

= Legacy of Pedro II of Brazil =

The legacy of Pedro II of Brazil began to become apparent soon after his death . Emperor Pedro II was the second and last monarch of Brazil , whose long 58 @-@ year reign ( 1831 ? 1889 ) represented a time of remarkable prosperity and progress for his country . Despite his achievements , he was deposed in a coup by disgruntled republicans , though there was no desire for a change in the form of government among the majority of the Brazilian people .

His popularity among the citizenry had never waned , and support continued to be evident , even on the eve of his overthrow and throughout his exile . He was seen as a hero , a model citizen , a caring monarch , and the source of national unity and well @-@ being . Following his death , political wrangling prevented the return of his remains to Brazil . Continued efforts to repatriate the bodies of the Emperor and his wife dragged on for decades . The disputes were resolved and this was finally accomplished in 1920 with much fanfare . Over the decades , Pedro II gradually grew within Brazil to represent the archetypical benevolent , self @-@ effacing and effective ruler concerned only for the national welfare .

Aside from the prosperity and modernization Pedro II left to the nation , there was also a heritage of political and personal values . Many of his reforms and achievements had become so much a part of the national consciousness that they were accommodated by successor regimes . These formed the foundation for Brazilian democratic ideals . Historians have also largely agreed that Pedro II 's reign was not merely benign , but rather , exceptionally constructive and progressive . He has also consistently been ranked by scholars as the greatest Brazilian .

= = Legacy = =

= = = Aftermath of his death = = =

The monarchy fell at a point when it had reached its highest popularity among Brazilians , due in part to the abolition of slavery on 13 May 1888 . Indifferent to the new heroes , such as Tiradentes , imposed by the new republican government , Brazilians remained attached to the popular Emperor whom they regarded as a hero . He continued to be thought of as a national symbol , the Father of the People personified . This view was even stronger among those of African descent , who equated the monarchy with freedom . The afro @-@ Brazilians demonstrated their feeling of loyalty towards the monarch in subtle ways , such as by having the Imperial Crown tattooed on their bodies .

In cities throughout the nation , the years immediately following the end of monarchy witnessed the spread of music containing lyrics that reflected popular sentiments favorable to the Emperor . Examples include : " Pedro the Second left / to the kingdom of Lisbon . / The monarchy is over / and now Brazil is adrift . " and " The mother of Deodoro said : This son was once mine / Now he is cursed / by me and by God . " The Brazilian historian Ricardo Salles argued that among the " great ? and few ? names in our history [ of Brazil ] that hold a place in the popular imagination , is certainly the figure of Dom Pedro II . " The phenomenon of continued support for the deposed monarch is largely credited to an unextinguished and generally held belief that he was a " wise , benevolent , austere and honest ruler . " The positive view towards Pedro II , and nostalgia for his reign , only grew as the nation quickly fell into a series of economic and political crises which Brazilians attributed to the Emperor 's overthrow . He never ceased being a popular hero , and would gradually become , once again , an official hero .

Surprisingly strong feelings of guilt were manifested among republicans , and these became increasingly evident upon the Emperor 's death in exile at the end of 1891 . In Brazil , the news of the Emperor 's death " aroused a genuine sense of regret among those who , without sympathy for a restoration , acknowledged both the merits and the achievements of their deceased ruler . " The overthrown monarchy was still a fresh memory to Brazilians , to which was added a feeling of remorse over what they perceived as an unjust exile , followed by his lonely demise . Some republicans " reconsidered the long banishment and reflected upon the severity of such action . "

Even they believed that Pedro II deserved a better end , and nostalgia spread among them as they " started to see in the Imperial epoch a happier time , a golden age , forever gone . " The Empire began to be viewed more tolerantly by the new governments , and its considerable achievements were openly recognized . Now appeared " a feeling that there was once a time when Brazil was more respectable , more honest , and more powerful . "

An odd predilection arose on the part of various republican politicians , including those " of higher standing " , for " praising D. Pedro II and the monarchy . " They did not desire a restoration , but believed that the Brazilian Republic might learn from the fallen regime . Thus , Pedro II " became , paradoxically , a model of republican ideals . " To these " republicans , d . Pedro appeared as the best of themselves ; for the monarchists the compliment meant , clearly , something else [ i.e. , that the Emperor was the best of the monarchists ] . "

After the death of the Emperor , appeals for the repatriation of his body increased over time . The republican periodical A Cidade do Rio ( The City of Rio ) stated that " Brazil is so large that it cannot begrudge some scant feet of land to him " and demanded : " Bring him back . " The Gazeta da Tarde ( Afternoon Gazette ) said that Pedro II deserved an official funeral within the country . In 1895 , Afonso Celso wrote in the Comércio de São Paulo ( Commerce of São Paulo ) : " The body of D. Pedro cannot continue to lie in foreign territory . " By 1906 the poet Olavo Bilac wrote , " The fatherland reclaims your body and it shall have it . " The Jornal do Comércio ( Commerce Newspaper ) predicted that " one day , when all passions have lost their strength , your body shall rest here . "

