The Fall of the Brazilian Empire

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The fall of the Brazilian Empire

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Final Draft/ Senior thesis
Dr. Rector
May 25, 1999
“[On November 15, 1889] Marshall Deodoro [De Fonseca] informed a surprised nation, 'The people, the army and the navy, in perfect harmony of sentiment with our fellow citizens resident in the provinces, have just decreed the dethronement of the imperial dynasty, and consequently the extinction of the representative monarchical system of government.'”¹ This statement by Deodoro made it clear to the people of Brazil that the empire had fallen. The fall of the empire in Brazil was a bloodless revolution. The withdrawal of support for the empire by the church, landowners, the military; and the rise in opposition of the empire by the military, and the republicans led to the fall of the Brazilian Empire.

When looking at the historiography of this topic there are various views on the reasons for the collapse of the empire. Most of the historians who published books in the 1960’s, which relate to this field of study seem to agree that the main causes of the collapse of the empire is due to its loss of support, and the opposition by the military and the republicans. These historians that follow this line of thought include Charles Willis Simmons, Joao Pandia Calogeras, Rollie E. Poppino and many others. They tend to focus on the disillusion and withdrawal of support of the empire by the church, the landowners, and the military as being the main reason why there was no one to support the empire when it was needed. They also say that the loss of the empire’s support was critical for the military and the Republicans success in the rebellion.

Some later historians who focus on this subject tend to criticize the dominant view of the 1960’s historians. Emilia Viotti da Costa, a well-reputed historian, argues a view contrary to the dominant ideas of the 1960’s. She argues the collapse of the

empire was not due to the withdrawal of support of the church, and that the landowners did not withdraw their support of the empire because of the abolition of slavery. As for the landowners, she insists that they withdrew their support not because of the abolition of the slaves, but because they resented their lack of representation in the legislature.

Viotti da Costa downplays the significance of abolition of slaves by showing that the important state of São Paulo in particular had already begun freeing slaves and no longer relied on slave labor in order to produce agricultural goods. Some contemporary historians like Ronald M. Schneider disagree with Viotti da Costa's opinion. He states, "certainly the economic effects of abolition and their political ramifications had an impact." Schneider observes that even though some historians downplay the role of the abolition of slavery, it was important especially in the state of Bahia.

When looking at the fall of the empire it is important to look at the role of the royal family. Don Pedro the II was popular among the Brazilian people, but the empire did not have the same level of support and at the fall of the empire it had virtually no support. He was one of the most influential persons in 19th century South America. Not just because he was the last emperor of Brazil, but because he was a kind and generous man who allowed for political freedom in his country. Because of his feelings about democracy he allowed the republicans to have there say especially if they had been elected to office. Pedro even said "Were I not a monarch, I should be a Republican." He said this because he truly did believe in the ideas of the republic.

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Although he believed in their ideas he did not endorse them because he felt Brazil was not ready for a Republic. "Since his people were largely illiterate and were inexperienced in the real principles of democracy, he considered monarchy under the existing constitution, the best for them. He believed without preparation for self-government unscrupulous military dictators would soon dominate Brazil." With his beliefs in democracy he also let people who did not agree with him, criticize him. By allowing people to voice their discontent it helped to spread the dissatisfaction of the Empire. The emperor could have stopped this thought before it gained popularity, but he took no action. Instead of stopping the criticism he allowed them to run their course all the way to the end of the empire.

The other important royal figures one must look at when discussing the fall of the empire are Princess Isabel and her husband Comte d'eu. They were both influential in the fall of the monarchy because the leaders of the government did not want to see them take control of the country after Don Pedro II's death. This was important because near the end of his reign Pedro was often sick, and near death. Although some admired the princess, many others did not like her at all.

"The slaveowners blamed her, as regent, for uncompensated emancipation, and religious liberals who sided with the crown in the quarrel with bishops were distrustfully aware that she was less broad-minded in church matters then was Don Pedro, and that she showed considerable sympathy towards the bishops. Moreover, during the Emperor's absence in 1887-1888 (he took a trip to

\[4\] Ibid., 295.
Portugal) she had further aggravated the religious liberals by opposing a bill permitting Protestants to have steeples and bells on their meeting houses. 

