In the generous legislative élan following the French Revolution, the *Assemblée Constituante* voted a law proclaiming the absolute equality of French nationals and foreigners, only to regret this step towards universal fraternity when France started to fill quickly with refugees and spies. Subsequent legislation consequently hardened throughout the *Directoire* and the Consulate, ultimately establishing the principles of modern surveillance of foreigners by the state with the Law of 12 *messidor*, year VIII (1 July 1800), which placed foreigners under the direct control of the Prefect of Paris. Thereafter, it was the Prefecture which issued passports and residence permits as well as arrest and deportation orders against those believed to pose a threat to the state. Laws of 3 December 1849 and 2 February 1852 further refined the criteria for naturalisation as well as for the expulsion of undesirable aliens. Yet, in spite of increasingly strict control, the foreigners kept arriving in Paris throughout the nineteenth century, both as visitors and as refugees. The Prefecture statistics for 1836 show 3,884 landlords offering 53,000 beds to foreign visitors in Paris. The number of *logeurs* catering for foreigners grew to 5,183 five years later, which suggest the steady increase in demand for accommodation as well as the growing reputation of France as a cultural beacon and *terre d’asile*.48

To foreigners, mid-nineteenth-century Paris offered the combined attractions of a rapidly growing metropolis with its cultural and entertainment venues, its urban amenities, reputable institutions of higher education, and its restless, politically savvy masses, hardened by the revolutionary experiences of 1789 and 1830. Paris had a “quasi-mythic

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quality for persons who felt overwhelmed by the constraints, contradictions, and inequalities in their native societies.\textsuperscript{49} For many German, Russian, Italian and East-European exiles, in spite of the relative conservatism of Louis Philippe’s régime, Paris retained its “highly charged significance” as the “refuge for displaced radicals and hence as the enemy of conservative regimes everywhere.”\textsuperscript{50} Germans such as Heinrich Heine and Karl Marx, who were fleeing Metternich’s repressive policies, and Poles such as the poet Adam Mickiewicz, seeking refuge from Russia’s heavy-handed intervention in fractured Poland, found themselves in Paris, where, in their eyes at least, political control and censorship were comparatively less aggressive. And although, in reality, ‘revolutionary’ France posed a lesser danger to old-regime Europe than some of these radicals hoped, Paris’s reputation as a den of republicans, conspirators and spies and as a school of liberal politics remained intact in the collective European imagination. But subjective representations of liberalism and freedom varied widely according to the émigrés’ background and country of origins. Thus, for instance the Russian literary critic Pavel Vasylievich Annenkov (b. 1813), a moderate liberal who lived in Paris between 1841 and 1843, had only words of praise for Louis-Philippe, the “distinguished bourgeois king”, and believed that France had a more liberal régime in the 1840s than at any time before or after:

Out of fear of being reputed an egotistical “bourgeois” bereft of the faculty for understanding popular aspirations and the hidden miseries of the working classes, few people could bring themselves to give full voice to all they felt about the Paris of the 1840s. It is an undeniable fact, however, that travellers to Paris at the time came in contact with a city of irreproachable manners and customs, distinguished, as a natural outcome of the constitutional order, by an ease of social intercourse, by the possibility for any foreigner of finding appreciation and sympathetic response for any serious opinion or initiative, and finally, an integrity, relatively speaking, in all transactions between private parties. All this, as we know, immediately vanished with the advent of the Second Empire. To verify this brief sketch, it is sufficient to draw a comparison between it and what the city of Paris became after the loss of the July Constitution.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{50} Idem, 18.