first they are quite strangers to each other [...] as we were assured that men sometimes slept on the steps or landing, and that this small area would occasionally shelter as many as twenty persons for the night, giving to each therefore from 70 to 80 cubic feet of air! [...] In Somers Court [...] the drains were so constantly stopped that they overflowed, and the inhabitants had to place planks on stones so as to step from house to house without treading in the sewage matter lying exposed in the open court [...]. No one, however, had interfered to put an end to this dangerous state of affairs. The drains, it is true, are occasionally looked at and repaired by the sanitary authorities, while disinfectants are also sprinkled outside the houses; but the overcrowding and the disgraceful intermixing of the sexes continue unchecked. Many cases of infectious disease escape notice, dirt and vermin are not removed, closet accommodation is often altogether inadequate, the houses are in a ruinous crumbling condition, people are allowed to sleep underground, or under roofs that do not exclude the rain...⁴⁷

Social conditions of the Italian colony in Holborn were not very different in 1900:

Il quartiere di Holborn, dove, da tempi remoti, vive pigiata in luride catapecchie la quasi totalità dei girovaghi italiani, ebbe per molti anni e conserva ancora in qualche sua parte non raggiunta dal piccone risanatore, l'aspetto e, purtroppo, il carattere di un vero covo di malviventi. Nella più assoluta negazione di ogni principio di igiene e di pulizia, nella più scandalosa promiscuità di sessi, di età, di condizioni, nella più completa mancanza di organi collettivi di miglioramento e di coltura, vive quivi accalata, in mezzo alla miseria più squallida, al vizio più sfacciato, al

⁴⁷ 'Report of The Lancet Special Commission on the sanitary condition of the Italian quarter, *The Lancet*, 18 October 1879, vol. 2, pp. 590-592.

lerciume più nauseabondo, una popolazione di troppo inadeguata alla esiguità degli ambienti, ed a cui manca in modo assoluto il desiderio di qualsiasi miglioramento, l'aspirazione ad un più elevato tenore di vita.⁴⁸

The anarchists tried several times to organise the workers of the community. During the 1890s a large number of Italians were employed in the catering trade, especially as cooks and waiters who worked in the restaurants in Soho.⁴⁹ The catering sector became the one of the centres for organised politics, from the anarchists to the Fascists.⁵⁰ In 1890 the Italian Ambassador Count Tornielli wrote to Francesco Crispi that: 'La propaganda qui tenta esercitarsi particolarmente fra i numerosi cuochi e camerieri che sono riuniti in una associazione che conta varie centinaia di persone'.⁵¹

In July 1893 Malatesta, Gori, Merlino, and Agresti, referred to the establishment of a new workers' association in opposition to the *Circolo Mazzini-Garibaldi* in a letter to the director of the newspaper *Londra-Roma*, Pietro Rava, and raised the issue of poor working conditions in the restaurants.⁵² On 12 January 1901 the newspaper *L'Internazionale* announced the first meeting of the 'Lega di resistenza fra i lavoratori in cucina', set up by the Socialist Anarchist Group.

Italian anarchists sought also to organise schools for the education of workers, an initiative that was reminiscent of Mazzini's. They opened a *Circolo Educativo* for Italian workers, although it did not last very long. In 1905 they rented a room in Euston Street, not far from Soho and the Italian area, where they established the *Università*

⁴⁸ Giuseppe Prato, 'Gli italiani in Inghilterra', *La Riforma Sociale*, VII, vol. 10, 1899, pp. 680-681.

⁴⁹ 'Nell'ultimo decennio il numero dei camerieri e dei garzoni d'albergo convenuti in Londra [...] è di molto cresciuto, come pure sono molto aumentati d'assai gli esercizi di caffè, trattorie, pasticcerie e simili, nelle quali si impiega esclusivamente personale italiano, onde tale elemento [...] continua anche oggi a crescere rapidamente così che, dopo aver fondata, nel quartiere di Soho in Londra, una colonia propria, indipendente del vecchio ed infetto recesso di Holborn, estende a poco a poco alle minori città della provincia' (Prof. Todeas Twattle-Basket, pseud. [i.e. Tommaso de Angelis], *Note di Cronaca, ossia i giornali, gli istituti e gli uomini illustri italiani a Londra durante l'era Vittoriana, 1837-1897*, Bergamo: 1897, p. 85).

⁵⁰ For example in August 1932 Dino Grandi, only one month after he became Ambassador to London, wrote to Mussolini that: 'his intention was to appear as a 'father' to the Italian community... In particular he emphasised the absence of an organisation among Italian cooks and waiters, although they numbered many thousands and were spread almost everywhere throughout the city'. (Claudia Baldoli, *Exporting Fascism. Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930s*, Berg:Oxford-New York, 2003, p. 19.) Two years later two catering societies were created in London: the Italian Culinary Society, and The Wine and Food Society.

⁵¹ Ambassador Tornielli to Crispi, London 22 October 1890, ASDMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 36.

⁵² 'Nei 'restaurants' italiani i garzoni di cucina lavorano alle volte sedici ore al giorno, in un sotterraneo, umido e infocato, rovinandosi la salute per pochissimi scellini la settimana. Ce n'è qualcuno dove la paga è così meschina, che un operaio per quanto misero non ci resta che qualche settimana, e ce n'è altri i cui padroni, d'accordo con i sensali, mandano via i lavoranti, per permettere ai sensali di intascare nuove mance. E molti altri gravi abusi si commettono a danno nostro, abusi che la Società non cura di reprimere' ('Voci del pubblico', *Londra-Roma*, 22 August 1893, p. 3. The letter was signed by G. Pietraraja, Bianconi, A. Agresti, S. Merlino, E. Malatesta, and Bertani).

Popolare. The school had a cosmopolitan flavour. The *Università Popolare* was opened by speeches from Tàrrida de Màrmol and Errico Malatesta on 25 February 1905.⁵³

However, the activities of Italian anarchists, as well those of other political refugees, were directed not only to the local community but also to the homeland, as reported by the inspector Mandolesi in 1905.

Il movimento di Londra si può agevolmente distinguere in due categorie (e ciò si applica tanto per quello italiano che per quello degli altri paesi).

Propaganda diretta ad influire sugli emigrati qui residenti.

Agitazione per aiutare finanziariamente o moralmente il movimento nel paese nativo o quello in cui si producono fatti acconci a destare interesse sentimentale. E così a seconda dei casi il movimento nascosto dei sovversivi si rende palese.⁵⁴

In sum, certain conditions characterised the experiences of the Italian anarchists from the 1870s to the eve of the First World War. The exiles felt far from their homeland. They were mostly poor or threatened with a rapid descent into poverty. And many found it difficult to master the native tongue. Malatesta, for example, started to speak publicly in English only at the end of the century.⁵⁵ These difficulties were aggravated by the continuous intrigues of spies and by the often violent, polemical debates carried out among different groups of anarchists. Even so, their activities, which began in 1878 with the arrival to London of the first Italian anarchist, Tito Zanardelli, lasted without interruption until the Second World War.

⁵³ *Relazione sul movimento sovversivo in Londra nel mese di Febbraio*, ACS, PS, 1905, b.22.

⁵⁴ Inspector Mandolesi to Ministry of Interior, May 1905. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁵⁵ Levy, 'Malatesta in Exile', p. 253.

Chapter 3

Italian Anarchist Groups in London

Origins: the 1870s and Tito Zanardelli

During the 1870s and 1880s several colonies of political refugees found shelter in London. The main groups were composed of French, who flooded England after the fall of the Paris Commune; Germans, who went into exile after the Bismarck's anti-socialist law of 1878; and of Russians, most of whom were Jews, who escaped from the persecution that followed Alexander II's death. Some leaders of Italian anarchism, such as Carlo Cafiero and Amilcare Cipriani, had settled in London for a short period.

However, the first politically active anarchist within the Italian colony was Tito Zanardelli. Born in 1848 in the northern Italian town of Vittorio Veneto, Zanardelli began his political life in the Republican Party. During the second half of the 1860s he travelled around Italy to disseminate Mazzinian propaganda. Mazzini's ideas, particularly with regard to the education of the working classes, had a strong influence upon him. As a result, throughout his life Zanardelli oscillated between reformist socialism and anarchism.

In 1871, Zanardelli joined the Italian Federation of the I.W.A. During the following years he participated in several enterprises: he organised sections of the I.W.A. in Rome and in Venice, promoted the founding of several Internationalist newspapers and presided over the second congress of the Italian Federation of I.W.A., held in Bologna in 1873.¹ However, as Hostetter noticed: 'as late as the summer of 1872, many of the prominent socialists – thanks, in part, to Garibaldi's equivocal stand on the International – had still not broken with the Party of Action. Men like (...) Tito

¹ In 1872, Zanardelli with C. Cafiero, A. Tucci and C. Gambuzzi founded the Internationalist newspaper *La Campana* in Naples. In the same year, he established a section of the I.W.A. in Venice with Pietro Magri. (See: Francesco Moisisio, *Anarchici a Venezia* (Venice: 1989). In 1873, Zanardelli with Gnocchi Viani organised a section in Rome. On Zanardelli see: Mariella Nejrotti, 'Zanardelli Tito', in F. Andreucci and T. Detti (eds.), *Il movimento operaio italiano: Dizionario biografico, 1853-1943* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1975-1979), vol. 6, pp. 266-271.

Zanardelli (...) probably never accepted the premises that impelled Costa, Malatesta and Cafiero to argue a dialectical incompatibility between their vision of a future society and that envisaged by a Mazzini or a Garibaldi'.²

According to a report by the Ministry of Interior, Zanardelli was one of the organisers of the uprising in the Romagna in August of 1874. Following the failure of the insurrection, he left Italy to avoid arrest and took refuge in Switzerland.³ One year later, with the Italian Internationalist Ludovico Nabruzzi and the French Joseph Favre, Zanardelli established in Lugano a dissident section of the International Working Men's Association which sided with the legalitarian wing of the International.⁴ This section, called the *sezione del Ceresio*, strongly criticised the Italian anarchists, especially the *Comitato per la Rivoluzione Sociale* led by Malatesta and Cafiero, both for its intransigent position towards parliamentary socialist parties and for its insurrectionist policy, which led to the uprising in Benevento in April 1877. Zanardelli expressed his criticisms by attacking Malatesta and Cafiero fiercely at the World Socialist Congress held in Ghent in September of the same year, where he represented the Italian reformist socialist groups. This political position deeply affected Zanardelli's relationship with the Italian anarchist community in London few years later.

Under Benoît Malon's influence, the political project of the *Ceresio* section aimed at winning the leadership of the International in Italy and assembling Italian socialist forces around a moderate programme, which considered electoral participation and working class education as the chief means of political struggle.⁵

In 1878, Zanardelli was arrested in Paris, where he had gone to establish links between the *sezione del Ceresio* and the French sections of the International in the attempt to organise the legalitarian forces within the International. Expelled from France he departed for London where, from the very beginning, he joined the community of political refugees. Among them he organised a study group, the *Club International des Études Sociales, Circolo Studj Sociali* which included French, Russian and German exiles, such as Paul Brousse, Gustave Brocher and Leo Hartmann.

² Richard Hostetter, *The Italian Socialist Movement, I: Origins (1860-1914)*, (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1958), pp. 352-354.

³ Ministry of Interior to Foreign Ministry, 27 October 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6, f. (Ministero dell'Interno. Corrispondenza ricevuta, 1881).

⁴ Franco Della Peruta, 'Il socialismo italiano dal 1875 al 1882', *Annali dell'Istituto G.G. Feltrinelli*, I, 1958, pp. 15-58.

⁵ Romano Brogginì, 'Un gruppo internazionalista dissidente: la sezione del Ceresio' in Liliano Faenza, (ed). *Anarchismo e socialismo in Italia (1872-1892)*, (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1973), pp. 187-208.

From 1880, this circle published its own monthly newspaper, *Le Travail. Bulletin mensuel du Club Internationale des Études Sociales de Londres*.⁶

At the same time Zanardelli came into contact with the British Left in London. He joined the International Labour Union, founded by the radical Hales and Johann Georg Eccarius, Jung, Weston, Mottershead, G. Shipton, E. Hopes, Steward Headlam, Victor Delahaye, L. B. Lazar Goldenberg, Charles Bradlaugh, Annie Besant, and Harriett Law joined this circle.⁷

In the same year Zanardelli published four issues of *La Guerre Sociale/La Guerra Sociale*, a bilingual newspaper, written both in French and Italian, which lasted from September to November 1878. This newspaper, using a bombastic style, proclaimed that ‘la Guerra Sociale, cioè lo scatenamento delle masse contro lo Stato e le classi cosiddette superiori, cagione precipua del male’ was the only way for working classes to acquire their economic emancipation.⁸

When *La Guerre Sociale/La Guerra Sociale* ceased publication, Zanardelli founded the *Circolo Italiano di Studj Sociali*, with the aim to organise the workers of the Italian colony. Meetings were held every Tuesday at the *White Hart*, 17 Windmill Street, off Tottenham Court Road. The number of workers who joined this club, and the impact it had on the community are far from certain. According to Giuseppe Prato, the circle was a complete failure. However, the reliability of Prato’s sources is questionable.⁹

Two speeches, addressed by Zanardelli at the club, offer an idea of the attitude that characterised the club’s charter. After describing the various misfortunes and tribulations that workers faced daily (daughters prostituting themselves to feed their

⁶ David Stafford, *From Anarchism to Reformism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), pp. 143-147.

⁷ Leo Valiani, ‘Dalla Prima alla Seconda Internazionale’, *Movimento Operaio*, II, 1954, p. 193.

⁸ ‘La Guerra Sociale’, *La Guerre Sociale/La Guerra Sociale*, 2 October 1878, p. 3.

⁹ Giuseppe Prato, ‘Gli italiani in Inghilterra’, *La Riforma Sociale*, 15 January 1901, XI, p. 17. It seems that this circle did not achieve significant results. However, it must be underlined that Prato’s only sources about anarchist activities in London were the consul Minghetti, in charge of the surveillance of the Italian anarchists in London, and the editor of the newspaper *Londra-Roma* Pietro Rava, who quarrelled with a group of Italian anarchists (*La Riforma Sociale*, X, 1900, p. 674). A British policeman, after inquiring about the publication of a fake issue of the *Londra-Roma*, (published by the Individualist group in 1894) reported: ‘The *Londra Roma* is a strong anti-anarchist journal [...] The *Londra-Roma* published a strong appeal to Italians in London to have nothing to do with Anarchism [...] since that time Rava has been the object of attack from Italian anarchists. M. Rava is very indignant about this publication and expressed an opinion that it is the mark of Italian Anarchists and is done to annoy him and ruin his reputation. [...] M. Rava is a very popular man in Italian Society in London and is especially friendly with the Italian Ambassador’. (*Sergeant John Walsh’s report to Sir G. Lushington K.C.B. Home Office*, 20 August 1894. PRO, HO 144/258/A55684).

parents, old people killing themselves to avoid to dying of famine, parents becoming murderers to save their children), Zanardelli proclaimed the purpose of the founders of the *Circolo di Studj Sociali*:

E' perciò che nel costituire il nostro Circolo [...] noi abbiamo avuto un pensiero altamente umanitario; noi ci siamo messi una mano sul cuore e un'altra sulla coscienza e abbiamo guardato coraggiosamente dietro e avanti a voi.... Operai! Voi siete poveri, ignoranti, mangiate poco, vestite male, dormite peggio e noi vi offriamo una nuova vita.¹⁰

These speeches suggest that Zanardelli believed that the workers were incapable of understanding their social position and their rights by themselves; consequently, they needed to be made aware of them. Therefore, the main purpose of the circle was the political education of Italian workers.¹¹ The club had to be a school in which the workers could understand the causes of their pitiable conditions and find the way towards gaining their own social emancipation.

Per questo abbiamo fondato questo Circolo, che non sarà una Chiesa, ma piuttosto una Scuola, ove imparerete senza accorgervi a conoscere voi stessi, a convincervi della vostra forza, mentre a voi pare di essere deboli, e ad apprezzare il vostro giusto valore, quando appunto vi si grida da tutti i punti che senza dirigenti voi non potete andare. Noi vi offriamo, in una parola, il mezzo di essere uomini, onde pensare colla vostra testa, agire colle vostre braccia, senza dipendere dal **Prete**, dal **Console** e dal **Padrone**, che vi trattano e maltrattano come ragazzi e pretendono istruirvi, promettendovi, ora le pene dell'inferno ed ora i ferri della prigione...Se vi piace, così intitolarlo, il nostro sarà il Circolo del Perché. Non per fare al gioco delle domande e delle risposte, o per una vana curiosità; ma per trovare un rimedio ai vostri mali e un sollievo alle vostre miserie.¹²

The circle published four issues of the *Bollettino Socialista Rivoluzionario* which appeared between March and May 1879. All issues addressed workers or political activists in Italy, without discussing any topic related to the Italian colony in London. The first issue, *Agli operai d' Italia non ancora socialisti*, was an appeal to the Italian

¹⁰ Tito Zanardelli, 'Discorso II, tenuto Domenica 6 Luglio 1879 a "The Bull's Head"', in Zanardelli, *Della utilità e dello scopo di un Circolo Italiano di Studj Sociali a Londra. Due discorsi* (London: Biblioteca del Circolo di Studj Sociali, 1879), pp. 9-10.

¹¹ In 1872 Zanardelli published one of his speeches with the title: *L'operaio in Italia e la sua non coscienza delle proprie forze e dei propri diritti* (Naples: Tipografia di L. Gargiulo, 1872).

workers to leave reformist parties and to join socialism. Beginning with the view that national independence did not imply personal and economic freedom, the leaflet concluded by affirming the uselessness of fighting for the overthrow of monarchy and for the institution of a republican system. The second issue, which came out on 18 March, celebrated the anniversary of the Paris Commune. The third issue, directed to peasants, sharecroppers, and day-labourers urged them to rebel and to appropriate the land and its produce. The fourth issue was a strong attack against the exponents of the democratic parties in Italy (Minghetti, Sella, Depretis, Cairoli, and Nicotera) who had criticised the Internationalists.

Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that these bulletins managed to persuade many workers to join the *Circolo di Studj Sociali*. Their rhetorical and pedantic style made the contents probably quite obscure for the working people of that time.

In the middle of 1881, the arrival in London of other Italian anarchists, most of whom supported the politics of the Italian Federation of I.W.A, among them Errico Malatesta and Vito Solieri, weakened even further Zanardelli's position within the Italian anarchist community. Not only did Zanardelli lose his leadership, but he was subject to severe criticism as well. According to Orlando De Martijs, informer of the Italian embassy in London during the early 1880s, Zanardelli was summoned before a court of honour. Brousse, Malatesta, Antolini and Defendi were the witnesses against Zanardelli. Malatesta in particular was the major accuser. According to Malatesta, Zanardelli had jeopardised the existence of all the anarchist circles in which he had been involved during his stay in Italy; together with Nabruzzi he blackmailed Michael Bakunin, threatening to reveal a revolutionary plot to the police. Finally, in Italy Zanardelli had also carried out several frauds.¹³ This event may be related both to Paul Brousse's resignation from the committee of the *Club International des Études Sociales* and disengagement from the newspaper *Le Travail*, and to the dispute between Zanardelli and Malatesta 'which apparently demanded a duel'.¹⁴

¹² Tito Zanardelli, 'Discorso I, tenuto sabato 28 Giugno 1879, at "Hat & Tun" Hatton Wall', in Zanardelli, *Della utilità*, pp. 5-6.

¹³ Report by DM, (Orlando De Martijs), 9 June 1880. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 5, f. (Rapporti Ambasciata di Londra).

¹⁴ David Stafford, *From Anarchism*, p. 311, note 39.

In addition, according to the Italian Minister of Interior, Malatesta revived former suspicions that Zanardelli, in 1874, had disclosed the plans of the insurrection organised by the Internationalists in the Romagna to the Italian police.¹⁵

About one month later, in August 1880, Zanardelli left London and moved to Paris, where the polemics followed him.¹⁶ In Paris, he joined Amilcare Cipriani for a projected insurrection in Italy.¹⁷ Zanardelli went to Milan in order to pave the way for the enterprise¹⁸. However, some anarchists were arrested in Milan shortly after having been in contact with Zanardelli. Cipriani was arrested in Rimini in January 1881. Zanardelli went back to London in November 1881 with the intention to reopen an Italian circle there.¹⁹ His arrival aroused the fury of Malatesta and other refugees. In fact, the colony of political refugees openly demonstrated their hostility towards him since they considered Zanardelli responsible for Cipriani's arrest.²⁰ For this reason Zanardelli was eventually forced to leave London and to move to Belgium.²¹ On 13 June 1882 the *Rabagas*, a newspaper published in Naples, in an article accused Saverio Merlino and Orlando De Martijs of working for the Italian authorities.²² De Martijs informed the Italian embassy that Zanardelli could be the author of that article; however, De Martijs later found out that the author was another anarchist, Alvini. The fact that Zanardelli could have been considered, although by a spy, the likely author of

¹⁵ Ministry of Interior to Foreign Minister, Rome 27 October 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6, f. (Corrispondenza ricevuta 1881).

¹⁶ 'Londra Lunedì. Zanardelli è partito sabato per Parigi definitivamente avendo venduto tutti i mobili di casa. Con lui sono partiti la moglie e la madre. Forse sarà impiegato nel nuovo giornale socialista di Malon La lotta sociale. Ha detto che fra due mesi farà ritorno in Italia'. Report by De Martijs, July 1880. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 5.

¹⁷ Cipriani, Zanardelli, Nabruzzi, and Zirardini published a manifesto entitled 'Manifesto agli oppressi d'Italia' announcing insurrectionary actions.

¹⁸ Malatesta wrote to Cipriani: 'Non vi è un solo uomo d'azione, un solo uomo serio in Italia, sia anarchico che umanitario, garibaldino o mazziniano, il quale conoscendo di persona o di fama Zanardelli prenderà un solo istante sul serio le sue proposte [...] e Zanardelli dovrebbe sapere che, a torto o a ragione, egli gode di pessima fama in mezzo a questo partito. Non è la prima volta che il nome di Zanardelli è stato causa di scacco per coloro che han voluto servirsene'. Malatesta's letter to Amilcare Cipriani, December 1880, in: Franco Della Peruta, 'Il socialismo italiano dal 1875 al 1882', *Annali dell'Istituto G.G. Feltrinelli*, I, 1958, pp. 81-81.

¹⁹ Italian consul to Foreign Ministry, 19 and 21 November 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70 (Corrispondenza con il consolato).

²⁰ '...una visita imprudentemente fatta da Zanardelli a Kropotkin, il quale, ove ritorni, intende metterlo alla porta!'; 'Pare che Zanardelli non ha giudizio, rischia di essere un giorno o l'altro bastonato dagli amici di Cipriani, che esso è imputato di aver contribuito a far arrestare', Italian consul to Foreign Ministry, 29 November and 7 December 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

²¹ Italian consul to Foreign Ministry, London 19 December 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

²² 'A Londra si apprese altresì con entusiasmo la notizia dell'espulsione dall'Internazionale di un avvocato napoletano, già fervente anarchico e [word unreadable] per essere uomo di costumi borghesi, anzi lo accusano persino di essere una spia del Bolis. Quest'ultimo, come si vede, ha buon tatto per scegliere i suoi agenti...segreti. Anche certo Orlando De Martijs, già segretario della federazione in Londra, è in

such letter in the *Rabagas*, may give an idea of Zanardelli's reputation among the anarchist groups. In addition, Zanardelli had been a member of the editorial group of *L'Agitatore*, which in 1875 sympathised with the spy Carlo Terzaghi.²³

Indeed, in December 1882, the newspaper *Tito Vezio* and the Internationalist Vito Solieri accused Zanardelli of being a spy of the Italian police.²⁴ Other newspapers and anarchist militants confirmed the allegations. As a consequence of these controversies Zanardelli left the anarchist movement and went to Brussels where he devoted himself to philological studies.

The 1880s and the International Revolutionary Socialist Congress

It was from the first years of 1880s that an identifiable colony of Italian anarchists began to establish itself in London.

In 1878, Giovanni Passanante's failed attempt against King Umberto I caused the fall of the Cairoli-Zanardelli government. Agostino Depretis constituted a new cabinet in which he was both Prime Minister and Minister of Interior. A wave of repression hit the International; Italian authorities regularly used preventive detention, forced domicile and admonishment. Several trials took place against the Internationalists who, following the new course taken by the government, were accused of being common criminals and considered to be members of *associazioni di malfattori* and not of political organisations. At the conclusion of these trials the government did not gain the political aim pursued by its judicial offensive, namely the outlawing of the International. However, this repression destroyed the organisation and virtually put paid to the Italian Federation of the I.W.A.²⁵ Many Italian anarchists chose exile over imprisonment; some of them, after passing through several countries, eventually reached London.

sospetto d'essere un agente di V.E.Manabrea' Ministry of Interior to Foreign Ministry, 17 June 1882, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4.

²³ See: Romano Brogini, 'Un gruppo internazionalista dissidente: la sezione del Ceresio', pp. 192-193.

²⁴ See Nejrotti, 'Zanardelli Tito'; Masini *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin*, p. 199. The first article published in *Tito Vezio* about Zanardelli appeared on 12 December 1882.

²⁵ Pier Carlo Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin*, pp. 151-168; Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian Anarchism*, pp. 147-157. For the historiographical debate on the historical periodisation of the First International in Italy see: Pier Carlo Masini, 'La Prima Internazionale in Italia. Problemi di una revisione

Malatesta left Italy in 1878 after having been acquitted at the trial for the Benevento uprising. From 1878 and 1880 he went to Egypt, Romania, Switzerland and France. He briefly stayed in London in the spring 1880. Then he went to Brussels where he was arrested and subsequently expelled. He reached London again in March 1881.²⁶ Giovanni Defendi, one of Malatesta's best friends in the United Kingdom, was a Garibaldian who fought in the anti-Prussian war at the time of the Paris Commune. He had spent eight or ten years in prison. He arrived in London after serving this sentence, in around 1881.²⁷ Vito Solieri, born in 1858 in Frassineto near Imola, was expelled from Switzerland with Malatesta in April 1879. At the beginning of 1881 he was in London. The young Count Francesco Ginnasi from Imola joined this group of refugees in August 1881. He had taken part in the Matese expedition in 1878. Before staying in London, he lived two years in Brussels. In October 1881, Carlo Cafiero returned to London, where he stayed only a few months, until the spring of 1882, when the first symptoms of his mental illness appeared.²⁸ Pietro Cesare Ceccarelli arrived at the beginning of January 1882, after a period spent in Romania with Napoleone Papini, another Internationalist who participated in the Benevento attempt.²⁹ They left Romania in April 1881 where they had been engaged in trading. Papini wrote to Malatesta from Belgrade asking him to provide a false passport to enter Italy. Malatesta promptly sent it to him from London.³⁰

storiografica', in *Il Movimento operaio e socialista. Bilancio storiografico e problemi storici. Convegno di Firenze. 18-20 gennaio 1963* (Milan: Edizioni del Gallo, 1965), pp. 85-142.

²⁶ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 29 March 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

²⁷ 'Connotati di Giovanni Defendi: Età 32 anni, Statura quasi m 1, 49 Camminatura grave e sollecita per abitudine presa mentre in prigione per 8 anni passeggiando continuamente in una piccola cella'. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 21 February 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70. See also: Emilia Civolani, 'La partecipazione di emigrati italiani alla comune di Parigi', *Movimento operaio e socialista*, II, n. 21, 1979, pp.172-173.

²⁸ Cafiero left London and went to Milan where he was arrested. In prison he tried to commit suicide; because of his mental illness Cafiero was admitted to mental hospital several times. He died in 1892. See: Pier Carlo Masini, *Cafiero* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1974).

²⁹ In 1879 Ceccarelli was acquitted together with Merlino and other Internationalists in a trial in Lucera. They had been arrested after a riotous demonstration of workers in Naples. See: Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin*, pp.165-166; Berti, *Francesco Saverio Merlino*, p. 20.

³⁰ '...un italiano scrive a Malatesta da Belgrado per avere subito un passaporto qualunque per entrare in Italia, da spedire al seguente indirizzo C. Petrony Iocuogacka n 11 Yunza Belgrado'. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 7 aprile 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70. In May 1881, Malatesta received a letter from Ceccarelli and Papini from Trieste. Papini thanked Malatesta for the passport 'Trieste 27 aprile 1881 Mio carissimo Errico, Da Belgrado a Trieste! Ricevei la tua carissima e il passaporto qualche giorno dopo. Quest'ultimo non poteva essere meglio. Te ne ringrazio tanto tanto. Dalla Rumenia dopo tante e tante vicende siamo dovuti sparire con un passivo di 100 mila franchi e senza un soldo in tasca!..' Ministry of Interior to Foreign Ministry, 10 May 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6, f. (Ministro degli Interni. Corrispondenza ricevuta 1881).

Ernesto Antolini, from Naples, reached London at the beginning of 1882. Another Internationalist who resided in London at that time was Federico Ravà, native of the Italian town of Reggio Emilia. Just as Giovanni Defendi, he fought with Garibaldi in France.

Italian refugees generally settled in Soho and Clerkenwell: for instance Defendi lived at 17 Cleveland Street, Fitzroy Square; Solieri at 2 Church Street in Soho; Ginnasi resided at 53 Huntley Street, off Tottenham Court Road; Cafiero lived at 72 Myddelton Square in Clerkenwell.

Refugees shared lodgings. Recently arrived comrades would take a vacated flat when refugees left for Europe or the United States. Exiles were employed in a variety of diverse occupations. Ceccarelli started trading with a partner called Leon. At some point they split up and Ceccarelli recovered his own merchandise, golden and silver brooches, from Leon's house only with Malatesta's and Solieri's help. Shortly thereafter, he pawned part of it. Solieri worked as barber's boy in a shop at 30 Greek Street, near Tottenham Court Road. In the same shop Malatesta received his mail, addressed to Leopoldo Pelillo. Antolini was employed as a waiter in the Hotel de Rome et de Venise, then in a café. Poverty affected refugees' every day life. According to a note of the ambassador in 1882 Ravà, Ceccarelli, and Alvini sold a pair of shoes for two shillings in order to feed themselves.³¹

In June 1881, Errico Malatesta rented a work shop in a back yard at 9 Smith Street, Northampton Square, Clerkenwell for five francs a week. A curtain divided the part in which Malatesta slept from that in which he worked. According to the informer De Martijs, Solieri, who earned ten francs a week as barber, and Defendi helped Malatesta to pay the rent. Malatesta 'was always very careful so that nobody should look into his workshop, the windows were white-washed, and at night, a rough/cartoni made of pack-cloth was drawn across [?] the windows'. Inside there was 'a bed which only contained a mattress and a sheep-skin serving as bed-clothes, all very filthy, the room was strewn over with revolutionary papers: *I Malfattori*, *la Favilla* – *Le Révolté* etc. and numerous letters, having the Italian Post-mark, towards the window stood a small desk work bench, to which a vice was attached and on the sides were ranged files, hammers and screw cutting implements, all new and not used'.³²

³¹ Italian embassy to Foreign Ministry, 7 June 1882, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4.

³² Italian ambassador to Foreign Minister, 19 April 1882, Inspector Charles von Toward's report. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4.

Malatesta received daily visits from Kropotkin, for the first time in London in November 1881. Malatesta, accompanied by Kropotkin, and other Italian refugees, among them Solieri, Defendi, and Ceccarelli, visited the *Rose Street Club* regularly. This club, founded in 1878, was the central meeting point for revolutionary refugees in London. Here Malatesta became acquainted with Franz Kitz, and the German Johann Most. In the same period Malatesta was in close contact with the nihilists Lazar Goldenberg and Leo Hartmann.³³ This variegated community used to meet for social events as well: at Christmas 1881 Malatesta, Nathan Ganz, and Cafiero had dinner in De Martijs's house. One week later, on 31 of December, Cafiero, Malatesta, Solieri, Baldassarre Monti, De Martijs, Kropotkin and Chaikovsky and their families, Goldenberg, Le Compte, Hoffmann, and Signoff met to celebrate the New Year.

In his workshop, Malatesta worked as a mechanic. Apparently in June 1881 he was interested in participating in a competition organised by the '*Esposizione di Milano*' for developing a 'shell-peas' machine with a prize of 10,000 *lire*. The consul thought to take advantage of this opportunity and suggested to the ambassador to put Malatesta in contact with a spy pretending to be an engineer in order to spy on him.³⁴

Malatesta's activities in the workshop worried Italian authorities. Especially when Malatesta and Hartmann worked together at 'mechanical or electrical experiments'. This gave rise to a good deal of alarm among the Italian authorities, who believed that the two were secretly experimenting with powerful new weapons.³⁵ The British police as well tried to keep Malatesta's workshop under surveillance, and spied on him from the room of a neighbour's.³⁶

This anxiety about alleged mysterious weapons reflected the main concerns that obsessed the minds of the Italian police and were associated with possible assassination attempts against the king of Italy, or anarchist insurrections, in the Romagna and in southern Italy in particular.³⁷ The embassy sent several warnings to the Minister of

³³ Leo Hartmann, a member of the Russian group 'People's Will' found refuge in London after a failed attempt against the life of Tsar Alexander II. His mission in London was to propagate the policies of the group 'People's Will'.

³⁴ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 22 June 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

³⁵ 'Il rapporto del D.M. contiene...importanti informazioni sugli studi e sui tentativi che sta facendo il Malatesta per costruire bombe o altri terribili apparecchi di distruzione'. Italian ambassador to Foreign Ministry, 24 May 1882. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4.

³⁶ An inspector of the British police spoke with an English woman who lived next to Malatesta in order to use a room of her house. She warned Malatesta of this attempt. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 30 June 1881. ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

³⁷ For example the consul reported about Malatesta's and Covelli's plan to go to Lugano and later to meet Solieri in Geneva with weapons and money in order to take part to an insurrection in the Romagna and in other places in Italy. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 24 June 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

Interior about consignments or shipments of weapons and explosives, hidden in sardine cans or barrels of beer, allegedly sent to Italy by the anarchists in London.³⁸

In reality, the Italian anarchist movement was facing a period of great difficulties, due to both the harsh repression that followed Passanante's assassination attempt and to Costa's defection in favour of parliamentary socialism.

The Italian anarchists' scope for action from England was circumscribed. The persistent lack of money was the main obstacle for the realisation of their projects. The consul and the ambassador underlined this fact in their correspondence several times, declaring that the best protection against the wicked plans of the anarchists was their absolute lack of means.³⁹ In the same way the worries of Italian authorities increased sharply as soon as they believed that the anarchists were about to receive some financial support. This happened for example when Malatesta was waiting for part of a legacy left to him by an aunt in Marseille.⁴⁰ The anarchists' forced inaction was often cause of tension and frustration: feelings which commonly affected the lives of all political refugees.⁴¹

In May 1881 Solieri, Malatesta and Cafiero published a programmatic circular launching a new anarchist-communist newspaper: *L'Insurrezione*. This program, in opposition to Costa's turn to parliamentary socialism, still considered insurrection the main strategy to demolish the authoritarian institutions that prevented the free development of social progress towards anarchy.

L'idéal social, vers lequel marche l'humanité, est le communisme dans l'anarchie, c'est-à-dire, une organisation harmonique et solidaire, dans laquelle tous travaillent pour le bien-être de tous. Le moyen indiqué par la science et par l'expérience, pour atteindre ce but, c'est la libre action des lois naturelles de l'homme et de la société, la harmonisation spontanée et forcée des besoins, des intérêts, des volontés de tous et l'intégration individuelle de l'individu dans le tout social. Mais aujourd'hui, l'humanité trouve, au

³⁸ For example: 'le materie esplodenti che lo Stinchi spedirebbe in Italia [...] dovrebbero impiegarsi in un movimento insurrezionale il quale sarebbe tentato quanto prima dagli anarchici, probabilmente il 18 marzo prossimo nelle Romagne ed in Toscana'; '...una parte delle materie esplodenti che si attenderebbero dall'Inghilterra sarebbero già state imbarcate costì per ignota destinazione racchiuse in casse di birra'. Foreign ministry to Italian ambassador, 24 and 28 January 1884, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 38.

³⁹ 'Per fortuna han pochi denari, e ciò sarà non piccolo ostacolo alle loro trame!'. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70. The same opinion was expressed on 22 June 1881.

⁴⁰ In order to receive this legacy Malatesta signed a proxy in the Italian consulate; the spy De Martijs, from Caserta, was one of his sources. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 22 January 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

⁴¹ '...che Solieri è deciso di separarsi da Malatesta per l'eccessivo dispotismo di questi!'; '...non sembra che havvi nulla in questo momento di combinato né di serio, e ciò non per mancanza di volontà, ma di mezzi per parte di Malatesta che d'altronde pare che si renda ogni giorno più intollerante ed insoffribile sia a Cafiero che agli altri!'. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 7 November and 10 December 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

contraire, dans les institutions et dans les conditions sociales, un obstacle qu'elle ne pourra vaincre que par la violence, un obstacle qui - nous nous proposons de le démontrer - s'il n'est pas abattu par la force matérielle, non-seulement ne laissera plus d'issue au progrès ultérieur, mais encore finira par détruire ce qui existe de civilisation et par nous rejeter dans la barbarie. Ainsi, ouvrir par la force une voie à la marche progressive de l'humanité, détruire radicalement, par l'insurrection, les institutions et les conditions qui lui font obstacle et la repoussent, - voilà la nécessité principale pour notre époque, la condition indispensable de notre progrès.

Tout ce qui facilite l'insurrection et en rapproche le moment, est bon; tout ce qui l'éloigne, quoiqu'en conservant même l'apparence de progrès, - est mauvais, voilà le principe qui nous guidera...

C'est pourquoi, tout en suivant avec attention le développement de la vie sociale dans toutes ces manifestations essentielles, et tout en sympathisant et en prêtant notre concours à ceux qui travaillent à préparer les destinées futures de l'humanité, nous combattons avant tout pour les intérêts de l'insurrection et nous serons l'organe des hommes de l'insurrection.

Le journal paraîtra tous les huit jours. Prix d'abonnement 2 fr. Par trimestre. Adresse: Vito Solieri, 8, Windmill Street, Tottenham Court road, Londres.⁴²

Malatesta sent hundreds of copies of this circular to anarchist militants in Italy and in other European cities: Marseille, Brussels, Lugano; although most of them were seized by the police.⁴³ Apparently, Malatesta and Solieri prepared a mock-up of the newspaper composed of sixteen pages. Nevertheless, the newspaper never saw the light of day; the promoters abandoned the scheme, as reported by an English inspector to the Italian consul, 'no doubt for want of funds'.⁴⁴

In the first half of 1881 Malatesta was engaged in another undertaking: the preparation of the International Revolutionary Socialist Congress scheduled in London for 14 July of the same year, in the public house *The Wheat Sheaf*, in Charrington Street. The manifesto announcing the congress, 'Au révolutionnaires des deux Mondes', was published in *La Révolution Sociale*, *Le Révolté*, and *L'Intransigeant* in March 1881, shortly after the assassination of the Tsar Alexander II. The aim of the congress was the reconstitution of the International.⁴⁵ The preparations of the congress, promoted

⁴² *Le Révolté*, Geneva, 6 August 1881; now in Carlo Cafiero, *La Rivoluzione per la rivoluzione*, Gianni Bosio (ed.), (Milan: Edizioni del Gallo, 1968), pp.117-118.

⁴³ Minister of Interior to Foreign Minister, 10 May 1881. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6., f. (Ministero dell'Interno Corrispondenza Ricevuta). Other eighty copies were sent in August 1881.

⁴⁴ Italian ambassador to Foreign Minister, 19 April 1882, Inspector Charles von Toward's report. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4.

⁴⁵ 'Au révolutionnaires des deux Mondes! Travailleurs! Les efforts courageux de nos frères de Russie viennent enfin d'être couronnés de succès. En présence de la coalition de toutes les forces bourgeoises, il est nécessaire de lui opposer la coalition de toutes les forces révolutionnaires et de rétablir l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs. C'est à cet effet compagnons que nous vous convoquons tous un [sic] Congrès International Socialiste Révolutionnaire qui se tiendra à Londres le 14 Juillet 1881 et dont l'unique ordre du jour sera: "Reconstitution de l'Association International [sic] des Travailleurs"'. Consul

by the Jura Federation, Kropotkin and Malatesta, took several months. An initial organisational committee composed by seven people was established in London at the beginning of February 1881. A room was rented at 41 Upper Rathbone Street to hold regular meetings. De Martijs, informer of the Italian embassy, was the Italian representative. The representative for London was C. Hall, another possible spy, in this case for the British police.⁴⁶ Malatesta, after his arrival in March 1881, worked on the organisation of the congress with Brocher, who was elected secretary. The *Rose Street Club* was the organisational headquarters. In that period Malatesta kept up an extensive correspondence with Cafiero, Kropotkin and other anarchist leaders.

Italian authorities were seriously concerned about the results arising from this congress. As soon as the embassy knew about the intentions of the anarchists, they made preparations for surveillance. Two Italian spies, who were among police spies of other nationalities, were able to attend the congress despite the precautions taken by the organisers. Orlando De Martijs was one of them. In 1881, he already worked for the Italian embassy in London and in fact he collaborated in the organisation of the congress. Moreover, Malatesta received his correspondence at De Martijs's address.⁴⁷ De Martijs had therefore the opportunity to supply the embassy with copies of his letters. The second informer, Raffaele Moncada, was sent to London from Marseille. Malatesta received a report from Marseille, which warned him about the real identity of Moncada. These suspicions were apparently averted because Moncada arrived in London with a reference written by Cafiero. According to the consul's reports, De Martijs was able to attend the private meeting as delegate of Naples and Rome.⁴⁸ These two spies sent more than four hundred reports describing the developments at the congress to the Italian embassy.⁴⁹

in Geneva to Ministry of Interior, 29 May 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6. See also: Errico Malatesta, 'Les éléments du congrès de Londres', Bulletin du Congrès. IISH, Brousse Archive.

⁴⁶ John Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse* (London: Paladin Granada Publishing, 1978) p. 16. The other representatives were: Biedermann for Switzerland, Figueras for Spain, Brocher for Alsace and Lorraine, Hartmann for Russia, and Magnin for France.

⁴⁷ De Martijs received his mail at 51 Stillington Street; Italian embassy to Foreign Ministry, 18 August 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 3. As a result of the British inspector's visit to Malatesta's neighbour, Malatesta asked his comrades to stop sending letters to his usual addresses. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 8 July 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

⁴⁸ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 30 April 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

⁴⁹ Giampietro Berti, *Francesco Saverio Merlino*, p. 51.

The last day a public meeting was held at Cleveland Hall, in which the resolution of the congress and a document of protest against Most's conviction were approved.⁵⁰

The final resolution stated:

Le rappresentanti [sic] dei socialisti rivoluzionari dei due mondi [...] , partigiani della distruzione integrale, per mezzo della forza, delle istituzioni attuali politiche ed economiche, hanno accettato la dichiarazione di principi adottata il 3 settembre 1866 a Ginevra dal Congresso Internazionale dei Lavoratori è di stretta necessità fare tutti gli sforzi possibili per propagare per mezzo di atti, l'idea rivoluzionaria e lo spirito di ribellione in quella grande frazione della massa popolare che non prende ancora parte al movimento e si fa delle illusioni sulla moralità e l'efficienza dei mezzi legali [...] per portare la nostra azione sul terreno dell'illegalità che è la sola via conducente alla rivoluzione, è necessario ricorrere a mezzi che siano in conformità con questo scopo [...] ricordandoci che il più semplice fatto, diretto contro le istituzioni attuali, parla meglio alle masse che non migliaia di stampati e fiotti di parole, e che la propaganda per mezzo del fatto nelle campagne ha anche più importanza che nelle città.⁵¹

The results of this congress, its unequivocal support for 'propaganda by deed', and the lax organisation which characterised the anarchist movement during the following years, opened the doors to individualist terrorism and to the spread of anti-organisationalist groups which weakened the anarchist movement seriously. Moreover, the idea of considering themselves a '*minoranza agente*', removed anarchists from the labour movement, leaving it to the growing movement of reformist socialism.⁵²

At the congress, the delegates discussed the use of 'chemical materials' for revolutionary purposes. And this theme can be found in the final resolution. Militants were urged to apply themselves to the study of this matter: 'Il congresso raccomanda alle organizzazioni e agli individui che fanno parte dell' Associazione Internazionale dei Lavoratori di dare grande importanza alla studio delle scienze tecniche e chimiche, come mezzo di difesa e di attacco...'.⁵³ This resolution explains the concerns of the consul when he was informed that Malatesta and Chaikovsky were spending many days

⁵⁰ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 19 July 1881, ASMAE, AL, b. 70.

⁵¹ Ettore Zoccoli, *L'Anarchia: gli agitatori – le idee – i fatti* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca Editori, 1907), pp. 397-398.

⁵² Giampietro Berti, *Francesco Saverio Merlino*, p. 53.

⁵³ *Il Grido del Popolo*, (Naple) 19 August 1881, quoted in: Giampietro Berti, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano e internazionale 1872-1932* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2003), p. 96.

in the British Library, ‘ove leggono libri che trattano di chimica e d’ingegneria mineraria, probabilmente a scopo criminoso!’⁵⁴

At the end of the congress an information bureau was established. Malatesta, Chaikovsky and the German Trunk were the members; Figueras, Neve and Goldenberg were their deputies.⁵⁵ Malatesta, who was the secretary of this committee, kept a complete set of the papers of the congress.

On Figueras’s suggestion, a section of this International Workingmen's Association was established in London on 30 August 1881. Robin, Ferrand and De Martijs were named secretaries.⁵⁶ Weekly meetings were held every Monday in the *Sun Tavern*, Nermon Street, Oxford Street or in private houses: Malatesta’s and Chaikovsky’s for example. This committee was composed of more than twenty members.⁵⁷

Cafiero, Malatesta, Ginnasi, Solieri, De Martijs, Figueras, Robin, Hoffman and Chaikovsky were among the people who attended these reunions. The members organised meetings and conferences at *Rose Street Club*.⁵⁸

In this period, the Italian anarchists in London arranged collections in favour of Amilcare Cipriani who had been arrested in Italy and charged for murder. They likewise organised parties at *Rose Street Club*. In November 1881, a list of subscribers from London was published in Costa’s newspaper *Avanti!*. This list included about twenty people: most of them were anarchists. The others were old republicans; among them there were Domenico Lama, the secretary of Mazzini’s Working Men’s Association, Bendi, the owner of the public house in Greek Street, and Vincenzo Melandri.⁵⁹ Solieri had close and frequent contacts with militants in Emilia and the Romagna and he was probably sympathetic to Costa. This could have been the reason for some disagreements between him and Malatesta.

⁵⁴ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 10 September 1881, ASMAE, AL, b. 70.

⁵⁵ Hermia Oliver, *The International Anarchist Movement*, pp. 16-17.

⁵⁶ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 30 August 1881, ASMAE, AL, b. 70.

⁵⁷ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 21 August 1881, ASMAE, AL, b. 70.

⁵⁸ In September 1881 the secretary Robin sent a circular asking the editors of English newspapers to publicise a meeting organised by the International Association of Working Men. Malatesta and Brocher gave speeches on anarchist propaganda. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 26 September and 5 December 1881, ASMAE, AL, b. 70.

⁵⁹ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 4 November 1881, ASMAE, AL, b. 70. ‘Melandri Vincenzo di Faenza (detto Babilon) Oste di n. 10 Laystall Street [...] E’ piuttosto un buon diavolo, sempre pronto a dare una zuppa a qualsiasi italiano più povero di lui; un po’ eccentrico nelle sue idee intorno a Garibaldi e Mazzini, e sebbene talvolta faccia pompa di idee repubblicane, non lo ritengo avverso all’attuale ordine di cose in Italia né al Governo di S. M. il Re, ma è accanito contro i preti specialmente del suo tempo in Italia!’ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 20 December 1881, ASMAE, AL, b. 70.

At the end of July 1882, Malatesta left London. Malatesta's absence from the United Kingdom caused a decrease in anarchist initiatives. Indeed, Italian anarchists in London did not publish any newspaper until Malatesta's return in 1889. Also the number of reports regarding Italian anarchist activities sent by the embassy to the Ministry of Interior decreased; they mainly notified arrivals and departures of anarchist militants from London. However, the network of political refugees did not completely disappear. In 1885, an Italian anarchist section still existed, promoted by Biagio Poggi, Defendi and Solieri.⁶⁰ Moreover, in February 1885 Francesco Saverio Merlino, one of the chief leaders of Italian anarchism, took refuge in London, at 19 Charrington Street.⁶¹ Merlino's sojourn in the United Kingdom had a considerable relevance to the development of his ideological and theoretical thought. However, his presence was less significant to anarchist organisations in the Italian colony. Until 1888 the documentation regarding Merlino's activity is very scarce, probably because he dedicated himself principally to theoretical studies.⁶² In 1887 he organised a 'comitato rivoluzionario italiano attivissimo nella corrispondenza coll'Italia, la Francia ed il Belgio'.⁶³ In 1884, two Internationalists, Lombardi and Berni, were in contact with the Central Committee of the International in Florence where Malatesta was publishing *La Questione Sociale*. In addition, Vito Solieri, the militant who, with Malatesta and Merlino, showed the strongest sense of initiative, left London. In February 1886 he went to Paris with Merlino and subsequently moved to the United States.⁶⁴ In 1887, an anarchist active in London, Attilio Melchiorri, sent a manifesto entitled *11 Novembre* to Italy.

But the drying up of police sources regarding the activities of Italian refugees during those years is also related to another reason. At the end of 1886, the spy De Martijs was forced to leave the United Kingdom; the Italian embassy did not have available informers or spies to replace him until 1889, when Count Giuseppe Torielli-

⁶⁰ Letterio Briguglio, *Il partito operaio italiano e gli anarchici* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1969), p. 22.

⁶¹ Italian ambassador to Italian consul in London, 2 January 1887. ASMAE, AL, b. 122, f. 5 (1887. Corrispondenza al consolato di Londra). In the same letter the ambassador reported Merlino's intention to publish his work *Monopolismo o Socialismo?*.

⁶² On Merlino in London see: Giampietro Berti, *Francesco Saverio Merlino*, pp. 109-120.

⁶³ Ministry of Interior to Italian ambassador in London, 12 January 1887, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (Londra Ambasciata' 1886-1887).

⁶⁴ Foreign Ministry to Ministry of Interior, 24 February 1886 and 14 September 1886, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (Londra ambasciata 1886-1887).

Brusati di Vergano employed an informer, alias Calvo, who provided information during the successive decade.⁶⁵

The 1890s: Individualists and Associationists

At the end on 1880s a new wave of Italian political refugees caused by Crispi's '*leggi scelleratissime*', revitalised the colony of Italian anarchists in London. In 1888, the embassy was notified of the presence in London of a group of individualist anarchists who arrived from Paris.⁶⁶ Moreover, in 1889 Malatesta, who had returned to Europe after four years spent in Argentina, moved the printing of *L'Associazione* from Nice to London. The colony of Italian refugees during the 1890s was extremely active. The colony became more numerous and the relationships among political refugees more complex. Meetings were held in different places; some of the refugees began to be entrenched in the Italian colony. For example, the Defendi family opened an Italian delicatessen at 12 Archer Street, W.C.; Giovanni Defendi's companion, Emilia Tronzio, worked in the shop. She was native of Cosenza. She had lost her parents during a cholera epidemic and was adopted by the Zanardelli family; Tito Zanardelli was her stepbrother. Before Defendi's arrival in London she had been living with Malatesta.⁶⁷ Giovanni and his son Enrico went through the colony selling their products by cart.

On their arrival, new refugees found an established colony; they could settle and find work more easily. In 1891, a list of the anarchists in London provided to the Italian Minister of Interior by the ambassador included Matteo Benassi (nicknamed 'Gobbo'), Pietro Bianchi, Cesare Carpanetti, Demetro Francini, Giacomo Marchello, Francesco Prodi, Luigi Rosati, Ludovico Scacciati, and Francesco Vittorio.⁶⁸ In October, the ambassador notified that these active anarchists expelled from Belgium and Switzerland had strengthened the local anarchist group.⁶⁹ In 1892, Antonio Agresti arrived in

⁶⁵ The Italian consul replied to the ambassador who had sought information about the manifesto published by the Italian anarchist Melchiorri: 'Non essendo però possibile di tener dietro alle mene degli anarchici italiani qui, senza avere una persona ad hoc che se ne occupi, e che non è facile di trovare, su due piedi, le restituisco il manifesto sovraccennato'. In order to solve this problem the consul suggested the ambassador support the suggestion to have De Martijs returned to London. Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 2 December 1887, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 122.

⁶⁶ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 11 January 1888, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1888.

⁶⁷ ACS, *CPC*, b. 5234, f. (Tronzio Emilia)

⁶⁸ Ambassador Tornielli to Foreign Minister Crispi, 20 January 1891, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1891.

⁶⁹ Tornielli to Foreign Minister, 3 October 1891, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1891.

London from France. A Florentine, he had been especially active in France.⁷⁰ Isaia Pacini, a tailor, arrived in London in 1895, expelled from Switzerland, where he had lived for ten years. He was a native of Pistoia from where he had escaped in 1885, after being sentenced to two years' imprisonment for publishing an anarchist manifesto against the monarchy.⁷¹ In September 1894 Francesco Cini, Germano Polidori, Raffaele Ferlaschi, and Pilade Cocci also arrived. In 1894, Pietro Gori, Riccardo Bonometti, Domenico Borghesani, Luigi Radaelli, nicknamed 'Razzia', and Edoardo Milano expelled from Switzerland went to London where they lived in the office of the newspaper *The Torch*, in Euston Road.⁷² Years later, Pietro Gori gave an affectionate description of the meeting that this group had with Kropotkin, in the house of the Russian revolutionary.⁷³ Other anarchists in London in 1894 were Giuseppe Verga, a Milanese army deserter and cabinet-maker, and Franco Piccinielli the owner of a barbershop where anarchists used to meet. In September 1896, Sante Cenci, a tailor from Rimini, after having served two years of forced domicile in Porto Ercole, migrated to London.⁷⁴

The Italian anarchist movement in London was divided into two main groups: the 'anti-organisationalist individualists' and the 'anarcho-communist organisationalists'. At the beginning of the 1880s some Italian anarchists, such as Carlo Cafiero and Emilio Covelli, advocated the avoidance of stable and formal organisations in order to make it more difficult for the police to suppress their activities owing to the campaign by the government to outlaw the International. Thus for Cafiero this anti-organisational approach was merely a contingent tactic. But for the individualist 'anti-organisers', who became a current of the Italian anarchist movement from the late 1880s, the contingent has become a principled position. And they considered all organisations as inherently authoritarian.⁷⁵

Moreover, the insurrectionist approach, which in Italy reached an apogee with the Benevento uprising in 1877, was no longer practicable. The policy of propaganda by deed evolved from demonstrative acts of guerrilla warfare to a series of assassinations,

⁷⁰ ACS, CPC, b. 31, f.(Agresti Antonio).

⁷¹ ACS, CPC, b. 3638, f. (Pacini Isaia).

⁷² PRO, HO/144/587/B2840C (Alien. Foreign Anarchists coming to U.K.).

⁷³ Pietro Gori, *Pagine di vagabondaggio* (Milan: Editrice Moderna, 1948)

⁷⁴ ACS, CPC, b. 1239, f. (Cenci Sante).

⁷⁵ Maurizio Antonioli, 'L' Individualismo anarchico', in Maurizio Antonioli, Pier Carlo Masini (eds.), *Il sol dell'avvenire. L'anarchismo in Italia dalle origini alla prima guerra mondiale* (Pisa: BFS Edizioni, 1999), pp. 55-84.

which shook the European ruling elite during the 1890s.⁷⁶ Michele Angiolillo, August Vaillant, Sante Caserio, François-Claudius Ravachol, and Emile Henry's acts had an enormous impact on European society and the widespread stereotype of the bomb-throwing anarchist developed during these years.⁷⁷

The knife was merely the expression of the old personal quarrel with a personal tyrant. Dynamite is not only our best tool, but our best method. It is a perfect symbol as is incense of the prayers of the Christian.⁷⁸

The mystique of dynamite caught on among anarchist groups. Anarchist publications often gave detailed instructions about how to make bombs, those published by the individualists in particular.⁷⁹ This attitude eased the way for the penetration of *agents provocateurs* into the anarchists' constant rows. They not only caused the arrest of many anarchist militants, but were also able to spread discord within the anarchist movement.

The Individualists

The idea of destroying the bourgeois world by using bombs and engaging in 'expropriations' guided the individualists active in London, who were 'besides Paolo Schicchi, the most famous individualists of 1889 to 1897'.⁸⁰ They were found in a group known variously as the *Gruppo dell' Anonimato* or *La Libera Iniziativa*.

In a leaflet entitled: *Studio igienico alla portata dei lavoratori, Viva il furto e la dinamite! Abbasso l' organizzazione e la morale*, this group explained how to make two

⁷⁶ Pier Carlo Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani nell'epoca degli attentati* (Milan: Rizzoli Editore, 1981).

⁷⁷ Haia Shpayer-Makov, 'A Traitor to His Class: the Anarchist in British Fiction', *European Studies*, XXVI (1996): pp. 299-325.

⁷⁸ G.K. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1975), 1st ed.: 1908, p. 66.

⁷⁹ See for example the newspaper *Il pugnale*, which in its first page, under the title 'Il nostro programma', gave instructions for making bombs; or Johann Most's text *Science of revolutionary warfare*.

⁸⁰ Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian anarchism*, p. 270, note 53.

different bombs, the first by using nitro-glycerine and the second by using chlorate of potassium. They included also a detailed note of the implements and the necessary costs. They ended the article with the following advice:

Bisogna adottare il sistema da noi indicato qui perché si possa ottenere *infallibilmente* splendidi risultati sia rovinando Edifici governativi sia ammazzando i ricchi nei loro palazzi [...]. Dunque compagni non bisogna avere pietà del nemico, poiché esso non ha mai avuto pietà di noi! Coraggio ed all'opera!⁸¹

In line with this point of view, they enthusiastically honoured the bombers as anarchist heroes. From their point of view, not only did Ravachol, Pallas, Vaillant, and Henry strike terror into the bourgeoisie's heart; they accomplished invaluable acts of propaganda too.

It is likely that members of *La Libera Iniziativa* knew Henry personally. Henry lived in London for several years frequenting the principal meeting point of the individualist anarchists, the *Autonomie Club*, which also members of *La Libera Iniziativa* often visited. In March 1894, following Vaillant's execution and Henry's arrest in Paris, *La Libera Iniziativa* published a leaflet entitled *Vendetta!!*. They sent hundreds of copies of this pamphlet to several Italian cities: Rome, Bologna, Florence, Naples, and Turin; they distributed them also within the Italian colony in London.⁸² In this leaflet, a typical example of this group's literature, *La Libera Iniziativa* strongly defended Vaillant and Henry's actions and, at the same time, threatened the bourgeoisie.

Le rivolte [sic] innumerevoli, le fucilazioni in massa, le arrestazioni [sic], le condannazioni [sic], lo stato d'assedio non possono che far germogliare la vendetta! Le rappresaglie vogliono le rappresaglie e ciò che la ragione non ha potuto fare finora, lo farà il bagliore delle città incendiate e il bagno di sangue che dovrà annegare il nostro pianeta [...]. Sì, la terra intiera diverrà in [sic] immenso brasiera [sic], lo diverrà, lo diverrà [...]. Per uno di noi di cui versate il sangue siamo oramai decisi di mandare *ad patres* un migliaio di voi [...] e che la pietà resti agli impostori e agli imbecilli!! [...]. La lotta, o furfanti, è senza tregua! Ma se per assassinare uno di noi occorrono centinaia di sbirri, per anentire [sic] mille di voi in un minuto secondo, uno di noi è d'ora in avanti sufficiente[...]. Seminiamo a nostra volta il terrore, lo

⁸¹ *Studio igienico alla portata dei lavoratori*, without date, but after 1893. ACS, *Carte Crispi DSPP*, b. 136, f. 928.

⁸² Giuseppe Fornara distributed two hundred copies of this leaflet in the Italian colony. Biographical record, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2121, f. (Fornara Giuseppe).

spavento, la sofferenza e la morte in mezzo a tutto quanto si presenta come ostacolo all'esercizio della nostra libertà [...]. Giustizia o compagni! [sic] In nome di tutte quelle che crepano nelle sofferenze [sic] della fame, del freddo e di tutte le altre privazioni: in nome di ciascuno di noi è necessario e imperioso di fare delle ecatombi degli assassini che ci affamano! Ah! Vendetta! Ah Vendetta!⁸³

The pamphlet did not spare the anarchists and the socialists who disagreed with terrorism.

Questi fatti sì rivoluzionari non mancano d'essere anatematizzati dagli eunuchi che [sic], riducono la rivoluzione a delle processioni precedute da stracci rossi e neri, tamburro [sic] in testa...ecc. e vedete questi redentori ad ogni bombificazione turarsi le orecchie, e le lacrime agli occhi domandare le folgori pei titani ... Come?! Delle bombe nei ristoranti, hotel, teatri, in casa di poveri magistrati, e quello che è peggio in mezzo alla folla? Si [sic]! ipocriti a cento faccie [sic]; alla vostra volta potrete attenderle...⁸⁴

Likewise, the article considered everyone who did not support these actions as an enemy to be destroyed; even the apolitical masses were in danger.

Ohè popolo camaleonte le bombe solo giungeranno a te!? Ciechi e sordi che vi ostinate a nulla vedere né sentire, fatalmente correte alla vostra prossima fine perché: chi comanda, come il vile che ubbidisce, è indegno di vivere.⁸⁵

Furthermore, members of *L'Anonimato* considered individual acts as the most effective method to undermine bourgeois society and to minimise the risk of arrest for other active anarchists. To leave the political initiative to individual will, without containing it within the boundaries of formal organisations, not only prevented the establishment of hierarchies and authoritarianism, but also guaranteed their safety and prevented the arrest of anarchist militants en masse.⁸⁶ Even a temporary agreement between the members of the group in order to contrive a plot was not accepted:

⁸³ *Vendetta!!* (Milan: Tip. Della Sera) (but London: 1894); another copy in ACS, *Carte Crispi DSPP*, b. 136, f. 928 and ACS, *Min. Giu. Miscellanea*, b. 105, f. 991.

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*

⁸⁶ 'Pour un Tartarin en herbe, et en mal d'organisation et d' idées démocratiques, tu aurais au moins dû comprendre que l' Anonymat [...] a été reconnu nécessaire comme tactique de guerre à employer pour couvrir d' abord et effacer ensuite les individualités au bénéfice des unités de combat dans la lutte actuelle' in: *L'Anonymat aux plumitifs de l'anarchie!!!*, signed L'Anonymat. This leaflet was probably published against Charles Malato who in his book *Les joyeusetés de l'exile* had criticised the group of *L'Anonimato*. A copy of this leaflet is kept in the British Library.

L'assassino che è deciso di commettere un reato, non si fida di alcuno – deve agire di propria volontà, questa è la dottrina dei liberi pensatori! E' vero che vi possono essere anche dei complotti, ma sono cose rare e gli stessi anarchici della Libera Iniziativa non ammettono, perché dicono: meglio comprometterne uno, che molti.⁸⁷

Luigi Parmeggiani was the leader of the Italian individualist anarchists in London. During the 1880s he was active in Paris, where he became Vittorio Pini's companion.⁸⁸ Together they founded different groups, called *Gli Intransigenti di Londra e Parigi*, *Gli Straccioni di Parigi*, *I Ribelli di St. Denis*, and *Il gruppo degli Introvabili*.⁸⁹ The chief members of these groups, who settled in London in 1888, were Alessandro Marocco, Cajo Zavoli a former Garibaldinian officer, Giacomo Merlino, Pini, and Parmeggiani.⁹⁰ The group advocated and practised 'expropriation' as their chief revolutionary activity. Pini in particular, as a result of his several audacious and successful robberies, became such a legendary character that Cesare Lombroso chose him as the prototype of 'Criminale-Nato' ('the born criminal') in order to illustrate his discussion of 'criminality arising from anarchism'.⁹¹

In Paris they published the newspapers *Il Ciclone*, *Il Pugnale* and the pamphlets *Difesa degli anarchici di Chicago e di Duval* and *L'Indicateur anarchiste*. They allegedly planned several bomb attempts and murders. They also stabbed a suspected secret agent of the Italian police in Paris (Farina).⁹²

In their pamphlets, Pini and Parmeggiani attacked the anarchists who believed in the organisation of revolutionary forces: Amilcare Cipriani was their main target. In the *Manifesto degl' anarchici in lingua italiana al popolo d'Italia*, they violently censured Cipriani because of his proposal for the creation of an Union of Latin Peoples to oppose

⁸⁷ Calvo's report, 9 June 1891, ACS, CPC, b. 1239, f. (Sante Cenci).

⁸⁸ On Vittorio Pini: Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin*, pp. 229-233; Ettore Sernicoli, *L'Anarchia e gli Anarchici* (Milan: Treves, 1894); Flor O'Squarr, *Les coulisses de l'anarchie* (Paris: 1892); Jean Maitron, *Histoire du mouvement anarchiste en France (1880-1914)*, (Paris: Société Universitaire d' Editions et de Librairie, 1951). Pietro Di Paola, *Dizionario Biografico dell'Anarchismo*, vol. II, (Pisa: BFS, forthcoming).

⁸⁹ See Luigi's Parmeggiani's biographical record, ACS, CPC, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi).

⁹⁰ Italian consul to Italian ambassador, 11 January 1888, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1888. The consul attached a report of the activities in Paris of this group.

⁹¹ Cesare Lombroso, *Gli Anarchici* (Rome: Napoleone editore, 1972, reprint of second edition, originally published 1894).

⁹² Farina is the same name of the informer who revealed the plans of the 'Matese' expedition to police.

Crispi's foreign policy, which seemed to be leading to war against France.⁹³ The article set 'social revolution' against the idea of 'fatherland', which was supported instead by Cipriani, and preached the unity between Prussian and Latin workers against the power of capitalism.

At the beginning of February 1889 two socialist newspapers, *Il sole dell'avvenire*, published in Mirandola, and *La Giustizia*, published in Reggio Emilia, as a response to the attacks against Cipriani, accused Parmeggiani and Pini of being spies. Pini and Parmeggiani travelled to Italy to attack the editors of those newspapers: Celso Ceretti and Camillo Prampolini. On 13 February 1889 they stabbed Ceretti in Mirandola. Three days later they were discovered by the police in Reggio Emilia where Prampolini lived. Pini and Parmeggiani were able to escape after a shoot-out with the police. Shortly after having returned to Paris, Pini was arrested by the French police, allegedly thanks to the revelation of a confidant, and sentenced to twenty years hard labour in Cayenne.⁹⁴ Parmeggiani avoided arrest and found refuge in London where, in June 1889, he was taken into custody for the attempted murder of Ceretti. Nevertheless, the judge opposed Parmeggiani's extradition by the Italian authorities and freed him because Ceretti refused to travel to London to identify his attacker.

Parmeggiani was therefore able to assemble a large group of followers around him and to organise, as he did in Paris, robberies and frauds. The Italian authorities reported that in London Parmeggiani was leading a gang of anarchists and thieves, refugees of different nationalities, all habitual criminals.⁹⁵ In his correspondence, the Italian consul reported that around eighty people assembled at a meeting of *La Libera Iniziativa*.⁹⁶

On 10 June 1894, the police confidant Calvo warned the Italian embassy to keep Parmeggiani under surveillance because he was planning to burgle a private house. According to police records, in August 1894 the anarchist Giuseppe Fornara, a member of the group expert in forging keys, made twelve keys for Parmeggiani. However, the keys did not work properly and Parmeggiani was unable to burgle the house from which he hoped to obtain ten thousand pounds.

⁹³ *Manifesto degli anarchici in lingua italiana al popolo d'Italia*, I gruppi intransigenti di Londra e Parigi, Gli Straccioni di Parigi, I Ribelli di Saint Denis. Londra 11 Novembre 1888, Londra – Tipografia della Verità, 17 Euston Road, in ACS, *Carte Crispi, DSPP*, b. 136.

⁹⁴ According to Masini, Pini could have been betrayed by Carlo Terzaghi. Pini's arrest opened a debate in Malatesta's newspaper, *L'Associazione*, about the legitimacy of robbery as a revolutionary method.

⁹⁵ '...dirige una banda di anarchici e ladri. Furono e sono suoi satelliti individui malfattori pregiudicati di tutte le nazionalità rifugiati a Londra come ad ultimo asilo, i quali come lui vivono di ruberie e di scrocco'. Parmeggiani's biographical record ACS, *CPC*, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi).

⁹⁶ Italian ambassador to Foreign Minister, 22 August 1893, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1893.

Fornara forged keys for Parmeggiani and the members of *La Libera Iniziativa* several times with varying results. During these nightly forays his accomplices were Cesare Firpo, nicknamed 'Venezia' and Ludovico Scacciati.⁹⁷ The Italian Ministry of Interior wondered if it was necessary to inform the local police about these crimes; nevertheless, the ambassador in London rejected this idea. Because a disclosure of the information provided by the secret agent could reveal his real identity and endanger his safety.⁹⁸

Parmeggiani praised 'expropriation' in a polemical leaflet printed in English, French and Italian on the occasion of the celebrations for the First of May in 1891.⁹⁹ In this leaflet, significantly entitled *The Comedy of the 1st of May*, Parmeggiani condemned this holiday as a harmless manifestation in which workers, wearing their best dress, paraded inoffensively. A revolt launched during the May Day demonstration was impossible because it was called months in advance, and the police and the army would be well positioned to act. Consequently, the only result that the May Day could achieve was to restore the confidence of the bourgeoisie. And Parmeggiani opposed the major political aim of the demonstration: the eight-hour working day.

Will you see your way clear henceforth and if you want something more than a fruitless revolution, do you feel the small value of poniard and the dynamite in comparison with the arm of expropriation with which nature has endowed equally all of us? [...] Therefore we say: Away with your nonsensical talk, and your speeches a thousand time re-echoed and attack individually unceasingly common understanding, property under whatever form you find it according to your strength and capacity. [...] Let us march on to the conquest of the material goods of this earth before anything else!! In short, comrades, you who claim with hue and cry the 'grand day' you surely do not expect to see it come with the sound of the drum on a fixed hour 6 months in advance, for every case in history would prove that it is impossible, and would tell you that revolutions burst forth by dint of the Individual act.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Calvo reported often, and colourfully, about these activities.

⁹⁸ 'La procedura inglese richiederebbe presentazione di testimoni a discarico sempre facili a trovare in una vasta associazione di gente di malaffare. L'origine della denuncia non tarderebbe a conoscersi ed, oltre ai pericoli ai quali noi esporremmo il denunziante, avremmo a prevedere la completa inutilità delle sue rivelazioni'. Italian ambassador to Foreign Ministry, 18 January 1891, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1891.

⁹⁹ Secret agent Calvo, in a letter of 26 April wrote: 'Parmeggiani ha fatto un manifesto per il primo maggio. Tanto per idee che per la filosofia spiegata in questo manifesto, meriterebbe 20 anni di galera! Spropositi in ogni frase, ammassi di errori e di corbellerie e stupidaggini, sono i pregi del lavoro!' According to Calvo Parmeggiani intended to print ten thousand copies, most of which to be sent to Italy, to Milan in particular. Calvo's report, 25 April 1891 ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹⁰⁰ 'The Comedy of the 1st of May', leaflet in ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

The leaflet concluded with the slogans; ‘Down with speeches and palliatives! Down with organisations and organisers! Long live individualism and positivism!’.