She was opposed by the landowners because she not only supported but also signed the Golden Law, which failed to compensate the slave owners. Religious liberals opposed her because of her strong ties to Catholithism. Her husband was also disliked by the masses mainly because he was not a native Brazilian. The animosity towards the Princess and her husband was so strong that people did not want them in power. This effected the growth of discontent of the empire because many Brazilians felt that a republic needed to be established, so they would not be in power. Although it did not play a major role the growth in animosity towards the empire eventually got so big that it did help lead to the fall of the empire.

Although the loss of church support alone may not have played a crucial role in the collapse of the empire, when combined with the loss of support of the landowners and the military it is significant. Many of the large landowners withdrew support from the monarchy because of inadequate representation, but when looking at regions such as the Bahia it can be seen that the abolition of slavery did have drastic effects. It is very likely that the historians of the 1960's are correct when they say that the abolition of slaves resulted in the loss of landowner support because of the effects it had on Bahia. It is not just the abolition of slavery or the inadequate representation that led to the collapse of support from the landowners, but most likely a combination of the two. It seems that both historical interpretations are correct when considering the empire's loss

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5 Williams, 290.
of support of the landowners. It was not just one or the other but both of the views combined that led to the loss of this group’s support.

One of the main reasons behind the fall of the empire was its loss of support by the church, the landowners and the military. These three groups supported the power of Emperor Pedro II, and once this support was taken away there was no one left to defend his throne. The church was originally supportive of the empire but because of a confrontation between the government and the church the emperor lost their support. “The foundations on which the empire rested were further weakened by an unhappy conflict between the government and certain elements of the clergy.”

The church was originally supportive of the empire but because of a confrontation between the government and the church the emperor lost their support. “The foundations on which the empire rested were further weakened by an unhappy conflict between the government and certain elements of the clergy.”

This confrontation resulted in the loss of support by the clergy.

The conflict involved the Masonic order, the Catholic Church, and the government. “The Bishops [Dom Vital Maria Goncalves de Oliveira and Dom Antonio de Macedo Costa] sought the expulsion of all the Masons from membership in the brotherhood.” The expulsion of masons from the church was the focus of the Bishops Dom Antonio De Macedo Costa and Don Vital Maria Goncalves de Oliveira. Although other members of the clergy supported the actions of the two bishops, the movement did not include other bishops. When the bishops tried to expel all of the masons it resulted in a conflict with the government because many of the masons were involved in politics. These masons occupied important government positions and would not let the bishops do as they pleased without retribution. “Rio Branco at this time was both leader

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of the government and grand master of the Masonic order. Most of the men who were
in higher government offices were members of the lodges. Dom Pedro himself had
served for a time as an official in the order.”8 This conflict set the most influential
people in the government (who were masons) against the church.

After the bishops sought to expel the Masons the government soon became
involved and a conflict ensued. Government officials tried to solve this problem before
it developed further into a conflict. They wanted the bishops to reconsider their actions
and get rid of their order against the masons, but the bishops refused. The Bishop of
Oliveira refused to change his stance and said “In a statement of September 25, 1865,
the Holy Father (the pope) formally condemned Masonry, even in countries where the
secular power tolerates it. And that is enough for the Catholic.”9 Since the bishops
would not change their stance the government decided to take action against them.
“The bishops stubbornly resisted, challenging the state’s authority. In response the
government had the bishops arrested.”10 They were arrested and sentenced to serve
many years in prison because they did not change their view against the masons.

The issue might have not progressed further except for the fact that most of the
clergy supported the bishops. The clergy were outraged at the imprisonment and as a
result there were many demonstrations in support of the bishops. “Mobs of half savage
country folk in the provinces of Pernambuo and Parahyba sacked public buildings,
burned archives, destroyed the newly arrived standards for the metric system, and also

8 Ibid., 68.

9 Ibid., 68.

10 Emilia Viotti da Costa, The Brazilian Empire Myths and Histories. (Chicago: The University of
wrecked private property. 'Down with the Freemasons! Down with the Government! Long live religion!' They shouted. In many instances Catholic priests led the rioters.\textsuperscript{11}

As a result of the arrest of the bishops many of their supporters went on rampages to protest the government's action. Although there was some violent and destructive demonstrations there were also non-violent demonstrations. The main form of protest by the supporters of the bishops was the signing of petitions, which called for the release of the bishops. "The Province of Minas alone was said to have sent in 40,000 signatures."\textsuperscript{12} The number of signatures for the petition showed that it was not just the higher clergy that was upset with the imprisonment, but it was the lower clergy as well as the Catholic laity.

