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Fleeing absolutism. Portuguese liberals in England before the Portuguese Civil War (1828-1832)

ABSTRACT

The political and ideological conflicts between liberalism and absolutism that shaped the first half of the nineteenth century contributed significantly to the transnational circulation of people. The experience of Portuguese liberal exiles, who travelled through countries such as England and France before returning to Portugal on the eve of the Civil War of 1832-1834, forms part of the broader phenomenon of nineteenth-century liberal exile, alongside the experiences of Spanish and Italian exiles. These groups shared experiences, contacts, ideas, and knowledge that often endured beyond the period of exile. Drawing on periodicals, memoirs, archival documentation and texts produced in exile, this article examines the presence of Portuguese liberal exiles in England, focusing on their arrival, forms of organisation, and the networks of sociability that developed in the host country. Through an analysis of the experiences of Portuguese exiles in Plymouth, this article argues that the Portuguese case complicates the traditional view of British hospitality towards incoming liberals and challenges historiographical interpretations that tend to portray England as a "land of freedom". It is concluded that the Portuguese experience in Plymouth was particularly arduous, owing both to the conditions imposed by the British government and to the conflicts among the exiles themselves, arising from political divisions and issues inherent to the condition of exile.

KEYWORDS

Portuguese exiles; Liberalism; England; Sociability; Political conflict.

Introduction

The first half of the nineteenth century in Europe was marked by the political and ideological confrontation between liberalism and absolutism, which manifested itself in a series of revolutionary movements that profoundly affected and transformed the political landscape of the continent. These movements reached countries such as Italy,

which had not yet been unified, Spain, Greece and Russia, where prominent figures emerged and assumed leadership in the struggle for liberalism during the so-called "Age of Revolutions" (Stites, 2014; Isabella, 2023). Portugal was not immune to this broader dynamic and was likewise affected, politically, economically and socially, by the conflicts between liberals and absolutists. The events of the 1820s and 1830s were precipitated by the French invasions, which led to the flight of the royal family to Brazil in 1807 and the subsequent strengthening of British control and influence in Portugal, following Britain's decisive contribution to the defeat of the French forces. The material and economic devastation caused by the invasions, compounded by the absence of the monarch and, above all, by D. João VI's refusal to return to Portugal, help explain the emergence of the Liberal Revolution on 24 August 1820. This development unfolded alongside events in Spain, where a liberal revolution against the absolutist government of Ferdinand VII also took place in the same year.

As a result of the adoption of measures directed against British representatives in Portugal, including the expulsion of army officers and the confrontation with General William Beresford in October 1820, the new liberal regime gradually gained the confidence and support of a significant section of the Portuguese population. However, once the foundations of the future Constitution of 1822 became known, opposition and discontent began to emerge, particularly under the leadership of the Patriarch of Lisbon, Cardinal D. Carlos da Cunha e Meneses. This social discontent intensified in the following months as a result of the implementation of measures such as the abolition of the Inquisition, the establishment of the Banco de Lisboa, and the reform of the Diplomatic Corps. Meanwhile, D. João VI and the rest of the royal family, with the exception of D. Pedro, had already returned to Portugal. The monarch's acceptance of the conditions imposed by the Constituent Cortes foreshadowed the development of an absolutist opposition led by D. Miguel and D. Carlota Joaquina, with the support of sections of the clergy, the nobility, and less educated sectors of the population (Marques, 2002, 559-560).

The absolutist opposition took the form of conspiratorial activities aimed at overthrowing the liberal experiment, particularly following the entry into force of the Constitution, which D. João VI had already sworn to uphold in October 1822. In late May 1823, the *Vila-Francada* took place, resulting in the dissolution of the Cortes and the end of the first liberal experiment. The restoration of absolutism led to a series of persecutions, banishments and exiles, marking the beginning of what has been termed

the first liberal exile (Vargues and Torgal, 1993-1994, 78). In late April 1824, the *Abrilada* took place, constituting a second military uprising led by D. Miguel. Among other actions, it involved the confinement of D. João VI, the arrest of several hundred moderate figures, and a crackdown on secret societies, particularly Freemasonry. Having taken refuge aboard a British vessel, the Portuguese king dismissed his son from his position as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and sent him into exile, bringing about two years of relative political calm, despite the persistence of several absolutist-inspired conspiracies. The death of D. João VI in March 1826 further exacerbated Portugal's political difficulties, as D. Pedro's appointment as his successor was viewed with considerable reservations by D. Miguel and by Infanta Isabel Maria, who had previously been appointed president of the Regency (Matos, 2018). Following the granting of the Constitutional Charter in April of the same year, D. Pedro abdicated the throne in favour of his daughter, Maria da Glória (the future D. Maria II), on the understanding that she would marry D. Miguel and that he would swear allegiance to the Charter.

The following months were marked by growing discontent and opposition, particularly among the military and the clergy, compounded by influences emanating from neighbouring Spain, which had meanwhile reverted to absolutism. In the face of the escalating conflict between liberals and absolutists, in July 1827, D. Pedro appointed D. Miguel as his lieutenant in Portugal and entrusted him with the government, thereby strengthening the position of the Miguelist faction. D. Miguel returned to Portugal in February 1828 and soon demonstrated that he had no intention of honouring the oath he had taken, forming a government composed of ministers loyal to him, dissolving the Chamber of Deputies, and annulling the electoral law. As the absolutists had done during the liberal period, supporters of the liberal cause sought to undermine D. Miguel's new government through actions such as the attack on professors from the University of Coimbra who were travelling to Lisbon to pay homage to the new monarch (Marques, 2002, 567-574).

In this context of political and ideological confrontation, manifested in the emergence of numerous revolutionary movements, Portuguese political exiles circulated throughout Europe, joining many other foreigners of different nationalities, particularly Italians and Spaniards, during the 1820s and 1830s (Isabella, 2009; Simal, 2012). They interacted with one another in major European capitals such as London and Paris,

sharing experiences, contacts, ideas, and knowledge that endured beyond the period of exile and that they carried with them upon their return to their homeland.

Methodological approach

Mobility is an inherent feature of the human condition, evident since the earliest stages of human history, when the first nomadic communities were compelled to move in search of the resources necessary for survival, particularly food. Population mobility may be defined as the movement of individuals or groups between different geographical spaces, regardless of its duration, purpose, or underlying motivation. The factors driving such movements are diverse and may broadly be divided into two main types: forced or imposed mobility and voluntary mobility. Nevertheless, both involve the need to survive in a foreign country, whether in the case of economic migrants, refugees, or exiles. While those who emigrate for economic reasons are not compelled to leave their country of origin, refugees and exiles are characterised by involuntary departure as a means of preserving their lives (Paulo, 2024, 30).

In our view, the most significant distinction between an exile and a refugee concerns the nature of the persecution experienced by individuals that led to their forced departure. Exile appears to be the more restrictive category, as it is primarily associated with a specifically political dimension, particularly prominent during the first half of the nineteenth century in the context of the political antagonism between liberalism and absolutism (Simal, 2009; 2012). Refuge, by contrast, appears to constitute a broader phenomenon, encompassing a wider range of factors underlying flight from a country, including religion, nationality, race, and political opinion. This distinction became particularly salient during the twentieth century and was subsequently codified in the 1951 Geneva Convention (Marrus, 2002; Gatrell, 2013). The consultation of Portuguese dictionaries published during the nineteenth century further supports this perspective, as they provide a definition of *exile* closely associated with that of *emigrant*, referring to someone condemned to live outside their homeland, while offering no specific definition of *refugee* (Silva, 1878).