Parmeggiani’s ideas about and estimations of the First of May are reported also in a long report by Calvo, whom Parmeggiani visited shortly after the First of May celebration. Because Malatesta had left London, Parmeggiani hoped to seize control of the leadership of the London anarchists. And chatting with Calvo, Parmeggiani described an improbable revolutionary plan to be carried out in Rome, and he made clear his idea of ‘expropriation’:

...se muoiono cento persone della polizia, o soldati, il governo non piange certo, perché ne ha sempre a sua disposizione, ma se tocchiamo la proprietà egli è bello e fritto. Signori e governi sono ladri, se voi togliete loro la proprietà, il loro sfruttamento finisce. Il governo non può reggersi senza proteggere i signori. Dunque, quando i popoli sentiranno che cento anarchici sono capaci di saccheggiare una città, dopo il terrore da noi destato, si uniranno con noi, noi entreremo nelle loro case, ci prenderemo il loro denaro e ci resteremo in quelle case così bene addobbate. Col denaro si aiuta il popolo affamato, e via discorrendo! Il popolo che non ha preso parte perché idiota, vedendo i compagni in floride condizioni, essi pure prenderanno le armi e scenderanno in piazza con noi. Per essere anarchici, dice l’amicone Parmeggiani, bisogna aver coraggio e si deve essere ladro! 20 anarchici a Roma bastano a destare il terrore. 40 bombe ben lanciate vogliono dire qualche cosa (come è facile nel dire!) dice Parmaginello!!! Il detto galantuomo disse ancora che i governi non piangono la morte dei loro soldati, ma temono e combattono il furto! Queste sono le ciance che ha in testa il misero pazzo Parmeggiani, e che pretende comunicarle ai suoi compagni di Londra e di fuori, e che io ho comunicato a lei fedelmente.¹⁰¹

However, it is likely that, in contrast to Vittorio Pini, Parmeggiani used most of the stolen goods he acquired for his own purposes rather than for the anarchist cause. He bought a house near the British Museum, in Bedford Square, where he opened an antiques shop, according to Virgilio’s report thanks to ‘l’ aiuto di certe signore Escusurra, antiquarie spagnole residenti a Parigi e di non so quali furti’.¹⁰²

Despite his illegal nocturnal activities, in public Parmeggiani managed to be considered respectable. He used to speak ‘con una calma tutta propria. Ha le parole persuasive, ed anche una maniera nel dire, come se fosse un uomo di molta capacità ed esperienza...’.¹⁰³ Queen Victoria’s daughter, the Empress of Germany, visited his shop

¹⁰¹ Calvo’s report, 3 May 1891, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹⁰² Virgilio’s report, London, 29 June 1903. ACS, *CPC*, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi).

¹⁰³ Calvo’s report, 27 December 1890, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1890).

in 1898. And he sold Edward III's sword to Sir Charles Robinson, Queen Victoria's 'supervisore generale delle opere d' arte nei diversi palazzi reali'.¹⁰⁴

But at the same time in other circles in London, Parmeggiani became well known through his endless quarrels with the organisationalist anarchists and their leaders: Francesco Saverio Merlino and Errico Malatesta.

Sempre in urto con Cipriani, Malatesta, F. Saverio Merlino ed i loro seguaci anarchici e socialisti i quali riprovano la libera iniziativa e ritengono necessaria l'organizzazione; gli capitò talvolta di venire alle mani con alcuno di essi e ne ebbe perfino la fama di spia e minacce di morte.¹⁰⁵

However, some sources seem to indicate that initially Parmeggiani's relationship with Malatesta and Merlino was less uneasy and that it only gradually deteriorated. In March 1889, according to Calvo, Parmeggiani, Malatesta, and Pietro Bianchi went outside London to speak to Italian workers in a weapons factory who were replacing British workers on strike: the Italian authorities were concerned with the dangerous effect of anarchist propaganda among Italian workers. They also feared possible violent reactions against Italians by British workers, instigated by the Italian anarchists. The day after this outing Malatesta and Bianchi, who was Parmeggiani's best friend, met, probably in order to write a manifesto announcing a meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the Paris Commune.

In another report, although an evident case of *captatio benevolentiae*, Calvo wrote: 'quando i gruppi erano riuniti mi era più facile sapere le cose, ma ora che sono divisi, con quelle questioni successe, vi è un bel da fare per me, essere amico dell'uno e dell'altro'.¹⁰⁶ However, one year later, the two groups still found practical reasons for collaboration, probably because extradition was an issue of common interest. Indeed, in July 1892, during a trip to Paris, Parmeggiani was arrested for violation of a former deportation order and sentenced to a year's imprisonment. It seemed that Italian authorities intended to ask Parmeggiani's extradition for attempted murder of Ceretti. In a report of September 1892, Calvo wrote that Errico Malatesta and another anarchist, Alessandro Marocco, went to his house where they discussed writing a letter to the

¹⁰⁴ Transcription of Parmeggiani v Sweeney trial, p. 48, Italian inspector Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 11 November 1905, ACS, CPC, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi). See also PRO, HO144/606/B31076.

¹⁰⁵ Biographical record, ACS, CPC, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi).

¹⁰⁶ Calvo's report, 30 April 1891, ACS, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

Parisian newspaper *L'Intransigeant* in order to protest against the request of extradition. Allegedly, Malatesta dictated the letter to Marocco in French.¹⁰⁷ Two days later, Malatesta, Defendi, Louise Michel, the informer Calvo, and other anarchists took part in a collection to allow Parmeggiani's wife to travel to Paris to visit her husband.¹⁰⁸

In any case, after Parmeggiani's return to London the quarrels between these groups became more frequent and harsh.¹⁰⁹ Parmeggiani strongly supported individual actions and opposed all of Malatesta's initiatives to create an anarchist organisation in order to get out from the impasse in which the anarchist movement found itself.¹¹⁰ In August 1894, Parmeggiani distributed a fake copy of the newspaper of the Italian colony, *Londra-Roma*. This issue, characterised by extremely violent language, attacked the law on forced domicile promulgated by Crispi.¹¹¹ However, along with the death threats to the bourgeoisie, which were usual in the leaflets published by *La Libera Iniziativa*, Parmeggiani also attacked Malatesta and Merlino:

...cheché ne dica il noto umile, modesto, pulcinella e camaleonte Tartarin di antica fama che tutto di recente provò come al suo solito, il bisogno di vomitare (in un'intervista pubblicata nel giornale To-Day) su Hémile Henry e su Salvador, chiamando i loro atti stupidi e orribili, giustificando l'atto di Caserio, ma che sarebbe da idiota imitarlo sulla persona della vecchia regina d'Inghilterra (?)! dicendo inoltre che gli anarchici italiani soltanto comprendono il vero socialismo (?)! Bada buffone che ti conosciamo, o Menateste!..¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Calvo's report, 11 September 1892, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39.

¹⁰⁸ Calvo's report, 13 September 1892, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39.

¹⁰⁹ Virgilio wrote: 'Intanto era arrivato a Londra il Malavasi e Malatesta e i Defendi se lo erano avvicinato. Spinto da costoro, egli si prese l' assunto di far tacere il Parmeggiani e infatti incontratolo in Old Compton Street, circa cinque anni fa, lo provocò e gli diede un sacco di pugni. Da allora i biglietti diminuirono di quantità...'. Report by Virgilio, 1 July 1903, ACS, *CPC*, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi).

¹¹⁰ Report by Calvo, 9 June 1891, ACS, *CPC*, b. 1239, f. (Cenci Sante).

¹¹¹ 'Delle vostre tribune o borghesi ce ne ridiamo, la nostra non necessitando coadiuvazione. Se un bel mattino per esempio il fu intrepido rivoluzionario (?) e ingenuo Crispi, che lecca ora il culo di tutte le maestà maschio e femmina colla sua lingua sifilitica, lo si trovasse pugnalato, invelenato o – castrato come il suo cervello, alla porta di qualche gran postribolo dove è solito custodire il pudore e la morale, che c'importa o eruditi che la vostra stampa l'inserisca o no? E crederete che non vi siano almeno qualche migliaio di noi che sperano riuscire ciò che Lega non riuscì, vale a dire conversare col macquereau [sic], ladro, assassino, pederasta, spia e ributtante rettile che crede poter relegarci tutti là dove il clima raggiunge 60 e 70 gradi di calore?', *Londra-Roma*, 18 August 1894.

¹¹² A report of the investigation carried out by a detective of Scotland Yard about the publication of this issue, together with a copy of it can be found in PRO 144/258/A55684. The detective wrongly attributed the publication of this issue to Malatesta and Merlino as revenge for Pietro Rava's opposition to the anarchist attempts to open an Italian workers' circle. The issue is also kept in the *Londra-Roma* collection in Colindale Newspaper Library. Years later, Parmeggiani wrote about Malatesta: 'A Londra Malatesta, che passava per un "so tutto", era intollerante, autoritario e non ammetteva che nessuno lo contraddicesse; se faceva un giornale col denaro degli amici non accettava che articoli che confacevano al suo modo di pensare [...] pretendeva di fare scoppiare la rivoluzione sociale alla stessa ora ed in ogni luogo. [...] Io di tanto in tanto cercava di oppormi ai suoi modi barocchi e settari. Questo pazzo, che poco

The informer, Virgilio, dated the beginning of the controversy in 1896. According to his reports Parmeggiani began openly to attack the organisationalists following the decision of an anarchist's court of honour concerning the behaviour of the anarchist Francesco Cini. Cini was accused of stealing part of the money that he had collected in favour of the Spanish militants tortured in the Montjuich fortress in 1896.¹¹³ In a report giving details on Cini's past activities, the informers wrote that Parmeggiani was one of the judges; the others were Giovanni Defendi and Isaia Pacini. Parmeggiani defended Cini, but the court of honour found Cini guilty.¹¹⁴ From that moment, according to Virgilio, the relationship between these two groups turned hostile.

Siccome Malatesta vedeva in lui un arricchito e null'altro, così cominciò a combatterlo nelle riunioni, finché si giunse alla memorabile seduta nella quale fu giudicato il Cini e cacciato come spia dal partito. Il Parmeggiani non solo difese il Cini, ma gli diede anche del denaro. Allora formò un gruppo o per dir meglio si attornì di certo numero di amici [...] che per conto suo e col danaro suo stampavano certi foglietti contro Malatesta e compagnia. La guerra era dunque dichiarata ed è continuata così per parecchi anni.¹¹⁵

Since the controversies between the two groups began before 1896, Virgilio was evidently wrong in his reports. Nevertheless, he revealed the tension between the two groups.

In the second half of 1890s Parmeggiani gradually became less politically active and he concentrated on his business activities. At the end of 1890s he left London and went to Paris where his shop flourished. He reappeared in London in 1905. John Sweeney, a former policeman, in his memoirs had described Parmeggiani as an anarchist and Parmeggiani sued him for libel. At the trial in London Parmeggiani denied ever being an anarchist, but lost his case.

Parmeggiani lived in Paris and in the 1920s returned to his native town of Reggio Emilia. A few years before his death he donated his whole collection of antiquities to

poteva tollerarmi, mi odiò mortalmente quando lo battezzai col nome di 'Tartarin Napoletano', Luigi Parmeggiani, *Ricordi e riflessioni* (Paris: 1914).

¹¹³ In June 1896 a bomb was thrown on the Corpus Christi procession in the streets of Barcelona and killed several people. 400 opponents of the regime and the Church were arrested and tortured in the Montjuich fortress. Several prisoners died before reaching trial.

¹¹⁴ Dante and Virgilio's report, 24 April 1901, ACS, *CPC*, b. 1350, f. (Cini Francesco).

¹¹⁵ Virgilio's report, 1 July 1903, ACS, *CPC*, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi).

the city council; nowadays it is possible to visit the *Galleria comunale d'arte Parmeggiani* in Reggio Emilia.

Parmeggiani was allegedly also involved in the case of 'the Walsall anarchists'. In January 1892 six anarchists were arrested in Walsall and London, and charged with manufacturing bombs. Three of them, among whom the Italian shoemaker Jean Battolla, received a sentence of ten years' imprisonment. The whole event was the result of a conspiracy organised by Inspector Melville of Scotland Yard through the agent provocateur Auguste Coulon, employed by the British police.¹¹⁶ One of the reasons that led to the arrest of this group of anarchists was the fact that they were in possession of the newspaper *L'International*, printed by Bourdes and probably by Parmeggiani, which gave instructions about how to make bombs. There were often rumours that Parmeggiani could have been an agent provocateur. In the late 1890s, Parmeggiani himself circulated a leaflet denying these rumours.

Mouchard, moi? Un drôle de mouchard qui combat l'organisation des groupes; qui n'est point partisan des clubs, réunions et congrès; qui n'écrit à personne et à qui personne n'écrit de quelque part du globe que ce soit; qui ne reçoit que quelque rares et vieux amis! Mouchard, moi? Depuis 15 ans que je suis dans le mouvement, qui entre mes adversaires, qui entre mes ennemis mêmes, peut se lever et affirmer que j'ai en telle occasion, en telle affaire, de dépit, par haine ou par vengeance, trahi un seul de ses secrets, abusé d'une seule de ses confidences?¹¹⁷

His behaviour, the character of the pamphlets he published, and his disruptive actions suggest otherwise. The prefect of Reggio Emilia described him as 'un individuo misterioso [...] ci troviamo di fronte ad un uomo la cui ricchezza ha origini assolutamente misteriose. Ex anarchico, egli è stato sospettato di essere legato a elementi massonici internazionali, e perfino di essere un ricettatore abituale di refurtiva internazionale'.¹¹⁸ However, according to archival sources, there is no evidence that Parmeggiani worked for the Italian authorities.

¹¹⁶ On the 'Walsall Anarchists' see: John Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse*, pp. 103-161; Hermia Oliver, *The International Anarchist Movement*, pp. 77-81; David Nicoll, *The Walsall Anarchists* (London: 1894).

¹¹⁷ Luigi Parmeggiani, 'La Décadence des Anarchistes a Londres', (no date) IISH, Archive Nettlau, b. 310.

¹¹⁸ Prefect of Reggio Emilia to the Ministry of Interior, 12 September 1930, ACS, *CPC*, b. 3740, f. (Parmeggiani Luigi).

The Organisationalists

The transfer of the printing press of Malatesta's newspaper, *L'Associazione*, from Nice to London in November 1889 represented an important milestone in the revitalisation of activities among Italian anarchists in London.¹¹⁹ In autumn 1889, Malatesta returned to Europe from Argentina, where he had escaped at the end of 1884. 'The general revival of Socialism, just beginning in 1889 and marked by the London dock strike, the first of May (1890), the fact that he was in possession of the necessary means to make propaganda may have prompted him'.¹²⁰ In Nice Malatesta started the publication of *L'Associazione*, with 'the intention to constitute an international socialist-anarchist-revolutionary party with a common platform'.¹²¹ In France, Malatesta published three issues of *L'Associazione*. Then he was forced to move to London to avoid arrest by the French police for violating an old expulsion decree. Around this newspaper Malatesta gathered a number of other refugees: Francesco Merlino, Luisa Pezzi, Giuseppe Consorti, Galileo Palla, F. Cucco, and Giuseppe Cioci. At 4 Hannel Road, Fulham, Malatesta published four more issues. In December 1889 the administrator of the newspaper, Cioci, stole the funds of the newspaper, five thousand francs, and escaped to Italy where he was arrested.¹²² This financial loss caused the abrupt end of *L'Associazione*.

Nevertheless, Malatesta and Consorti did not stop their activities and managed to continue political and theoretical debate. In August 1890 they sent a circular in which, assuming the programme of the defunct newspaper,¹²³ they announced the publication

¹¹⁹ Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in London: the Era of Dynamite', in *A Century of Italian Emigration to Britain 1880-1980s*, edited by Lucio Sponza and Arturo Tosi, supplement to *The Italianist*, 13, 1993, pp. 25-43.

¹²⁰ Max Nettlau, *Errico Malatesta* (New York, Il Martello, 1922) p. 126.

¹²¹ *L'Associazione* represented an important experience in the development of Malatesta's thought. The attempt to reorganise the anarchist movement and to create a socialist anarchist revolutionary party reached its culmination at the Capolago congress in 1891.

¹²² Cioci's arrest had a bizarre aftermath. In order to prosecute him, the Minister of Interior asked the embassy to provide testimony from the editors of *L'Associazione* about the stolen money. The ambassador replied that the anarchists were not in the habit of testifying to the Italian authorities. In any case the funds concerned were said to be of dubious origins. Moreover, it was nearly impossible for the editors of *L'Associazione* to travel to Italy in order to give evidence since most of them had outstanding sentences hanging over their heads. Italian ambassador Tornielli to Foreign Minister Crispi, 20 January 1890, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1890).

¹²³ 'Svolgere e propugnare gl'ideali comunisti anarchici. Propugnare la costituzione di un partito internazionale socialista anarchico rivoluzionario, mediante l'organizzazione per libero accordo con un programma d'azione comune a tutti coloro che vogliono la rivoluzione violenta per mettere in comune la ricchezza, abbattere i governi ed opporsi alla costituzione di nuove autorità'. Reported by the Ministry of Interior to the Italian ambassador, 27 August 1890, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1890).

of a series of pamphlets and bulletins under the title of *Biblioteca dell' Associazione*.¹²⁴ Indeed they published some of Malatesta's most noted works, in particular: *Fra contadini*, *In tempo di elezioni* and *L'Anarchia*, which had large circulation and were translated into many different languages.¹²⁵

For the celebration of the First of May 1891 Malatesta's group organised and discussed initiatives. Italian anarchists organised at the *Club Nazionale* in Frith Street a meeting addressed to the Italian workers in which Malatesta was announced as one of the speakers. In reality, Malatesta printed his name in the advertisement as a deception to hide his plans to leave London in order to go to Italy where large demonstrations were expected. A few days before the First of May, the Metropolitan Police warned the Italian Embassy about Malatesta's intention in a document considered by the same ambassador as a 'documento eccezionale poiché è stabilito che la polizia inglese non investiga sulla condotta politica degli stranieri ed è escluso in ogni caso che essa comunichi ai governi esteri le notizie che possiede'.¹²⁶

The International Anarchist Communist groups distributed a leaflet entitled *What's to be done*. In this leaflet, after having underlined the international character of class struggle, they criticised the watchword of the eight-hour workday as an 'inadequate proposal and (an) illusory object'. The anarchist-communists demanded 'Bread for all, Science for all and for all Freedom and Justice'. Governments were the cause of robbery and oppression. Government in all its forms was the deadliest and most powerful enemy; petitions to governments were useless because freedom and liberty were never given but always taken:

Let us boldly stand, side by side with our comrades of other lands, in order to *take* (individually or collectively, on any favourable occasion, and, if

¹²⁴ The pamphlets announced in the circular were: *La politica parlamentare nel movimento socialista; Programma e organizzazione di un partito internazionale socialista-anarchico-rivoluzionario; Che cos'è il socialismo: sua base fondamentale, sua condizione e tendenza; Che cos'è il comunismo anarchico; Fra Contadini*, nuova edizione riveduta dall'autore. *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ 'L'opuscolo L'Anarchia è già stato pubblicato. Le ne rimetto una copia. Ieri e oggi ne partiranno migliaia di copie', Calvo's report, 25 April 1891, ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹²⁶ ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1891. Italian ambassador to Foreign Ministry, 29 April 1891: 'Information has been received that about a week or 10 days ago Malatesta & a most intimate friend of his named Consorti (another desperado) left this country en route for Italy, and supposedly for Rome, for the purpose of fomenting disturbances on the 1st of May. The few Italians in London, who are aware of Malatesta departure are very silent respecting it, and with a view to deceiving any person who would give information to the Italian Gov. about it, handbills are being printed announcing that Malatesta will speak in London on 1st of May. From this circumstance it is believed that Malatesta has gone to Italy for very important business'. Metropolitan Police Criminal Investigation Dept. New Scotland Yard April 27 1891, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39.

possible, to make the occasion itself) the wealth we have created, and of which we have been robbed...¹²⁷

During the 1890s Italian anarchists increasingly paid attention to the colony of Italian immigrants and initiated political activities among their compatriots. At the end of August 1891 a meeting of chefs and waiters was announced at the *Autonomie Club*.¹²⁸ In September 1891 the ambassador, Tornielli, referred to the Foreign Minister that in the reports received by the spy ‘è parola del Merlino e della propaganda che egli pare intento a fare nella classe dei cuochi e dei camerieri italiani la quale conta in Londra qualche migliaio di persone’. In November 1891, Tornielli reported that Italian anarchists, following the English example, had begun to have some success, holding public speeches in the poorest areas of the Italian colony. Indeed if ‘la prima apparizione di questi singolari apostoli ricevette diffidente e quasi ostile accoglienza’ in the following days ‘succedettero presto altri sentimenti’.¹²⁹ At that time Malatesta’s group was apparently named the *Circolo dei ribelli rivoluzionari*.¹³⁰

In March 1893, Tornielli informed that ‘è accresciuta sensibilmente l’attività del gruppo anarchico italiano in Londra. Il proposito di Merlino e Malatesta di portare le loro predicazioni anarchiche nel seno della Società Italiana degli operai è conosciuto alla presidenza di quell’ Istituto. Essa spiega la miglior buona volontà per tenere lontano il pericoloso elemento’.¹³¹

A few months later Merlino, Malatesta, Antonio Agresti, Gennaro Pietraraja, and Antonio Bertani promoted a meeting for the establishment of an association of Italian workers ‘pel miglioramento e l’emancipazione dei lavoratori’, ‘in cui non ci sia né presidente, né consiglio elettivo, e tutti i soci si riuniranno settimanalmente per trattare da loro gli interessi dell’ associazione’.¹³² Pietro Rava, the editor of *Londra-Roma* stood against this proposal:

¹²⁷ *What’s to be done*. Published by the International Anarchist-Communist Groups, in ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹²⁸ ‘Sono uniti ai rapporti suddetti due esemplari di un invito-appello ai cuochi e ai camerieri per una riunione nel club anarchico “Autonomie”. Da parecchio tempo si adoperano vari mezzi per fare proseliti nella numerosa classe di Italiani che esercitano qui quelle professioni. Finora non mi risulta che siano numerosi gli aderenti al gruppo anarchico’, Ambassador Tornielli to Foreign Minister Di Rudinì, 20 August 1891. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1891).

¹²⁹ Ambassador Tornielli to Foreign Minister Di Rudinì, 6 September and 5 November 1891, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1891).

¹³⁰ Calvo’s report, 5 April 1891, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹³¹ Italian ambassador to Foreign Ministry, 22 March 1893, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, 39, f. (1893).

¹³² ‘Ai nostri operai’, *Londra-Roma*, 28 July 1893; ‘Voci dal pubblico’, 22 August 1893.

[...] Il buon senso di coloro che veramente lavorano basta ad allontanarli da quelli che molto difficilmente potrebbero dar conto dell'origine dei loro mezzi di sussistenza. L'operaio italiano sa perfettamente bene che l'emancipazione si ottiene con l'operosità ed il risparmio, due concetti che i signori anarchici combattono. [...] il bisogno di una congrega onde predicarsi l'anarchia e seminare così nella popolazione inglese il sospetto contro l'operaio italiano, è sentito da nessuno. Ed amiamo ripeterlo: il sentimento moderno è la mutua assistenza e l'associazione [...] Quanto alle teorie degli anarchici – che non ammettono governo alcuno ed autorità, e che anzi ne cercano la distruzione con mezzi violenti e sanguinari – possono semplicemente considerarsi (come benissimo si espresse testé il deputato Chamberlain) di competenza della polizia.¹³³

This position caused a quarrel with the Italian anarchists who, in order to have a letter of response published, stormed Rava's office. This led the police to believe that Malatesta and the others were responsible for the publication of the fake issue of *Londra-Roma*, in reality published by Parmeggiani.

At the beginning of 1893 Malatesta, Pietraraja, Merlino, Bertoja and others formed a group, called *Solidarietà*, with an office in Pietraraja's home at 35 East Street, off Theobald Road, W.C.¹³⁴ This group was set up in opposition to the individualist group of *La Libera Iniziativa*, known to be followers of Ravachol.¹³⁵ The *Solidarietà* group focused its attention on the dramatic events that were happening in Sicily. And Malatesta and Merlino expressed interest in the activities of the *Fasci Siciliani*, which the anarchist leaders believed that they could transform into a general armed insurrection on the island. Thus Malatesta, Merlino and Bertone left London and went to Italy to organise this uprising. Merlino was arrested in Naples in January 1894.¹³⁶ After Merlino's arrest, while Italian authorities were desperately trying to capture Malatesta as well, the Ministry of Interior received a letter from London informing that Malatesta and Malato were in the city of Massa Carrara. This note was sent by the British provocateur Auguste Coulon, who had been at the centre of case of the Walsall anarchists.¹³⁷ In spite of this, Malatesta was able to find his way back to London unhindered.

¹³³ 'Ai nostri operai', *Londra-Roma*, 28 July 1893.

¹³⁴ Calvo's report, 29 February 1893, ACS, *CPC*, b. 1519, f. (Cova Cesare).

¹³⁵ Italian ambassador to the Foreign Minister, 7 May 1893, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1893).

¹³⁶ Giampietro Berti, *Francesco Saverio Merlino*, pp. 219-230.

¹³⁷ Foreign Minister to Italian ambassador, 8 February 1894, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. '1894-1895'.

The *Solidarietà* group sent appeals to provoke insurrections in Italy. One of them sent after Malatesta's return to London in March 1894, followed the bloody repression of the popular revolt in Sicily and the anarchist uprising in Lunigiana.¹³⁸ This manifesto, written by Pietraraja and corrected by Malatesta, imputed the failure of the insurrection to the lack of support received from other regions of Italy, which did not revolt:

Lo stupido, infame ed imbecille governo dell'ipocrita, sanguinaria e barbara Casa di Savoia è vittorioso, l'ordine è ristabilito, la monarchia è salva! I più nobili sentimenti, i più giusti diritti, sono stati soffocati ferocemente nel sangue nella Sicilia, nelle Calabrie, nelle Puglie, nella Toscana, nella Lunigiana, perché il resto d'Italia è restato quasi muto ed indifferente al generoso grido di riscossa che doveva far insorgere tutta una nazione ridotta nella più vergognosa miseria. Se il popolo delle altre località d'Italia invece di limitarsi a semplici manifestazioni e proteste alla partenza delle truppe per le provincie insorte, si fosse anche esso messo in rivoluzione, certo il governo sarebbe stato impotente a vincere l'insurrezione dell'intero popolo.

The manifesto urged Italian workers to revolt in order to free themselves from government and to establish 'l'Anarchia, cioè società senza governo, popolo in libertà'. A secret agent in London informed the ambassador, Tornielli, about the posting of this manifesto.¹³⁹ As a result, Italian authorities in Turin were able to seize four hundred copies of it. The Italian police drew up a list of the people to whom the manifestos were addressed and, using the law against subversive publications, many of them were taken to court in different cities. In particular, the incriminating passage of the manifesto was:

Popolo dipende da te se vuoi essere libero! Scrivi ai tuoi figli soldati di disertare, impedisci che gli altri si presentassero sotto le armi. Non pagare più le tasse. Armati come puoi e scendi risolutamente in piazza per combattere i tuoi affamatori. Spezza tutti i fili telegrafici, fa saltare tutti i ponti di ferrovie, rompi tutte le comunicazioni tra una località e l'altra; così il governo perdendo il filo delle informazioni perderà il filo della repressione e non sapendo dove far correre i suoi sgherri si ucciderà da se stesso. Avanti e coraggio! Piglia d'assalto e disarmi tutti i posti di polizia, incendia tribunali, archivi, palazzi municipali, comunali e prefettizi bruciandone tutti i titoli e documenti di: Proprietà, Sentenze e condanne che vi sono conservati. Piglia possesso di tutto. Tu col tuo lavoro hai fatto tutto, tu devi per giustizia godere di tutto invece d'essere nudo e affamato.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Gruppo Solidarietà, 'Al popolo d'Italia', London 1 March 1894, ACS, *Min. Giu., Miscellanea*, b. 105, f. 991, 'Stampa straniera sediziosa'. Another appeal for insurrection, launched by the group 'Solidarietà', was reported by Tornielli in his letter of 11 November 1893. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1893).

¹³⁹ Ambassador Tornielli to Foreign Minister Blanc, 10 March 1894. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1894-1895).

¹⁴⁰ 'Al popolo d'Italia'.

However, because it was not possible to demonstrate both the relationships between these people and the publishers of the pamphlets and the culprits' will to distribute them in Italy, generally those charged were acquitted.¹⁴¹

In 1896 the International Socialist Congress held in London, featured a great debate between socialists and anarchists after which the anarchists were expelled from the Second International. In its wake the Italian exiles had gained much publicity and the organisationalist anarchists, led by Malatesta, sought to revitalise the revolutionary anarchist movement in Italy from the exile in London. Concurrently, the fall of Crispi's government facilitated the return of many militants in Italy from forced domicile and thus the time for a revival was propitious. But the followers of Malatesta's type of anarchists had to regain much lost ground and support amongst the working and peasant classes of Italy because of the wave of anarchist terrorism in Europe and the ideological and political confusion generated by individualist anarchists. In order to have an 'anarchist party' able to act and to influence the events, Malatesta and his companions believed that the organisationalists needed to split from the individualists and gather only those militants who agreed on a common plan of action.¹⁴² For this purpose, in August 1896, a group of socialist-anarchists composed of Errico Malatesta, Isaia Pacini, Francesco Cini, Antonio Agresti, and Luigi Radaelli, published the single issue, *L'Anarchia*. The ideas published in that issue, especially Malatesta's articles 'Socialismo e Anarchia' and 'Errori e rimedi', would exert great influence in the Italian anarchist movement.¹⁴³

A few months later, in 1897, Malatesta and Gori left London to go to Italy where their presence was needed for the reorganisation of the anarchist movement. Enriched by the experience of exile and by the contacts he had with foreign anarchist leaders in London, Malatesta went to Ancona where he published *L'Agitazione*, one of the most important anarchist newspapers of the nineteenth century. He returned to London in the new century, which began with the murder of the king of Italy, Umberto I, by another anarchist exile, Gaetano Bresci.

¹⁴¹ Various reports in ACS, *Min. Giu. Miscellanea*, b. 105, f. 991 (Stampa Straniera Sediziosa).

¹⁴² Malatesta to Niccolò Converti, London 10 March 1896, in Errico Malatesta, *Epistolario 1873-1932. Lettere edite ed inedite*, edited by Rosaria Bertolucci (Carrara: Centro Studi Sociali, 1984) p. 74.

¹⁴³ Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo*, vol. 2, *Periodici e numeri unici anarchici in lingua italiana pubblicati all'estero (1872-1971)*, (Florence: Crescita Politica Editrice, 1976), p. 154.

The New Century

At the beginning of 1900, the arrival in London of Silvio Corio and Carlo Frigerio, who joined Malatesta and Pietraraja in the British capital, revitalised the activity of the Italian group. Indeed, between 1901 and 1905, the Italian anarchists published six newspapers: *L'Internazionale* (1901), *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, (1902), *Lo Sciopero Generale* (1902), *Germinal* (1903), *La Settimana Sanguinosa* (1903), and *L'Insurrezione* (1905).

On 18 March 1901, the informer Calvo reported:

Ieri sera le solite riunioni presso il Circolo Filodrammatico ed in Wardour. Non si è mai visto tanta energetica propaganda fra i compagni. Essi credono che la rivoluzione, come sempre dice la Michel, è alle porte!¹⁴⁴

In this period, the Italian anarchists sought to reinforce their links with the Italian colony. At the turn of the century, with the expansion of catering services in London, the number of Italian cooks and waiters increased steadily. They lived mainly around Soho and Holborn. The employees in restaurants and hotels were unorganised; they accepted to work under any conditions and were subject of a harsh sweating system. And they became a source of potential recruits for the Italian anarchists.¹⁴⁵ In 1901, the Italian anarchists announced in their newspaper, *L'Internazionale*, the first meeting of the *Lega di Resistenza fra i lavoratori in cucina in Londra*. The meeting was to be held at the headquarters of the *Circolo Filodrammatico*, at 38-40 Hanway Street. The *Circolo Filodrammatico* was run by Isaia Pacini and had been established a few weeks previously after Pacini changed the legal status of the club he formerly run.¹⁴⁶ According to the promoters, the *Lega di Resistenza fra i lavoratori in cucina in Londra*:

si prefigge il miglioramento morale, la diminuzione delle ore di lavoro, l'aumento dei salari... non sarà una semplice società di incoraggiamento, come ve ne sono parecchie in Londra, le quali non occupandosi che di un vago mutuo-soccorso, dimenticano che l'operaio deve prima badare di farsi ben pagare... Soprattutto bisogna protestare contro l'ingordigia di molti

¹⁴⁴ Calvo's report, 18 March 1901. ACS, *CPC*, b. 1992, f. (Felici Felice).

¹⁴⁵ Sponza, L., *Italian immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain: Realities and Images* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), pp. 102-108

¹⁴⁶ Calvo's report, 14 January 1901. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

padroni italiani, i quali ben conoscendo le misere condizioni di questi operai e la grande adattabilità de'loro connazionali, li sfruttano in un modo indecoroso. Così continua l'esposizione all'estero degli stracci e della miseria italiana.¹⁴⁷

On 20 January, according to *L'Internazionale*, several orators spoke in front of a large audience, and a British worker urged the waiters to join the Amalgamated Waiters Society. The meeting ended with the endorsement of a resolution urging the waiters to fight for 'l'abolizione delle mance e un adeguato salario'.¹⁴⁸

At the beginning of 1901, the Italian anarchists were also planning the establishment of a *Università Popolare*.¹⁴⁹ In June 1902, they launched the proposal for the creation of the *Università Popolare Italiana* with an article in *Lo Sciopero Generale*.¹⁵⁰ About fifteen societies of the Italian colony joined the project: the *Società per il Progresso degli Operai italiani in Londra*; the *Circolo Mandolinistico Italiano*; the *Veloce Club Italiano*; the *Circolo Italiano dell'Arte culinaria*; the *Circolo Filodrammatico Italiano*; the *Banca Popolare*; the *Lega di resistenza dei mosaicisti*; the *Gruppo sarti italiani*; the *Lega di resistenza fra camerieri*; the *Lega fra i lavoratori di cucina*; the *Comizio veterani e reduci*; the *Gruppo operaio internazionale*; the *Società di M.S. 'Unione' Circolo Educativo*; the *Unione sociale italiana di M.S.*; and the *Società italiana fra cuochi, camerieri ed affini*. The secretaries of the committee were Ennio Bellelli, Antonio Galassini, and Ascanio Santos. A series of meetings were organised in the headquarters of these societies to promote the *Università Popolare*, that opened at 58 Hatton Garden in Clerkenwell, which was also the headquarters of *L'Unione Sociale Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso*. The informer Calvo remarked:

Vi rimetto il manifesto sulla Università Popolare Italiana! Vedete come studiano i buoni compari! Essi credono che riunendo tante persone di diverse opinioni e posizione sociale, raggiungere un grande scopo quello cioè di fare propaganda delle loro famose idee!¹⁵¹

In December 1904, the *Università Popolare* left its premises in Poland Street, in Soho.¹⁵² Two months later, in February 1905, this initiative was undertaken on a larger

¹⁴⁷ 'Cronaca', *L'Internazionale*, 12 January 1901, p. 2.

¹⁴⁸ 'Cronaca Londinese', *L'Internazionale*, 26 January 1901, p. 4.

¹⁴⁹ Virgilio's report. 7 December 1901, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹⁵⁰ 'Agli Italiani della colonia di Londra', June 1902. ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

¹⁵¹ Calvo's report. 1 July 1902, ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

¹⁵² Mandolesi's report to Ministry of Interior, January 1905. ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

scale: the entire international anarchist community was involved in the project. The opening of the *Università Popolare Internazionale* followed a period of intense propaganda in the quarters of Soho and Clerkenwell. The program of the *Università Popolare* was printed in French, the refugees' common language, and was widely disseminated. According to the Italian police, the leaflet emphasised the revolutionary character given to teaching, thus 'l'insegnamento non è il fine ma il mezzo per fare propaganda anarchica'. The University was therefore seen as a 'focolare rivoluzionario'.¹⁵³

The organisers of the *Université Populaire de Londres*, on the contrary:

hoped that by the organisation of a library, reading-room, lectures, classes, dramatic representations, concerts, etc. an intellectual and artistic centre may be gradually built up in the foreign quarter of London.¹⁵⁴

Two classes took place each evening from Tuesday to Friday from eight to ten. Geometry, English language, mathematics, history, linguistics, physics, chemistry, linear design, and sociology were the main subjects taught. Lectures were carried on in French, 'but steps are being taken to organise lectures and discussions in German, Italian, Spanish and English'.¹⁵⁵ An 'International Circulating Library' of 1000 volumes was available at the opening of the *Università Popolare*. The teachers were of different nationalities; from Italy were Corio, who taught design, Bellelli, who taught history, and Malatesta who taught chemistry and physics. A large crowd attended the opening of the *Università Popolare Internazionale* on the 25 February 1905 in Euston Road; Tárrida del Mármol and Errico Malatesta lectured the audience, then two plays entertained the public. The informer of the Italian embassy reported:

L'inaugurazione dell'accademia fondata dai comparì riuscì brillantissima, mi assicurò l'amico Bologna. Fuori dalla porta della sala vi stavano piantate più di 30 guardie in borghese vestite, ed altre 40 in uniforme, tutto per onorare i celebri oratori! Sebbene il locale fosse fuori centro, la sala era piena zeppa. Gli oratori vennero indistintamente applauditi per le sciocchezze che davano a intendere a quei mal capitati!¹⁵⁶

According to police inspector Mandolesi, Malatesta under the pretext of teaching physics and chemistry, in fact lectured on anarchism. Malatesta was hoping that the

¹⁵³ Mandolesi's report. February 1905. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

¹⁵⁴ 'Université Populaire de Londres', leaflet, IISH, *Archive Nettlau*, b. 311.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibidem*

Università Popolare could become ‘un centro di mutua istruzione che gioverà agli operai e dimostrerà loro come i progressi della scienza, della meccanica, ma della chimica in special modo possano essere utilizzati per scuotere il giogo del capitalismo’.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, in his classes he lectured on the physical and chemical reactions, which occurred during explosions. Thus, Mandolesi believed, ‘se avesse potuto continuare le sue lezioni avrebbe sfacciatamente insegnato il modo di fabbricar bombe’.¹⁵⁸ The *Univerità Popolare* proceeded successfully for a few months, but the first signs of difficulties, due to financial problems and dissension between the Italian and the French groups, emerged in the spring of 1905. At the beginning of July, the *Università Popolare* closed, and the anarchists abandoned the premises in Euston Road.¹⁵⁹ Malatesta, Rudolf Rocker, and other anarchist leaders were deeply disappointed by the failure of this initiative.

During the whole of 1905, the refugees in London closely followed the development of revolutionary events in Russia. On 15 January, about 4,000 people attended a meeting held in Whitechapel against the Russo-Japanese war at which also the Italian Di Domizio spoke. On the evening of 22 January, ‘Bloody Sunday’, several Russian, Polish, and Italian anarchists, among whom were Cherkezov, Karaski, and Tárrida del Mármol, convened at Malatesta’s house to await news from Saint Petersburg. The latest news from Russia was transmitted by telegraph to Charles Malato in Paris and then in turn forwarded by a French journalist (Bonafoux) to Malatesta. At eleven at night, Malatesta received a telegram notifying that the military were ready to defend the Tsar, and shortly after he was informed about the massacre of civilians. Inspector Mandolesi noted with some concern that:

Questi fatti dimostrano la facilità con cui i capi rivoluzionari si intendano fra loro qualora vi sia qualcosa importante a fare o accada qualche importante avvenimento e ciò malgrado le censure telegrafiche.¹⁶⁰

A few days later, on 27 January, a large meeting against the massacre was organised in the Wonderland Hall; Malatesta spoke in French and ‘fu interrotto continuamente da applausi ed all’ultimo fu fatto segno a calorosa dimostrazione’.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ Soldi’s report, 27 February 1905. ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

¹⁵⁷ Mandolesi’s monthly report to Ministry of Interior, February 1905. ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

¹⁵⁸ Mandolesi’s monthly report to Ministry of Interior, March-April 1905, ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

¹⁵⁹ Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 10 July 1905. ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

¹⁶⁰ Mandolesi’s report to Ministry of Interior, January 1905. ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22.

¹⁶¹ *Ibidem*

Many other rallies and meetings were organised that year, Malatesta, Bergia and Di Domizio were among the Italian orators. Apart from a series of minor meetings that took place in the anarchist clubs, in March a lecture at Wonderland Hall was attended by more than 3,000 people, and another large demonstration was held in November.

Alarm about possible terrorist actions organised by the anarchists in London during the visit to England of Alfonso XIII, King of Spain emerged later in 1905. On that occasion, a group of anarchists - Antonelli, Corio, Defendi, Ferrarone, Mazzotti, and Galassini – published a leaflet against Alfonso XIII and in defence of the failed attempt on his life, which had occurred in Paris on the 2 June.

In questi tempi di generale viltà, di sottomissione disgustosa, di inganni, di menzogne, d'ipocrisie e di delitti, occorrono degli uomini pronti all'azione. – Difensiva ed offensiva! E quale più bella, più umana, più nobile che il liberare la terra di un mostriciattolo che sarà tanto più feroce tanto più lo si lascerà crescere?¹⁶²

Nonetheless, the police inspector based at the Italian embassy underlined that the danger of attempts in London against the king of Spain was very low. Indeed, in his opinion, the anarchists believed that such an action would hasten the passage of the Aliens Act. Moreover, they feared a possible violent reaction by the British population and they did not intend to jeopardise the freedom that they enjoyed in England. However, the publication of the leaflet by the Italian anarchists was cause of apprehension among the Italian colony:

A titolo di cronaca sento il dovere di riferire che molti commercianti e bottegai residenti in Soho (quartiere francese ed italiano) avendo letto il manifesto pubblicato dagli anarchici e ritenendo che costoro abbiano ideato e possano commettere un attentato contro il re di Spagna si sono armati per difendersi dalla popolazione londinese nel caso di violenta aggressione.¹⁶³

The content of the manifesto was also mentioned in the British press. And therefore the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Reynold's Newspaper*, and the *Express* argued that the content of the leaflet issued by the *Comitato Internazionale Rivoluzionario* justified the exceptional security measures taken by the police during Alfonso XIII's visit to London. The *Express* used the manifesto also to demonstrate the necessity of the Aliens

¹⁶² 'Per un viaggio regale', leaflet. ACS, *PS* 1905, b. 22. According to Frosali the manifesto had been written by Malatesta. Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 7 June 1905. ACS, *PS* 1905, b. 22.

¹⁶³ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 7 June 1905, ACS, *PS* 1905, b. 22.

Act. Another event that linked the Italian anarchists with the debate on the Aliens Act was the arrest of Adolfo Antonelli and Francesco Barberi.

L'Insurrezione: Adolfo Antonelli's and Francesco Barberi's trial

On the morning of 29 July 1905, Adolfo Antonelli collected from his printer 1,000 copies of the newspaper of which he was the editor, *L'Insurrezione*, and delivered them to Francesco Barberi, the owner of a newsagent shop in Dean Street. The Special Branch of Scotland Yard was aware of the publication of *L'Insurrezione*: indeed, that day they kept Barberi's shop under surveillance from very early in the morning. Once Antonelli had delivered the newspaper, Sergeant Riley of Scotland Yard purchased some copies of *L'Insurrezione* and later ordered Barberi to refrain from selling them. Barberi did not comply with the injunction. In the evening the agents from Scotland Yard returned to the shop and seized all the copies of *L'Insurrezione*. The following day they visited and questioned Antonelli in his home. One week later, on 7 August, Antonelli was arrested in Southampton, where apparently he had gone with the intention of embarking on a ship to flee abroad. Barberi, although alerted about Antonelli's arrest by Enrico Defendi by telegraph, was not able to escape and was arrested in London. Antonelli was indicted for publishing a scandalous libel which allegedly intended to justify the crimes of assassination and murder and 'to encourage certain persons unknown to murder the Sovereigns and rulers of Europe', notably Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy. Barberi was indicted for aiding and abetting Antonelli.

The article published in *L'Insurrezione* that led to the arrest of the two anarchists was very short:

29 Luglio 1900-1905. A Gaetano Bresci che col sacrificio spontaneo della propria libertà liberava l'Italia da quel mostro coronato di Umberto I; a Gaetano Bresci, che solo fra la viltà generale seppe sorgere e colpire il massacratore degli affamati d'Italia; all'eroico compagno nostro, barbaramente assassinato nel reclusorio di Santo Stefano dai sicari del rachitico Emanuele III, vada in questo giorno – V anniversario del fausto avvenimento – il nostro saluto sincero di combattenti e l'augurio ardente, il

proponimento fermo di seguirlo al più presto nella via – da lui così luminosamente segnata – della ribellione. Salve!¹⁶⁴

The arrest of Antonelli and Barberi caused intense concern in the international anarchist colony. A committee was established to finance and organise the defence of the two. Malatesta was deeply involved in this committee, although he disagreed with Antonelli's individualist views and with the content of *L'Insurrezione*. In a letter he wrote:

la mia opinione è che noi, come compagni, dobbiamo occuparci egualmente di Antonelli e di Barberi e che quindi i soldi che si raccolgono debbano servire per la difesa dei due...In un affare come questo si deve avere in vista nello stesso tempo l'interesse della propaganda e la liberazione dei carcerati.¹⁶⁵

The committee was composed also of Corio, Ferrarone, Di Domizio, Carrara, and Zanetti. At a first meeting, attended by Russian, Jewish, German, and British anarchists, a series of concerts were planned to raise funds in favour of the two arrested Italian anarchists. One of the concerts was to be organised by the Italians, another by the British and Jewish groups.¹⁶⁶ These initiatives roused the anarchists from a period of indolence, as the London-based Italian police inspector reported:

gli anarchici in questi giorni si mostrano più attivi, e nei soliti ritrovi oltre ad un'intensa propaganda, castigano l'operato della Polizia, che chiamano arbitrario perché in Inghilterra non vi è il sequestro di stampati etc. sancito dalla legge.

In the same report, the police inspector noted that, despite Malatesta's efforts to turn public opinion in favour of the two arrested:

l'opinione pubblica è sfavorevole, non perché si tratti di anarchici, chè la gran massa inglese né teme né presta orecchio a tali idee, ma perché ritengono che gli accusati, in qualità di stranieri, abusarono della libertà di stampa, che la Legge Inglese accorda alle espressioni di qualsiasi opinione, eccetto però all'incitamento all'assassinio.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ '29 luglio 1900-1905', *L'Insurrezione*, July 1905, p. 5.

¹⁶⁵ Malatesta's letter. Without date and addressee. ACS, CPC, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹⁶⁶ Frosali monthly report to Ministry of Interior, August 1905. ACS, *PS 1905*, b. 22. Note dated 25 August 1905, in ACS, *CPC*, b. 320, f. (Barberi Francesco).

¹⁶⁷ Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 2 August 1905. ACS, *CPC*, b. 154, f. (Antonelli Adolfo).

The trial took place at the Central Criminal Court on 15 September. Inspector-General Baldassarre Ceola of the Department of Public Security came from Rome to give testimony about the killing of Umberto I by Gaetano Bresci. During the trial, Antonelli was not allowed to read a statement of self-defence, in which he accused a fellow anarchist, Bojada, of being the informer who had alerted the English police. W. Thompson, president of the National Democratic League and managing editor of the *Reynold's Newspaper* came to Antonelli's defence. At the trial, Antonelli's and Barberi's lawyers objected that the words 'sovereigns and rulers' were vague and that 'an allegation of incitement to assassinate an undefined person was not sufficient to support the indictment'. Antonelli's lawyer added that 'the words complained of did not bear the interpretation put upon them but were merely rhetorical expressions such as were frequently made use of in Latin countries'.¹⁶⁸ However, after only a few minutes consultation, the jury found both Antonelli and Barberi guilty. Mr Justice Phillimore, in consideration of Antonelli's youth, sentenced him to ten months' imprisonment with hard labour. Barberi received a sentence of nine months' imprisonment with hard labour. In a letter to the *Daily Chronicle*, the writer H.G. Wells protested against the harshness of the sentence. After having served the whole term of prison, Antonelli moved to the United States, Barberi instead remained in London.¹⁶⁹

Catering Workers

During the same period, several Italian anarchists were also involved in organising the waiters and restaurant workers of the Italian colony. At the end of 1905, an Italian anarchist, named Bergia, from the northern town of Biella, began a campaign against employment agencies. He opened an *ufficio di collocamento gratuito* (free employment agency) in his restaurant, at 70 Cleveland Street. In these premises, on 2 December 1905, he organised a meeting for Italian cooks to discuss the constitution of a *Lega di resistenza*. The police inspector of the Italian embassy reported:

¹⁶⁸ 'Central Criminal Court', *The Times*, 16 September 1905, p. 12.

¹⁶⁹ On Barberi and Antonelli see the entries: Pietro Dipaola, *Dizionario biografico dell'anarchismo A-M*, vol. 1, (Pisa: BFS, 2003).

Il restaurant che con un tedesco ha aperto in 70 Cleveland Street è frequentato soltanto da anarchici o da giovanotti sul punto di diventarlo. In detto locale si stampa La Revue che è composta dal Bergia stesso. In una stanzetta della stessa casa vi è l'ufficio gratuito di collocamento, che continua "a vivere" sul profitto del Restaurant.¹⁷⁰

The restaurant's address was also used for the correspondence of the secretary of the Caterers' Employees Union. Indeed, in order to reach the catering workers, Bergia founded, with the English activist, M. Clark, the newspaper, the *Revue. International Organ for the interests of all Employees in Hotels, Restaurants, Boarding-Houses, etc.* The articles in the newspaper were written in English, German, and French.¹⁷¹ The campaign among the Italian waiters gave rise to some results. Inspector Frosali reported that, at a meeting organised at the *German Club* where the French anarchist, Gustave Lance, spoke about the trade union movement: 'fra il pubblico si notavano parecchi cuochi e camerieri italiani, per la prima volta venuti nelle riunioni anarchiche'.¹⁷² Another Italian anarchist involved in the organisation of waiters was Giacinto Ferrarone, who, like Bergia, came from the surrounds of Biella (and signed his articles in anarchist newspapers as Giacomino Giacomini).¹⁷³ Ferrarone exercised some influence among Italians employed in hotels and restaurants, most of whom were from Piedmont too. For this reason, in April 1905, he was chosen as a speaker at meetings to campaign for the abolition of the employment agencies.¹⁷⁴ Ferrarone joined the socialists but continued his organisational work.¹⁷⁵ He promoted the creation of *sindacati di resistenza* (trade unions) that, in his view, represented the workers' real interests. Since the working class 'delle tante riforme, miglioramenti promessi, nulla di positivo ha potuto ottenere per mezzo dei suoi rappresentanti...' for Ferrarone 'l'emancipazione dei lavoratori deve essere opera dei lavoratori stessi'.¹⁷⁶

He was also the tenant of the headquarters of the *Lega di Resistenza dei lavoratori della mensa*, constituted as the *Sezione Italiana della Caterer's Employees Union*, at 55 Frith Street.¹⁷⁷ But his career as a labour organiser for the anarchists or socialists ended

¹⁷⁰ Frosali's monthly report to Ministry of Interior, December 1905. ACS, PS 1905, b. 22.

¹⁷¹ Frosali's monthly report to Ministry of Interior, November 1905. ACS, PS 1905, b. 22.

¹⁷² Frosali's monthly report December 1905. ACS, PS 1905, b. 22.

¹⁷³ Ferrarone's biographical record in: ACS, CPC, b. 2029, f. (Ferrarone Giacinto).

¹⁷⁴ Report from the Italian embassy in Paris, 3 April 1905, ACS, CPC, b. 2029, f. (Ferrarone Giacinto).

¹⁷⁵ Report from the Italian embassy in Paris, 3 August 1905, and Virgilio's report 10 June 1906, in ACS, CPC, b. 2029, f. (Ferrarone Giacinto).

¹⁷⁶ G. Ferrarone, 'Avanti, Lavoratori!', *Revue*, September 1906, p. 48.

¹⁷⁷ Report from the Italian embassy in Paris, 19 December 1906. ACS, CPC, b. 2029, f. (Ferrarone Giacinto).

abruptly when he left London at the beginning of August 1907, after stealing the funds of the club, *Nuovo Sempione*, of which he was the secretary.¹⁷⁸

Nevertheless the campaign continued and in 1909, the mobilisation of workers in restaurants and hotels, led especially by the socialists, resulted in demonstrations against the ‘Truck system’, the system used by employers for sharing tips among their employees. Abolition of all Registry offices and Employment Agencies and a weekly day of rest were the main aims of the protest. In February 1909, the French group and the editors of the newspaper the *Revue* met at the *International Club* to maintain the campaign and plan a demonstration in April. The demonstration took place in Trafalgar Square on 18 April. The police inspector Frosali reported:

Domenica 18 grande dimostrazione a Trafalgar Square dei cuochi, camerieri ed impiegati di albergo e restaurants di tutte le nazionalità... La processione arrivò a Trafalgar Square alle 3.30 p.m. con banda e bandiere, ed al canto della Marsigliese. I dimostranti erano per la maggior parte affiliati al partito socialista. I socialisti italiani erano raggruppati intorno ad una bandiera con la scritta “sindacato fra i lavoratori della mensa”. La bandiera era portata dal noto Quarantini Giacomo. Per gli italiani parlò certo Polledro Mario... La sera stessa il Polledro fu licenziato dal padrone del Restaurant Blanchard.¹⁷⁹

During the same period, Malatesta and the Italian anarchists decided to concentrate their efforts through regular open-air speeches in Clerkenwell, at the corners of Saffron Hill and Eyre Street. On several occasions the police prevented Malatesta from giving speeches and forcibly removed him from the area.¹⁸⁰ The inspector of the Italian police reported that:

Da varie fonti seppi che alcuni napoletani?.. [sic] erano decisi ad agire anche con le armi contro la polizia e contro chiunque avesse voluto impedire al Malatesta di parlare. Ne detti subito avviso alla polizia locale.

A few weeks later, according to the same inspector, Malatesta’s efforts began to achieve some results:

Gli italiani di quel quartiere popoloso cominciano a prendere interesse alle conferenze del Malatesta, il quale tratta argomenti alla portata di tutti, e parla

¹⁷⁸ Virgilio’s report, 12 August 1907, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2029, f. (Ferrarone Giacinto).

¹⁷⁹ Frosali’s report to Ministry of Interior, April 1909. ACS, *PS 1909*, b. 4, f. 5075/103. Giacomo Quarantini was a member of the anarchist group.

¹⁸⁰ Frosali’s monthly report to Ministry of Interior, January 1909, ACS, *PS 1909*, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

in dialetto napoletano. Il Malatesta è soddisfatto perché di giorno in giorno l'uditorio aumenta, e nei restaurants, bars e caffè si discutono le teorie anarchiche, ed anche i più ignoranti e refrattari cominciano ad interessarsene.¹⁸¹

However, in 1909, the attention of the anarchists was soon directed to Spain where, in July, a popular insurrection took place in Catalonia, caused by the departure of conscripts to suppress a rebellion in Morocco. In the wake of the riot the authorities arrested the anarchist educationalist Francisco Ferrer director of the 'Modern School', and charged him with plotting the uprising. Despite massive demonstrations throughout Europe and elsewhere, a military court sentenced Ferrer's to death and on the 13 October Ferrer was executed in the notorious Montjuich fortress.

In the months following the rising in Barcelona and after Ferrer's arrest many meetings and rallies were organised in London. They were all well attended. And many Italian waiters and scullery-boys were present. The Italian anarchists issued a leaflet, *I martiri di Barcellona. Ricordiamoci*, apparently written by Malatesta, which denounced the acts of the Spanish government.

Si tratti di un insorto che colle armi alla mano tenta l'opera suprema di liberazione; o si tratti di un pensatore sereno, di un educatore zelante, tutto compreso del suo luminoso sogno di pace e di amore, come Francisco Ferrer che s'illuse di poter gettare le basi di un vasto sistema di educazione razionale e coprire la Spagna di una fitta rete di scuole libere senza aver prima strappate alla reazione le unghie ed i denti – pel governo di Madrid e per la chiesa di Roma si è ugualmente dannati a perire per le mani dei carnefici.¹⁸²

On 19 October, a massive demonstration of about ten thousand people, organised by the Social Democratic Party, gathered in Trafalgar Square. After the speeches, a procession singing the 'Marseillaise' and 'Keep the Red Flag Flying' proceeded toward Victoria to reach the Spanish Embassy. In Grosvenor Gardens, mounted police confronted the protesters and forced them back. The protesters sought to reassemble at Westminster but the police dispersed them. The inspector of the Italian embassy reported that the Italians were:

¹⁸¹ Frosali's monthly report to Ministry of Interior, January 1909, ACS, *PS 1909*, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

¹⁸² Gli anarchici, 'Martiri di Barcellona. Ricordiamoci', London, October 1909. Leaflet. In: ACS, *PS 1909*, b. 6, f. 5079.

Circa cinquanta e fra essi si notavano Malatesta, Gualducci, Rossi Giulio, Corio, Spizzuoco, famiglia Defendi, Corso, Barretta, Beleli [sic], Pesci Giuseppe detto Bologna e alcuni camerieri e lavapiatti.¹⁸³

Two days later, 4,000 people attended a conference at the Memorial Hall, where Kropotkin was among the speakers. In the following months many other meetings were held in the anarchist and socialist clubs in London, raising suspicions among the Italian authorities that the anarchists were plotting to kill a crowned head of Europe as revenge for the death of Ferrer. Nothing came of these fears but in the years before the First World War the anniversary of the execution of Ferrer became a day of commemoration for the refugee community in London.¹⁸⁴

Activity until the First World War

In the successive years the activity of the Italian anarchists remained largely confined to their clubs. The general passivity of the anarchist movement can be gauged by a report published in the *Bulletin de l'Internationale Anarchiste* and in *Freedom* by the Correspondence Bureau. (Both had been organised after the International Anarchist Conference held in Amsterdam in 1907.) The report complained at the lack of responses received to its appeal for the organisation of a further international anarchist congress.

Our first appeal published last October for the organisation of the International Congress which should have taken place in the current year, brought only very few answers... If no Congress will be held this year, if comrades do not answer to our repeated appeals for a stronger agitation for the enlargement of the A. I. and for the common and more systematic action of the Anarchists of all countries, the Bureau has no more its *raison d' être*, and becomes, by the fact of its members' passivity, a platonic organisation, without special ideal, without real value, and consequently non-existent... It is our last appeal...hoping still that you will understand...the absolute

¹⁸³ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 24 October 1909, ACS, *PS 1909*, b. 6, f. 5079.

¹⁸⁴ In 1910, a meeting was held at the *Communist Club* attended by 250 militants. Among the speakers: Malatesta, Tárrida del Mármol, Rudolf Rocker, and Jack Tanner. Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 14 October 1910. ACS, *PS 1910*, b. 7.

necessity of reacting against the apathy which seems to have overtaken all our groups at the present moment.¹⁸⁵

However events from outside the anarchist community served to bring it back into the public eye. In 1910 and 1911, the ‘Houndsditch robbery’ and the ‘Siege of Sidney Street’ were covered extensively by the press and had serious consequences for the Jewish anarchist movement in London, but they also involved Malatesta. For several months in 1910, Malatesta allowed a Latvian refugee, introduced to him as Muronzeff but whose real name was George Gardstein, to utilise his workshop. Gardstein was a member of a group of Social Democrat refugees who carried out a botched robbery at a jeweller’s shop in Houndsditch. In Malatesta’s workshop, Gardstein built the tools that he needed for the robbery. Moreover, Malatesta sold to another member of the gang the oxygen blowpipe, which was needed to open the safe. The gang was caught in the act and they shot their way out killing three unarmed policemen and seriously wounding two others. Gardstein was shot by mistake by his own friends and died shortly after. A prolonged siege was organised by the Home Secretary, Winston Churchill, which included a detachment of armed soldiers. After a fire in which some of the other members of the gang probably perished, their mysterious leader, ‘Peter the Painter’, disappeared.

Through the oxygen blowpipe left at the scene of the crime in Houndsditch, the police traced Malatesta and arrested him. However, he was released a few hours later since the police could not find any evidence of his involvement in the crime. Malatesta explained several times, both in interviews in the days immediately after the event, and many years later, that he never had any suspicion of Gardstein’s real intentions.

The activities of the Italian anarchists were also revitalised by an antimilitarist campaign opposing the invasion of Libya in 1911.¹⁸⁶ In London, the Italian anarchists organised several meetings. Malatesta spoke at the *Communist Club* on 20 October. The police surrounded the building and many detectives attended the conference. They also reinforced their protection of the Italian embassy. During the conference, Malatesta attacked Giolitti’s government and he argued against the contention that Italy was

¹⁸⁵ The Correspondence Bureau, ‘The Anarchist International. A Last Appeal’, *Freedom*, April 1909, p. 29. This appeal had been previously published in Italian in the *Bulletin de l’Internationale Anarchiste*, March 1909. See also: Le Bureau de Correspondance, ‘Pour le Bulletin’, *Bulletin de l’Internationale Anarchiste*, October 1909.

¹⁸⁶ See Berti, G. *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico internazionale* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2003) pp. 479-520; M. Degli Innocenti, *Il socialismo Italiano e la guerra di Libia* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1976).

bringing civilisation to the Arabs and that most Italians would gain an economic advantage from the colony.

Quando il Vesuvio erutta, il popolino porta immagini sacre a fermare il progresso della lava. E si va a Tripoli a portare la civilizzazione... Educiamoci e quando saremo educati e forti non andremo più a opprimere, ma troveremo la ricchezza nel nostro paese.... Io non mi auguro che i Turchi vincano, sebbene ciò potrebbe essere una lezione salutare, ma mi auguro che gli Arabi si sollevino e gettino a mare sia i turchi che gli italiani.¹⁸⁷

Malatesta spoke against the war several other times. After having strongly criticised the Libyan war at a commemoration of the Chicago anarchists ('the Haymarket Martyrs of 1886') on the 13 of November, he proposed a resolution (which was passed by those present) for the liberation of the anarchist anti-militarist, Maria Rygier, arrested in Italy. A copy of the resolution was then sent to the Italian ambassador.

Another anarchist particularly active in this period was Silvio Corio. Signing his articles as 'Qualunque', he wrote against the war in the London Left newspapers, the *Star*, *Justice*, and the *Daily Herald* and the Italian *Avanti!*, denouncing the futility of this colonial expansion and the massacre of civilians by Italian troops.¹⁸⁸

Everybody who was in Tripoli during those two days, October 23 and 24, 1911, knows of blood curdling episodes and particulars. It was, indeed, a veritable man-hunt; unarmed women and children were mercilessly shot... One could see the bodies of dead Arabs, of both sexes and of all ages, who never had arms, lying about in the gardens, on the sands, on the doorsteps, next to the oasis where the habitations end.¹⁸⁹

Pietro Gualducci also gave speeches against the Libyan war. The Italian anarchists in London took part in the mobilisation for the liberation of Augusto Masetti, the soldier who, on 30 October 1911, shot at his lieutenant the morning on which his platoon was to depart for Libya, and they contributed to fund the publication of the single issue *Pro Masetti*.¹⁹⁰ In London, the campaign against the war led to the publication of *La Guerra Tripolina*, which appeared in April 1912, the first newspaper that the Italian anarchists published since 1905. The publication of this one-off led to a

¹⁸⁷ Frosali's report on Malatesta's meeting to the Ministry of Interior, 28 October 1911. ACS, CPC, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹⁸⁸ ACS, CPC, b. 1474, f. (Corio Silvio).

¹⁸⁹ S. Corio, 'What Our Readers Say. The Tripoli Massacres', *The Daily Herald*, 12 April 1912.

series of events, which saw Malatesta imprisoned in Wormwood Scrubs and nearly deported to Italy. This generated brief if intense interest in the anarchists in wider London, but I will discuss this in the next chapter.

In the same year, the anarchists in London were also involved in the campaign for the liberation of the two Italo-American syndicalists Joseph Ettor and Arturo Giovannitti. The two were members of the Industrial Workers of the World and leaders of a bitter strike of textile workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts. They were charged with moral complicity in the murder of Annie LaPezza, a working girl shot by a policeman in an attack on the strikers. Their arrest caused an international outcry. In London, an Ettor-Giovannitti Protest Committee was established on 1 September. The trade unionist John Tanner was the secretary; Malatesta, represented the Italians. Silvio Corio wrote a long report about that event in *The Anarchist*.¹⁹¹ On 22 September a protest meeting was organised in Trafalgar Square. Malatesta, Tom Mann, James Tochatti, Rudolf Rocker, and John Tanner were among the speakers. Malatesta proposed the boycott of American products. He spoke also against the Libyan war. The inspector of the Italian police reported that Malatesta was:

Tanto più lieto che i capi del movimento furono italiani, offrendo così una forte antitesi all'Italia che va ad assassinare gli arabi inermi. Quando parlò degli arabi si animò ed il pubblico applaudì calorosamente.¹⁹²

At the end of the meeting, the police did not allow a collection to be made, which led to a minor disturbance.¹⁹³ A second rally took place in Clerkenwell Green on 6 October. In front of 300 people, Natale Paravich, secretary of the Italian anarchist group, announced that the representatives of the *Società Dante Alighieri* and the president of the *Club Cooperativo* had not answered to his invitation to participate in the rally. Moreover, he lamented the insufficient participation of Italians at the meeting: 'I lavoratori italiani hanno perduto il rispetto di loro stessi nel non presentarsi numerosi in questa occasione come sarebbe stato loro dovere'. Also Malatesta and Gualducci gave speeches.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ On Masetti see: L. De Marco, *Il soldato che disse no alla guerra. Storia dell'anarchico Augusto Masetti (1888-1966)*, (Santa Maria Capua Vetere: Spartaco, 2003).

¹⁹¹ Crastinus (Silvio Corio), 'The Ettor-Giovannitti Case', *The Anarchist*, 20 September 1912, p. 2.

¹⁹² Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, Florence 27 September 1912, ACS, PS, 1912, b. 36, f. k1.

¹⁹³ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 27 September 1912, ACS, PS, 1912, b. 36, f. k1. See also: 'Police Prohibit a Collection', *Daily Mirror*, 23 September 1912.

¹⁹⁴ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 12 October 1912, ACS, PS, 1912, b. 36, f. k1.

However Malatesta's attention was drawn to Italy where the revival of the anarchist movement induced him to support the funding a newspaper, an initiative he had been proposing to the anarchists of Ancona since the summer of 1912. The newspaper, Malatesta's hoped 'sarà l'avviamento a cose più importanti del giornale stesso'.¹⁹⁵ In April and May 1913, he discussed the project with Natale Paravich, Silvio Corio, Keell, the Defendi family, Vittorio Calzitta, and Romeo Tombolesi (who was a police informer, see Chapter 4). Inspector Frosali reported that after an animated discussion in which the weaknesses of the anarchist movement were candidly discussed, the group agreed to the virtues of this newspaper as a method to revitalise anarchism in Italy.

Il nuovo giornale quindi dovrà intensificare la propaganda rivoluzionaria, in seno ai sindacati socialisti. Si occuperà della riorganizzazione anarchica e di riordinare le file disciplinandole per impedire che i socialisti legalitari in caso di sciopero abbiano il campo libero e non permettano la violenza. Si occuperà attivamente di preparare il sindacato di classe con la violenza, ed in caso di sommossa...agire energicamente col fermo proponimento di abbattere il governo attuale.¹⁹⁶

Funds were collected in London and sent to Ancona. Among the contributors was Emidio Recchioni who, as noted by Malatesta, 'è entusiasta e ci sarà molto utile'.¹⁹⁷ Silvio Corio was named London correspondent. Two hundred and fifty copies were set aside for distribution in London. The first issue of *Volontà* appeared in Ancona on the 8 of June 1913. On 29 July 1913 Malatesta left London and secretly reached Ancona, where he played a major part in the 'Red Week' the following June.¹⁹⁸

The events surrounding the war and the war years will be discussed in Chapter 7.

¹⁹⁵ Malatesta to Luigi Fabbri, 7 May 1913, in: R. Bertolucci (ed.), Errico Malatesta, *Epistolario 1873-1932. Lettere edite ed inedite* (Carrara: Centro Studi Sociali, 1984), p. 83.

¹⁹⁶ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior. 9 May 1913. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹⁹⁷ Malatesta to Cesare Agostinelli, 2 April 1913, in: Errico Malatesta, *Epistolario 1873-1932*, p. 82.

¹⁹⁸ In June 1914, as a result of the antimilitarist campaign against the Libyan War, an insurrectionary protest took place in Northern and Central Italy. The insurrection collapsed after one week. See: L. Lotti, *La settimana rossa* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1972).

Conclusion

Statistical Analysis of the Presence of Italian Anarchists in London, 1870-1914

In 1881, at the beginning of the settlement of Italian Internationalists in the British capital, the number of Italian-born people living in London amounted to about 3500. In 1891, the figure rose to more than 5,000 and in 1901 to almost 11,000. In the following decade the colony was subject to a period of stagnation due to both socio-economic changes in the areas of emigrants' provenience and the introduction of the Aliens Act.¹⁹⁹

The number of the Italian anarchists in London is difficult to establish. In the course of this research around 300 names of anarchists who settled in London emerged. They are listed in table A. The table provides further information: the provinces of origin in Italy; the period in which the anarchists were in London; and their occupation. These data have considerable limitations. The names were collected from police and spies reports; from the anarchist newspapers published in London (as the authors of articles, members of editorial board or subscribers), and in private letters. The presence of those militants in London has been checked through the Census for England and Wales of 1901.

It is possible that some of the people listed were not 'active militants' but 'sympathisers', or, if named as spies, neither of the two. Moreover, for the period around 1881, some of the people mentioned may have been republicans and not Internationalists. The column 'Time in England' refers to the date of the document in which the name appears; therefore, in many cases it does not provide information about the real length of their permanence in London. The table has therefore only an indicative value.

Nevertheless, some conclusions can be drawn. Although the Italian anarchists changed jobs often, the data collected show that a high percentage of them were artisans and craftsmen (about 30%: 9 tailors, 11 shoemakers, 8 barbers, 2 hatters, 5 decorators, 3

carpenters). Other documents available show that in most cases they had already practised the same occupations in Italy. Another significant section of the anarchist community was active in the catering trades (4 dishwashers, 14 waiters, 5 cooks). Some of them opened their own restaurants. Finally, some of the anarchists were active in trading, especially food products and produce.

From the table, it is also possible to summarise the anarchists' regions of origin. The main regions were Tuscany, the Romagna, Piedmont, and the Marche. Smaller numbers came from Campania, Veneto, and Lazio. The regions of origin were therefore different from that of Italians who migrated for economic reasons, who came from very restricted areas, notably: Lucca, Parma, Liri and the Como valleys.²⁰⁰ The areas of origin of the Italian anarchists coincide with the Italian regions where the presence of the anarchist groups was most prominent.²⁰¹ However, like the economic migrants, the political refugees followed also a system of chain migration: indeed many militants came from the same town.²⁰²

Although speculatively, it is possible to argue that in the 1880s and 1890s, the number of Italian anarchists in London amounted to probably a few hundreds. However, the number was subject to considerable change. The Congress of 1881 certainly attracted a considerable number of activists. Persecution against the anarchists in Italy in the 1890s induced a huge wave of emigration to London. The last chapter of Malato's book *Les joyusetés de l'exile* gives us an indirect proof of the importance of this phenomenon. Indeed, Malato ended his book with a 'handbook' for the refugees who escaped to London. He provided timetables of ships from France to England and of rail services, addresses of anarchist clubs, and an English phrasebook. The mobility of activists in this period was probably very high. From the beginning of 1900 militants were probably settling in London more permanently. In 1905, 1,000 copies of the newspaper *L'Insurrezione* were printed, but they were also intended to be distributed abroad. A more precise indication is the fact that, as already mentioned, at the meeting to organise the publication of the newspaper *Volontà* in 1914, it was agreed to request 200 copies for distribution in London. Considering the data of Table 3.1., the number of

¹⁹⁹ See Lucio Sponza, *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain. Realities and Images* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988) p. 13. According to Sponza's table, Italian-born people living in London in 1901 amounted to 10,889, and in 1911 to 11,668.

²⁰⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 35.

²⁰¹ See Carl Levy, 'Italian Anarchism 1870-1926', in *For Anarchism. History, Theory and Practice*, edited by David Goodway (London-New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 31.

those mentioned in documents between 1901 and 1909 oscillated between 50 to 80. From the beginning of the century to the First World War, it is possible to argue that there was a core of about fifty to eighty Italian activists in London.

²⁰² On the mechanism of chain migration of Italians to England see Terri Colpi, *The Italian Factor. The Italian Community in Great Britain* (Edinburgh-London: Mainstream, 1991), pp. 19, 33-34.

T. 3.1. *Table of the Italian Anarchists' Presence in England*

CPC: Casellario Politico Centrale.

Census: Census for England and Wales 1901.