The Brazilian government tried to get the pope to change the bishops' minds but this failed also. This effort backfired because, after the pope found out that the bishops had been arrested, he withdrew his support from the Brazilian government and put his full endorsement behind the bishops. This conflict aligned those who supported the church against those in the government.

In the end the issue was finally resolved by releasing the prisoners. "Amnesty was granted to the two imprisoned bishops by Princess Isabel in 1875. Soon after this amnesty an order from the pope ended the interdicts against the brotherhoods."\textsuperscript{13} The conflict may have ended after amnesty was granted and the interdicts lifted, but the Empire lost the support of the church permanently. "Church support of Dom Pedro II

\textsuperscript{11} Williams, 183.

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., 183

\textsuperscript{13} Simmons, 71-72.
faltered when he ordered the imprisonment of the bishops." Before this conflict the
clergy had supported the empire, but after this conflict they opposed it.

Although this individual conflict dealt with the masons in the church the
significance of the issue deals with church-state relations. "[Dom Pedro II] resented the
fact that the right of the state to supervise the church was challenged." A conflict
insued not just because the bishops were challenging freemasons but because the
bishops were challenging the emperors’ right to supervise the church. The bishop’s
enforcement of this papal bull, which Dom Pedro considered illegal because “the
constitution established that papal bulls had no validity without the emperor’s
approval.” Since Pedro did not approve this papal bull, but in fact condemned it, the
bishops’ acts were clearly in violation of the Brazilian Constitution.

In the end Pedro was condemned by both sides in this conflict. Those who
supported the church were unhappy because he arrested the bishops, while those who
supported free masonry were upset because he let the bishops go and because the
bishops were not forced into hard labor while imprisoned. Although he resolved the
conflict he ended up losing the support of the church, and upsetting the liberals who
believed he was too easy on the bishops.

14 Jordan M. Young, The Brazilian Revolution of 1930 and the Aftermath. (New Jersey: Rutgers

15 Mary Crescentia Thorton, The Church and Freemasonry in Brazil, 1872-1875: A Study in Regalism.

16 Edited by Leslie Bethell, Brazil Empire and Republic 1822-1930. (Cambrige: Cambridge University

17 Williams, 184.
Another of the important groups that supported the empire then withdrew their support, were the large landowners. The two main reasons why the emperor lost the support of these landowners involve the abolition of slavery and the lack of legislative representation. "On May 13, 1888, all Brazilian slaves were manumitted when Imperial Princess Regent signed the 'Golden Law' abolishing slavery."\(^{18}\) This emancipation of the slaves caused a major uproar among the slave owners. "By the stroke of a pen over 700,000 slaves, almost exclusively Negroes, were transformed into free subjects of the empire."\(^{19}\) The slave owners were upset with this emancipation of 700,000 slaves because it caused a great loss of capital. "The value of the slaves liberated on May 13, 1888, was estimated at more than $200,000,000."\(^{20}\) The cost of the abolition to the landowners in terms of the value of slaves was immense. "This settlement of the slavery issue, which had long agitated the country, resulted in a financial loss to the planters and provoked much bitterness and resentment."\(^{21}\) It was not the abolition, but the financial loss caused by the abolition that upset the slave owners and helped to cause the empire to lose this group’s support.

The slave owners suffered greatly and with the abolition of slaves and wanted the government to pay for this loss. "At the heart of the debate were the economic concerns of slaveowners, who wanted compensation for manumitted slaves and

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20 Simmons, 65.

assurances that they could maintain adequate levels of productivity after abolition.”