= = = The end of Pedro II 's exile = = =

A law was proposed in the Chamber of Deputies to authorize the transfer of the bodies of Pedro II and his wife . Although it had support from old republicans , it was put aside due to a precondition from Princess Isabel that this could only be permitted if the banishment of her family was also rescinded . The dedication of a statue of the Emperor in Petrópolis on 5 February 1911 was attended by more than 1 @, @ 500 people , including members of the federal government . Several statues of the monarch were erected throughout the country during the following years . At this time , a manifesto written by former Presidents of the Council of Ministers , Lafayette , Ouro Preto and João Alfredo declared that " given the love that Brazilians have for their sovereigns , we agree to the return of the venerable remains back from São Vicente de Fora . "

A proposed new bill , which would revoke the banishment , was debated in the Chamber in 1913 . The republican deputy Irineu Machado alleged that " futile objections " were being raised which denied " justice to the memory of the emperor . " Another member , Martim Francisco de Andrada III , affirmed that " D. Pedro II departed poor , leaving the country rich ; it was an injustice that the those who are rich and leave the country impoverished be against it . " The deputy Pedro Moacir believed that the return of the remains would represent " the perpetual gratitude of posterity towards the most clement , the most tolerant of all monarchs of his time . " The deputy Maurício de Lacerda said that " now the traces of his political legacy ? honesty ? are disappearing . " In the Senate , however , the proposal was rejected due to intervention by the caudillo and radical republican Pinheiro Machado . The most famous speech in homage to Pedro II was made in 1914 by the last surviving republican leader of the 1889 coup , the person who had ordered the banishment :

The lack of justice , Mr. Senators , is the great evil of our land , the evil of evils , the origin of all our misfortunes , the source of all our discredit , is the supreme misery of this poor nation . [ ... ] After seeing so much futility triumph , after seeing so much dishonor prosper , after seeing so much power in the hands of evil people grow , man becomes disheartened about virtue , he laughs to himself at honor and becomes ashamed of being honest . This has been the work of the Republic in the last years . In the other regime [ the Monarchy ] the man who had a certain disgrace in his life was lost forever , as a political career would be closed to him . There was a vigilant sentinel [ Dom Pedro II ] , whose severity everyone feared and that , bright and very high , protected the surroundings as a lighthouse that never fades away , in benefit of honor , justice and morality .

Two years later , in 1916 , President Venceslau Brás agreed to the return of the bodies and

revocation of the banishment , but opted to await the end of World War I to officially approve the Act . On 3 September 1920 , his successor Epitácio Pessoa signed the law ( using a gold quill provided by the Brazilian Press Association ) which ended the banishment and allowed repatriation of the remains . Rui Barbosa said that those " who created the federal republic do not have claims against the ashes of the old emperor , whose virtues were much higher than his faults . " He concluded , " Therefore , in the republican gallery there is a proper place , and a great one , for D. Pedro II . "

= = = The Emperor returns home = = =

In 1920 the dreadnought São Paulo bore the imperial coffins to Brazil . The Portuguese republican government granted Pedro II an exhumation with dignities befitting a Head of State , and he received the same honors upon arrival in Brazil . The Count of Eu accompanied the remains , along with his only surviving son , Pedro de Alcântara . His wife , Princess Isabel , was elderly , unwell and unable to participate . She died one year later , without ever seeing her homeland again . President Artur Bernardes declared a national holiday and the return of the Emperor was celebrated throughout the nation .

In attendance at the main ceremony in Rio de Janeiro was councilor Antonio Prado , the last minister of the Empire still living , who had traveled from São Paulo . Thousands of people attended the event . The " elderly people cried . Many kneeled . All clapped . There was no distinction between republicans and monarchists . They were all Brazilians . " It marked the reconciliation of Republican Brazil with its monarchical past . However , " the official return of the figure of d . Pedro as a national hero would truly come only in 1922 , owing to the great national commemoration of the centenary celebration of Brazilian independence " during which the Emperor was highly acclaimed .

Three years later , Brazilians spontaneously commemorated Pedro II 's centenary . There was a clear " disproportion between the enthusiasm generated by the festivities around the birth of d . Pedro , and the little interest in the anniversary of the Republic , which was then 36 years old . " President Artur Bernardes recognized the popularity of the monarch and affirmed that he would not refuse " the justice that the Emperor deserves . He loved Brazil and while he had the strength and energy he served the country together with the best men of that time . " Pedro II became , once again , the " Father of the Fatherland " ( or " Father of the Nation " ) .