There is a substantial body of Portuguese historiography examining the development of liberalism during the first half of the nineteenth century, addressing the political, social, economic, and cultural transformations of the period (Pinheiro, 1996; Bonifácio, 2004; Ferreira, 2005; Pereira, 2024). Nevertheless, with a few notable exceptions, the subject of Portuguese liberal exile during the 1820s and 1830s has

remained relatively marginal and underexplored within Portuguese historiographical scholarship (Nemésio, 1946; Faria, 2015), although some relevant contributions have also emerged from Brazil (Gonçalves & Silva, 2024). This article seeks to contribute to and strengthen the historiographical knowledge of this subject, situating it within the broader scholarship on Portuguese liberalism and foreign liberal exile (Freitag, 2003; Simal, 2012; Isabella, 2009). Drawing on the periodical press, memoirs, archival documentation and texts produced in exile, it examines the presence of Portuguese liberal exiles in England, analysing their arrival, organisation, and the forms of sociability that developed in the host country. To this end, the article explores the aforementioned sources, produced by the protagonists themselves, which provide insight into their perspectives and experiences of exile in England. It therefore follows the analytical approach proposed by Goodwin, who emphasises the use of biographies and individual experiences as a means of developing a broader understanding of group dynamics and collective realities (Goodwin, 2022).

This article argues that the Portuguese liberal experience challenges the prevailing historiographical view of harmonious British hospitality towards nineteenth-century liberal exiles. In line with this argument, the article differs from existing studies, which have focused primarily on the cultural and social dimensions of Portuguese exile.

The England desired by European liberals

England, and London in particular, was one of the most sought-after destinations for European liberals fleeing absolutist repression. Despite some political tensions between the *Tories* and *Whigs* over control of the British political scene in the late 1820s, the relative political stability prevailing at home made England an attractive destination for exiles seeking to escape the conflicts that were unfolding elsewhere in Europe. At the time, London stood apart from other European cities as "the commercial, intellectual, scientific, artistic and literary centre of the period" (Simal, 2012, 197). England entered the nineteenth century as the world's most economically advanced country, with a political system that was among the most admired by the European intellectual elite. Here, exiles could benefit from assistance provided by influential sections of British society who sympathised with the liberal cause. Many European politicians and intellectuals who sought refuge in England regarded it as the "country of liberty" and

viewed its political and social system as the most desirable model for adoption in their own countries.

England offered a number of advantages that made it a destination of choice for liberals fleeing repression. These included its accessibility, facilitated by developments in transport, particularly maritime travel; its political stability; and, most importantly from the exiles' perspective, the relatively lenient legislation governing their presence, as there were no laws specifically prohibiting their entry or providing for their expulsion. Between the late 1820s and the early 1830s, England possessed a combination of features that made it particularly attractive to exiles. These included a favourable immigration policy, the availability of financial assistance, and the freedom to continue their political activities (Fahrmeir, 2003, 33-37).

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, exiles were generally tolerated, largely because they refrained from involvement in British domestic affairs and were therefore not perceived as a threat. This situation changed from 1848 onwards, following the outbreak of the "Springtime of Nations". Faced with a wave of revolutionary movements that swept across much of Europe, Britain, concerned with maintaining domestic order, introduced legislation regulating the presence of foreign nationals (Simal, 2012, 199). Nevertheless, for most of the nineteenth century, there were no recorded cases of exiles being denied entry to or expelled from British territory (Porter, 1979, 8). Britain thus came to be regarded as a hospitable and welcoming country for those fleeing absolutism, since "Britain not only had liberal asylum legislation, but also lacked any regulations that curbed the stream of refugees" (Freitag, 2003, 3).

The political developments that unfolded across Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century led to a significant increase in both the number and the national diversity of exiles arriving in England. While in the early decades they originated predominantly from Italy and Spain, as well as Portugal, the political transformations that took place across Europe as the century progressed encouraged the arrival of exiles from other countries, including Germany, Poland, and Hungary (Freitag, 2003). Alongside the favourable reception afforded by the state, British society also responded positively to the presence of European liberal exiles. Their arrival reinforced Britain's image as a tolerant and secure country and as a space of liberty, not only for its own citizens but also for those arriving from abroad. Exiles received assistance through private committees and public subscriptions established across Britain, to which both

wealthier sections of society and those with more limited means contributed. Moreover, pressure exerted by these groups resulted in the British government providing official assistance to exiles (Simal, 2012, 203-206). Nevertheless, as will be discussed below, this philanthropy was insufficient to meet all the needs of European liberals in England, many of whom faced precarious living conditions.

During the 1820s, England emerged as the principal meeting place for European liberals fleeing repression by absolutist forces. London consequently served as a political and intellectual centre of liberal exile (Lloréns, 1979, 23). Exiles of multiple nationalities converged there, including Poles, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Italians. Owing to the sympathy and interest they attracted on account of their culture, the Italians were among the groups most warmly received by British society (Simal, 2012, 210). This interest is evident in the extent to which British liberal readers identified with the ideals espoused by Italian exiles in writings published in England, particularly the principles of progress, liberty, and civilisation (Isabella, 2009, 206). Spanish exiles also benefited from a particularly hospitable reception in Britain, especially among members of the state administration, the army, and the Church who espoused a moderate form of liberalism (Alonso García, 2008, 152).

The Portuguese exiles who arrived in 1828 followed the pattern established by their counterparts of other nationalities and, particularly during the initial phase of their exile, also sought refuge in England. They shared the admiration of other European liberals for the British political and social model and identified with the ideals of liberty and equality that were then gaining prominence. In the eyes of Portuguese liberals, England was perceived as a country of progress, security, and liberty, characterised by the prevalence of science, charity, comfort, cleanliness, and magnanimity. This perception of England as a country of exile is reflected in writings and memoirs left by the liberals, many of whom regarded it as "the classical land of liberty", which provided "asylum and protection to all foreigners persecuted for their political and religious opinions" (Lago, 1834, 8-9). However, a closer examination of the Portuguese case presented here demonstrates that British hospitality was far from universal and that exiles were subject to various restrictions, including a disciplinary regime of surveillance and harsh living conditions. This reveals a clear contrast between the image of England as a "country of liberty" and the concentration of exiles in barracks in Plymouth, which imposed significant restrictions and exposed them to considerable hardship and deprivation.

The arrival of Portuguese exiles in England

The failure of the *Belfastada* was the event that prompted the departure of many liberals from Portugal. This episode took place in Porto in May 1828 and constituted yet another liberal uprising against absolutist rule. Its name derived from the *Belfast*, a vessel chartered in England with the mission of collecting the insurgents in the city, where a Provisional Government Junta had been established. However, absolutist repression led to the failure of the uprising and, in its aftermath, the second period of Portuguese liberal exile began. This period involved several prominent figures who, following the definitive triumph of liberalism in 1834, would go on to play important roles in Portuguese political life[1]. Even before the *Belfastada*, several dozen liberals had already left Portugal from February 1828 onwards, following D. Miguel's landing, heading for England and France (Vargues and Torgal, 1993-1994, 80). The *Belfastada* led to a substantial increase in the number of exiles abroad, a phenomenon that assumed two distinct forms, although both stemmed from the same underlying cause. On the one hand, the exile involved members of the liberal elite, individuals who had already occupied prominent positions in Portuguese political life since the 1820s; on the other, involved many military personnel implicated in the May 1828 uprising. The liberal exile thus comprised an elite whose presence evoked the cosmopolitanism of the eighteenth century, alongside ordinary citizens, particularly those belonging to the middle classes, and military personnel, who constituted the largest group (Marques, 2002, 576). In the words of Almeida Garrett, they were people who had "voluntarily expatriated themselves to escape infamy and perjury"[2].

