

concentrated their attention on more lucrative colonies in Africa and Asia.

Portuguese expansion inland was based first on the pursuit of slaves and then on the discovery of mines in the hinterland of Brazil which soon engaged the energies of Brazilian adventurers, known as *bandeirantes* (literally, carriers of the flag). As a result the Portuguese, despite their relative weakness in Europe, expanded deep into the heart of the continent and did so at Spanish expense. Some such expansion went southwards and struck the Spanish settlements along the delta of the River Plate. Here the Spanish resisted as they did not and could not deeper in the continent. And the centuries-long struggle for dominance of the delta began.

In the early 19th century, Argentina began a struggle for independence from Spain, and then the country fell into a state of anarchy and civil war that did not end until the 1860s and had some shocks still well after that date. The Brazilian experience could hardly have been more different. When Napoleon invaded Portugal in 1807, the royal family simply boarded ships of the Royal Navy and sailed to establish the imperial capital in Rio de Janeiro.

The subsequent evolution of Brazil is tied up with the presence of the royal family and the court in the country. Evolution it was when compared with the revolutionary events occurring almost everywhere else in Latin America. The independence of Brazil in 1822 was in many respects a dynastic issue although local nationalism played a major part in it. For a series of reasons, Brazil moved then to an essentially peaceful independence. Equally important, its new freedom was as a united monarchy instead of the quarrelsome and unstable republics that surrounded it.

Thus Brazil was able to increase the pressure on its newly independent neighbour Argentina as its domestic unity came into play. War over control of the delta and its ports occurred between the two countries in 1827 but settled little. British power put paid to such fighting over Uruguay when that country was carved out of the border zones, and especially the River Plate (Argentina), shortly afterwards. But the rivalry lived on.

The two countries still had border disputes in the regions near Paraguay but much more importantly, they began to play in the complex balance of power relationship developing in the whole of the Southern Cone of the continent. This led to war again in 1855 but this time Brazil merely backed one of the contenders in yet another Argentine civil war. Despite this animosity, the two countries came together in 1865 in order to jointly (and with the help of Uruguay) prosecute a five-year war with Paraguay. Such an alliance did not last, however and the two countries returned quickly to their mutual distrust and contradictory ambitions.

The last years of the monarchy in Brazil, overthrown in 1889, saw the rivalry continue but at a less fierce level. The end of the old century and the beginning of the new brought great change to both countries, a transformation that was to alter the relationship but not end the distrust. Both countries received untold numbers of European immigrants with Argentina getting the lion's share. The same was true of European technology, loans and capital. Argentina leapt ahead of Brazil and became a thoroughly European country in terms of race, language, urban society and much else.