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Agresti, Antonio	23.10.1864	Florence	Journalist	1893, 1897				CPC 31
Albertini, Enrico				1914				CPC 50
Alciatore				1907				
Alignani, Clelia	3.9.1878	Alessandria	Tailor	1901-1939(naturalised)		Married: 2 children	Unknown After 1934	CPC 67
Alvino, Luigi	1847	Naples		1882				
Antolini, Ernesto	1842±	Naples	Waiter	1881				
Antonelli, Adolfo	26.4.1883	Rome	Stonemason	1903-1906	Chelsea		Unknown (after 1939)	CPC 154
Arcelli				1901				CPC 176
Armetta, Emilia				1903-1909 (+)	Southampton			CPC 194
Arturo				1901				
Bacherini, Alfredo	8.10.1863	Livorno	Shoemaker	1897-1921	Islington		London 26.3.1921	CPC 231
Bacci, Omero				1902-1914				CPC 236
Baldini, Giulio (nicknamed Dio Boia)				1902-1905		Married		
Balzani				1903				
Bandi, Carlone				1902-1903				
Barbera				1902				
Barberi, Francesco	1873	Castelletto Ticino	Waiter, newsagent bookseller	1902-1929		Married 1 child	London 8 March 1929	CPC 320

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Barone		Faenza	innkeeper	1864-1884 (1894?)				
Barosi		Faenza	Hotel owner	1884				
Barosso, Luigi			Hatter	1901-1908				CPC 358
Barretta				1909				
Barsotti, Luigi	27.12.1869	Livorno	Tailor	1907-1909				
Bartaletti			Painter	1909				
Basilico, Antonio				1901				
Battistini, Pietro				1906				CPC 414
Battolla, Giuseppe Giovanni			Shoemaker	1892- 1901+				
Beduzzi, Ugo				1893				
Befagnotti				1902				
Benassi, Matteo (nicknamed Gobbo)	1863	Carrara	Dish-washer	1891-1894	Clerkenwell	Married: 2 children		
Bergia			Restaurant owner	1906				
Berrutti, Carlo				1902-1903				CPC 544
Bertiboni, Bruto				1901-1902				
Bertoja				1893				
Bertone				1894				
Bertoni, Sebastiano			Waiter	1901-1903				
Betti				1897				
Bianchi		Livorno		1902				
Bianchi				1881				
Bianchi, Pietro	1868	Lucca		1889-1892	Eyre Street	Married: 3 children		
Bianchi, Vittorio		Bari	Painter					
Bianco, Francesco		Turin	Bookbinder	1905				
Bianconi, Antonio	1857	Ravenna		?-1893				

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Bonometti, Riccardo				1894				
Borello				1901				
Borghesani, Domenico				1894				
Bortolotti, Angelo				1881				
Borzoni, Bartolomeo			Restaurant owner	1905				
Buffi, Emilio (Tamburini Giovanni)		Imola		1884	Laystall Street			
Buffoni, Celeste				1905				
Burzio, Delfina				1905-1906				
Calzitta, Vittorio (Chioccon Giovanni?)	20.10.1878	Mestre Venice	Greengrocer	1905-1915(+)	Clerkenwell	Married		
Cambi, Arturo			Hatter	1905				
Campagnoli, Arturo	13.1.1874	Imola	Goldsmith	1900-1902	St James	Married	Unknown (after 1934)	CPC 977 Census
Campagnoli, Luciano	13.12.1875	Imola		1900			Unknown (after 1930)	CPC 978
Cantori, Raffaele	30.1.1858	Ancona	Tailor, Stonemason	1896-1909(+)	Poplar	Married: 2 children		CPC 1018 Census
Capelli, Pietro	1870		Shoemaker, Navy	1901-1906(+)	St James			CPC 1026 Census
Carboni, Adolfo	1865		Upholsterer	1901-1909	St Pancras			Census
Carboni, Emilia	1875		Tailoress	1909	St Pancras			Census
Carpanetti, Cesare	1846	Imola	Waiter	1887-1905				CPC 1107
Carrani, Alfonso				1902				CPC 1111

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Carrano				1907				
Carrara, Enrico Vincenzo	1873		Heliographer	1902- 1906(+)	Marylebone			CPC 1112 Census
Carutti, Giovanni	1870	Vigone	Mechanic	1905				
Cazzanigra, Carlo				1901				
Ceccarelli, Aristide								CPC 1213
Ceccarelli, Pietro	18??	Savignano		1882				
Celeste				1897				
Cenci, Sante	11.10.1858	Rimini	Tailor	1896-1914	Walworth		Nanterre 19.9.1933	CPC 1239
Ceraglioli, Emilio	29.11.1878	Arezzo	Barber	1906-1925		Married	After 1934	CPC 1245
Ceresoli			Barber	1909				CPC 1249
Cerino, Napoleone				1909	Southampton			
Chiappa, Giuseppe	1866		Goldsmith, General Dealer	1891	Hatton Garden St Andrew & St George	Married: 1 child		Census
Chignola, Carlo	12.4.1865	Brescia	Kitchenport er, cook, Legminiere	1898-1942 (+)	Blackfriars road, Soho St James		After 1942	CPC 5414 Census
Ciccotti				1909	Southampton			
Cicognani, Angelo	1863	Romagna	Tailor	1901-1902	St Marylebone	Married (5 children?)		CPC 1337 Census
Cini, Francesco	12 March 1857	Livorno	Wine trader	1894, 1896-1898				CPC 1350
Cioci, Giuseppe				1889				
Cocci, Pilade				1894				
Colombata, E.				1881				
Consalvi, Alfredo				1909				CPC 1441
Consorti, Giuseppe				1890-91	Euston road			

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Corio, Silvio	26.10.1875	Cuneo	Printer	1901-1954		Married: 3 children	London January 1954	CPC 1474
Corso, Marco				1905-				
Corti, Giuseppe			Upholsterer	1893				
Cova, Cesare	1855	Mantova	Can & Peed Worker	1892- 1922(+)	Leyton, Clerkenwell, Walthamstow	Married: 2 children		CPC 1519 Census
Crippa, C.			House- painter	1895-1905				
Cuccioli Guglielmo				1901				CPC 1551
Cucco				1890				
Curioni, Antonio	1863	Lecco	Clerk to Italian Club	1901-1911	St Anne Soho	Married: 1 child		Census
Curretti			Shoemaker	1902				
D'Angiò, Roberto				1905				
Dal Masso, Antonio				1909				
Dalbosco, Luigi				1901				
Dall'Acqua				1902				
Dapporto				1901-1903				
De Marchi				1902				
De Maria				1902				CPC 1718
Defendi, Enrico	3.9.1883	London	Trading Italian produce	1883-1916	Islington		London 8.11.1916	CPC 1 653 Census
Defendi, Giovanni	24 Giugno 1849	Casale Maggiore Cremona	Grocers And Wine Merchant	1881-1925		Married: six children	London 10.10.1925	CPC 1953
Del Fiume, Francesco		Romagna		1913				
Del Monico				1905				

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Del Turco, Vittorio		Venice	Cook	1889				
Delboni		Mantova		1901-1902				
Delbuoni, Carlo Guglielmo				1902				
Di Domizio, Giuseppe				1905				CPC 1781
Di Giulio, Paolino	10.1.1878	Caserta	Asphalter	1903-1919 (+)	Clerkenwell			CPC 1790
Emiliani, L.				1901 -1902				
Erlotti, Guglielmo				1895±				
Ermolli				1895				
Farina				1894				
Farinelli, Luigi	2.4.1871	Turin	Engraver	1893				
Farinetti, Artidoro	1856	Clerkenwell	Civil Engineer	1893-1901	Civil Engineer	Married: 1 child		Census
Felice, Felici	28.7.1871	Ancona	Shop assistant	1901-1911	Leyton	Married	After 1940 Italy	CPC 1992
Ferlaschi, Raffaele				1894				
Ferrara		Naple		1901				
Ferrari, Francesco				1901-1906				
Ferrarone, Giacinto	24.2. 1869	Biella	Waiter, restaurant owner	1904-1907		Married		CPC 2029
Ferraroni				1900				
Ferretti, Aldo		Forlì	Stoker					
Ferrini, Sante	23.10.1895	Rome	Printer	1901-1902	Soho			CPC 2044
Ferroni Roberto			Restaurant Owner	1905-1907				CPC 2046

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Firpo Cesare (nickname Venezia)		Venice		1893-1894				
Flecchia	1877		Hotel Waiter	1901	St James			Census
Fornara, Giuseppe	17.3.1850	Carpignano Sesia (Novara)	Engineer Blacksmith	1890-1941	Devon (after 1894)		Devon 13. 7.1941	CPC 2121 Census
Franchi				1891				
Franchini, Michele	24.11.1871	Faenza	Shoemaker trader	1897-1911	Clerkenwell	Married 1 daughter		CPC 2153
Francini, Demetrio	1849	Macerata		1890				
Franco				1893				
Frigerio, Carlo	7.3.1878	Berne		1901-1906			18.1.1966	CPC 2181
Fubini			Waiter	1902				
Fumagalli, Camillo	1853		Rattaweyn Keeper	1901-1902	St George Hanover Sq			Census
Galassini, Antonio				1900- 1913(+)	Clerkenwell			
Gasparetti				1884				
Gentili, Abele			Decorator	1909 - 1911		Married		
Gentilini				1909				CPC 2337
Germani, Ferdinando				1899				
Gheduzzi				1893				
Ghittoni, Ludovico	1861	Piacenza		1903		Married two children		CPC 2369
Gilodi, Ludovico			Plasterer	1905				
Ginnasi, Francesco	1858	Imola		1881-1887				

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Giorgetti				1905				
Giorgi, Giorgio	1852		Barber Hair Dresser	1901-1902	St Anne Soho			Census
Giusti, Salvatore	1876			1901-1905	Lambeth			CPC 2645 Census
Goldoni, Giorgio	23.11.1868	Modena	Shoemaker	1901-1906			Modena 18.7.1925	CPC 2477
Gori, Pietro	14.8.1865	Messina	Lawyer	1895			1911	CPC 1486
Gorini				1901				
Grossini				1901				
Gualducci, Pietro	27.7.1871	Ravenna	Decorator	1901-1937				CPC 2554
Insogna, Angelo	9.7.1867	Foggia		1907 – 1913			Paris 21.9.1916	CPC 2639
Iaffei, Antonio				1902-1905				CPC 2612
La Rosa, Michele				1905-1909				CPC 2725
Lama, Domenico				1881				
Lanfranchi, Giuseppe	13.5.1874	Borgosesia	Manager at Restaurant	1899-1912	Maidstone	Married		CPC 2712 Census
Liverani, Salvatore	1848		Cook	1881-1901	St Pancras	Married: 2 children		Census
Livi, Vittorio				1902				
Lucarelli		Turin	Carpenter	1881				
Maestrazzi				1901				
Maffiocchetti, Alberto				1904				
Magnani				1902- 1905(+)				CPC 2928
Magnoni, Carlo	7.6.1871	Brescia	Sculptor	1901-1940	Battersea Chelsea	Married: 2 children	After 1940	CPC 2932 Census

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Magrini, Sante				1892				
Magro, Pietro				1878				
Maiolio, Vincenzo			Waiter	1901-1905				
Malatesta, Errico	1853	Santa Maria Capua Vetere	Engineer	1880 1882, 1889-1897, 1900-1913, 1914-1919	Islington		Rome 1932	CPC 2949-2950 Census
Malavasi, Asdrubale	20.7.1876	Mirandola Mantova		1896-1916	Soho	Not married	Unknown. After 1926	CPC 2954
Mantovani, A.				1913				
Manucci				1903				
Maraldi				1901				
Marchi				1902				
Marchiello or Marchello, Giacomo	1868	Turin	Baker	1890-1894				
Margiotti				1903				
Mariani, Ferruccio	1876		Coach Maker	1901-1905			Paris, before 1908	Census
Marocco, Alessandro				1887-1892				
Marzetti(?) Giuseppe				1881				
Mascherini, Luigi				1889				
Mascheroni				1901				
Mattei				1889				
Mazzotti, Giovanni				1905-1906				CPC 3191
Melchiorri, Attilio	1860		Shoemaker	1887-1901	Clerkenwell, Brighton			Census
Menicucci				1906				
Meoni				1902				

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Merlino, Francesco Saverio	1856	Naples	Lawyer	1884-1893			Rome 1930	
Milano, Edoardo				1893				
Molasi, G.			Waiter	1891	Soho			
Monti, Baldassarre				1881				
Musso, Luigi				1901				
Nava			Barber	1881	Soho			
Novarese, Antonio				1909				CPC 3564
Pacini, Isaia	7.8.1885	Pistoia	Tailor	1899-1914	Soho	Married: 2 children		CPC 3638 Census
Padesniak				1909				
Palla, Galileo				1889				
Panigatti, Augusto				1905-1906				CPC 3697
Panizza, Attilio				1901-1905				CPC 3697
Panzavolta, Cesare				1902-1905				
Papini	16.1.1856	Fano		1881				
Paravich, Natale				1912-1913				
Parmeggiani, Luigi	24.7.1858	Reggio Emilia	Shoemaker Trader in Antiquities	1888-189	Bedford Square			CPC 3740
Pasi, Francesco				1881-1903				
Pecorelli				1901-1902				
Perazzini, Troiano				1909				
Pergoli				1889				
Perino				1909	Southampton			
Pernelli, Mario				1893				
Perutti				1902				
Pesci, Giuseppe (Bologna)		Bologna	Printer	1894-1912				CPC 3891

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Piazza, Domenico	1843		Domestic Cook	1881-1901	St Anne Soho			Census
Piazzzi, Vincenzo			Cook	1889				
Piccinielli, Francesco			Barber	1893-1894				
Pierconti, Alfredo				1902				Brasil 1905
Pietraroja, Gennaro	10.6.1860	Naples	Tailor	1893-1906	East Street St Jamess	Married: 2 children	Naples 4.2.1937	CPC 3900 Census
Pinasco, A.				1909				
Pinazzoli, Giuseppe				1881				
Pini, Vittorio				1888				
Poggi, Biagio				1885				
Polidori, Germano				1894				
Polti, Francesco	1876	Unknown		1894-?				CPC 4070
Pomati, Amilcare	1870	Mantova	Decorator	1893		Married		
Pozzo, G.	1863		Kitchen Porter	1901	St Jamess			Census
Prestini, Enrico				1907				
Prina, Enrico				1909				
Prodi, Francesco	1870		Kitchen Porter	1891-1894	Charlotte Street			CPC 4136
Quarantini, Giacomo		Faenza		1903-1909				CPC 4173
Radaelli, Luigi (nicknamed Razzia)				1894				CPC 4262
Ragazzi, Luigi Antonio				1905-1906				CPC 4189
Ranieri, Alfredo				1903-1905	Clerkenwell			

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Ravà, Federico	1843	Reggio Emilia	Artist	1880-1905	St Pancras			Census
Ravaglioli, Sante				1909				CPC 4239
Recchioni, Emidio	14.10.1864	Russi Ravenna	Trader in Italian produce	1899-1934		Married: 2 children	Neuilly sur Seine 31.3.1934	CPC 4260
Rezzesi				1901				
Ricci, Cesare			Shoemaker	1903-1905				
Rissone, Silvio	1883	Biella		1898?-1905				CPC 4341
Roca				1908				
Rolle				1901				
Romussi, G.				1901				
Rondoni, Luigi				1892				
Rosati, Luigi	1861	Furecchio Tuscany	Figure maker clerk	1890-1894				
Rossetti, Carlo				1901				
Rossetti, Olivia				189				
Rossetti, Pietro		Venice	Waiter Carpenter	1892-1909	Clerkenwell		Egypt 25 May 1925	CPC 4426
Rossi, Angelo				1906				CPC 4431
Rossi, Carlo				1901-1904				
Rossi, Giulio	17.6.1866	Verona	Decorator	1898-1922 (+)	Islington	Married	Unknown	CPC 4446
Rossotti, Carlo				1905				CPC 4466
Sala, Luigi	1877		Waiter	1901-1909	Southampton	Married		Census
Salustri, F.				1881				
Salvati			Newsagent	1905				

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Samaria				1901				
Sangiorgi, Giorgio				1881				
Scacciati, Ludovico	1864	Florence		1892-4	Gresse Street			
Scolari, Gaetano			Barber	1902-1905	Soho		June 1905	
Sidoli, Carlo	1871	Piacenza	Dishwasher	1890				
Solieri, Vito	1857		Barber	1881-1884				
Soriani, Carlo	1879	Cento	Waiter	1905				
Spasiano				1902				
Spizzuoco, Alfonso	1885	Naples		1892-1934(+)		Married: 3 children		CPC 4919
Stinchi, Leopoldo				1884				
Stoppa, Giuseppe		Magenta	Waiter	1889				
Tedeschi, Mario				1895±				
Terroni, Giovanni	1889	Pontremoli	Shop owner	1905-1906				
Tombolesi, Romeo	2.4.1869	Ancona	Tailor	1901-1919	Soho		Rome 18.7.1921	CPC 5134
Tonin				1903				
Tonzi, A.				1901				
Trunzio, Emilia	9.7.1858	Cosenza	Trader in Italian Produce	1881-1919	Islington		London March 1919	CPC 5234 Census
Valentini, Alfredo				1907				CPC 5293
Valsuana, Luigi				1902				
Vannucci		Rome	Mechanic					
Varani, Giovanni	1879	Parma	Hotel Waiter	1903	Lambeth			Census
Ventura, I.				1901	Soho			
Venturini, Armando				1884				
Venza				1896				

Name	Born	Place	Profession	Time in England	Civil Parish	Family	Death	Archival sources
Verga, Giuseppe	1870	Brescia	Carpenter	1894-1910+	Erith			CPC 5373 Census
Vezzani, Felice	26.5.1855	Reggio Emilia	Painter	1914-1917			Paris 1929	CPC 5392
Vico				1897				
Vignati, Giovanni				1903-1908				
Vittorio, Francesco (nicknamed Ciccio)	1854	Siena	Coachman stable-boy	1889 1894	Eyre Street			
Zaganelli, Luigi				1881				
Zanardelli, Tito	1848	Vittorio Veneto		1878-1881				
Zanchini, Ettore				1888				
Zanella, Alessando di Ciompo		Venice		1905				
Zanella, Ferdinando				1904-1909				
Zanelli				1903				
Zanetti, Alfredo				1905-1909				CPC 5521
Zanetti, Luigi				1905				
Zavattero				1898				
Zavoli, Cajo				1888-1890				CPC 5556
Zipoli, Marino	1870	Milan		1893				
Zirardini, Luciano				1887				
Zola				1881				
Zoli	1845	Imola	Shoemaker	1901				
Zoli, Ezio				1881				
Zoli, Francesco	1834		Bootmaker	1881	St Anne Soho			Census
Zucchi		Bologna		1896-1899	Finsbury Street			

WHAT'S TO BE DONE? ²⁵⁹

FELLOW-WORKERS!—On FRIDAY, the 1st of MAY, the wage-earners of almost the entire civilised world are keeping, in very earnest fashion, a new holiday—Labour Day—the second great annual review of Labour's forces.

This is no Sunday, no Bank Holiday graciously bestowed by our masters to enable us the better to work for their enrichment on the remaining days of the year; but one taken by the workers to suit themselves, in spite of repressive laws and every obstacle thrown in their way.

What is the meaning and effect of this new universal movement amongst the world's wealth-creators? Surely it is a remarkable demonstration of the fact that the man of labour is at last awakening from his long stupor, and that he not merely consciously protests against the miserable and degrading conditions by which he is surrounded from birth to death, and the still worse prospect his hands on to his children, but expresses, in no uncertain tone, his determination to alter them, and ultimately to secure the emancipation of his class.

And further, a recognition of the fact that the interests of all workers, of every land and every tongue, are identical, and that victory can only be won by united action.

The capitalist daily becomes more and more international. No barriers of race or frontier exist for him in his ever-renewed pursuit of riches and domination. His natural and inevitable foe—the producer of his riches, the victim of his power—must be international also, if victory is to be won.

This novel festival of Human Brotherhood is feared and detested by the rich classes and their hangers-on throughout the civilised world, because it brings home so forcibly and clearly to the rich idler, as well as to the poverty-stricken worker, that, as Victor Hugo says, "The Paradise of the Rich is based upon the Hell of the Poor."

It is an object-lesson of how absolutely helpless our masters would be if their wage-slaves ceased to labour for them even for a single day. And a complete cessation of work throughout the civilised world would, in all truth, mean the abolition of the whole horrible system of oppression and robbery by which we are crushed down.

It is true that many amongst our fellows do not yet see clearly what it is that needs doing to secure an existence worthy of human beings in this nineteenth century, and that in some places their protest takes the form of a demand for an Eight-Hour work-day, either by legal means or otherwise. In other places they will inaugurate a General Strike to obtain political rights, higher wages, &c.; but the band is ever growing larger who see that such small measures will not solve the question, or even much help it, and that the growing discontent and agitation amongst the workers in every land must intelligently go to the root of the matter, by securing the Tools for the Toolers, the Produce for the Producer, and Freedom for All.

We Anarchist-Communists know that the workers may be as much sweated in eight as in nine hours. Hundreds of large employers, from the Allen Tobacco Company in Chicago, to Beaufoy, M.P. for Kennington, who have adopted this Eight-Hour day, express their complete satisfaction with the result, as they can obtain even more work from their hands in eight hours than they could in the longer hours during which they previously worked.

No such measures can possibly reduce the unemployed ranks permanently, and it is extremely doubtful if they could do so even temporarily.

We know that competition at home and abroad with dearer labour would force on the application and use of new machinery, in order to dispense with human labour, that capital and machinery would be removed to other lands—Asia or Africa—where the workers could be more easily robbed, and that for an enormous mass of the workers, agricultural labourers, home workers, &c., such Acts would be as inoperative as many of our factory laws are to-day, and that the practical result would be an intensification of labour—an increased temptation to work overtime—and desperate struggles to prevent reduced wages, which, if victorious, the next period of trade depression, which is even now coming, would render barren, and that in such places as Australia and several of the American States, where it has been in actual operation for many years, there are as many unemployed, and as much misery and want, as here.

We therefore urge upon all who desire that the present efforts of Labour shall not, as has so often happened before, be wasted upon utterly inadequate proposals and illusory

"He who would be free, himself must strike the blow."

Issued by the International Anarchist-Communist Groups.

objects, to thoroughly and honestly examine the causes of the poverty, oppression, and insecurity of livelihood, which degrades the modern wage-slave and produces the crime, disease, prostitution, and servility of our fellows.

We Anarchist-Communists demand Bread for all, Science for all, Work for all, and for all Freedom and Justice.

And why is this impossible for great numbers of our fellows to-day?

Is it because we produce so little that it has to be scrambled for, and some of us have to go without?

Nothing of the sort; quite the reverse. The fact is, that we have means of producing in any country to-day, twice as much food, and three times as much of all other necessary articles, as are required to provide abundance for all.

Why then, do so many people want everything? so much so as to be obliged to starve, to accept degrading charity, or better, to boldly take what they require? Because all the means of existence, everything is owned and controlled for the benefit of a few idlers at the expense of the workers, and not to supply the needs of all.

We Anarchist-Communists do not say let us burn and destroy, but rather let us take the wealth that already belongs to us; as it is due to our toil and the gifts of Nature to the race—the soil, the sea, and the seasons—and consume it in supplying our needs, instead of begging of the present owners to charitably give us back our own.

We will therefore join in no cringing petitions to Government, knowing full well that government in all countries to-day is but a committee composed of labour robbers that exists solely to defend their privileged and unjust position, and that to ask them to abolish themselves and the robbery and oppression of which they are the cause, is absurd and ridiculous to the last degree.

Surely the last few years have given us sufficient examples of the truth of this in all countries, whether in Republican and Democratic France and America, in Radical Australia, or Despotical Austria and Germany.

We have lately seen in strikes everywhere a growing incontinence to use the police and military to defeat the workers. The death-roll of workmen killed by the forces of Law and Order during strikes in Europe and America for the last two years (including the last outrage at Pennsylvania) is a very large one indeed.

In a recent American mining strike the Government even assisted the masters by lending them prisoners to act as blacklegs, and thus defeat the men.

The action of the robbing classes at home, in the case of recent strikes, at Leeds, Southampton, Motherwell, and Silksworth, and in the threatened gas strike in London, when the Government arranged for soldiers to take the strikers' places, show that they intend to be in no way behind their fellow-robbers elsewhere. Let us remember that this has ever been the position of a ruling and a privileged class, and is inevitable in the nature of things. That we enjoy no liberties to-day that we have not had to struggle for and take in the past, and that from the earliest times of mastership and robbery, down to even such insignificant matters as the Corn-Law or Franchise agitations, not the smallest step has been taken towards Freedom except by showing force and determination to take them on the part of the people, and by putting wholesome fear into the breasts of their enemies.

Liberty is never given, but always taken, and we possess no rights but those we are prepared to defend at any and all times by force.

More legal rights, such as freedom of speech, liberty of press, meeting, &c., we all know, are worth little so soon as we begin to use them for the overthrow of class privilege and oppression.

Let us, therefore, face frankly and fearlessly the position, that only by the abolition of every vestige of mastership and robbery can the emancipation of our class be accomplished.

Let us cease begging and praying and making ourselves a laughing-stock, with our Sunday promenades which mean absolutely nothing; but let us boldly stand, side by side with our comrades of other lands, in order to take (individually or collectively, on any favourable occasion, and, if possible, to make the occasion itself) the wealth we have created, and of which we have been robbed; and in doing this, let us not shut our eyes to the fact, that Government in all its forms is our deadliest and most powerful enemy, and the mightiest support of the existing unjust social order.

Ill.3.1. Leaflet distributed on occasion of the celebration of the First of May by the Anarchist-Communist groups. (ACS, CPC, f. 2949, f. Malatesta Errico).

THE COMEDY OF THE 1ST OF MAY.

Appreciated by the "International" and "La Libera Iniziativa."

Once more, the workers and starving poor of the so-called civilized world are going to meet to make a show of themselves, triumphantly in their best dresses, in sight of their sweaters who begin to get now accustomed to this yearly promenade. But what can they hope those forlorn ones?

Or rather, what have they been made to believe when ordered to come out of their workshops and dwellings on an appointed day and a fixed hour, like soldiers, to parade after the review under the balconies of their chiefs and their rulers?

What are they looking for there? could it be medals or simple compliments for their wise obedience in given orders? this must necessarily be the only reward to crown this platonic manifestation which after all proves nothing but the tameness of manners at the end of the present century.

Now, as it is quite out of the question for the great masses to revolt on that day, since cannons and guns have got time to make little ones, why do they pick out 6 months in advance this day to exhibit their multiple ranks to the bourgeois, who being no longer astonished, look at them from their windows to point them out, with pride, to their guests for this special day, saying:—

"Look at our workers! what a smart and intelligent class! Behold how well they are dressed, how they walk quick time! Oh! we may leave them alone, to be sure! They are composed and considerate. We have no longer to deal with those terrible epochs. To-day, as you can see, good instincts guide them, better brought up and well educated they know that with gentleness and submission they can obtain from us all they want."

"Therefore we must state this fact that their annual feast to which they have the kindness to invite us 6 months in advance, is a token of their devotedness and thankfulness for our gentlemanly behaviour towards them during the remainder of the year."

"Such as you see them to-day, happy, proud and calm, as they themselves say, tomorrow, you may take it for granted, not one will fail to make his appearance in the workshop or dockyard, with the exception of some Bully watched by the police who will see to it to keep him all right, and so all will go by in the quietest manner. This good people will live with this beautiful remembrance until the next 1st of May in 1892 and so on until the year 15,000 for the greatest welfare of our posterity."

"As to us, we are most happy to take part in these quiet fetes which prove the great progress accomplished and of the universal calmness of the slaves."

There is, gallant workers, the positive effect of your terrible first of May!

Oh! it is said also that an old idea haunts you, that is, the 8 hours question as well as the no less old scheme of the general strike, is it not so? But before you mount such a hobby-horse did you ask yourselves whether it would be logical to formulate such wishes, rather than this other, for example, to ask and to exact for you, and in your turn, a complete rest, with good food, and the 8 hours for those who up to now make you work 10, 12 or 14 hours each day.

And why has not such an idea struck your mind before? In it really the case that in 1891 you are still under the impression that you were born specially to toil whilst others, according to you, logically, were born to be Bankers, Magistrates or Bosses?

Servility, or in other words, is paid-labour your original task, and cannot you in one stroke blot out this stain in overthrowing this state of things?

But no, not being able to think for yourselves, you have to follow the instructions of those amongst you, more cunning than you, know how to make capital out of it at your expenses.

If, however, in your grand day when perambulating through the streets, anything should strike your sight, it must necessarily be the case with which all our bourgeois close hermetically their storehouses and shops for which they fear not so much the panes of glass as the products they have there accumulated.

This remark should open your eyes, for this proves that if the bourgeois laughs at your fine speeches, they nevertheless tremble at the idea that you could take it into your head some day to fill your stomach, to cover your shoulders and to put on new boots, in spite of all the trouble they took to stuff up your brains with prejudices about honesty and uprightiness, and if they do not speak to you about their fears, it is not to open your eyes on a sudden on the weak point of their armour, scarcely do they venture to whisper their fear amongst themselves.

Oh! If they do not fear your attempts to revolt, armed as they are for that purpose, what could they do to prevent 20 millions of hands to expropriate collectively or individually, without any more ado all they need, not in one single day of the year but at any hour and everywhere. Answer yourselves!!!

To show you, comrades, how much the bourgeois fears the idea of expropriation under and above all, even above murder, just look at their tribunals and their laws in hand. Example—Take a case where a man has murdered to avenge himself, through hatred or anger, in 19 cases out of 20, he will get from 20 years or life long hard labour, another has killed to rob only, and he is sure to be sentenced to death.

Where is the crime? Is it the murder? No, — it is the robbery which has earned the death sentence to be pronounced.

These facts, every day under our eyes, but as your minds are so full of the lies which fill your asleep, which prevents

Therefore we say: Away with your nonsensical talk, and your speeches a thousand times re-echoed and attack individually unceasingly common understanding, propriety under whatever form you find it according to your strength and capacity.

There, once in your life you will meet your foe face to face relying on himself only to protect in his home, till his last breath, what he himself or his ancestors have "first" stolen from your sweat and the shortening of your days.

Again if you see every day those bourgeois killing themselves after a financial disaster, which shows you plainly that they have more care for their money than for their life, so great are their covetousness and cowardice, be sure that on the day of expropriation which, for us, is the most powerful act of revolt to accomplish, you will find them bold and resolved to fight knife in hand if necessary "to defend their gold only" leaving their families, their little ones and all the public buildings at the disposal of events whilst they never will trust neither soldier nor policeman nor any domestic servant to defend their gold. For in this supreme action, soldiers, bobbies and servants would only be too glad to join hands with us eager as they all are for a happy life to which all men have the right and duty to share, under penalty of being ranked among the lower intelligence of the dog, the ox and the horse.

Yes, comrades, the land, its produce and ours belong to us without dispute and henceforth: Let us march on to the conquest of the material goods of this earth before anything else!!!

Once these goods reconquered we will in one stroke disarm our enemy and we satisfy all our wants!!! In the same way, once this first act accomplished we will have plenty of time to mind other things and see if the 8 hours question (bitter irony which ignorance and submission have caused to come to the front) is the true maximum of production for the general welfare.

In short, comrades, you who claim with hue and cry the "grand day" you surely do not expect to see it come with the sound of the drum on a fixed hour 6 months in advance, for every case in history would prove that it is impossible, and would tell you that revolutions burst forth by dint of individual acts, for which it would be foolish, not to say more, to warn our enemy: it would look like the man affected with hydrophobia, who shouts: Out of the way, I feel I want to bite you!

Neither do you this time hope sillily and simply, to change the present form of government by another.

For years past your bowels and muscles must have told you the real fact, is that not so?

In the same light you will discern the emptiness and the stupidity to get killed for the revolution (how easy it has been for the bourgeois to satisfy your wishes in that direction) and understand that you must live for her, and for the attainment of which you must make use of cunning and force to get all you require for your living, each time you have an opportunity for doing so, your existence being a hundred times more precious than the skin of those bandits whom it is our duty to strip in order to reduce them to powerlessness.

Do not any longer injure your body by fatigue, preserve your strength for the day "when not you", but the bourgeois themselves will revolt against the gloomy concealed and enervated state of things you will cease them to endure.

It will be too late then for them for police and soldiers will no longer serve masters without money.

Have no fear nor concern about the length of time it will take them raise to one man, for prisons are full already and in the presence of this threatening danger they will have no time to build new ones, the move will be too rapid.

Therefore, in order to reach a true social revolution which will spread the happiness on equal footing for each individual the only law worth knowing and observing, it will be necessary to begin to expropriate, which in the essential ground-work of equity and justice that will place on our side all the present and future forces.

And, if this is the ideal which you dream, as we think you should, you will understand that instead of your processions à la Don Quichotte it would be more intelligent on our part to intrench one's self under shelter, and by these means compel the wolves themselves to come out of their dens, in which case you will, by far be cleverer and the stronger.

If you follow this tactic, you must see how you compel the bourgeois themselves to make the revolution for which we long so much. No tactic other than this can hasten it so much. — And in case they do not make the revolution as we want them to do, they at least will give us the means and the occasion to strike the blow as we think it best.

Till then:
Down with speeches and palliatives!
Down with organisations and organisers!
Long live individualism and positivism!
Long live expropriation! the strongest of our means in the struggle.

Before we go to press with the present manifesto, we received the different Ministries of Italy, England and France, with whom, by the way, we had proclaimed addressed to the workers of their respective countries, the 1st of May.

For want of space we only can give some extracts:
To the people of Italy it is said to be the word and not

Ill. 3.2. Leaflet distributed on occasion of the celebration of the First of May 1891 by the group of *La Libera Iniziativa*. (ACS, CPC, b.2949, f. Malatesta Errico).



AGLI ITALIANI DELLA COLONIA DI LONDRA

Un impulso, un amore ad apprendere ed a conoscere trae oggi, più che in qualunque altra epoca, uomini e popoli a fondare istituti e scuole rispondenti ai bisogni dell'anima moderna.

Le nazioni che hanno una storia, che hanno aviti ordini di studi, informate ad uno spirito nuovo dei popoli aspiranti al sapere con intenso amore di felicità, hanno visto sorgere e propagarsi dovunque le Università popolari.

Naturale ed umana è questa bramosia alla scienza ed ai miracoli che essa produce e più a quelli ch'essa lascia intravedere.

E' obbedendo a questi impulsi e tendenze che pochi animi generosi hanno pensato di dare vita ad una **UNIVERSITA' POPOLARE ITALIANA**, la prima che sorga fuori d'Italia, in Europa.

L'Italiano che dalla Sicilia, dalla Calabria, dall'Abruzzo, da Napoli, dalle Marche, dalla Toscana, dalle Romagne, dalla Lombardia, Liguria, Piemonte, Veneto è qui venuto, non può a meno di sentire il bisogno di collegare i ricordi della terra natia con la espressione visibile di libertà del popolo in mezzo a cui è destinato a vivere.

L'Italiano trasportato dal caso, o dalle vicende, o dai commerci, o dai doveri nella più vasta città del mondo e nella quale convergono da tutte le parti della terra i prodotti delle industrie e delle scoperte del genio che aprono la via a nuovi orizzonti, che a nuovi sentimenti si ispirano e preludono al completamento di nuovi ordinamenti; l'Italiano che vive in questa grande metropoli a cui fluiscono come ad un gran cuore civile gli spiriti della umanità, deve sentire il bisogno di comprendere il mondo da cui parti e quello a cui venne, deve sentire il bisogno e il dovere di imparare.

Gli italiani e per tradizione e per desiderio e per bisogno e per prontezza d'intelligenza, si sentono trascinati verso la scienza e la verità. Non per nulla ci educarono Galileo e Dante.

Al di fuori del paese natio, non può a meno di spronarci anche il bisogno di concordare il nostro spirito progredito e la nostra intuizione dei nuovi tempi con la scienza e il genio e le leggi del popolo in mezzo a cui viviamo.

Queste concordanze tra la nostra storia e la nostra scienza e le nostre abitudini e quelle del popolo al quale siamo venuti, non sono stato l'ultimo argomento che ha condotto a costituire una Università Popolare Italiana in Londra.

La Commissione provvisoria si è proposta che l'Università Popolare Italiana debba rispondere alle richieste e ai desideri dei nostri connazionali, desiderosi di apprendere, per quanto riguarda i principi della legislazione, e della storia, e della filosofia, e delle lettere, e delle arti, e delle industrie, e delle lingue, e dei commerci, e di tutte le discipline più utili alla vita pratica quotidiana.

La Commissione crede che l'uomo tanto è più forte e tanto è più capace alla vita quanto più è dotto, e che più è utile a' suoi simili quanto più sa disporre delle proprie doti.

III. 3.3. Leaflet promoting the opening of the *Università Popolare Italiana* in 1902. (ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22).

Université Populaire de Londres

4, Euston Buildings, Euston Street, London N. W.

This is an attempt to found in London an educational institution on the lines of the People's Institutes (UNIVERSITES POPULAIRES) which, in France and other parts of the Continent, have done so much for the higher education of the working classes. It is hoped that by the organisation of a library, reading-room, lectures, classes, dramatic representations, concerts, etc., an intellectual and artistic centre may be gradually built up in the foreign quarter of London.

At present the lectures etc. are carried on in French, the language most widely spoken in the foreign quarter; but steps are being taken to organise lectures and discussions in German, Italian, Spanish and English; and classes may also be carried on in these languages. Every encouragement will be given for the formation in the institution of free groups for the study and discussion of special subjects, so as to promote that most valuable form of education, which consists in the free exchange of ideas.

The lectures are all free to the public, but a subscription of 3d. per week has been fixed for the classes, use of the Reading-room, Library, etc. An International Circulating Library of 1000 volumes is already in existence,

Although primarily intended for the foreign residents of London, it is hoped that such an international centre will prove attractive to many Englishmen who are interested in foreign languages and ideas, and who recognise the intellectual and moral stimulus which comes from international intercourse.

P. T. O.

Ill.3.4. Leaflet promoting the opening of the International University in London in 1905. (IISH, Nettlau archive, b. 311).

Cours et Conférences

SEMAINE D'OUVERTURE DU SAMEDI 25 FEVRIER AU 3 MARS 1905.

- Samedi 25 8 p.m.* — INAUGURATION. Représentation par le "Groupe d'Art Social" de : Le Gendarme est sans pitié. Saynète satirique par Georges Courteline, et de : Le Portefeuille, Comédie d'Octave Mirbeau. — Allocution par le Professeur F. Tarrida del Marmol sur l'Université Populaire, son but et son programme.
- Dimanche 26 4 p.m.* — Conférence par W. Tcherkesoff : L'agitation en Russie.

C O U R S

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Mardi 27 8 p.m.</i> — Géométrie. | <i>9 p.m.</i> — Linguistique |
| <i>Mercredi 8 p.m.</i> — Langue Anglaise. | <i>9 p.m.</i> — Physique et Chimie. |
| <i>Jeudi 8 p.m.</i> — Mathématiques. | <i>9 p.m.</i> — Dessin Linéaire. |
| <i>Vendredi 8 p.m.</i> — Histoire | <i>9 p.m.</i> — Sociologie |

PROCHAINEMENT — Conférences de Tarrida del Marmol sur La nouvelle théorie astronomique. — de Gatti sur L'évolution de la propriété, etc.

Ill.3.5 Programme of courses at the International University in 1905. (IISH, Nettlau Archive, b. 311).

*No. B-PS.
Montecatini 12/10/1912*

(allegato 1)

Grande Corteo e Comizio

in difesa di Ettore, Giovannitti,
Caruso minacciati della pena di
morte in America a cagione della
loro attivita' in favore della
causa dei Lavoratori.



AVRÀ LUOGO

Domenica 6 Ottobre.

Il corteo partira da Soho Squ., W.
alle 3 p.m. precise, si rechera a
Clerkenwell Green, ove avra luogo
il Comizio.

Sono invitati tutti gli uomini
di cuore.

Chapter 4

The Surveillance of the Italian Anarchists in London

Introduction

Italian authorities were seriously concerned about the danger represented by anarchists living in foreign countries. Indeed, they perceived the colonies established outside Italy by the Internationalists as dangerous centres of conspiracy. Since the Italian police could not intervene directly in foreign countries, the prosecution of anarchists fell upon discretion of foreign police forces, and collaboration was often problematic. But the Italian government regarded as of great importance their surveillance abroad. This surveillance in Italy or abroad was carried out by an intelligence service whose information was largely based on informers and secret agents worming their way into the anarchist groups.¹ Ambassadors and consuls were deeply involved setting up these operations; indeed, they were key elements in establishing the office known as the '*polizia internazionale*'. In 1888, the consul in Geneva Giuseppe Basso, writing to the Prime Minister Francesco Crispi, declared himself one of the main founders of the international surveillance, a sort of pioneer.²

Although the ultimate decision about recruitment belonged to the Ministry of Interior, consuls and ambassadors enlisted their own informers *in loco*. Moreover, the Minister of Interior occasionally recruited his own agents who reported directly to him without the interference of the ambassadors, who were kept in the dark about their existence.

The Ministry of Interior administered the espionage budget and decided upon the estimate of expenditure submitted by the consuls and ambassadors. In London, for example, the Vice-consul Buzzegoli supervised the intelligence service during the whole of the 1880s, until the appointment of the new ambassador Count Tornielli, in December 1889. Tornielli was transferred to London from Paris, where he had instituted

¹ Stefania Ruggeri 'Fonti per la storia del movimento operaio in Italia presenti nell'Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri. Il fondo "Polizia Internazionale"'. In Fabio Grassi and Gianni Dollo (eds.), *Il movimento socialista e popolare in Puglia dalle origini alla costituzione (1874-1946)*, (Bari-Lecce: Istituto "Vito Mario Stampacchia", 1986).

² Consul Basso to Crispi, 8 February 1888, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 46, f. (1888).

a highly efficient network of espionage thanks to the abilities of police inspector Ettore Sernicoli.³ On his arrival, Tornielli reported about the inefficiency he found in local operations, due to the lack of informers. As a result he requested the Ministry of Interior to authorise the expense of two pounds sterling a week in order to employ a new agent.⁴

In order to avoid the direct involvement of the Italian authorities, anonymous functionaries maintained contacts between the embassies and their informers. The person who for many years received and delivered the reports to the embassy from the spy alias *Calvo*, was the registrar at the embassy: Cavalier Manetti. The ambassadors valued the information received from the spies and conveyed them to the Foreign Ministry, at the *Divisione Prima Affari Politici*, the section in charge of the 'International Police'. Subsequently, the Foreign Ministry passed all relevant information to the Ministry of Interior or, if criminal acts were suspected, to the foreign governments involved.

Occasionally, more than one secret agent worked at the same time, without knowledge of each other's existence. That allowed the Italian authorities to compare and double-check the information acquired by their agents. At the London international congress of anarchists and social revolutionaries of 1881, an informer was sent from Marseille to London to infiltrate the proceedings, in addition to the secret agent already present in the British capital. The Ministry of Interior emphasised: 'Non credo inutile ripetere come sia indispensabile che detto confidente nulla sappia del DM, nè costui di quello, acciò l'uno possa servire di controllo dell'altro'.⁵

However, as underlined by ambassador Tornielli, this practice was not completely devoid of disadvantages:

il maggior pericolo in questo genere di cose è di avere dai prezzolati agenti segreti notizie, se non inventate di sana pianta, almeno ingrandite ed esagerate ad arte per uno scopo di continuazione di lucro facile ad indovinare... Sarebbe certamente desiderabile che l'opera dell'uno potesse servire di riscontro a quella dell'altro. Ma siccome molto facilmente avverrebbe che i due agenti, venendo a conoscersi, s'intenderebbero fra di loro per esercitare l'inganno, così io sono d'avviso che l'opera di due agenti riesca superflua.⁶

³ Based on his experience of the surveillance of the anarchists Ettore Sernicoli published the book: *L'anarchia e gli anarchici* (Milan: Treves, 1894).

⁴ Tornielli to Crispi, 19 December 1889, ASMAE, *Serie Politica P*, b. 47.

⁵ Ministry of Interior to Foreign Ministry, 3 July 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6. D.M. was the code-name of the informer Orlando De Martijs.

⁶ Tornielli to Crispi, 19 December 1889, ASMAE, *Serie Politica P*, b. 47.

When more than one informer operated at the same time, further problems could emerge: rivalry was one of them. At the beginning of 1902 when Inspector Prina, who had been sent by Rome, and the informer Calvo, who worked for the embassy, became aware of each other's existence, they made reciprocal accusations of being unreliable and of providing inaccurate information, igniting in this way endless and distracting personal disputes.

If the Minister of Interior adjudged a police inspector was acting inefficiently, he summoned him back to Italy. For example, in 1882, when the Vice Inspector Amede was recalled from London after the Minister of Interior and the ambassador seriously suspected that the Internationalists, and Vito Solieri in particular, had discovered his real identity. In fact, in their opinion, suspicions were enough to hinder the continuation of his mission:

i socialisti si sanno sorvegliati dal Regio Governo che [sic] la maggior parte di essi continuano a sospettare l'Amede e che quindi anche coloro che hanno dei dubbi se egli sia o non sia veramente un agente di polizia, non avrebbero mai avuto in lui alcuna confidenza.⁷

On that occasion, the Italian ambassador also consulted the inspector of the Central Criminal Police Charles von Toward, who was at that time collaborating with the Italian embassy in an 'unofficial' way. In Toward's opinion the Italian vice-inspector had to be immediately recalled, since:

il di lui soggiorno qui a Londra è inutile per il Governo (non potendo egli mai cattivarsi la confidenza dei socialisti) e pericoloso per lui medesimo potendo egli, da un momento all'altro, essere aggredito e forse pugnalato da quei settari.⁸

But in this case it is difficult to establish whether Toward's judgement was more concerned about Amede's safety, or merely to facilitate the removal of a possible rival.

A similar thing happened in 1902 when, following the discovery of the informer Gennaro Rubino by the anarchists, Giolitti hastily summoned back to Italy Inspector Prina notwithstanding his remonstrations.⁹

⁷ Italian ambassador to Foreign Ministry, 31 May 1882, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4, f. (1882).

⁸ Italian ambassador to Foreign Minister, 23 May 1882, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4.

⁹ Inspector Prina to Italian ambassador, 19 December 1902, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22. Rubino's name is spelled in two different ways: Rubini or Rubino. In all documents concerning his discovery as a spy the name appeared as Rubini, but his real name was Rubino.

The spies were paid monthly; their wages calculated on a weekly basis and registered as '*spese segrete di polizia*'. Secret agents and informers signed regular receipts of their payments. There was probably a distinction between informers and secret agents. In 1905, for example, the embassy recorded on its payroll three informers and one secret agent. The informers, alias *Foster* and *Kite*, received two pounds sterling a week. While secret agents provided their information from inside anarchist groups, it was unlikely for informers to act as anarchists, but rather as people who, for different reasons, were in contact with them. For example, in 1904, the embassy paid one pound sterling a month to Giovanni Ferrari, employee at the 'Istituto di Beneficenza', an organisation to which the anarchists sometimes resorted to receive financial aid, mostly in order to pay for return voyages to Italy.¹⁰

Occasionally, especially when the surveillance of the anarchists needed to be more accurate, the Ministry of Interior resorted to incentive payments. In 1881, the Ministry of Interior promised a bonus to 'DM' on occasion of the international congress that was to be held in London.¹¹ At the end of the month, the Ministry of Interior granted 'DM' a reward of 150 Italian lire for '*il lodevole servizio prestato*'.¹²

Spies often claimed refunds to cover unforeseen expenses that they encountered in the accomplishment of their duties, such as subscriptions to anarchist newspapers or participation in collections for political campaigns. However, the expense that most seriously affected the budget of the spies in London, was of a very different nature. In 1881, the consul reported that:

Malatesta...oltre a farsi imprestare denaro da Defendi ed altri, per vari bisogni, continua tutti i giorni, da buon socialista, ad andare regolarmente a desinare dal De Martijs, ... sarebbe forse opportuno di aumentare, in considerazione di questa spesa cui va soggetto, altri 5 s per settimana al D.M. portando così il suo assegno a £ 2 per settimana, onde abbia maggior motivi di essere contento e di spiegare tutto lo zelo possibile nell'adempimento dei doveri...¹³

Lauria as well often had guests for lunch at his home:

¹⁰ Receipt signed by Giuseppe Ferretti, 30 November 1904, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 8, f. 70.

¹¹ 'Io sarei di parere che si prometta al DM una elargizione straordinaria di alcune sterline per l'aumento di fatica che dovrà incontrare', Italian ambassador to Foreign Ministry, 13 July 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 5, f. 1880-1881.

¹² Ministry of Interior to Foreign Ministry, 30 July 1881, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6.

¹³ Vice Consul Buzzegoli to ambassador Menabrea, 25 June 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

I ladroni mi hanno anche obbligato ad andare a fare debiti presso i bottegai italiani per potersi sfamare. Mi inzaccherarono ben bene il Natale e il capodanno. La aveste veduta la mia signora, faceva pietà. Poveretta, non ebbe un momento di pace, un momento per mangiarsi un boccone!¹⁴

Collaboration with the police forces of the host countries greatly affected the efficiency of intelligence. Indeed, for the Italian authorities in London the surveillance of the anarchists was more difficult because of the policy adopted by British police forces. In fact, officially, they did not collaborate in preventive investigations and acted only after a crime was committed. The Foreign Office underlined this point several times during the preparative meetings for the international conference against anarchism of 1898 held in Rome, and subsequently as well.¹⁵

Italian diplomats in London often lamented the lack of collaboration that they obtained from the British police. In 1911, the consul complained to the ambassador about the negative response he had received from the Metropolitan Police to a request of information ‘perché sia una volta di più constatato tra quali difficoltà, sconosciute negli altri paesi, debba svolgersi qui il servizio di questo commissario di Pubblica Sicurezza’¹⁶. The consul wanted to know if a man called Antonio Polti was in fact the Francesco Polti who had been sentenced to prison for illegal possession of explosives in 1894. The Metropolitan Police replied that ‘it would be wholly contrary to the practice of Metropolitan Police to give any information regarding ex convicts or others who have been liberated at the expiration of their sentence’.¹⁷ In the consul’s opinion this practice meant that ‘nel giudizio delle Autorità il delinquente, anche il più pericoloso, il quale abbia scontato la pena...ha da essere nuovamente considerato alla stregua di ogni altro onesto cittadino, i suoi movimenti lasciati liberi ed indisturbati, le sue tracce perdute’.¹⁸

The conceited attitude that the British authorities often assumed when dealing with the question of the surveillance of anarchists annoyed the Italian diplomats as well. In 1891, Count Tornielli showed to Lord Salisbury a ticket for a dancing evening organised at the *Autonomie Club* for the benefit of revolutionary propaganda in Italy.

¹⁴ Soldi’s report, 9 January 1905, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

¹⁵ Italian ambassador to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 6 December 1902, ASMAE, *Serie politica P*, b. 49, f. P 8 Italia. ‘Allo stato attuale della legislazione in Inghilterra era impossibile adottare misure di repressione preventiva contro gli anarchici come tali, fino a quando non avessero commesso qualche infrazione contro le leggi del paese’.

¹⁶ Italian Consul to Italian ambassador, 10 November 1911, ASMAE, *AL*, 1912, b. 305.

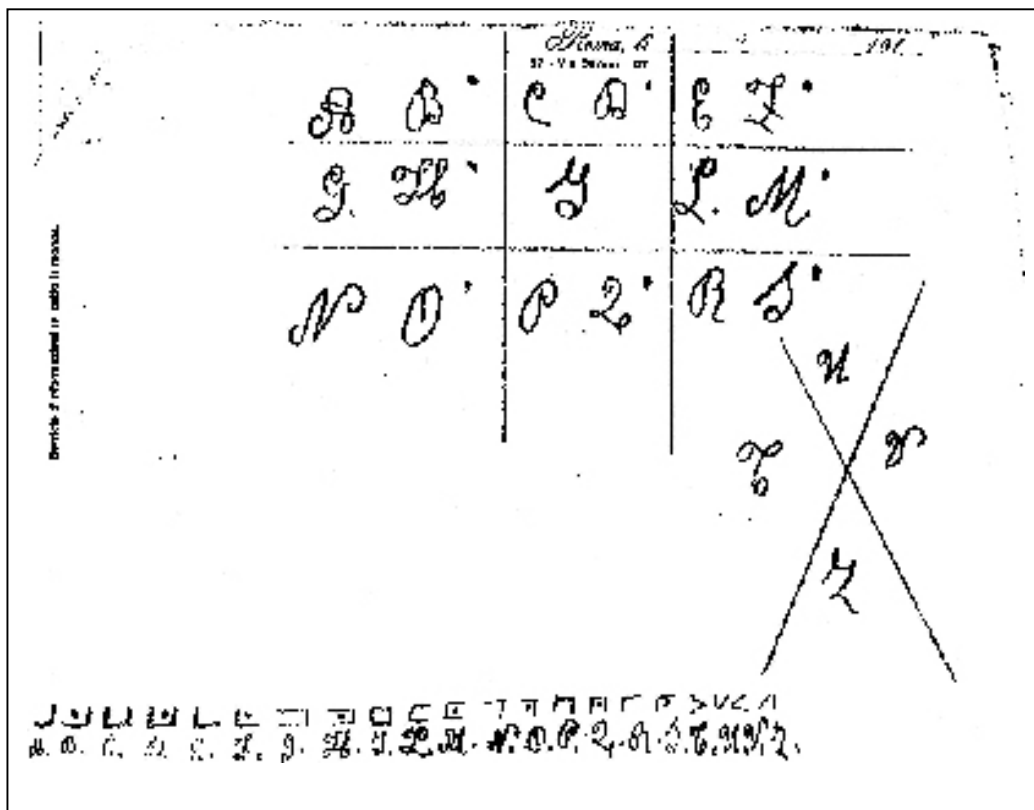
¹⁷ M.L Macnaughten to Italian consul, 4 November 1911; ASMAE, *AL*, 1912, b. 305.

¹⁸ Consul to ambassador, 10 November 1911; ASMAE, *AL*, 1912, b. 35.

Sua signoria, come era da aspettarsi, prese apparentemente la cosa in ischerzo osservando che una propaganda che voleva rivoluzionare danzando, non poteva essere molto terribile. Gli risposi che il denaro si raccoglieva con qualsiasi modo e riceveva poi la destinazione che gli si voleva dare, che le persone che si riunivano al club autonomia, italiane e d'altri paesi, erano delle più pericolose...¹⁹

Yet, either officially or 'unofficially' - through English police inspectors whom the Italian embassy rewarded for their information - the embassy sometimes was able to receive intelligence information from Scotland Yard.

On the other hand, the anarchists employed their own stratagems to avoid police surveillance. For example, they used secret codes to hide the content of their correspondence. In 1904, the Ministry of Interior alerted the prefects that the anarchists were employing an ingenious code based on letters and numbers to communicate, providing the prefects with the key for decoding it. A few years later, Malatesta apparently created a code in which each letter of the alphabet was substituted by a particular sign.²⁰



Ill. 4. 1. Malatesta's code

¹⁹ Tornielli to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 21 April 1891, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1891.

²⁰ Ministry of Interior 1912, ACS, *PS, Massime*, b. 4, f. 2.

The anarchists also had their own systems of ‘counter-espionage’ in order to discover government informers. In this regard, the exchange of information among the anarchist groups, both in Italy and abroad, was essential. The liaison with the anarchists in Turin seems to have been crucial in inspector Amede’s unmasking, for example. As the ambassador noted:

...la missione affidata al Signor Amede fu conosciuta da varie persone nella città di Torino e, principalmente, da non pochi agenti di Pubblica Sicurezza, i quali ne fecero argomento di conversazione. Se la notizia è vera, non fa d’uopo cercare altro motivo per la non riuscita della missione affidata al Signor Amede, poiché i socialisti Italiani di Londra sono in continuo carteggio coi loro amici nelle principali città del Regno e questi li avvertono di qualsiasi pericolo che loro sovrasti.²¹

Similarly, in 1881, the anarchists in Marseille warned Malatesta about the real identity of the secret agent Moncada, who had been sent from there to London in order to attend the international social revolutionary and anarchist congress.

When the anarchists unmasked a spy, they warned their comrades by publishing notes in their newspapers or, if the case was particularly serious, by printing and circulating special issues. Through *L’Associazione*, Malatesta warned the anarchist movement about Carlo Terzaghi’s attempt to infiltrate their groups under the false name of Azzati. In 1902, *La Rivoluzione Sociale* printed a warning against Gennaro Rubino; in 1912, the anarchists in London published the single issue *La Gogna* that reported all events related to the dispute between Malatesta and the spy Enrico Belelli.²²

In general, the anarchists were extremely suspicious of comrades who did not have visible means of support. In 1881, the spy De Martijs urged the embassy to instruct the Ministry of Interior to send two letters to him from the village of Troja in southern Italy, leaving an interval of ten days between the two postings. These letters served to demonstrate that De Martijs’s relatives assisted him financially.²³ In 1912, in a leaflet distributed to the Italian colony, Malatesta accused Enrico Belelli of being an informer of the Italian government, and challenged him to openly disclose the nature of his means of maintenance:

²¹ Italian embassy to Ministry of Interior, 23 May 1882, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4, f. 1882.

²² On Terzaghi see: ‘Ultim’ora’ and ‘Azzati-Terzaghi. Una spia smascherata’, in *L’Associazione*, 27 October and 30 November 1889; on Rubino: ‘In guardia’ in *Lo Sciopero Generale*, 2 June 1902; on Belelli see: *La Gogna*, July 1912.

²³ Ambassador Menabrea to Minister of Interior Mancini, 18 August 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 5.

Dicono che egli, malgrado abbia una numerosa famiglia, fa vita larga e spendereccia senza che gli si conoscano i mezzi di esistenza, e che il commercio di libri che egli dice di fare è una menzogna facile a sventare... Ebbene, io offro la mia vita all'esame del pubblico... io m'impegno a prestarmi a tutte le indagini che chiunque voglia fare su tutte le mie cose; m'impegno a dimostrare come guadagno ogni centesimo di cui dispongo, da dove viene ogni boccone di pane che metto in bocca, il Bellelli [sic] faccia altrettanto.²⁴

Another way a spy could be exposed was by providing false information only to the person under suspicion, and then see if the information was divulged afterwards. Spies were aware of this danger. In fact, when they realised that they were among only the few who had knowledge of a certain fact, they warned their controllers of a possible trap.²⁵

Nevertheless, despite these forms of counter-espionage, the anarchist movement was generally extremely vulnerable: spies were able to infiltrate quite easily. Indeed, some of those spies held positions at the highest level in the anarchist movement. Carlo Terzaghi, the chief spy in the First International, was the founder of the International in Turin. Giovanni Domanico played an important role in the development of the International in southern Italy; he financed and directed several anarchist newspapers.²⁶ Recently, suspicions have arisen about Carlo Monticelli, one of the founders of the First International in the Veneto, in regard to his relationship with the consul in Geneva Basso (the 'pioneer of the International Police') during the early 1880s.²⁷

It is therefore not surprising that the embassy in London was able to obtain information regarding the Internationalists from the very beginning of their settlement in London. Orlando De Martijs was probably the first secret agent who worked for the Italian authorities in the surveillance of the Internationalists. He fitted perfectly into London's community of political refugees. In fact, with Brousse, Conti, Figueras, Hall, Mayier, and Muller he was part of the directing committee of the *Cercle Italian d'études sociales* (*Circolo Italiano di studj sociali*).²⁸ Following the transformation of that circle into *Club international d'études sociales de Londres*, De Martijs joined both the

²⁴ Errico Malatesta, 'Alla Colonia Italiana di Londra. Per un fatto personale', IISH, Nettlau Archive, b. 304.

²⁵ 'a mettere alla prova i suoi adepti mediante notizie straordinarie, fatte note ad uno solo, onde accertarsi, se scoperte, che quegli era vero o falso amico!', Vice-consul Buzzegoli to Menabrea, 7 March 1880, ASMAE, AL, b. 70.

²⁶ Natale Musarra, 'Le confidenze di "Francesco" G. Domanico al Conte Codronchi', *Rivista Storica dell'Anarchismo*, III, 1, 1996, pp. 45-92.

²⁷ Piero Brunello and Pietro Dipaola, 'Giuseppe Basso viceconsole di Ginevra e Carlo Monticelli. Note d'archivio (1880-1881)', *Terra d'Este*, XI, 22, 2001, pp. 55-76.

²⁸ 'Communications du club', *Le Travail*, 2 May 1880.

administrative commission of the club, sharing responsibilities with Antolini and N. Van Walwyck, and the propaganda committee composed of Brochet, Conti, Robin, Hale, Muller and Mayier.²⁹ As a delegate of that circle De Martijs, together with Paul Robin, attended the Social Revolutionary and Anarchist Congress of 1881.³⁰

De Martijs, who signed his reports with his initials 'DM', was considered by the Minister of Interior as an 'utilissimo istrumento'. Moreover, DM was trusted by most of the anarchists in London. The minutes between the embassy and the Foreign Ministry are rich with references to letters sent by Cafiero and other anarchists to Malatesta, missives that De Martijs was able to copy and provide to the Italian Government³¹. Moreover, Malatesta received his mail at De Martijs's address.³² De Martijs had probably known Malatesta for a long time, since at some point they had lived in the same building in S. Maria di Capua (Malatesta's home town), near Naples.³³ In 1881, De Martijs was Malatesta's witness for the granting a power of attorney to a solicitor in order for Malatesta to obtain an inheritance from his aunt.³⁴ Furthermore, a letter that Malatesta wrote to De Martijs demonstrates that he was in close relationship with him.³⁵ Apparently, De Martijs fell occasionally under his comrades' suspicions, once in

²⁹ 'Communications officielles du Club international d'études sociales de Londres', *Le Travail*, 5 August 1880.

³⁰ Robin's letter, 'Cercle International d'Etudes sociales de Londres', 5 June 1881. IHS, *Brousse archive*.

³¹ Unfortunately these copies cannot be found in the archives. The minutes, however, provide highlights of their contents.

³² Vice consul Buzzegoli to ambassador Menabrea, 8 July 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

³³ DM's report, 9 June 1880, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 5, f. 1880-1881.

³⁴ Malatesta's second witness was Vincenzo Melandri. Vice-consul Buzzegoli to Italian embassy, 24 January 1881, ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

³⁵ 'Aversa 6 Marzo 1883 Alle 7 del mattino

Mio caro, carissimo Orlando. Tu certamente sarai arrabbiato con me per il mio lungo silenzio. Non ti dirò ora la vera ragione di ciò perché potrebbe sembrare una scusa: spero però potertela dire tra breve con prove in appoggio. Intanto voglio che tu sii sicuro che il mio silenzio non è dipeso mai né da amicizia diminuita, né da dimenticanza delle tante bontà che hai sempre avuto per me. Al contrario ti assicuro che tra le sofferenze e le vicende fortunate (ma non sempre fortunate) di questi ultimi tempi, un pensiero mi ha sempre tormentato ed è stato quello che tu potessi pensare male del mio cuore e della mia memoria. Ti debbo poi confessare che dopo la ragione primitiva per cui ho tanto tardato a scriverti, mi si è aggiunto la vergogna ed il non sapere come scusarmi, poiché la ragione vera non potevo dartela ancora. Ed oggi infine ho dovuto fare un atto energico di volontà e dire a me stesso che era una vera vergogna il trattare così male un amico come te. Dunque, caro Orlando, nella speranza che tu non mi serberai rancore, io finisco questa lettera coll' abbracciarti con tutto il cuore. Non ti parlo di nulla oggi, perché deve servire, per così dire, a rompere il ghiaccio. Stasera o domani ti scriverò di nuovo per parlarti del come mi trovo in questi luoghi e di tutte le cose nostre. Non dubitare, oramai non fosse che per farmi perdonare il passato, ti manderò anche più lettere che non vorresti. Non posso ancora darti indirizzo diretto perché non ne ho ancora. Intanto puoi scrivermi

A Menton (Argues maritimes) France

M. A. Facchini Chez Clericy frères

Rue St. Michel n.8

Sulla busta interna scriverai "per Errico" Facchini penserà a farmi pervenire la lettera. Tante cose per me alla buona sig. Amalia ed ai tuoi bimbi. Ed a te un bacio fraterno.

Tuo Errico Cesare è sempre in Egitto a Cairo'.

particular because of the allegations against him that Domanico, probably to divert suspicions, inserted in a letter to Malatesta. However, it seems that De Martijs was always capable of overcoming such difficulties.³⁶ In January 1881, Malatesta offered De Martijs the money necessary to move to Malta where, in Malatesta's plan, De Martijs would open a tavern and organise the smuggling of weapons to Sicily. The Ministry of Interior instructed De Martijs to refuse Malatesta's proposal, because it would have been extremely difficult to replace him. In any case, Malatesta did not persevere in the realisation of the scheme.³⁷

De Martijs regularly updated the embassy on Malatesta, Ceccarelli, Solieri, and Cafiero. He provided reports on the activities not only of Italian anarchists but also of anarchists and revolutionaries from other countries such as the Russian Hartmann or the Spaniard Figueras. Unfortunately, only a few of his reports have survived in the archives and their content can be known only through the minutes of the correspondence between the embassy and the Foreign Ministry.

De Martijs's collaboration with the embassy in London terminated at the end of 1886, when his son seriously imperilled his cover. The two had had a fierce argument, probably over an inheritance; De Martijs's son threatened his own father's life and blackmailed him, promising to reveal his true identity to the anarchists. Meanwhile, De Martijs experienced serious financial difficulties. And thus in September 1886 the Ministry of Interior's decision to offer De Martijs a more generous form of assistance, indicates how valuable De Martijs was for the Ministry of Interior:

per i servizi prestati, sia per quelli che in avvenire potrebbe rendere, sembrasi conveniente venire in di lui ajuto...a fargli pagare a titolo di sovvenzione straordinaria la somma di lire italiane mille sperando che con tal somma egli possa rimettersi e continuare a prestare l'opera sua.³⁸

But the threat represented by his son undermined the effectiveness of De Martijs in London. In November 1886, De Martijs was compelled to leave the United Kingdom and to move to Paris. The Ministry of Interior informed the ambassador in London that:

questo ministero è dispiacente che il DM sia costretto ad assentarsi da Londra, ma allo stato attuale delle cose non potrebbe far opposizione a quel divisamento. Spera però e si augura che la sua lontananza possa essere

The letter is in ACS, *PS*, 1914, b. 9, f. A8 Martijs (De) Orlando.

³⁶ Minister of Interior to Foreign Minister, 17 June 1881 ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 6.

³⁷ Consul to ambassador, 24 January and 16 February 1881. ASMAE, *AL*, b. 70.

³⁸ Foreign Ministry to Italian ambassador, 6 September 1886, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1886-1887.

temporanea e di breve durata e che anche dal luogo in cui si recherassi [sic] (specialmente se tale località sarà Parigi) il DM sarà in grado di continuare a rendere utili servizi mantenendosi in relazione col R. Console a Londra.³⁹

De Martijs never returned to England. He lived in France, first in Paris then in Marseille where he continued to spy on the Italian anarchists sending his reports directly to Rome. No evidence exists as to whether the anarchists ever discovered his true identity.⁴⁰

After his departure the intelligence service in London remained without an agent. The embassy was compelled to replace De Martijs, especially, in April 1888 with the arrival from Paris of Pini and Parmeggiani's group. Since it was still impossible for De Martijs to return to London, because his son was still living there, the ambassador contacted a man called Carlo Alberto Rosti, who had pleaded with the consul for help a few months earlier. Rosti's story is a good example of how the system of informers worked.

Il signor Heath mi ha indicato a tale Carlo Alberto Rosti, figlio del Colonnello Giuseppe Rosti, nato a Torino nel 1863. Prima però di indagare (colle necessarie precauzioni) se il Rosti volesse accettare l'incarico, devo pregare l'Eccellenza Vostra di fare assumere e comunicarmi informazioni sul di lui conto.⁴¹

In June, the Minister of Interior authorised the recruitment of Rosti - who signed his reports as Car – allowing the consul to spend monthly up to 200 Italian lire for his payment.

However, the new informer did not have the necessary qualities and surveillance of the anarchists operated inefficiently until the appointment of the new ambassador, Count Torielli, at the end of 1889. On his arrival, Torielli reported to the Minister of Interior that:

³⁹ Minister Malvano to embassy, 18 November 1886, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1886-1887.

⁴⁰ In 1897 De Martijs was still informing the Italian authorities about the Italian anarchists in Marseille. De Martijs's report, 20 May 1897, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2477, f. (Goldoni Giorgio).

⁴¹ Ambassador Catalani to Crispi, 7 February 1888; ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1888. The letter written to the consul Heath by Rosti was: 'Il sottoscritto Carlo Alberto Rosti si trova oggi nella dolorosa posizione di dover ricorrere all'infinita bontà dell'Eccellenza Vostra trovandosi assolutamente privo di qualsiasi mezzo di sussistenza. Giunto il 26 corr.te a Plismouth [sic] proveniente da Carmen (Messico) mi presentai al sig. A. Consolare che mi consigliò di venire a Londra, assicurandomi che oltre l'appoggio dell' Eccellenza Vostra avrei più facilmente trovato da impiegarmi. Obbligato ad abbandonare l'America causa la mia mal ferma salute è la prima volta che in vita mia che sono costretto di abusare della bontà dei rappresentanti SS MM' , 23 January 1888. ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1888.

sia perché le persone che avevano accettato tale incarico non avevano le qualità necessarie, sia perché le medesime preferivano darsi ad altre occupazioni che non lasciavano loro il tempo sufficiente per esercitare una sorveglianza efficace, questo servizio non aveva mai potuto essere disimpegnato in modo totalmente soddisfacente.⁴²

Consequently, the reorganisation of the intelligence service was one the first priorities of the new ambassador. Following Vice-consul Buzzegoli's suggestion, Tornielli contacted 'certo Sig. Federico Lauria, antico artista di canto, ora in età di 54 anni, dimorante in Londra da sei anni'.⁴³ The Ministry of Interior authorised Tornielli to employ Lauria and to pay him two pounds a week.⁴⁴ But just a couple of weeks after Lauria's appointment, Tornielli already wanted to dismiss him and suggested as a substitute a secret agent of the Ministry of Interior who was on duty in London at the time. The Minister of Interior replied to Tornielli's request that, although he did not have any objections to Lauria's dismissal, he could not 'lasciare il confidente costì inviato in missione, il quale è già partito da Londra per ritornare all' ordinaria sua residenza in altra città dell'estero, ove rende utilissimi servizi per la estesa conoscenza che ha dei partiti sovversivi e per le personali relazioni coi più pericolosi affiliati ai partiti stessi'.⁴⁵

Lauria was not discharged, and continued to work for the Italian embassy uninterruptedly for fifteen years, until his death in 1907.

Lauria assumed the nickname of 'agente Calvo'. Differently from what happened to De Martijs's reports, a considerable number of Calvo's letters have been kept in the archives in Rome, although they are scattered in many different files. In his letters Lauria referred to himself in the third person, a system commonly adopted by spies. Lauria called himself, with self-irony: 'il vecchio' or 'il vecchietto'. Lauria's reports were rich with information about the anarchist community in London. Indeed, although he often indulged in not particularly significant details, as a whole his reports, written in a literary style, provide a vivid account, from an informer's point of view, of the anarchist colony.

Lauria was regularly involved in organising the anarchists' social events. He used to write plays that were performed in the anarchists' clubs. In addition, he directed plays

⁴² Tornielli to Crispi, 19 December 1889, ASMAE, *Serie Politica P*, b. 47.

⁴³ Tornielli a Crispi, London 3 December 1889, *Serie Politica P*, 1891-1916, f. (ambasciata Londra in partenza 1889).

⁴⁴ Ministry of Interior to Tornielli, 18 december 1889, *Serie politica P*, 1891-1916, f. (ambasciata Londra in partenza 1889).

⁴⁵ Minister of Interior to Tornielli, 9 January 1890, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 38, f. 1890.

written by others. In June 1894, for example, Pietro Gori sent the text of a comedy that Lauria had to arrange and prepare for performance. In 1893, the comedy *La Congiura, scherzo comico in un atto*, composed by Lauria, was performed at the *Club Italo-Svizzero* in Clerkenwell Road.

Although Lauria often overestimated the importance of alleged plots and terrorist projects, some of his information was effective in facilitating the containment of the activities of the Italian anarchists. Indeed, thanks to his reports, the embassy was able to advise the Minister of Interior about almost all the shipments of anarchist publications to Italy, causing their immediate seizure at post offices. Moreover, Calvo's reports were essential for the arrest of two Italian anarchists. At the beginning of 1892, Calvo alerted the embassy to the return to London from America of the anarchist Pietro Bianchi, well known among the Italian anarchists and an intimate of Luigi Parmeggiani. The previous year Bianchi had escaped to the United States to flee from the English police. Thus, the embassy and the consulate were able to entrust the matter to Scotland Yard, which arrested him. Since Bianchi had been found guilty of the murder of his brother in Italy, the British authorities granted his extradition. And Bianchi's extradition represented a rare success for the Italian authorities.