According to some sources, based on official records from Galicia, 2,166 military exiles passed through Spain en route to England after July 1828[3]. Other sources, such as the memoirs of Joaquim José da Silva Maia, suggest somewhat higher figures, indicating that the number of liberals who went into exile in Britain reached 2,386 individuals, including both civilians and military personnel. Among the 496 civilians were *juízes de fora*, lawyers, doctors, landowners, and merchants, while the military group, comprising 1,890 individuals, included colonels, lieutenant-colonels, captains, majors, ensigns, and rank-and-file soldiers. Although the group of exiles consisted predominantly of men, it also included 90 women and 27 minor children (Maia, 1841)[4]. The difficulties associated with keeping daily records of people on the move, together with the hardships faced by the exiles while travelling through Spain,

mean that these figures should not be regarded as definitive, as they are unlikely to represent the full extent of the phenomenon. Nevertheless, they are significant in demonstrating the substantial movement of people fleeing absolutist repression.

The departure of the exiles from Portugal took place across the border with Spain, where they encountered a range of hardships that led to a progressive reduction in their numbers, before continuing their journey to England. Authors also differ regarding the leadership of the group that crossed the Portuguese-Spanish border. According to José Liberato Freire de Carvalho, the exiles' crossing was led by Brigadier Pizarro, who may have been either Joaquim de Sousa Pizarro or his elder brother, Gaspar Pizarro (Carvalho, 1982, 184). Maria de Fátima Bonifácio, by contrast, argues that it was Rodrigo Pinto Pizarro who led the Portuguese through Galicia (Bonifácio, 2005). The archival documentation consulted indicates that the Portuguese contingent that crossed Spain was commanded by Brigadier-General Joaquim Quevedo Pizarro. This body of documentation is also particularly valuable because it comprises several lists recording the names, occupations, and numbers of Portuguese exiles who passed through Spanish localities such as Ferrol and A Coruña before disembarking at British ports such as Falmouth and Plymouth[5].

The exiles' passage through Spain was marked by various constraints and difficulties, particularly owing to the presence of political factions sympathetic to D. Miguel and opposed to the presence of Portuguese liberals. They were subjected to harsh climatic conditions, food shortages, and repression by the Spanish authorities[6]. Of particular significance was the publication of a royal decree requiring those accommodated in designated depots to leave. In mid-July 1828, Ferdinand VII decreed that the Portuguese liberals were to leave Spanish territory within thirty days, under threat of imprisonment and deportation to Portugal (Silva, 2019, 60). Conversely, the exiles also encountered supportive attitudes in other places, particularly in Lugo and A Coruña, where local supporters of constitutionalism provided them with money and clothing and disregarded the orders they had received to monitor their presence. Similar treatment was afforded to the exiles in Ferrol, where they were not subjected to the usual daily searches or curfew restrictions (Maia, 1841, 136-139).

More than a month elapsed between the exiles' departure from Portugal and their arrival in England, which took place between late August and early September 1828. They entered the country through Portsmouth and, a few days later, proceeded to Falmouth aboard eleven vessels. According to Silva Maia's account, the exiles who

travelled to the latter destination had a more difficult experience during the journey, which was characterised by overcrowding and disorder on board (Maia, 1841, 156). In numerical terms, the sources indicate that 1,342 exiles departed from Ferrol for Falmouth, while 824 liberals travelled from A Coruña to Portsmouth, bringing the total to the aforementioned 2,166 individuals[7]. As for Plymouth, records produced by the administration of the depot indicate that 754 people were present there on 21 September 1828, only a few days after the exiles had disembarked in England[8].

The organisation of liberals in Plymouth

As noted above, Portuguese liberal exile in the late 1820s involved prominent figures from Portuguese political life as well as the military personnel implicated in the *Belfastada*, who constituted the bulk of the exiled population from July 1828 onwards. It was essentially a movement involving the political, economic, and social elites of the period, who were politically committed to the liberal cause at the time of D. Miguel's return to Portugal in February 1828 (Faria, 2015, 36). Many of these figures were already in London when the military exiles arrived in late summer 1828, notably Palmela, Mousinho de Albuquerque, and Almeida Garrett. The author of *Frei Luís de Sousa* and *Viagens na Minha Terra* travelled into exile accompanied by his wife, Luísa Midosi, via Ferrol, disembarking at Falmouth in June of that year. Thanks to financial assistance he received, Garrett experienced circumstances markedly different from those of most Portuguese exiles, enjoying relatively comfortable living conditions in Oxendon Street, Haymarket, London, where he also had the opportunity to visit the library of the Royal Museum (Sousa, 1999, 86).

By contrast, the majority of exiles who faced financial hardship and difficulties in meeting their basic needs, particularly those arriving from Galicia, were accommodated in a depot established in Plymouth as soon as they landed on British soil. The concentration of foreigners, including exiles, refugees, and wartime enemies, in designated spaces that restricted their movements and facilitated more effective surveillance was a common practice throughout the modern and contemporary periods, as observed, for example, in Portugal (Pereira and Faria, 2024) and France. In the latter country, the establishment of depots, the distinction between civilian and military exiles, and the provision of monthly allowances were measures already in place since the end of the Ancien Régime. The significant increase in the number of exiles during the 1830s led to the broader application and further refinement of these mechanisms of

control and surveillance. Indeed, the French government began allocating allowances according to a wider range of categories and introduced a more rigorous administrative framework (Diaz, 2014, 98-99).

In Plymouth, where "everyone arrives without means, everyone asks for assistance"[9], the liberals were confronted with harsh living conditions, both in terms of accommodation and food. In the words of an exile opposed to Palmela, Plymouth was home to "that brave and valiant army, deliberately and systematically abandoned by men who were instruments of British policy"[10]. Conditions deteriorated further according to the six classes into which the exiles were divided upon their arrival, ranging from general and staff officers to rank-and-file soldiers and domestic servants. This classification, ordered by Palmela in his capacity as leader of the Portuguese emigration, was unpopular among the exiles, particularly those assigned to the lower classes (Soriano, 1883, 170). In late August 1828, Palmela transferred responsibility for the administration of the Plymouth depot to Cândido José Xavier, a politician and military officer who had participated in the *Belfastada* and subsequently travelled to England following its failure[11]. Shortly afterwards, and largely as a result of disagreements and the lack of consensus surrounding Cândido José Xavier, responsibility for the depot was entrusted to General Stubbs, assisted by Paulo Midosi as secretary and by a merchant named Carvalho as treasurer (Nemésio, 1946, 52). Thomas Stubbs, a British officer who had joined the Portuguese liberal army, was appointed by Palmela to oversee the depot in late November 1828[12]. Reflecting the instability that characterised Portuguese exile, General Stubbs was himself replaced by Colonel José Bernardo António Zagallo in April 1829[13]. Midosi's appointment as secretary had already been determined in August 1828, when Cândido José Xavier was appointed, as indicated in a document setting out the principal instructions governing the operation of the depot[14].