Although the law stipulated no financial compensation, there were efforts made by the government to help out those who were hurt by this law. “At the same time as the agricultural problem that had been brought on mainly by abolition, Ouro Preto instructed the Treasury to lend money to various banks. The banks would in turn be able to make farm loans at 6% interest for periods of one to fifteen years. The Republican Revolution kept this grand scheme from being carried out.” The blockage of some program of financial relief robbed the emperor of the support of the landowning class. The Golden Law also caused many of the large landowners to turn towards other parties. “Many exslavocrats who felt the government let them down on abolition turned to the republicans, believing that remuneration might still be possible under a new form of government.” The landowners switched parties not because the slaves were freed, but because of the government’s failure to compensate slave owners. “Some [began] to support the Republicans. The vast majority, however, simply withdrew from politics and from any active support of the emperor.” This law diminished support of the emperor, and it also led some of his former supporters to shift their allegiance to the Republicans.

The abolition of the slaves was not significant to all the regions because even before the Golden Law was passed there was the gradual freeing of slaves. Some

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historians have noted that the impact of the abolition of slavery had little effect on the landowners and therefore this would not cause them to withdraw support from the emperor. Although the impact of the Golden Law may not have effected regions such as São Palo and Pernambuco, it did have a great impact on other regions such as Bahain Reconcavo. An individual example of the impact of the abolition of slavery can be seen when looking at the case of the wife (Dona Luisa Flora Bulcao Viana) of Francesco Vincente Viana. The death of Francesco in 1888 left his wife with his property, which included slaves.

"The probate officials, in dividing Viana’s property, followed Brazilian law and gave to his widow goods and cash worth half the net value of the couple’s jointly owned estate. They gave her additional money to pay outstanding debts and costs of probate. As part of her share, Dona Luisa also received all of the couple’s slaves. The very next day, May 13, 1888, Princes Isabel, acting as regent for her father, singed the Golden Law that abolished slavery. In one stroke, the law diminished the net appraised value of Dona Luisa’s share of the estate by more than 100 per cent."26

Dona Luisa is just one case of the impact of the Golden Law on the landowners in Bahia. In her case she lost 100 per cent of the value of her husband’s estate because her slaves were set free and because the Golden Law failed to deal with the economic set backs it would cause the slaveowners.

One of the reasons that São Paulo and Pernambuco were not badly effected was because they had already began to shift from a slave labor market to a free labor market before the abolition of slavery. Bahia on the other hand had not begun this shift to free labor and the result was costly. "Former slaveholders of Bahia suffered from [the Golden Law]. They relied heavily on slave labor for manpower. Abolition brought temporary dislocation as freedman left plantations after the emancipation proclamation. When ex-slaves returned, [land owners] lacked the capital to pay them."27 Contrary to the view of some historians, the abolition of slavery did have a drastic impact especially in Bahian Reconcavo. Abolition had such a dramatic impact in this location because "even as late as the 1880's Bahian sugar planters continued to rely heavily on slaves to work their estates."28 By not recognizing before the passage of the Golden Law that the shift to a free labor market was needed the effects on Bahia were devastating.

The results of the abolition of slaves that Bahia depended on for its sugar plantations can be seen the year after this law passed. "One year later, in May 1889, the municipal council in the same township characterized the 'material results' of abolition as 'disastrous'. Jose Carlos de Carvalho, an official from the National Ministry of Agriculture, reported to his superiors that he had found the Bahian sugar industry in utter disarray. [He wrote], 'Formerly opulent centers' of sugar production had been 'reduced to shabbiness.'"29 Even only a year after the abolition its effects could be seen in Bahia. When looking at the effects of the Golden law one can not

27 Toplin, 249.
28 Barickman, 249.
29 Ibid., 608.
simply look at one region such as São Paulo, one must look at all of the regions. In the case of Bahia the passing of this law had a devastating effect on the sugar plantations and therefore led to the decay of landowner support of the empire.