L'arresto e l'extradizione del Pietro Bianchi, avvenuta contemporaneamente all'arresto ed alla messa in accusa di Giovanni Battolla, ha prodotto l'effetto che se ne poteva aspettare. La baldanza dei loro amici che sembrava sfidare l'autorità locale, quasi sicuri di impunità, è diminuita.⁴⁶

Two years later Lauria facilitated the arrest of another Italian anarchist: Giovanni Fornara, nicknamed 'Piemonte'. Piemonte's capture followed the arrest of another young Italian anarchist, Francesco Polti. On the 14 April 1894 Inspector of Scotland Yard John Sweeney arrested Polti in Clerkenwell road because he was found in possession of a suspect iron cylinder. In searching Polti's lodgings the police discovered a large quantity of sulphuric acid, chlorate of potash, and other chemicals utilised in the making of explosives. In addition, they found upon him instructions for concocting explosives that Polti sought in vain to pass for a recipe for cooking 'polenta pudding'. Polti then wrote a statement, which pointed to Fornara as the conceiver of the plot of manufacturing a bomb. The police looked for Fornara, but they were not able to find him. During the manhunt, Chief Inspector Melville and his agents searched Lauria's

⁴⁶ Tornielli to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 8 January and 9 February 1892, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1892.

home without realising that he was a police spy. An angered Lauria advised Melville to ascertain his identity within the Italian embassy.

On 22 April, at half past one in the morning, Sergeant Maguire caught Fornara while he was sleeping in a house in Stratford and arrested him. The police located Fornara thanks to the information provided by Calvo.

24 Aprile 1894.

Promisi di farle la narrazione circa l'arresto del nostro sapiente compagno Piemonte, ed ecco mantenuta la promessa. La polizia, che non fu capace di arrestare Piemonte nella casa ove dimorava, perdute le tracce non sapeva dove rivolgersi. Allora il sig. Melville si presentò alla casa di Lauria sabato, verso l'una, egli solo e in mezzo alle scalinate chiama, con voce femminile e bassa, madame, madame. La madame Corso si presentò all'uscio della porta e vide un signore che non aveva conosciuto, chiamò il Lauria e disse a lui – Un signore ti cerca – Il Lauria si fece avanti e si accorse che era M. Melville che saliva sulle punte dei piedi. Lauria gli disse: salite, non vi è alcuno. Melville entrò con educazione squisita, si mise a sedere, stringendo prima cordialmente la mano di Lauria. Dopo che il Melville fece le debite scuse al signor Lauria per lo sbaglio preso nei giorni precedenti, gli disse: Parlai con l'ambasciatore, compresi tutto e sta tutto bene. Ora conviene preparare tutti i mezzi per l'arresto di Piemonte, ed ho bisogno, in tal caso, di tutta la vostra cooperazione. Londra si deve sbarazzare da questa gente che mantiene una terribile agitazione nel paese. E' troppo giusto, rispose l'intrepido vecchietto – ho già fatto le mie pratiche per farvelo prendere, e speriamo che i vostri agenti non se lo facciano scappare come fecero l'altra volta. In Back street 13, indirizzo preciso da me dato. Quindi il Lauria disse al Melville, mandai persone a cercare Piemonte, senza guardare alle spese che necessitavano, e giusto ora ho saputo che il Piemonte trovasi a Stratford, in casa ecc, ecc, e numero ecc, ecc, ecc. Melville disse poi, consigliandosi col Lauria, - quando credete che lo si possa arrestare, domani, domenica, oppure lunedì mentre sarà al lavoro nel palazzo di Cristallo? E il Lauria, - no dovete andarci questa notte, sabato, perché lunedì il Piemonte potrebbe facilmente nascondersi, oppure prendere il volo! Melville allora disse: ci manderei insieme agli agenti quell'ispettore che voi conoscete che parla francese, e che conobbe Piemonte in casa vostra. Così d'accordo, Melville diede la sua carta da visita al sig. Lauria, e licenziandosi affettuosamente gli disse: ci vedremo altra volta e così scese le scale un po' timido, sulle punte dei piedi e se ne andò. Nessun altro agente lo seguiva. L'operazione dell'arresto riuscì facile, perché le cose regolate dal vecchio non potevano fallire!⁴⁷

Polti and Fornara's arrest and trial had great resonance in both Italy and the United Kingdom. Indeed, it was one of the rare cases in which anarchists were arrested because they intended to commit an outrage in England. Fornara stated that, since he did not have the money to take the bomb to France or to Italy, he planned to throw the bomb into the Stock Exchange. At the end of the trial Fornara was sentenced to twenty years of penal servitude, Polti to ten. Polti was released seven years later. Fornara faced

⁴⁷ Calvo's report, 24 April 1894. ACS, *CPC*, b. 4070, f. (Giuseppe Polti).

a different fate. The release of Fornara, who was considered mentally unsound, greatly concerned the English and Italian authorities.⁴⁸

I think it is out of the question to set Fornara free. He is the subject of interest to so many people on political grounds that if he were at large, either here or in Italy, he would be almost certainly ultimately to get into the hands of anarchists sympathisers. Then not only would his career and "sufferings" be exploited for political purposes, but he would be very likely to become more or less dangerous again (so far as he was physically capable) when he found himself in anarchist surroundings.⁴⁹

The suggestion to solve the problem by certifying Fornara as mentally insane and by removing him to a criminal asylum was envisaged both by the Italian Ministry of Interior and by the Home Office. Only one voice opposed that view.

28.2.10

I do not feel justified in keeping this man in prison after the period has been reached when his licence did not err on the side of leniency. Its full force under that law has now almost spent itself. The fact that if the convict returned to Italy "his suffering would be exploited by Anarchist Associates" appears to me wholly irrelevant to the question of the rights of the State against him and of his rights against the State. I do not like the suggestion which appears on 1/14, that he can be certified a lunatic as a matter of administrative convenience. I do not misunderstand it in its context, but I cannot recognise it as right. The man being entitled to his discharge, the law cannot hold him under any lien of the original sentence. If, however, he is actually insane at the moment when he would otherwise be discharged, the treatment appropriate to his case must be afforded. An independent examination by two trustworthy medical men, not connected with Government service, should be made on the question of his sanity and fitness to live outside an asylum. By that we must be bound. The rights of a convict against the State must be regarded as at least equal, and often superior, to the rights of the State against the convict.

Sir E. Troup⁵⁰

Only a few days before the date of his release, Fornara was certified mentally insane and transferred to Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum. As wished by the director of Pankhurst Prison according to whom 'he might end his days where he is',

⁴⁸ 'Il Fornara è un tipo pericolosissimo, appunto perché squilibrato di mente, ed io ritengo che sarebbe opportuno, all'avvicinarsi della sua liberazione, di fare pratiche perché sia rinchiuso in un manicomio o casa di salute'. Italian consul to Ministry of Interior, ACS, *CPC*, b. 3740, f. (Fornara Giuseppe).

⁴⁹ Report on becoming due for licence, 21 December 1909, PRO, HO144/1711/A55860D/14.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*

Fornara died at the Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum thirty-five years later, on 13 July 1941, aged ninety one.⁵¹

The Rubino affair

By 1902 Lauria's reliability as a secret agent was being questioned by police inspector Ettore Prina. The previous year the Ministry of Interior had sent Prina on a mission to London to set up his own intelligence network that would run in parallel to that of the embassy. As a cover, Prina was formally in charge of the consulate's conscription office. Prina rented a room in the neighbourhood of the consulate, where he summoned Italian youths liable to the call up. In that way, he was able to mingle with young Italians and to establish a network of informers. Meanwhile as a precautionary measure the embassy and the Ministry of Interior decided to maintain separately the services of Prina and Calvo.

Codesto servizio del Sig. Prina rimarrà indipendente da quello che l'ambasciata già esercita per mezzo del proprio agente segreto ... allo scopo di evitare che, venendo eventualmente scoperta la qualità del sig. Prina, non abbia a soffrirne il servizio già in corso. Il Prina stabilirà per proprio conto un altro centro di sorveglianza sotto la propria direzione, tenendo informato direttamente codesto Regio Ministero e anche la Regia Ambasciata quando ciò fosse di speciale necessità. L'Ambasciata, dal canto suo, gli comunicherà copia delle notizie ottenute per mezzo del detto agente segreto.⁵²

Initially, Prina enrolled at least two informers: Gennaro Rubino and Enrico Boiada.⁵³ He also introduced a systematic photographic record of the anarchists: a novelty in London. In his lodgings he set-up a darkroom and developed the photographs taken by Rubino. In this way, Prina supplied the Ministry of Interior with accurate images of many of the anarchists in the Italian colony. Generally, those pictures were taken when the anarchists were eating or relaxing, for example at a restaurant or sharing a bottle of wine. To avoid the possibility that those portrayed could identify where the shots had been taken Prina often confined the developed photographs to the head and

⁵¹ Pietro Di Paola, 'Farnara Giuseppe: Storia di un anarchico italiano a Londra', *Annali di Ca'Foscari*, XXXVIII, 1-2, 1999, pp. 663-680.

⁵² Ambassador Pansa to Ministry of Interior, 30 July 1901, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 32.

⁵³ Prina nicknamed Rubino as 'Enrico', the other informer was called 'Gallo'.

shoulders.⁵⁴ Prina also supported Rubino's scheme to open a printing company that could both provide a cover for Rubino and follow anarchists' plans step by step by actually publishing their newspapers and pamphlets. And even more conveniently the anarchists could use the premises of Rubino's press to organise conferences and meetings and to give temporary shelter to comrades who were unemployed or passing through London. According to Prina, the Rubino's project obtained Malatesta's, Michel's and Kropotkin's approval.⁵⁵ But little did the anarchists know that the Italian Ministry of Interior funded it completely to the tune of fifty pounds. Prina reported that Rubino had acquired the press and was about to issue a new journal:

con oggi doveva uscire il primo numero del nuovo giornale L'emigrato, per il quale erano pronti gli articoli e persino i clichets [sic] di alcune vignette per un romanzo di Ferrini da pubblicarsi in appendice.⁵⁶

Contrary to the initial decision, the embassy did not maintain the services provided by Calvo and by Prina separately. The change of heart turned out to be a mistake. In fact, the two began to blame each other in their reports. In a note to the consul, Prina gave the following judgement on Calvo:

Perché poi il fatto che io, da un po' di tempo, non ismentisca più quanto riferisce Calvo non facci [sic] credere che questi abbia cominciato, una buona volta, ad essere utile, credo mio dovere far noto che... il Sig. Ambasciatore mi ha vietato di controllare le notizie per evitare venga scoperto. Il Sig. Ambasciatore ci tiene assai a conservare il Calvo... Non comprendo perché tale attaccamento, mentre, se devo dire il vero, è mia convinzione che, pel presente almeno (dalla metà di settembre cioè ad oggi, vale a dire da quando ho potuto esercitare su di lui un efficace controllo), nulla, o ben poco, sappia di ciò che d'importante si progetta od avvenga nel campo anarchico. Con tutta facilità, e ben di frequente, smentisce le notizie di pochi giorni innanzi e le indicazioni, specialmente sugli individui, sono vaghe e di raggio assai limitato...⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Prina reported to have the pictures of: Sante Cenci, Pietro Capelli, Carlo Frigerio, Enrico Vincenzo Carrara, Luigi Valsuana, Alfredo Pierconti, Carlo Chignola, Giuseppe Battolla, and Carlo Berrutti. In the same report Prina requested the permission to acquire for 6 pounds (150 lire) 'una eccellente macchina in mogano 12X1072, soffiato di pelle, cremagliera, spostamento e cerniera completamente girevole, otturatore pneumatico e graduatore della velocità fino a 1/90 di minuto così da potersi usare anche per l'eventualità di fotografie istantanee, e treppiede smontabile e scorrevole'. Prina to Ministry of Interior, 18 October 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁵⁵ Prina's letter, 16 January 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁵⁶ Prina's report to the Ministry of Interior, 5 July 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22. Ferrini's novel was: *Canagliate*, published in the same year by Tipografia Internazionale, with a short introduction by Silvio Corio. A copy of the novel in ACS, CPC, b. 2044, f. (Ferrini Sante).

⁵⁷ Prina's report, 18 February 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

However, if the Italian authorities had been wonderfully successful at infiltrating the most exalted circles of London's anarchist community, the management of their spies caused them greater headaches. A few weeks previously, the Ministry of Interior had informed the embassy that the anarchists suspected Calvo. At that point the ambassador decided to separate ‘assolutamente fra loro i due servizi , evitando anche il reciproco controllo che finora feci esercitare da entrambi sulle medesime notizie’.⁵⁸ Advised about their suspicions, Calvo replied:

Lessi con sorpresa che notizie confidenziali comunicarono al ministero dell’Interno che io, Calvo, sono stato scoperto, e che i compari mi vogliono anche cogliere con un bene organizzato tranello! Ebbene io non ho paura né della mia scoperta, né dei tranelli che mi si vogliono tendere e seguirò a fare il mio dovere. Se sarò disgraziato, morirò vittima del mio dovere. Malgrado la scoperta che si pretende sia stata fatta a danno mio, ecco che cosa mi è riuscito di sapere su cose più recenti...⁵⁹

But the disputes between Lauria and Prina increased in the aftermath of subsequent exposure of Rubino. Indeed the second half of 1902 witnessed a chaotic flurry of disputes and accusations in both anarchist and Italian police circles.

At the beginning of May 1902, the anarchists came into possession of documents revealing Rubino’s collaboration with the Italian police. On 9 May, Malatesta summoned him in front of a court of honour, in the anarchists’ club at 55 Charlotte Street. Rubino did not attend the meeting, at which about thirty people were present. Instead, he sent a long letter to Malatesta claiming that his real intention was to double-cross the consul and the police inspectors by taking the money without providing them with any useful information. Rubino included three letters received by Inspector Prina to support that version; in these letters, the inspector complained about the unsatisfactory nature of Rubino’s spying. Moreover, Rubino added that he had assisted several comrades with the money obtained from the consulate. Finally, he insisted he accepted Prina’s proposal in order to carry out *ad hoc* counter espionage and discover the identity of other spies of the Italian police.

In one of the letters provided by Rubino, Prina named Calvo explicitly. This fact made Lauria furious.

⁵⁸ Pansa to general inspector of Ministry of Interior, 14 February 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁵⁹ Calvo’s report, 4 February 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

15 maggio 1902

Scandali sopra scandali. Vergogna sopra vergogna! Eccovi un'altra parte dello scandalo della scorsa domenica. Rubini [sic] mandò al Giurì dei comparì un'altra lettera del Signor Prina ed un telegramma. La lettera, che è stata letta a tutti i soci che erano presenti diceva, fra le altre amenità: bada bene Rubin[o], che la Casa (il Governo) potrebbe andare in collera. Voi avete moglie e un figlio da mantenere; cercate scrivere bene e la verità, perché vi è il Calvo che mi fa la concorrenza, e che io spero farlo mettere fuori! Dunque chi ha nominato il Calvo? E perché il Calvo gli fa la concorrenza? Si capisce bene, perché il Rubin[o], nelle sua dichiarazione dice di aver detto sempre delle bugie, inventati complotti ecc. ecc. e che il Calvo doveva smentire recisamente, e ciò che non andava al sig. Prina!⁶⁰

Rubino accused other anarchists of being linked with the Italian police.⁶¹ He stated that Malavasi was the person who indirectly gave information to Calvo – an accusation that was actually true.⁶² He also named Delboni and Fumagalli and concluded that the anarchists could not trust Bruto Bertiboni.⁶³ And in the following months, the case of Bertiboni divided the anarchist colony.

At the same meeting, Sante Ferrini, who lived with Rubino and who was supposed to work at Rubino's printing press, was questioned about his relationship with the spy.

The day after the meeting, the anarchists sought to obtain more information and documents from Rubino regarding his allegations, but without any appreciable results. They also attempted to ambush Prina, but he got wind of the plot and avoided any physical harm. As usual when a spy was unmasked, the Italian anarchists issued a leaflet of denunciation, a *diffida*, against Rubino. In the leaflet, after Rubino's exposure, they publicised Prina's address and the name he used as a cover: Piero Marelli.⁶⁴ In addition, they published a note in *Lo Sciopero Generale* and other anarchist newspapers in Europe.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Calvo's report. 15 May 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁶¹ 'Soggiunge consigliando Malatesta di guardarsi di molti che ha intorno i quali riferiscono ogni menomo suo atto al Governo Italiano. Dice che di questi ve ne sono molto influenti nel partito ed altri che sono disperati e malvestiti e che sono più spie degli altri. Nomina alcuni sui quali non c'è da fidarsi... e poi dice di guardarsi da vari altri, come dal Fumagalli, dal Delboni e in ispecial modo dal Bertiboni...' Virgilio's report, 11 May 1902. Prina's report to Ministry of Interior, 5 July 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁶² Malavasi was accused of running a brothel and of being involved in the 'white slave trade'. Later during the *biennio rosso*, he took part in the 'conspiracy of Pietralata' in Rome in 1919 (Marco Rossi, *Arditi, non gendarmi!*, Pisa: BFS, 1997, pp.77-89) ACS, CPC, b. 2954, f. (Malavasi Asdrubale).

⁶³ Delboni and Fumagalli were named because they had asked for help from the *Beneficenza*.

⁶⁴ 'Diffida', London 14 April 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁶⁵ 'In Guardia', *Lo Sciopero Generale*, 2 June 1902.

The Rubino affair created a climate of suspicion. Malatesta and Pietraraja received more documents from Arturo Tonzi, and from Bertiboni. Tonzi asserted that he had obtained those papers from an employee of the consulate and that those documents would reveal those among the anarchists who were police informers. A restricted number of people had access to the documents, namely Malatesta, Pietraraja, Mariani and Bertiboni. Rumours began to circulate; mutual accusations, grudges, and uncontrolled suspicions swirled through the anarchist community. A report written by Virgilio illustrates the atmosphere of those days:

Recchioni e Bertiboni girano insieme accigliati, Fumagalli vuol bastonare Recchioni, Dall'Acqua vuol bastonare Pietraraja [sic] e gira assieme al Jaffei. Come vedi è un putiferio.⁶⁶

Suspiciousness arose about Spasiano, who had been approached by Rubino to work for his newspaper, and also Alfredo Pierconti. According to Calvo, Bojada was also accused of being a spy, which in fact was true.⁶⁷ As a consequence of the controversies in which they found themselves involved, both Spasiano and Ferrini decided to leave London.

Meanwhile all was not well amongst the authorities. The Italian ambassador was engaged in finding out which documents were in possession of the anarchists and how the anarchists had been able to obtain them. Only one of the three employees of the consulate was considered a plausible suspect. The ambassador informed the Ministry of Interior:

Poco si sa di lui e mi dicono che abbia un aspetto non attraente; ma ciò, beninteso, poco significa...⁶⁸

However, the consul defended his employee and denied that he could possibly be involved in the matter. The ambassador speculated that the documents could have been taken from Rome, an idea that Giolitti rejected absolutely.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Virgilio's report, 12 May 1902, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

⁶⁷ Bojada was effectively Prina's informer as evident from a letter of Inspector Mandolesi who replaced Prina. 'Il Bojada possiede gelosamente tutte le lettere scrittegli dal Prina', Mandolesi to Ministry of Interior, 12 January 1905, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22. Bojada was unmasked by the anarchists in 1904 (see Calvo's report, 18 July 1904, ACS, *PS* 1905, b. 5, f. 10/70).

⁶⁸ Pansa to Leonardi, 24 May 1902, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

⁶⁹ 'il dubbio...che qualche documento sia potuto uscire da Roma, non ha ombra di fondamento', Giolitti to ambassador Pansa, 21 May 1902, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

The ambassador entrusted inspector Prina with the investigation of the matter, since:

Se qualcuno può riuscirci è certamente lui, come quello che ha l'abitudine professionale a simili cose e può giovare di elementi coi quali io non ho contatti... di constatare se realmente abbiamo in casa una persona infida.⁷⁰

Among the documents in the anarchists' hands - apparently thirty-six photographic reproductions of letters - one signed 'Lari' led suspicions to fall on the barber Gaetano Scolari. On 29 May, Scolari was summoned in front of a court of honour in Charlotte Street. Bertiboni and Pietraraja were the main accusers; Malatesta chaired the trial. In order to check his handwriting, Pietraraja dictated to Scolari the text of the letter in Malatesta's possession. A particular spelling mistake, present in both letters, aggravated Scolari's position. Bertiboni accused him repeatedly; however, Scolari strongly denied all allegations against him and favourably impressed part of the audience. At the end of the meeting, it was decided that a graphologist was to examine the letter and the final decision about Scolari was therefore postponed.

In the following days, Scolari continued to deny all accusations and to defend himself by publishing a leaflet in which he proclaimed his innocence, and by threatening to take his accusers to court.⁷¹

At that point, some of the anarchists and in particular those forming the *Bresci* group began to raise doubts about the authenticity of the papers in Malatesta's possession.⁷² Moreover, they criticised the fact that the documents were controlled by a small group that, basically, formed 'un comitato terroristico o di proscrizione'.⁷³ They argued that the police could have orchestrated the entire affair and they requested Malatesta and the others to reveal who had provided the documents. That fuelled an already incendiary situation. In fact, Tonzi and Bertiboni, who claimed to have received the letters, contradicted each other. Tonzi claimed to have obtained them from Giovanni Ferrari, an employee of the 'Beneficenza', with whom he was closely acquainted. Bertiboni, on the other hand, denied knowing Ferrari, but was unable to explain from whom he had received the documents. To complicate the situation further, during the same days, Ferrari contacted the anarchist Giorgio Giorgi and took him to the consulate

⁷⁰ Pansa to Leonardi, 27 May 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁷¹ Gaetano Scolari, 'Sempre protestando' leaflet. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁷² The Bresci group was composed of Corio, Fumagalli, Delbuoni, Perutti, De Maria, Marchi, Gualducci, Barosso, Bianchi, Tosti, Befagnotti, and Frigerio.

where Vice-Consul Righetti proposed he work for the consulate as an informer. Giorgi refused the proposal and spat in Righetti's face.⁷⁴

The *Bresci* group called for a meeting at which Bertiboni was asked to reveal the source of the documents. Before the meeting, however, Malatesta decided, according to Virgilio's report, to take full responsibility. At the meeting, at which about fifty people attended, Bertiboni was unable to reveal the origins of the documents. Malatesta then intervened affirming that: 'egli cambiò le pratiche con un detective per i documenti, che dirà poi come avvenne e che altre cose verranno fuori. Dice che si sa già chi è che ha preso il posto di informatore del console, offerto al Giorgi e che si conosce e si sa che vi è uno nuovo venuto qui da pochissimo tempo'.⁷⁵ After a heated discussion, the assembly decided to postpone all meetings until after the conclusion of the celebrations for King Edward's coronation. Malatesta utilised this period to attempt to find out the real origins of the disputed documents. He met and convinced Ferrari to attend a meeting with Tonzi and Bertiboni. Instead of clarifying the situation, the meeting led to a quarrel.

Il Tonzi, il Bertiboni e il Ferrari erano stati messi assieme. Il Tonzi riconosceva nel Ferrari colui che gli aveva dato i documenti, il Bertiboni invece non lo riconosceva. Ora questo fatto portato nella riunione segreta di ieri sera ha dato luogo ad una gran lite... Qui scoppia un urlo contro Bertiboni e Tonzi. Rossi assalta Tonzi perché dice che lo ha ingannato e messo in cattiva luce anche lui. Pietraraja [sic] investe Bertiboni e lo chiama vile, rinfacciandogli il fatto Scolari. Dietro consiglio della moglie di Pietraraja si sale dalla cucina al pian terreno della bottega. Rossi quivi balza addosso a Tonzi e dopo avergli dato tre pugni gli morde anche una guancia. La battaglia diventa generale e si sentono grida di aiuto. I bambini di Pietraraja [sic] si mettono a strillare. Bertiboni e Tonzi sono spinti fuori di bottega.⁷⁶

Other public meetings were held in which Bertiboni's lies were revealed. In fact, it was concluded that he never met the person who had provided the documents. At that point, Bertiboni apparently moved away from London. But tempers were still frayed and on 4 July, a meeting held at the top floor of a bar in Dean Street to discuss the Scolari affair, ended in a general brawl that was only concluded by the arrival of the police.

⁷³ The group was formed by Malatesta, Recchioni, Mariani, Giulio Rossi, Spodesniac, Enrico Defendi and Pietraraja. Virgilio's report, 4 June 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁷⁴ Vice consul Righetti's letter 11 October 1902; Pansa to Foreign Minister, 14 October 1902. ASMAE, *Serie Politica P*, b. 49, f. (Inghilterra). Virgilio's report, 17 May 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁷⁵ Virgilio's report, 4 June 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁷⁶ Virgilio's report, 21 June 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

In the following days Tonzi finally sent a letter to Scolari admitting that he had lied, and that the person who gave him the documents was not Ferrari, but another man called Galanti. Moreover, Tonzi wrote to Vice-Consul Righetti to deny that Ferrari had taken the papers away from the consulate. According to the letter, Tonzi named Ferrari in an attempt to protect him when, after the meeting between Vice-Consul Righetti and Giorgi, the anarchists threatened Ferrari.⁷⁷ According to Prina, however, Tonzi named Ferrari following Bertiboni's suggestion. In the letter to Vice-Consul Righetti, Tonzi advanced the hypothesis that the documents were fabrications. Inspector Prina, who investigated the matter and reconstructed the entire story, confirmed this theory. No papers had been purloined from the consulate; the letters in the anarchists' hands were, in fact, forgeries. The conceivers of the deception were three individuals: Galanti, Franchiotti and Bruto Bertiboni. The anarchists had expelled Galanti from their circles some time before because they considered him a spy. Franchiotti, described as 'un farabutto' by Prina, was a former policeman, who had reasons to seek revenge against Rubino. Bertiboni was the most controversial character. Prina did not exclude the possibility that Bertiboni could have been a secret agent.⁷⁸

Questi tre individui benchè spinti da impulsi diversi e proponentisi scopi immediati differenti...finirono come era naturale col trovarsi ed accordarsi.⁷⁹

Franchiotti and Galanti produced the forgeries, and Bertiboni, involving Tonzi, delivered them to Pietraraja. The fact that the consulate carried out an investigation to discover if and how the documents were removed from the consulate excludes the possibility that the embassy and the Italian police in London had planned the affair. So it is entirely possible that the entire affair was the consequence of the spirit of revenge of the three people involved. Yet, Bertiboni's aims remain unclear. Rubino considered Bertiboni a secret agent, and Prina as we have seen did not entirely exclude that possibility. Apparently, the anarchists believed that Bertiboni worked for the English police. In this case, the fact that the Rubino Affair happened just before the coronation of Edward VII, could lead one to the supposition that the scheme was planned to avoid possible troubles by the anarchists during the celebrations by causing them to fight

⁷⁷ Tonzi's letter to vice consul Righetti, 10 July 1902. ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

⁷⁸ 'Non so se e di chi il Bruto Bertiboni sia mai stato informatore segreto'. Prina's report to Ministry of Interior, 5 July 1902. ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

⁷⁹ Prina's report to Ministry of Interior, 5 July 1902. ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

amongst themselves. However, there is no evidence supporting this theory at the Public Record Office.

The Rubino affair had several consequences. On the 1 November 1902, Virgilio reported that Rubino told the anarchist Michele Franchini, who refused to shake hands with him, that ‘egli [Rubino] ha un’opera di risanamento da compiere’.⁸⁰ Two weeks later, in Brussels, Rubino shot at the King of Belgium, Leopold I, but missed his target. Rubino, who was about to be lynched, was immediately arrested. At the trial, he proclaimed to have acted on his own initiative and to consider himself an anarchist. He received a life sentence. The police in London felt Rubino may have made an attempt on the life of the King of Belgium in order to prove his bona fides.⁸¹

Inspector Prina was removed from London and summoned back to Italy. Giolitti had reached this decision as early as the end of May, since:

trovo che la scoperta del Rubini [sic], se è deplorabile per se stessa lo è tanto più per la leggerezza e la imprudenza dimostrata dal dr. Prina... il dr. Prina difficilmente, io penso, riuscirà a reintegrare quel servizio di sorveglianza, compromesso forse per eccesso di zelo, se non per imprudenza e leggerezza... Dal complesso delle circostanze in cui il deplorabile incidente del Rubin[o] si è svolto... io desumo la convinzione che il nome del Calvo sia stato fatto al Rubin[o] dallo stesso Prina ed anche per tale riguardo io ritengo necessario esonerare questi dall’incarico che ha costì.⁸²

However, at the ambassador’s request, Prina remained in London to help organise protection during the visit of the Duke and Duchess D’Aosta for the celebration of the coronation and to investigate the supposed disappearance of the documents from the consulate. In December, Giolitti summoned Prina back to Italy, seconding him to Venice. Prina pleaded with the consul to intercede on his behalf in order to delay the departure. In the letter to the consul Prina appeared to have been seriously damaged by the Rubino affair.

Non ho più energia, non ho più forza, non mi sento più di affrontare lotte ed ansie; in particolare psichicamente, non sono più che l’ombra di me stesso... vedo tutto nero davanti a me, non ho più speranze, fede nel mio avvenire, illusioni. Perché mandarmi a Venezia, dove il diavolo potrebbe far sì che in un modo o nell’altro, si parlasse ancora di me?... Non ci sarebbe una nicchia qui all’Ufficio Schedario, od in quello fotografico, dove celarmi agli occhi di

⁸⁰ Virgilio’s report, 1 November 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁸¹ Malatesta commented on Rubino’s assassination attempt in: ‘Gennaro Rubini’, *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, 1 December 1902, p. 1. Rubino died in prison on 15 March 1918. See also Carl Levy, ‘Malatesta in London: the Era of Dynamite’, in *A Century of Italian Emigration to Britain. 1880s to 1890s. Five Essays*, edited by L. Sponza and A. Tosi, Supplement to *The Italianist* (1993), p. 39.

⁸² Giolitti to Pansa, 21 May 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

tutti, dove attendere ignoto e dimenticato la fine degli anni che ancora mi rimangono?⁸³

Nevertheless, Giolitti did not allow Prina to stay in London any longer and ordered him to leave at once.⁸⁴ Lauria, instead, was kept on. The ambassador suggested ‘il mantenimento del piccolo servizio del C., il quale non sarà gran cosa, ma costa anche poco e, se non altro, ha potuto durare parecchi anni senza venire scoperto’.⁸⁵ Furthermore, the ambassador proposed to change Lauria’s undercover name that was known to the anarchists. The Minister of Interior approved; Lauria thus became secret agent ‘Soldi’.⁸⁶ In 1906, Lauria fell seriously ill. Although Lauria could not provide any information because of his illness, the Minister of Interior decided to continue to pay him not only because ‘egli ha servito zelantemente ed utilmente per molti anni’, but especially because

Potrebbero nascere seri inconvenienti se egli fosse indotto a fare delle rivelazioni. Sarebbe assai spiacevole, sia di fronte alla Colonia, sia di fronte a questo Governo, ed alla opinione pubblica in generale che si sapesse come confidenti fanno capo a quest’Ambasciata per il servizio di polizia politica.⁸⁷

On 22 January 1907, Lauria’s stepson Marco Corso informed the embassy of Lauria’s death.⁸⁸ Marco Corso added:

Per un anno e più sono stato l’allievo e confidente del Sig. F. Lauria (S. Soldi) il quale mi ha istruito riguardo al posto tenuto da lui per tanti anni. Vi offro i miei servizi, sicuro di potere continuare onestamente questo lavoro delicatissimo.⁸⁹

The embassy recruited Marco Corso as a secret agent. The ambassador communicated to the Ministry of Interior that he had fixed ‘la retribuzione del Corso a Lire sterline due e mezzo la settimana’.⁹⁰ Corso assumed the undercover name M. Soldi.

⁸³ Prina’s letter, London 19 December 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁸⁴ Prina was replaced by Inspector Paolo Mandolesi. Ministry of Interior to Italian embassy, 2 January 1903. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁸⁵ Pansa to Leonardi, 24 May 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁸⁶ Pansa to the General Director of PS Leonardi, 16 May 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁸⁷ Italian embassy to Minister of Interior, 21 December 1906. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 5, f. 10/70. Also De Martijs’s son, asked the Ministry of Interior to be recruited as a secret agent considering the services provided by his father and the fact that he was unemployed. Vincenzo De Martijs’s letter, 12 December 1914, ACS, PS, 1914, b. 9, f. A8.

⁸⁸ M. Corso to Cavaliere Manetti, 22 January 1907, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 5, f. 10/70.

⁸⁹ M. Corso to Cavaliere Manetti, 22 January 1907, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 5, f. 10/70.

⁹⁰ Ambassador Pansa to Ministry of Interior, 6 February 1907, ACS, PS, b. 5, f. 10/70.

However, as noted by the Ministry of Interior, after Lauria's death 'l'utilità di siffatto servizio confidenziale è andata ancora più scemando'.⁹¹

The Rubino affair affected the anarchists too. The violent quarrels probably caused the newspaper *Lo Sciopero Generale* (see Chapter 5 for a discussion of the anarchist newspapers) to collapse, the last issue of which appeared in June 1902. Malatesta and Pietraraja faced blame because they had been easily fooled, and because of their allegations against Scolari.⁹²

According to Virgilio, Pietraraja inferred that Malatesta was weakened by the whole affair. In the same report Virgilio informed:

Corio poi, a parte s'intende, constata che Malatesta si è lasciato trascinare in trappola come un babbuino, che ci fa brutta figura e che non è uomo da capeggiare un partito e ormai sono tutti dello stesso di lui parere.⁹³

And because Malatesta held the documents and accused other anarchists the resentment of those who already considered him as an authoritarian leader was merely deepened. It is also possible to suggest that the Rubino and the Scolari affairs and their consequences were among the causes of the heavy depression that affected Malatesta in the winter of 1903.⁹⁴

Virgilio, Belevi and Malatesta

Thanks to Virgilio's reports, Giolitti was able to follow the developments of the Rubino affair in detail. For example, it was through them that Giolitti found confirmation that, despite his denials, Prina had named Calvo in his letters to Rubino. The embassy and the consulate had no knowledge of Virgilio's presence in London. Virgilio worked in tandem with another spy who was situated in Paris, Enrico Insabato,

⁹¹ Minister of Interior to Italian embassy, 4 June 1907, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 5, f. 10/70.

⁹² One year later Scolari distributed two leaflets in the Italian and the French colonies in which he attacked Pietraraja and Malatesta for the accusations of the previous year. 'Calendario anarchico 1903 maggio 29' and 'Calendario anarchico 1903 giugno 2', in ACS, CPC, b. 3900, f. 'Pietraraja'.

⁹³ Virgilio's report, 9 July 1902, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁹⁴ Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in Exile', p. 269.

whose undercover name was ‘Dante’.⁹⁵ They were both sent probably on missions to the French capital in the middle of 1900. From Paris they sent a report, focused on the French anarchists Cruisse and Faure, with a long preamble, a model of *captatio benevolentiae*:

Siamo qui con Dante riuniti nello stesso amore per la nostra Italia che impariamo ogni giorno più ad apprezzare e per la quale ci convinciamo che è bello qualunque sacrificio. E’ con ansia che leggiamo tutto ciò che si riferisce al nostro paese alla sicurezza ed alla gloria del quale vorremmo dare ben più che non ci consentano le nostre forze. E nell’amore per l’ Italia facciamo andare compagno quello per gli uomini che la difendono e tutelano e la fanno stimata, e intanto non ci dimentichiamo di te che tante volte ci hai opportunatamente indirizzati ed avviati a nuove scoperte e ad utili lavori. Così avrai veduto che sotto gli auspici tuoi e di Babbo abbiamo aperte nuove vie nelle nostre esplorazioni...⁹⁶

In Paris, Dante and Virgilio were able to obtain information about the anarchists in London, probably thanks to the letters that they received from Corio, with whom they were on close terms because of Corio’s previous sojourn in Paris. Virgilio not only provided the information to the Minister of Interior, but he suggested a possible plan of action against the anarchists:

Da quanto pare a Londra ...si acuirebbe...la lotta contro Malatesta per opera degli individualisti come qui si acuisce la lotta contro Jean Grave. Merita considerazione questa condizione di cose, perché se si fosse in condizione di trarne profitto, si potrebbe scindere per molto tempo il partito anarchico facendolo lacerare in lotte intestine. Si tratta adunque se tra gli italiani si può mettere in lotta Ciancabilla, L’Agitazione e alcuni dell’Internazionale di Londra, contro Vezzani, Malatesta, Tarrida, Samaria Nino ecc. ecc.⁹⁷

In 1901, Virgilio moved to London. Compared with those by Calvo, the reports written by Virgilio were of a very different character. The style was succinct and penetrating. Furthermore, unlike all the other informers who worked in London, Virgilio never solicited for money. His letters show that he was well placed in the anarchist colony. However, he shared the prejudices of his fellow spies and policemen. Thus most of male anarchists were syphilitic, while women were always described as loose.

⁹⁵ See: Giampietro Berti, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano e internazionale. 1872-1932* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2003), p. 318.

⁹⁶ Dante and Virgilio’s letter, 26 February 1901, ACS, *Carte Giolitti*, b. 2, f. 1.

⁹⁷ Virgilio’s letter, 25 February 1901, ACS, *Carte Giolitti*, b. 2, f. 1.

In April 1912, the Italian anarchists in London published a single issue to protest against Italy's invasion of Libya: *La Guerra Tripolina*. Malatesta wrote the editorial for the one-off publication. Shortly after the appearance of this single issue, Enrico Ennio Belevli, a member of the anarchist colony, spread rumours that Malatesta was a Turkish spy. In reply, Malatesta issued a leaflet entitled *Alla Colonia italiana di Londra (Per un fatto personale)* and circulated it in the Italian colony.⁹⁸ In that leaflet, Malatesta explained the reasons why he had ended all relations with Belevli, namely Belevli's support of the Italian military expedition. Then Malatesta turned attention to a question that:

da anni tormenta me e tutti, o quasi, coloro che il Belevli [sic]conoscono. Il Belevli [sic]si dice (o si diceva) anarchico, però moltissimi lo considerano come un tipo losco e misterioso, e parecchi lo ritengono una spia della polizia italiana... Io m'interessai della questione, ma non potei arrivare a nulla di positivo... non portai nessuna accusa, perché le prove mi mancavano sempre.⁹⁹

Malatesta challenged Belevli to attend a public meeting to explain where his funds came from and prove that he was not an agent of the Italian police. The publication of this leaflet represented the starting point of one of the most dangerous events that threatened Malatesta's safety during the years of his long exile in London.

Initially Belevli issued a rebuttal to be printed by Giuseppe Pesci, who provided Malatesta with a copy of it. However, Belevli decided to withdraw the publication and not to distribute the leaflet in which he explicitly accused Malatesta to have taken part in the Houndsditch robbery.¹⁰⁰ Instead, Belevli took proceedings against Malatesta for criminal libel. According to *La Gogna*, the single issue that exposed Belevli as a spy, Belevli reached that decision after consultation with Inspector Francis Powell of Scotland Yard.

Malatesta's trial took place on 20 of May 1912 at the Old Bailey, in front of the Common Serjeant. Belevli's interpreter was Enrico Bojada, the former informer of Inspector Prina. Belevli declared he was a bookseller and to have repudiated anarchist ideas a long time before the trial:

...I am an Italian and have been trading in England about 10 years. Have known prisoner about 30 years, and have seen him many times since I have

⁹⁸ Malatesta, 'Per un fatto personale'.

⁹⁹ *Ibidem*

¹⁰⁰ *La Gogna*, July 1912, p. 2.

been in England... I was a personal friend of prisoner up to about six months ago, when the Italian-Turkish War started. I have sold a lot of books, some very ancient ones. I do not keep books of accounts as I pay in cash. I have no invoices or documents to show that I have sold any books, but I have sold many to various ladies and gentlemen. I make a profit of L250 to L300 a year. I have not banking account. I have not plate on my door showing I am a bookseller. I have two rooms and a Kitchen at my flat, and live there with my wife and six children, and carry on my business from there. I sell my books outside. I keep all my books in my flat. I have at present 700 or 800 francs worth. I may not have a large numbers of books as perhaps only one is a very valuable book...I did profess anarchy at one time, but after I saw that anarchist ideas were not fit for myself or others I gave up anarchy. That is ... more than eight years ago, and I very seldom went to any other meetings. I did go to the International Anarchist Congress at Amsterdam in 1907 with prisoner's brother, who is not an Anarchist, but only as a matter of curiosity... I have never been an Italian police spy, and have never received any money from the Minister of the Interior in Italy. I never sent money to the Anarchist Congress, and have only bought their newspapers; 15s. or 20s. is all I have ever paid towards anarchism in my life... I have never asserted that the defendant had sold himself to the Turkish Government as a Turkish spy. I did not write an article in reply to the challenge of defendant, and never gave such a thing to anyone to print for me... It may be that defendant and I have fallen out in consequence of the war, but my wife broke the friendship off at the time of the Houndsditch affair because the police were calling at my house asking me if I knew persons who participated in the murders... I take defendant's circular to be an act of vengeance because I put him out of my house...six months ago because he said that whoever killed an Italian was his friend, and my wife would have given him some kicks if he had not gone...¹⁰¹

Malatesta confirmed to have been close to Belevi; in fact, Malatesta used to visit him to give arithmetic lessons to his children. Malatesta added that Belevi posed as a bookseller, that in the previous five or six years he never saw him supply books and that Belevi owned only a few books for private use. In the cross-examination, Malatesta stated:

When I published the circular I said that many people might think Bellili [sic] was an Italian police spy. When I say that he is not doing an honest trade as bookseller I mean to imply that he is getting his money as an Italian police spy. When I say he is a liar, I mean it. When I said I could show how I get every 6d. of my income I meant I was getting my living honestly. I challenged Bellili [sic]to do the same. I have been sentenced in Italy, but always for political offences – never to 30 years' imprisonment or anything of the kind. I did not go to Bellili's [sic] house on purpose to say that I disagreed with the Italian over the war. I did not say I was against all the Italians – I am an Italian myself. Bellili [sic]said at the Italian Colony that I wished all the Italian would get killed – or something of the kind – to influence the Italian Colony; but he has failed. Mrs. Bellili [sic] told me that she had a brother, who was a lieutenant in the Italian Army. I used no violent language, but Bellili [sic] was not ashamed to put his wife in the question. I

¹⁰¹ Central Criminal Court, Minutes of Evidence: 1911-1912, pp. 209-214. PRO, CRIM 10/102.

do not like to quarrel with ladies. I did not say that everybody who murdered an Italian was a friend of mine, or that they should be crucified. I was a frequent visitor at Bellili's [sic] house until his wife insulted me and then I went away. Afterwards I met Bellili [sic] at a shop kept by a friend of mine. I have seen Bellili [sic] on several occasions, but have had no conversation with him. It was in April I issued the circular and had it printed. It was printed in Paris. I had about 500 copies distributed.¹⁰²

Giuseppe Pesci, Giulio Rossi, Alfonso Spizzuoco, Pietro Gualducci, Romeo Tombolesi, Giorgio Antibando, and Enrico Defendi stood as witnesses in Malatesta's favour, confuting Belelli's statements. The Common Serjeant refused to accept as evidence a copy of Belelli's reply to Malatesta. Pesci, nicknamed Bologna, the printer of many anarchist publications in London, stated that he had printed three proofs of the reply to Malatesta that Belelli had handed to him. Spizzuoco and Antibando testified to have been told by Belelli that Malatesta was a spy of the Turkish government. Defendi, Gualducci, Tombolesi, and Rossi denied that Belelli was a bookseller. All of them admitted to have been Belelli's friends. Ludovico Brida and Giovanni Moroni, to whom Belelli declared to have sold books for a large amount of money, rectified the figure of the purchase to the value of few shillings. The Russian anarchist Chaikovsky testified in Malatesta's favour as well.

The jury held Malatesta's allegation against Belelli not substantiated by the evidence available. Therefore, they found Malatesta guilty of criminal libel.

In a contentious decision, the Common Serjeant allowed Inspector Powell of the Special Branch to give evidence after the delivery of the verdict.

...Prisoner has been known to the police as an Anarchist of a very dangerous type for a great number of years. He has been imprisoned in his own country and has been expelled from France. He has visited Egypt, Spain, France, Portugal, and, I believe, America, in the interests of Anarchy, and wherever he went there was a great deal of trouble. He is known as the leader of militant Anarchists in this country – in fact, in the world. Many of his former colleagues have passed through this court and had penal servitude for coining. Gardstein, one of the Houndsditch ...had been using prisoner's workshop, or working with him for 12 months. A tube of oxygen that was used on that occasion was traced to prisoner, who stated that he had sold it to Gardstein. That is all that was known. He has never been in the hands of the police in this country, but on one occasion was fined for assaulting a school teacher who chastised his son at school... I do not know much in his favour...¹⁰³

¹⁰² *Ibidem*

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*

Clearly opinion in the courtroom was swayed by Powell's description of Malatesta as 'an anarchist of a very dangerous type', who had links with forgers and the police murderers of Houndsditch: his pronouncements also prejudiced the sentence issued to Malatesta by the Common Serjeant.

Three months' imprisonment; recommended for expulsion under the Aliens Act; ordered to pay costs of prosecutions.¹⁰⁴

The Common Serjeant's decision of considering Malatesta as an undesirable alien and to recommend him for expulsion at the expiration of his sentence aroused broad indignation. Articles against the punishment appeared in several newspapers: the *Manchester Guardian*, *The Nation*, the *Daily Herald*, the *Star*, the *Daily News*, and the *Leader*, as well as in Conservative newspapers. Malatesta's sentence was seen as an attack against the tradition of political asylum, an attempt 'to repudiate a principle to which all Liberals and most Conservatives are sincerely devoted'.¹⁰⁵

An even greater scandal has arisen by the appearance in the court of a detective from the Political Department of Scotland Yard. This man was allowed to enter the witness box after the jury had given their verdict and make an attack upon Malatesta...Malatesta is the victim of the despicable international secret police who wish to destroy the RIGHT OF ASYLUM for political refugees which has hitherto been the glory of Britain. Their victory would be our dishonour. If this plot to deliver Malatesta into the hands of the Italian Government were successful, it would also strengthen [sic] the hands of the enemies of freedom in this country.¹⁰⁶

Prince Kropotkin defended Malatesta in a long letter published in *The Nation*. Kropotkin argued that Malatesta's case had to be considered in its political aspect. The *challenge*, an appeal to the judgement of comrades, as the one addressed by Malatesta to Belevi, was a defence against the system of agents-provocateurs that had 'lately taken an immense development'. Malatesta's condemnation for libel was dangerous because it rendered impossible any appeal to a jury of honour.¹⁰⁷

A Malatesta Release Committee was immediately established to launch a protest campaign against the sentence and to stop the deportation order. Initially, the secretary

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem*

¹⁰⁵ 'The case of Malatesta', *Manchester Guardian*, 25 May 1912, p. 8.

¹⁰⁶ 'An Appeal to the Men and Women of London', Malatesta Release Committee, IISH, *Nettlau Archive*, b. 304.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Kropotkin, 'The case of Malatesta', *The Nation*, 8 June 1912, pp. 366-368. In 1908, Kropotkin participated in the jury of honour that dealt with the case of Evno Azef, the chief of the Russian combat

and treasurer was Jack Tanner, but was quickly replaced by Guy Aldred. The official address of the committee was Recchioni's shop, in 37 Old Compton Street.

In the following weeks the Committee distributed 120,000 leaflets and 100,000 postcards to be sent to the Home Secretary. Rallies were held in Finsbury Park, Peckham Rye, and Regent's Park 'for arousing public interest in the dark and low-down tricks of continental political police agents'.¹⁰⁸ A massive meeting was held on the 9 June, the day before the hearing of Malatesta's appeal. According to *The Anarchist* at least 15,000 people joined the demonstration. Four processions with bands and banners convened on Trafalgar Square from Highbury, Mile End, Hammersmith and Harlesden. A large number of trade unions and labour organisations participated: dockers, tailors, gas workers, railwaymen, shop assistants, iron and tin-plate workers, etc. Banners of the Independent Labour Party and the British Socialist Party mixed with those of the anarchist groups. Many speeches were given from three platforms, among others by the secretary of the London Trades Council, James MacDonald, the editor of *The Syndicalist*, Guy Bowman, the Italo-Scottish anarchist James Tochatti, Guy Aldred, Mrs. Tom Mann, and Mrs. Agnes Henry.

The mobilisation demonstrated the deep esteem that Malatesta enjoyed, especially among the people of Islington, the area where he lived. Thousands signed the petition in Malatesta's favour.¹⁰⁹

Islington knows little and cares less about Malatesta's "philosophical anarchism". It only knows him as one who will give his last copper to the man who needs it, and who for more than twenty years has worked there, teaching useful trade to boys who would have drifted into hooliganism.¹¹⁰

Generosity was the main feature of the character representing Malatesta in Olivia Rossetti's book *A Girl Among the Anarchists*. An example of Malatesta's influence in the Italian colony and among the youth in Islington can be found in a letter addressed by Alfonso Spizzuoco, a former anarchist militant, to the Italian ambassador Dino Grandi in 1934.

Eccellenza, [...] all' età di sette anni, dopo la morte di mio padre fui condotto in questo paese [...] Malauguratamente per tutti nel quartiere Italiano di Clerkenwell dove si era alloggiato l'anarchico Malatesta che vi

organisation of the Social Revolutionaries. See: George Woodcock, Ivan Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince* (New York: Schocken, 1971), pp. 371-372.

¹⁰⁸ 'The Malatesta release Committee', *The Anarchist*, 7 June 1912, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in exile', p. 267.

¹¹⁰ 'Malatesta's fate', *The Anarchist*, 31 May 1912, p. 2.

esplicava disinteressatamente un apostololato secondo la sua dottrina, notando in me una certa vivacità ed interprete delle ristrettezze della famiglia prese, dopo poco la morte di mia madre quando era a piccola età di quindici anni ad interessarsi con tutta abnegazione della nostra educazione per fare di noi dei suoi futuri e fedeli satelliti. [...] Non di meno pur avendo spesso scatti di ribellione non potei emanciparmi da quella influenza e rispetto che il maestro esercitava su di me, così che più per rispetto e per un senso di gratitudine seguii i suoi ammaestramenti. Conseguentemente mi resi renitente agli obblighi militari di leva e di guerra.¹¹¹

Also, Rudolf Rocker's son, Fermin, retained a vivid memory of Malatesta in those years:

Malatesta was one of the heroes of the movement, a veteran of many struggles on two continents, and his prestige, particularly among his countrymen, was equalled by very few. Oddly enough, there was little in his appearance and demeanour to suggest his exploits as a leader of strikes and insurrections, and to children in particular he seemed the very essence of benevolence... Despite his prominence in the movement, Malatesta lived a life of the utmost frugality, supporting himself as a machinist and metalworker, a calling he pursued in his own little workshop in Islington. Poor as he was, he invariably had a little gift for me whenever he would see me, either a little bag of sweets, a coin or a toy. In this regard he was not playing any favourites, for he had a way with children and was known and loved by all the youngsters in his neighbourhood.¹¹²

The Malatesta release campaign was a real tonic for the anarchist movement in London. Corio reported in *La Cronaca Sovversiva*, 'in questi passati due mesi facemmo tale una propaganda di anarchismo quale non si era vista in Londra da molti anni'.¹¹³ Demonstrations were held in France as well. The anarchist newspaper, *Les Temps Nouveaux*, organised a successful meeting in Paris where 'there was an overflow that would have filled the hall twice over'.¹¹⁴ The principal speakers were Charles Malato, M. Yvetot, and Dr. Pierro. Two hundred pounds were collected for the fund raised for the benefit of Malatesta. A large open-air meeting took place in Glasgow on Sunday 16 June.

On 10 of June, the appeal of Errico Malatesta against the sentence was heard before the Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Darling, and Mr Justice Avory. During the proceeding Malatesta 'lent his bushy iron grey beard upon his white arm and gazed about the court with keen, penetrating eyes. Throughout the hearing he took apparently

¹¹¹ Alfonso Spizzuoco to Dino Grandi, 4 June 1934, ACS, CPC, b. 4919, f. (Spizzuoco Alfonso).

¹¹² Fermin Rocker, *The East End Years. A Stepney Childhood* (London: Freedom Press, 1998), pp. 68-69.

¹¹³ Silvio Corio, 'Per Errico Malatesta', *La Cronaca Sovversiva*, 10 August 1912.

¹¹⁴ 'The Malatesta's case. Protest meeting in Paris', *Manchester Guardian*, 7 June 1912, p. 17.

a deep interest in the proceeding'.¹¹⁵ Malatesta's appeal was refused. The motivations for refusing the appeal, apart from the legal questions, demonstrated the judges' particular perception of the Italian colony:

He wrote and published in Italian, the native language of a number of people living together as a colony in this country, among them many anarchists... it held up Bellilli [sic] to the hatred of this society, a society of a very peculiar character. If a man in such a society was to be convicted of being a police spy... it followed that that man would be, in a society like that, in a very dangerous position... The Common Serjeant had made perfectly plain that he did not recommend that Malatesta should be deported as an undesirable alien simply because he was an Anarchist... His deportation was recommended on the ground that Bel[elli] being an anarchist, and being accused by Malatesta of being an Italian spy, the accusation was a danger to Bel[elli]. It was probable that in consequence of the libel some crime would be committed, and it was not going too far to say that some assassination might take place and that crime would be produced in this country. The Court, having taken in consideration all the circumstances, could therefore see no reason for revoking that part of the sentence relating to the deportation of Malatesta.¹¹⁶

The *Manchester Guardian* underlined the judges' contradictions at the Court of Appeal and rested its hopes in the Home Secretary.¹¹⁷

On 18 June, the Home Secretary, Reginald McKenna, announced to the House of Commons that he: 'had decided not to make an expulsion order against Malatesta but he saw no reasons to advise the remission of the sentence of imprisonment'.¹¹⁸

Thanks to those mass demonstrations, Malatesta was therefore able to stay in England.

The trial put an end to Belelli's, alias *Virgilio*, career as a spy. Indeed, Malatesta's allegations were sound. Belelli was born in the village of Novellara, near Reggio Emilia, on the 15 May 1860.¹¹⁹ The inaccessibility of *prefettura* and *questura* records held at the *Archivio di Stato* in Bologna, closed for building works for the last two years, made it impossible to consult further documents to determine when Belelli was recruited as an informer by Giolitti. The go-between Giolitti and Belelli was the police superintendent (*questore*), Vincenzo Neri. Neri had much experience in dealing with spies. It was in fact Neri, at that time a police inspector, who approached Domenico-

¹¹⁵ 'Malatesta's appeal. Revocation of deportation order refused', *Manchester Guardian*, 11 June 1912, p.4.

¹¹⁶ *Ibidem*

¹¹⁷ 'Political offenders and their sentences', *Manchester Guardian*, 11 June 1912, p. 6.

¹¹⁸ *Manchester Guardian*, 18 June 1912, p. 11.

¹¹⁹ See: Giampietro Berti, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano ed internazionale. 1872-1932* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2003), pp. 333-349.

noted anarchist police spy discussed earlier- in Florence and put him in contact with the Ministry of Interior in 1892.¹²⁰ Neri was appointed *questore* of Bologna in April 1896, but he took office only in the September of the following year. Belelli, after being a socialist, from 1892 became one of the leaders of the anarchist movement in Bologna. Although Belelli could have been a secret agent before Neri's arrival in Bologna,¹²¹ it is possible to surmise that Belelli's career as a spy began with Neri's appointment in that city. Belelli was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for libel in September 1897. In May 1898, Belelli was suddenly released, a decision that completely surprised the prefect of Bologna. Belelli was granted pardon thanks to the good offices of a senator. It is therefore possible to make a conjecture that Neri contacted Belelli while in prison and released him in exchange for his services. In the middle of 1900, Belelli moved to Paris. He was expelled in September 1901, when the Tsar visited France.

Apparently, serious suspicions against Belelli were aroused by the solicitations of the anarchist Siegfried Nacht. Nacht had applied for a position at the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome; the position had been offered to him on condition of interrupting all his contacts with the anarchists. From Rome, Nacht sent 45 lire to Giovanni Spizzuoco, Alfonso's brother, to clear a debt that he had previously contracted with him. Some time later, Nacht was questioned at the Ministry of Interior about this transfer of funds and was rebuked for continuing to maintain contacts with the anarchists. In consequence Nacht urged his comrades in London to investigate the leak. Spizzuoco claimed that the only person acquainted with the transaction was Belelli, who had changed the *lire* into pound sterling. Moreover, Felice Vezzani, from Paris, reported that, according to Belelli's sister-in-law, Belelli received registered letters from the Ministry of Interior monthly. In any case after Malatesta's trial, Belelli went back to Reggio Emilia where he died in 1926.

With Belelli's departure, Virgilio disappeared as well. In fact Belelli was the person who for twelve years signed his reports with that cover name. But although Belelli was in direct contact with the Ministry of Interior he left no traces of Virgilio's real identity in his correspondence between the Ministry and the embassy or the consulate, which was different from what happened with other spies. However, it has

¹²⁰ Natale Musarra, 'Le confidenze di "Francesco" G. Domanico', p. 49.

¹²¹ The *prefetto* in Bologna wrote in Belelli's biographical record: 'Tutto ciò che si è fatto, escogitato, discusso, moveva dalla ispirazione del Belelli che audace, ma al tempo stesso prudente ed accorto, seppe tenersi lontano da ogni pericolo. Condannati i principali suoi compagni a Vicenza, pel titolo di associazione di Malfattori, il Belelli divenne sempre più padrone della situazione. Egli vive coi mezzi, per quanto pochi, che i compagni di fede possono fornirgli'. 27 June 1894. ACS, CPC, b. 440, f. (Belelli Ennio Enrico).

been possible to verify that Belelli and Virgilio were one and the same person. In 1901, the spy 'X.Y.' in Paris informed the Italian embassy that Belelli had put up an anarchist recently arrived from America on his way home to Italy. Two days later, a note of the Ministry of Interior informed the *questore* of Bologna Neri that 'nell'agosto scorso Virgilio ospitò in sua casa a Parigi un compagno proveniente dall'America... interesserebbe conoscere chi era tale individuo, e perciò proposi di chiederne notizie a Virgilio'.¹²²

Italian Anarchists and the British Police

The surveillance of foreign political refugees often put British authorities in a quandary. On the one hand, they had to face strong pressure from foreign governments that expected co-operation in the surveillance and suppression of anarchism. On the other hand, they had to be loyal to the principles of asylum and of individual freedom, deeply rooted in British society.¹²³ This contradiction was evident at the International Conference against Anarchism held in Rome in 1898, when British delegates opposed almost all the proposals advanced by the conference. However, in the usual defence against the criticism of Britain's limited co-operation, the former Director of Criminal Investigations at Scotland Yard Howard Vincent stated that it was

in great measure an erroneous idea...our laws on the subject of Anarchical propaganda are undoubtedly the best in Europe... our law forbids the advocacy of crime, even if it is to be committed outside the United Kingdom.¹²⁴

In the same interview, Sir Howard rebuffed criticisms about the impossibility of foreign governments securing the extradition of anarchists from Britain.

Nevertheless, this did not impede British authorities from acting against the anarchists. The surveillance and containment of the anarchists' activities in Britain was the main duty of the Special Branch. Under Inspector William Melville's direction during the 1890s Special Branch changed 'quite radically...the Branch appears to have become more dedicated to the suppression of anarchism as a doctrine, as well as its

¹²² Minister of Interior to Questore Neri, 18 September 1901, ACS, *CPC*, f. 440 (Belelli Ennio Enrico).

¹²³ Bernard Porter, *The Origins of the Vigilant State* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987), pp. 98-114.

¹²⁴ 'How to deal with anarchists. An interview with Sir Howard Vincent', *Daily Graphic*, 11 August 1900.

terrorist offshoots, than it had before'.¹²⁵ Surveillance of the anarchists was carried out within the existing law, although 'sometimes that law had to be stretched a little'.¹²⁶ The Victorians' spirit of liberalism was weakening, and surveillance of foreign refugees could be unscrupulous. The Wallsall case, in which the Italian Battolla was involved, is the clearest example of that. And the plot was organised by Melville's agent provocateur Coulon.

Sir Howard made several attempts to keep Malatesta under surveillance, notwithstanding 'official' claims that it was not possible. Sir Howard's initiative was not limited to the request to the Italian consulate of an official letter in order to allow the arrest of the leader of the Italian anarchism.¹²⁷ In 1882, Sir Howard rented the flat next to Malatesta's lodging in Frith Street in order to spy on the anarchist leader through the many chinks in the wooden partition wall. Nevertheless, greatly to the disappointment of the Italian ambassador, Malatesta fled from his lodging abruptly. Just a couple of days before Vincent's scheme became operational. In the room left empty, the police found only cabinetmaker's tools.¹²⁸ Sir Howard had also previously asked the Metropolitan Board of Works to search the lodgings of Malatesta, Cafiero, and Ceccarelli, believing that they were handling explosive materials. In this way, Sir Howard intended to be able to examine their papers.¹²⁹

As a general rule, the police in Britain were forbidden to work on political refugee cases directly with foreign police. Co-operation with foreign police forces had to pass through diplomatic channels.

E' noto che qualunque pratica si facesse presso il Governo Britannico per l'allontanamento o anche soltanto per la sorveglianza di coloro che in Inghilterra cospirano contro i governi del continente, riuscirebbe inutile. Ma trattandosi di persone che si agitano per rovesciare l'ordine costituito tanto qui che negli altri paesi, ritengo che le autorità inglesi riceverebbero senza difficoltà le notizie di fatto che intorno ai nostri più pericolosi soggetti loro fossero comunicate in forma confidenziale e sempre che tali comunicazioni non conchiudano alla domanda di provvedimenti speciali. Io sarei perciò d'avviso che questa R. Ambasciata dovrebbe essere autorizzata a rimettere privatamente, o alla polizia locale, od anche al Foreign Office quelle informazioni che può essere opportuno far conoscere circa le persone che compongono il gruppo anarchico italiano in Inghilterra.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Porter, *The Origins*, p. 142.

¹²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 115.

¹²⁷ See chapter 2.

¹²⁸ Minister of Foreign Affairs to Minister of Interior, 10 April 1882, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 13.

¹²⁹ Ambassador Menabrea to Foreign Minister, 1 April 1881, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 5, f. 1880-1881.

¹³⁰ Tornielli to Foreign Ministry, 20 January 1892, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1892

Requests for information were made by the Italian embassy directly to the Foreign Office. For example, following Merlino's and Malatesta's arrest in Italy in 1891, the embassy easily received information on the two anarchists, in particular about their last address in London. But Italian authorities seldom received information directly from the Metropolitan Police.

In April 1891, the Italian embassy received from the Metropolitan Police a confidential note regarding the move of Malatesta and Consorti to Italy with the intent to foment disturbances on the 1st of May. The ambassador regarded that note as 'un documento eccezionale, poiché è stabilito che la polizia inglese non investiga sulla condotta politica degli stranieri ed è escluso in ogni caso che essa comunichi ai governi le notizie che possiede'.¹³¹

However, when the Italian consulate offered the co-operation of the Italian police in London for the surveillance of the anarchists, the Foreign Office rejected the offer out of hand. This is because they felt the Italians were a security risk, as they were unable to maintain the identity of their secret agents.

However the story does not end here. There is clear archival evidence that the police in London did freelance work for the Italian authorities. This would merit a study of its own, but I can only outline the bare bones of the argument here.

Tornielli was clear in this regard:

Gli ufficiali subalterni della polizia di Londra si fanno gran merito per aver arrestato il Bianchi. Codesto R. Ministero e quello degli Interni saranno sorpresi nel sentire che quegli ufficiali si sono presentati alla R. Ambasciata a chiedere una pecuniaria ricompensa. Ciò non deve però meravigliare in questo paese dove la polizia, essendo quasi sempre chiamata ad agire in cause mosse dall'azione privata, suole direttamente ed indirettamente conseguire ricompense dai medesimi per i servizi che nel nostro paese sarebbero di ordine pubblico. Considerando come stanno qui le cose e le consuetudini locali, io debbo anzi proporre al R. Ministero di autorizzare una mancia all'agente inglese che operò l'arresto del Bianchi e proporrei gli siano pagate 5 lire sterline. La venalità degli agenti della polizia di Londra è da tenersi in conto da chiunque ritenga di poterne avere bisogno. Perfino gli agenti incaricati di accompagnare ai porti francesi le persone estradate e di consegnarle colà per l'extradizione in transito, vengono a chiedere alla R. Ambasciata delle ricompense. Credo che esista un fondo sul quale si pagano certi premi a coloro che conseguono di far arrestare i ricercati e che tali premi sono misurati sopra la qualità del reato imputato al ricercato stesso. Se così fosse, mi pare che si potrebbe assegnare i premi agli agenti inglesi nei casi di arresti importanti e con questo sistema si ecciterebbe forse la loro attività che, in più di un caso, ho trovato scarsa ed insufficiente al bisogno.¹³²

¹³¹ Ambassador Tornielli to Minister of Foreign Affairs Rudini, 29 April 1891, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1891.

¹³² Tornielli to Foreign Ministry, 20 January 1892, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. 1892.

In 1882, Inspector of the Central Criminal Police Charles Von Toward, offered his offices to the Italian consul for the surveillance of Malatesta. He provided the consul with a report from which the latter could judge that ‘il Malatesta è stato seguito passo a passo, ed invigilato colla massima cura’. The consul proposed to reward inspector Von Toward, ‘uno dei più abili ufficiali di Londra’ with forty pounds ‘salvo a rifocillare, di quando in quando, il di lui zelo con alcune somme minori’.¹³³ And on 1 May 1882 the Minister of Interior, expressing his great satisfaction authorised the embassy to award the inspector with forty pounds.¹³⁴ In the following months Von Toward shadowed Malatesta. The consul put Von Toward in contact with the secret agent of the embassy Amede, alias Luigi Bianchi. The consul’s enquiry about the discharge of the secret agent Amede shows the strict collaboration that was established between that inspector and the Italian consulate. Melville’s collaboration with Okhrana, the Russian secret police, few years later, should therefore be placed within a broader pattern of behaviour.

Conclusion: Methodological Issues

Much of the archival evidence concerning the anarchists in London comes from the spies who infiltrated their groups and from police sources. This documentary evidence raises the pressing question of its historical reliability. Since spies were paid for providing information, it is reasonable to question to what extent they distorted facts in order to impress their ‘employers’ and to sell ‘their product’. The novelist Graham Greene had direct experience of that during the Second World War in Lisbon. In his novel, *Our Man in Havana*, based on his life in the intelligence service, he describes how German officers ‘spent much of their time sending home completely erroneous reports based on information received from imaginary agents. It was a paying game, especially when expenses and bonuses were added to the cypher’s salary, and a safe one’.¹³⁵ Spies were undoubtedly subjected to a *déformation professionnelle*; for an informer ‘nothing can be quite what it seems... he will scent daggers – or pretend to

¹³³ Italian embassy to Foreign Ministry, 19 April 1882; ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4, f. 1882.

¹³⁴ Foreign Ministry to the Italian ambassador, 1 May 1882, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 4.

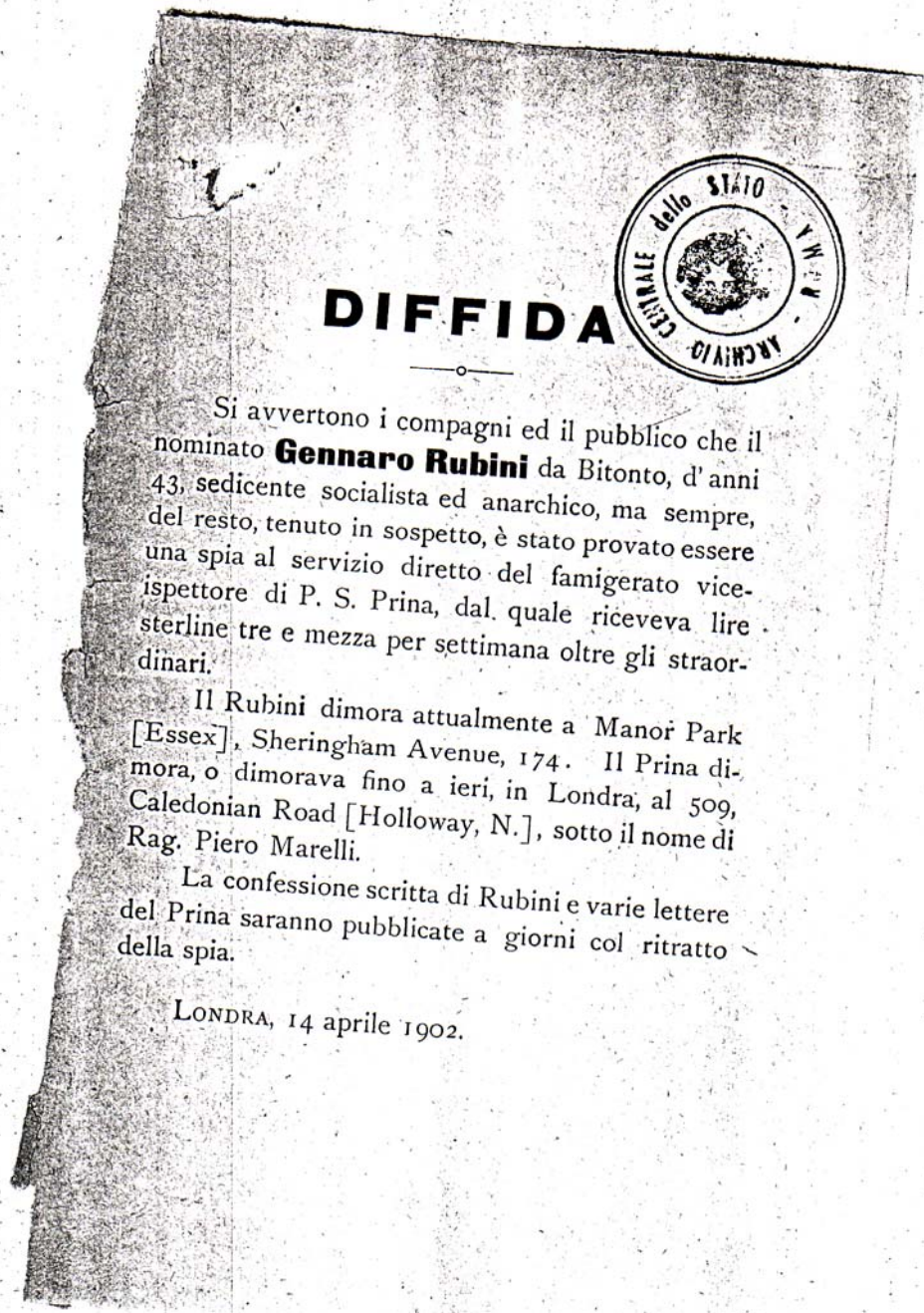
¹³⁵ Graham Greene, *Our Man in Havana* (London: William Heinemann & the Bodley Head, 1970), p vii.

scent daggers – where there are kitchen knives and spoons’.¹³⁶ In sum police sources must be used with caution. Nevertheless, they must be taken seriously.¹³⁷

The reports of spies provide a wide range of information that can be analysed on different levels. In the first instance, the reports of spies tell us about the spies themselves. In fact, there were informers more capable than others and that affected the quality of the information they provided and, consequently, today’s historical sources. When a reasonable amount of letters are available, it is possible to have an idea of the characters of spies. The reports of Calvo and Virgilio are in this sense exemplary. Calvo indulged in particulars: his literary temperament emerged in his writings. Virgilio, on the other hand, was dry and synthetic. Calvo gave vivid descriptions of the colony of Italian anarchists. The ‘knowledge’ of the personality of a given spy can help in analysing the information that they provided to the embassy. Moreover, if spies twisted reality or stressed some aspects rather than others in order to earn their keep, this demonstrates that the needs of their employers had made them sensible to what was the most attractive information. This tells us what the authorities ‘wanted’ to hear or to know, exposing their major fears. Thus Calvo, for example, used to emphasise threats to the Italian Royal Family and plots against the Italian government. Outbursts that probably quite frequently occurred in anarchist circles. But Calvo’s most lurid accounts usually occurred when he was negotiating a ‘pay rise’. At the end of the day the knowledge that the government had of the anarchist movement was based principally on what it received from its informers. However, as well as all other historical sources, spies’ reports must be verified and evaluated through the comparison with other sources available. I will now turn to another major source: the anarchists’ newspapers and publications, which appeared in the London from the 1870s to the eve of the Great War.

¹³⁶ R.C.Cobb, *The Police and the People. French Popular Protest 1789-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 7. The first chapter gives an account of the factors that make informers unreliable.

¹³⁷ Mimmo Franzinelli, ‘Sull’ uso (critico) delle fonti di polizia’, in *Voci di Compagni Schede di Questura considerazioni sull’uso delle fonti orali e delle fonti di polizia per la storia dell’anarchismo*, Quaderni del Centro Studi Libertari Archivio Pinelli, pp. 19-30.