The accommodation provided only limited amenities, as the entire facility was constructed of wood, with unglazed windows and only benches, chairs, and beds as basic furnishings. The floors were covered with straw, which was replaced every fortnight. The number of exiles was so considerable that the barracks were unable to accommodate all of them. Consequently, four vessels anchored in Plymouth harbour were rented to provide sleeping quarters for those who could not be accommodated in the barracks (Nemésio, 1946, 53). The provision of food, consisting of a daily ration of bread, meat, and rice, also varied according to social class: only exiles belonging to the

sixth class received their rations in kind, while the others were provided with the equivalent monetary allowance. Some of the accounts left by exiles in England, particularly those who stayed in Plymouth, challenge the image of hospitality generally associated with the country, as the conditions in which they were accommodated were, in fact, degrading and reflected the contempt and inhumanity with which the Portuguese were confronted. Joaquim Pinheiro Chagas, father of the future writer and journalist Manuel Pinheiro Chagas, was one of the members of the liberal contingent stationed in Plymouth and left a testimony to the difficult experience endured by the exiles there. In *As noites do barracão passadas pelos emigrados portugueses em Inglaterra, em verso alexandrino*, Pinheiro Chagas highlighted some of the main hardships faced by those living "in the thorny ground of the vile barracks". He drew attention to the lack of basic necessities, including beds, clothing, food, and hygiene, which contributed to many of the difficulties experienced by the exiles in Plymouth, particularly hunger, cold, and infestations of lice[15].

In addition to the food assistance mentioned above, exiles received an allowance equivalent to the pay enjoyed by first-line and second-line military officers in Portugal. Employees likewise received their regular salaries as if they had remained in active service. Other forms of financial assistance were also available, including a monthly allowance of fourteen *shillings* for non-commissioned volunteers and a monthly payment of ten pounds for doctors, landowners, and merchants. Access to these financial allowances depended on the recipient's occupation, which could be certified by means of a statement signed by three fellow exiles (Soriano, 1883, 171-172). The money distributed among the liberals, upon which their subsistence in Plymouth depended, came from funds received by Portugal from Brazil under the terms of the treaty of independence signed in 1825, as recorded in the document entitled *Relação das quantias pagas pelo Brasil como indemnização a Portugal*[16]. Two years earlier, in exchange for recognition of its independence, the former colony had assumed responsibility for servicing the loan contracted by Portugal in London, an arrangement overseen by the Viscount of Itabaiana, Brazil's minister in the British capital (Bonifácio, 2005, 15). The distribution of allowances, which was the responsibility of Palmela, was one of the main sources of disagreement among the exiles, an issue that will be examined in greater detail below. Expenditure on the liberals in Plymouth included not only payments made to the exiles but also the daily costs associated with the administration of the depot itself. These included the purchase of writing materials,

the hire of boats, and the dispatch of correspondence, as recorded in the document *Contas dos emigrantes portugueses em Plymouth,* covering the period from November 1828 to June 1830[17]. The financial burden was also a source of concern among those responsible for the Portuguese emigration, including Palmela, who, as early as late August 1828, warned "that the longer the stay in England is prolonged, the greater the expenses will become, and I fear that we shall soon find ourselves so burdened by them that it will be difficult to continue"[18].

With regard to the exiles' subsistence, it is noteworthy that the Portuguese case differed from the experience of many liberals of other nationalities. While the Portuguese were compelled to rely on subsidies derived from Brazilian payments, many Spanish and Italian exiles benefited from British assistance during the 1820s. The high cost of living in Britain meant that only a limited number of individuals could support themselves independently. In this context, officially organised assistance under Wellington's direction was particularly significant, especially for Spanish exiles, owing to Spain's alliance with Britain in the struggle against Napoleonic France. These political affinities continued to manifest themselves in exile and directly influenced the allocation of assistance. The support provided took the form of a monthly allowance, supplemented by an aid committee responsible for raising funds, organising subscriptions, and arranging charitable events, which also benefited Italian liberals (Lloréns, 1979, 49-51).

The depot established in Plymouth had a disciplinary and quasi-carceral character, particularly evident in the imposition of surveillance, the classification of exiles into different categories, and the restrictions placed on their freedom of movement. Portuguese documentation demonstrates that the entry and departure of exiles from the depot were subject to systematic control, carried out through the daily compilation of numerical and nominal registers. The administration of the depot also involved a constant exchange of correspondence among those responsible for its management, much of which concerned written petitions submitted by the emigrants. These requests reveal, in particular, problems concerning the payment of allowances, largely because exiles in Plymouth received their money only after it had been distributed among the liberals residing in London[19]. This issue generated the greatest number of protests among the exiles, particularly the volunteers, who received lower payments (Gonçalves & Silva, 2024, 25). The central concerns raised in petitions submitted by the exiles to the depot commander revolved around issues of mobility and

financial assistance. On a daily basis, liberals requested admission to the depot, higher allowances, reassignment to a different category, exceptional payments, and the issuance of documentation, particularly passports[20]. The poor nutritional and sanitary conditions prevailing in the depot contributed to the spread of disease and constituted one of the main reasons why emigrants sought advances on their allowances[21]. This situation, in which "the means of subsistence began to run short and the horrors of destitution became apparent"[22], made the prospect of leaving Plymouth considerably less difficult and far less bittersweet (Lago, 1834, 27-28).

According to Silva Maia, the exiles assigned to the sixth class were the most disadvantaged and suffered most severely from the harsh conditions of the Plymouth barracks, as those belonging to the other classes lived in private houses or lodging houses. The first four classes were the most favoured in terms of the allowances they received, as these were higher than those available to them in Portugal while their expenses were lower. However, from early 1829 onwards, the provision of these allowances underwent several changes: daily rations were withdrawn for all classes except the sixth; allowances were reduced for first- and second-line military personnel and volunteers; and exiles in the fifth class began to receive a slightly higher amount (Maia, 1841, 164-167). Nevertheless, the poor living conditions experienced by a large proportion of the exiles did not extend to the entire Portuguese liberal exile community. Those with some financial means were able to enjoy the comforts offered by the Plymouth area. Initially, the brothers Passos Manuel and Passos José remained in Plymouth, but they did not share the hardships endured by many of their fellow exiles, as they received money sent by their mother from Portugal. Moreover, their profession as lawyers entitled them to a monthly allowance of three pounds in addition to food subsidies (Pinheiro, 1996, 52).

As the leader of the *Belfastada*, having been responsible for chartering the vessel and partly contributing to the failure of the revolutionary movement, Palmela assumed leadership of the Portuguese liberal emigration in England[23]. At the end of 1828, Palmela was instructed by the representative of the British government, the Duke of Wellington, to disperse the Portuguese exiles concentrated in Plymouth. In early December of that year, Palmela informed Abreu e Lima, Count of Carreira, then in exile in France, of the situation, explaining that the British government had demanded that the liberals be relocated to several pre-selected locations, specifying a maximum number of men for each and requiring soldiers and officers to be kept separate.

According to Palmela's letter, the preferred option was for the exiles to be relocated to another European country rather than depart for Brazil[24]. However, José da Silva Carvalho, one of the leading figures behind the Liberal Revolution of 1820 and twice exiled in England, argued that the former colony was the most suitable destination for achieving the liberals' objectives, namely the overthrow of absolutism (Viana, 1891, 21).