Although some historians tend to focus only on the abolition of slavery as a reason for the loss of the landowners support of the empire, the inadequate representation of landowners in the government was also a primary factor. "Land owners from the São Paulo west joined the Republican Party because they resented the lack of representation in the political system and hoped that in a republican system they could have more political control." It is evident when looking at the representation per person in this district, why these landowners would be upset. The lack of representation caused a switch in allegiance from the empire to the Republicans. "Each of São Paulos’ nine representatives in the Chamber of Deputies was for more then 166,000 people. This was almost double the entire population of Espirito Santo, a province that elected two representatives, and nearly three times the population of Amazonas, which also elected two." It is obvious that Brazil under the empire did not have equal representation in the Chamber of Deputies, because the under representation of São Paulo. There was also an inadequate representation of senators. "Sao Paulo had only four senators (compared to ten for Minas Gerais, seven for Bahia, and six for Pernambuco)." This lack of representation upset the landowners from the Sao Paulo west especially considering the fact that São Paulo was the richest providence in the

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30 Costa, 227.

31 Ibid., 222.

32 Schneider, 64.
country. The lack of adequate representation and the abolition of slavery led to the withdrawal of support for the emperor. After the landowners withdrew support many of them no longer involved themselves in politics, while others shifted their support to the Republican Party.

One of the major supporters, which the government depended on but then lost, was the military. Due to a constitutional flaw as well as important events the military shifted its allegiance to the Republican Party. "The imperial constitution permitted the election to parliament of officers in active service. This was a great mistake." This allowed the military to have say in politics. By allowing officers to be a part of politics meant that they could gain power, control, and prestige in both the military and the government.

During the independence struggle when the empire began the military developed little power because of the lack of armed conflict. It wasn't until the Paraguayan War that the military began to build up and gain power. "The war with Paraguay greatly increased the political strength of the Brazilian army. Not only did the army grow in size, but its officers acquired a new sense of military spirit and pride." The most important factor of military growth in terms of numbers, was the officer corps. "Even more serious in its political implications was the swelling of the officer corps from roughly 1,500 to 10,000". The officers were the ones who entered the political arena and were also the ones who led the revolt against the empire. The war helped to

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33 Calogeras, 227.

34 Hahner, 7.

35 Shneider, 52.
develop the military into a dominant political power as various political parties tried to get military heroes such as Caxias, Deodoro to join their party. "What appeared in the short run to be smart politics actually served to aggravate this potentially serious situation. Both imperial parties cultivated leading military figures, offering them government offices in return for their endorsement and support. Moreover both establishment parties when out of power frequently sought to turn army resentment against the incumbent cabinet to force it from office." The growing size of the military and their involvement in politics helped to increase their power.

At first the military strongly supported the empire but after the war they began to criticize it because of the changes that the government was making to the military. Some of these criticisms involved low wages, the interference of politicians in military issues, and the use of the draft. "The military had many grievances. They complained about their wages and accused the government of neglecting the needs of the army. They resented the interference of politicians in cases of promotions and transfers. They also condemned the politicians for the use of the draft during elections, and draft deferments given by politicians to their friends." The military felt that the government was neglecting them and causing problems by their meddling in military concerns. One of the major problems was the level of pay. "During the 1870-1880 period the military budget was the same as it had been in 1857 substantially less in real terms when taken into account." This low level of government expenditure on the military meant low

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36 Ibid., 58

37 Costa, 213-214.

38 Schneider, 59.
pay and this in turn helped to increase the militaries discontent over the government. The use of the draft by politicians involved those in power threatening to draft the supporters of the opposition, so that they would not vote. The politicians also gave draft deferments to their friends. These actions were supposed to be military affairs, but the politicians used the draft to their favor, which greatly upset the military. Later the government attempted to please the military by making reforms including increasing pay. This change was not successful because it took so long to take place. "The recession of 1873 delayed the expected increase in wages for more then ten years."39 The long delay in pay increases greatly aggravated military leaders because they felt they were not given importance.

Another of the problems concerned promotions in the military. "Promotions came slowly and the proportion of officers to enlisted men became grievances in some quarters."40 The slow promotions upset the soldiers who had helped with the Paraguayan war. The inadequate number of officers to enlisted men clearly shows that there was a slow level of promotion in the military. The way military personal were promoted is one more reason leading to discontent of the government.