Ill. 4. 2. Leaflet against the spy Gennaro Rubino (ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22)



Ill. 4.3. The spy Belelli (at the centre standing on the back) with Enrico Defendi (standing on the left), Luigia Defendi (at the centre with the child) and her husband Giulio Rossi (sitting on the right). (ACS, *CPC*, b. 440, f. Bellelli E.).



Ill. 4.4. Picture of Giulio Rossi (marked with number 1), Luigia and Enrico Defendi (marked with numbers 2 and 3). (ACS. CPC, b. 4446, f. Rossi Giulio, September 1908).

ERRICO MALATESTA
 ALLA COLONIA ITALIANA DI LONDRA.

(PER UN FATTO PERSONALE.)

Apprendo che, in seguito alla mia propaganda contro la guerra, il Signor ENNIO BELLELLI va insinuando, e ad alcuni ha detto tassativamente, che io mi sono venduto alla Turchia, che sono una spia turca.

La cosa è davvero troppo ridicola, e troppo appariscenti sono i motivi dell'insana calunnia! ed io non ne terrei alcun conto se essa non venisse da Bellelli e non mi porgesse il destro di andare a fondo di una questione che da anni tormenta me e tutti, o quasi, coloro che il Bellelli conoscono.

Il Bellelli si dice (o si diceva) anarchico, però moltissimi lo considerano come un tipo losco e misterioso, e parecchi lo ritengono una spia della polizia italiana. Dicono che egli, malgrado abbia una numerosa famiglia, fa vita larga e spendereccia senza che gli si conoscano mezzi di esistenza, e che il commercio di libri ch'egli dice di fare è una menzogna facile a sventare. Alcuni gli han domandato spiegazioni, ma il Bellelli ha risposto sdegnosamente ch'egli non deve render conto ad alcuno dei fatti suoi.

Io m'interessai della questione, ma non potetti arrivare a nulla di positivo, e perciò non credetti dover rompere le relazioni che avevo con il Bellelli. Degli amici me lo hanno rimproverato, ma io sapevo che se avessi fatto altrimenti sarei stato obbligato a prendere l'accusa su di me—ed io prove non ne avevo. E sapevo pure che quando si portano accuse del genere e non si possono provare all'evidenza, ne risultano dissensioni e lotte, che fanno ben più danno di quello che può fare una spia...specie se è già stata messa tacitamente in quarantena.

Poi venne la spedizione italiana a Tripoli, e Bellelli, dopo qualche esitazione, si dichiarò partigiano della guerra con tutte le sue peggiori conseguenze, l'annessione, il massacro degli arabi, la forca.

Questo, che in altri può essere una onesta opinione, non poteva esserlo in Bellelli che si diceva anarchico. Per quali interessi sosteneva egli una causa che è opposta a tutte le idee e tutti i sentimenti che costituiscono l'anarchismo? O se è partigiano sincero della guerra, per quali interessi si fingeva anarchico?

Ora: mi vi era una ragione sicura per rompere le relazioni, ed io le ruppi; ma non portai nessuna accusa, primo perchè le prove mi mancavano sempre, e poi perchè non avrei voluto fornirgli il mezzo di schivare la questione dicendo che lo si accusava perchè egli è "patriota."

Ma ecco che il Bellelli accusa me.

Ebbene, io offro la mia vita all'esame del pubblico; il Bellelli non può più allegare la dignità offesa per rifiutarsi di offrire allo stesso esame la vita sua. Io m'impegno a prestarmi a tutte le indagini che chiunque voglia fare su tutte le cose mie; m'impegno a dimostrare come guadagno ogni centesimo di cui dispongo, da dove viene ogni boccon di pane che metto in bocca; il Bellelli faccia altrettanto.

Se io non dimostro a soddisfazione di tutti, amici ed avversarii, l'origine chiara ed onesta dei miei mezzi di vita, io autorizzo la gente a trattarmi di SPIA TURCA; se il Bellelli non fa lo stesso, permetterà che si ritenga provato ch'egli è una SPIA ITALIANA.

Se Bellelli è un galantuomo, accetterà la sfida; e dovrà essermi grato che gli offro il modo di liberarsi, dignitosamente, dall'atmosfera di diffidenza e di sospetti che lo circonda.

Perciò, se egli si sente la coscienza tranquilla, convochi una pubblica riunione per discutere su di me e su di lui. O se non vuole incomodarsi, mi faccia sapere che è disposto a presentarsi al pubblico per accusarmi e per difendersi, e la riunione la convocherà io.

Londra, 22 Aprile, 1912.

ERRICO MALATESTA,
 92 High Street, Islington, N.

1912

WHY WE DEMAND MALATESTA'S RELEASE

- Because** the trial ought never to have taken place.
- Because** the "libel" was a challenge to an accuser to prove his accusation that Errico Malatesta was a Turkish spy.
- Because** Malatesta proved that the man Bellelli was the aggressor and was the first to circulate a scandalous untruth against him.
- Because** the alleged "libel" was not malicious and was simply the challenge of an honest man to submit the question to a court of honour.
- Because** Malatesta produced overwhelming evidence at the trial in contradiction of that given by the prosecutor.
- Because** the display of bias by the Common Sergeant was so great, both in the conduct of the trial and his summing up.
- Because** a great quantity of evidence which Malatesta was prepared to produce to prove the truth of his assertion was disallowed by the Common Sergeant.
- Because** it is in the public interest to *clear up* charges of spying in political and social movements, as so many detestable crimes have been committed by that class of persons in all European countries.
- Because** statements made by Bellelli as to his opinions, his attainments and his business are alleged to be untrue by many creditable witnesses.
- Because** the statements made by a political detective in the witness box, after the prosecution and defence were closed, were false, and most reckless assertions were made by him which prejudiced the case against Malatesta.
- Because** the connection of this political detective with the case has not been fully explained.
- Because** the appearance of this political detective in the box was totally unjustifiable when no crime against the State or society had been alleged in the charge—which was a personal dispute arising out of the agitation Malatesta carried on against the infamous war in Tripoli.
- Because** the prosecution and imprisonment of Malatesta appears very like vindictive action on the side of the Italian Government.
- Because** the conscience of the people of Great Britain and Ireland condemns the Tripolitan outrage perpetrated by the Italian Government, and would honour and not condemn a man who, like Malatesta, opposes it.
- Because** the political police in this country have for years past worked in collusion with those of continental despotisms, and because the tyrannical treatment of people in other lands is being extended to this country.
- Because** the cause of Malatesta's imprisonment is *worse* than the case of Miss Malecka, inasmuch as Russia makes no pretence to political freedom.
- Because** it is a double infamy for a judge or police officers to use a man's opinions on public questions against him in what was a private affair.
- The recent prosecutions of Tom Mann, Guy Bowman, Fred Crowsley and many others, beside the general effort to curtail the freedom of the people, are indications of a far more dangerous attempt to crush the growing movement of the British workers to secure social redress and emancipation.
- Therefore join also in the demand for the release of Frederick Crowsley, condemned to four months imprisonment at Hants Assizes on June 18th, for distributing leaflets appealing to men of the working class in the army not to shoot their brothers, fathers and comrades when on strike against low wages, and bad and tyrannical conditions of employment.

A PROTEST MEETING

WILL BE HELD IN

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

On Sunday, June 30th, at 4 p.m.

Speakers will be announced in the "Daily Herald."

CHAPTER 5

Italian Anarchist Newspapers in London

Introduction

Anarchist newspapers in Italian represent the most visible sign of the widespread experience of Italian anarchist political exile; indeed anarchist expatriates published them all over the world.¹ Newspapers served several functions: they were a means of organisation, political debate, and propaganda. Usually these publications had an international circulation: newspapers published in the United States or in South America were sent by mail to Europe, and vice-versa. Indeed, the anarchists accepted stamps as a form of payment for the purchase of their newspapers.

Not only were newspapers a means of political propaganda, but they were likewise a system of exchanging information and maintaining contacts among anarchist colonies around the world. An analysis of these newspapers reveals much about the history of exile and about the international relationships that the Italian anarchists established. Thus articles written by anarchists who lived in a different country from that where a given newspaper was published was a frequent occurrence. Private correspondence between anarchists often pertained to comments and suggestions about the contents of the newspapers elsewhere in the world, or requests for missed articles on important issues. Newspapers were an important means to exchange information between militants who lived in different countries: indeed special sections were dedicated to the exchange of coded messages. Groups of anarchists in different countries and continents supported fraternal newspapers by publicising them in their host country and sending small amounts of money to help fellow anarchists' newspapers. Obviously, the anarchists always sent their publications to Italy; and Italian authorities persistently sought to intercept and to seize them, often successfully.² The surveillance and monitoring of the socialist and anarchist press in Italy was intense,

¹ See: Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo. Periodici e numeri unici anarchici in lingua italiana pubblicati all'estero (1872-1971)*, Vol. 1., (Florence: Crescita Politica Editrice, 1976).

² See: V. Castronovo and N. Tranfaglia, *La stampa italiana dall'età liberale al Fascismo* (Bari: Laterza, 1979); Patrizia Audenino, *Cinquant'anni di stampa operaia dall'Unità alla guerra di Libia* (Milan, 1976); Mariella Nejrotti, 'La stampa operaia e socialista 1848-1914', in Aldo Agosti and Gian Mario Bravo (eds.), *Storia del movimento operaio e del socialismo e delle lotte sociali in Piemonte* (Bari: De Donato, 1979), pp. 375-445.

especially in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. Crispi in particular hardened the vetting of the ‘revolutionary’ press. Local police were charged with systematic collection and posting to the Minister of Interior of copies of the entire ‘subversive’ press. Pelloux perfected a system of vetting and censorship and it lasted throughout the Giolittian era. Unfortunately, the entire press collection, kept at the *Archivio di Stato* in Rome, was lost during the Second World War.³

Newspapers sent by the expatriates were essential in providing an anarchist press in Italy during the most intense periods of government repression. However, the fact that those newspapers were published abroad heavily influenced their contents. Often they were disconnected from Italian realities. Furthermore these newspapers suffered from several faults partially caused by their being located abroad. There were frequent interruptions in publications. And they suffered from obsessive discussions of the differences between socialists and anarchists and indeed between the various schools of anarchism. They were therefore doctrinaire and dogmatic.

On several occasions the Italian anarchists in London sought to publish their own newspapers. However, these publications shared the same destiny of those published in Italy. In the majority of cases, they were short-lived, mainly for financial reasons. Newspapers survived thanks to collections and subscriptions among militants in England and abroad. Often the anarchists devoted the proceeds of initiatives organised in their clubs, especially parties or music concerts, to cover the costs of their publications. To overcome financial problems they published single issues on special occasions, such as the celebration of the First of May or the commemoration of the Paris Commune. A further difficulty was to find the availability of a printer. In general, the printer of the majority of Italian anarchists’ publications in London was Giuseppe Pesci, alias Bologna. Just as in the well known case in France, where the inspector of the political police Andrieux, through his secret agent Serraux, financed the publication of the anarchist newspaper, *La Révolution Sociale*.⁴ As we have seen previously in Chapter 4, the Italian Minister of Interior provided indirectly the Italian anarchists in London with fifty pounds for the purchase of a press in 1902. And the newspaper

³ See: Antonio Fiori, ‘Introduction’ in *Direzione Generale della Pubblica Sicurezza. La stampa italiana nella serie FI. 1894-1926*, (Rome: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali. Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, 1995).

⁴ Louis Andrieux, *Souvenirs d’un préfet de police*, (Paris: J. Rouff, 1885), vol. 1.

L'Emigrato was about to see the light of day when Gennaro Rubino was revealed as a spy.⁵

The Italian anarchists sold their newspapers in shops owned by militants or by sympathisers. Alternatively, they distributed them inside their clubs. The distribution to other countries, and to Italy particularly, was a more difficult task. The anarchists used to send the newspapers by mail, wrapped up with 'unsuspected bourgeois' newspapers in order to disguise them. However, the police were often able to seize them in the post offices thanks to forewarnings from spies and informers. Moreover, the circulation of these publications in Italy was necessarily restricted to militants.

The Italian anarchists in London often did not publish any newspapers for years due to periods of organisational weakness or because the colony's denizens preferred to concentrate their efforts on other activities. Nevertheless, an analysis of these newspapers supplies us with much information about the anarchist movement both in exile and in Italy.

In the remainder of this chapter I will summarise the contents and history of the various publications that the anarchists managed to publish in London from the 1870s to the eve of the Great War.

La Guerre Sociale - La Guerra Sociale (1878)

La Guerre Sociale, journal socialiste-révolutionnaire was the first publication in Italian published in London and it oscillated between socialism and anarchism. The first issue appeared in October 1878; in total four issues appeared between October and November 1878. Consisting of four pages, it was composed of two sections, one in French and the other in Italian. Tito Zanardelli (already encountered in Chapter Two) was one of the promoters of the publication. The newspaper was sold in London, Brussels, Geneva and Liège.

In the first issue's Italian section, an article explained the meaning of the title chosen for the newspaper. According to the newspaper, workers needed to subvert the economic bases of the society if they wished to insure for themselves a dignified life. In fact, it was argued, economic and political reforms, universal suffrage, and

⁵ See: Minister of Interior to the Italian Embassy in London, 26 February 1902; Inspector Prina's report to Minister of Interior, 15 May 1902. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

parliamentarism were ineffective means; social war – *la guerra sociale* - represented the only possibility to gain social and economic emancipation.

The newspaper expressed these hopes through bombastic and violent language:

Ebbene noi vogliamo la *Guerra Sociale*, perché altro mezzo non rimane all'operaio per giungere alla sua emancipazione economica. La vogliamo colle sue morti, le sue violenze e le sue rappresaglie [...] La vogliamo perché spinti dalla disperazione, provocati dall'egoismo e incalzati dalla necessità, che rende ancora più giusta una guerra già di per sè giusta... Ah! Voi credete, signori borghesi, che non avere niente nel ventre e poco nella saccoccia non sia un *Casus Belli*?... Chi semina vento raccoglie tempesta e la *Guerra Sociale* sarà il frutto delle discordie che avete seminate e delle nefandezze di cui avete sporcata l'anima vostra.⁶

Most of the articles written in the Italian section consisted of polemics aimed at other newspapers or individuals. One article, for example, replied to the Republican newspaper *Fanfulla* (published in Rome) and the Monarchist *Satana* (published in Cesena). Both of them had attacked *La Guerra Sociale* because of its violent language.⁷ *La France*, a French newspaper, likewise blasted the newspaper because of its socialist theories. *La Guerra Sociale* was also subject to attacks from Charles Bradlaugh who, in a meeting, had exposed the newspaper 'à la vengeance publique comme prêchant l'assassinat et voulant porter une main profane sur sa divinité le capital'.⁸

La Guerra Sociale replied by underscoring the gap that separated its critics from the working class. It criticised the affected and refined language of the two Italian newspapers, and the atheist Bradlaugh's rather abstract fight against the powers of heaven with his simultaneous alliance with earthly authorities.

Le nostre parole respirano odio, ma è che i nostri buoni padroni c'impediscono essi di amare e ne abbeverano di fiele quando fanno delle nostre donne, perché sono povere, delle prostitute, e dei nostri figli, perché sono nostri, dei sicari e dei capri espiatori.[...] E' il bisogno che esagera le nostre passioni, non la nostra volontà; è il diniego di giustizia che inasprisce i nostri caratteri, non il nostro naturale [sic], sono le provocazioni dei governi che intorbidano i nostri spiriti, non la mancanza di genio. [...] Noi le abbiamo le viscere umane, ma non per coloro che passano i giorni a lacerarle. Noi abbiamo carezze ma non pei carnefici dell'umanità.⁹

The criticism of *La Guerra Sociale* in Italy, France, and England does suggest that the newspaper enjoyed a healthy circulation. The editors of *La Guerra Sociale* were

⁶ 'La Guerra Sociale', *La Guerre Sociale/La Guerra Sociale*, October 1878, n. 1, p. 3.

⁷ 'Fanfulla di Roma e Satana di Cesena', *ibidem*, 2 November 1878, p. 3, n. 4.

⁸ 'Monsieur Bradlaugh et la Guerre Sociale', *ibidem*, 2 October 1878, n. 3, p. 1.

in close contact with the Internationalists of Emilia-Romagna. In fact, all the contributions that they received from Italy came from groups from that region. The newspaper published a proclamation edited by the socialists of Cesena, and an appeal to Italian soldiers issued by the Rimini section of the International.¹⁰

A long article, published in three instalments, described the grim economic conditions in Italy. Employing a statistical analysis, it urged Italian workers to rise up in revolt against their inhuman condition. The assassination attempt against King Alfonso of Spain carried out by the worker, Oliva Moncasi, who shot at the king without hitting him and was sentenced to death, was the occasion for the newspaper to expound its views on regicide. Regicide was not accepted for various reasons:

1. Perché siamo innanzitutto e dopo tutto socialisti e come tali noi facciamo guerra ai tiranni economici che rendono possibili quelli politici. La piramide sociale ha bisogno di essere scossa nella sua base, ch'è la proprietà individuale, per vedere cimato il suo comignolo, ch'è la monarchia. 2 Perché noi combattiamo le caste più ancora che gli individui che la costituiscono e insieme agli uomini le istituzioni... 4 Perché è un rimedio che non impedisce al male di riprodursi costantemente. 5 Perché è un'azione che è d'uopo attenderla dall'impulso degli individui e non dal commovimento della massa e dal vento delle rivoluzioni.¹¹

The French section of the newspaper devoted much space to the prisoners of the Paris Commune exiled to New Caledonia. A section, entitled *Journal de la nouvelle Calédonie et des bastilles d'état*, gave accounts and detailed descriptions of the terrible conditions of life in which the prisoners were subjected. And the newspaper organised a collection of money in favour of the deported Communards by selling portraits of the most famous heroes of the Paris Commune.

In a series of two articles *La Guerre Sociale/La Guerra Sociale* dealt with the question of the strike. The position of the newspaper was clear: 'Nous considerons les grèves comme le combat d'avant-poste de la révolution sociale'.¹² Strikes were occasions for workers to deepen solidarity. Strikes were positive even when they did not obtain tangible results. 'Quand après une grève, les travailleurs rentrent au chantier ou redescendent dans les mines sans avoir rien obtenu, qu' on ne croit pas que rien n'ait été fait.

⁹ 'Fanfulla di Roma e Satana di Cesena', *ibidem*, 2 November 1878, p. 3, n. 4.

¹⁰ 'I Socialisti Cesenati a tutti i compagni di Italia', *La Guerre Sociale/La Guerra Sociale*, 9 October 1878, n. 2, p. 3; 'Associazione Internazionale dei lavoratori, regione italiana, sezione riminese. Ai compagni dell'esercito', *ibidem*, 25 October 1878, n. 3, pp. 3-4.

¹¹ 'Il regicidio', *ibidem*, 2 November 1878, n. 4, p. 3.

¹² 'La question des grèves', *ibidem*, 25 October 1878, n. 3, p. 1.

[...] Ce n'est pas en soumis qu' il revient à l'atelier, mais en rebelle, en ennemi: La rancune et la révolte sont dans son coeur'.¹³

Concurrently, Tito Zanardelli was the promoter of a club of Italian workers that published its own bulletin: *Bollettino Socialista Rivoluzionario*, which appeared between March and May 1879. The circle published four issues of the *Bollettino Socialista Rivoluzionario*, which addressed workers or political activists in Italy; none of them discussed any topic related to the Italian colony in London. The first issue, *Agli operai d'Italia non ancora socialisti*, was an appeal to Italian workers to leave the reformist parties and to join the socialists. Beginning with the view that national independence did not imply personal and economic freedom, the issue concluded by affirming the uselessness of fighting the monarchy to establish a republican system. The second issue, which came out on 18 March, celebrated the anniversary of the Paris Commune. The third issue, directed to peasants, sharecroppers, and day-labourers, urged them to rebel and to seize the products of the land. The fourth issue contained a fierce attack against the exponents of the democratic parties in Italy, Minghetti, Sella, Depretis, Cairoli, and Nicotera, who had recently prosecuted the Internationalists.

Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that these bulletins managed to persuade many workers to join the *Circolo di Studj Sociali*. The rhetoric and pedantic style in which they were written made the contents probably obscure to workers or peasants.

¹³ 'La question des grèves', *ibidem*, 2 November 1878, n. 4, p. 2.

L'Associazione (1889)

In September 1889, an appeal printed in Italian announced the publication of a new anarchist newspaper: *L'Associazione*. As we have already seen previously, Malatesta, who had secretly returned from Argentina to Europe, and settled in Nice, was at the heart of this project.

Malatesta gathered a number of other refugees around the newspaper: Francesco Saverio Merlino, Francesco and Luisa Pezzi, Giuseppe Consorti, Galileo Palla, F. Cucco, and Giuseppe Cioci.

The political aims he pursued through this newspaper were ambitious: the reorganisation of the anarchist movement and the establishment of an international anarchist party. Malatesta called for an end to anarchist dogmatism. The controversies and contrasting philosophical speculations regarding the social and economic organisation of future society were to be postponed until the final success of the revolution. At that point, various experiments and practices would have indicated the correct way to build a new society by the 'free will of all'.

In the first issue of *L'Associazione*, Malatesta published the political program, around which the anarchist forces could assemble and constitute an anarchist party,

un partito, la cui unità e disciplina non derivi già dall'azione di capi buoni solo ad arrestare la iniziativa individuale ed a falsare il concetto collettivo, non già da deliberazioni ufficiali di assemblee e comitati, ma dalla intelligenza chiara e piena che ciascuno deve avere del fine e dei mezzi, dalle affinità naturali e dalla simpatia reciproca, dal rispetto per gli impegni presi, dalla ferma volontà che dev'essere in ciascuno di far tutto per la causa e niente contro la causa...¹⁴

The principles around which Malatesta intended to unify the anarchists were fourfold: anarchy as the rejection of all governments; revolution as the instrument to overthrow a society founded on violence; the refusal of parliamentarianism; and anarcho-communism as the solution to the social question.

After the program, guidelines for members of the party followed. Malatesta considered the outbreak of a revolution imminent; this belief was evident in the drawing up of the following directives:

¹⁴ 'Programma', *L'Associazione*, 6 September 1889, n. 1, p. 1.

Propaganda cogli scritti, colla parola e coi fatti contro la proprietà, contro i governi, contro le religioni; suscitare lo spirito di rivolta in mezzo alle masse; combattere tutti i mezzi parlamentari e cercare di fare il vuoto intorno alle urne; profittare di tutte le occasioni, di tutti gli avvenimenti economici, politici, giudiziari per indurre il popolo ad impadronirsi della roba, ad offendere l'autorità, a disprezzare e violare la legge; ispirare l'amore, la solidarietà, lo spirito di sacrificio verso i poveri e gli oppressi e l'odio contro i padroni e gli oppressori...

The program continued urging the anarchists to prepare for armed revolution against the existing governments and social order. But according to Malatesta, after the revolution the anarchists could not merely wait for a spontaneous re-ordering of society. There had to be a conscious, libertarian plan for the common provision of goods and for the organisation of the means of production. The anarchists through political agitation and if necessary armed force had to prevent the establishment of new forms of hierarchical authority.

As specified in a note to contributors, the newspaper was not intended to be an organ of mass agitation, but rather it was to serve as an instrument of analysis and debate among militants.¹⁵ In fact, it had a refreshing style because it lacked the rhetoric and bombastic phrases found all too often in most anarchist newspapers. Central issues and debates were analysed with lucidity and soberness.

In the columns of this newspaper, Malatesta developed his concept of association, an idea that became central in his thought. Indeed, Malatesta regarded association or organisation as fundamental both before and after revolution. From a political point of view, Malatesta considered the organisation of the political forces of anarchism essential to enable the anarchist movement to play a leading role in the struggle for human emancipation. He realised that the atomisation of anarchist groups, which had followed the end of the First International and governmental prosecutions, had caused the collapse of their influence. In fact, the rejection of all forms of organisation, which the anarchists had theorised and practised as a form of protection against police repression and infiltration by spies, together with their faith in the efficacy of 'individual act', had detached the anarchists from the common people. To reverse the anarchists' decline, Malatesta envisaged the establishment of an anarchist party that comprised all members who embraced a common program. This organisation had to be an anarchist one, therefore without authority and with complete freedom of action both for individuals and for groups. Members could express any opinion and use every tactic

¹⁵ 'Ai nostri corrispondenti', *ibidem*, 16 October 1889, n. 2, p. 4.

that was not in contradiction with the freely accepted principles and did not interfere with the activities of other members. Co-operation among members could vary, according to local situations, personal knowledge, personal tempers, and the political climate. Thus the very organisational structure of the anarchist 'party' in which individuals were free to join the groups that they felt most congenial, educated people to act by themselves and, consequently, prevented the constitution of new authoritarian powers after the revolution.

In fact, Malatesta perceived association as the necessary and natural form of the organisation of social life. Association was:

l'accordo che si forma in virtù dei loro interessi, fra gli individui aggruppati per un'opera qualsiasi, sono le relazioni reciproche che derivano dai rapporti giornalieri...ma questa organizzazione che noi intendiamo, non ha né leggi né statuti, né regolamenti ai quali ogni individuo sia costretto di sottostare...gli individui non vi sono attaccati dalla forza, essi restano liberi della loro autonomia.¹⁶

However, speculative theories on the structure of future society were, according to Malatesta, a waste of time. After the revolution, individuals would join with each other according to their interests; the nature of society would be determined spontaneously and harmoniously over time by the free will of all.

This ideological relativism was the way in which the anarchist movement could disentangle itself from the theoretical controversies and ideological debates that had paralysed action. This approach, for example, could allow common action between collectivist and communist anarchists, two groups that held different opinions on the future structure of society, but shared the same revolutionary program and agreed on the methods to attain it.¹⁷

According to Malatesta, revolutionary methods needed to be revised as well. Malatesta was aware that political conditions had changed and revolutionary methods needed to conform to these changes. The actions of small conspiratorial groups, for example, were unpractical. The anarchists were to substitute for them the constant actions of individuals and groups. Chiefly, through *L'Associazione*, Malatesta began to develop his belief in the relevance of the working class, economic struggles, and strikes as forms of group action. That newspaper was the starting point for Malatesta's

¹⁶ 'L'Indomani della rivoluzione', *ibidem*, p. 1.

¹⁷ 'I nostri propositi', *ibidem*, 30 November 1889, n. 4, p. 1.

development of a syndicalist strategy that he deepened and articulated in successive years, especially through the publication of *L'Agitazione* in Ancona.

Malatesta was impressed with the London dock-workers' strike of September 1889¹⁸ and by the wave of strikes that were simultaneously taking place in Europe. Malatesta found new value in the strike, which anarchists had neglected. Although he added that strikes needed to be turned into attacks against the state and into the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. But it was through the active participation in strikes that the anarchists could return to the people.

Le masse arrivano alle grandi rivendicazioni per la via dei piccoli reclami e delle piccole rivolte: mettiamoci con loro e spingiamole avanti... provochiamo ed organizziamo quanti più scioperi possiamo; facciamo che lo sciopero diventi contagioso... Ma ogni sciopero abbia la sua nota rivoluzionaria; ogni sciopero trovi degli uomini energici per castigare i padroni e, soprattutto, per attentare alla proprietà...¹⁹

L'Associazione dealt with several other issues. Some of the contributions aimed at opposing parliamentarianism and socialist reformism; others countered republican positions.²⁰ Local elections in Italy gave rise to articles calling for electoral abstention. But the newspaper was forced to move to London in late 1889 after it uncovered the activities of master police spy, Carlo Terzaghi (previously discussed in the Chapter 3). As a result, the French police became aware of Malatesta's presence in France and the Italian anarchist was therefore forced to move from Nice to London, where from its fourth issue, *L'Associazione* was published at 4 Hannell Road, Fulham.

Towards the end of 1889 *L'Associazione* gave considerable significance to the arrest in Paris and the conviction to twenty years' penal servitude, and the deportation to Cayenne of the anarchist, Vittorio Pini (previously discussed in Chapter 3). Indeed, Pini's arrest gave rise to a wide-ranging debate about the role of 'expropriation', that is robbery.²¹ Pini, author of several sensational robberies in Paris, proclaimed during his trial that all his robberies had been politically motivated and that he considered

¹⁸ 'A proposito di uno sciopero', *ibidem*, 6 September 1889, n. 1, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*

²⁰ About the elections see: Errico Malatesta, 'Le candidature proteste', *ibidem*, 23 January 1889, n. 7, p. 1; 'Elezioni amministrative', *ibidem*, 16 October 1889, n. 2, p. 3; 'La lotta elettorale', *ibidem*, 27 October 1889, n. 3, p. 1.

²¹ Francesco Saverio Merlino, 'Nostra corrispondenza', *ibidem*, 30 November 1889, n. 4, p. 3; 'Il furto' and 'Vittorio Pini', *ibidem*, 7 December 1889, n. 5, p. 3; 'Ancora del furto' and Saverio Merlino, 'Contribuzione allo studio della questione del furto', *ibidem*, 21 December 1889, n. 6, pp. 1, 3-4; 'Contribuzione allo studio della questione del furto', *ibidem*, 23 January 1890, n. 7, p. 4.

expropriation of the bourgeoisie as the main revolutionary instrument. This claim opened a debate among anarchist groups. *L'Associazione*, to avoid divisions within the anarchist movement, decided to analyse the issue carefully. With its usual coherence and relativism, *L'Associazione* argued that the significance of robbery changed according to the conditions and the ends for which it was committed. There were different kinds of robberies; each of them needed to be judged in a different way. In fact:

Perché il furto dunque possa diventare atto da socialisti, atto da rivoluzionari bisogna che esso sia commesso o per giovare alla propaganda ed alla povera gente, o anche per sopperire ai proprii bisogni, quando la società non vi lascia altro messo per vivere, ma sempre tenendo presente la giustizia e l'utile sociale e colla coscienza di far opera buona.²²

Robberies committed by poor people in order to satisfy their more urgent needs could be compared to acts of rebellion. But those who robbed professionally, in the same way in which they might practice any other trade, were not anarchists. People who committed robberies with the only goal being to get rich at somebody else's expense did not differ from the bourgeoisie, and they had to be dealt with accordingly.

But robberies carried out to finance the movement were excused. Moreover, robberies in the right political contexts were positive because they eroded deference for individual property and authority.

Vorremmo che l'operaio, il contadino, il popolo comprendessero che tutto dovrebbe appartenere ad essi che tutto han prodotto, e che i proprietari sono degli usurpatori, dei *ladri*, e quindi si abituassero a prendere come possono quel che loro bisogna, non con la coscienza turbata di chi crede di far male, ma colla tranquillità, con l'intima soddisfazione di chi esercita un diritto e compie un dovere.²³

But Merlino, disagreed with the analysis of *L'Associazione*. And in two articles he explained his differences. In particular, he did not accept the theory of robbery as protest and propaganda '*anti-proprietaria*' advanced by some anarchist groups; he was probably referring to *La libera iniziativa*. Political robberies were individual acts that contributed to the atomisation of the anarchist movement; they were committed against other individuals, not against the system itself. The anarchists' duty was to generalise particular rebellions, not the contrary.

²² 'Il furto', *ibidem*, 7 December 1889, n. 5, p. 3.

²³ 'Contribuzione allo studio della questione del furto', *ibidem*, 21 December 1889, n. 6, pp. 2-3.

L'atto nostro di propaganda e d'iniziativa deve essere capace di allargarsi, di generalizzarsi, di diventare da ribellione individuale rivolta collettiva, da scintilla incendio. Come potrebbe esserlo il furto, per sua natura costretto a nascondersi nel segreto...?²⁴

Merlino added a moral motivation to his point of view: he refused to elevate robbery, as well as violence or homicide, to a human principle or duty, it could only be considered as a temporary necessity in the struggle for human emancipation. The debate in the newspaper concluded a note of ideological relativism, which characterised the publication generally. In a comment on Merlino's letter, the answer of the editorial group, (likely Malatesta), underlined the fact that the newspaper had received several contributions expressing a broad range of different opinions. However, these opinions differed according to the point of view from which the issue was considered. In fact, all contributions shared an opposition to individual property, the respect for human dignity and freedom, and all the contributors 'were deeply socialists'. In conclusion, robbery was not a special issue, and in judging it the newspaper suggested

di attenerci senz'altro ai principi del socialismo, i quali bastano per guidarci nelle nostre azioni e nei nostri giudizi. Infatti è impossibile potere approvare o disapprovare astrattamente un dato genere di azioni, poiché tutti gli atti umani possono, secondo le circostanze e secondo i momenti, essere o diventare buoni o cattivi.²⁵

But paradoxically, it was an act of robbery that ended the publication of *L'Associazione*. As discussed previously, in December 1889 the administrator, Cioci, stole all the newspaper's funds, five thousand francs, and escaped to Italy where he was arrested.²⁶ Although this financial loss caused the abrupt termination of the newspaper, *L'Associazione* played a crucial role in revitalising Italian anarchists' activities and led to the organisation of the national congress in Capolago in January 1891.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ 'Contribuzione allo studio della questione del furto', *ibidem*, 23 January 1890, n. 7, p. 4.

Il Comunista - Der Communist (1892-1894)

‘Fa quello che tu vorrai’

Malatesta’s attempts to reorganise the anarchists met with the fierce opposition of the individualists. In particular the group *L’Anonimato*, or *La Libera Iniziativa*, opposed this attempt for a considerable period of time, by circulating a vast amount of hostile leaflets and pamphlets. *L’Anonimato* published the newspaper *Der Communist*: a series of fourteen issues, a considerable number considering the difficulties that all anarchist groups had to face in order to fund such enterprises. *Der Communist* appeared between 1892 and 1894 and was written in German, but two of the fourteen issues published, the second and the last, were printed in Italian.

Both the Italian issues contained attacks against organisation and praised expropriation and individual action. Malatesta and Merlino were the main targets of these attacks. Merlino, for example, was called the ‘nuovo Terzaghi’ because of an article written about Ravachol in the newspaper *L’Homme libre*.

The last issue, published in 1894, was devoted to denouncing apparent attempts by Malatesta and Merlino to kill one or more members of *La Libera Iniziativa* during a meeting held in August 1893.²⁷

In opposition to organisation the newspaper praised expropriation and secretiveness.

Compagni...bisogna guardarci da questi futuri sfruttatori che sono precisamente gli *avvocati*, gli *spostati*, gli *intrusi*, i *camaleonti*, gli *organizzatori*; è necessario di tenerli d’occhio col fucile alla mano... il propagatore dell’espropriazione, non è un ladro ma un rivoluzionario convinto, e che ha compreso che per la propaganda anarchica, ci vogliono delle palanche e non delle chiacchiere.²⁸

The style in which these articles were written was characteristic of Parmeggiani the leader of *La Libera Iniziativa* in London, who we have discussed in some detail in previous chapters. Parmeggiani was probably also involved in another individualist

²⁶ Ambassador Tornielli to Foreign Minister Crispi, 20 January 1890, ASMAE, *Pol. Int.*, b. 39, f. (1890).

²⁷ ‘Ai miserabili umani!’ and ‘Vigliacchi e spudorati alla gogna!’, *Il Comunista*, n. 14.

²⁸ ‘Fra Anarchici Onesti e Disonesti!’, *Il Comunista*, 5 April 1892, n. 2.

publication, published in French and appearing in London in 1890: *L'International*. The editor of *L'International* was Auguste Bordes.²⁹

L'International was published in 1890 in the French language and it was almost entirely devoted to challenging the organisationalists. 'Qu'espèrent-ils alors? Retarder, et pour cela entraver le développement des idées qu'ils tentent d'embigader!'³⁰ Much of the newspaper was devoted to the debates in the anarchist colony in London about organisation.³¹ The last page of *L'International* was entitled *L'Indicateur anarchiste* and was exclusively devoted to supplying instructions on the manufacture of explosives. The fact that the Walsall anarchists were found in possession of this newspaper was presented as evidence at their trial. The newspaper was often thought to be an organ of the French police.

L'Anarchia (August 1896)

Numero unico pubblicato a cura di un gruppo socialista anarchico

This one-off publication advanced the Malatestan positions on anarchism. During the 1890s, Italian anarchists struggled with serious difficulties. The differences between individualists and organisationalists became more extreme. One of the points of divergence was a contrasting concept of the relationship between the individual and society.³² Malatesta considered the individual a product of society, and organisation a prerequisite for the free development of human civilisation. For the individualists, on the contrary, society was a union of self-governed individuals who might or might not, according to the potential benefits expected, associate with each other. Influenced by Kropotkin's theories, these types of anti-organisationalists believed in the natural inclination of human beings towards anarchy. Hence, they considered any kind of organisation as an artificial and authoritarian superstructure, slackening progress. From a political point of view, the anti-organisationalists affirmed that political organisation necessarily produced leaders and authority. Consequently, they fiercely opposed Malatesta's attempt to revitalise the anarchist movement by restructuring it as an

²⁹ See Bordes' testimony at the Parmeggiani trial in 1905, 'Processo Parmeggiani v Sweeney ed Altri', ACS, CPC, b. 3740 (Parmeggiani Luigi).

³⁰ *L'International*, 2 June 1890, p. 20.

³¹ See: 'Mouvement en Angleterre', *ibidem*, August 1890, n. 5, p. 53.

³² On anarcho-individualism in Italy see: Maurizio Antonioli, *L'Individualismo anarchico*, in Maurizio Antonioli - Pier Carlo Masini (eds), *Il sol dell'avvenire. L'anarchismo in Italia dalle origini alla Prima Guerra mondiale*, (Pisa: BFS Edizioni, 1999), pp. 55-84.

anarchist ‘party’.³³ *L’Avvenire Sociale*, mouthpiece of anti-organisational groups, was the main promoter of these positions in Italy.³⁴

In 1896, Malatesta reached the conviction that these two wings of anarchism were irreconcilable; his previous optimistic vision of a union of all anarchist tendencies, which he had supported in *L’Associazione*, had vanished. In March of that year, he wrote to Niccolò Converti:

Disgraziatamente noi siamo ridotti in condizioni di non poter nulla fare, nulla iniziare da noi e dobbiamo aspettare o l’iniziativa di altri partiti o il concorso di circostanze completamente indipendenti da noi. [...] Come ridiventare un partito che agisce e fa sentire la sua influenza sul corso degli avvenimenti? Ecco il problema. Ma per risolverlo bisogna innanzitutto intendersi sul significato di questo *noi* che ripetiamo così spesso.[...] Oggi siamo in tanti a chiamarci *Anarchici*, ma v’è spesso tra un anarchico e l’altro tanta differenza che ogni intesa è impossibile e sarebbe assurda. Sicché invece di cooperare insieme allo stesso scopo, non riusciamo che a combatterci e a paralizzarci gli uni gli altri. Bisogna innanzi tutto dividerci per poi riunire insieme quelli che sono d’accordo ed hanno un terreno comune d’azione.³⁵

The belief that separation from the anti-organisationalists had become necessary brought about the release of the single issue, *L’Anarchia*, which appeared in London in August 1896. Through *L’Anarchia* Malatesta and his companions intended to investigate the crisis of the anarchist movement and to suggest possible solutions in order to overcome it. In the first page of the publication, a note made clear that the opinions published belonged exclusively to the editorial group. If these ideas could cause a schism: ‘che essa venga presto e sia ben netta, poiché nulla è più dannoso della confusione e dell’equivoco’.³⁶

From Malatesta’s viewpoint, the presence of completely different ideologies and practices within the anarchist movement raised substantial problems. Every political activity was paralysed by the juxtaposition of these tendencies. Ideological misunderstandings grew not only among anarchists, but also and especially among people to whom the anarchists addressed their message. The necessity of a

³³ On Malatesta and the individualists see: Stefano Arcangeli, *Errico Malatesta e il comunismo anarchico italiano*, (Milan: Cooperativa Edizioni Jaca Book, 1972), pp. 157-172, Gino Cerrito, ‘Sull’ anarchismo contemporaneo’, in *Malatesta. Scritti scelti*, Gino Cerrito (ed.), (Rome: Samonà e Savelli, 1970) pp. 15-17, Malatesta, *L’organizzazione degli anarchici*, *ibidem* pp.123-135, Luigi Fabbri, *Malatesta, l’uomo e il pensiero*, (Naples: Edizioni RL, 1951), pp. 171-184.

³⁴ *L’Avvenire Sociale* was founded in 1896 in Messina by Tommaso De Francesco. See: Leonardo Bettini, *Bibliografia dell’anarchismo*, vol. 1.

³⁵ Errico Malatesta, *Epistolario 1873-1932. Lettere edite ed inedite*, edited by Rosaria Bertolucci, (Carrara: Centro Studi Sociali, 1984), p. 74.

³⁶ Il gruppo editore, ‘Avviso’, *L’Anarchia*, August 1896, p. 1.

disengagement from the individualists was asserted in almost all the articles published in the single issue. According to Luigi Radaelli, who had taken part in the debate in *L'Avvenire Sociale* with the article 'Basi d'accordo', which had received furious responses, detachment from the anti-organisationalists was necessary in order to resume effective political agitation among the lower classes.³⁷ Antonio Agresti shared his belief: 'Noi siamo due gruppi diversi stretti in un medesimo cerchio, il meglio per tutti è francamente separarsi – mettersi in due campi diversi ed ognuno tirare per la sua via'.³⁸

In view of the separation proposed from the anti-organisationalists, it was essential to highlight and to clarify the profound differences that distinguished organisational anarcho-communists from the other wings of the anarchist movement so to avoid further misunderstandings. The articles in *L'Anarchia* analysed several aspects, both philosophical and political. Malatesta and Agresti underlined moral questions in their writings. In 'Errori e rimedi', Malatesta criticised the anarchists who denied the existence of morality. In this way, he said, they disregarded the fact that, to fight bourgeois morality, it was necessary to oppose it with a superior moral system both in theory and in practice.

Quando noi combattiamo la presente società noi opponiamo alla morale individualistica dei borghesi, alla morale della lotta e della concorrenza, la morale dell'amore e della solidarietà, e cerchiamo di istituire delle istituzioni che corrispondano a questa nostra concezione dei rapporti fra gli uomini.³⁹

Agresti stated that anarchy was impossible without morality. In an anarchist society, where authority was absent, only moral principles could assure that people would observe their obligation towards society. As a result, the anti-organisationalists were blamed because of their disdain of human solidarity, a disdain that had not simply ethical but also political consequences. The concept that, in an ideal society, individuals had to take care only of their own interests was an anti-human doctrine.⁴⁰ The refusal of organisation had significant political implications. The idea that the fight against the bourgeois world was delegated to individuals had caused the spread of terrorist actions. Moreover, the use of violence had degenerated.

³⁷ R. Luigi Razzia (Luigi Radaelli), 'Spieghiamoci', *ibidem*, p. 3.

³⁸ Antonio Agresti, 'L'Individualismo', *ibidem*, pp. 3-4. Only one article, 'Reminiscenze' differed substantially from this position. The author was Isaia Pacini who urged a union of all anarchists.

³⁹ Errico Malatesta, 'Errori e rimedi', *ibidem*, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁰ Francesco Cini, 'Praticità nell'ideale', *ibidem*, p. 4.

Ma disgraziatamente c'è negli uomini una tendenza a scambiare il mezzo col fine; e la violenza, che per noi è, e deve restare, una dura necessità, è diventata per molti quasi lo scopo unico della lotta.⁴¹

Some of the anti-organisationalists not only praised, but even theorised the use of indiscriminate violence: workers who did not rebel were to be blamed just as much as the bourgeoisie for the existence of exploitation in society. Terrorist acts could be carried out, and were carried out, against the ruling order and the common people alike.⁴² This allowed governments and public opinion to come together and condemn all anarchist currents. For the publishers of *L'Anarchia*, the supporters of terrorist actions were for that reason 'i più fidi alleati e gli ausiliari più efficaci della borghesia dominante'.⁴³

Because bourgeois society was based on violence, Malatesta did not refuse the use of force to overthrow it. Gradual and peaceful reforms were ineffective; anarchists and socialists were revolutionary parties because institutions could not be changed in any other way than by revolution. However, violence did not have to be employed more than was necessary.

Gridiamolo forte e sempre: gli anarchici non debbono, non possono essere dei giustizieri, essi sono dei liberatori. [...] Non facciamo vittime inutili, nemmeno tra i nemici. Lo stesso scopo per cui lottiamo ci astringe ad essere buoni ed umani anche nel furore della battaglia.⁴⁴

For the organisational anarcho-comunists, organisation was the foundation both of social revolution and of the future post- revolutionary society. Malatesta carefully addressed this point in his article 'Socialismo ed Anarchia'. Here, Malatesta explained the inextricable connection between means and ends.⁴⁵ Socialism was the anarchists' end; the anarchists had to find proper means to realise it. In Malatesta's opinion, the means were:

⁴¹ Malatesta, 'Errori e rimedi', *ibidem*, p. 1.

⁴² Ciancabilla wrote in *L'Agitazione* that there were not 'innocenti nella società borghese'. Quoted by Maurizio Antonioli, *Il sole dell'avvenire*, p. 61.

⁴³ F.Cini, 'Praticità nell'ideale', *L'Anarchia*, p. 4.

⁴⁴ Errico Malatesta, 'Errori e rimedi', *ibidem*, p. 1.

⁴⁵ 'E' certo che i fini ed i mezzi sono collegati tra loro da un nesso intimo, il quale fa sì che per ogni fine vi è un mezzo che meglio gli conviene, come ogni mezzo tende a realizzare il fine che gli è naturale, anche senza e contro la volontà di coloro che lo adoperano'. Errico Malatesta, 'Socialismo ed Anarchia', *ibidem*, p. 1.

l'organizzazione libera, dal basso in alto, dal semplice al complesso mediante il libero patto e la federazione delle associazioni di produzione e di consumo, cioè l'anarchia. E' questo il mezzo che noi preferiamo.⁴⁶

In his article, Radaelli insisted that to escape the political stalemate caused by the quarrel with the anti-organisationalists, the anarchists who believed in popular collective action had to regain the people's confidence that they had lost because of their inactivity. The anarchists had to demonstrate that they were on the side of the oppressed, that social revolution was possible, and that they were acting for it. Organisation was essential to reach that goal. Radaelli rejected the anti-organisationalists' claim that a structured organisation led unavoidably to the authoritarian leadership of a minority. The organisationalists were well aware that to allocate the direction of a political movement to a minority was a mistake. The anarchists did not tolerate any authority within their organisation; every anarchist knew his own duties and to accomplish them he needed companions, not leaders. Neither, the organisationalists could be likened to the socialists who deceived workers with the mirage of electoral victories. Therefore, all the criticisms advanced by the anti-organisationalists were 'ombre che non esistono'.⁴⁷

Agresti, Cini and Malatesta developed similar arguments in their articles. In their opinion, the anarchists had made a substantial error in neglecting the working class; they had lost contact with real life and left to the socialists an uncontested arena. The rather ineffectual role played by the anarchists, within the *Fasci Siciliani* and the failure of the rising in Lunigiana demonstrated the crisis the anarchists found themselves in Italy. The establishment of an organised anarchist movement focusing its propaganda and actions on workers and their organisations was the main solution proposed.⁴⁸

Ora soprattutto, dopo tanti e dolorosi eventi è necessario che gli aderenti al partito socialista anarchico, risorto a vita nuova ed attiva, abbiano cura di mischiarsi fra il popolo ed entrare nelle sue organizzazioni onde renderlo atto a validamente sostenere la lotta contro il capitale.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*

⁴⁷ R. Luigi Razzia, 'Spieghiamoci', *ibidem*.

⁴⁸ Malatesta had already launched this proposal in *L'Art. 48*, published by Recchioni in Ancona, with the article 'Andiamo tra il popolo' and persisted in promoting it in *L'Agitazione*. See for example: 'Organizzatori e antiorganizzatori', *L'Agitazione*, 4 June 1897.

⁴⁹ Francesco Cini, 'Praticità nell'ideale', *L'Anarchia*, p. 4.

In *L'Anarchia*, Malatesta published a mordant report of the Second International Congress held in London the previous month.⁵⁰ Malatesta recalled that the anti-parliamentarians, although conscious of the strong majority held by the democratic socialists at the congress, hoped to have the opportunity to debate and to discuss fundamental questions, such as parliamentarianism, the general strike, and the workers' economic organisations. In particular, the anti-parliamentarians expected to discuss their ideas with other trade unions' delegates. However, the anarchists were mistaken. At the congress, there was neither agreement nor discussion.

Noi avevamo contato sullo spirito operaio ed era precisamente questo spirito che mancava al Congresso. I capi sono generalmente, o operai imborghesiti, o borghesi d'origine. E fra la maggioranza, tra il pecorume cioè che alzava ed abbassava la mano, quel che dominava erano le guance floride e le pance tondeggianti su cui brillavano pesanti catenelle e ciondoli d'oro, come in una festa di bottegai arricchiti. [...] Che avresti detto tu, o [sic] Carlo Cafiero, se tu avessi potuto vedere, in un congresso di operai e socialisti, una delegata cambiare sette toilettes in sei giorni e... non trovare che ammiratori?!⁵¹

Nevertheless, the congress had not been completely unprofitable. It had clearly revealed the social democrats' authoritarianism and parliamentary policy. Social democrats reduced the solution of the social question to an electoral confrontation and their unique aim was to gain votes 'da chiunque si sia e comunque si sia'. Meanwhile, the congress had provided evidence to the anarchists of the necessity to address their efforts at organising the working class. In fact, the anti-parliamentary opposition to this congress represented 'a transitional link between an older Bakuninism, and other varieties of populist socialism, and conscious syndicalism'.⁵²

The release of *L'Anarchia* had broad ramifications and succeeded in promoting a debate among the anarchist movement, especially inside Italy. *La Questione Sociale* on 30 December 1896 wrote that the alarm raised by the anarchists in London had 'un eco potente tra i compagni di Italia'.⁵³ This discussion certainly helped Malatesta, once he returned to Italy in early 1897, to publish *L'Agitazione*, one of the most important Italian anarchist newspapers of nineteenth century. Through *L'Agitazione* Malatesta continued to emphasise 'the organisation of an anarchist-socialist party, the

⁵⁰ Errico Malatesta, 'Il congresso Internazionale', *ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*

⁵² Carl Levy, 'Malatesta in London: The Era of Dynamite', in L. Sponza and A. Tosi (eds.) *A Century of Italian Emigration to Britain 1880 -1980s. Five Essays*, supplement to *The Italianist*, n. 13 (1993), p. 34.

⁵³ Armando Borghi, *Errico Malatesta*, (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1947), p. 116.

development of close ties between the movement and the masses, the formation of workers' leagues of resistance, and strike action'.⁵⁴

Cause ed effetti. 1898-1900 (September 1900)
Pubblicato a cura di un gruppo socialista-anarchico

Il 29 luglio scorso, il Re, insistentemente invitato, interveniva alla distribuzione dei premi al concorso provinciale delle gare di ginnastica in Monza. La festa procedette animatissima, il Re fu indicato alle maggiori acclamazioni, ma verso le ore dieci e mezzo di sera, nell'atto che muoveva in vettura... per salutare la folla i cui evviva coprivano la marcia reale, improvvisamente furono esplosi contro di lui, e quasi a bruciapelo, quattro colpi di rivoltella. Ferito nel cuore che viveva pel sollievo dei miseri ed i cui palpiti erano pel culto di ogni grande ideale e per la grandezza della Patria, il re cadde riverso sui cuscini della vettura, poco dopo entrava in agonia ed esalava l'anima invitta.⁵⁵

Tutti ricordano il grido feroce ed infame che la vile borghesia di Milano, appiattata dietro le persiane, lanciava ai soldati di re Umberto, che nelle vie assassinarono i proletari disarmati: "Tirate forte, mirate giusto!". Un vendicatore è sorto, che ha tirato forte, che ha mirato giusto.⁵⁶

On the evening of 29 July 1900, the anarchist Gaetano Bresci shot dead Humbert I, nicknamed respectively 'il re buono' by the bourgeoisie, and 'il re mitraglia' by the anarchists. Bresci's act was thought to be in revenge for the bloody repression of the 'moti del pane', when, in 1898, more than eighty civilians were killed in Milan by troops under the command of General Bava Beccaris. Afterwards the monarch had decorated the general for the successful operation and appointed him senator.

Violent reactions followed in the wake of Bresci's act. The conservatives and the liberals attacked all anti-monarchist groups, socialists and republicans included. The socialist and republican press also condemned the deed; Filippo Turati refused to provide legal advice to the regicide.⁵⁷ Neither did the anarchists assume a coherent, homogeneous position. Initially, some of them did not openly support the assassination; others, like *L'Agitazione*, strongly condemned it. It was from abroad that anarchist

⁵⁴ Nunzio Pernicone, *Italian anarchism 1864-1892*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993) p. 289.

⁵⁵ Eugenio Pedrotti, *Vita e Regno di Umberto I, Re d'Italia*, (Naples: Nicola Jovene Librai, 1900), p. 235.

⁵⁶ Amilcare Cipriani, *Bresci e Savoia, il regicidio*, (Paterson: Libreria Sociologica, s.d.), quoted in Giuseppe Galzerano, *Gaetano Bresci. La vita, l'attentato, il processo e la morte del regicida anarchico*, (Salerno: Galzerano Editore 1988), p. 97.

⁵⁷ Francesco Saverio Merlino defended Bresci during the trial.

leaders enunciated a more thoughtful and articulate analysis of the event. Felice Vezzani in Geneva's *Il Risveglio*, through the article 'Alto là', urged the anarchists to cease adopting bourgeois arguments. A few months later, in London, Malatesta and other anarchists published a pamphlet significantly entitled *Cause ed effetti. 1898 - 1900*.

Since the anarchist movement seemed to have been deeply shaken by the event and incapable of reacting effectively, the publishers intended: 'riaffermare i loro ideali, rivendicare la parte di responsabilità morale che può spettar loro nella lotta odierna tra oppressi ed oppressori e nei tristi suoi episodi e mostrare che essi restano al loro posto di combattimento...'.⁵⁸ This single issue was designed to defend the anarchists from the attacks that they had received from both conservative and socialist camps, first and foremost by countering their allegations that connected anarchism with violence.

The first article of the single issue, 'Che cos'è l'anarchia', was therefore devoted to clarifications. Although several different tendencies comprised the anarchist movement they shared the principle of denying the role of physical force as a permanent feature of human relations. The anarchists did not regard violence as a progressive factor in the social evolution of the human race, the article argued. Having eliminated institutional violence from society, the people would organise themselves in order to satisfy general interests without the need for authoritarian impositions. The anarchists' first aim was therefore to do battle against violence. Yet violence was often the only possible defence against violence: 'ma anche allora il violento non è chi si difende, ma chi costringe altri a doversi difendere'.⁵⁹

In the second article, 'La tragedia di Monza', Malatesta without disowning Bresci, declared that the anarchists could not be held responsible for the regicide. According to Malatesta, Bresci's action had to be considered in perspective:

Prima di tutto riduciamo le cose alle giuste proporzioni. Un re è stato ucciso; e poiché un re è pur sempre un uomo, il fatto è da deplorarsi. Una regina è stata vedovata; e poiché una regina è anch'essa una donna, noi simpatizziamo col suo dolore. Ma perché tanto chiasso per la morte di un uomo e per le lagrime di una donna quando si accetta come una cosa naturale il fatto che ogni giorno tanti uomini cadono uccisi, e tante donne piangono, a causa delle guerre, degli accidenti sul lavoro, delle rivolte represse a fucilate, e dei mille delitti prodotti dalla miseria, dallo spirito di vendetta, dal fanatismo e dall'alcolismo?⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Cause ed Effetti*, September 1900, p. 1.

⁵⁹ 'Che cos'è l'anarchia', *ibidem*, p. 1.

⁶⁰ Errico Malatesta, 'La tragedia di Monza', *ibidem*, p. 2.

Moreover, in Italy, the government and the police forbade workers to associate with each other and to fight peacefully for the improvement of their inhuman conditions. The army ferociously repressed the protests of starving and defenceless citizens.

Da chi viene dunque la suggestione, la provocazione alla violenza? Chi fa apparire la violenza come la sola via d'uscita dallo stato di cose attuale, come il solo mezzo per non subire eternamente la violenza altrui? [...] Chi è il colpevole della ribellione, chi è il colpevole della vendetta che di tanto in tanto scoppia: il provocatore, l'offensore, o chi denuncia l'offesa e vuole eliminarne le cause?⁶¹

By defending their privileges by force and violence, the monarchs, the oppressors, and the exploiters forced the anarchists to employ the same means. Nonetheless, the anarchists knew that violence and authority were inherently linked: the more violent a revolution, the more likely that the outcome would be authoritarian. For this reason, the anarchists were attempting to educate people and to acquire the moral and material strength necessary in order to minimise the use of violence during the revolution.

sappiamo che l'essenziale, indiscutibilmente utile si è, non già uccidere la persona di un re, ma l'uccidere tutti i re – quelli delle corti, dei parlamenti e delle officine – nel cuore e nella mente della gente; di sradicare cioè la fede nel principio di autorità a cui presta culto tanta parte di popolo.⁶²

Lack of freedom, continued Malatesta, caused outbursts of violence in Italy. Harsh repression of all dissidents, socialists, anarchists, and workers' associations, deprived people of hope in peaceful change. The immediate effect was the rebellion of the oppressed. Consequently, the establishment of social justice represented the only way to avoid bloody revenge by victims.

Per eliminare totalmente la rivolta sanguinosa delle vittime, non c'è altro mezzo che l'abolizione dell'oppressione, mediante la giustizia sociale. Per diminuirne ed attenuarne gli scoppi non v'è altro mezzo che lasciare a tutti libertà di propaganda e di organizzazione; che lasciare ai diseredati, agli oppressi, ai malcontenti la possibilità di lotte civili; che dar loro la speranza di poter conquistare, sia pur gradualmente la propria emancipazione per vie incruenti.

Malatesta ended the article with the usual call to action:

⁶¹*Ibidem*

⁶²*Ibidem*

Noi, pur deplorando la cecità dei governanti che imprime alla lotta un'asprezza non necessaria, continueremo a combattere per una società in cui sia eliminata ogni violenza, in cui tutti abbiano pane, libertà, scienza, in lui l'amore sia la legge suprema della vita.⁶³

The other articles that composed *Cause ed effetti* followed the points of view expressed by Malatesta. Pietraraja underlined in particular the responsibility of the monarchy, which had betrayed the expectations of the Risorgimento, for the deprived social condition of the country and for the repression of popular demonstrations.⁶⁴ 'Brutus' concentrated on the issue of violence instead. A collection of other short articles, poetry, and dialogues, pilloried the contradictions and the hypocrisies of the bourgeois world, especially about the grief for the king's death and about the concept of violence in society. Many of these writings were quite sarcastic. Galassini ended his article reporting that, in the same way in which the bourgeois considered the deaths of workers as hazards of their professions: 'a proposito dell'incidente occorso ad Umberto... la plebe che soffre e lavora ...ha esclamato in cuor suo - unico modo permesso d' esprimere il pensiero in Italia: Incerti del mestiere!'.⁶⁵

L'Internazionale (January-May 1901)

Periodico Socialista Anarchico

Costretti a star lontani dal nostro paese d'origine, che è quello in cui potremmo con più efficacia esercitare l'opera nostra, non vogliamo restare inerti, e ci proponiamo, ora che è tanto necessaria un'intensa propaganda degl'ideali e dei metodi anarchici, di pubblicare un nuovo periodico.⁶⁶

At the end of 1900, a circular illustrating the contents and aims of a new newspaper announced the appearance of the fortnightly, *L'Internazionale*. Malatesta, the author of the circular, noted that a wave of reaction was threatening basic civil rights in all European countries. Clericalism, authoritarianism, and militarism were regaining

⁶³ *Ibidem*

⁶⁴ Gennaro Pietraraja, 'Monarchia e popolo', *ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁵ Antonio Galassini, 'Libro Nero', *ibidem*, p. 4.

⁶⁶ Circolare 'L'Internazionale, Periodico Socialista Anarchico', IHS, *Fabbri Archive*, b. 29. There were thirty-one signatories of this circular.

influence in Italy, France, England, and in the United States too. This fact, he said, clearly demonstrated the validity of the socialist theory regarding the uselessness for the working class of gaining political freedom without a simultaneous economic emancipation. Despite that, the social democratic parties, pursuing a merely defensive strategy, were abdicating the class struggle, and forming alliances with sections of the bourgeoisie to gain votes and seats in parliaments. According to the circular, the anarchists were therefore the last defenders of socialist intransigence. The socialist anarchists, it continued, fought for the complete emancipation of the working class by taking advantage of partial economic and political victories. Nevertheless, they would not renounce any part of their program, nor would they forget their goals and legitimise or enter the institutions against which they were fighting.⁶⁷

Silvio Corio explained the aims of *L'Internazionale* in a letter to the individualist Roberto D'Angiò: 'L'Internazionale ha per programma questo specialmente: combattere i pregiudizi odierni sullo stato, sulla proprietà, sulla famiglia ed indicherà ogni dì i danni del parlamentarismo'.⁶⁸

From its first issue, the editorial group made clear that the purpose was to employ the newspaper as a platform from which the various tendencies of the anarchist movement could hold a frank debate.⁶⁹ The contributors to the newspaper were exponents of the international anarchist colony in London. In addition to pieces written by the Italians - Corio, Malatesta, Bacherini, D'Angiò, Cicognani and Pietraraja - *L'Internazionale* welcomed articles by Louise Michel, Cherkezov, and Tárrida del Mármol.⁷⁰ The result was a heterogeneous publication. But issues concerning the labour movement and the general strike were the most dominant. Tárrida del Mármol advocated the promotion and organisation of the general strike as the main task for the anarchist movement; a point of view that he often professed at meetings and debates organised in the anarchist colony in London.⁷¹ Bacherini, however, although

⁶⁷ 'Solo quando il popolo ha conquistato da sé qualche cosa e resta vigile e custode delle sue conquiste, solo quando esso sa che se non è soddisfatto deve da sé stesso pretendere e prendere quello che gli manca, solo allora esso cesserà dallo affidarsi a questo o quel partito borghese, in cerca di quel benessere che mai avrà dai suoi oppressori...solo allora i lavoratori fatti avvertiti dall'esperienza che tutte le riforme finiscono in nulla, invece di tornare indietro, si decideranno ad abbattere la causa fondamentale che produce i mali sociali e sterilizza ogni progresso: la proprietà individuale e lo Stato. Così, e non già entrando nei parlamenti e nei ministeri, si prepara il futuro'. In *Circolare: L'Internazionale*.

⁶⁸ Silvio Corio, 'Piccola Posta', *L'Internazionale*, 15 March 1901, n.3, p. 2.

⁶⁹ 'Circolano nel movimento anarchico diverse, ma non opposte tendenze: occorre offrire loro un campo libero di discussione, a che una selezione od una compenetrazione di idee si compia', Crastinus (Silvio Corio), 'Quattro parole ai compagni', *ibidem*, 26 January 1901, n. 2, p. 1.

⁷⁰ Louise Michel wrote a long article regarding the anarchist Paolo Schicchi. Louise Michel, 'Per Paolo Schicchi', *ibidem*.

⁷¹ Tárrida del Mármol, 'L'urgenza dello sciopero generale', *ibidem*, 12 January 1901, n. 1, p. 4.

underlining the increasing relevance that the labour movement was assuming for the anarchists, was chiefly concerned about the preparation for the final act of human liberation: revolution.⁷² Moreover, *L'Internazionale* supplied much information on the labour movement in Europe and the Americas. And the articles that *L'Internazionale* dedicated to the anarchists' attempt to organise the workers of the Italian colony in London are one of the central features of the newspaper, giving accounts of meetings to organise waiters and dishwashers employed in the restaurants of the capital. The newspaper published the correspondence of a waiter, Vincenzo Mayolio, who described the harshness of working conditions in restaurants.⁷³

L'Internazionale published the only article written by a woman (apart from those written by Louise Michel) in all the Italian anarchist newspapers in London. This article signed 'Annetta', encouraged women related to anarchist militants to take part in the political activities of their relatives without fear, a fear that apparently was nearly superstitious.⁷⁴ Women could play a central role in the anarchist movement.

Non tutti, e quei pochi non sempre, pensano quale grande missione sia affidata alla donna nel destino dell'umanità ed è perciò che sì tanto ne trascurano la sua educazione e la propaganda presso di lei delle idee di rinnovamento sociale. Ma gli anarchici vogliono libera la donna, chè se sarà cosciente essa sarà di grande aiuto alla società e migliore educatrice de' suoi figli, poiché è essa che risveglia nelle loro tenere menti quei sentimenti che poi avranno un ascendente in tutta la loro vita.⁷⁵

Corio was at the centre of *L'Internazionale*. He contributed articles about a variety of topics. In the first issue of the newspaper, he wrote a leader, which discussed workers' internationalism.⁷⁶ Other articles focused on the ineffectiveness of law and punishment, the political situation in Russia, and the suppression of freedom of the press in Italy. He published translations of excerpts of Kropotkin and Tolstoy. Corio

⁷² Alfredo Bacherini, 'Gli anarchici e il movimento operaio', *ibidem*, 26 January 1901, n. 2, p. 1. Bacherini was born in Livorno in 1863 where he worked as shoemaker. Between 1882 and 1886 he was arrested several times, and he had to find refuge in France and Spain. In 1890 Bacherini was sentenced to ten months' imprisonment for '*associazione a delinquere*'. He escaped to France and Belgium. He arrived in London between 1897 and 1900. He died in London in March 1921. ACS, CPC, b. 231, f. (Bacherini Alfredo).

⁷³ The editorial group organised meetings every Sunday in Wardour Street.

⁷⁴ 'Non temano le madri, se i loro uomini diventano anarchici, di vedere la loro famiglia perseguitata dalla sfortuna (unica sorte dei lavoratori) ma si tolgano dalle tenebre in cui sono, e, avanti con noi, per la Libertà e la Giustizia'. Annetta, 'Alle donne', *L'Internazionale*, 5 May 1901, n. 4, p. 3.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁶ 'Una solidarietà europea va formandosi. Verso l'Internazionale va la storia. Opponendo all'internazionale del capitale l'Internazionale degli oppressi, tenendo desto il sentimento rivoluzionario, noi avviciniamo il giorno in cui la rivoluzione sociale, vale a dire la presa in possesso fatta dal popolo

edited the column 'Pro Innocenti', a section devoted to denouncing abuses to which anarchist prisoners were subjected around the world and promoting activities of solidarity in their favour. This column was connected with the proposal, launched by the newspaper *Les Temps Nouveaux* in Paris, for the creation of an international pro-prisoners solidarity group. In addition, Corio was in charge of the correspondence page, a vital part in the life of the newspaper.

Malatesta contributed to *L'Internazionale* with three articles. The first discussed the Anglo-Boer war. Malatesta described the Boers as heroes. In this article, Malatesta opposed the Marxist determinism of certain socialists who viewed the possible defeat of the most advanced bourgeois capitalist country in Europe (Britain) by the Boers as detrimental to the final triumph of proletariat because it undermined the further development of capitalism. According to Malatesta, the outbreak of revolution did not occur out of necessity or inevitably or as a consequence of objective economic and political forces; revolution depended on the subjective will of both determined individuals and the masses. The Boers, and all people fighting against oppressors, were nearer to socialism than the brutalised workers of England. An English victory would mean the victory of militarism:

essa rafforzerebbe quello stolto orgoglio nazionale che fa credere al più miserabile inglese di avere il diritto di dominare il mondo, e che è così forte ostacolo al progredire delle idee emancipatrici.⁷⁷

The other two articles appeared in the third issue of *L'Internazionale*. 'La situazione in Italia', giving notice of the outbreak of famine in the southern regions of Puglia and Basilicata, and commenting on the appointment of the new government, the liberal cabinet of Zanardelli-Giolitti, a change that did not impress Malatesta.

Noi potremmo dire dei nuovi ministri tutto il male possibile senza pericolo di calunniarli. Potremmo dimostrare che tra questi campioni del liberalismo monarchico borghese ed i Crispi, i Rudinì, i Pelloux, la sola differenza è che questi sono più proni alla brutta violenza soldatesca, quelli in compenso sono meglio dotati di gesuitismo curialesco. Ma è inutile occuparsi degli uomini, poiché la situazione in Italia è tale che, data la continuazione del sistema borghese e monarchico, ben minima importanza possono avere le tendenze

sulle ricchezze sociali, sarà un fatto compiuto'. Silvio Corio, 'L'Internazionale', *ibidem*, 12 January 1901, n. 1, p. 1.

⁷⁷ 'I boeri hanno conquistato l'ammirazione del mondo con miracoli di coraggio, di abilità, di forza morale; essi si sono mostrati umani e civili quanto valorosi, ed hanno dato uno dei più splendidi esempi che ricorda la storia di quanto possa un popolo deciso davvero resistere all'oppressione'. Errico Malatesta, 'La guerra Anglo-Boera', *ibidem*, 12 January 1901, n. 1, p. 4.

individuali dei governanti. Il male fondamentale dell'Italia come nazione è la sua povertà, e questa povertà è la conseguenza fatale del sistema capitalistico.⁷⁸

In the third article, Malatesta criticised the decision of a French city council to forbid priests to wear the cowl in public. Authoritarianism, according to the anarchist leader, could not be contested by authoritarian means. For the anarchists, freedom meant freedom for everyone, even for priests; otherwise, the result could only be 'violenza di preti rossi che si alterna con la violenza dei preti neri'.⁷⁹

After the second issue, *L'Internazionale* began to face financial difficulties. Approximately two months passed before the publication of the third issue.

In the third number, the editors thanked those who had helped in keeping the newspapers alive with their subscriptions. Yet, contrary to the editors' hopes, this aid was sufficient to print only one more issue, and only after considerable delay.⁸⁰ Corio proposed that Malatesta be the editor of the newspaper in order to overcome these difficulties. But Malatesta refused the offer for several reasons. Firstly, he disagreed with the general tone of the newspaper. In addition, he believed that his presence was likely to increase instead of solve the difficulties, because of the strong opposition to which he was subject at that time from a group of anarchists in London (see Chapter 4):

Non ti nascondo ch'io credo che – questioni di tempo a parte – se io facessi un giornale, riuscirei a farlo vivere. Ma un giornale fatto da me sarebbe un giornale ad indirizzo ben determinato, in cui le opinioni diverse dalle mie non troverebbero posto se non a titolo d'informazione e per essere confutate. Questo non potrebbe essere il caso dell' "Internazionale" il quale non è né un organo mio personale, né l'organo di un gruppo omogeneo, di gente cioè che accettano tutti lo stesso programma. Esso è l'organo di un gruppo aperto a tutte le varietà e sub-varietà dell'opinione anarchica e quindi non può essere che un mezzo di propaganda generale...In un organo simile, a causa della reputazione che la gente mi ha fatta, io sono un elemento di debolezza anziché di forza.

Malatesta explained the reasons for the difficulties that *L'Internazionale* was facing:

E ciò che è avvenuto coll' "Internazionale" ne è la prova. Coloro che pensano come me ed appoggerebbero un giornale fatto come lo farei io, non

⁷⁸ Errico Malatesta, 'La situazione in Italia', *ibidem*, 15 March 1901, n. 3, p. 1.

⁷⁹ Errico Malatesta, 'Per la libertà', *ibidem*, p. 3.

⁸⁰ 'L'altro ieri (Malatesta) andò a visitare il compare Corio per sapere il perché della tardanza della pubblicazione dell'Internazionale', Calvo's report, 29 April 1901, ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

han trovato quello che si aspettavano e si sono raffreddati, quelli che sono avversarii miei decisi han combattuto più o meno di nascosto il giornale perché io v'ero in mezzo; ed il resto, gli eclettici e conciliatori, si son tenuti in guardia sempre perché v'ero io, che molti amano dipingere come settario, autoritario...

Malatesta, after refusing to assume the editorship of *L'Internazionale*, concluded:

Non posso nemmeno lasciare che i compagni credano che io sia magna pars del giornale e che tutto ciò che vi sia pubblicato sia da me approvato. Se la mia collaborazione è nelle attuali circostanze giudicata utile, io collaborerò volentieri... ma a condizione che si dichiari esplicitamente che il giornale essendo l'organo di un gruppo aperto a tutte le gradazioni anarchiche, deve essere considerato come una tribuna libera, in cui ciascuno è solo responsabile di ciò che scrive e firma.⁸¹

Malatesta's request was promptly satisfied in the form of a note published in the fourth issue of *L'Internazionale*. However, Malatesta did not contribute to this issue.⁸² The completely botched layout of the last issue, with pages and articles mixed up, showed the difficulties the editorial group were having. Indeed, the fourth was the last issue of *L'Internazionale*.