Silva Maia argues that the British demand was related to domestic legislation prohibiting the concentration of foreign military depots. He further maintains that the measure may have resulted from a request by the Spanish minister for Wellington's government to adopt the same approach as the Spanish government had taken in 1827, when, at British request, it had dispersed Portuguese exiles throughout Spain (Maia, 1841, 191). Maria de Fátima Bonifácio, by contrast, argues that the British government justified the order to disperse the exiles on the grounds that the presence in Plymouth of the liberal military personnel involved in the *Belfastada*, approximately 1,000 soldiers and 2,250 officers, constituted a hostile act towards the Miguelist government. Such an act could easily have been interpreted as a breach of the neutrality initially adopted by Britain (Bonifácio, 2004, 528). The hostility between the Portuguese exiles and the Duke of Wellington was particularly evident in the manner in which the former reacted to the British politician's resignation in late 1830. Accusing Wellington of being sympathetic to D. Miguel and opposed to the liberal cause, the exiles considered that his departure from government would not be mourned[25].

Immediately following the British communication Palmela began taking steps to implement Wellington's demand, announcing on 10 December 1828 that the departure of the first group of exiles was imminent and that four vessels then in Plymouth would be used for this purpose (Viana, 1891, 23). These were possibly the same vessels that had been chartered to accommodate the liberals who could no longer be housed in the barracks. According to Silva Maia's account, this first voyage involved the departure of more than 600 men, including infantry rank-and-file soldiers, *caçadores*, and officers, under the command of General Saldanha. General Stubbs, by then commander of the depot, had ordered the expedition to call at Terceira Island, which had not been occupied by Miguelist forces, where the journey was to end if circumstances permitted. Otherwise, the exiles were to proceed to Rio de Janeiro (Maia, 1841, 197-198). The correspondence exchanged between Silva Carvalho, the Viscount of Itabaiana, and Palmela at this time reveals that the majority of liberals preferred to remain in Europe,

particularly in Belgium, rather than undertake a transatlantic journey to Brazil. According to Palmela, this would place them in a financially disadvantageous position, as he doubted that Itabaiana would continue to provide allowances to those who, of their own accord, chose not to travel to Brazil (Viana, 1891, 23-27).

The liberals, predominantly military personnel but also including some civilians, who remained in Plymouth left during the first quarter of 1829. Two distinct approaches can be identified regarding the instructions given to the vessels that departed during this period. While the first vessels were instructed to sail for Brazil if they were unable to land in the Azores, the later vessels were ordered to travel directly to the former colony. Silva Maia argues that this change of policy was related to the existing knowledge of D. Miguel's order to blockade Terceira Island and to the perception that the approximately 2,000 exiles who had already landed there would be sufficient to withstand Miguelist attacks (Maia, 1841, 198-199). In early March 1829, Palmela reinforced this view, stating that the territory was secure following the landing of approximately 1,100 liberals, although there is therefore some discrepancy in the figures reported[26]. The Miguelist blockade of the Azorean archipelago led Saldanha, who was in command of the vessel, to alter its intended destination, choosing France, and specifically the coastal city of Brest, instead of Brazil. There, he is reported to have benefited from the influence of Baron Hyde de Neuville in securing permission for the exiles to disembark (Viana, 1891, 28). In France, the Portuguese exiles benefited from allowances provided by the French government from early 1829 onwards[27].

Silva Maia's memoirs reveal significant differences between the Portuguese liberals' experience in Spain, their stay in England, and their presence in France, the latter apparently having been the most favourable. In Paris, the exiles benefited from the proceeds of theatrical performances and balls, which also enabled them to establish closer contacts with prominent local figures. Moreover, the French government appears to have adopted a more hospitable and cordial attitude towards the Portuguese liberals, providing 30,000 francs per month for the exiles and establishing three depots in Normandy to accommodate them (Maia, 1841, 203-204). Silva Carvalho corroborates this favourable assessment of the French reception, reporting to Palmela in March 1829 that correspondence received from Brest praised the attitude of the French authorities, particularly the provision of a monthly allowance of 150 francs to each Portuguese exile and the organisation of subscriptions to assist the exiles (Carvalho, 1891, 34).

Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that France became genuinely tolerant of the entry and residence of exiles on its territory primarily after the Liberal Revolution of 1830. Until then, the French authorities had maintained particularly close surveillance of exiles, perceiving them as potential sources of instability, conflict, and conspiracy (Simal, 2012, 218). Indeed, exiles arriving in France in the early 1820s were subjected to particularly close surveillance and detention (Diaz, 2014, 62-63), as was the case with Spanish liberals, who were treated as prisoners of war and confined to designated depots (Lloréns, 1979, 18). In light of this context, Silva Maia's account should therefore be treated with some caution, as it may somewhat exaggerate the favourable nature of the French reception. It is important to bear in mind that the greater tolerance introduced under the July Monarchy was accompanied by the emergence of the legal category of the "refugee", following the introduction of specific legislation in the early 1830s. In this context, increased control and surveillance of the foreign population accompanied the rise in the number of exiles receiving assistance during the first months of the new regime (Diaz, 2019, 25). Through increased subsidies and the adoption of this legislation, the July Monarchy developed a system of "control through assistance" (Noiriel, 2006, 46), which also affected Portuguese exiles (Diaz, 2014, 108).

Conflicts and sociabilities in British exile

The Portuguese liberal exiles were united by the same political objectives: the overthrow of absolutism and the restoration of the constitutional regime in Portugal, which had been interrupted by Miguelist rule from 1828 onwards. However, personal ambitions and the desire for political power undermined the liberal cause and the pursuit of these shared objectives, generating divisions and conflicts among the emigrants, both in Portugal (before and after the Civil War) and in exile. This foreshadowed the deep political fracture that would shape political life in Portugal for approximately two decades, between 1834 and 1851 (Paquette, 2013, 256). This dynamic was not exclusive to the Portuguese case, as tensions also emerged among Spanish exiles, leading to divisions between *exaltados* and *moderados* and weakening the revolutionary cause (Simal, 2016, 35).

Indeed, the years that followed the definitive triumph of liberalism in Portugal were marked by intense political divisions, rooted in conflicts that had emerged during the 1820s and were subsequently reflected during the period of exile. One of the central points of contention among the liberals concerned their respective positions on the two

constitutional texts drafted before the Civil War, the Constitution of 1822 and the Constitutional Charter of 1826, as well as the political course that Portugal should pursue thereafter. These divisions led to the formation of rival liberal factions, which were responsible for the outbreak of revolutionary movements aimed at overthrowing the established political order. Notable examples include the September Revolution of 1836, which advocated the restoration of the Constitution of 1822 and in which figures who had previously experienced exile, such as Sá da Bandeira and Passos Manuel, played prominent roles, and the 1842 pronunciamiento led by António Bernardo Costa Cabral, which favoured the restoration of the Constitutional Charter and involved another prominent figure of the Portuguese liberal exile.

The experience of exile in Britain provides an important example of these divisions within the liberal movement. The pre-existing conflicts were exacerbated by the *Belfastada*, particularly because its failure prevented the restoration of liberalism and created a need to identify those responsible. Accusations focused in particular on the two leading liberal figures involved in the attempt, Palmela and Saldanha. Palmela was accused of having contracted a loan to finance a coup that ultimately failed and resulted in the flight of several hundred liberals, while Saldanha was held responsible for the failure of the rebellion because of his alleged failure to act in a timely manner. The divided exiles rallied around these two figures, forming two factions with distinct political and ideological programmes. Their principal point of contention concerned their respective views of the role that D. Pedro IV should play in the liberal cause.