Yet another problem that developed between the military and the government involved a proposal for a pension reform. "A proposal in the senate for compulsory contributions from soldiers for a monte-pio (pension or insurance) created strong resentment."41 The military was upset with the proposal because they did not want to

39 Bethell, 193.
40 Williams, 313.
41 Ibid., 313.
be forced to contribute towards their pension. This would obviously upset the military men because as it was they felt they were not being paid adequately and by making them pay for their monte-pio it would further lower their pay. In the end the army was successful in getting this proposal dropped. The struggle over this issue led the military to increase its involvement in politics and its oppositions to the empire.

A different factor that upset the military was cutbacks in military after the war. "When the imperial government attempted to reduce the army’s size following the Paraguayan War, [officers] complained bitterly of abuses and eventually rose against the government."\(^{42}\) It’s obvious that the military did not want a reduction in personal because this would reduce its power. The government for its part, believed it no longer needed the large number of enlisted men so it reduced the size of the military.

In the debates about the military, the government offended the honor of some officers. This increased tensions between the two institutions. Viscount Pelotas a leader of cavalry in the Paraguayan War tells about the importance that the military holds on honor, “an officer who is wounded in his honor has the undeniable right to avenge himself."\(^{43}\) The military held honor as key and if their honor was insulted they would act to avenge themselves. Another factor dealing with honor is that when an officer’s honor is insulted the rest of the officers defend him. One such confrontation of civilian politicians and military officers involves Colonel Cunha Mattos. In a paper in which he was defending his honor he stated that the charge that he “had been captured in the Paraguayan war and that while ‘a prisoner he had directed enemy artillery fire against

\(^{42}\) Hahner, 3-4.

\(^{43}\) Simmons, 52.
Brazilian troops’ was a mistake the result of an error made by the Minster of War. Chaves (the mister of war) a civilian politician was insulted by this remark and in return sentenced the colonel to “48 hours in the waiting room of his regimental head quarters.” The punishment of the Colonel, who was just defending his honor, led to the conflict becoming one between the military and the government. The military had various other confrontations with civilian politicians involving honor, which spread the discontent between the military and the government.

After the war the military protested little against the emperor and instead focused their attacks on civilian politicians. This was partially do to the various military leaders who supported the emperor. “Until after the death in 1880 of the Duke of Caxias, Brazil’s outstanding military figure and strong supporter of Pedro II, military protests largely were limited to complaints about low pay and inadequate army appropriations had limited political impact.” After his death, however, the military began to protest about the government on a higher level.

The republican influence in the military helped focus this attack on the emperor. The republican ideas slowly began to spread, beginning with the students at military schools. “Republican ideas had a wider following among the lower ranked officers and recent graduates of the military school; officers at the higher levels continued in general to give their support to the monarchy.” The real backings of the republican ideals by

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44 Ibid., 51.
45 Ibid., 51.
46 Poppino, 215-216.
47 Costa, 212.
the military first began to surface among the lower officers and students at the military school. Along with it came a greater amount of anti-monarchical views. Eventually most of the military was united against the empire.

When the revolt against the government began in 1889, originally the object was to overthrow the ministry. In the waning moments of the military revolt against the ministry the overthrow of the monarchy was not set. Deodoro de Fonseca, the leader of the military revolt, at first supported the emperor. "Deodoro, continued to waver between the respect he held for the emperor and his sense of military pride and solidarity. Finally, Benjamin [Constant] persuaded him to join the Republicans in overturning the monarch instead of merely substituting one ministry for another."48

There was strong sentiment against the emperor in the military but it wasn’t until the last minute that the leader of this revolt helped turn it from a revolt against the ministry to a revolt against the emperor. The military played a critical role in the fall of the regime because they were one of the groups that used to support the emperor and then turned sides. Since the military not only withdrew support of the emperor but also openly opposed him the result was the collapse of the empire.

With the loss of these three pillars of support (the church, the landowners, and the military) the Republicans stepped in and helped change Brazil from an empire to a republic. Without the Republicans the discontent towards the empire would have never risen to the point that it did. Although they had enough influence to help overthrow the empire they did not start out very powerful. "Republican sentiment existed to a lesser

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48 Hahner, 29.
degree of intensity in the first days of the empire, but its influence registered a marked
decline after the abdication of Dom Pedro I in 1831. The Republicans held little
influence in politics of the empire especially after the abdication of Pedro I.