His body was temporarily housed in the Cathedral of Rio de Janeiro until construction on the Cathedral of Petrópolis was complete . The final burial would only occur on 5 December 1939 , when the dictator Getúlio Vargas took advantage of the ceremony as an opportunity to benefit his own popularity ( just as Mussolini had done during Anita Garibaldi 's funeral in 1932 ) . Vargas dedicated the funerary chapel in the Cathedral of Petrópolis where the mortal remains of the Emperor and his wife were interred .

Many of the most profound transformations achieved under Pedro II would survive him . Concepts such as a representative political system and a paradigm of citizenship had been allowed to flourish and become ingrained under the Empire , so much so that they survived " during three succeeding regimes : the Old Republic ( 1889 ? 1930 ) , the Vargas Era ( 1930 ? 45 ) , the Liberal Republic ( 1945 ? 64 ) . " The concept of a nation @-@ state , as envisioned by Pedro II , was even appropriated by the military which seized control during 1964 . Though during the 1980s , this concept began to change , it still endures . At the beginning of the twenty @-@ first century his " name is widely employed to evoke both traditional values and the nation 's heritage . His image confers respectability , dignity , and integrity on whatever event or institution employs it . "

= = Historical assessments = =

Historians have expressed high regard for Pedro II and his reign . The scholarly literature dealing with him is vast and , with the exception of the period immediately after his ouster , overwhelmingly positive , and even laudatory . Emperor Pedro II is usually regarded by historians in Brazil as the greatest Brazilian . In a manner quite similar to methods which had been used by the republican politicians , historians point to the Emperor 's virtues as an example to be followed , although none

go so far as to advocate a restoration of the monarchy . " Most twentieth @-@ century historians , moreover , have looked back on the period [ of Pedro II 's reign ] nostalgically , using their descriptions of the Empire to criticize ? sometimes subtly , sometimes not ? Brazil 's subsequent republican or dictatorial regimes . "

American historian Dana Munro wrote in her study about Latin America that Pedro II " grew up to be serious minded , irreproachable in his private life , and indefatigable in the performance of what he considered his duty . " She added that he was " an able and intelligent ruler if not a great statesman " . Another American historian writing on Brazilian history , Thomas Skidmore , remarked that the Emperor " brought a natural talent to his work . Even at age 14 , he was steady , equilibrated and discrete " . He states that during " his reign , he acquired the reputation of being just and objective , projecting the image of an honest and ethical sovereign who would not hesitate in disciplining politicians who were caught turning away from his strict standards " . The British historian Roderick . J. Barman wrote in his biography of Pedro II that he " was at once the model emperor and the model citizen . He literally and metaphorically towered above his fellow Brazilians . Pedro II 's achievements at home and the high reputation he established abroad convinced Brazilians that the goals he advocated would create a country as powerful and as civilized as France , Great Britain or the United States " .

The Brazilian American historian Richard Graham praised Brazilian politics affirming that " Brazil enjoyed all appearances of a functioning representative democracy . Foreign observers were virtually unanimous in praising a political system that seemed so like the bourgeois regimes of Europe . The main focus of their enthusiasm lay in the regularity of elections and in the alternation of parties in power . The government scrupulously observed the Constitution , individual rights seemed protected , and no military leader or other dictator overthrew the elected government . " The Brazilian historian Pedro Calmon in his work covering Brazilian history asserted that during Pedro II 's reign the " politics became British ? like , and were improved , creating processes which began to function under the vigilant eyes of the emperor " , and which allowed " the evolution of democracy in Brazil " .

José Murilo de Carvalho , a biographer of the Emperor , wrote that at the time he was deposed the nation had been consolidated , the slave trade had been abolished , and the foundations of a representative system had been established due to uninterrupted elections and broad freedom of the press . He remarked that for " the longevity of his government and the transformations effected during its course , no other head of State has marked more deeply the history of the country . "

The historian Pedro Karp Vasquez wrote that the Emperor ushered " the country into a period of stability and prosperity after 1850 . Enormously interested in everything that was related to scientific discoveries , Dom Pedro II sought to modernize the nation , in many instances anticipating initiatives in European nations . " Another biographer of Pedro II , Renato Sêneca Fleury , remarked that " in the History of Brazil , the pages dedicated to Pedro II , ascribe to him complete justice , heightening his moral greatness , his immense patriotism and the great well ? being he accorded to Brazil " and that he " became immortal in the heart of the Brazilian people . Schools , libraries , hospitals , cultural societies , theaters , streets , squares , here , there , all over Brazil , exist which have received Pedro II 's name . "