The *palmelista* group, which included figures such as Cândido José Xavier, Agostinho José Freire, and José da Silva Carvalho, was characterised by a more moderate, Anglophile outlook and closer ties to D. Pedro. By contrast, the *saldanhista* faction, which included figures such as Rodrigo Pinto Pizarro and the Passos brothers, was more radical, Francophile, and more opposed to D. Pedro (Vargues and Torgal, 1993-1994, 80-86). There was, therefore, a geographical dimension to the political divisions within Portuguese liberalism. However, for many of the exiles concentrated in the various European depots, such as Plymouth and Brest, this was a secondary concern (Marques, 1996, 47), as their primary and most immediate concern was their subsistence and survival. The distribution of allowances among the exiles was, moreover, another major source of conflict, with the leaders of the liberal emigration, such as Palmela and Cândido José Xavier, playing a particularly prominent role. They were accused by the other exiles of favouring their closest associates and of distributing

the funds received from Brazil in an unfair and inequitable manner. An exchange is reported to have taken place between the latter and another exile, who accused him of living in considerable Comfort, with more money, accommodation provided, and passage from Porto aboard the *Belfast*, while he himself, as he put it, "crossed Galicia on foot, suffered hunger, and in Plymouth slept on top of the filth in the barracks; I receive only 14 *shillings* a month and cannot consider myself fortunate" (Maia, 1841, 172).

Thus, tensions among the exiles were fuelled by three major issues. First, the failure of the Junta do Porto and the collapse of the *Belfastada*, which forced several hundred liberals into exile; second, the difficulties they faced in securing their subsistence in Plymouth and the disparities in their treatment; and, finally, political disagreements over D. Pedro's role in leading the liberal cause (Ferrão, 1940, 215). These issues inevitably generated intense debate within the liberal exile community, pitting Palmela's group against Saldanha's and, in geographical terms, the exile community in London against that in Paris. The exile press was the principal platform through which these debates were articulated and disseminated. Consequently, the exiles' material survival did not become a particularly prominent subject of discussion, since those most directly affected were also those with the least access to the press. From this perspective, the main subjects addressed were political in nature, particularly the failure of the uprising in Porto and D. Pedro's role in advancing the constitutional cause, as the literate exile elite had the greatest interest in these issues and greater access to the press. With regard to the former, the press published in England and France debated the question of responsibility for the *Belfastada*. Rodrigo Pinto Pizarro and Albino Pimenta de Aguiar supported Saldanha and criticised Palmela's actions, whereas other figures, such as Joaquim António de Magalhães and Gama Lobo Botelho, both members of the Junta do Porto, attacked the *saldanhista* faction and defended Palmela (Ferrão, 1940, 215-216).

The question of oaths of allegiance to the liberal cause, to D. Maria II, and to the Regency established on Terceira Island also became a major source of division among the exiles. In March 1830, Portuguese emigrants in Belgium and France were required to swear an oath of recognition and allegiance to the Regency established by D. Pedro the previous year (Bonifácio, 2004, 527). Given the considerable differences that characterised the liberals' experience of exile, this requirement may be understood as an attempt to assess the exiles' degree of allegiance to D. Maria II and the Constitutional

Charter (Faria, 2015, 46). Many liberals refused to sign the oath, not because they rejected the liberal cause or were unwilling to recognise the Regency, but because they did not acknowledge the authority of D. Francisco de Almeida, who was responsible for overseeing the collection of signatures. More specifically, they considered "the order imposing the oath to be irregular, illegal, and incompetent"[28]. This refusal prompted several emigrants, including some who were still residing in Plymouth, to draft a formal protest in late August 1830[29].

José da Silva Carvalho considered that those exiles who had not yet taken the oath were opposed to the Regency and supported Saldanha. Nevertheless, he argued that their allowance should not be withdrawn, as doing so could be used as an argument by those refusing to sign (Viana, 1891, 57-58). Further problems arose from the refusal to take the oaths. In late 1828, coinciding with the mass departure of liberals from Portugal, an oath of allegiance to D. Maria II was required, but several prominent exiles refused to take it, including Mouzinho da Silveira, José Liberato Freire de Carvalho, José Ferreira Borges, and Almeida Garrett[30]. Even after the period of exile, in his memoirs published in 1855, Freire de Carvalho continued to express his hostility towards Palmela, accusing him of having been a vassal of the British and of seeking to send the exiles to Brazil, thereby depriving "the Queen of this powerful support that she had in Europe"[31].

The issue of the oaths did not go unnoticed in the exile press, particularly in influential periodicals among the exiles, such as *Paquete de Portugal*, which was published in London for two years, between August 1829 and August 1831. Contributors to the newspaper included figures such as Rodrigo da Fonseca Magalhães, Marcos Pinto Soares Vaz Preto, José Liberato Freire de Carvalho, and José da Silva Carvalho. A debate published in September 1830 set out the arguments put forward by both sides. Those who had taken the oath to the Regency argued, among other things, that it constituted an additional demonstration of the allegiance they had previously expressed towards D. Maria II and that the possibility of a Regency led by D. Miguel could under no circumstances be entertained. Those who had refused to take it, by contrast, maintained that the oath sworn to D. Maria II and the Constitutional Charter was sufficient and that they had received no order from the Regency requiring them to take a further oath. As was customary, the article concluded with an appeal for unity among the exiles in pursuit of the liberal cause and the overthrow of the Miguelist government[32]. The editors of the periodical believed that the defeat of D. Miguel would

put an end to the conflicts and divisions among the emigrants, just as the Spanish liberals, having overcome their differences, had united in opposition to the absolutism of Ferdinand VII[33].

One of Palmela's strategies for attempting to resolve the disagreements among the exiles concentrated in Plymouth was to send José da Silva Carvalho there. As one of the principal figures behind the Revolution of 1820, he enjoyed considerable popularity among the liberals. Rodrigo da Fonseca Magalhães is also reported to have accompanied Silva Carvalho to Plymouth, although, according to José Liberato Freire de Carvalho, without success, "because they preached in the wilderness; and our good people remained steadfast in their purpose"[34]. Silva Carvalho arrived in London in October 1828 and was based in Plymouth between December of that year and March 1829, becoming the principal point of contact between the liberals accommodated in the barracks and the leaders of the exile community. To this end, he maintained regular correspondence not only with Palmela but also with Itabaiana, who played a crucial role in providing financial assistance to the exiles. At the individual level, Silva Carvalho's mission was to temper the hostility of Palmela's most vocal critics and of D. Pedro's ministers, and to bring the two sides closer together. At least to some extent, this appears to have produced the desired results. In early December 1828, Palmela's envoy reported that the distrust surrounding the work of D. Pedro's ministers, which had been fuelled by writings circulated in Plymouth, had subsided. He further emphasised that the exiles expressed confidence in those directing their affairs and a willingness to comply with whatever instructions they might receive (Viana, 1891, 18). Nevertheless, divisions among the liberals persisted, both during the period of exile and after their return to Portugal, as became particularly evident in the development of Portuguese politics in the years following the Civil War, especially up to 1851.

Conflicts among the liberals constituted only one dimension of the experience of exile. In another respect, Portuguese exiles established important networks of contact and sociability. Exile provided a space for learning, intellectual development, and social interaction, facilitated by attendance at libraries, courses, and performances, as well as at balls and social gatherings organised by the European elite during the first half of the nineteenth century (Santos, 1985, 113). António Bernardino Pereira do Lago, a brigadier in the Corps of Engineers, left significant accounts in his memoirs, in which he emphasised the social and cultural dimensions of exile. Pereira do Lago travelled through these countries, beginning his exile in Plymouth, where he arrived in early

November 1828, and subsequently moving through London, Paris, Lille, and Brussels. In England, the Portuguese brigadier attended several clubs, particularly a liberal association, and became acquainted with scientific societies and various other establishments, including factories and printing presses (Lago, 1834, 540). Through these activities, he demonstrated that exile, although initially prompted by political circumstances, could also serve as an opportunity for the exiles' cultural and social enrichment (Santos, 1985, 114).