Lo Sciopero Generale (March-June 1902)

'L'insurrezione popolare è il mezzo necessario per abolire la tirannia'

At the beginning of the century, the liberalisation of trade union legislation under Giolitti gave new life to Italy's trade unions. Membership increased steadily and general strikes took place in Turin, Rome and Torre Annunziata. This political climate induced the anarchists to join labour organisations, as Malatesta had suggested years before in both *L'Associazione* and *L'Agitazione*. Many anarchist militants entered trade unions, chambers of labour, *leghe* and federations, despite their opposition to the reformist

⁸¹ Letter to Silvio Corio, no date. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁸² In a letter without date and address, concerning *L'Internazionale*, Malatesta wrote: 'In quanto al giornale io ci ho definitivamente rinunciato. Assolutamente il tempo mi manca; e tu pure non devi averne molto d'avanzo a giudicare dal ritardo con cui è uscito l'ultimo numero dell'Internazionale. Fare un giornale che esce solo a lunghi ed irregolari intervalli è peggio che non farlo. Perciò quando avrò il tempo di scrivere sarà meglio che aiuti i giornali d'Italia che tutti si lamentano per la mancanza di collaborazione'. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

tendencies held by the majority of their members and especially by the leadership.⁸³ The debate between reformist socialists, syndicalists and anarchists about the relevance of the general strike for the social movement enveloped the entire Left. The Italian anarchists in London intervened by publishing *Lo Sciopero Generale*.

Carlo Frigerio and Silvio Corio were the key figures in this publication, which began in 1902. A newspaper carrying the same title appeared simultaneously in French and English. As the title chosen for the newspaper suggested, the general strike was considered central for political and social action. However, for the editorial group, the general strike was only the first step toward a popular insurrection aimed at the destruction of government. In fact, they considered the general strike in itself ineffective if an armed insurrection did not accompany it. This theme is apparent in the three issues of the newspaper, which appeared from March to June 1902.

Most of the articles published in *Lo Sciopero Generale* provided examples of the failure of general strikes in which leaders had not been ready to defend themselves from the inevitable, fierce repression of the bourgeoisie. This had been the case of the strikes in Catalonia, where the military had shot many militants in Montjuich prison. The editors believed that, before launching a general strike, the main duty of militants was to be prepared militarily. The general strike as a simple abstention from work, which would naturally lead to revolution or to economic and political improvements was misleading, as the social democrats were doing at that time in Belgium in their campaign for the universal manhood suffrage. Nevertheless, even if the electoral aims of the general strike in Belgium were wrong, these protests showed the vitality of the Belgian working class and the necessity for the anarchists to act.

According to the newspaper, the anarchists had made a mistake in neglecting the strikes as a means of struggle. Indeed, although strikes with limited aims did not gain effective results, they nurtured the seeds of revolt. Consequently, the anarchists had to concentrate their efforts and their activism inside workers' associations.

...ora il nostro posto di combattimento, più che nei nostri gruppi, nei quali possiamo bene unire le nostre forze per un maggiore sviluppo della propaganda, è in mezzo alle associazioni operaje, poiché basta aver vissuto al fianco dei lavoratori per convincerci quanto più direttamente l'interessino le forze unite del proprio mestiere ed il miglioramento di questo, anziché

⁸³ See: Maurizio Antonioli, *Il sindacalismo italiano. Dalle origini al fascismo, studi e ricerche* (Pisa: BFS, 1997); Gian Biagio Furiozzi, 'Sindacalisti rivoluzionari e anarchici', *Ricerche Storiche*, 2-3, 1982, pp. 495-512.

l'idea di darci [sic] ad un partito che s'agita fuori del proprio ambiente, con idee che spesso egli non arriva ad afferrare.⁸⁴

It was in workers' associations and chambers of labour that the anarchists could propagate their views about the inefficiency of reformism and the necessity to expropriate and socialise the means of production. Thus anarchists should spread these ideas while at the same time retaining their anarchist identity, in order to prevent these organisations from becoming centres for reformist tendencies.

Lo Sciopero Generale introduced a new element of activism to the Italian anarchist newspapers in London: anti-militarism. Militarism was considered in fact 'il più potente e più diretto ostacolo al sorgere di forme nuove, libere ed egualitarie, di vita sociale'.⁸⁵ The army and militarism represented the capitalist's ultimate defences against popular claims. Through them the bourgeoisie were able to keep patriotic values and the sense of submission alive in the masses. Young people were seized from their families and transformed, in the barracks, into defenders of the privileges of the dominant class. Consequently, the articles in *Lo Sciopero generale* considered political activity among soldiers extremely valuable because it could affect the main apparatus used by the bourgeoisie to repress workers' protests. The anarchists had to approach young people in workers' associations before the call-up and educate them in class solidarity. In this way, once soldiers, they might be induced to sympathise with protesters. Alongside with campaigns against patriotism, war, and colonialism the anarchists had to spark rebellion inside the army by instilling intolerance against authority and discipline in conscripts.

Mantenendo saldi i vincoli naturali da cui sono uniti il proletario-soldato ed il proletario-produttore...l'arma fratricida che il governo ha posto in mano ai nostri fratelli operai perché essi ci massacrino nei dì di sciopero sarà rivolta e sparata contro i comandanti.⁸⁶

In the second issue, alongside news about strikes in Italy and other European countries, *Lo Sciopero Generale* reported on demonstrations and mutinies of conscripts in several Italian cities.

Antimilitarism was closely connected to another theme that often recurred in the articles of the newspaper: anti-colonialism.⁸⁷ Particularly, in the second issue, the

⁸⁴ 'Sullo sciopero generale', *Lo Sciopero Generale*, 18 March 1902, n. 1, p. 2.

⁸⁵ 'L'ultimo riparo', *ibidem*, 2 June 1902, n. 3, p. 1.

⁸⁶ 'L'ultimo riparo', *ibidem*, 2 June 1902, n. 3, p. 1.

⁸⁷ 'L'Africa agli africani', *ibidem*, 18 March 1902, n. 1, p. 2, for example, supported the Boers.

newspaper suggested that anarchist militants in Italy should celebrate the First of May in front of barracks to protest against an Italian military expedition in Libya, which at that time seemed to be imminent.⁸⁸

The third issue of *Lo Sciopero Generale* provided news about the anarchist movement in London. It gave notice of a debate between Corio, the socialist Mombello, and Malatesta; and of a meeting between Italian associations in London on the proposal of the constitution of a *Università popolare* (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 6). In the same issue, the newspaper published a note concerning the establishment of an ‘international’ editorial society. French, German, Spanish, Polish and Italian refugees composed the committee of this initiative. The Italians were Corio, Tombolesi and Bellelli.⁸⁹ The Frenchman Gustave Lance was the secretary and the Italian Pietraraja the treasurer. This society was intended to publish sociological works in several languages, avoiding commercially generated censorship. Thus the first brochure *Der Generalstreik Und Die Soziale Revolution* by Siegfried Nacht was the first work published by this society. The newspaper ceased publication abruptly. It is possible that this was caused in part by financial difficulties and in part by the fierce arguments that erupted in the Italian colony following the discovery of Gennaro Rubino as a police spy (see Chapter 4).

La Rivoluzione Sociale (1902-1903)

Following the cessation of *Lo Sciopero Generale*, the Italian anarchists circulated a note launching a new newspaper: *La Rivoluzione Sociale*. Twenty anarchists, all of them living in London, signed the note, which had been written by Malatesta. The newspaper was intended to articulate a change in the anarchists’ political tactics.⁹⁰ By now Malatesta began to consider the widespread entry of anarchists into workers’ organisations in Italy an error. By joining labour associations, the anarchists had partially succeeded in their effort to break the isolation in which they had found themselves. However, the anarchists had been overconfident about the potential of the working class movement and had sympathised with groups who were ideologically and

⁸⁸ The publication of *Lo Sciopero Generale* happened as Italy and France held diplomatic talks for the recognition of Italian rights in Libya.

⁸⁹ ‘Société d’Edition d’oeuvres sociologiques en toutes langues’, *La Grève Générale*, 2 July 1902, p. 2.

⁹⁰ Masini considered this new tactic a negative development in Malatesta’s thought. See: Masini, *Storia degli anarchici italiani nell’epoca degli attentati*, pp. 211-215.

politically antagonistic: republicans and socialists. This had the effect of eroding the anarchists' radicalism.⁹¹ Malatesta argued that the anarchists had overestimated the importance of workers' associations: it was an illusion to believe that the labour movement could, on its own, by its very nature, lead to social revolution. In addition, for Malatesta, the trade unions included conservative and reactionary features, which the anarchists had to avoid.⁹²

The labour movement was a convenient target for campaigns and was very useful for the assemblage of forces for the coming revolution. Nevertheless, to achieve a structural change in society an armed insurrection was thought unavoidable. Consequently, the anarchists had to prepare and organise themselves with a view to armed conflict. For Malatesta, the groundwork for an armed revolution had to be the anarchists' priority, both inside and outside workers' associations. In his article 'L'Insurrezione armata', published in the last issue of *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, he bolstered this belief by distinguishing between political action that belonged to masses - strikes, protests, and demonstrations - and military action that was only practical for small groups.⁹³ If the former could induce people to rise up and spark a revolution, only the latter could ensure success.⁹⁴

Malatesta held this position because he assumed that Italy was on the brink of a popular insurrection.⁹⁵ His viewpoint was reported by Virgilio several times between 1901 and 1903.⁹⁶ Indeed, the wave of general strikes in 1902 throughout Italy and the shooting dead of several protesters in the South by the army seemed to confirm in Malatesta's mind that a revolutionary period was approaching.⁹⁷ He therefore believed that Giolitti liberal experiment was about to fail and be replaced by a policy of repression reminiscent of the 1890s. And the publication of *La Rivoluzione Sociale* was

⁹¹ 'Si è voluto insomma allargare il movimento, ma non si è badato al pericolo di perdere in intensità quello che si guadagnava in estensione', 'Agli anarchici di lingua italiana', September 1902, IISH, Luigi Fabbri Archive, b. 29.

⁹² 'Crediamo che bisogna prendere parte attiva al movimento operaio ma senza lasciarvisi assorbire, senza comprometersi in quello che esso ha di conservatore e di reazionario'. 'Agli anarchici di lingua italiana', September 1902, IISH, Luigi Fabbri Archive, b. 29. In the following years Malatesta further developed this point and it became central to his position on syndicalism.

⁹³ 'L'Insurrezione armata', *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, 5 April 1903, n. 9, p. 1.

⁹⁴ 'Gli anarchici si misero nel movimento operaio, vi si fecero troppo assorbire, presero quello che doveva essere il mezzo, o meglio uno dei mezzi, quasi come un fine; e dimenticarono in pratica se non in teoria, la rivoluzione, che nullameno resta sempre una necessità imprescindibile impostaci da tutto l'ambiente'. 'I nostri propositi', *ibidem*, 20 February 1903, n. 8, p. 2.

⁹⁵ '...Siamo forse alla vigilia di una di quelle crisi violente che fanno epoca nella storia dell'evoluzione sociale'; 'Agli anarchici di lingua italiana', September 1902, IISH, Luigi Fabbri Archive, b. 29.

⁹⁶ Virgilio's report, 7 and 17 June 1903, ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁹⁷ Peasants were killed at Cassano, Candela, and Giarratana. Between 1901 and 1903 about thirty people, especially peasants, were killed during demonstrations.

meant to advocate that new orientation in Italy by taking advantage of the freedom of expression granted in England.

A differentiation from the reformists, with whom the anarchists often collaborated within workers' associations, became a central theme in all nine issues of *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, which appeared between October 1902 and April 1903. In fact, the first article published in *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, 'Noi ed i nostri "affini"', intended to rid its readers of the misleading idea of a possible collaboration with socialists, radicals, and republicans. The article asserted that every single attempt made in the past by the anarchists for common action – either insurrections or merely protests against internal exile - failed. Moreover, the relationships with those parties were dangerous since the anarchists' own radical stance was threatened with an unnecessary dilution. According to this article, which was in all likelihood written by Malatesta himself, in working with the reformists, 'abbiamo rischiato di lasciarvi parte di quell' intransigenza che è forza e salvaguardia per un partito che vuole serbare intatto il proprio ideale'.⁹⁸

The fear that contact with socialists could undermine the anarchists' revolutionary purity was translated in a series of articles that strongly criticised the Socialist Party's policies. Once again, the main objection was the socialists' parliamentary approach.⁹⁹ And the decision by reformist socialists to lend their support to Giolitti's cabinet merely deepened the anarchists' disdain.¹⁰⁰

...Con questi corrotti del parlamentarismo, che si sono prostituiti al potere e sono diventati i più pericolosi corruttori ed addormentatori del popolo, non v'è nulla da fare.¹⁰¹

These attacks appeared in several articles, often targeting campaigns that the socialists were undertaking in the Chamber of Deputies. This happened, for example, when the socialists and the republicans began a political campaign for the reduction of spending on such items as military expenditure as the means to solve the social problems of the country. *La Rivoluzione Sociale* dismissed this scheme.¹⁰² The article

⁹⁸ 'Noi ed i nostri "affini"', *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, 4 October 1902, n. 1, p 1.

⁹⁹ 'L'azione parlamentare – funzione di governo capitalista – fa rientrare man mano i partiti più avanzati entro un ordine di tendenze e di azioni più e più consone alla funzione governativa – più e più quindi conservative'. 'Dopo un Congresso', *ibidem*, 20 February 1903, n. 8, p 2.

¹⁰⁰ 'Votare per il ministero che ammannetta, fucila, manda i soldati a prender il posto degli scioperanti vuol dire per Turati 'conquistare le riforme, dare impronta proletaria alla riforma'. Per noi vuol dire giocare sulla buona fede, sulla ignoranza del popolo', 'Dopo un Congresso', *ibidem*, 4 October 1902, n.1, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ 'Noi ed i nostri "affini"', *ibidem*, 4 October 1902, p. 1.

¹⁰² 'Le spese improduttive', *ibidem*, 1 November 1902, n. 3, p. 1.

argued that the army was central to the Italian economy in which not only the capitalists, but also the lower classes benefited. Therefore, the workers would not have accepted the socialists' project: indeed, they always wanted to preserve any institution that provided employment for them no matter how detrimental and immoral militarism might be.

In una società come questa si capisce che l'esercito, dannoso dal punto di vista morale, possa essere utile da un punto di vista economico: ed è per questa ragione che resta e resterà fino a che non cambi il sistema sociale.¹⁰³

The intransigent wing of the Socialist Party was not spared criticism either. In an article entitled 'Produzione e distribuzione' the newspaper attacked Arturo Labriola.¹⁰⁴ In a recent meeting in Milan, adopting Malthus's theory, Labriola had asserted that the social question was related to the production of wealth, not to its distribution. For *La Rivoluzione Sociale* this statement, typically conservative and shared by other socialists such as Turati and Ferri, was a further proof of the socialists' betrayal.¹⁰⁵ The scarcity of goods was a real fact; however, the central question was the ownership of the means of production. Furthermore, the owners of the means of production were interested in safeguarding their gains rather than in the satisfaction of popular needs, and thus they generated this scarcity artificially. By keeping the level of production low, they increased their gains. Production was slackening because the access to distribution of wealth was restricted and could increase only when aimed at satisfying the needs of everybody.

The intransigence towards the reformist programme even drove the newspaper to dismiss social reforms, such as the legalisation of divorce, or the proposal for an anti-militarist congress to be held in London.¹⁰⁶ Malatesta, according to Virgilio, thought that anarchists' involvement in crusades for reforms, even seemingly beneficial reforms, was a dissipation of their energies.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*

¹⁰⁴ 'Produzione e Distribuzione', *ibidem*, 20 February 1903, n. 8, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵ 'Questa nuova predicazione dei socialisti, che tende a far abbandonare al proletariato cosciente la via maestra della lotta di classe e ricacciarlo nei vicoli senza uscita del riformismo borghese, è tanto più pericolosa in quanto prende a pretesto un fatto vero, quello della insufficienza dei prodotti attuali a soddisfare anche in limiti ristretti i bisogni di tutti...cambia l'effetto in causa e tira le conclusioni che servono ai suoi scopi', 'Produzione e Distribuzione', *ibidem*, 20 February 1903, n. 8, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ See: 'Il proposto congresso Antimilitarista', *ibidem*, 27 January 1903, n. 7, p. 3; Errico Malatesta, 'Protesta', *ibidem*, 20 February 1903, n. 8, p. 2.

¹⁰⁷ Virgilio's report, 7 June 1903, ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

But the main interest for *La Rivoluzione Sociale* focused on the participation of anarchists in workers' associations and thus continued a theme found in *Lo Sciopero Generale*. According to *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, all workers, whatever political or religious inclinations, should join trade unions; but workers' organisations themselves had to remain politically neutral. The newspaper urged anarchist members of the trade unions to preserve their own identity and avoid being absorbed into the union hierarchy by accepting offices. At the same time, anarchist members were eager to contrast their policies from the socialists' attempts to acquire hegemony and to manipulate these organisations for their own political ends. As members, the anarchists could strengthen the revolutionary consciousness of organised workers, and persist in their battles against authority, property and religion. Workers' associations were fertile grounds for propaganda aimed at the recruiting of proletariat into the revolutionary movement.

Agli anarchici spetta invece la parte di forza propulsiva, rivoluzionaria, che con la critica e coll'esempio cerca di mettere nelle idee e nella condotta degli associati quanto più di anarchia è possibile...di libertà e di uguaglianza tra i soci, di solidarietà nelle relazioni con tutta la classe operaja, di ribellione, di energia, d'intransigenza nella lotta contro i padroni e contro il governo.¹⁰⁸

And in the following years, the development of the analysis begun by Malatesta and the group of *La Rivoluzione Sociale* about the relationship between anarchists and labour movement, strongly influenced the anarchists' participation in revolutionary syndicalism and in the *Unione Sindacale Italiana*.¹⁰⁹

La Rivoluzione Sociale, compared with other Italian anarchist newspapers published in London, had a more international horizon. Correspondence from other countries such as France, Spain, Brazil and Holland appeared regularly. Cherkezov wrote a series of articles dealing with the political situation in Russia, and another series regarding the necessity of revolution.¹¹⁰ A number of issues published translated articles from *Les Temps Nouveaux*, in support of an international campaign for the release of eight Spanish Internationalists sentenced to life imprisonment in 1883.¹¹¹ The political

¹⁰⁸ 'Gli Anarchici nelle Società operaie', *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, 4 October 1902, n. 1, p.3.

¹⁰⁹ See Carl Levy, 'Currents of Italian Syndicalism before 1926', *International Review of Social History*, 45, 2000, pp. 209-250.

¹¹⁰ Wladimir Cherkezoff, 'Il movimento rivoluzionario in Russia', *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, n. 1 and n. 3; 'L'azione economica e rivoluzionaria come unico mezzo per risolvere il Problema Sociale', *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, nn. 7-9.

¹¹¹ In 1883 a trial against Spanish Internationalists, accused of being members of '*La Mano Negra*', ended with seven people sentenced to death and subsequently executed and fourteen sentenced to life imprisonment. In 1902 several newspapers of different European countries joined the campaign for the liberation of the eight prisoners still alive. The articles reconstructing the collection of manufactured

situation in England found more space than usual. More specifically, England served as an example of the failure of reformism. In the article ‘Società condannata’, the description of widespread poverty caused by the economic crisis that was affecting the United Kingdom was utilised to emphasise the inefficiency of trade unions, charities, and political reforms. *La Rivoluzione Sociale* often criticised the British trade unions, which were portrayed as the embodiment of all the negative aspects of reformism. Although born as revolutionary institutions, the trade unions had gradually acknowledged the role of capitalism. Consequently, they became defenders of corporate interests and incited privileged workers against less favoured foreigners.¹¹² Moreover, the trade unions developed bureaucratic structures led by a class of well paid functionaries concerned almost exclusively with their own interests. And Malatesta often referred to British trade unionism to illustrate his criticisms of syndicalism.

The last issue of *La Rivoluzione Sociale* appeared in April 1903. Financial difficulties, already reported in the newspaper in January, were probably the reason for its demise.

According to Virgilio’s reports, Malatesta was disappointed by the ineffectualness of *La Rivoluzione Sociale* in effecting a change in the anarchists’ approach in Italy. In April, Virigilio wrote that Malatesta: ‘si dice pure stanco del giornale’; in June he wrote that:

Malatesta... tenterebbe chi sa che cosa pur di dimostrare che il suo concetto puramente rivoluzionario deve avere il sopravvento. Egli dice che in Italia è un gran disordine di idee, perché non hanno saputo seguire esattamente le sue teorie... questo programma in Italia non è stato inteso.¹¹³

A subsequent attempt to revive the newspaper did not succeed, primarily for economic reasons but also because the anti-organisationalists were not interested. Instead for the rest of the period until 1915 the Italian anarchists only published single issues on special occasions.¹¹⁴

evidence that was produced at the trial in 1883 occupied a considerable amount of space of three issues of *La Rivoluzione Sociale* (nn. 4-6).

¹¹² See: ‘La morte dell’Unionismo classico’, *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, 29 December 1902, n. 6, p. 2.; ‘La guerra ai lavoratori stranieri’, *La Rivoluzione Sociale*, 27 January 1903, n. 7, p. 1.

¹¹³ Virgilio reports, 17 April and 7 June 1903. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

¹¹⁴ Inspector Mandolesi to the Ministry of Interior, 10 August 1903, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

*La Settimana Sanguinosa (18 March 1903)**18 Marzo –24 Maggio*

Numero unico pubblicato a cura di alcuni anarchici di Londra

The Paris Commune represented the most important event in the anarchist calendar and each year its anniversary was celebrated in their clubs. Moreover, this commemoration was heightened in the London exile community by the presence of several former Communards. Louise Michel, the ‘Red Virgin’, was undoubtedly the most famous among them. And so in March 1903, Italian anarchists published the commemorative single issue, *La Settimana Sanguinosa*. The promoter of this publication was Adolfo Antonelli, a young anarchist from Rome. Politically active from the age of seventeen, he had been a correspondent for various anarchist newspapers, in Italy and abroad. He collaborated with *L’Agitazione*, published in Ancona, and with *L’Avvenire* published in Buenos Aires, strongly supporting individualist anarchism in his articles. Arrested on the occasion of a demonstration by the unemployed in Rome, he was sentenced to eleven months’ imprisonment. To avoid prison Antonelli fled from Italy. Expelled from France at the end of 1902, he arrived in London at the beginning of February 1903. Carlo Frigerio put him up in his home, at 12 Dean Street; Malatesta included him in the publishing group of *La Rivoluzione Sociale*. Indeed, from the very beginning, Antonelli dedicated himself to political activities. The informer Virgilio wrote: ‘Egli è ora il maggiore propagandista nel quartiere italiano ed è assiduo alle riunioni che avvengono in casa di Berruti’.¹¹⁵

Antonelli’s individualism is clearly identifiable in the introductory note of *La Settimana Sanguinosa*: ‘Il presente Numero Unico non è emancipazione di alcun gruppo formalmente costituito, bensì di alcuni compagni liberamente volontariamente aderenti all’iniziativa di pubblicarlo’.¹¹⁶

The intent of this publication was to commemorate the Paris Commune and, in the meantime, to pave the way for future battles: ‘Vogliamo, ricordando il passato, esaminare il presente, e preparare l’avvenire’.¹¹⁷ The articles in praise of the Commune and of its martyrs have another message as well. By analysing the reasons that caused the fall of the Commune, most of them attacked both the parliamentary system and the social democrats. The Commune, the single issue continued, had been a glorious

¹¹⁵ Virgilio’s report, 17 Marzo 1903. ACS, CPC, b. 104, f. (Antonelli Adolfo).

¹¹⁶ ‘Ai compagni!’, *La Settimana Sanguinosa*, 18 March 1903, p. 1.

¹¹⁷ Adolfo Antonelli, ‘Il nostro intento’, *ibidem*, p. 1.

revolutionary experience, the starting point of the social-revolutionary movement. Moreover, some of the conceptions that had been involved in the governing of the Commune still had influence, even in the most unlikely quarters:

ed oggi, senza che essi nemmeno se ne rendano conto di continuare appunto la tradizione creata nella Comune, persino i borghesi di idee più avanzate, persino gli operai più conservatori di Inghilterra, caldeggiavano dappertutto la “municipalizzazione” dei servizi pubblici, della produzione dei generi di prima necessità, la refezione scolastica, ecc., in una parola il “socialismo municipale”.¹¹⁸

However, the Communards had not really been revolutionaries. They did not dare to give political power to the people; they delegated it to an assembly instead. In this way, they perpetuated bourgeois institutions: it was the mistake that caused their downfall. Indeed, for the publishers of *La Settimana Sanguinosa* the Commune was a parliamentary government ‘autoritario e paralizzatore dell’energia popolare’, that safeguarded bourgeois privileges.¹¹⁹ The leaders were ‘non abbastanza rivoluzionari per scagliarsi interamente contro il passato, non abbastanza rivoluzionari per frangere gli ostacoli che inceppavano la vittoria, troppo esitanti di fronte alla lotta’.¹²⁰ It did not abolish private property. On the contrary it restricted popular initiative. Social reforms were either only theorised or, when put into practice, ineffective. As a consequence, the Paris Commune:

...cadde, onorata sì dal sublime eroismo dei suoi, ma nell’indifferenza reale del più gran numero che non aveva visto nessuna differenza sensibile tra essa ed i governi che l’avevano preceduta.¹²¹

The events of the Commune exemplified the risks inherent in a revolution led by ‘delegates’ and not by the people themselves. Social democrats were, from this point of view, the principal target of the articles in *La Settimana Sanguinosa*. From its colourful definitions of ‘falsi pastori’, ‘turba di ciarlatani e di mestatori politici’, ‘moderni cialtroni del socialismo’, ‘ciarlatani delle piazze e dei circoli’, to the more sober criticisms of Malatesta and Berruti, attacks against the socialist democracy dominated the single issue. And thus we get the usual criticisms that the anarchists had always advanced against electoral socialists. First of all, the anarchists attacked the social

¹¹⁸ W. Tcherkesoff, ‘Viva la Comune!’, *ibidem*, p. 2.

¹¹⁹ Errico Malatesta, ‘La Comune di Parigi e gli anarchici’, *ibidem*, p. 2.

¹²⁰ Aristarco Samio, ‘La logica della rivoluzione’, *ibidem*, p. 3.

¹²¹ Errico Malatesta, ‘La Comune di Parigi e gli anarchici’, *ibidem*, p. 2.

democrats because of their parliamentary and reformist policy. Social democrats concentrated their efforts and propaganda on electoral competition and gradual reforms; thus they diverted the people from the revolution.¹²² Secondly, the socialist aim was the replacement of bourgeoisie with the bureaucratic State. The duty of the anarchists was to educate and free people from the idea that authority was necessary. Only in this way, differently from what had happened during the Paris Commune, would a successful revolution be accomplished and new forms of authoritarian control thwarted.¹²³

A long article signed by 'Bruto', is devoted to explaining the differences between the anarchists and the social democrats but it departs from the usual refrain found in the other to move on to women and free love, a theme rarely discussed in these publications.

La evoluzione della concezione della donna come individuo avente una funzione sociale eguale a quella dell'uomo e la evoluzione del sentimento dell'amore... condurrà all'amore libero e naturale. La famiglia sarà riformata dal libero amore. L'unione dell'uomo e della donna sarà assolutamente libera e non avrà altra base che il reciproco affetto. L'unione sessuale non sarà più prostituzione come è ogni unione di individui di sesso diverso oggi che la donna deve domandare al marito o al compagno il necessario per l'esistenza sua e dei figli. Essa sarà libera come sarà l'uomo.¹²⁴

Antonelli sent a few hundred copies of *La Settimana Sanguinosa* to Rome and probably to other cities in Italy and Europe. *L'Avvenire Sociale* in Messina and *L'Agitazione* in Rome reprinted some of its articles. Antonelli, satisfied by the results obtained, organised the publication of a second issue, this time for the celebration of the first of May: *Germinal*.

¹²² 'La tattica elettorale noi la combattiamo ancora perché essa rafforza nelle masse il principio di autorità ed educa il popolo alla azione passiva, a lasciar fare agli altri ciò che dovremmo fare noi stessi', Bruto 'Presente ed Avvenire', *ibidem*, pp. 3-4.

¹²³ 'Quando domani il popolo si deciderà a scuotere il giogo ed a drizzarsi contro chi glielo impone... alle lusinghe dei "falsi pastori" che anche allora tenteranno di adescarlo per farsene sgabello, occorre egli sappia opporre la ferma volontà di amministrare da sé stesso i propri affari, senza alcun bisogno di alcun "rappresentante" ed all'infuori di qualsiasi legge e sanzione', C. F. 'Commemorando', *ibidem*, p. 2.

¹²⁴ It is likely that this topic was discussed in private meetings, probably due to Berruti's suggestion. Virgilio wrote, with a spy's perception: 'Egli (Antonelli) ogni giorno è mantenuto presso due o tre delle non poche cocottes che vanno in quella tana per farsi usare o per altro dall'Orlandini che non so come faccia a pagare le spese. Due di queste cocottes sono belghe, altre tre o quattro sono francesi ed una italiana. Costoro convengono dall'Orlandini e in queste riunioncelle non parlano che di rapporti sessuali naturali e di anarchismo': Virgilio's report, 31 January 1904. ACS, CPC, b. 154, f. (Antonelli Adolfo).

*Germinal (1 May 1903)**Pubblicato a cura di alcuni anarchici in Londra*

Compared with *La Settimana Sanguinosa*, *Germinal*, the second single issue published by Antonelli in 1903, had a more markedly individualist and anti-organisationalist flavour. In the introductory note, the editors clearly announced their opposition to organisations and federations of anarchist groups, since they believed that they were incompatible with the idea of anarchy as limitless freedom. In fact, some of the articles published in *Germinal* strongly attacked the anarcho-organisationalists, Malatesta in particular. However, the single issue focused principally on the May Day celebrations and the general strike.

Germinal was very critical of the present day celebrations of May Day, bemoaning the decadence of the original revolutionary spirit associated with it.¹²⁵ But these criticisms were rather similar to the traditional reservations that the anarchist movement had expressed since the early 1890s when May Day began to be celebrated.¹²⁶ The anarchists had always linked May Day with the general strike, which they considered the initiation of the revolution. Instead, far from representing a revolutionary moment, May Day had been reduced to a platonic demonstration of proletarians who ‘l’indomani, il 2 maggio, ... ritorner[anno] irremissibilmente più pecor[e] di prima’.¹²⁷ The responsibility for the disappearance of the revolutionary spirit rested entirely with the socialist and democratic parties, which based their policy on legal means to obtain gradual, political reforms. For the contributors of *Germinal*, the workers did not need parades, speeches, and parties; they required weapons, and they needed to be trained to use them in order to be ready to act at the first occasion: ‘Ed il Primo Maggio tanto auspicato, in quel giorno sarà cosa avvenuta’.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Crastinus (Silvio Corio), ‘La manifestazione del primo maggio’, Adolfo Antonelli, ‘Primo maggio’, *Germinal*, 1 May 1903, pp. 1-2.

¹²⁶ Maurizio Antonioli, *Vieni o Maggio. Aspetti del primo maggio in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1988), pp. 39-40. ‘Il primo maggio degli anarchici si identificò agli inizi e continuò ad identificarsi in seguito nello sciopero generale. Attorno al Primo maggio si sviluppò così una specie di “LEGGENDA” delle origini secondo la quale “la festa del lavoro” era nata “Dall’idea dello sciopero generale” per perdere successivamente il suo primitivo carattere rivoluzionario a causa “degli intrighi dei politicanti”, dell’immaturità della classe operaia e dell’impotenza dei rivoluzionari’. See also: Marco Fincardi, *Il 1° maggio*, in Mario Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Personaggi e date dell’Italia unita*, (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1997) pp. 130-137.

¹²⁷ Adolfo Antonelli, ‘Primo Maggio’, *Germinal*, 1 May 1903, p. 1.

¹²⁸ *Ibidem*

Issues of economic conflicts and strikes, strictly connected with May Day, were analysed from the same point of view. Partial strikes aiming at economic improvements or at reforms, even when successful, were ineffective because the economic élites were able to recover their losses by simply raising the prices of goods. Similarly, the general strikes declared for limited claims were merely a waste of energies: they neither changed social order, nor improved the conditions of the working class, either politically or economically. In conclusion, for the editors of *Germinal*, the general strike had to be:

Un mezzo rivoluzionario, anzi la rivoluzione stessa, poiché la diserzione dal lavoro deve essere seguita dall'espropriazione e da tutti quei mezzi richiesti dalla necessità del momento... che gli anarchici sappiano destare nel proletariato l'energia rivoluzionaria, che gli anarchici in caso di sciopero o di conflitti si mostrino quali veramente dovrebbero essere, cioè dei rivoluzionari.¹²⁹

In the first half of 1903, Virgilio reported persistent criticisms of Malatesta by the individualists, whom they considered 'un vecchio rimasto indietro nelle idee'.¹³⁰ And the articles published in the second part of *Germinal* reflect this campaign against the veteran anarchist. 'Anarchia o Partito Socialista Anarchico' returned to the anti-organisationalist arguments. And the authors quoted a passage from an old article published in *L'Agitazione*, in which Malatesta had rejected individual acts, to prove that the socialist-anarchist program had degenerated into authoritarianism. In fact, by denying free initiative to its associates and by condemning individual acts, the socialist anarchist party had elaborated a code of practice defining what was right and what was wrong. That contrasted, they claimed, with the fundamental principle of anarchy: individual freedom.

Una mancanza di buon senso che è una conseguenza dell'accecamiento con cui l'autore dell'articolo [Malatesta] segue le proprie idee sull'organizzazione e contro gli atti individuali, dimostrando così che quando si parte da una formula prefissa, per lui indiscutibile, si perde lo spirito critica [sic] e di ragione. [...] Il partito socialista anarchico dunque non è né anarchico né potrebbe esserlo poiché, come tutti i partiti, esso ha bisogno di una linea prestabilita di condotta uniforme, di programmi che racchiudano in sé stessi tutte le aspirazioni dei propri componenti, quasicché un programma, che potrebbe paragonarsi ad una legge, potesse rispecchiare

¹²⁹ Aristarco Samio, 'Dopo la disfatta', *ibidem*, pp. 3-4.

¹³⁰ Virgilio's report, 7 June 1903, ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

tutti i sentimenti, tutti i pensieri, tutte le energie individuali che si muovono, vivono, producono o demoliscono in una associazione o nella società.¹³¹

In contrast to Malatesta this article proposed that the anarchists could occasionally and temporarily associate together for specific purposes. However, individuals always maintained their own independence: they could take any action according to their own will, and leave the others at any moment, or when a common goal was reached.

Tutti non seguiranno che la propria coscienza, liberamente, anarchicamente, senza maggioranze, né minoranze. E, lo scopo raggiunto, ognuno rientri nell'orbita della propria individualità, faccia ciò che crede, faccia ciò che vuole.¹³²

The article ended urging the anarchists to give vent to their own individual energies and to depart from antiquated and Jacobin organisations that paralysed the activity of the anarchist movement.

Che ognuno, liberamente, agisca come vuole, faccia propaganda delle proprie idee, cosciente della propria forza perché l'anarchia non è un limite, una barriera... Che i compagni antiorganizzatori, intensifichino la loro propaganda e non temano cogli attriti che possono nascere, danneggiare l'idea.¹³³

This article was signed *Due compagni*: they were probably Margiotti and Pietro Gualducci. No documents exist regarding Margiotti, but Gualducci was well known among the refugees in London. He was arrested and imprisoned on several occasions both in Italy - once for merely singing anarchist songs - and in other European countries. In Switzerland, the police suspected him of being Luigi Luccheni's accomplice (the assassin of the Habsburg Empress, Elizabeth); however Gualducci was discharged for lack of evidence. For seven months, in 1897, Gualducci served in the Foreign Legion in Algeria. He arrived to London at the beginning of 1902 and immediately joined the 'Bresci' group of anarchist individualists.

Germinal criticised Malatesta by reprinting a polemic between Malatesta and Henry that appeared in the newspaper *L'En Dehors* shortly after Ravachol's execution in August 1892. Naturally the editors supported the terrorists.

¹³¹ *Due compagni*, 'Anarchia o Partito Socialista Anarchico', *Germinal*, 1 May 1903, pp. 3-4.

¹³² *Ibidem*

¹³³ *Ibidem*

Henry's reply to Malatesta's article 'Un peu de théorie' contested his assertion that the use of violence could not exceed the 'limits of necessity'. In Henry's opinion, no one could arrogate to himself the right to define these 'limits'. Terrorist acts were appropriate because the masses had to wake up and terrorism exposed the weakness of the bourgeoisie. Malatesta could promote organisations of workers, but he could not affirm that that was the only correct way to act. Henry agreed with Malatesta that man was a product of institutions. But for Henry institutions were the people who comprised them, so targeting these individuals undermined the foundations of bourgeois society.

E noi accogliamo con gioia tutti gli atti energici di rivolta contro la società borghese, perché non dimentichiamo che la rivoluzione non sarà che la risultante di tutte queste rivolte particolari.¹³⁴

Malatesta resented these relentless personal attacks. And he complained about them in a letter to Corio. As we have had cause to note previously Malatesta faced a period of deep discouragement and depression. And *Germinal* may have pushed him over the edge. Virgilio reported:

Malatesta è un nevrotico. Quando trova qualche contrasto fa atti di pazzo. Alle volte avviene che dà la testa davvero nei muri. Ciò ha fatto per gli ultimi attacchi del "Germinal" e la sua ira contro Margiotti ed il Gualducci non ha limiti.¹³⁵

Nevertheless, the relationship between Antonelli and Malatesta does not seem to have been affected by the release of *Germinal*. One year later Antonelli wrote in a letter that Malatesta was his only friend in London.¹³⁶ In 1905, after Antonelli's arrest for the publication of *L'Insurrezione*, Malatesta was particularly active in his defence committee. In fact, their relationship was long lasting. Antonelli sent financial aid to Malatesta in 1931; two years later, after Malatesta's death, he organised a collection in the United States to support the purchase of a proper grave for the anarchist leader.

The last article published in *Germinal* analysed British trade unions, taken as an example of the worthlessness of workers' organisations. Carlo Berruti, the author, advanced several concerns, describing them as corporate organisations that supported native workers to the detriment of immigrants. In addition, contrary to general belief,

¹³⁴ 'Una polemica fra Henry e Malatesta', *ibidem*, p. 4.

¹³⁵ Virgilio's report, 11 May 1903. ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

trade unions were powerless. This was underlined by the recent law (temporarily) introduced to make the trade unions liable for the financial losses suffered by employers from strikes. In England, Berruti remarked, strikes had been successful only when the unorganised resorted to violence against employers as had happened for example during dockers' and miners' strikes of the 1890s.

In all other cases, where the trade unions were in charge, strikes ended in failure. Finally, the trade unions supported members in Parliament. For all these reasons, the enthusiasm that anarchists in Britain and Italy had exuded for trade unions was misguided.

Questi sono i mali non solo della organizzazione operaia inglese; se vogliamo vederci bene, sono gli stessi che si verificano negli altri paesi. Per questo noi non vogliamo entrarci e crediamo che se qualcosa di buono si possa fare è all'infuori di questi cancrenosi organismi conservatori.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ 'Fino ad oggi la mia esistenza trascorse nella monotonia glaciale dell'isolamento. Al di fuori di qualche raro compagno come Enrico (il Malatesta) non ebbi nessun amico'; Questura di Roma to Minister of Interior, 21 March 1904. ACS, CPC, b. 104, f. (Antonelli Adolfo).

¹³⁷ C. Berruti, 'Il movimento operaio in Inghilterra', *ibidem*, p. 4.

L'Insurrezione (July 1905)

‘L’Avvenire noi siamo, pensiero e dinamite’

Antonelli promoted the publication of the single issue *L'Insurrezione* on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of Bresci's assassination of Umberto I. He broached the idea in April 1905 during a meeting at the *Università popolare* and faced Malatesta's opposition.¹³⁸ Antonelli was able to collect funds from Switzerland, London and Italy, with which he paid the cost of the printing of one thousand copies of the single issue. (Antonelli as we had cause to note in Chapter 4, asked for both an article and financial aid from the spy of the Italian embassy: Federico Lauria).¹³⁹ *L'Insurrezione* was published on a wave of excitement for the revolutionary events in Russia, particularly for the mutiny of the ‘Potëmkin’. Indeed, *L'Insurrezione* was a call to the anarchists to abandon their endless internal quarrels and theoretical debates and to dedicate themselves entirely to revolution: it was time for action, not for debates. All wings of the anarchist movement were to prepare and to propagate an armed insurrection on their own, within or outside workers' associations.¹⁴⁰ ‘E' necessario che noi cessiamo di essere dei chiacchieroni ed abbracciamo il vessillo dove sta scritto “prima rivoluzionari, poi anarchici”’.¹⁴¹

The single issue's position was very similar to that of the previous publications Antonelli had a hand in. Parliamentary socialists were the cause of people's passiveness. The anarchists represented the only genuine revolutionary group.¹⁴² In all their articles the contributors, Crastinus (Corio), Homo (Antonelli), Nerisso (Rissone) and Giacomino Giacomini (Giacinto Ferrarone), repeated insistently the message of action now.

¹³⁸ Inspector Mandolesi to the Ministry of Interior, ‘Relazione del movimento dei sovversivi in Londra nei mesi di Marzo e Aprile’, London 1905, ACS, PS, 1905, b 22.

¹³⁹ Antonelli's letter to Federico Lauria, 14 July 1905. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

¹⁴⁰ Quelli dell'Insurrezione, ‘L'Insurrezione’, *L'Insurrezione*, July 1905, pp. 1-2.

¹⁴¹ Internationaliste, ‘Ai compagni tutti’, *ibidem*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴² ‘Troppi sono coloro, che si dicono rivoluzionari credendo che tutto si possa fare per opera magica per poter essere veramente coerenti con i nostri principi. Molto dottrinarismo, e rivoluzionarismo frasario e molto poca azione rivoluzionaria si è fatta sin ora e tutto ciò è vergognoso e scoraggiante...E' tempo di finirla con i pettegolezzi, colla filosofia, colle accademie! E' tempo di finirla col criticare platonicamente chi tradisce negli scioperi, chi turlupina i lavoratori, mentre traditori e turlupinatori, a nostra volta, lo siamo pur noi se continueremo ad incitare i lavoratori alla rivolta quando per questa non siamo preparati, quando, noi, per primi non ci troviamo in prima fila’. Internationaliste, ‘Ai compagni tutti’, *ibidem*, pp. 3-4.

Non bastano soltanto i nostri giornali: essi son letti soltanto dai già anarchici. Quelli che sono la forza, perché il numero, ci ignorano o ci fuggono perché non ci comprendono. La rivoluzione, ricordatelo bene, o [sic] compagni, non sarà opera di una maggioranza cosciente ma bensì, come tutte quelle passate, di una infima minoranza risoluta, che avrà saputo trascinare dietro la maggioranza – la massa..¹⁴³

Antonelli and Rissone addressed soldiers, inciting them to join the rebels on the day the revolution started.¹⁴⁴ However, despite the intentions of the editors, the impact that single issue had in the colony of Italian anarchists in London was exclusively due to the local authorities unusual reaction. As we have seen in Chapter 3, the police seized the single issue almost immediately and this led to their prosecution.¹⁴⁵

La Guerra Tripolina (April 1912)

A gap of seven years elapsed between the events related with the publication of *L'Insurrezione* and the appearance of a new single issue published by the Italian anarchists in London.

In September 1911, as previously discussed in Chapter 4, Giolitti ordered the invasion of Libya. The war was at its most intense when the Italian anarchists in London published *La Guerra Tripolina* expressing their opposition to the imperialist adventure. This single issue was probably the outcome of several meetings and debates that the anarchists had organised in London. Malatesta wrote the leading article, 'La Guerra e gli anarchici', which subsequently reappeared several times in other anarchist publications.

Malatesta did not discuss the political reasons that were supposed to be the cause for the war. Instead he engaged the moral arguments that had been presented to justify the invasion of Libya. These were essentially three: first, the Italian people were not conscious of their potential, of their vital energy; for this reason, Italy did not occupy the place that the country deserved in the world. Secondly, Italy was bringing civilisation to a barbarous country. Finally, the point most stressed by pro-war propaganda, support of the invasion was a genuine expression of patriotism and of love of fatherland.

¹⁴³ *Ibidem*

¹⁴⁴ See: 'Processo Antonelli-Barberi, 12 September 1905'. ACS, CPC, b.154, f. (Antonelli Adolfo). See also: PRO, CRIM 1/98/8 and HO144/795/131464.

¹⁴⁵ Italian consul to Ministry of Interior, 21 August 1905, ACS, CPC, b. 154, f. (Antonelli Adolfo).

Answering the first argument, according to which the war served to awaken and to develop popular energies, Malatesta sought an alternative:

L'energia della gente civile, la forza che produce davvero intensità di vita non è quella che si spiega nelle lotte inter-umane, colla prepotenza contro i deboli, coll'oppressione dei vinti. Ma è quella che si esercita nella lotta contro le forze avverse della natura, nei compiti del lavoro fecondo, nelle ardue ricerche della scienza, nell'ajutare a progredire quelli che restano indietro, nel sollevare i caduti, nel conquistare per tutti gli esseri umani sempre maggiore potenza e maggiore benessere.¹⁴⁶

Discussing the second point, Malatesta argued that war, invasion and robbery were not factors for the promotion of civilisation. On the contrary, by sending its army to Africa, not only was Italy committing an outrage against Libya, but also demeaning itself.

L'Italia...ha tutto un popolo intelligente e gentile...potrebbe ascendere rapidamente alle più alte vette della civiltà... E invece, ingannata da coloro stessi che la opprimono...nel tentativo infame di ridurre in schiavitù un popolo straniero, essa s'imbruttisce e si fa schiava di se stessa.¹⁴⁷

In the second half of the article, which entirely occupied the first page of the single issue, Malatesta dealt with the issue of patriotism, a question of particular interest for someone who lived most of his life abroad. Patriotism was a sentiment that had a forceful appeal to people. The oppressors, claimed Malatesta, knowingly employed it in order to dampen down class conflict; thus, the call for solidarity of race and nation made the oppressed served the interests of the oppressors.

Real patriotism, in Malatesta's opinion, was a mixture of positive feelings:

L'amore del loco natio, o piuttosto il maggiore amore per il luogo dove siamo stati allevati, dove abbiamo ricevuto le carezze materne, dove bambini giocammo coi bambini, e giovanetti conquistammo il primo bacio di una fanciulla amata, la preferenza per la lingua che comprendiamo meglio e quindi le più intime relazioni con coloro che la parlano, sono fatti naturali e benefici. Benefici perché, mentre riscaldano il cuore di più vivi palpiti e stringono più solidi vincoli di solidarietà nei vari gruppi umani e favoriscono l'originalità dei vari tipi, non fanno male ad alcuno e non contrastano, anzi favoriscono, il progresso generale.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Errico Malatesta, 'La Guerra e gli anarchici', *La Guerra Tripolina*, April 1912.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibidem*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibidem*

However, patriotism had grown up when conquerors and oppressors were one in the same; thus often a fight against foreign invaders meant a fight against oppression. Love of fatherland developed from hatred for foreign oppressors but this type of patriotism was no longer needed in Italy or elsewhere. The anarchists were internationalists: their fatherland was the whole world.

Noi aborriamo la guerra, fratricida sempre e dannosa, e vogliamo la rivoluzione sociale liberatrice: noi deprechiamo le lotte fra popoli ed invochiamo la lotta contro le classi dominanti.

In case of a war, however, the anarchists supported peoples who were fighting for their independence. Therefore, in the case of the invasion of Libya:

...santa è la rivolta degli arabi contro il tiranno italiano. Per l'onore d'Italia, noi speriamo che il popolo italiano rinsavito, sappia imporre al governo il ritiro dall'Africa; e se no, speriamo che gli arabi riescano a cacciarlo.¹⁴⁹

The other articles in the single issue added to Malatesta's arguments questioning the failure of the anarchists and socialists to prevent the war. Neither party was faultless in failing this major responsibility. Felice Vezzani argued that errors and internal quarrels, especially by the individualists, had paralysed the anarchists' activity. But the lack of ideals in the working class was also a hindrance.

Poiché, teniamolo presente; [sic] se nell'ora attuale siamo costretti a constatare la nostra impotenza e quella del proletariato di fronte al presente criminoso attentato della borghesia italiana, lo si deve alla mancanza di un alto ideale.¹⁵⁰

Corio, who in the following years became deeply involved with Sylvia Pankhurst in the campaigns against the Fascist colonisation of Ethiopia advanced his criticisms of the Italian government's reasons for war. The colonial undertaking satisfied the economic interests of a financial élite: namely military suppliers and land speculators. Italian emigration would not find an outlet in Libya. Emigration was induced by poverty the solution to this problem would be found within Italy. Furthermore, the government's claim that a budget surplus would finance the war was a lie. In the meantime, thanks to the war, the people's attention was diverted from domestic social questions.

¹⁴⁹ Errico Malatesta, 'La guerra e gli anarchici', *La Guerra Tripolina*, April 1912, p. 1.

Il proletario ...dimenticò che il sangue degli arabi tripolini ribadisce le catene del proletariato italiano nelle risaie lombarde, nelle zolfare sicule, nelle officine.¹⁵¹

Corio suggested that the real patriotic challenge for the ruling class was to alleviate people's poverty and to allow freedom of thought.¹⁵² Therefore, the war that Italy really needed, Corio concluded, was the war of the poor against the rich.

The second part of *La Guerra Tripolina* gives us an idea of the difficulties that the anarchists had to face, within the Italian colony, to express their opposition to the war. In particular, the single issue attacked the pro-war propaganda carried out by the section of 'Società Nazionale Italiana Dante Alighieri'¹⁵³, which had just been established in London.

An 'Open letter to the Italian Ambassador in London', written in response to the speech that the ambassador gave at the inaugural meeting of this Society, is exemplary in this sense:

Ella nel pronunciare il discorso inaugurale di fondazione davanti la numerosa adunanza, composta di parecchie centinaia di italiani della nostra colonia londinese, ha trovato modo...di inneggiare, invitando gli astanti ad imitarla, alle "valorose gesta militari dei nostri soldati che pugnano eroicamente per la conquista della Tripolitania e la Cirenaica" [...]. Mentre che l'uditorio ascoltava, trascinato e sopraffatto, l'inebbrianti parole di gloria, di patria, e di conquiste civilizzatrici, e giubilante prorompeva in frenetiche acclamazioni alle eloquenti fioriture retoriche [...] in un angolo riposto della sala un oscuro operaio, quale sono io, di basso stato e di nessuna altra autorità che quella di sapersi dalla parte della ragione, fremeva di indignazione, soffocando nel proprio cuore un grido di protesta.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ F. Vezzani, 'Scuotiamoci', *ibidem*, p. 2.

¹⁵¹ Silvio Corio, 'La Guerricciuola dei piccoli italiani', *ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

¹⁵² 'Ad un popolo per natura intelligente e vivace dare, davvero, e scuole e libri per l'educazione elementare; far scomparire l'analfabetismo [...] arar la maremma e distruggere la malaria, [...] introdurre nei latifondi meridionali e siculi la cultura intensiva, e macchine a lavorar le risaie; [...] dar il nome di Dante a una scuola, non ad una corazzata micidiale; osar di pensar; osar di lasciare pensare', *ibidem*.

¹⁵³ The Society was established in Rome in 1889 in order to 'sponsor' Italian language and culture in the lands occupied by Austria. Its purpose 'was not only cultural, but also political and strongly anti-Austrian. The Society did not limit its irredentism to the Trentino and Trieste, but aimed to extend it to every part of the world where Italian emigrants lived'. 'From this point of view emigration, usually regarded as a negative event because of the loss of vital energies to the fatherland, now acquired a positive aspect as a "pacifist" form of expansionism, an "imperialism with clean hands". In particular, the Society was interested in the expansion of *italianità* in the Adriatic (especially in Albania), and in the Mediterranean; in 1908 it founded branches in Tripoli and Cyrenaica. Italian Nationalists promoted similar aims during the years preceding the Great War'. Claudia Baldoli, *Exporting Fascism: Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930s* (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2003), p. 8.

¹⁵⁴ Ottavio Valperga, 'Lettera aperta a S.E. il Marchese Francavilla, Regio Ambasciatore d'Italia a Londra', *La Guerra Tripolina*, April 1912, p. 3.

The single issue also directed criticisms against another speaker, Antonio Cippico, professor of Italian Literature at University College and founder of the London section of the *Dante Alighieri Society*, who gave a lecture there supporting the war.¹⁵⁵ The rest of the articles in *La Guerra Tripolina* looked at the attempt against King Vittorio Emanuele's life by a young bricklayer, Antonio D'Alba. Malatesta wrote an article discussing the reasons that could have driven the young man to commit this act, which included the war in Libya and the generalised climate of violence and reaction. However, the fate of Antonelli and Barberi after the publication of *L'Insurrezione* still restrained the anarchists from freely expressing their thoughts. Indeed, in answer to a rhetorical question about the utility of individual acts of violence in an atmosphere of stifled protest and apathy, Malatesta answered: 'Noi, non avendo la libertà di dire tutto ciò che pensiamo, preferiamo tacerci'.¹⁵⁶

References to the struggle of the Italian people during the Risorgimento recurred frequently in *La Guerra Tripolina*. The anarchists believed that supporters of the war had misappropriated the heroes of the Risorgimento.

On the one hand, the contributors attempted to demystify what the anarchists considered a misuse of this legacy.¹⁵⁷ On the other, the anarchists pointed to the absurdity of the newspaper *Londra-Roma*, which celebrated the enemies of monarchies - Mazzini, Milano, Orsini, Oberdan – and, simultaneously, praised the House of Savoy and its current imperialist adventure.¹⁵⁸

La Guerra Tripolina, as we have seen in Chapter 4, led to the public dispute with Bellelli, the publication of *La Gogna*, the imprisonment of Malatesta and his near deportation to Italy.

¹⁵⁵ Natale, 'La Dante Alighieri', *ibidem*, p. 4.

¹⁵⁶ Errico Malatesta, 'L'attentato di Roma', *ibidem*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁷ 'Mi sa dire Ella che cosa hanno di comune i nomi da lei tirati in ballo di Garibaldi, Mazzini, Ugo Foscolo, Antonio Panizzi, che su questa terra cercaron rifugio per la causa oppressa e del popolo italiano ridotto in servitù, coll'attuale brigantaggio che sta perpetrando in Libia la nuova Italia "civilizzatrice?"', Ottavio Valperga, 'Lettera aperta', or 'Sarem noi che avrem mostrato che non è completamente spento in Italia il sentimento che animò Mazzini e Garibaldi e tutta quella schiera gloriosa d'Italiani che [...] fece caro il nome d'Italia a quanti, in tutti i paesi, avevano un palpito per la causa della libertà, dell'indipendenza e della giustizia', Errico Malatesta, 'La guerra e gli anarchici', *ibidem*, p.1.

¹⁵⁸ See: Jacob, 'Ad un Cortigiano', and Errico Malatesta 'L'attentato di Roma' *ibidem*, p. 2.

Conclusion

The newspapers published by the Italian anarchists in London were mainly dedicated to propagating the general principles of anarchism, and they concentrated on the political situation in Italy. It is not possible to consider them as political newspapers particularly rooted in the Italian colony in London. Many of them, the single issues in particular, had the limits that often characterised anarchist publications. They were overly doctrinaire, rhetorical and dogmatic. It is difficult to evaluate their influence on the Italian colony in itself; however it must be observed that the subscribers and activists and the writers in these newspapers were often the same people. Yet, despite these limitations these newspapers were fundamental for maintaining the presence of an anarchist press in Italy in the face of government harassment back home. Moreover, some of those newspapers, such as *L'Associazione*, *L'Anarchia*, or *Lo Sciopero Generale*, played a leading role in defining new strategies and orientations for the international anarchist movement.

AGLI ANARCHICI DI LINGUA ITALIANA

LONDRA, Settembre 1902.

Compagni,

NELLA fiducia di avere eliminato le ragioni che ci fecero fallire in anteriori analoghi tentativi, facciamo appello al vostro concorso per la pubblicazione di un organo socialista-anarchico che prenderà il titolo:

“LA RIVOLUZIONE SOCIALE.”

Segue un breve cenno delle ragioni che ci muovono e che ci proponiamo di sviluppare ampiamente nel detto periodico.

Fuvi un tempo in cui gli anarchici, disdegnosi delle piccole lotte di cui è composta la vita quotidiana, non pensavano guari che alle grandi giornate della rivoluzione auspicata. E vi si preparavano, moralmente elaborando il proprio ideale, materialmente raccogliendo i mezzi di lotta che erano in grado di procurarsi. Non sapendo acconciarsi alle necessità pratiche della propaganda in mezzo ad un ambiente ostile, e mal avvertendo, per soverchia baldanza, l'enorme sproporzione tra la povertà estrema dei mezzi e la grandiosità del fine da conseguire, essi restarono lontani dalla massa che non li comprendeva; e non riuscirono, malgrado tentativi audaci e grandi sacrifici, a far sentire in modo efficace la loro azione sui fatti sociali e finirono col farsi prendere la mano da gente per la quale il socialismo non era che un mezzo per andare al potere.

Poi si son accorti dell'errore ed han cercato di correggerlo.

Vista l'impotenza della semplice propaganda teorica e delle piccole congreghe più o meno segrete; compreso chiaramente che la rivoluzione, e soprattutto una rivoluzione a tendenze anarchiche, non si fa senza la simpatia della massa da liberare, si sono slanciati nella vita pubblica, prendono parte attiva, e non di rado preponderante, nel movimento operaio e raccolgono dalla nuova attività frutti abbondanti di propaganda e d'influenza per il bene.

Ma è avvenuto purtroppo quello che suole avvenire in tutte le reazioni contro un errore: si è caduti nell'errore opposto.

Si è riconosciuto il danno dell'isolamento, ma si è fraternizzato troppo con gente che per interessi e per idee ci sono naturalmente nemici.

Si è riconosciuto l'utilità e l'importanza della nostra attiva partecipazione al movimento operaio, ma si è finito col credere, da parte di molti, che esso movimento sviluppandosi indefinitamente potesse da solo risolvere la questione.

Si è riconosciuto che il fare appello continuo alla rivoluzione c'impediva spesso di poter dire le ragioni per le quali essa rivoluzione s'invocava, e che per poter fare la propaganda pubblica in barba alla polizia bisognava all'occorrenza sapere attenuare il proprio linguaggio e farsi capire a mezza parola; ma smettendo l'uso di dire sempre e dappertutto chiaro e tondo quello che si vuole, si è finito spesso col dimenticare l'esistenza di quello che si tace e col credere — o almeno fare come se si credesse — che tutto il vero programma degli anarchici sia quello che si può esporre senza soverchio pericolo innanzi ai regi procuratori.

Si è riconosciuto che colle pietre e qualche vecchio fucilaccio non si possono affrontare con successo le armi perfezionate degli eserciti moderni, e si è finito col trascurare ogni previsione di lotta materiale e fare come se i soldati non avessero più fucili e non li avessero proprio per spiarli addosso a noi ed al popolo.

Si è voluto insomma allargare il movimento, ma non si è badato al pericolo di perdere in intensità quello che si guadagnava in estensione.

Ed intanto gli avvenimenti seguono il loro corso.

L'agitarsi generale delle classi lavoratrici mostra che il popolo va diventando sempre più insofferente del giogo, e che siamo forse alla vigilia di una di quelle crisi violente che fanno epoca nella storia dell'evoluzione sociale. Ed i recenti avvenimenti che hanno commosso ed insanguinato varie città

III.5.1. Leaflet announcing the publication of *La Rivoluzione Sociale*. (IISH, Fabbri Archive, b. 29).

Giovedì 14 Marzo 1901, ore 8 p.m.

Festa Libertaria

A FAVORE DEL GIORNALE SOCIALISTA-ANARCHICO "L'INTERNAZIONALE."

ATHENÆUM HALL—73, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD

PROGRAMMA.

Apertura (Piano) Prof. L. SALOMONE.

ROMANZE { Signor G. GROSSI *tenore*.
 " A. COLLO *baritono*.

Il Canto del Galeotto (*monologo*) Sig. G. FERRARONE.

SENZA PATRIA

Bozzetto Sociale in due atti di Pietro Gori.

PERSONAGGI.

Giorgio, *agricoltore, ex garibaldino*, Sig. G. BARBERI—Annita *sua figlia*,
Sig. na A. SCOLARI—Arturo, *giovane bracciante*, Sig. MAGNONI—Giovanna
madre di Giorgio, Sig. a CESIRA—Tonio *vecchio marinaio*, A. CAMPAGNOLI
—Don Andrea, *parroco del paese*, Sig. G. PIFFERRI—Beppino, *carrettiere*,
Sig. G. SCOLARI.

CONFERENZE DI L. MICHEL, TARRIDA DEL MARMOL, E. MALATESTA
Mr. KELLY.

Romanza inglese, Miss JENNY ATKINSON | *L'INFAME*, (*poesia*) Bruna Magnoni.

LES "NOMIS" DANS LES ŒUVRES DES POETES MONTMARTROIS.

MAIS QUELQU'UN TROUBLA LA FETE.

Action en vers de Louis Marsolleau, interdite par la censure a Paris
le Juin 1900, jouée par un groupe libre de langue française.

PERSONNAGES: Le paysan, l'ouvrier, l'inconnu M. JACQUES BONHOMME—
Le financier, M. VAN-DERBIELT—Le politicien, M. JEVA-ES—Le général, M.
GAL-IFFAIT—Le juge, M. PUY BARREAU—L'évêque, M. DE PARISSÉ—
La duchesse, madame DE LAMBALLE—La courtisane, madame PAULETTE.

M. REYMOND dans son répertoire. — M. MILLARD monologue.

Mad. Frédé Diction. — Sig. Gemignani Pezzi d'opera. — Les Frédés Duettistes.

CORO RIVOLUZIONARIO SPAGNUOLO.

Mad. Krueger *Romance Allemande* | M. Frédé-Rick dans son répertoire.

CORO ITALIANO.

Prezzo di ammissione 6d. e 1s.

Ill.5.2. Programme of a *soirée* to raise funds for the newspaper *L'Internazionale* (ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. Malatesta Errico).

CHAPTER 6

Politics and Sociability: the Anarchist Clubs

Introduction

Sociability was one of the main factors in the birth of socialism in Italy. In Italian villages *osterie* were centres of republican and socialist conspiracies before and after unification. *Osterie* opposed the *campanili* (bell-towers), symbols of clericalism and reaction.¹ For Italian exiles in England, that background intersected with the longstanding local tradition of political clubs.² In the 1870s, when the first groups of Internationalists found refuge in London, numerous small clubs and working class organisations were active around Soho and Clerkenwell, and they were intertwined with the growing colony of political refugees from all over Europe.

Generally speaking, conditions of life for refugees were very difficult. In the descriptions and memoirs of their lives in London, it is possible to notice several similarities in refugees' complaints, from the weather and the quality of the food to the unfriendly temperament of the English people, whom Malatesta described as 'forse il più xenofobo del mondo'.³ In this adverse environment, the refugees used to spend their social life with their fellow countrymen and political comrades. For the exiles, as Rudolf Rocker remembered, 'the social life at that period depended entirely on the clubs'.⁴ Thus, political refugees used to assemble in national and political groups, to meet in usual places, such as restaurants, public houses or clubs. In these centres, they could organise forms of mutual aid; they were able to maintain their typical social life in a foreign context, and hold their endless political discussions.⁵

¹ See: M. Ridolfi, *Il circolo virtuoso. Sociabilità democratica, associazionismo e rappresentanza politica nell'Ottocento* (Florence: Centro editoriale toscano, 1992); B. Bottignolo, *Without a Bell Tower. A Study of the Italian Immigrants in South West England* (Rome: Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1985).

² See: S. Shipley, *Club Life and Socialism in Mid Victorian London* (London: Journeyman/London Workshop Centre, 1983).

³ Malatesta, 'Scarfoglio', *Umanità Nova*, n. 140, 23 September 1920, also in Malatesta, *Scritti scelti*, vol. I, p. 238.

⁴ Rudolf Rocker, *The London Years* (London: Robert Anscombe, 1956), p. 67.

⁵ Enrico Verdecchia, 'Tedeschi e italiani: rapporti e contrasti tra due comunità nell'esilio londinese', *Bollettino della Domus Mazziniana*, 2, 1996, p. 178.

The major gatherings of Italian refugees in London took place in Greek Street, which, in the early 1870s, was the site of one of the most famous Italian pubs and meeting point for republican refugees:

Bendi, the Garibaldian public-house-keeper, [...] had two bars, one for the ordinary English customers, while the other was frequented almost exclusively by foreigners, the great number being Italians. This bar led to a little inner room where private conversation could be held in which Bendi himself often joined, leaving his wife to serve the ordinary customers, with instructions accidentally to drop a pewter pot on the floor if among these she noticed a foreign political spy.⁶

On the corner between Greek Street and Old Compton Street there were:

two celebrated little hotels. The first, distinguished by a couple of bow windows on the street level, was the *Albergo de Venezia*. This place used to be frequented by one of Mazzini's confidential secretaries, and for many years was a popular rendez vous for the Italian revolutionists. Many an anatheme has been hurled at the Pope and even against the burly head of Victor Emanuel from this place, and preparations made to support the raids organised by Garibaldi.⁷

This hotel was presumably the same where Italian anarchists used to meet during the 1890s, called the *Albergo Bella Venezia*, which was often mentioned by Italian agents in their reports to the embassy.

These clubs served also to organise a network of mutual aid, primarily in order to face the major needs of the poorest refugees, for example providing low-cost dinners, as it happened from 1846 among the French refugees at the *Hotel des Bons Amis*.⁸

In Bendi's public house:

on the first floor there was a large room, and here the Communist Refugees' Society used to meet. This was a non political association of politicians formed as to help those who in their exiled life had no means of subsistence. The more fortunate refugees, who were able to earn their living, subscribed to help their brothers-in-arms. Sometimes help was obtained from charitable or sympathising outsiders. Many a despairing communist was saved from literal starvation by the numerous two penny meals which this one donation

⁶Adolphe Smith, 'Political Refugees', in Sir Walter Besant, *London in the Nineteenth Century* (London: 1909), p. 404.

⁷*Ibidem*

⁸'A French dinner soup, two courses, salad, dessert, half a bottle of wine, and a demi-tasse of black coffee, could be obtained for the modest sum of eighteen pence all included, and, as the cooking was absolutely French, and hours might elapse without a word of English being heard in the establishment, the exile felt himself at home again, and this without too great a strain upon his slender purse'. (*ibidem*)

provided, for this was the society which had organised the refugee's soup-kitchen off Newman Street.⁹

It was in this area of London, in Rose Street, that the exile community opened the *German Communist Workers' Educational Club* (KABv) in the early 1870s. Apart from German, the KABv had five other language sections: Italian, French, Polish, Russian and English. The club was flooded by refugees after the passage of the Anti-Socialist Laws in Germany; among them was Johann Most who moved the printing press of his newspaper *Freiheit* to the premises of the club.¹⁰ The club served also as the organisational centre for the International Social Revolutionary and Anarchist Congress in July 1881.

Italian Internationalists opened their own club in June 1879 with the establishment of a *Circolo Italiano di Studij Sociali* that was 'composto essenzialmente di elementi operai'. The main aim of the circle was education of the working class of its social rights: 'Vogliamo in una parola nutrire lo stomaco e non lasciare languire il cervello: chiedere ed ottenere Pane, Scienza, e Lavoro'.¹¹ For this purpose the first initiative of the Circle was an attempt to open a library. However, about one year later, the managing committee of the *Circolo Italiano di Studij Sociali* decided to transform itself and to merge into the already existing *Club International des Études sociales de Londres* at the *White Hart*, 9 Windmill Street, Fitzroy Square. This circle was devoted to the same ideals; the first article of its statute declared:

But et moyens

Art 1: Le *Club International d'Études Sociales de Londres* a pour but le développement intellectuel de ses membres. Il a pour moyens: la discussion des questions sociales: la création d'un Cercle, centre de relations quotidiennes; la fondation d'une bibliothèque; l'organisation de conférences...¹²

The *Club International* published a monthly bulletin, *Le Travail*. A number of expatriates of different nationalities contributed to it, in particular: Brocher, Brousse, Conti, Costa, Dardelle, Figueras, Guesde, Hall, Hartmann, Lombard, Malon, Muller, Verrycken, and de Richard.

⁹ *Ibidem*

¹⁰ Most was arrested and imprisoned in 1881 for publishing in the *Freiheit* an article applauding the assassination of Tsar Alexander II and for incitement to murder. See: Bernard Porter, 'The Freiheit Prosecutions, 1881-1882', *The Historical Journal*, 23, 4, (1980), pp. 833-856.

¹¹ Enrico Vercellino, Tito Zanardelli, Giorgio Boezio, 'Circolo Italiano di Studj Sociali', 3 June 1879, IISH, *Jung Archive*, b. 535.

¹² 'Règlement Club International d' études sociales de Londres', *Le Travail*, 1 April 1880.

In the 1870s, anarchist clubs bolstered both the creation of a network between refugees of different nationalities and the establishment of links with British radicalism; clubs were ‘an important feature of the organisation of the party in London’.¹³

Clubs were essential instruments of organisation, but they accomplished other functions as well. First of all, by being the principal meeting point for the Babel of anarchists who lived in the capital, they eased socialising between the many different national anarchist groups. In 1891, *Freedom* reported enthusiastically about the outcome of a social evening:

More than a hundred comrades assembled on the evening of March 28th in the tipper chamber of a City coffee tavern, to enjoy the pleasure of each other's society, to renew old friendships and form new ones, to gain inspiration, in an interchange of opinion and in comradeship, for the work lying before us. A glance round the large room, with its pleasant little tea tables, each brightened by the music of friendly talk, showed Germans and Frenchmen from the *Autonomie* in conversation with Englishmen from the provinces, Jewish Comrades from Berner Street, laughing and talking with members of the Italian group, the Editor of the *Herald of Anarchy* in amicable discussion with one of the *Freedom* staff, friends from Hammersmith Socialist Society, the London Socialist League, the Individualist Anarchist League, all cordially mingling with Anarchist Communists from every group in London.¹⁴

Moreover, clubs represented a vital support for refugees who landed in London after long and exhausting journeys. Indeed, it was in the clubs that refugees received first aid from their comrades: hospitality, some food, and precious advice. However, when persecution on the continent increased, the consequent overflow of expatriates brought conditions in the clubs to a crisis. The French anarchist Malato recalled the efforts that were made at the *Autonomie club* in order to shelter the wave of refugees escaping from France in 1892:

Ce club était, dans les circonstances présentes, devenu, sinon un repaire, du moins un point de repère précieux à la fois pour les arrivants ... On se casait et s'organisait comme on pouvait. Les locaux exigus du club *Autonomie* étaient transformés en dortoirs; une Marmite sociale avait été créée par et pour les plus miséreux: bien qu'alimentée dans la mesure du possible par des dons volontaires, elle était plus souvent vide que pleine: L'idée valait pourtant quelque chose, mais si âpre était la vie dans cette petite république anarchiste que ceux qui la composaient n'avaient qu'en désir: la quitter.¹⁵

¹³ Ralph Derechef, ‘Anarchism in England’, in F. Dubois, *The Anarchist Peril* (London: Unwin, 1894), p. 269.

¹⁴ ‘Our Social Evening’, *Freedom*, V, 53, April 1891.

The *Autonomie club*, at 6 Windmill Street, was well known in the 1880s and early 1890s. It was 'a very small place, just two rooms'¹⁶, 'composé d' une salle longue et étroite, d'une petite cantine et de deux ou trois pièces exiguës au premier étage'.¹⁷ The club, located in Charlotte Street, was founded in 1886 by the German anarchist Peukert after his expulsion by Victor Dave, member of the Socialist League, from another club in Whitfield Street. Later the *Autonomie club* moved to Windmill Street off Tottenham Court Road. The *Autonomie club* was the principal meeting point for the international colony of anarchists in London, although it was frequented particularly by the individualists. Some of its regulars were Parmeggiani and the members of *La Libera Iniziativa*. The press and the police believed the *Autonomie* was the centre of all the anarchist conspiracies and outrages that were committed in Europe. As Malato pointed out:

Les journaux à l'affût d' informations sensationnelles ont, jusqu'au dernier moment, transformé ce modeste local... en l'ancre de la révolution sociale. Là, affirmaient les reporters à court de copie et heureux de spéculer à trois sous la ligne sur les terreurs bourgeoises, se tramaient tous les complots destinés à éclater sur le continent, se prenaient toutes les résolutions tragiques, se fabriquaient la dynamite, le chlorate de potasse, la nitrobenzine, le rack-a-rock et la poudre verte.¹⁸

The *Autonomie club* was raided by the police twice: the first time in 1892, during investigations related to the arrest of the Walsall anarchists, the second time two years later, following the explosion that killed the anarchist Martial Bourdin in Greenwich Park. Shortly after the raid the premises of the club were mysteriously burned down, signalling the end of the *Autonomie club*.