As time passed a resurgence of Republican sentiment appeared. “Following the
conclusion of the Paraguayan War republican ideas flared up again; and this time they
were never to be extinguished.”\textsuperscript{50} Shortly after the war a Republican document was
published in order spread dissent in the empire. “The men who signed the Republican
Manifesto in 1871 did not expect that the publication of the manifesto would cause the
immediate downfall of the emperor. It was intended to be a signal or a call to unite the
forces of opposition to the monarchy. Without the existence of an organized party the
republican ideal could not have been effective.”\textsuperscript{51} After the publishing of this manifesto
they continually gained power and influence. The republicans often obtained support of
those who changed their allegiance because of the neglect by the empire. One of these
cases is the ex-slaveowners that switched their allegiance from the emperor to the
Republican Party because they felt betrayed by the abolition of slaves without
compensation. Many landowners also joined the Republican Party because they felt
that the empire was not properly representing them and that they would gain better
representation if a republic were established.

Another group that swelled the ranks of the republicans and helped them to
overthrow the government was the military. The republicans began to gain acceptance

\textsuperscript{49} Calogeras, 221.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 221.

\textsuperscript{51} Simmons, 72.
of the military especially after the war. "Republicans found great receptivity in the army, where dissatisfaction had been growing since the Paraguayan War."\(^{52}\) The alliance between the military continually built until many of the members of the military had republican ideals. The alliance was not only linked by the military contempt for the government but also the military allegiance to improve the country. "What facilitated the alliance between the Republicans and the military was the militaries conviction that it was their duty to improve their country’s social and political organization."\(^{53}\) The military commitment to helping improve the country was important because many of those in the military felt that the only way to improve the country was via Republican ideals. At first Republican sentiment among the military was low but it eventually began to rise. "Republican sentiment was spreading rapidly within the ranks of the junior and mid-grade officers including a majority of those who had attended the academy since the mid 1870’s."\(^{54}\) The support of military grew from junior and mid-grade officers all the way to the top leaders (Deodoro). Eventually the Republican Party had enough support that they decided to start planning a coup with the military.

The Republicans also used various tactics besides befriending enemies of the empire, in order to gain support. They went to every effort to bring the realization of a republic to reality. "The republicans exerted every effort, by means of intrigues and astute propaganda, to bring the crisis to a head. They stopped at nothing; slander,

\(^{52}\) Costa, 229.
\(^{53}\) Ibid., 229.
\(^{54}\) Schneider, 61.
calumnies, downright falsehoods. They utilized any and every weapon which might undermine the foundations of the state." The Republicans went to extremes in their attempt to overthrow the empire whether it involved lies or rumors; they went to extreme levels to bring about the dream of a republic into reality. The state of the empire in 1889 was explosive and was just waiting for something to set it off, which would cause the destruction of the empire. The republicans helped to light this fuse by spreading rumors involving Marshall Deodoro. "The republicans accused the government of planning to exile the higher officials of the army, beginning with Deodoro, to remote, uninhabited regions of the empire." This rumor started by the republicans about the exile of military officials was the final insult that pushed the military to revolt.

The fall of the empire was due to many factors including a loss of support, the rise of the military power and their rebellion, and the rise of the Republican Party. Contrary to the view some contemporary historians the confrontation with the church did result in the loss of the churches support of the empire. Some historians tend to focus on the importance of the abolition of slaves while in the loss of the empires, while others focus on representation caused this loss of this groups support, it can be seen that both led to the landowners withdrawal of support. The conflict with the military caused the government to lose support of this group. Many of the landowners that withdrew their support from the emperor gave their support to the Republicans. The military

55 Calogeras, 268.
56 Ibid., 268.
officials who withdrew their support from the empire also gave their support to the republican ideas. Not only did the empire lose the support of the groups, which held up the empire, these groups also often shifted their support to the opposition (the Republican Party). With this loss of support the empire had no way of defending itself in case of attack from within. No group of significance would step forward to protect the monarchy. With this lack of support the Republican Party attacked the empire via the military, which resulted in a bloodless revolution.
Bibliography