Almeida Garrett was another exile who developed significant social and cultural connections in England, establishing close relationships with prominent figures in British society at the time. During this period, Lord Holland's (Henry Richard Vassall Fox) residence was one of England's leading political, social, and literary centres. It was frequented not only by prominent British liberals but also by diplomats and foreign liberal exiles, including the Portuguese figures Palmela, António de Sousa Coutinho (Marquis of Funchal), Luís António de Abreu e Lima, and Garrett himself (Sousa, 1999, 90). Many of these contacts were crucial in giving the Portuguese liberal cause an important international dimension. This was particularly evident in the activities of Palmela, who, in addition to Lord Holland, established connections with Lord Palmerston, Lord Brougham, and Sir James Mackintosh, while regularly attending social gatherings and balls. Other exiles, such as José da Silva Carvalho and José Ferreira Borges, also established connections in London with British radicals, including John Bowring and Edward Blaquière, as well as with exiles of other nationalities, such as the Spanish liberal Argüelles (Bron, 2013, 502-505).

The relationship between Portuguese and Spanish exiles was particularly significant from a political perspective and can be understood as the development of an Iberian liberalism within the broader context of liberal internationalism. More specifically, it involved the possibility of creating an "Iberian union", an idea circulated among Portuguese and Spanish liberals in exile that envisaged D. Pedro as the "Emperor of Iberia" (Lloréns, 1979, 147-148). This position was particularly prominent in parts of the Portuguese and Spanish exile press during the 1820s, including the periodicals *Ocios de Españoles Emigrados*, *El Español Constitucional*, and *O Portuguez* (Silva, 2019, 54; Paquette, 2016, 49). The possibility of establishing an Iberian constitutional monarchy under D. Pedro remained under consideration until 1833 (Gonçalves, 2015, 33), when the death of Ferdinand VII paved the way for the

First Carlist War and a definitive shift towards liberalism in Spain, while in Portugal liberals and absolutists were already engaged in civil war.

Two factors contributed to the close relationships established between Portuguese exiles and prominent British figures such as Lord Holland. On the one hand, there was sympathy for the Portuguese liberal cause, as well as the experience of previous visits to Portugal (Sousa, 2011); on the other, their shared membership of organisations such as Freemasonry provided an important basis for closer connections between them (Sousa, 1999, 90-91). Garrett developed relationships with several British writers and other prominent figures, and was a regular visitor to bookshops and the Royal Museum in London. Some of these figures had, moreover, previously travelled to Portugal and written about the country between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Sousa, 1999, 87-92).

These encounters and forms of sociability enabled the exiles to assimilate a new culture and different ways of thinking, which they subsequently disseminated upon returning to their country of origin, seeking to implement many of the political and social models they had encountered abroad. At the same time, however, integration into the host society also enabled the emigrants to share and promote the culture of their own country (Simal, 2012, 491). Through the press, exiles followed developments in the principal issues shaping the public affairs of their host countries, regarding various aspects of these societies as potential models for implementation in Portugal. One example was a proposal for judicial reform introduced in England in late April 1830. In *O Paquete de Portugal*, Rodrigo da Fonseca Magalhães highlighted its various advantages and argued for the need to introduce a similar reform in Portugal[35]. In this sense, Portuguese liberals also acted as agents of the "cultural transfers" facilitated by exile (Espagne, 1999), contributing to the internationalisation of political debates and the circulation of ideas (Fournier-Finocchiaro & Clímaco, 2017, 13). Exile thus became a site of transculturation, in Peter Burke's sense, whereby both places of origin and destination are transformed through population movements (Burke, 2017).

Indeed, their presence, together with the fact that some were already well known abroad, such as Almeida Garrett, whose works were already being studied outside Portugal, encouraged the populations of the host countries to sympathise with the cause they represented. At the same time, Garrett's contacts with liberals from Southern Europe influenced his understanding of Portugal's place in Europe (Paquette, 2016, 46), an outlook particularly evident in his book *Portugal na Balança da Europa*. Here,

Garrett articulated a markedly internationalist perspective, shared by many other exiles, advocating a "system of freedom in the South" rather than an exclusively "Portuguese freedom"[36]. Moreover, Portuguese exiles interacted not only with the cultures of their host countries but also, owing to the multiple nationalities represented within the exile communities, with foreigners from many other states. Liberal exile thus emerged as a transnational and cosmopolitan phenomenon, extending beyond a bilateral relationship between individuals from a particular country of origin and the inhabitants of a host country. It facilitated social contacts and the exchange of experiences among individuals of diverse nationalities, including Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Polish, British, French, and Belgian exiles (Faria, 2015, 105).

Drawing on Norbert Elias's concept of civilisation, which emphasises the features shared by all societies while placing national differences in the background (Elias, 1989, 59-60), Portuguese liberal exile can be understood as an important space of sociability and civilisation. By sharing a common fate with exiles of other nationalities, Portuguese liberals themselves became agents of civilisation, assimilating new ideas while also disseminating Portuguese culture. Unlike Italian liberals, who did not regard Italy as their homeland, since they could not live there freely and under the protection of national laws (Isabella, 2006, 495), Portuguese exiles did not consider their host country to be their homeland. Indeed, they never ceased to express their hope of returning to Portugal, which they regarded as their true homeland. Nevertheless, the persistence of absolutist rule in Portugal led Portuguese liberals to state categorically that the country could not be regarded as their homeland for as long as D. Miguel's regency remained in place[37]. The liberal exiles of this period, including many Portuguese, transcended the traditional geopolitical boundaries of states and became genuine cosmopolitan agents, engaging in a range of activities that brought them into closer contact with local societies and with individuals from other countries. An international liberal network thus emerged, bringing together people of different nationalities who shared the common objective of ending absolutism in Europe. They interacted and developed friendships and close relationships that, in many cases, endured beyond the period of exile (Faria, 2015, 107).

This liberal internationalism also manifested itself through the participation of foreign liberals in revolutionary movements and civil wars, precisely as a result of the contacts established abroad. This was the case of Italian liberal volunteers who participated in the Portuguese Civil War as members of D. Pedro's armies, having

acquired a more detailed understanding of the situation in Portugal during their time in countries such as France and Belgium (Bron, 2009, 433). Portuguese advocates of liberalism likewise fought to overthrow absolutist regimes elsewhere, as exemplified by Bernardo de Sá Nogueira, the future Marquis of Sá da Bandeira, who joined the revolution in Naples in the early 1820s (Isabella, 2023, 581). These were transimperial and transnational actors who, by virtue of their status as exiles, were compelled to live on the margins of new empires and nation-states (Isabella & Zanou, 2016, 6).

An intense circulation of ideas and knowledge concerning economic liberalism, political reform, and liberal approaches to penal reform took place (Isabella, 2006, 514)[38], alongside practical cooperation between liberal political and military forces aimed at overthrowing absolutism. The flight from absolutist repression thus contributed to the formation of transnational networks of liberal exiles throughout the 1820s and 1830s. These networks consisted largely of intellectuals and political activists who circulated primarily within Europe, but also in Brazil, for instance, where Portuguese refugees from Miguelist rule also established themselves (Gonçalves & Silva, 2024). In exile, emigrants expressed optimism and confidence in the triumph of liberalism through solidarity among nations, as part of the construction of an international liberal imaginary (Simal, 2016, 32). This was also shared by Portuguese exiles, who remained confident that they would return to Portugal and prevail over the absolutists[39].