Thus belief that the anarchist clubs in London were hotbeds of international anarchist conspiracies was broadly shared by public opinion, particularly at the end of nineteenth century. Sernicoli, the police inspector who monitored the colony of the Italian anarchists in Paris, considered the London clubs to be the source of origin of most of the inflammatory publications that were circulating throughout Europe at that time. From his point of view, meetings at the clubs were used as clearing houses for the promotion of the pet manifestos of individual anarchists. Here one could find supporters

¹⁵ C. Malato, *Les Joyeusetés de l'Exile* (Paris: P.V.Stock, 1897), pp. 45-46.

¹⁶ R. Rocker, *The London Years* (London: Robert Anscombe, 1956), p. 67.

¹⁷ C. Malato, *Les Joyeusetés de l'Exile* (Paris: P.V.Stock, 1897), pp. 99-100.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*

and means to publish and distribute political statements throughout Europe and the globe: ‘così l’idea svolta in un club di Londra, fa, in pochi giorni, il giro d’Europa e del mondo’.¹⁹ Moreover, according to Sernicoli, in these clubs anarchists from all European countries met and debated the most efficient techniques and strategies to commit terrorist outrages. They allegedly discussed:

se sia preferibile servirsi delle bombe o del pugnale, se valga meglio assassinare dei pacifici borghesi in un caffè od in una trattoria o rivolgere i colpi contro gli uomini più eminenti d’ogni paese.²⁰

In 1892, the magazine *Tit Bits* published the report of a supposed visit made by one of its contributors to an anarchist headquarters in a suburb of London. The article recounted a speech given by an anarchist recently arrived from Paris, who did not look like ‘the accepted portrait of a blustering political agitator’, exhorting members to commit atrocities and violence. On the contrary, it was possible to perceive from his manners and language that he was a well-educated Frenchman ‘accustomed to good society’. In his talk, the speaker stated that:

...the branches of the society in all the principal cities of Europe possessed members residing, either as occupiers or servants of occupiers, near the chief buildings, and they could obtain on immediate notice delicately – manufactured instruments which would obliterate from the face of this world the offices of government, as well as their occupants. These machines were made on a most ingenious plan devised by a prominent member, and were so constructed that they could be set to explode at any given time, thus allowing those implicated in the plot to escape from the country.²¹

Allegedly the speech was so absorbing that it produced a ‘deadly quiet’ amongst the audience, not a whisper or a sound had been heard.

In 1892, the *Morning Post* alarmed its readers that from France four hundred ‘desperados, voleurs, faussaires et assassins se sont abattus sur notre pays... Ces misérables ont décidé de pénétrer sous des prétextes divers chez tous les riches de Londres et du royaume et de les chloroformer. Apès leur avoir fait perdre connaissance en leur appliquant un bâillon imbibé de cette infernale matière, ils doivent faire main basse sur tout ce qu’ils possèdent...’.²²

¹⁹ E. Sernicoli, *L’Anarchia e gli Anarchici* (Milan: Treves, 1894), vol. 2, p. 176.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 178.

²¹ ‘In An Anarchist Club’, *Tit Bits*, 7 May 1892, p. 7.

²² Quoted in C. Malato, *Les Joyeusetés de l’Exile* (Paris: P.V.Stock, 1897), p. 97.

Malato dismissed allegations that clubs were centres of production of a variety of explosives. Ironically, he considered:

...La période tragique étant passée ...ou interrompue - on ne sait jamais ce que réserve l'avenir - je tiens à déclarer que la seule poudre à la fabrication de laquelle on ait jamais procédé en ce lieu redouté était la poudre d'escampette.²³

Newspapers and popular magazines nourished the view of the anarchist clubs as centres of conspiracies by circulating gloomy descriptions of them. For example, they often pictured entrances to those clubs as narrow, dim passages provided with security doors and watchmen.

A ring at the side door of the shop before mentioned secures for anyone admittance into a long passage. The door is opened by means of a wire running from a second door a few yards along this passage. This wire is operated by a swarthy-looking janitor [...] This door-keeper knows by sight all the "admitted" members of the party in London, with not a few of the provincial ones as well, and he would not allow anyone pass the second door if he knew them to be strangers, unless they produce vouchers of their interest in the cause. This second door has rather a deceptive appearance, it does not look formidable, but it is for all that. It is covered with green baize, and has a small slide let into a panel through which the keeper can inspect anyone coming down the passage. The door would take some time to force were the keeper to drop an iron-headed recess [sic] the iron bar which swings on a pivot ready for emergency.²⁴

According to the *Tit Bits*, the club was equipped with a second entrance, facing onto a back street, that allowed members to enter the club unobserved by reaching that entrance through a labyrinth of quiet streets. That door served also as a means of escape in case of raids by the police.

Inside their clubs the anarchists were thought to reveal their blood lust. At the beginning of the century, shortly after the failed attempt against King Leopold by the Italian Gennaro Rubino, *Il Corriere della Sera* published an account of an event held at the Athaeneum Hall in Tottenham Court Road:

Il sipario del minuscolo palcoscenico si alza: il rumore delle conversazioni cessa d'un tratto: una donna, che cerca invano di soffocare gli strilli del suo bambino, è costretta ad uscire. Il direttore di scena [...] annunzia che una gentile compagna inglese [...] suonerà qualche pezzo al pianoforte. La giovane musicista si avvanza: una veste nera le scende dritta dalle spalle come

²³ C. Malato, *Les Joyeusetés de l' Exile*, pp. 99-100.

²⁴ 'In An Anarchist Club', *Tit Bits*, 7 May 1892, p. 7.

una dalmatica...sul lato sinistro, sul cuore, la veste ha una macchia rossastra. Poi ella si siede impassibile e suona alcuni pezzi anodini. Ma la giovane statua si commuove [...] La canzone della giovane iniziata si intenerisce sulle miserie umane per risalire alle cime dell'odio. Con quale accento la giovane promette il bacio, la felicità all'amante ideale che le tornerà accanto fiero di aver combattuto le ingiustizie trionfanti della società. [...] Un uomo basso, tarchiato, vestito da operaio, declama a squarciagola un monologo poetico di sua composizione. E' la difesa, innanzi ai giudici, di un operaio che, spinto dalla fame, per nutrire la moglie e i figli ha uccisa la prima persona viva incontrata per via. Al momento opportuno, l'oratore si toglie dalla cintura un pugnale e rifà con bella efficacia la scena del delitto, dicendosi pronto a ricominciare da capo su tutti i ricchi della terra. E' l'apologia del delitto in versi zoppicanti. Gli oratori si succedono ripetendo in varie lingue e su toni diversi le stesse frasi, gli stessi luoghi comuni. Soltanto una bionda bambina di sei o sette anni si stacca dal quadro uniforme. Ella declama una poesia, il cui ritornello finisce col verso sonoro: *Avanti, avanti sempre col pugnale!*

Al primo ritornello la creatura, tutta graziosa nella veste bianca a nastri rossi, leva il braccio sottile per accompagnare con un gesto il verso terribile. L'assemblea scatta. La piccina s'infiamma: al secondo ritornello cerca un altro effetto ed ha una trovata da grande artista: al momento di levare il braccio, ella batte il piedino sul pavimento. Gli applausi scoppiano con tale entusiasmo che la piccina fugge tra le quinte...²⁵

These and other features such as secret passages, mysterious meetings, and passwords were fostered not only by the press but by a large number of contemporary novels as well.²⁶

Another quite paradoxical myth about the anarchist clubs circulated at the beginning of the century. In 1905, Frosali, the police inspector of the Italian embassy, reported to the Minister of Interior the information that, during his visits to England, King Humbert had a liking for visiting London *incognito*. On one of these occasions, the King had called on two anarchist clubs. Inspector Frosali had picked up this revelation from a short article published in the *Reynold's Newspaper*. Frosali carefully clipped a copy of the article to his report 'perché non si possa supporre che la notizia che fornisco sia fantastica'.²⁷ The source of this story was supposed to be an Irish anarchist. Three years later, Peter Latouche repeated this anecdote in his book on anarchism. According to Latouche:

The late King Humbert, [...] had on several occasions met and been on friendly terms with members of the violent section of Anarchists when sojourning *incognito* in London. His Majesty spoke English perfectly... he had an amazing disregard of danger...It was his delight to roam at will in all

²⁵ 'Una serata presso gli anarchici', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 21-22 November 1902.

²⁶ Haia Shpayer-Makov, 'A Traitor to His Class: the Anarchist in British Fiction', *European Studies*, XXVI, 3, (1996), pp. 299-325.

²⁷ Frosali's September report, London 11 October 1905, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

parts of our great Metropolis, dressed as an artisan...In these excursions he was usually accompanied by an Irish gentleman who was at that time attached to the Turkish Embassy. It was impossible to appease his curiosity without a visit to the Anarchist Clubs... King Humbert, with his Irish guide, visited the Club Autonomie on a Sunday evening, and listened to several of the comrades advocating the uprooting of governments, and the hastening on of the millennium of chaos. Here he was introduced to and shook hands with Louise Michel, with whom he had a long interested, and animated conversation [...] His experience of the Club Autonomie was uninteresting save for the meeting with Louise Michel, but his visit to the Anarchist Club in the Kingsland Road was exciting enough. While he was present, a "comrade" of the extremist type made a violent speech, advocating the removal of all crowned heads of Europe, and of his own in particular. King Humbert was hailed by the assembled Anarchists as a new "comrade" and as a souvenir of his visit and enthusiasm for the cause he was presented with a cartoon. This was a crude drawing depicting Anarchy freeing the workers, by blowing all the reigning monarchs and presidents in office throughout the world into space. The artist himself made the presentation, and in the handing the King the sheet, he said, pointing to what was intended for the head of the King of Italy detached from the body and flying like a cannon-ball towards the heavens: - "*How like you are to that fellow!*". The King, with admirable *sang froid*, admitted the resemblance, and soon after left the club with his Irish guide and the Anarchist artist.²⁸

Malatesta, who had been informed about the article in the *Reynold's Newspaper* discounted these stories as fantasies.

Descriptions from contemporary newspapers and magazines provide specific information about women's participation in the clubs' activities. In contrast to the information kept in police records, in which women scarcely appeared, in these articles it often transpired that women constituted the majority of the entourage attending the evenings at the clubs. However, moralising connotations pervade most of these descriptions. In fact, the authors repeatedly deprecated the immoral practices that were allegedly taking place in the anarchist clubs. Sernicoli, for example, quoted one account of an evening organised in an anarchist club: 'Man mano la sala si riempie. Molte donne, e che razza di donne! Diciamo femmine e tiriamo avanti'.²⁹

In his description of the Italian colony, Wilkins mentioned briefly the presence of women in an anarchist club:

A chi entra nel pseudo-circolo italo-svizzero del quartiere italiano (dove si paga uno scellino mensile di quota col diritto al socio di portare *tre* donne ogni serata) salta tosto agli occhi la mancanza assoluta di rappresentanti italiani del debil sesso. Gli onori della danza al suon dell'organetto, sono

²⁸ P. Latouche, *Anarchy! An Authentic Exposition of the Methods of Anarchists and the Aims of Anarchism* (London: Everett & Co., 1908), pp. 40-45.

²⁹ E. Sernicoli, *L'Anarchia e gli Anarchici* (Milan: Treves, 1894), vol. 2, p. 175.

invece sostenuti da ballerine inglesi ed irlandesi, già serve ed ora amanti di questi Don Giovanni da trivio.³⁰

Il Corriere della Sera, in 1902, presented a more folklore-like image of anarchist women to its readers:

La sala era al completo. L'elemento femminile costituiva la quasi la maggioranza. Vi erano numerose donne del popolo, mogli legittime e compagne libere, che discorrevano del più e del meno, come comari al mercato: fanciulle dai capelli arruffati, dallo sguardo ardente, dalla persona negletta, che pur non erano da confondersi con le abituali frequentatrici del marciapiede disseminate nei dintorni del Museo Britannico... Una giovane donna, che all'accento e all'aspetto si tradiva per un'italiana delle provincie meridionali, serviva le bevande, tenendo sul braccio sinistro un bambino poppante.³¹

Similar descriptions to those given by the magazines can be found in spies' and police reports. Anarchist women (who generally appear in documents as partners or wives of anarchist militants) are labelled as prostitutes and anarchist men were often said to be suffering from syphilis.

From archival sources, politically active women in the anarchist colony appear to have been few. Thus, the peculiarity of being an 'anarchist woman' is obvious by the title chosen by Olivia Rossetti for her novel: *A Girl Among the Anarchists*. Indeed, the majority of the characters in her book were men. As far as can be discerned, in the Italian colony it seems that the chief anarchist women were the British born Rossetti sisters, who edited *The Torch* in the early 1890s and Emilia Trunzio, who was married to Giovanni Defendi, endowed with a strong personality, who had been Malatesta's lover at one point and certainly had a degree of political influence over the famous anarchist.

³⁰ Paulucci di Calboli, R., *I girovaghi italiani in Inghilterra ed i suonatori ambulanti* (Città di Castello: Lapi Tipografo Editore, 1893), p. 175.

³¹ 'Una serata presso gli anarchici', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 21-22 November 1902.

Leisure Activities

Fermin Rocker remembers how the German anarchist club in Charlotte Street provided a home away from home. ‘Not only did it have a hall and a stage with its complement of sets and drops, but at weekends there was nearly always music being played’.³² In a foreign and uncertain environment, clubs were the places where refugees could socialise among compatriots and spend their free time in a friendly atmosphere. According to Rudolf Rocker, up to the First World War, there were very little contacts between the foreign colonies and the native English population in London. Indeed, refugees lived their own separate lives, in their own streets, speaking their own languages. Many of the refugees were able to speak and read only very few words of English during their sojourns in London. Italians, for example, communicated with other refugees mainly in French, a language known by almost all of them. Therefore, ‘social life at that period depended entirely on the clubs’.³³ Spies from the Italian embassy often reported about evenings spent by the Italian anarchists drinking and chatting to each other in their clubs.

Clubs were visited mostly during weekends.

The new Grafton Hall club was the finest meeting place the foreign revolutionaries in London ever had. There was a large room on the ground floor, where the comrades who lived in the neighbourhood came every evening, for company, and for their evening meal. On Saturdays and Sundays it was packed with comrades from other parts of the huge city, who could come only on those days.³⁴

Evening festivities were sometimes held in the clubs as well. At Christmas 1908 members and their families gathered at the club in Charlotte Street for an evening with vocal and instrumental concerts. Dinner started at six, concerts took place at ten, and then dancing lasted from midnight to three in the morning; as reported by the police inspector Frosali it was a real bacchanal. On New Year’s eve, there was another concert; the French sang *La carmagnole* and the Italians *L’Internazionale*.³⁵

Clubs provided different means of recreation. ‘The rooms used by the members are comfortably furnished, and all kind of indoor amusements are provided, as well as a good supply of revolutionary periodicals of all nations. Cards and chess are the

³² F.Rocker, *The East End Years. A Stepney Childhood* (London: Freedom Press, 1998) p. 70.

³³ R. Rocker, *The London Years* (London: Robert Anscombe, 1956), p. 68-69.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 67.

³⁵ Frosali’s report, December 1908. ACS, PS, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

principal diversions indulged'.³⁶ However, card-games were sometimes an issue of contention, since they could degenerate into gambling. At the *International Club* in Charlotte Street it was possible to play billiards. Once a week, a room was used as a gym. The *Grafton Hall Club* was provided at the back 'with a big, bright, comfortable library'.³⁷

Generally, the concerts, evenings of dancing and recitals were the main attractions of the *soirées* organised in the clubs; they were political events and entertainment at the same time. Indeed fund raising was usually tied to the concerts and evenings of dancing. At the official opening of *L'Università popolare di Londra* in 1905, after Malatesta's and Tárrida de Mármol's speeches, two comedies – 'le solite di carattere sovversivo' – were presented: 'Le gendarmie est sans pitié' by G. Courtelins and 'Le Portefeuille' by Octave Mirabeau.³⁸ In conjunction with a meeting held by Malatesta, 'Le Portefeuille' had already been put on at a 'Grande Soirée Internationale' in Holborn on 4 July 1903. A few months later, a *Soirée Familiare*, with musical concerts was held.

The newspaper *L'Internazionale* relied on the money collected during those events, of which a detailed report states:

Riuscitissima fu la rappresentazione del Primo Maggio di P. Gori, nella serata del 5 corr. all'Atheneum Hall, a beneficio del nostro giornale. Il bozzetto fu eseguito come meglio non si sarebbe potuto desiderare. La signorina Annita Scolari, fu una "vergine popolana" superba. Piena di grazie e di sentimento, fece correre la scena come un incanto, e tenne il pubblico affascinato sotto l'energia delle ispirate parole che il Gori mise in bocca alla protagonista del suo bozzetto. La Signora Cesira, sostenne la parte di vecchia madre, con una naturalezza sorprendente. I compagni Ferraroni, Scolari, Campagnoli ed anche il Sig. Pifferi fecero molto bene, e meritano una parola di plauso. Il prologo fu recitato dal compagno Barberi, con disinvoltura e sentimento e fu applauditissimo. Precedettero la rappresentazione le conferenze applauditissime dei compagni H. Tcherkesoff, E. Malatesta e Tarrida del Marmol. Efficace fu la propaganda e buono l'incasso.³⁹

In March 1901, another *soirée* to support the newspaper opened with music performed by G. Grossi (tenor) and A. Collo (baritone) accompanied by Professor Salomone at the piano. The representation of the *Bozzetto Sociale* 'Senza Patria' by Pietro Gori and lectures by Michel, Malatesta, and Tárrida del Mármol followed. Italians contributed to the evening also with the poem *L'Infame* by Bruna Magnoni, a

³⁶ 'In An Anarchist Club', *Tit Bits*, 7 May 1892, p. 7.

³⁷ R. Rocker, *The London Years*, p. 67.

³⁸ Mandolesi's report, February 1905. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

³⁹ Brutus, 'La Nostra Festa', *L'Internazionale*, n. 1, 12 January 1901, p. 2.

monologue by G. Ferrarone *Il canto del Galeotto* and passages from operas sung by Mr. Gemignani. The Italian chorus closed the evening.⁴⁰

In his account of the evening, the secret agent Calvo reported:

La Festa riuscì assai splendida! La sala era affollatissima. Malatesta entusiasmò il pubblico. Nel suo secondo discorso, parlando degli [sic] giovani italiani che si vendono all'Inghilterra, il buon compagno spiegò una tale energia e una tale passione da commuovere l'intero auditorio. E' inutile dire che gli applausi e le grida di bene, bravo si ripetevano ad ogni frase, ad ogni parola!!!...⁴¹

However, these *soirées* did not always end successfully. For example, Virgilio reported an unforeseen event at a social evening organised by Arturo Campagnoli to raise funds: 'Ad un certo punto un tal Burioli recitò un monologo in cui si combatteva lo sciopero. Apriti o cielo. Grida, urli e fischi e battibecchi. Non si sa perché il suonatore del piano per creare una diversione si mette a strimpellare la "Marcia Reale": Figurati allora che putiferio'. The following day Malatesta held a lecture and: 'dopo finito si avvicinò ad un gruppo ove trovavasi Campagnoli Arturo, Ferrini, Dalboni e certo Spasiano, napoletano, e disse: "Ma bravo! Colle vostre feste a base di Marcia Reale e di critica dello sciopero!". Spasiano disse "E' quello che dicevo io. Tu, Campagnoli, sei un cretino!" Campagnoli allora gli allungò uno schiaffo e Spasiano gli tirò un bicchiere'.⁴²

In 1907, the Italians and the French organised a musical concert to finance *L'Università popolare*. A crowd of French people attended, but the Italian Ferrarone announced that the artist he had secured could not participate. The public booed and went away disappointed. In his apologetic speech to the public, Gustave Lance pointed out that breaking promises was a peculiarity of Italian people, nourishing further annoyance between the two groups.

Generally, the programme of the evenings were structured in a similar way: speeches or anarchist declarations provided the opening, followed by the reading of novels and poetry, monologues, playing of revolutionary songs, lectures and eventually dancing. This scheme was very similar to that occurring in other Italian anarchist

⁴⁰ Although it should be mentioned that many of the singers and some of the actors mentioned here were not anarchists.

⁴¹ Calvo's report, 18 March 1901, ACS, CPC, b. 1992 f. (Felici Felice).

⁴² Virgilio's report, 14 January 1902, ACS, CPC, b. 977, f. (Campagnoli Arturo).

colonies overseas, for example in Argentina.⁴³ In the 1890s, a ‘Social Evening’ promoted by an International Anarchist Agitator Group at the *New Cross Inn* in South London opened with a selection of piano songs, among which the ‘Marseillaise’ and the ‘Carmagnole’ were played. Anarchist declarations and speeches followed.⁴⁴ At a *soirée* in the Athaeneum Hall, organised by anarchist groups of different nationalities, the evening began with an ‘Operatic Melodramatic Burlesque (For the First Time on any Stage)’ entitled ‘Trafalgar Square’. In this opera, the English anarchist David Nicoll played the character of ‘Inspector Bellville’, a parody of Chief Inspector of the Special Branch, William Melville. Italians contributed with a choir of Italian revolutionists. German and British glees and songs were also performed. The *soirée* ended with the ‘Marseillaise’ and dancing.⁴⁵

A letter from Calvo offers a colourful description of a *soirée* organised in an anarchist club. The main attraction of the evening was a comedy written by Calvo himself in which he acted. The prompter was one of the major anarchist leaders: Saverio Merlino. The plot of the play was based on two anarchists (Don Gregorio and Cicco) who had left Italy to find refuge in London, and a French woman and exiled Communard (Preziosilla).

13 Marzo 93.

Ieri 12 Marzo alle 6 p.m. nel Club Svizzero Italo [sic] ebbe luogo l’annunziato divertimento a scopo di adescare i gonzi di Eyre Street Hill. Molto concorso di gente. Non vi furono discorsi sulla santa causa; Merlino soltanto disse poche parole al pubblico, prima dello spettacolo, facendogli conoscere che, fra l’interesse che hanno gli anarchici, hanno anche quello di divertire quelli che vengono alle riunioni, così un compagno chiama l’altro, per così far capire ad essi i diritti che a loro spettano per essere uomini!!! La commediola scritta dal Lauria ebbe un successo entusiastico! Egli aveva messo il titolo A sbalzi, ma al Merlino non piaceva il titolo, e volle invece cambiarlo in quello: La Congiura! Il soggetto. Due anarchici che, per sfuggire ad alcune condanne, scappano dal loro paese nativo per andare a luogo sicuro (Londra) onde poter fare propaganda. I due galantuomini per non essere accusati di vagabondaggio, si qualificano di [sic] attori di commedie, o tragici. Il compagno meno esaltato non crede al progetto fatto dal suo compagno, lo prega di fare delle prove. Il compagno accetta. Qui, scene tragiche, in parodia, ed altre cose burlesche. Questi due voluti amici si incontrano con una giovane espulsa da Parigi accusata come comunarda.

⁴³José C. Moya, ‘Italians in Buenos Aires’s Anarchist Movement: Gender Ideology and Women’s Participation, 1890-1910’ in Donna Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta (eds.), *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives. Italian Workers of the World* (Toronto-Buffalo-London: University of Toronto Press, 2002), pp. 189-216.

⁴⁴International Anarchist Agitator Group, ‘Social Evening’, IISH, *Nettlau Archive*, b. 311.

⁴⁵‘Programme of Concertos’, leaflet, 7 October 1899, IISH, *Nettlau Archive*, b. 311.

Questa accetta di fare l'attrice. In ogni punto del lavoretto, frizzi, mottò in burletta, un attore che insulta l'altro per incapacità di recitare: il pubblico ride a crepapelle, la commedia finisce con applausi prolungati. I maggiori applausi spettarono al vecchietto Lauria, il quale, come scrittore e come attore, riportò la vittoria! Esecutori, Lauria, Madame Eugenia, e Pietraraja. Suggestore Merlino! Malatesta e Merlino andarono a pregare il figlio di madame Corso, perché avesse prestata l'opera sua e quella de'suoi compagni (inglesi) onde fare delle suonatine nello stesso Club. 4 giovinetti con mandolini e chitarre fecero il loro dovere! ... La sera poi riunione in casa di Pietraraja, alle 9 ½. Eletto cassiere Lauria, gli consegnarono i pochi scellini che si raggranellarono fra i compagni.⁴⁶

It is likely that, due to frequent social events in their clubs, the anarchists wrote a large numbers of plays. Unfortunately, apart from those written by 'professional writers' such as Pietro Gori, copies have not survived. But from the reports of spies it is possible to know some titles. Dramas included *Lazzaro il mandriano*⁴⁷ and *La macchia di sangue*⁴⁸. There was the comedy *La Vispa Teresa*.⁴⁹ Another play was entitled *I delitti delle comari*, a social drama in four acts written by the anarchist sculptor Carlo Magnoni.⁵⁰ It was performed at the *Club Cooperativo* in Greek Street in 1915.⁵¹ Two years later, in the same club, Magnoni presented the drama *Gli Irredenti*. The Italian police inspector reported:

Artisti al di sotto del mediocre, dialogo: infelice, prolisso, spesso sgrammaticato, ...insomma una zibaldone 'che ha un solo pregio': Tenere vivo il "sentimento" di odio e di disprezzo per i sistemi di governo dell'Austria... E un anarchico che compie tale opera patriottica, merita lode.⁵²

Indeed, a few years later Magnoni used the fact that he had been the author of that play in order to prove his patriotism and loyalty towards Italy and the Fascist regime.

Besides leisure activities, the clubs often organised educational courses. Tuition in foreign languages was usually a successful initiative. Malatesta, Tombolesi, Defendi,

⁴⁶ Calvo's report, 13 March 1893, ACS, *CPC*, b. 1519, f. (Cova Cesare).

⁴⁷ Calvo's report, Campagnoli Arturo, ACS, *CPC*, b. 977, f. (Campagnoli Arturo).

⁴⁸ It was performed in Tottenham Court Road in 1899. Calvo's report 23 May 1899, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949 (Malatesta Errico).

⁴⁹ Mandolesi Report, March 1905, ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

⁵⁰ In 1906, according to Inspector Frosali, Magnoni sent to the 'R. Accademia di Belle Arti di Londra' a bust representing Sante Caserio (the Italian anarchist who assassinated the President of France, Sadi Carnot). The bust was refused. A few years later Magnoni made the ornamental sculptures for Victoria Station and for the harbour in Dover. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2932, f. (Magnoni Carlo).

⁵¹ Frosali's report to Minister of Interior, 3 May 1915. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2932 (Magnoni Carlo).

⁵² Frosali's report to Minister of Interior, 30 July 1917. ACS, *CPC*, b. 2932 (Magnoni Carlo).

Quarantini, Di Giulio, Rossetti, and Ravaglioli followed courses in German. Malatesta and the Defendi family also attended courses in English.

Management of the Clubs

The management of clubs was not an easy task. In his memories Rudolf Roker recalled:

The club life too had certain unpleasant features, which I discovered later. A place like Grafton Hall was expensive to run, and those who were responsible for its upkeep could not be selective in their admission of members. They also hired the hall to all sorts of bodies; it was not always pleasant. Most of the revenue came from the bar, from selling beer, wine and other intoxicants. Most of the people who frequented Grafton Hall were sympathisers with the movement; they had radical ideas, but were not much interested in the movement as such; they contributed to the funds, but only when they were pressed by the comrades. They rarely came to the discussion evenings. We could count on their attendance only when the discussion concerned one of the conflicts that so often occurred in the life of the emigre (sic) population.⁵³

The sale of alcoholic drinks was an issue of concern. In 1905, Malatesta, speaking at a discussion at the *German Club*,⁵⁴ expressed his disappointment that the managers of anarchist clubs were compelled to sell alcoholic drinks to cover the high cost of rent. According to Malatesta, this was detrimental to propaganda and to political education of the clubs' membership. Although he was not a teetotaler, Malatesta wanted only non-alcoholic drinks sold at the *German Club* and in all anarchist clubs generally.⁵⁵ Rudolf Roker noticed how the decision not to sell intoxicants at the *Jubilee Street Club*⁵⁶ increased the participation in the club. Indeed, by not selling alcoholic drinks, those who were legally responsible of the club were not compelled to issue membership cards. That allowed everybody to use the library and the reading room or to join the

⁵³ R. Roker, *The London Years* (London: Robert Anscombe, 1956), p. 69.

⁵⁴ The *German Club* was at 107 Hampstead Road and at that time counted about 74 members.

⁵⁵ Frosali's monthly report to Ministry of Interior, 11 October 1905. ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22

⁵⁶ The Jubilee Street Club was opened on 3 February 1906. It represented the centre of the activities of Jewish anarchists in the East End. It was largely used also by the other anarchist groups of the capital. 'It was a big building, with a large hall, which with the gallery held about 800 people. There were a number of smaller halls and rooms. One hall on the second floor was used as a library and reading room. A smaller building adjoining the Club served as the editorial and printing offices of the "Arbeter Frint"', R. Roker, *The London Years*, p. 178.

educational classes in English, history and sociology. However, it meant that other sources of revenue needed to be found. One of them was hiring out of the premises of the club to other organisations for their meetings.

Raising funds to support the activities in the clubs was a major problem, and lack of finance was among the main causes for the closure of anarchist clubs. The absence of one central club made it more difficult for the police to monitor the anarchists. At the beginning of 1905, the police inspector at the Italian embassy informed the Ministry of Interior that an International Anarchist Federation existed in London, although it had not been formalised and still did not have a regular place for its meetings. For this reason, meetings were held in different places: in Poland Street, Brick Lane, and Gresse Street, while the decision about the meetings' location depended upon unpredictable factors. That caused serious problems for the inspector to organise consistent surveillance of the anarchists.⁵⁷ In 1911 his colleague Frosali was requested by the Ministry of Interior to provide information about the arrival in London of the anarchist Francesco Cini. Once again Frosali was unable to satisfy the request. And to justify himself he repeated the same observation made by Inspector Mandolesi in 1905: 'attualmente non esiste più un club internazionale, e gli anarchici sono sparsi per la immensa Metropoli che ha una superficie di 316 chilometri quadrati, e quindi il servizio riesce difficile, faticoso e dispendioso...'.⁵⁸

Other nationalities opened their own clubs, but sometimes they merged trying to ease the difficulties of financial management. In 1905 police inspector Frosali communicated that the Italian anarchists had left their centre at 4 Euston Road, where the *Università popolare* had been organised, for lack of funding and had moved to 2 Dean Street in Soho, merging with the French group. According to Frosali:

questa unione sta anche a provare che fra gli anarchici di varie nazionalità si va formando una specie di fusione, e ciò è dovuto principalmente alla comunanza delle loro condizioni e dei loro bisogni, perché risiedono in terra straniera, inospitale dal punto di vista economico.⁵⁹

This arrangement was accomplished between 1908 and 1909 at the *International Working Men's Society* in 83 Charlotte Street. In April 1909, the number of members of the club was 237. Meetings were held on different days for each nationality. The Italian group was supposed to meet every Sunday but, since members were keen to enjoy

⁵⁷ Mandolesi's report to Ministry of Interior, 10 February 1905, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

⁵⁸ Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 12 September 1911, ACS, CPC, b. 1350, f. (Cini Francesco).

themselves during that day of the week, meetings were postponed to Tuesdays; the English met on Wednesdays, and the French on Fridays.

In 1909, the *International Working Men's Society* obtained its main income from refreshments, subscriptions, billiards, rent (on the upper floor there were five beds available for let), and collections during Sunday events. Rent, goods for refreshments, piano and billiard hire, a pianist, heating and lighting represented the most significant expenses. A commission composed of members of various nationalities managed the club. In January 1909 the committee was composed of two Germans, one Jew, one Spaniard, one Frenchman and one Italian, Marco Corso, Lauria's son (see Chapter 4), who replaced Silvio Corio and whose nomination was unsuccessfully opposed by Malatesta. But the many attempts to balance the books of the club failed and the *International Working Men's Society* closed at the end of 1909 to be later transformed by one of its members, a German, into a restaurant. Most of the Italians moved then to the *Socialist Club*, at number 107 of the same street, since the management of that club had withdrawn its requirement for new members to sign the 'Costituzione del Partito Marxista'. The club counted about five hundred members, and later it changed its name to the *Communist Club*.⁶⁰ After the closure of the *International Working Men's Society*, the different groups continued to meet independently from each other in the upper rooms of the building, paying three shillings' rent for each meeting.

Lectures At the Clubs

Clubs hosted most of the meetings and lectures organised by the anarchists. Alternatively, especially when a large audience was expected, the anarchists hired private halls such as the Athaeneum Hall near Tottenham Court Road. In general, contents of lectures were of three types: historical or commemorative; theoretical, often organised in a controversial form with two speakers supporting opposite points of view; and lectures related to major contemporary political events.

Celebrations of the First of May and of the Paris Commune were typical of the first type of lecture. Every 18th of March, veterans of the Commune summoned up their memories; not surprisingly, Louise Michel was a constant figure at these celebrations. Despite the repetitiveness that presumably characterised this particular event, it always

⁵⁹ Frosali's report, 7 June 1905, ACS, PS, 1905, b. 22.

maintained its appeal. In 1909, four hundred people attended the commemoration of the Commune held in the *Jubilee Street Club*, listening to English, Russian, French, and Jewish speakers.⁶¹

Each year the anarchists paid tribute to their other ‘martyrs’. In 1909 about 250 ‘subversives’ honoured the Chicago martyrs at 165 Jubilee Street; Malatesta, Cherkezov, Rocker, Turner, Leggat and Kaplan gave lectures. Three years later, the meeting for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ‘Judicial Murder of the Chicago Anarchists’ was planned as a rally to demand the release of the anarchists Ettore and Giovanitti arrested in the United States.⁶² Celebrations were held to remember Gaetano Bresci. In 1914, for example, about 120 revolutionaries attended a commemoration with Pietro Gualducci as the main orator.⁶³ From 1909 onward, several meetings were held to pay tribute to the Spanish anarchist Francisco Ferrer, executed by the Spanish government. In October 1910 a meeting was held at the *Communist Club* in Soho where Ferrer was remembered in front of more than 250 people by Boulter, Tárrida del Mármol, Aldred, Tanner, Rocker, and Malatesta. The last, as he often did, spoke in French.⁶⁴

On other occasions the themes of lectures were historical. Malatesta spoke on the history of the First International both at the *German Club*⁶⁵ and at the club in Charlotte Street, where he recalled the uprising in Ancona in 1898.⁶⁶

Some of the lecturers had much broader topics instead. In 1909, for instance, at the *International Working Men’s Society*, Tárrida del Mármol lectured on ‘L’habitabilité des Planètes et avenir du système solaire’ and one month later about a new theory about the creation of the world.⁶⁷ Within a series of lectures on neo-Malthusianism, the Spaniard Pedro Vallina gave a conference with slides, entitled ‘L’anatomie des organes sexuels’. The talk attracted a large audience and was favourably received.⁶⁸ In 1901 Malatesta’s lecture on ‘Sociologia comparata’

⁶⁰ Frosali’s report, October 1909, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁶¹ Frosali’s report, March 1909, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁶² Leaflet *Meeting St Andrews Hall*, 13 November 1912, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁶³ Biographical profile, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2554, f. (Gualducci Pietro).

⁶⁴ Frosali’s report to Ministry of Interior, 14 October 1910, ACS, *PS*, 1910, b. 7.

⁶⁵ The German circle, in 107 Hampstead Road, in 1905 counted 74 members. In that year Malatesta was invited to give lectures at that club twice.

⁶⁶ Frosali’s report, February 1909, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁶⁷ Leaflet, 6 May 1909, and Frosali’s report May 1909, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁶⁸ Leaflet, 14 May 1909, and Frosali’s report, May 1909, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

completely filled two rooms in the club at 104 Wardour Street.⁶⁹ In 1913, Malatesta gave a lecture in French on 'Fisica e Metafisica'.⁷⁰

At the *International Working Men's Society*, a meeting point for the anarchist groups in 1908-1909, lectures were organised on a weekly basis; the speakers were usually the leaders of the main anarchist groups. In April and May 1909 the programme of lectures consisted of: W. Wess 'Anarchist socialism or social democracy: which is nearer the English character?'; Tárrida del Mármol 'The problem of Unemployment'; C. Kean 'Crime and Punishment'; S. Carlyle Potter 'The crime of government in Barbados and Burma'; and Dora Montefiore 'Why organised democracy must concentrate at the present time on Universal Adult Suffrage'.⁷¹ Generally, these speeches attracted between one hundred and two hundred listeners. At the end of October, for example, about 150 people half English and half Italian, participated in a 'pro Ferrer' meeting at which Malatesta, Kitz, Turner, Rocker and Cherkezov spoke. However, sometimes speeches did not take place because of the lack of an audience. This happened, for example, at Dora Montefiore's conference. Sometimes meetings reached greater numbers of the public. According to police records, 500 people attended Kropotkin's talk about his memoirs of Spain at the *Workers' Friend Club Institute* at 165 Jubilee Street.⁷² Three hundred people assembled at the *Socialist Club* to listen to Malatesta's, Tárrida del Mármol's, Rocker's, and Turner's speeches against the Spanish government in September 1909.⁷³ At a meeting opposing the visit of the Tsar to Britain, at which Vera Figner (the Russian *Narodnik* who had spent 23 years imprisoned in the fortress of Schlüsselburg) and Peter Kropotkin were the main orators. A crowd of about two thousand people attended, while other five hundred could not be accommodated in the conference hall.⁷⁴

Theoretical debates were aimed more specifically at ideological discussion. They covered a wide range of topics: individualism, co-operation and anarchy, syndicalism, the general strike, and parliamentary socialism. In 1906, at the club in 107 Charlotte Street, Malatesta spoke about anarchists' assassination attempts, carefully followed by about one hundred 'subversives', 'molti dei quali non frequentano riunioni'.⁷⁵ In 1911, at the headquarters of the *Gruppo di Studi Sociali* in 6 Meard Street, Malatesta gave a

⁶⁹ Calvo's report, 29 April 1901, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁷⁰ Frosali's report, 12 February 1913, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁷¹ Leaflet, 'International Working Men's Society', *Course of Lectures*, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁷² Frosali's August monthly report, 4 September 1909, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁷³ Frosali's monthly report, 19 October 1909, ACS, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁷⁴ Frosali's report, 31 July 1909, July monthly report, *PS*, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

⁷⁵ Frosali's report, 16 July 1906, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

talk on anarchy and syndicalism in front of about fifty anarchists, most of whom were French.⁷⁶

Those meetings were often organised as debates in which two gifted orators, supporting opposite points of view, confronted each other. In some cases one of the opponents belonged to the Italian Socialist Party and the debate highlighted ideological differences. In these cases discussion turned inevitably to the uses of parliamentary and electoral methods. The debates could rouse the audience, as a member of the Italian Socialist Party, the shoemaker Giuseppe Sinicco who used to attend at the debates held at the *Communist Club*, recalled:

...veniva a Londra qualche pezzo grosso: deputato o persona illustre. Allora tutti vi accorrevano e non solo i socialisti ed i simpatizzanti. Spesso ci veniva anche Malatesta, e di solito vi era un contraddittorio, che generalmente finiva in una zuffa o in uno scambio di parolacce fra i seguaci dei due contraddittori. In generale quando i partigiani dell'uno applaudevano, gli altri gridavano e protestavano.⁷⁷

A similar situation developed at a debate on 'Socialismo e Religione', organised by the socialists at the *Communist Club* in 1905, which Malatesta helped to promote. Malatesta replied to Torquato Barsanti's speech.

Malatesta was often the spokesman for the anarchists in debates. Luigi Fabbri remembered Malatesta: 'nei contraddittori appariva invincibile, e l'avversario pareva uscire stritolato dalla sua dialettica terra terra, accessibile a tutti, nuda di fronzoli letterari o rettorici, senza paradossi di sorta'.⁷⁸ In 1913 he opposed the French socialist Martin in a debate, and during Malatesta's speech, 'l'assemblea applaudì fragorosamente, ed il Martin non potè che dire poche parole, interrotto continuamente dal Malatesta e dagli intervenuti, sovversivi, di tutte le nazionalità'.⁷⁹ Sometimes debates were not planned in advance, but emerged naturally during public meetings. For example, in 1912 Malatesta strongly attacked the famous French anti-militarist, Gustave Hervé, the main speaker at a rally against the Libyan war in Shoreditch Town Hall. Malatesta spoke in French and was translated into English. A formal debate between the two was held five days later at the *Communist Club*.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 16 December 1911, ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico). In 1912 the headquarters of the *Gruppo di Studi Sociali* moved to 99 Charlotte Street.

⁷⁷ G. Sinicco, *Memorie di un calzolaio da Borgognano a Londra* (Udine: Tipografia Pellegrini, 1950), p. 78.

⁷⁸ L. Fabbri, 'Errico Malatesta', in *Studi Sociali*, 30 September 1932, n. 21, p. 2.

⁷⁹ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 15 February 1913, ACS, CPC, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁸⁰ Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 17 December 1912, ACS, CPC, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

Most of the times the debates occurred between two anarchists, rather than against a socialist opponent. For example, Malatesta and Gennaro Pietraraja argued over 'il dovere degli anarchici nell'ora presente' in 1902. Malatesta stressed his well known insistence on organisation amongst the anarchists, and expressed his opinion about the possibility of a Rudini-Sonnino ministry. At that debate, 'L'uditorio numerosissimo era composto da tutti i più noti italiani e da gran numero di gregari, nonché da moltissimi francesi, tedeschi e russi, ragione per la quale Malatesta parlò anche in francese'.⁸¹ In January 1909 the anarchist La Rosa gave a lecture on 'Il Cooperativismo e l'anarchia'.

Malatesta debated with the Spanish anarchist, Tárrida del Mármol, on several occasions. In 1908 they debated the role of science in human civilisation. Tárrida argued that science led necessarily to anarchy. On the contrary, Malatesta, who always opposed belief in the inevitability of anarchism, refused to substitute materialism for God and argued that, although science could help humanity, it would not necessarily bring an anarchist society. In March 1913, at a club in Manette Street Malatesta debated with Tárrida on 'La Metafisica contro le scienze naturali'.⁸²

Conclusion

The anarchist clubs in London brought together different traditions of sociability and to some extent different traditions melded together. These clubs were centres of cultural production: here the anarchists performed comedies, plays, and songs. Educational circles for the education of the working class were also often established. The clubs were the most visible sign of the colony of foreign anarchist refugees, and for this reason they were the easiest source for popular magazines and newspapers in the construction of the image of the anarchist. Here too the anarchists debated the great events of the day and sharpened their ideological viewpoints. The clubs became a conduit between host country, home country and the wider world. For this reason they were important for the dissemination of anarchist ideas and forms of organisation throughout the world. They also raised through their social events, money for anarchist newspapers and other projects in London, back home or elsewhere. But they were also sources of information for the police forces of the world. The clubs were also a home

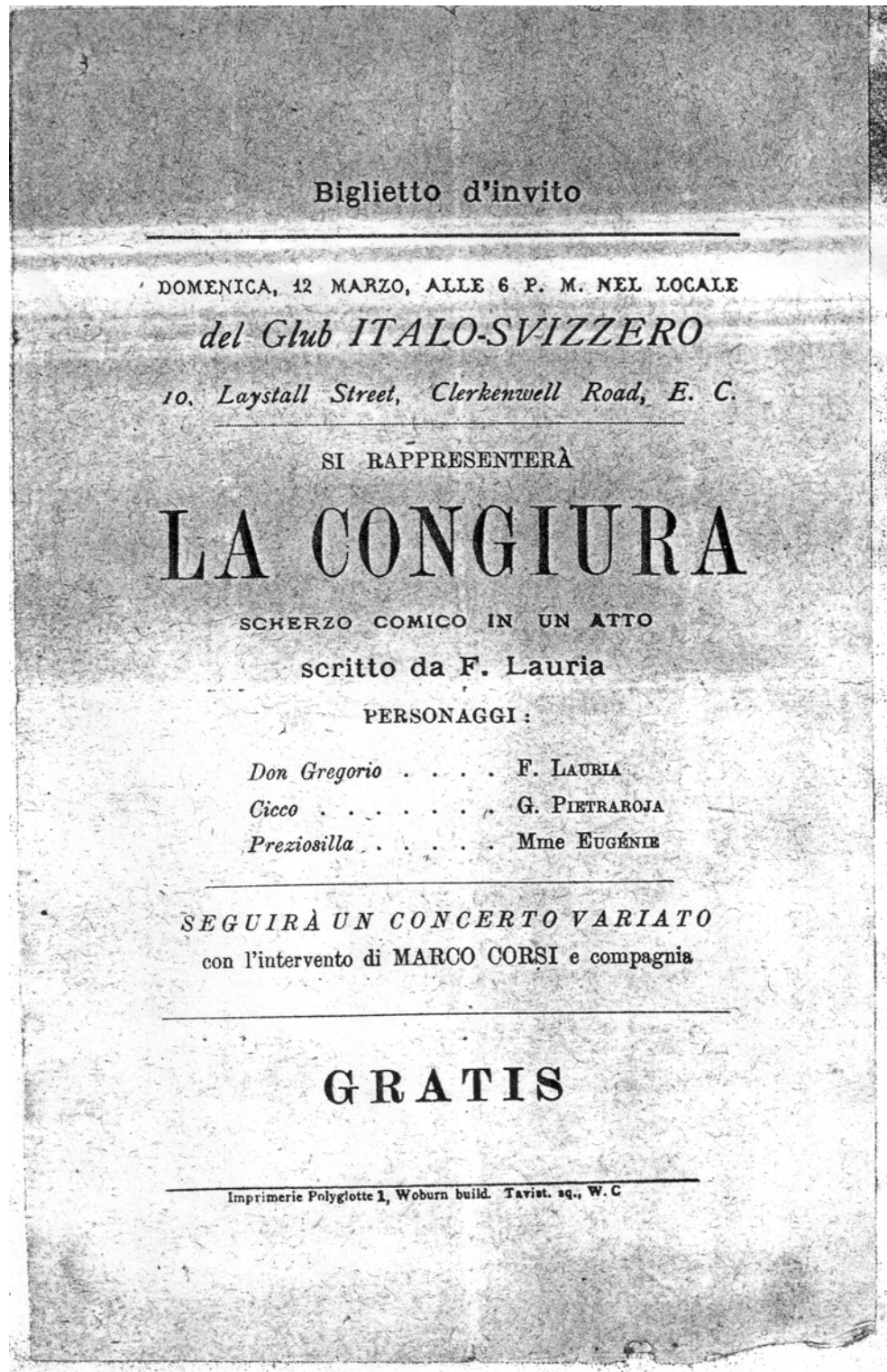
⁸¹ Prina's report, 12 March 1902, ACS, CPC, b. 2949, f. (Malatesta Errico).

away from home: havens for refugees who felt many times shut out from English life or who were home sick. For these reasons, the clubs were at the heart of the experience of political exile for the anarchists before this world was shattered by the Great War.



Ill. 6.1. From left to right: Ferruccio Mariani, Cesare Cova and Felice Felici sharing a bottle of wine. (ACS, *CPC*, b. 1992, f. Felici Felice, 5 November 1908).

⁸² Frosali's report, 28 March 1913, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).



Ill.6.2. Flyer advertising the theatrical play *La Congiura*, written and performed by the spy Federico Lauria, alias Calvo in 1893. (ACS, CPC, b. 1519, f. Polti Francesco).

INTERNATIONAL
Anarchist Agitator Group
 OF DEPTFORD.

A
SOCIAL EVENING

will be held at

NEW CROSS INN,
 393, NEW CROSS ROAD

On Saturday March 3rd, at 8 p.m.

Programme.

Selection on Piano	Marseillaise & Carmagnole.
Speaker	SAMUEL CASTER.
Anarchist Declaration	T. HARRIGAN.
Song	BERTHA CORNFIELD.
Speech	CHARLES MOWBRAY.
Anarchist Declaration	MISS ROSE.
Speech	KARL MORLEIT.

**Workers, you have nothing to lose but your chains and
 a world to gain.**

Long live the reign of Freedom for which we all aspire !

Ill. 6.3. Programme of a social evening in New Cross, London. (IISH. Archive Netllau, b. 311, no date).

*International Working mens Society,
83 Charlotte Street, W.*

Balance Sheet from Oct 1st to Dec 31, 1908

<u><i>Income</i></u>	<u><i>Expenditure</i></u>																																																		
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td style="width: 80%;">Rent - - -</td><td style="text-align: right;">6.14.6</td></tr> <tr><td>Billiard</td><td style="text-align: right;">3.8.3 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td>Loans & Shaves</td><td style="text-align: right;">46.15.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Refreshments</td><td style="text-align: right;">154.5.4</td></tr> <tr><td>Subscriptions</td><td style="text-align: right;">13.9.6</td></tr> <tr><td>Collection, & Sunday</td><td style="text-align: right;">3.13.2 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">228.11.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Cash in hand Oct 1st</td><td style="text-align: right;">14.2 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: right; border-top: 3px double black;">£ 230.0.2 1/2</td></tr> </table>	Rent - - -	6.14.6	Billiard	3.8.3 1/2	Loans & Shaves	46.15.0	Refreshments	154.5.4	Subscriptions	13.9.6	Collection, & Sunday	3.13.2 1/2		228.11.0	Cash in hand Oct 1 st	14.2 1/2		£ 230.0.2 1/2	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr><td style="width: 80%;">Lease</td><td style="text-align: right;">9.10.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Rent</td><td style="text-align: right;">23.7.6</td></tr> <tr><td>Furniture & Fitting</td><td style="text-align: right;">38.6.11 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td>Gas fitting</td><td style="text-align: right;">5.12.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Refreshments</td><td style="text-align: right;">100.6.7</td></tr> <tr><td>Wages & Tips</td><td style="text-align: right;">18.4.11</td></tr> <tr><td>Heat & Light</td><td style="text-align: right;">7.1.11 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td>Lamp dues</td><td style="text-align: right;">1.6.3 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td>Piano & Billiard hire</td><td style="text-align: right;">2.7.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Pianist</td><td style="text-align: right;">1.6.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Printing</td><td style="text-align: right;">1.10.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Loans Repair</td><td style="text-align: right;">4.15.0</td></tr> <tr><td>Secretary's Expenses</td><td style="text-align: right;">1.18.4 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">215.12.7</td></tr> <tr><td>Cash in hand Jan 1, 1909</td><td style="text-align: right;">14.7.7 1/2</td></tr> <tr><td>Total</td><td style="text-align: right; border-top: 3px double black;">230.0.2 1/2</td></tr> </table>	Lease	9.10.0	Rent	23.7.6	Furniture & Fitting	38.6.11 1/2	Gas fitting	5.12.0	Refreshments	100.6.7	Wages & Tips	18.4.11	Heat & Light	7.1.11 1/2	Lamp dues	1.6.3 1/2	Piano & Billiard hire	2.7.0	Pianist	1.6.0	Printing	1.10.0	Loans Repair	4.15.0	Secretary's Expenses	1.18.4 1/2		215.12.7	Cash in hand Jan 1, 1909	14.7.7 1/2	Total	230.0.2 1/2
Rent - - -	6.14.6																																																		
Billiard	3.8.3 1/2																																																		
Loans & Shaves	46.15.0																																																		
Refreshments	154.5.4																																																		
Subscriptions	13.9.6																																																		
Collection, & Sunday	3.13.2 1/2																																																		
	228.11.0																																																		
Cash in hand Oct 1 st	14.2 1/2																																																		
	£ 230.0.2 1/2																																																		
Lease	9.10.0																																																		
Rent	23.7.6																																																		
Furniture & Fitting	38.6.11 1/2																																																		
Gas fitting	5.12.0																																																		
Refreshments	100.6.7																																																		
Wages & Tips	18.4.11																																																		
Heat & Light	7.1.11 1/2																																																		
Lamp dues	1.6.3 1/2																																																		
Piano & Billiard hire	2.7.0																																																		
Pianist	1.6.0																																																		
Printing	1.10.0																																																		
Loans Repair	4.15.0																																																		
Secretary's Expenses	1.18.4 1/2																																																		
	215.12.7																																																		
Cash in hand Jan 1, 1909	14.7.7 1/2																																																		
Total	230.0.2 1/2																																																		
<p><i>Audited & found correct Hans Kuffner Auditor S. Corio</i></p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>C. Lillyman, Secretary</i></p>																																																		

III. 6.4. Balance sheet of the *International Working Men's Society* in the last quarter of 1908. (ACS, PS, 1909, b. 9).

ATHENÆUM HALL, 73, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD.

PROGRAMME OF CONCERT

TO BE HELD ON
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7th, 1899, AT 8 p.m.

OVERTURE "Zampa,"	1. CHANT "All for the Cause," <i>Morris</i>
MADAME CINI.	THE CHOIR.
1. GLEE "Comrades' Song of Hope," <i>Adam</i>	2. GERMAN SONG... .. "The Proletariat,"
HAMMERSMITH SOCIALIST CHOIR.	F. ROCHER.
2. SONG "Come back from Dreamland,"	3. SONG "Fimicula,"
WILL. WINSOR.	KATE FITZGERALD.
3. RECITATION "Dolores," <i>Steinburne</i>	4. "Death Song," <i>Edelstadt</i>
DAVID NICOLL.	R. SOLOMONS.
4. DUET "The Spider and the Fly," <i>Smith</i>	5. DUET "Life's Dream is O'er," <i>Ascher</i>
Mrs. WATT and Mr. COCHRANE.	Mrs. RANDALL and Mr. BUCKLEY.
5. COMIC SONG "It will take a lot of that to upset me,"	6. ITALIAN CHORUS
J. P. WALLACE.	A CHOIR OF ITALIAN REVOLUTIONISTS.
6. ITALIAN RECITATION	7. SELECTION Serio-Comic and Burlesque.
M. FERRARONI.	Miss FLO WILLIAMS.
7. "A Death Song." (Words by W. Morris) <i>M. Lawson</i>	8. SPANISH SONG
THE CHOIR.	M. QUIERA.
8. AN OPERATIC MELODRAMATIC BURLESQUE	9. SONG "Shipwrecked Captain,"
(For the First time on any Stage)	TOM BERRY.
ENTITLED:	10. SONG "The Midshipmite,"
"TRAFALGAR SQUARE."	R. WOOD.
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.	11. GLEE "No Master,"
TOM ALLALONE (Unemployed) GEORGE ORAM	GLEE "True Freedom," <i>W. Platt</i>
JIM BAREBONES (Unemployed) JOHN BROWN	THE CHOIR.
INSPECTOR BELLVILLE (of Scotland Yard) DAVID NICOLL	12. SONG "The Toilers,"
PRIEST RUD LYDOW	J. H. HIRD.
FAIR TRADER J. WALSH	13. GERMAN RECITATION
SPIRIT OF LIBERTY KATE FITZGERALD	R. BINGER.
JOHN TRUEHEART (A Socialist) J. TUNGATE	14. ITALIAN SONG
A FRENCH INSURGENT WALTER ALLEYNE	E. COLLO.
MARIENNE MADAME LESAGE	15. SONG "I fear no foe,"
POLICE INSPECTOR C. ALLEN	C. E. KING
DETECTIVE J. HUNT	
YOUNG GAVROCHE (The Printer's Devil) W. MANSFIELD	
POLICEMEN, FARIANS, UNEMPLOYED, &c.,	
Scene, Trafalgar Square. Time, Night and Morning.	

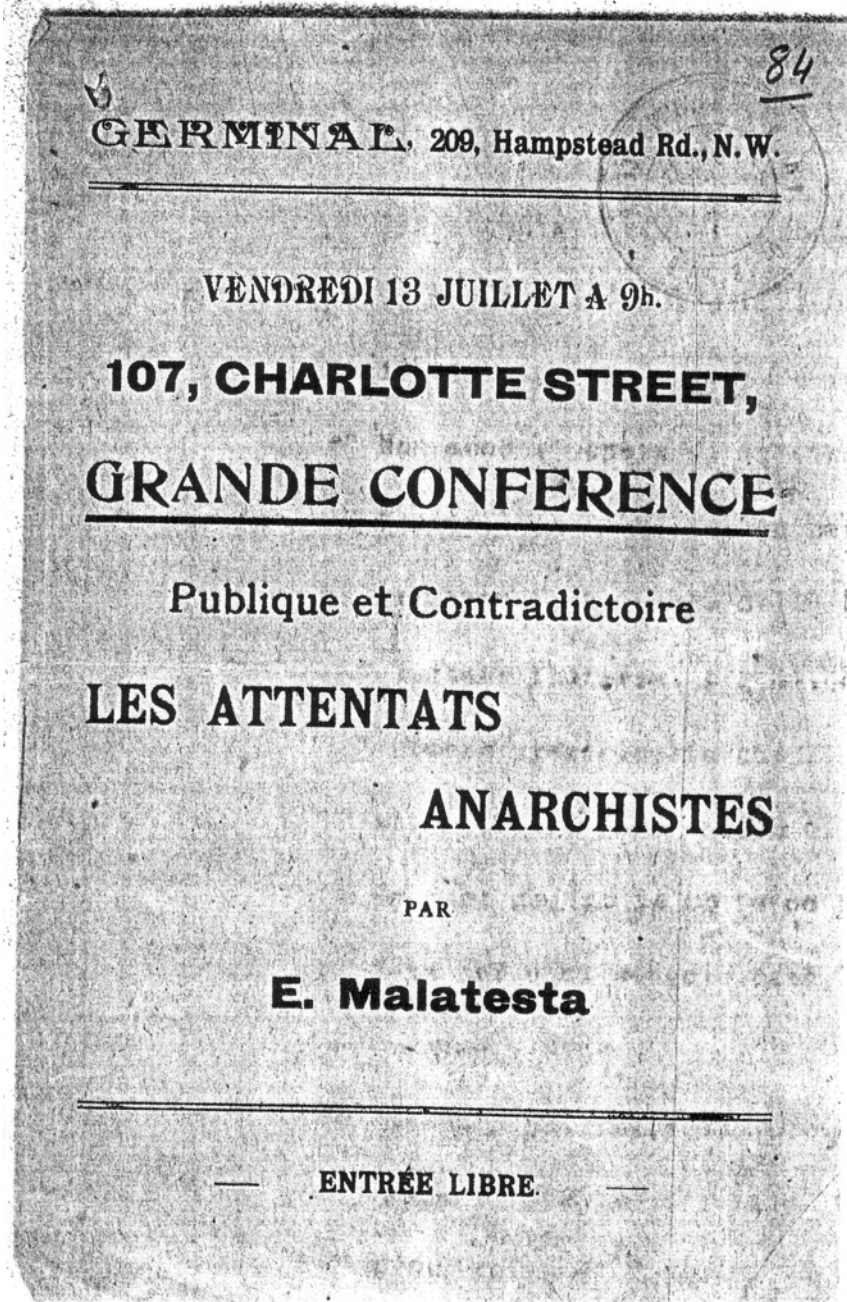
AN INTERVAL OF 10 MINUTES.

"THE MARSEILLAISE."

TO CONCLUDE WITH A DANCE.

Doors open at Half-past Seven. PROGRAMMES - ONE PENNY EACH. Concert begins at 8 p.m.

Ill.6.5. Programme of concerts at the Athenæum Hall in 1899. (IISH, Nettlau Archive, b. 310).



Ill. 6.6. Flyer advertising Malatesta's lecture in July 1906. (ACS, b.2949, f. Malatesta Errico).

Chapter 7

The First World War: the Crisis of the London Anarchist Community

Introduction

Following his escape from Ancona, the Italian police frantically sought Errico Malatesta for fomenting riots during the Red Week in June 1914. But he safely returned to London on 28 June 1914. The same day, in Sarajevo, the Serb nationalist Gavrilo Princip killed the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary. Generally, people failed in foreseeing the devastating consequences of that event, and the anarchists did not differ. Like the socialists, in the days following the attempt, ‘after the first shock, they turned to the more pressing and interesting problems of domestic politics and scandals’.¹ Thus, the Italian anarchists in London focused their attention on the aborted opportunity for a revolutionary outbreak in Italy and on Malatesta’s adventurous escape.

Just a few days after Malatesta’s return to England, the correspondent for *Giornale d’Italia* arranged a meeting with the Italian anarchist leader. In his interview, published on the first of July, there was neither mention of the assassination in Sarajevo nor allusion to the possibility war in Europe. Three days later, Malatesta and Rudolf Rocker spoke at a conference organised by the Federation of Jewish Anarchists in the East End. Rocker remembered how ‘Malatesta referred in his speech to what had happened at Sarajevo, saying he feared there would be very serious consequences. But he did not think there would be war’.² The same month, Malatesta contributed to *Freedom* with an article that gave an account of the events of the Red Week. But there were no comments in the article about the international political situation. Malatesta concluded his article optimistically:

These events have proved that the mass of people hate the present order; that the workers are disposed to make use of all opportunities to overthrow the Government; and that when the fight is directed against the common enemy - this is to say the Government and the bourgeoisie – all are brothers, though

¹ J. Joll, *The Second International 1889-1914* (London-Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 161.

² R. Rocker, *The London Years* (London: Robert Anscombe & Co, 1956), p.240.

the names of Socialist, Anarchist, Syndicalist, or Republican may seem to divide them.³

Yet, in the following months, Malatesta's expectations crumbled: nationalist and militarist sentiments spread throughout Europe; harsh divisions divided socialist, anarchist, syndicalist and republican parties against each other, but also militants belonging to the same political groups. The ideals of international unity and the solidarity of the working class were shattered. The belief that the war could be stopped by a general strike and by international workers' solidarity proved to be just an illusion. Recchioni mentioned the disappointment of the anarchists 'on seeing how easily the masses were persuaded to answer the call to arms made by the various Governments. A.[narchists] had in fact been dreaming that their propaganda of so many years must have taught the working classes not to place themselves in the hands of the State, at least to the extent of being pushed into a war against one another'.⁴

An irreparable schism

The outbreak of the First World War caused an irreparable schism in the international anarchist community. Different positions over the war ended friendships and comradeship that had linked militants for many years and that formed the bases of the exile network.

Many of the chief protagonists, Kropotkin and Malatesta, in this harsh and cruel debate on the stand the anarchists should take on the Great War lived in the exile community in London. And Kropotkin and Malatesta became the chief adversaries in the debate. Emma Goldman remembered how in the United States 'rumours had been filtering through from England that Peter had declared himself in favour of the war. We ridiculed the idea... but presently we were informed that Kropotkin had taken sides with the Allies'. Kropotkin's declaration in favour of the war 'was a staggering blow to our movement, and especially to those of us who knew and loved Peter'.⁵

The support that the most emblematic figure of anarchism gave to the Entente had a profound impact among both pro-war and anti-war factions. Pasquale Binazzi wrote in a letter to Malatesta:

³ E. Malatesta, 'The General Strike and the Insurrection in Italy', *Freedom*, July 1914.

⁴ E. Recchioni, 'Between Ourselves', *Freedom*, September 1915.

⁵ E. Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Dover Publications, 1970), vol. II, p. 564.

Quello che mi ha addolorato è l'atteggiamento del compagno Kropotkin, atteggiamento che viene con molta scaltrezza sfruttato dai versipelle, dai militaristi e dagli... eroi tipo De Ambris.⁶

Signals of Kropotkin's sympathy for the French Third Republic had already emerged in previous years. In 1913 Luigi Bertoni, after a long discussion with Kropotkin in Geneva, was disconcerted by the nationalist tinge of Kropotkin's praise of the French Revolution, and revealed his doubts to Malatesta. Indeed, Kropotkin's deep interest in the French Revolution had converted his love for France 'into a kind of adoptive patriotism'.⁷ Kropotkin regarded the Third Republic as one of the most advanced governments in Europe and never hid his sympathies for it. In 1906, he affirmed that in case of an attack on France, the socialists 'should not stand aside and see the republic defeated by a reactionary monarchist power'.⁸ At the same time, Kropotkin shared the anti-German feelings, which were traditionally present in Russian radical circles and had influenced revolutionaries such as Herzen and Bakunin. Eventually, Kropotkin's aversion to the German State extended into hostility toward the German population, which he considered to be just as belligerent and imperialist as its government. Therefore, following the invasion of Belgium, Kropotkin supported the view of the pro-war camp that the conflict was a war in defence of democracy against barbarism and imperialism. Malatesta, during his debate with Kropotkin and the Italian war interventionist factions (Italy only entered the war in 1915), acknowledged that it had been a mistake to underestimate Kropotkin's Franco-Russian patriotism and to fail to anticipate the consequences of his anti-German bias.⁹ In the summer of 1914 Thomas Keell, editor of *Freedom*, met Kropotkin in a café in Oxford Street. Kropotkin 'was sketching on paper the military situation in France [...] He spoke of German militarism and its barbarity in Belgium, and the duty of the Allies to throw the enemy back over their own frontiers'.¹⁰ Indeed as the war continued Kropotkin assumed a more militarist position, forgetting his 'past advocacy of a popular rising to expel the invaders'.¹¹ His feelings remained confined to anarchist inner circles until October 1914, when *Freedom* published *A Letter on the Present War*, an open letter to the Swedish Professor G. Steffen, in which Kropotkin publicly declared his support for the Entente.

⁶ Pasquale Binazzi's letter to Malatesta, 14 December 1914, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁷ G. Woodcock, I. Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince. Petr Kropotkin* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p. 374.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p.375.

⁹ E. Malatesta, 'Anti-Militarism Was it Properly Understood?', *Freedom*, December 1914.

¹⁰ J. Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse* (London: Paladin, 1978), p. 288.

¹¹ G. Woodcock, I. Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince*, p. 379.

I consider that the duty of everyone who cherishes the ideals of human progress, and especially those that were inscribed by the European proletarians on the banner of the International Working Men's Association, is to do everything in one's power, according to one's capacities to crush down the invasion of the Germans into western Europe.¹²

Kropotkin saw the cause of the conflict lying in the consequences of the war between Germany and France in 1870-1871 and in the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine by the German Empire. From that date, Germany had been a standing menace to Europe. And all European countries were compelled to maintain large armies in order to protect themselves from the threat of Prussian imperialism. Moreover, Kropotkin continued, for almost half a century Germany had paralysed European progress; indeed, the socialists in Belgium, France and Switzerland were conscious that, if an internal social struggle began in their countries, a German invasion would immediately follow. In case of Germany's victory, Europe would consequently fall into an era of general reaction and backwardness. Kropotkin concluded his article criticising pacifism and antimilitarist propaganda:

It is certain that the present war will be a great lesson to all nations. It will have taught them that war cannot be combated by pacifist dreams and all sorts of nonsense about war being so murderous now that it will be impossible in the future. Nor can it be combated by that sort of antimilitarist propaganda which has been carried on till now ... The German invasion *must* be repulsed – no matter how difficult this may be. All efforts must be directed that way.¹³

The article caused turmoil among anarchists of all nationalities and enflamed the debate about the war. The successive issue of *Freedom* was entirely dedicated to this dispute, and several articles appeared in response to Kropotkin's. Malatesta, who was linked to Kropotkin by many years of warm friendship, firmly stated his opposition in the article 'Anarchists Have Forgotten their Principles'¹⁴. The Italian argued that the only acceptable war for the anarchists was the fight of the oppressed against the oppressors. To speak of 'Germany' and 'France' as homogeneous ethnographic units, each having its proper interests and mission – Malatesta asserted - was misleading; it was possible only in the case of those countries in which the working class lacked political and social consciousness. The duty of all anarchists was to awaken awareness

¹² P. Kropotkin, 'A Letter on the Present War', *Freedom*, October 1914, pp. 76-77.

¹³ *Ibidem*

in the conflict of interest between dominators and dominated, to develop solidarity among workers across the frontiers, to organise class struggle in each country, and to weaken the State and the capitalist class. The disillusion caused by widespread nationalism was not a reason for abandoning anti-war propaganda but for intensifying it. If the anarchists found it impossible to act, as was likely to happen during the war, then they should avoid giving any voluntary help to the cause of their class enemies; they had to 'stand aside to save at least their principles - which means to save the future' and 'to keep outside every kind of compromise with the Governments and the governing classes'. Indeed, for Malatesta, there was no difference among the governments engaged in the war. Whoever was to be the winner, it would mean either the triumph of militarism and of reaction, or a 'Russo-English knouto [sic] capitalist domination in Europe and in Asia'. The only reason why Malatesta wished Germany's defeat was his belief that the outbreak of a revolution was more likely to happen in a vanquished Germany. However, in his opinion:

It is most probable that there will be no definitive victory on either side. After a long war, an enormous loss of life and wealth, both sides being exhausted, some kind of peace will be patched up, leaving all questions open, thus preparing for a new war more murderous than the present.¹⁵

Among the other articles, one by Cherkezov appeared in the November issue of *Freedom*. He was a close friend of Malatesta, but supported Kropotkin's point of view. But Cherkezov was even more uncompromising. In a letter to Jean Grave he wrote that 'Il faut que les allemands soient battus, annihilés, humiliés'.¹⁶ In the article 'The War, Its Causes, and German Responsibility', Cherkezov argued that the war was mainly due to the machinations and lust for power of the ruling classes of Germany and Russia, both of whom were composed of powerful castes of aristocrats and the military. However, the wars that the despotic Russian government had fought against Turkey in the nineteenth century were inspired by the aim of liberating Slavic and Balkan nations, and thanks to those wars Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, and Greece had achieved their independence. Germany, on the contrary, not only had never helped small nations to attain their independence but also had always expanded its territories by wars and annexations. The invasion of Belgium was a prologue to the tragedy awaiting 'France,

¹⁴ E. Malatesta, 'Anarchists Have Forgotten their Principles', *Freedom*, November 1914, pp. 85-86.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*

¹⁶ J. Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste en France. De 1914 à nos jours* (Paris: Maspero, 1983) vol. 2, p. 22.

the country of the great Revolution, the initiator of the revolutionary wave through Europe in 1848, of the Commune in 1871, the mother of Socialism, Anarchism, and Revolutionary Syndicalism'. Therefore, according to Cherkezov, 'all honest people' of any political or social conviction, all 'friends of social emancipation and lovers of justice', should support France and Belgium in their fight against Germany¹⁷.

Rocker remembered a meeting at the headquarters of *Freedom* in which Malatesta and Cherkezov bitterly confronted each other:

The discussion was a heated one. Tcherkesov shared Kropotkin's attitude. He went even further than Kropotkin. He said that if Germany won the war the entire free development of Europe would be ended. The Labour movement would be dead. It would start a long period of reaction throughout Europe which would destroy all the achievements of the past hundred years. He was therefore convinced that we must take our stand with the Allies. It was our duty as revolutionaries to prevent the victory of the Prussian militarism. Malatesta couldn't contain himself. He kept angrily interrupting Tcherkesov, who had been his intimate friend for many years. He said this war like every other war was being fought for the interests of the ruling classes, not of the nations. It would be different if the workers of France and Britain had fought for their countries, and had won, to introduce a new social order. Then it would be right to fight to repel a foreign invasion. But now it was different, and whichever side the workers fought on they were only cannon-fodder.¹⁸

The French anarchist Jean Grave contributed to the debate in *Freedom* arguing that recent events had proved the impossibility of stopping the war by starting a revolution. He shared the opinion that Germany's victory would mean the end of freedom and of all struggles for social emancipation. From his point of view, the military defence of the State did not necessarily mean safeguarding the interests of the 'class-oppressors', but the defence of the wealth and rights that workers had been able to gain in their struggle for social emancipation. In contrast to Kropotkin, Grave, although supporting the war, carefully distinguished the responsibilities of the German ruling class in endorsing Prussian militarism, from those of the German population. The aim of the war was to destroy the menace of Prussian militarism, not Germany. For this reason, after the Entente's victory, Grave believed that Germany should not be punished by the request for war reparations.

In the correspondence section, *Freedom* published a sarcastic letter by Robert Selkirk who attacked Kropotkin's analysis of the causes of the outbreak of the war, and

¹⁷ W. Tcherkesoff, 'The War, Its Causes, and German Responsibility', *Freedom*, November 1914, p. 86.

¹⁸ R. Rocker, *The London Years*, pp. 247-248.

criticised the decision to publish Kropotkin's article, warning the editor that 'A large number of our comrades are sliding down the declivity of militarism, and we should be careful that we do not in any way increase the number...'.¹⁹ Apparently Kropotkin was highly annoyed by the content of that letter.

The debate in *Freedom* involved the issue of anti-militarism as well. Kropotkin urged the anarchists to revise their concept of anti-militarism; in particular they had to reconsider their illusion that the general strike could be a means to prevent the war.

A general strike, to be efficacious, must be entered upon by the *two* nations going to fight. But in case of a Franco-German war there was not the slightest chance of this being the case. The German Social Democrats would not think, even for a single moment, of *not* joining the mobilisation; and in such a condition, even one single day of war-strike in France would mean the loss of a province, the gift of a hundred thousand men to the Germans, and the addition of a thousand million francs to the indemnity. No sensible man in France would join the strike. So it happened in reality.²⁰

Kropotkin reached the conclusion that the conduct of anti-militarist propaganda needed to be reviewed. He believed anti-militarism had to be based on the assumption that, if it failed, the anti-militarists would give their full support to the countries that suffered from invasion by the aggressors. Otherwise their inaction would mean giving tacit support to the invaders, hence 'they help them to make slaves of the conquered populations; they aid them to become still stronger and thus to be a still stronger obstacle to the Social Revolution in the future'. Kropotkin concluded that 'in a war of invasion every one is bound to take sides against the invaders'.²¹ Malatesta replied to Kropotkin's article pointing out his bitterness of having to oppose 'an old and beloved friend like Kropotkin who has done so much for the cause of Anarchism'; but Kropotkin seemed to have forgotten the class struggle, the necessity of economic emancipation, and all the other anarchist teachings. According to Kropotkin the national question had to be solved before the social question. The idea that the anti-militarists had to take sides in defence of the country that was going to be invaded, meant, according to Malatesta, 'that Kropotkin's 'anti-militarism' ought always to obey the orders of his Government. What remains after that of anti-militarism, and, indeed, of Anarchism too?'.²²

¹⁹ R. Selkirk, 'Correspondence', *Freedom*, November 1914.

²⁰ P. Kropotkin, 'Anti-Militarism. Was it Properly Understood?', *Freedom*, November 1914, p.82-83.

²¹ *Ibidem*

²² E. Malatesta, 'Anti-Militarism Was it Properly Understood?', *Freedom*, December 1914.

After the publication of the November issue of *Freedom*, Kropotkin and Cherkezov clashed with the editor Keell, who strongly opposed the war. In the same issue in which Kropotkin's letter was published, Keell had indeed expressed a completely divergent point of view:

The more I study the evidence, the more certain I am that the growing commercial as well military power of Germany was a challenge to Britain and the Allied Powers, and the supremacy of one or the other is the sole point at issue. And the workers are slaughtering each other to decide it. They will gain nothing by this war; whatever the result may be, they must lose.²³

In a meeting in Brighton, Kropotkin pressured Keell to resign: *Freedom*, he said, should shut down. Keell refused and continued to publish the newspaper, which became a mouthpiece of the anti-war group. Kropotkin and Keell never met again. Many years later Malatesta recalled the sorrow caused by his clash with Kropotkin:

He seemed to forget that he was an Internationalist, a socialist and an anarchist; he forgot what he himself had written only a short time before...and began expressing admiration for the worst Allied statesmen and Generals, and at the same time treated as cowards the anarchists who refused to join the Union Sacré [sic], regretting that his age and his poor health prevented him from taking up a rifle and marching against the Germans. It was impossible therefore to see eye to eye: for me he was a truly pathological case. All the same it was one of the saddest, most painful moments of my life (and, I dare to suggest, for him too) when, after a more than acrimonious discussion, we parted like adversaries, almost as enemies.²⁴

Only a minority of British anarchists, and within the anarchist movement in general, adhered to Kropotkin's position. However, several high profile figures with international reputations took his side. Many of them had been Malatesta's closest friends. These included Cherkezov, who testified in Malatesta's favour during his trial in 1912. Jean Grave the editor of *Les Temps Nouveaux*, the most important French anarchist newspaper. Charles Malato, the well-known anarchist writer and with whom Malatesta went to Belgium in the hope of fomenting a possible insurrection during the general strike of 1893. The Swiss James Guillaume, militant of the First International, who had edited Bakunin's writings, and Amilcare Cipriani, Garibaldian and hero of the

²³ T.H. Keell, 'Have the Leopards Changed their Spots?', *Freedom*, October 1914, p.78.

²⁴ E. Malatesta, 'Pietro Kropotkin. Ricordi e critiche di un vecchio amico', *Studi Sociali*, 15 April 1931. Published in: R. Vernon (ed.), *Errico Malatesta. His Life and Ideas* (London: Freedom Press, 1965), p. 260.

Paris Commune. In his memories, Jean Grave advanced a generational explanation for the division over the war:

Sans vouloir solliciter abusivement les ages on peut dire que les tenants de l'union sacrée étaient dans leur ensemble tant par leur age que par leur filiation idéologique plus proche de la commune de Paris et de la première internationale antiautoritaire que les résistants à la guerre. De ce double fait resultait une opposition de principe regard de l'Allemagne réputée dictatoriale et marxiste.²⁵

The Italian war interventionists took immediate advantage of the pro-war positions of Kropotkin and the other leaders, claiming that the whole anarchist movement supported the conflict. The censorship that was introduced during the war made it difficult for the anti-war anarchists to counter these misleading statements. But with this aim, in March 1915, *Freedom* published an 'International Anarchist Manifesto on the War'.²⁶ Among the signatories appeared Italians: Calzitta, Malatesta, Natale Paravich, Recchioni, Bertoni, and Frigerio. Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, and Alexander Shapiro signed the manifesto as well. The manifesto stated that it was not possible to draw any distinction between offensive and defensive war; all countries had prepared themselves for the conflict by constantly strengthening their armies and armaments for almost fifty years. It was therefore 'foolish and childish to seek to fix the responsibility on this or that Government'. At the same time, the manifesto rejected the assertion that supporting the war meant defending civilisation. None of the belligerents was entitled to invoke civilisation or 'to declare itself in a state of legitimate defence'; neither the militarist German State, nor repressive Russia, nor Great Britain with its colonial Empire, nor France with its 'bloody conquests in Tonkin, Madagascar, Morocco'. The real cause of war rested solely 'in the existence of the State, which is the political form of privilege'.

The role of the Anarchists in the present tragedy, whatever may be the place or the situation in which they find themselves is to continue to proclaim that there is but one war of liberation: that which in all countries is waged by the oppressed against the oppressor, by the exploited against the exploiters.²⁷

One year later the schism between pro and anti-war anarchists became unbridgeable. At the beginning of 1916, when rumours began to circulate that Germany

²⁵ Jean Grave, *Quarante ans de propagande anarchiste* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973), p. 546.

²⁶ 'International Anarchist Manifesto on the War', *Freedom*, March 1915.

²⁷ *Ibidem*

intended to start a campaign for peace with territorial annexations, Grave and Kropotkin promoted the publication of a manifesto urging the continuation of the war. It appeared in February 1916 in *La Bataille Syndicaliste* and was signed by fifteen anarchists; however Grave affirmed in his memoirs that, after the publication, they received more than one hundred signatures, half of which were from Italy.²⁸ The *Manifesto of Sixteen* claimed that the minimal conditions for starting a peace process did not exist, and that the war had to continue until Germany's defeat and retreat to its original boundaries.

I lavoratori tedeschi [...] dovrebbero dichiarare il proprio assoluto rifiuto a fare e ad accettare le annessioni, la propria rinuncia alla pretesa di esigere "contributi" dalle nazioni invase; dovrebbero riconoscere che lo Stato tedesco ha il dovere di riparare, per quanto possibile, ai danni materiali provocati dalle invasioni nei paesi vicini e che deve rinunciare alla pretesa di imporre condizioni di sudditanza economica sotto il nome di trattati commerciali. Sfortunatamente, fino a oggi non si scorgono sintomi di risveglio, in questo senso, del popolo tedesco. [...] E insieme a coloro che sono in lotta, noi consideriamo che [...] non sia proprio il caso di parlare di pace.²⁹

Errico Malatesta replied with an article in *Freedom*, significantly entitled 'Pro-Government Anarchists'. According to Malatesta:

...in the problematical hope of crushing Prussian Militarism, they have renounced all the spirit and all the traditions of Liberty; they have Prussianised England and France; they have submitted themselves to Tsarism; they have restored the prestige of the tottering throne of Italy. Can Anarchists accept this state of things for a single moment without renouncing all right [sic] to call themselves Anarchists?³⁰

Malatesta did not believe the defeat of Prussian militarism possible. In his opinion, even with the defeat of Germany, militarism was going to become a permanent feature in post-war Europe. Indeed, it would never be possible to prevent Germany from preparing its revenge and to avoid other countries from keeping themselves ready for another possible conflict. Then the 'self-styled Anarchists' that were presently supporting the war would become again 'at the first threat of war, recruiting-sergeants for the Governments'. The war could be stopped only by revolution or by the threat of it. Therefore, the anarchists should avoid every compromise and devote themselves 'to deepen the chasm between capitalists and wage-slaves, between rulers and ruled'. For

²⁸ Jean Grave, *Quarante ans de propagande anarchiste*, p. 547.

²⁹ 'Il Manifesto dei Sedici', republished in *Libertaria*, 1, (1999), pp. 67-69.

³⁰ E. Malatesta, 'Pro-Government Anarchists', *Freedom*, April 1916.

Malatesta, even foreign occupation, if it led to revolt, was preferable to bearing domestic oppression meekly, ‘almost gratefully, accepted, in the belief that by this means we are preserved from a greater evil’. He concluded:

It seems to me that it is criminal to do anything that tends to prolong the war, that slaughters men, destroys wealth, and hinders all resumption of the struggle for emancipation.³¹

The London Italian anarchist community during the First World War

The war also divided the Italian colony of anarchists in London. Silvio Corio initially stood with the pro-war factions; he did not sign the International Manifesto against the war. On 2 February 1915, Corio published an article entitled ‘Parlando con Hyndman’ in Mussolini’s interventionist newspaper, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, in which he stated that the war was necessary in order to weaken German militarism. That article caused deep resentment among the anti-war anarchists, in particular Malatesta and Recchioni. Later Corio changed his mind. In April 1916 at a private lecture with fifty anarchists of different nationalities present, he gave a long speech against the war.³² Other anarchists in London also became and remained interventionist. Thus Carlo Magnoni, in a letter written to his brother many years later, recalled how he became a nationalist at the outbreak of the First World War and how his drama *Gli Irredenti*, played at the *Club Cooperativo* in 1917, had aroused patriotic enthusiasm among the public.³³ The *Londra-Roma* reviewed the play:

Gli Irredenti giunge a proposito in questa nostra Colonia per secondar le speranze, le aspirazioni, i fremiti di questi nostri Connazionali onde essi siano concordi nel fronteggiare i sabotatori della guerra, i quali con ogni mezzo cercano di traviare il popolo e nascondere la verità, diffondendo idee false od esagerate, immaginando un domani travagliato dalla fame e dalla discordia.³⁴

The internal disputes between the Italian anarchists lessened their impact at this difficult time. In Britain within a few weeks of the beginning of the conflict, most of the opposition to the war had already disappeared. The Parliamentary Labour Party and the

³¹ *Ibidem*

³² ‘Conference’, note of Ministry of Interior, 2 June 1916. ACS, CPC, b. 1474, f. (Corio Silvio).

³³ Carlo Magnoni’s letter, 30 January 1934, ACS, CPC, b. 2932, f. (Magnoni Carlo).

³⁴ ‘Arte e Artisti, Gli Irredenti’, *Londra-Roma*, in ACS, CPC, b. 2932, f. (Magnoni Carlo).

trade unions ended their opposition and urged workers to abandon all strikes during the conflict. Pro-war and patriotic, indeed jingoist feelings dominated British society, especially in the first years of the war. These sentiments were carefully nurtured by an intense propaganda campaign organised by the British government, which had no equal in the past. Anti-war groups could do little to contest posters, parades, pamphlets, films, and martial music, which bombarded the eyes and ears of the British populace.³⁵ Moreover, ‘the opposition to the anti-war agitators by patriots was constant... Meetings were attacked with monotonous regularity, sometimes platforms were smashed, sometimes the speakers were violently handled. Meetings were banned by the police and free-speech fights were fought’.³⁶ This outburst of patriotism was followed by a wave of xenophobia: the war was perceived not only as a national but also as a ‘racial’ struggle. Germanophobia pervaded British society; several anti-Germans riots took place and mobs looted and destroyed German shops and businesses, particularly after the sinking of the passenger ship *Lusitania* in 1915. However, ‘the line between anti-German sentiment and hatred of all foreigners was easily erased. Mobs who began by destroying German shops often ended up looting businesses owned by Italians and Russians (British allies), or attacking blacks and Chinese’.³⁷ In October 1914, with the enforcement of the Alien Restriction Act, freedom of movement for aliens was limited - they could not move away from their residence further than five miles - and all resident aliens were required to register with the police. Sending letters abroad was prohibited. In the summer of 1914 the army organised a postal censorship bureau to monitor the correspondence of foreign nationals and suspicious persons. Initially intended for preventing leakage of intelligence and espionage, it was soon utilised to police the mail of dissenters and dissenting organisations.³⁸ Subsequently the government assumed the power to close down restaurants and bars regularly frequented by aliens. While the war continued, war regulations were applied without distinction between friendly and enemy aliens.³⁹

In the autumn of 1914 unnaturalised Germans, Austrians and Hungarians were interned or repatriated; in September, 10,500 enemy aliens were held in internment

³⁵ G. Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 96-128.

³⁶ J. Quail, *The Slow Burning Fuse*, p. 290.

³⁷ G. Robb, *British Culture*, p. 9.

³⁸ The mail of leading dissenters was examined on a systematic basis by the end of 1915. On the control of dissent see: B. Millman, *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain* (London-Portland: Frank Cass, 2000).

³⁹ G. J. DeGroot, *Blighty. British Society in the Era of the Great War* (London-NewYork: Longman, 1996), pp. 140-160.

camps. Many German and Jewish anarchists were arrested, among them Rudolf Rocker who, however, was arrested by special order of the War Office because of his anti-militarist propaganda. In October 1914, the British police raided the German Anarchist Club in Charlotte Street, arrested all the German anarchists who were in the club and interned them in the Olympia camp.⁴⁰ This atmosphere was aggravated by the spread of spy-fever: ‘anything German and anyone thought to have the least sympathy for Germans became the target for bitter personal attacks’.⁴¹

In this climate, whoever claimed to be against the war was immediately labelled as pro-German. Political activities by dissenting groups were heavily restricted by emergency legislation, in particular by the Defence of the Realm Act. The D.O.R.A. initially intended ‘to prevent persons communicating with the enemy or obtaining information for that purpose or any purpose calculated to jeopardize the success of the operations of any of His Majesty’s forces or to assist the enemy’⁴², and afterwards was increasingly exercised in order to silence dissent. Moreover, in 1915, attempts by either word or deed to obstruct recruiting became an offence. After the introduction of conscription in 1916, there was immediate arrest for those who refused to register for it. These laws hit the anarchist camp. Guy Aldred, editor of the newspaper the *Spur*, was imprisoned in 1916 for refusing to register for conscription. Thomas Keell and Lilian Wolfe were tried and sentenced respectively to three and two months’ imprisonment for distributing leaflets opposing recruiting. The police on several occasions raided the offices of *Freedom*. Also the offices of the *Labour Leader* were raided in the summer of 1915. In July 1916, *Freedom*’s press was seized and the newspaper could be printed only thanks to the help of the Independent Labour Party. The *Voice of Labour* ceased publication in August 1916 as a result of the arrests of many contributors under the Military Service Act.

Censorship was directed against all journals and newspapers and ‘was carried out by the Admiralty and the war office acting independently, with the result that newspapers had practically no war news at all’⁴³. As a result of the lack of information, the Italian anarchists in London found themselves almost completely cut off from the rest of Europe. When Italy joined the war, in May 1915, Malatesta admitted that:

⁴⁰ Frosali’s report to Ministry of Interior, 28 October 1914. ACS, PS, 1914, b. 34.

⁴¹ D. French, ‘Spy Fever in Britain, 1900-1915’, *Historical Journal*, 21, (1978), p. 364.

⁴² Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge* (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 76-77.

⁴³ *Ibidem*

We do not know, for want of reliable information, the present situation in Italy, and what are the true factors that have determined so quick a change in her attitude.⁴⁴

Lack of communication with the United Kingdom created difficulties for the anarchist movement in Italy as well. In the summer of 1914, the anarchists in Italy hardly received any news from Malatesta. This was due both to family reasons and censorship. Emilia Defendi, soon after Malatesta's return to London, fell seriously ill. Consequently, for months Malatesta spent every night looking after her. After a short time, Enrico Defendi, who was probably Malatesta's son, also went to hospital where he died of tuberculosis on the 8 November 1916. Emilia Defendi died in March 1919.⁴⁵

In September 1915, the British police intercepted a letter directed to, or sent by, Malatesta. In this correspondence, Luigi Bertoni, who was in Geneva, proposed that Malatesta launch a campaign against the war, which would be financed by a wealthy Indian man. Malatesta, before beginning this campaign, requested guarantees that the money did not come from Germany. British police summoned Malatesta 'per schiarimenti, e per consigliarlo a starsene tranquillo'.⁴⁶ In 1917 Malatesta wrote, 'Io mi trovo come in prigione. La mia corrispondenza pare sia completamente intercettata. Dall' Italia non ricevo risposta nemmeno a telegrammi con risposta pagata'.⁴⁷ In the first period of the conflict Malatesta's silence was misinterpreted by the interventionists as a signal of his support for the war, a position that Malatesta was compelled to refute in a letter to the newspaper, *L'Università Popolare*, published in Milan.

The Italian anarchists in London concentrated their propaganda on the colony, aiming in particular at the youths that had to register for conscription with the Italian embassy. The anarchists probably took advantage of the traditional reluctance of Italians in Britain to register their new born boys with the General Consulate in order to avoid the call-up.⁴⁸

Indeed, Italians in the colony did not appear particularly eager to join the war, especially in the first eight months of the conflict. When Garibaldi's son, General Ricciotti Garibaldi, visited London in February 1915 to recruit soldiers for his legion in

⁴⁴ E. Malatesta, 'Italy also', *Freedom*, June 1915, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁵ See ACS, *CPC*, b.1653, f. (Defendi Enrico) and b. 5234, f. (Trunzio Emilia in Defendi).

⁴⁶ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 24 September 1915, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2950, f. (Malatesta Errico).

⁴⁷ However, according to police sources, Malatesta was in continuous correspondence with Luigi Fabbri. S. Fedeli, *Una breve illusione. Gli anarchici e la Russia Sovietica 1917-1939* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1996), p.12.

⁴⁸ Lucio Sponza, *Divided Loyalties. Italians in Britain during the Second World War* (Bern: Peter Lang 2000), p. 21.

France, although ‘he was greeted with enthusiasm by his compatriots’ apparently he did not succeed ‘in recruiting Italian (or other) volunteers’.⁴⁹

A few weeks after Italy had entered the war, the police inspector at the Italian embassy announced to the Ministry of Interior that the anarchists had begun a campaign of propaganda to prevent conscripts from presenting themselves for the call-up.⁵⁰ The same month Frosali reported that many young men within the Italian colony had not reported for the medical examination required for conscription. He underlined that ‘this deplorable fact is mostly due to the active and seditious propaganda daily carried out by the anarchists Emidio Recchioni, Enrico Defendi, Vittorio Calzitta and others’.⁵¹ In September 1915, the Italian consulate published in the newspaper of the Italian colony, *Londra-Roma*, a warning to those who had not responded to the call-up threatening to declare them deserters.⁵² In January 1918, inspector Frosali requested that the Ministry of Interior be provided with the names of twenty people that Gualducci had recommended to the socialist deputy Dino Rondani in order to obtain their exemption from military service ‘e che indubbiamente devono appartenere ai partiti sovversivi’.⁵³

The consulate informed the English authorities about the anti-war Italian anarchists present in London for possible prosecution, although they wanted to avoid their expulsion to Italy. Thus, for example, in the summer 1915, Italian authorities reported Calzitta, Gualducci and Recchioni ‘persuading Italian reservists not to join the colours’, but withdrawing at the same time a previous request of expulsion for the three. The Home Office complied with the requests of the Italians as shown by a correspondence between the War Office and the Home Office:

My dear Pedder, referring to your letter of the 10th instant about three Italian anarchists Recchioni, Calzitta and Gualducci, it seems to me that in view of the decision of the Home Secretary that it is not proposed to make Deportation orders, the only possible course is to apply regulation 30 of the Alien Restriction Order and place these men under as many restrictions as possible with a view of checking their anti-recruiting tendencies...⁵⁴

Inspector Frosali reported similar events many times, but always stressing the necessity to avoid expulsion. At the beginning of 1918, he reported that Gualducci

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*

⁵⁰ Inspector Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 12 June 1915, ACS, *CPC*, b. 4260, f. (Recchioni Emidio).

⁵¹ Inspector Frosali’s letter, 4 June 1915, PRO/ HO/ 144/18949.

⁵² Between 1915 and 1918 around 8.500 Italians returned to Italy to join the Army. L. Sponza, *Divided Loyalties*, p. 22.

⁵³ Inspector Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 15 January 1918, ACS, *CPC*, b. 2554, f. (Gualducci Pietro).

⁵⁴ W. Kell (War Office) to John Pedder (Home Office), 19 July 1915, PRO, HO 144/18949.

[...] il 30 dicembre 1917 [Gualducci] si recò alla Società Operaia Italiana a 10 Laystalle [sic] Street E. C. a fare propaganda disfattista.[...] Egli è una delle menti direttive del movimento anarchico. Buon parlatore, germanofilo convinto va sorvegliato attentamente. Il rimpatriarlo sarebbe di grave danno al nostro paese. Da parte mia consiglieri che fosse invitato, dalle autorità militari, a desistere dalla sua propaganda e se preso in flagrante presentato al magistrato per il relativo procedimento e possibile condanna. Ripeto però che bisognerebbe evitare l'espulsione dal Regno Unito.⁵⁵

Frosali advanced a similar advice in the case of Cesare Cova, who,

spesso si reca nella osteria di 'Restighino' e fa una terribile e malefica propaganda disfattista profetizzando inoltre la prossima rivoluzione in Italia... Sono contrario che Cova venga espulso dal Regno Unito per ragioni facili a comprendersi. Sarebbe bene però farlo sorvegliare e richiamarlo e se del caso presentarlo al magistrato per successiva condanna senza la espulsione.⁵⁶

But some restrictions were applied to Italians involved in the anti-war campaign. Gualducci saw his application for passport rejected, since the authorities believed that in Italy he could easily foment disorder.⁵⁷ On the other hand, the local authorities put pressure on the anti-war activists. In December 1917, Recchioni was summoned by the police and the military authorities and was informed that they intended to expel him for having sent some money abroad. Recchioni avoided expulsion stating that the money was sent to acquire products for his trade.⁵⁸ In May 1915, Silvio Corio, gave a speech about Italy and the war, in which he stated that it was unlikely that Italy would join the conflict. The day after a detective from Scotland Yard went to Corio's house and told him:

Fate il piacere di parlare sull'anarchia quanto volete, ma non vi occupate della guerra, perché non vogliamo noie, specialmente da parte dei forestieri. E state tranquillo che è meglio per voi.⁵⁹

In 1917, the outbreak of revolution in Russia ignited new enthusiasm among the exile colony in London. The Russian Revolution aroused great expectations among the

⁵⁵ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 13 January 1918, ACS, CPC, b. 2554, f. (Gualducci Pietro).

⁵⁶ Inspector Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 13 January 1918, ACS, CPC, b. 1519, f. (Cova Cesare).

⁵⁷ Inspector Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 23 July 1917, ACS, CPC, b. 2554, f. (Gualducci Pietro).

⁵⁸ Inspector Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 13 December 1917, ACS, CPC, b. 4260, f. (Recchioni Emidio).

⁵⁹ Inspector Frosali to Ministry of Interior, 3 May 1915, ACS, CPC, b. 1474, f. (Corio Silvio).

anarchists, even if they soon became disenchanted by the rise to power of the Bolsheviks.

N. 53 P.S. 1914
Rendita 28/11

Groupe d'Etudes Sociales de Londres
14, LITTLE HOWLAND STREET,
TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD.

Domenica 25 Gennaio 1914
alle ore 3-30 pom. nella Sala della Cooperativa
12, Little Newport St., Charing Cross Road.
COMIZIO di PROTESTA
in favore di
MASETTI

Dimanche 25 Janvier
à 3h. 30 Salle de la Cooperative
12, Little Newport St., Charing Cross Road.
Meeting de Protestation
en faveur de
MASETTI

ORATEURS:—
(*italiano*) Gualducci) (*Francese*) Martini) (*Spagnolo*) Tarrida del Marmol.)
(*Austriaco*) Paravitch) (Fritz. *tedesco*)

Chapter 8

Conclusion

In August 1900, a few days after the killing of King Umberto by Gaetano Bresci, Howard Vincent, former director of Criminal Investigations at Scotland Yard, interviewed by the *Daily Graphic*, rebutted the criticism of Britain for giving refuge to foreign revolutionaries. Howard Vincent turned the criticism to his accusers by claiming that other governments were opportunistic: ‘The way in which foreign countries dump their objectionable characters down upon our coasts is most unfair. They are sending them every day’. Sir Vincent considered this practice ‘very convenient to them’, and he believed that it would not stop ‘as long as we keep our door open’. He considered that foreign governments ‘were not greatly distressed at the inconvenience caused to the British government’ and sustained the idea of an international agreement to limit the use of expulsion, as he stated in the interview: ‘Let each nation look after its own criminals and semi-criminals’.¹

Some of Howard Vincent’s remarks were well founded. On the one hand, the British policy of free asylum allowed the anarchists from all of Europe to conduct a relatively free life in Britain; on the other hand, the concerns of the foreign governments about alleged conspiracies organised by the anarchists in London proved to be mostly groundless. Scotland Yard kept foreign anarchists under continuous surveillance, both by shadowing them and by gathering information through informers. Moreover, when the British authorities believed that a dangerous action was being organised, they broke their traditional discretion and passed information to the foreign government involved, as happened in 1891 on occasion of the First of May, when Scotland Yard alerted the Italian embassy about Malatesta’s disappearance from London. Another question, as we have seen in Chapter 4, was the services that on occasion agents of Scotland Yard provided ‘privately’ and with payment to the Italian embassy, and almost certainly to all other foreign embassies.

Howard Vincent had good reasons for underlining the convenience that foreign governments found in having revolutionary leaders living abroad and therefore not to have to deal with their presence in their homelands. For example, during the First World

¹ ‘How to deal with anarchists. An interview with Sir Howard Vincent’, *Daily Graphic*, 11 August 1900.

War, the Italian embassy asked British authorities to stop the expulsion of the Italian anarchists active in anti-war propaganda. Malatesta's return to Italy in 1919 is a good example of this policy. In order to return to Italy, in 1916 Malatesta requested the Italian consulate in London to issue him with a passport. His request was rejected for years. Malatesta recalled how he was impeded from going back to Italy:

Si era in tempo di guerra: era impossibile uscire dall'Inghilterra senza il passaporto. Io lo domando. Il console me lo nega. Io insisto. Egli mi dice: "Ma voi avete un mandato di cattura!". Rispondo: "Precisamente: voglio andare a subire il processo". Non vi fu verso. Reclamai, gridai, scrissi, telegrafai al Ministero, domandai che mi si venisse a prendere coi carabinieri: niente, assolutamente niente. Boselli, Orlando, Nitti vanno e vengono, cambiano i Ministeri, ma è sempre la stessa cosa. Infine viene l'armistizio e la Corte d'Appello di Aquila mi applica l'amnistia. Dunque non più situazione speciale per cagione di guerra. Non più questione di mandati e non mandati di cattura. Ma vado dal console e questi mi rifiuta ancora il passaporto. Il Ministero non vuole! Io tento in tutti i modi possibili per tornare in Italia e non trovando altro modo, cercai di mettermi in contravvenzione con tutte le possibili leggi inglesi per farmi arrestare e farmi tradurre in Italia. Ma i poliziotti inglesi mi dicevano: "Sapete? E' inutile che voi ci fate correre, perché noi potremmo arrestarvi, ma non vi arrestiamo, perché se vi arrestiamo vi mandiamo in Italia ed il governo italiano trova che voi state meglio in Inghilterra".²

Many demonstrations were organised in Italy, particularly by the *Unione Sindacale Italiana*, demanding Malatesta's return. In November 1919, the passport was eventually issued. Yet, difficulties did not end.

Io credo finalmente di poter infine venire liberamente in Italia. Ma per venire in Italia si doveva passare per la Francia. Allora erano ancora chiuse le frontiere del Belgio, della Germania, ecc., ed il console, mentre mi dava il passaporto, si raccomandava poi al console francese perché non mi mettesse il visto necessario per potere passare la frontiera. Allora non mi restava altro modo che la via del mare. Ma sulla via del mare c'era la polizia inglese, la quale, per essere gentile col nostro governo, si adoperava perché nessun capitano, né per amore né per denaro, volesse trasportarmi in Italia. Mi diressi a capitani di tutte le nazionalità, a parecchi detti anche e molto largamente il prezzo del trasporto, ma quando andavo per imbarcarmi mi restituivano il denaro e qualcuno mi diceva: "Sapete, la polizia ci ha detto che ci succederebbero seri guai se vi trasportassimo". Ad uno la polizia avrebbe detto che se trasportavano me, il bastimento sarebbe stato affondato.³

² Trento Tagliaferri, *Errico Malatesta, Armando Borghi e compagni davanti ai giurati di Milano* (Milan: Gamalero, 1922), pp.25-30. Now in Errico Malatesta, *Autobiografia mai scritta. Ricordi (1853-1932)*, edited by Piero Brunello and Pietro Di Paola (Santa Maria Capua Vetere: Spartaco, 2003), pp. 185-186.

³ *Ibidem*

At the end of December 1919 Malatesta secretly boarded a Greek ship and was smuggled to Italy. Malatesta disembarked at the southern city of Taranto on Christmas Eve. From there, he reached Genoa where he was welcomed by tens of thousands of workers.⁴ Malatesta never returned to Britain.

But even with these official and unofficial contacts Italian diplomats in London never ceased complaining about the scarce amount of information and collaboration they received from Scotland Yard, and about the permissive and lax attitude manifested by the British authorities toward the anarchists. Due to the irregular information the Italian embassy received from the police in London, they had to rely on their own spies and informers. The reliability of the spies was not constant. Many factors affected the truthfulness of their reports. First of all, for their 'financial convenience', the informers tended to exaggerate when not completely inventing information, taking advantage of the fact that the Italian authorities overestimated the real danger represented by anarchists abroad. Therefore, as a historical source, their reports must be considered with care. Nevertheless, thanks to these informers, the Italian authorities had fairly accurate knowledge of some aspects of the activity of the anarchists. They knew almost all their local and international physical movements. Moreover, they were alerted in advance about all forthcoming anarchist publications and were thus able to seize most of them before they could reach their addressees in Italy. However, the use of spies sometimes had embarrassing consequences, both for Italian and British authorities. Gennaro Rubino, the police informer, who in 1902 attempted to kill the King of Belgium, is a case in point. Of greater reliability was the service carried out by police inspectors Mandolesi and Frosali who, from 1903, after the Rubino scandal and the removal of inspector Prina from London, openly monitored the anarchists in London.

Almost all the Italian anarchists lived in London. In 1909, 15 consular agents and the Italian consuls in Glasgow, Cardiff and Dublin replied to a request of the Ministry of Interior stating that neither anarchists nor socialists resided in the territory under their jurisdiction. The only positive reply came from the consular agent in Southampton, where five Italian anarchists lived. In particular in Southampton lived Emilia Armetta who put up anarchists either on their way to or on their return from the United States.⁵

⁴ See: Carl Levy, 'Charisma and Social Movements: Errico Malatesta and Italian Anarchism', *Modern Italy*, 3 (1998), pp. 205-217. Paolo Finzi, *La nota persona. Errico Malatesta in Italia. Dicembre 1919-Luglio 1920* (Ragusa: La Fiaccola, 1990).

⁵ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 9 September 1909. ACS, PS, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

The anarchists residing in the British capital lived in London's 'Little Italy'. Many were shoemakers, tailors, and waiters. Some of them were well known to their compatriots because of their jobs, especially when they traded Italian produce and products, as was the case of the Defendi family or Emidio Recchioni. The Italian anarchists frequented the friendly societies and clubs of the colony, such as the *Club Cooperativo* in Greek Street. They often met at the *Circolo Mandolinistico* and they were part of the management committee of the *Circolo Filodrammatico*, of which Isaia Pacini and Ferraroni were secretaries. However, differences in political opinions could cause tensions, as occurred for example in 1911, between a group of Italians and the anarchists Calzitta and Defendi during the celebration for New Year's Eve at the *Club Cooperativo*. A row erupted when the group toasted to *Tripoli Italiana* and the two anarchists reacted by toasting to the Arabs and Gaetano Bresci.⁶

A report by the informer Lauria, although probably not completely true, does highlight the tensions that could emerge in the relationships between atheist anarchists and devout Catholics within the colony. According to Lauria, in 1905, several Italian anarchists intended to disturb the *Processione del Carmine*, the traditional and most important religious feast of the Italian colony. Once that information had spread in the colony, the Italians of Clerkenwell armed themselves and the anarchists were forced to flee and were able to return to Clerkenwell only in the late evening.⁷ And the behaviour of single militants could also have serious consequences to the relationships between the anarchists and the Italian colony. In 1908, the anarchist Amedeo Tombolesi departed from London after he had defrauded comrades and other people of the colony, including a poor elderly woman with seven children, for a considerable amount of money. The whole Italian colony was up in arms. Since Tombolesi had been an active propagandist of anarchist direct action, the inhabitants of the colony blamed the anarchists and 'anarchy' in general. And as Virgilio reported, this caused a real setback for the anarchists.⁸ However, when the anarchists focused their political activities on certain issues, they sometimes made a positive impact in the colony. For example, at weekly open speeches organised by Malatesta in Clerkenwell in 1909, according to police inspector Frosali: 'di giorno in giorno l'uditorio aumenta, e nei restaurants, bars e caffè si discutono le teorie anarchiche, ed anche i più ignoranti e refrattari cominciano ad

⁶ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 4 January 1912. ACS, *CPC*, b. 1653, f. (Defendi Enrico).

⁷ Calvo's report, 17 July 1905. ACS, *PS*, 1905, b. 22.

⁸ Virgilio's report, London 23 March 1908. ACS, *CPC*, b. 5134, f. (Tombolesi Amedeo).

interessarsene'.⁹ A few years later, at the beginning of the First World War, as we have seen in Chapter 7, the campaign of the anarchists against conscription among the young men of the colony was cause for serious concern for the Italian authorities.

The Italian anarchists also made several attempts to organise hotel and restaurant employees. However, they were never able to establish long-lasting organisations and had few tangible results. First of all the fact that the hotel trades and catering were 'so much fragmented in small units and so often temporary and seasonal' represented a major obstacle.¹⁰ Secondly, many of the anti-organisationalist and individualist anarchists had little or no time for trade unions. The anarchists were chiefly interested in events back in Italy and their main aim was a revolution in Italy. But it was frustrating to follow these events from afar. In any case, the various organisations of the anarchists or their attempts at broader organisational activities in the Italian colony were affected by the frequent 'coming and going' of anarchist activists in London. Indeed, many of the anarchists who lived in London returned to Italy when they were given the possibility: either in case of amnesties or when the crimes for which they were wanted expired due to the statute of limitations. Others, for example the Tombolesi brothers, settled in Paris, which has long been a centre for Italian political refugees. Several anarchists moved to the United States, among them Giulietta Defendi with her husband Antonio Fabrizi, and Alfonso Antonelli with her companion Delfina Burzio.¹¹ South America was another usual destination, the two brothers Arturo and Luciano Campagnoli moved to San Paolo in Brazil where they acquired a small *fazenda* and were active in the syndicalist movement.¹²

Political and personal arguments among members of the colony also limited the activity of the anarchists. Some of these quarrels were concocted by spies in order to create an atmosphere of mistrust. However, personal disputes were a constant feature in the everyday life of the anarchists. Both Calvo and Virgilio referred frequently to personal quarrels that on occasion ended in physical fights. Anarchist activity in the 1890s was affected by the dispute between the individualist and anti-organisationalist members of *L'Anonimato*, led by Parmeggiani, and the organisational followers of Malatesta. Although Parmeggiani moved to France at the beginning of 1900, many of

⁹ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 25 February 1909, ACS, PS, 1909, b. 4, f. 5075/103.

¹⁰ Lucio Sponza, *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain: Realities and Images* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), p. 260.

¹¹ See: Italian consulate to Ministry of Interior, 20 August 1906 ACS, CPC, b. 1653, f. (Defendi Giovanni) and Frosali's report, 25 August 1906. ACS, CPC, b. 154, f. (Antonelli Adolfo).

¹² Campagnoli's biographical records in: ACS, CPC, b. 977, f. (Campagnoli Arturo) and b. 978, f. (Campagnoli Luciano).

his followers remained in London and stoked up feelings of resentment among the anarchists. At the beginning of the 1900s, Errico Malatesta, certainly the anarchist most endowed with organisational skills, was heavily criticised by his companions and decided temporarily to abandon political activity. And the recriminations that followed the Scolari affair, after the unmasking of the spy Gennaro Rubino in 1902, undermined Malatesta's leadership among the anarchists in London for a considerable time. In 1911, Cesare Cova and Emidio Recchioni were opponents in a personal dispute concerning an alleged affair between Recchioni and Cova's daughter. The controversy ended only in court where Cova was convicted of libel.¹³ And these quarrels were probably exacerbated due to the close-knit nature of the anarchist colony.

Anarchist political activity focused essentially on general issues and particularly on Italian political events. The Italian anarchists never published a newspaper dedicated to discussing issues concerning the Italian colony in London. The aim was to smuggle their publications back to Italy or to circulate them to other anarchist colonies around the world. Although short lived, these newspapers were significant from an ideological and theoretical point of view. *L'Anarchia*, *L'Associazione*, *Cause ed Effetti*, and *La Guerra Tripolina* were important for the ideological and tactical orientation of the Italian anarchist movement in periods of political difficulties and uncertainty. They played an important role in maintaining contacts between expatriates and anarchist groups in Italy.

The Italian anarchists also joined fellow refugee anarchists from other parts of Europe who had settled in London. Personal friendships were cemented in the many clubs established in London, especially in Soho, Fitzrovia, and the East End. Many of these clubs established were often managed by a 'multinational' base committee of anarchists. The social life of the anarchists was based in the clubs. Clubs were also centres of 'cultural production': plays, drama, songs, concerts were performed. Thus Rudolf Rocker, in the Jubilee Street club, organised lectures on Henrik Ibsen, Richard Wagner, and Edgar Allan Poe.¹⁴ If the clubs did not necessarily always lead to greater politicisation of the members of the Italian colony, they 'became an important social component of the colony's life'.¹⁵ But within the confines of their circles debates and discussions organised by the anarchists did encourage an exchange of opinions among members of the anarchist colony and the development of ideological and political

¹³ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 21 November 1911, ACS, CPC, b. 1519, f. (Cova Cesare).

¹⁴ 'The Anarchist Leader. Interview with Mr. Rocker', *The Morning Post*, 7 January 1911.

¹⁵ Lucio Sponza, *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain*, p. 270.

viewpoints. Anarchist groups from different nationalities organised political initiatives in common on the occasion of the First of May or the 18th of March, the anniversary of the Paris Commune. They also organised political campaigns, such as the demonstrations in support of Francisco Ferrer, of the Russian revolution in 1905, for the liberation of Ettore and Giovannitti in 1912, or the mobilisation to prevent Malatesta's expulsion in the same year.

The anarchist movement was devastated by the outbreak of the First World War. Due to differences over the war, a planned international meeting of the anarchists to be held in London from 28 August to 5 September 1914 was cancelled.¹⁶ As elsewhere in Europe, disagreements between pro and anti-war anarchists lacerated the exile community in London, and the war destroyed the international framework of solidarity and the web of personal relationships that had been the basis of the experience of exile before 1914.

The World War had enormous consequences for the anarchist movement. At the end of the war, the anarchists found that the conflict had been 'a shaking up of references such that everything seems to start again from square one, consigning old, "pre-war" references and arrangements to the museum. Like the fault in a geological fold, the war years constituted a spectacular break'.¹⁷ In the post-war world governments around the world increased restrictions on migration and the surveillance of foreign radicals.¹⁸

In the years following the end of the conflict, the British anarchist movement had become small: 'post war slumps had hit the movement and a surprising number had emigrated', explained the anarchist Albert Meltzer. The London colony of anarchists collapsed: many foreign anarchists left the country either voluntarily or because of deportation.¹⁹ Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the war, most of the anarchist leaders around whom the various nationally based anarchist communities had formed, departed from London; thus it no longer remained one of the major centres of international revolutionary politics in Europe. According to Meltzer, the German movement largely disappeared in the First World War 'with individual exceptions'.

¹⁶ Frosali's report to Ministry of Interior, 18 August 1914. ACS, *PS*, 1914, b. 34. On the preparation of the congress see: *Bulletin du Congrès Anarchiste International*, nn. 1 and 2, May and July 1914, ACS, *PS*, 1914, b. 34.

¹⁷ D. Colson, *Anarcho-syndicalisme et communisme*, Saint Etienne 1920-1925 (Saint Etienne: Université de Saint Etienne/Centre d'Etudes Foréziennes/Atelier de Création Libertaire, 1986). Quoted in: D. Berry, *A History of the French Anarchist Movement 1917-1945* (Westport Connecticut-London: Greenwood Press, 2002) p. 51.

¹⁸ See: Donna Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (London: UCL Press, 2000), p. 131.

Most of the French, according to Meltzer, instead became ‘completely integrated with the English speaking movement’. The Yiddish-speaking anarchist movement in the East of London vanished, ‘due partly to the disintegration of working class Jewry, certainly to the disappearance of Yiddish as a language, and partly to emigration’. After the war, many of the top activists of this movement, already weakened by the internment of Rudolf Rocker, were either deported to their countries of origin, or left voluntarily. In 1918, as part of an exchange of prisoners between Britain and Germany, Rocker was transferred to the Netherlands where he stayed until the ‘November revolution’ of 1918 in Germany. After that political exiles were granted an amnesty and Rocker returned to his homeland.

Many Russians left London at the outbreak of the Russian Revolution. Indeed, at that time ‘the whole radical community was in a state of euphoria, and many of Rocker’s friends flocked back to Russia to take part in the making of a new society’. Among them were Alexander Shapiro and his wife. Also Peter Kropotkin, as soon as he received news of the February Revolution, decided to return to Russia with his wife ‘to place ourselves at the service of popular revolution’.²⁰ In the summer of 1917, they reached Petrograd where a crowd of sixty thousand people welcomed them.

Malatesta was attracted to the revolution too and tried to travel to Russia, but ‘the British government forbade his departure on the grounds that he was an Italian citizen and only Russian expatriates were allowed to return’.²¹ When Malatesta left to go to Italy in December 1919, the Italian movement lost its most charismatic leader.

However, some other influential anarchist activists remained in Britain: Silvio Corio, Emidio Recchioni, Pietro Gualducci, Francesco Galasso, and Vittorio Taborelli.²² From the early twenties, this small group opposed the transformation of the Italian community into a ‘Little Fascist Italy’ which *Fasci* Abroad in particular, were aiming at.²³ Indeed, the first section of the *Fasci* Abroad opened in London as early as June 1921.

¹⁹ A. Meltzer, *The anarchists in London, 1935-1955* (Orkney Islands: Sanday, 1976), p. 8.

²⁰ G. Woodcock, I. Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince*, p. 392.

²¹ M. Graur, *An anarchist “Rabbi”. The Life and Teachings of Rudolf Rocker* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), p. 129.

²² On the anti-fascist activity in London see: A. Bernabei, *Esuli ed emigrati italiani nel Regno Unito, 1920-1940* (Milan: Mursia, 1997). See also the entries by P. Di Paola: Corio Silvio; Gualducci Pietro; Recchioni Emidio, in Various Authors, *Dizionario biografico dell’anarchismo Italiano*, vol. 1 (Pisa: BFS, 2003) and 2 (forthcoming).

²³ On the activity of *Fasci* Abroad in Britain see: Claudia Baldoli, *Exporting Fascism. Italian Fascists and Britain’s Italians in the 1930s* (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2003).

But between 1922 and 1924, Galasso and Taborelli managed to publish *Il Comento* the only anti-fascist newspaper that appeared in the Italian colony. However, in the 1930s the Fascists took almost complete control of the Italian community and the opposition to Fascism found expression only outside the colony. Silvio Corio and his companion Sylvia Pankhurst published the newspaper *New Times and Ethiopia News*, which denounced Fascist activities in Ethiopia and opposed Mussolini's regime until the end of the Second World War. The newspaper sold an average of ten thousand copies, an issue, reaching at times peaks of forty thousand, an issue. Recchioni, instead, took a more individual and conspiratorial approach. His shop *The King Bomba* in Soho became a centre of anti-fascist activity. Recchioni's son, Vernon Richards, recalled how the fascists often damaged the shop's windows. In 1931, in an anarchist newspaper published in the United States, *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, Recchioni launched a public subscription to raise money for whomever intended to devote himself to the mission of killing Mussolini; he opened the subscription with a donation of one thousand dollars. Recchioni was involved in Michele Schirru's and Angelo Sbardello's failed attempts to kill Mussolini and in many other alleged plots.²⁴ The outbreak of the Second World War changed completely the relationship between the Italian colony and its host country.²⁵ The anarchists once again opposed the war. Among them, symbolically representing a link with the past, was Emidio Recchioni's son, Vernon Richards, future editor of *Freedom*, and Marie Louise Berneri, daughter of the Italian anarchist, Camillo Berneri. They were both arrested in the early morning of 22 February 1945 for violating the Defence Regulation with their anti-war propaganda.

But this is yet another story.

²⁴ E. Recchioni, 'Per la nostra guerra', *L'Adunata dei Refrattari*, 4 April 1931.

²⁵ On the impact of the Second World War on the Italian Community in Britain see: L. Sponza, *Divided Loyalties*. On Marie Louise Berneri's activity during the war see: Marie Louise Berneri and Vera Brittain, *Il seme del caos. Scritti sui bombardamenti di massa (1939-1945)*, edited by Claudia Baldoli (Santa Maria Capua Vetere: Spartaco, 2004).

SOURCES

Archival Sources

International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam

Archives:

Brousse, Paul
 Fabbri, Luigi
 Fedeli, Ugo
 Jung, Hermann
 Nettlau, Max
 Recchioni, Emidio

Newspapers and single issues:

L'Anarchia
Il Ciclone
Der Communist- Il Comunista [sic]
La Guerra Tripolina
L'Insurrezione
Il Pugnale
Studi Sociali. Rivista di Libero Esame
Le Travail

Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome

Carte Crispi. Deputazione di Storia Patria Palermo
 Carte Giolitti 1875-1928
 Casellario Politico Centrale
 Ministero degli Interni. Divisione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza
 Ministero degli Interni. Massime.
 Ministero di Grazia e Giustizia. Direzione Generale Affari Penali. Miscellanea

Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome

Ambasciata di Londra
 Polizia Internazionale
 Affari Politici, Gran Bretagna
 Serie Politica P, 1891-1916
 Serie Z. Contenzioso

Public Record Office, Kew, London

Central Criminal Court Records
 Foreign Office Correspondence
 Home Office 45
 Home Office 144

British Library, Newspaper Library, Colindale

L'Associazione
Bollettino Socialista Rivoluzionario
Freedom
Germinal
L'Internazionale
Londra-Roma
The Revue
La Rivoluzione Sociale
Lo Sciopero Generale
La Settimana Sanguinosa

British Library**Newspapers, Single Issues and Pamphlets**

La Guerre Sociale
L'International [sic]
 Collection of Anarchist placards, manifestoes and leaflets, in French.

Printed Primary Sources

- Auberan, H., 'The Ethic of Dynamite', *The Contemporary Review*, 65 (1894).
- Cipriani, A., *Bresci e Savoia, il regicidio* (Paterson: Libreria Sociologica, s.d.).
- Dell'Erba, F., *L' anarchia* (Naples: Pietrocola, 1896).
- Drage, G., 'Alien Immigration', *Fortnightly Review* (1895).
- Dubois, F., *De Anarchist Peril ... Translated, edited and enlarged with a supplementary chapter by R. Derechef* (London: T.F.Unwin, 1894).
- I gruppi Intransigenti di Londra e Parigi, gli S. di P., I Ribelli di Saint Denis, 'Per Amilcare Cipriani'. *Manifesto degl' anarchici in lingua italiana al popolo d'Italia* (1 November 1888).
- Fabbri, L. 'Errico Malatesta', *Studi Sociali*, 2 (1932).
- Ferrini S., *Canagliate* (London: Tipografia Internazionale, 1901).
- Fiamingo, G. M., 'Italian Anarchism', *The Contemporary Review*, 78 (1900).
- G., 'Anarchist propaganda in England', *Fortnightly Review*, 89 (1911).
- Gori, P., *Pagine di vagabondaggio* (Milan: Editrice Moderna, 1948).
- Hart, W. C. A., *Confessions of an Anarchist* (London: E. Grant Richards, 1906).
- Kropotkin, P. *Memoirs of a revolutionist* ([s.l.]: Smith Elder, 1899).
- Pini, V., *Un brano della difesa del nostro compagno Vittorio Pini*, pamphlet (Milan: 1894).
- Latouche, P., *Anarchy! An Authentic Exposition of the Methods of Anarchists and the Aims of Anarchism*, (London: Everett & Co., 1908).
- Lollini, V., *L'ammonizione e il domicilio coatto* (Bologna: Fratelli Treves, 1882).
- Lombroso, C., *Gli anarchici* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca, 1894).
- Majetti, R., *L'anarchia e le leggi che la reprimono in Italia* (Caserta: Domenico Fabiano Editore, 1894).
- Malatesta, E., *In tempo di elezioni* (London: Biblioteca dell' Associazione, 1890).
- , *L'Anarchia* (London: Biblioteca dell'Associazione, 1891).

- , *A Talk about Anarchist Communism Between Two Workers*, 4th ed. (London: Freedom pamphlets, 1891).
- , *Scritti: Umanità Nova*, 3 vols. (Geneva: Edizioni del "Risveglio", 1934).
- Malato, C., *De la Commune à l'Anarchie*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Stock Editeur, 1894).
 ---, *Les joyeusetés de l'exile* (Paris: P.V.Stock, 1897).
- Meredith, I., *A Girl among the Anarchists* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1903).
- Nicoll, D., *Police Spies and Informers: Anarchy at the Bar. A speech*, pamphlet (London: 1892).
- , "Commonweal": *the Greenwich Mystery*, pamphlet (Sheffield: 1897).
- , *The Greenwich Mystery: Letters from the Dead*, pamphlet (London: 1898).
- , *The Walsall Anarchists*, pamphlet (London: 1892).
- O'Squarr, F., *Les Coulisses de l'Anarchie* (Paris: 1892).
- Ovida, 'The Legislation of Fear', *Fortnightly Review*, 56 (1894).
- Parmeggiani, L., *L'Ex ispettore inglese Sweeney condannato per diffamazione. A proposito del processo Parmeggiani-Sweeney innanzi all'Alta Corte di Giustizia d'Inghilterra*, (Paris-Colombes: Imprimerie Pontoise, 1906).
- , *Ricordi e riflessioni* (Paris: 1914).
- Paulucci di Calboli, R., *I girovaghi italiani in Inghilterra ed i suonatori ambulanti* (Città di Castello: Lapi Tipografo Editore, 1893).
- Pedrotti, E., *Vita e Regno di Umberto I, Re d'Italia* (Naples: Nicola Jovene Librai, 1900).
- Prato, G., 'Gli italiani in Inghilterra', *La Riforma Sociale*, 10-11 (1899-1900).
- Righetti P.F., 'La Colonia Italiana di Londra' in Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *Emigrazione e colonie - Rapporti di RR. agenti diplomatici e consolari* (1903).
- Schwab, M., 'A Convicted Anarchist's Reply to Lombroso', *The Monist*, 1 (1891).
- Sellers, 'Our Most Distinguished Refugee', *The Contemporary Review*, 66 (1894).
- Sernicoli, E., *L'Anarchia e gli anarchici* (Milan: Treves, 1894).
- Sinicco, G., *Memorie di un calzolaio da Borgognano a Londra* (Udine: Tipografia Pellegrini, 1950).
- Smith, A. 'Political Refugees' in *London in the Nineteenth Century*, edited Sir W. Besant, (London: Adam and Charle Black, 1909).

Tagliaferri, T., *Errico Malatesta, Armando Borghi e compagni davanti ai giurati di Milano* (Milan: Gamalero 1922).

Thomas, T. B. (pseud. De Angelis Tommaso). *Note di cronaca, ossia i giornali, gli istituti e gli uomini illustri italiani a Londra durante l'era Vittoriana, 1837-1897* (Bergamo: 1897).

Wilkins, W. H., 'The Italian Aspect', in *The Destitute Alien in Great Britain*, edited by A. White (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1892).

Zanardelli, T., *Della utilità e dello scopo di un Circolo Italiano di Studj Sociali a Londra. Due discorsi* (London: Biblioteca del Circolo di Studj Sociali, 1879).

---, *L'operaio italiano in casa sua e in casa d'altri*, pamphlet (Paris: 1882).

---, *L'operajo in Italia e la sua non coscienza delle proprie forze e dei propri diritti* (Naples: Tipografia di L. Gargiulo 1872).

Zoccoli, E., *L'Anarchia: gli agitatori - le idee - i fatti* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca Editori, 1907).

Printed Secondary Sources

Andreucci, F. and Detti, T., *Il movimento operaio italiano. Dizionario biografico 1853-1943* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1975-1979).

Antonoli, M. 'Il sindacalismo rivoluzionario italiano', in *Storia del sindacato. Dalle origini al corporativismo fascista*, edited by Fondazione Brodolini (Venice: Marsilio, 1982).

---, 'Errico Malatesta, l'organizzazione operaia e il sindacalismo (1889-1914)' *Ricerche Storiche*, 1 (1983).

---, *Vieni o Maggio. Aspetti del primo maggio in Italia tra Otto e Novecento* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1988).

---, 'Gli anarchici italiani e la prima guerra mondiale', *Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*, 1 (1994), pp. 7-34.

---, 'Gli anarchici italiani e la prima guerra mondiale. Lettere di anarchici interventisti (1914-1915)', *Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*, 2 (1995), pp. 77-87.

---, *Pietro Gori, il cavaliere errante dell'anarchia* (Pisa: BFS, 1995).

---, *Il sindacalismo italiano. Dalle origini al fascismo, studi e ricerche* (Pisa: BFS, 1997).

---, Masini, P.C., *Il sol dell'avvenire. L'anarchismo in Italia dalle origini alla Prima Guerra mondiale* (Pisa: BFS, 1999).

Arcangeli, S., *Errico Malatesta e il comunismo anarchico italiano* (Milan: Cooperativa Edizioni Jaca Book, 1972).

Audenino, P., *Cinquant'anni di stampa operaia dall'Unità alla guerra di Libia* (Parma: Guanda, 1976).

Bajer, O., 'L'influenza dell'immigrazione italiana nel movimento anarchico argentino', in *Gli italiani fuori d'Italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paese di adozione 1880-1940*, edited by B. Bezza (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1983).

Baldoli, C., *Exporting Fascism: Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930s* (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2003).

Bernabei, A., *Esuli ed emigrati italiani nel Regno Unito, 1920-1940* (Milan: Mursia, 1997).

Bernerì, M. L. and Brittain, V., *Il seme del caos. Scritti sui bombardamenti di massa (1939-1945)*, edited by C. Baldoli (Santa Maria Capua Vetere: Spartaco, 2004).

Berry, D., *A History of the French Anarchist Movement 1917-1945* (Westport Connecticut-London: Greenwood Press, 2002).

Berti, G., *Francesco Saverio Merlino. Dall'anarchismo socialista al socialismo liberale (1856-1930)* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1993).

---, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano e internazionale. 1872-1932* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2003).

Bertolucci, R. (ed.), *Errico Malatesta: epistolario 1873-1932. Lettere edite ed inedite* (Carrara: Centro Studi Sociali, 1984).

Bettini, L., *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo. Periodici e numeri unici anarchici in lingua italiana pubblicati in Italia (1872-1972)*, vol. 1 (Florence: Crescita Politica Editrice, 1972).

--- *Bibliografia dell'anarchismo. Periodici e numeri unici anarchici in lingua italiana pubblicati all'estero (1872-1971)*, vol. 2 (Florence: Crescita Politica editrice, 1976).

Bevilacqua, P., De Clementi A., Franzina, E., *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana. Partenze* (Rome: Donzelli, 2001).

---, *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana. Arrivi* (Rome: Donzelli, 2002).

Bezza, B., *Gli italiani fuori d'Italia: gli emigrati italiani nei movimenti operai dei paese di adozione 1880-1940* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1983).

Boldetti, A., 'La repressione in Italia: Il caso del 1894', *Rivista di Storia Contemporanea*, 6 (1977), pp. 481-515.

Borghì, A., *Errico Malatesta* (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1947).

---, *Mezzo secolo di anarchia, 1898-1954* (Naples: Eleutera, 1954).

Bottignolo, B., *Without a Bell Tower. A study of the Italian Immigrants in South West England* (Rome: Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1985).

Bottinelli, G., *Luigi Bertoni: la coerenza di un anarchico* (Lugano: La Baronata, 1997).

Bravo, G. M. (ed.), *Gli anarchici* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1971).

Briguglio, L., *Il partito operaio italiano e gli anarchici* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1969).

Broggini, R., 'Un gruppo internazionalista dissidente: la sezione del Ceresio', in *Anarchismo e socialismo in Italia (1872-1892)*, edited by L. Faenza (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1973).

Brunello, P. and Dipaola, P., 'Giuseppe Basso viceconsole di Ginevra e Carlo Monticelli. Note d'archivio (1880-1881)', *Terra d'Este*, XI (2001), pp. 55-76.

Carr, E. H., *The Romantic Exiles* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1933).

Castronovo, V., Tranfaglia, N. and Fossati, L. (eds.), *La stampa italiana nell'età liberale* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1979).

Cerrito, G., *L'antimilitarismo anarchico in Italia nel primo ventennio del secolo* (Pistoia: RL, 1968).

---, 'Sull'anarchismo contemporaneo', in *Malatesta. Scritti scelti*, edited by G. Cerrito (Rome: Samonà Savelli, 1970).

---, *Dall'insurrezionalismo alla settimana rossa. Per una storia dell'anarchismo in Italia (1881-1914)* (Florence: Crescita Politica, 1977).

Chesterton, G. K., *The Man Who Was Thursday* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1975), 1st ed. 1908.

Civolani, E., 'La partecipazione di emigrati italiani alla Comune di Parigi', *Movimento operaio e socialista*, II (1979).

Cobb, R. C., *The Police and the People: French Popular Protest, 1789-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

Colpi, T., *The Italian Factor: the Italian Community in Great Britain* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1991).

---, *Italians Forwards. A Visual History of the Italian Community in Great Britain* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1991).

Dadà, A., *L'anarchismo in Italia, fra movimento e partito: storia e documenti dell'anarchismo italiano* (Milan: Teti, 1984).

Degl'Innocenti, M., *Il socialismo italiano e la guerra di Libia* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1976).

---, 'L' esilio nella storia contemporanea.', in *L' esilio nella storia del movimento operaio e l'emigrazione economica* (Manduria: Pietro Lacaita Editore, 1992).

DeGroot, G. J., *Blighty. British Society in the Era of the Great War*, (London-New York: Longman, 1996).

Della Peruta, F. 'Il socialismo italiano dal 1875 al 1882', *Annali dell'Istituto G.G. Feltrinelli*, I (1958), pp. 15-58.

De Marco, L., *Il soldato che disse no alla guerra. Storia dell'anarchico Augusto Masetti* (Santa Maria Capua Vetere: Spartaco, 2003).

Di Paola, P., 'Farnara Giuseppe: storia di un anarchico italiano a Londra', *Annali di Ca'Foscari*, XXVIII (1999), pp. 663-680.

---, 'Antonelli Adolfo' – 'Barberi Francesco' – 'Corio Silvio' – 'Cova Cesare' – 'Gualducci Pietro' – 'Parmeggiani Luigi' – 'Pini Vittorio' – 'Recchioni Emidio' – 'Tombolesi Romeo', in *Dizionario biografico dell'anarchismo italiano* (Pisa: BFS, 2003).

Emiliani, V., *Gli anarchici: vite di Cafiero, Costa, Malatesta, Cipriani, Gori, Berneri, Borghi* (Milan: Bompiani, 1973).

Fabbri, Luigi, *Malatesta: l'uomo e il pensiero* (Naples: Edizioni RL, 1951).

Fabbri, Luce, *Luigi Fabbri. Storia di un uomo libero* (Pisa: BFS, 1996).

Fedeli, S., 'L'esilio nella storia del movimento operaio e l'emigrazione economica', in *L'esilio nella storia del movimento operaio e l'emigrazione economica*, edited by M. Degl'Innocenti (Manduria: Pietro Lacaita Editore, 1992).

Fedeli, S., *Una breve illusione. Gli anarchici e la Russia Sovietica 1917-1939* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1996).

Feldman, D., *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994).

Fincardi, M., 'Il Primo maggio', in *I luoghi della memoria. Personaggi e date dell'Italia Unita*, edited by M. Isnenghi (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1997).

Finzi, P., *La nota persona. Errico Malatesta in Italia. Dicembre 1919 – Luglio 1920* (Ragusa: La Fiaccola, 1990).

Fiori, A., 'Introduzione', in *Direzione Generale della Pubblica Sicurezza. La stampa italiana nella serie F1. 1894-1926* (Rome: Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali - Ufficio Centrale per i Beni Archivistici, 1995).

Foa, V., 'Operai e governo in Gran Bretagna', in *Stato e classe operaia in Italia durante la prima guerra mondiale*, edited by G. Procacci (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1983).

Franzinelli, M., 'Sull'uso (critico) delle fonti di polizia', in *Voci di compagni. Schede di questura. Considerazioni sull'uso delle fonti orali e delle fonti di polizia per la storia dell'anarchismo*, edited by C. Bermani et al. (Milan: Centro Studi Libertari, 2002).

French, D., 'Spy Fever in Britain, 1900-1915', *The Historical Journal*, 21 (1978), pp. 369-385.

Furiozzi, G.B., 'Sindacalisti rivoluzionari e anarchici', *Ricerche Storiche*, 2-3, (1982), pp. 495-512.

Gabaccia, D., 'Worker Internationalism and Italian Labor Migration, 1870-1914', *International Labor and Working Class History*, 45 (1994), pp. 63-97.

---, 'Per una storia italiana dell'emigrazione', *Altreitalia*, 16 (1997).

---, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (London: University College Press, 2000).

---, 'Class, Exile, and Nationalism at Home and Abroad: the Italian Risorgimento', in *Italian Workers of the World: Labour Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States*, edited by Donna Gabaccia and Fraser Ottanielli (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001).

Gainer, B., *The Alien Invasion* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1972).

Galante Garrone, A., 'L'emigrazione politica italiana del Risorgimento', *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento*, XLI, 1954, pp. 223-242.

Galzerano, G., *Gaetano Bresci. La vita, l'attentato, il processo e la morte del regicida anarchico* (Salerno: Galzerano Editore, 1988).

Garrard, J., *The English and the Immigration 1880-1910* (London-New York-Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971).

Goldman, E., *Living My Life* (New York: Dover Publications, 1970).

Goodway, D. (ed.), *For Anarchism: History, Theory, and Practice* (London: Routledge, 1989).

Gosi, R., *Il socialismo utopistico. Giovanni Rossi e la colonia Cecilia* (Milan: Maiozzi, 1977).

Grave, J., *Quarante ans de propagande anarchiste* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973).

Graur, M., *An Anarchist 'Rabbi': the Life and Teachings of Rudolf Rocker* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1997).

Halévy, E., *A History of the English People* (London: Benn, 1961).

Haupt, G., 'Il ruolo degli emigrati e dei rifugiati nella diffusione delle idee socialiste all'epoca della Seconda Internazionale', in *Anna Kuliscioff e l'età del Riformismo* (Rome: Mondo Operaio, Edizioni Avanti!, 1978).

Herzen, A., *My Past and Thoughts: the Memoirs of Alexandr Herzen* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968).

Horowitz, I. L., *The Anarchists* (New York: Dell, 1964).

Hostetter, R., *The Italian Socialist Movement, I, Origins (1860-1914)* (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co, 1958).

Institute of Marxism Leninism, *General Council of the First International, 1864-66* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1965).

Jensen, R., 'The International Anti-Anarchist Conference of 1898 and the Origins of Interpol', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 16 (1981), pp. 323-347.

Joll, J., *The Second International* (London: Weidenfeld, 1974).

---, *The Anarchists* (London: Methuen, 1979), 2nd ed.

Kedward, H. R., *The Anarchists: the Men Who Shocked an Era* (London: Bpc, 1971).

Levy, C. 'Malatesta in exile', *Annali della Fondazione Luigi Einaudi*, XV (1981), pp. 245-280.

---, 'Italian Anarchism, 1870-1926', in *For Anarchism: History, Theory, and Practice*, edited by D. Goodway (London: Routledge, 1989).

---, 'Malatesta in London: the Era of Dynamite', in *A century of Italian Emigration to Britain 1880 to 1980s. Five Essays*, edited by L. Sponza and A. Tosi, Supplement to *The Italianist*, (1993), pp. 25-42.

---, 'Charisma and Social Movements: Errico Malatesta and Italian Anarchism', *Modern Italy*, 3 (1998), pp. 205-217.

---, *Gramsci and the Anarchists* (Oxford-New York: Berg, 1999).

---, 'Currents of Italian Syndicalism before 1926', *International Review of Social History*, 45 (2000), pp. 209-250.

Leydi, R., *Canti anarchici. I dischi del sole* (Milan: Edizioni Avanti!, 1963).

Mack Smith, D., *Mazzini* (London: Yale University Press, 1994).

Maitron, J., *Le mouvement anarchiste en France. De 1914 à nos jours* (Paris: Maspero, 1983).

---, *Le mouvement anarchiste en France. De 1914 à nos jours* (Paris: Maspero, 1983)

Malatesta, E., *Umanità Nova. Pagine di lotta quotidiana* (Geneva: Edizione del “Risveglio”, 1934).

---, *Pensiero e Volontà e ultimi scritti, 1924-1932* (Geneva: Edizione del “Risveglio”, 1936).

---, *Autobiografia mai scritta. Ricordi (1853-1932)*, edited by P. Brunello and P. Dipaola (Santa Maria Capua Vetere: Spartaco, 2003).

Marshall, P., *Demanding the Impossible: a History of Anarchism* (London: HarperCollins, 1992).

Marwick, A., *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (London: Macmillan, 1991).

Masini, P. C., ‘La Prima Internazionale in Italia. Problemi di una revisione storiografica’, in *Il movimento operaio e socialista. Bilancio storiografico e problemi storici. Convegno di Firenze. 18-20 gennaio 1963* (Milan: Edizioni del Gallo, 1965), pp. 85-142.

---, *Storia degli anarchici italiani da Bakunin a Malatesta, 1862-1892* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1969).

---, *Cafiero* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1974).

---, *Storia degli anarchici italiani nell'epoca degli attentati* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1981).

---, ‘Gli anarchici fra neutralità e intervento’, *Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*, 8 (2001), pp. 9-22.

Meltzer, A., *The Anarchists in London, 1935-1955*, (Okney Islands: Sanday, 1976).

Miéville, A. and Antonioli, M., *Anarchism & Syndicalisme. Le Congrès Anarchiste International d'Amsterdam (1907)* (Paris: Nautilus Editions du Monde Libertaire, 1997).

Millman, B., *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain* (London-Portland: Frank Cass, 2000).

Morelli, E., *Mazzini in Inghilterra* (Florence: 1938).

Moya, J.C., ‘Italians in Buenos Aires’s Anarchist Movement: Gender Ideology and Women’s Participation, 1890-1910’, in D. Gabaccia and F. Iacovetta (eds), *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives. Italian Workers of the World* (Toronto-Buffalo-London: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

Musarra, N., ‘Le confidenze di “Francesco” G. Domanico al conte Codronchi’, *Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*, 1 (1996), pp. 47-92.

Nejrotti, M., ‘La stampa operaia e socialista 1848-1914’, in *Storia del movimento operaio, del socialismo e delle lotte sociali in Piemonte*, edited by A. Agosti and G. M. Bravo (Bari: De Donato, 1979).

- Nettlau, M., *Errico Malatesta, vita e pensieri* (New York: Il Martello, 1922).
- , *Bakunin e l'Internazionale in Italia* (Geneva: Edizione del "Risveglio", 1927).
- , *A Short History of Anarchism* (London: Freedom Press, 1966).
- Nicolaievsky, B. and Maenchen-Helfen, O., *Karl Marx* (London: Penguin, 1979).
- Oliver, H., *The International Anarchist Movement in Late Victorian London* (London: St Martins Press, 1983).
- Pernicone, N., *Italian anarchism, 1864-1892* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- Porter, B., *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
- , 'The Freiheit Prosecutions, 1881-1882', *The Historical Journal*, 23 (1980), pp. 833-856.
- , *The Origins of Britain's Political Police* (Warwick: Warwick Working Papers in Social History, 3, 1985).
- , *The Origins of the Vigilant State* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987).
- Quail, J., *The Slow Burning Fuse* (London: Paladin Granada Publishing, 1978).
- Ravindranathan, T., *Bakunin and the Italians* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988).
- Ridolfi, M., *Il circolo virtuoso. Sociabilità democratica, associazionismo e rappresentanza politica nell'Ottocento* (Florence: Centro Editoriale Toscano, 1990).
- Robb, G., *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).
- Rocker, F., *The East End Years: A Stepney Childhood* (London: Freedom Press, 1998).
- Rogers, C., *The Battle of Stepney* (London: Robert Hale, 1981).
- Rosselli, N., *Mazzini e Bakunin. Dodici anni di movimento operaio in Italia (1860-1872)* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967).
- Ruggeri, S., 'Fonti per la storia del movimento operaio in Italia presenti nell'Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri. Il fondo "Polizia Internazionale"', in *Il movimento socialista e popolare in Puglia dalle origini alla costituzione (1874-1946)*, edited by F. Grassi and G. Dollo (Bari-Lecce: Istituto 'Vito Mario Stampacchia', 1986).
- , 'L'emigrazione politica attraverso le carte della polizia internazionale conservate presso l'archivio storico diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri', in *Varese:*

emigrazione e territorio: tra bisogno e ideale. Convegno internazionale. Varese 18-20 maggio 1994, edited by C. Brusa and R. Ghirirghelli (Varese: Edizioni Latina, 1994).

Rumbelow, D., *The Houndsditch Murders and the Siege of Sidney Street* (London: Macmillan, 1973).

Sacchetti, G., 'Controllo sociale e domicilio coatto nell'Italia crispina. La provincia aretina', *Rivista storica dell'anarchismo*, 1 (1996), pp. 93-104.

Santarelli, E., *Il socialismo anarchico in Italia* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1959).

Sarti, R., *Mazzini: A Life for the Religion of Politics* (Wetsport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1997).

Shipley, S., *Club Life and Socialism in Mid-Victorian London* (London: Journeyman/London Workshop Centre, 1983).

Shpayer-Makov, H. 'A Traitor to His Class: the Anarchist in British Fiction', *European Studies*, XXVI, 3 (1996), pp. 299-325.

Sponza, L., *Italian Immigrants in Nineteenth Century Britain: Realities and Images* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988).

---, *Divided Loyalties: Italians in Britain during the Second World War* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000).

Stafford, D., *From Anarchism to Reformism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971).

Thomas, P., *Karl Marx and the Anarchists* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980).

Valiani, L., *Questioni di storia del socialismo* (Turin: Einaudi, 1975).

Venè, G. F., 'Il braccio della legge contro gli anarchici', *Storia illustrata* (1973).

Venturi, F., 'La circolazione delle idee', *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento*, XLI (1954), pp. 203-222.

---, 'L'Italia fuori d'Italia', in *Storia d'Italia. Dal Primo settecento all'unità* (Turin: Einaudi, 1973), pp.223-242.

Verdecchia, E., 'Tedeschi e italiani: rapporti tra due comunità nell'esilio londinese', *Bollettino della Domus Mazziniana* 2, (1996), pp. 177-189.

Vernon, R., *Errico Malatesta: His Life & Ideas* (London: Freedom Press, 1965).

William, R., *Prophet in Exile: Joseph Mazzini in England, 1837-1868* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989).

Woodcock, G., *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963).

Woodcock, G. and Avakumović, I., *The Anarchist Prince* (New York: Schocken, 1971).