Conclusion

Historiography has portrayed England as a particularly hospitable country for European liberals fleeing absolutism during the 1820s and 1830s. However, the Portuguese liberal experience challenges this view and demonstrates that hostility was also present. The reality experienced by Portuguese exiles in the barracks at Plymouth is particularly revealing in this respect, as they faced classification into different ranks, hardship, poor living conditions, overcrowding, and ultimately expulsion.

The liberal exile of 1828-1832 was one of the most significant population movements involving Portuguese people during the nineteenth century and, undoubtedly, the largest displacement compelled by political circumstances. Thousands of liberals were forced to leave the country as a result of the intense persecution unleashed by absolutist forces following D. Miguel's return to Portugal at the beginning of 1828. Owing to their political and social models, which were admired by many,

countries such as England, France, and Belgium were among the most desirable destinations for the exiles. England was the first major destination of refuge, both for prominent figures of the Portuguese liberal elite and for the many military personnel involved in the failure of the *Belfastada*, the revolutionary attempt that prompted their mass departure in mid-1828.

Socio-professional status was an important factor differentiating the exiles abroad, beginning with the difficult and protracted journey that the military participants in the *Belfastada* were forced to undertake through Spain before entering England via the port of Portsmouth. By contrast, prominent figures of Portuguese liberalism, such as Almeida Garrett and Palmela, enjoyed considerably greater comforts. Indeed, these differences in treatment and access to resources were an important source of conflict and division among the exiles, as those who received less assistance and endured greater hardship frequently accused the leaders of the Portuguese emigration, particularly Palmela, of favouring their closest associates at the expense of many other Portuguese who were in greater need. Although they shared the same cause, the overthrow of absolutism and the consolidation of liberalismo, the exiles disagreed on several issues, undermining the unity that would have been conducive to achieving their political objectives. In addition to economic considerations, divisions among the exiles were also deeply shaped by political disagreements, particularly concerning the role that D. Pedro should play in leading the liberal cause. The rift among the exiles was so significant that the liberal exile was characterised by the emergence of two clearly defined and distinct factions, particularly in geographical and political terms, led by Palmela and Saldanha. These divisions would, moreover, persist after the defeat of absolutism and the subsequent triumph of liberalism in 1834. In addition to their separation from their homeland, the experience of Portuguese exiles in England, particularly in Plymouth, was further compounded by political conflicts, restrictions imposed by the British government, and harsh living conditions.

Despite the many conflicts, exile also constituted an important space for learning and social and cultural enrichment (Faria, 2016). During the several years they spent moving throughout Europe, particularly between England and France, Portuguese liberal exiles came into contact with emigrants of other nationalities, especially Spaniards and Italians. Alongside important members of the local political, social, and cultural elites, they attended balls, soirées, and social gatherings organised by prominent figures in British and French society, as was the case with Almeida Garrett (Sousa,

1999, 90). Many of these connections endured after their return to Portugal, while much of the knowledge acquired and the experiences gained during exile were subsequently studied and considered for possible application to the Portuguese context. Through its exiles, Portugal became part of the liberal internationalism then developing in a nineteenth-century Europe still politically divided between liberalism and absolutism. In this way, Portugal participated in the European-Mediterranean liberal international and also contributed to the intellectual production of ideas throughout the nineteenth century, particularly those associated with liberalism (Gallant, 2016, 209).

Notes

[1]The first phase of Portuguese liberal exile took place between 1823 and 1826, following the *Vila-Francada* and the subsequent establishment of absolutist rule.
[2] Garrett, A. (1830). *Portugal na Balança da Europa*. S. W. Sustenance, p. 181.
[3] *Documentos para a História das Cortes Gerais da Nação Portuguesa* (1888), Tomo V, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, pp. 104-116.
[4] Silva Maia states that he accompanied the exiles to England, where he began writing his memoirs in 1829, completing them in Rio de Janeiro the following year.
[5] Cx. 161, n.º 34. Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros (MNE). Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (ANTT)
[6] Cx. 161, n.º 34. MNE. ANTT
[7] *Documentos para a História das Cortes Gerais da Nação Portuguesa* (1888), Tomo V, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, pp. 104-116.
[8] Cx. 160, n.º 31, 32, 33. MNE. ANTT.
[9] Cx. 5, Liv. 2. Arquivo Particular José da Silva Carvalho (APJSC). ANTT.
[10] *Memórias da vida de José Liberato Freire de Carvalho* (1982 [1855]), Lisboa, Assírio e Alvim, p. 184.
[11] Cx. 5, Liv. 2. APJSC. ANTT.
[12] Cx. 5, Liv. 2. APJSC. ANTT.
[13] Cx. 160, n.º 31, 32, 33. MNE. ANTT.
[14] Cx. 5, Liv. 2. APJSC. ANTT.
[15] Chagas, Joaquim Pinheiro (1834), *As noites do barracão passadas pelos emigrados portugueses em Inglaterra, em verso alexandrino*, Paris, J. P. Aillaud.
[16] Cx. 11, Liv. 3. APJSC. ANTT.
[17] Liv. 505. MNE. ANTT.
[18] Cx. 5, Liv. 2. APJSC. ANTT.
[19] Cx. 160, n.º 31, 32, 33. MNE. ANTT.
[20] Cx. 160, n.º 31, 32, 33. MNE. ANTT.
[21] Cx. 161, n.º 34. MNE. ANTT.
[22] *Paquete de Portugal*, Vol. 6, N.º 13, 15 de fevereiro de 1831, p. 385.
[23] The Marquis of Palmela was in England when he learned that one of his principal political rivals, General Saldanha, was on his way to Porto to lead the liberal insurgents. He subsequently chartered the *Belfast* and departed from Plymouth in mid-June 1828. This episode reflects the divisions within the liberal movement, which would persist throughout the period of exile and, indeed, in Portuguese political life after the Civil War.
[24] *Correspondência Oficial de Luís António de Abreu e Lima com o Duque de Palmela* (1874). Lallemant Frères, p. 126-127.

[25] *Paquete de Portugal*, Vol. 6, N.º 1, 21 de novembro de 1830, pp. 3-5.
[26] *Correspondência Oficial* (1874)…p. 126-127.
[27] Cx. 161, n.º 34. MNE. ANTT.
[28] Espólio de Rodrigo da Fonseca Magalhães, Reservados da Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Cota E21, Caixa 125.
[29] Casa Palmela, Cx. 211. Casa Palmela. ANTT.
[30] *Documentos* (1888)…, p. 503.
[31] *Memórias* (1982 [1855]) …, p. 185.
[32] *Paquete de Portugal*, Vol. 5, N.º 6, 28 de setembro de 1830, pp. 177-187.
[33] *Paquete de Portugal*, Vol. 5, N.º 11, 2 de novembro de 1830, pp. 441-446.
[34] *Memórias* (1982 [1855]) …, p. 185.
[35] *Paquete de Portugal*, Vol. 4, N.º 41, 1 de junho de 1830, p. 47.
[36] Garrett, A. (1830). *Portugal na Balança da Europa*. S. W. Sustenance.
[37] *Paquete de Portugal*, Vol. 8, N.º 12, 17 de agosto de 1831, p. 366.
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