

# Local elites, municipal elections, and state opposition in the First Republic: the split among the opposition in the state of Paraná and its effects on regional political life (1908 - 1909)

Elites locais, eleições municipais e oposição estadual na Primeira República: a cisão entre os oposicionistas do Paraná e seus efeitos na vida política regional (1908-1909)

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## Abstract

This study investigates the implications of the split that occurred in the first opposition group in the state of Paraná during Brazil's First Republic. The initial ramifications date back to 1908 and 1909. Through the analysis of the case of Paraná, it aims to contribute to the understanding of the electoral actions of the local elites in the state of Paraná, who opposed the ruling parties created in Brazil in the early Republican decades. Three aspects are emphasized: first, the split did not end the political activity of the opposition. In different municipalities, rivals of the dominant party maintained a certain degree of unity, enough to nominate candidates. Second, in some cities, the opposition secured a small space in political institutions. Third, the initiatives to reactivate an opposition group in Paraná were unsuccessful.

**Keywords:** Municipal elections, local elites, state of Paraná, opposition parties.

## Resumo

Neste artigo desenvolve-se uma investigação acerca das implicações da cisão ocorrida no primeiro grupo oposicionista que existiu no Estado do Paraná ao tempo da Primeira República. Os desdobramentos iniciais dessa cisão datam dos anos 1908 e 1909. A partir da análise do caso do referido estado, o presente trabalho objetiva avançar no entendimento das formas de ação eleitoral das elites locais que combateram os partidos situacionistas criados no Brasil nas primeiras décadas republicanas. Primeiro, cumpre salientar que a referida cisão não pôs fim à atividade política dos oposicionistas. Em diferentes municípios, os rivais do partido dominante conservaram um grau de unidade suficiente para lançar candidaturas. Segundo, destaca-se que existiram cidades em que os oposicionistas asseguraram um pequeno espaço em instituições políticas.

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Terceiro, compete salientar que foram malsucedidas as iniciativas destinadas a reativar uma agremiação oposicionista no Paraná.

**Palavras-chave:** Eleições municipais, Elites locais, Estado do Paraná, Partidos de oposição.

## Introduction

This study examines the consequences of the split within the first opposition group in the state of Paraná during Brazil's First Republic.<sup>1</sup> The initial political impacts happened in 1908 and 1909. In 1908, dissent emerged among the leaders of the minority political group; in 1909, attempts to revive the former state opposition party came to an end. Through a case study, this article aims to contribute to the understanding of the political activity of the local elites in the state of Paraná, who opposed the ruling parties created in Brazil in the early republican decades.<sup>2</sup>

Three key arguments are presented: first, despite the split, the opposition members remained active in electoral politics. Across various regions of Paraná, some opponents to the ruling party continued to recruit allies and nominate slates of candidates. Second, opposition members were present in political institutions in some cities. A small segment of the government opponents maintained electoral competitiveness. Third, by the end of the 1900s, efforts to re-establish a state-level opposition party proved unsuccessful.

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Analyses concerning the political activity of state opposition during the First Republic have advanced, among which is the investigation of the forms of political action employed by these oppositional forces. Historiographical research has revealed a convergence in the strategies employed to challenge the dominant political parties. Challenging the victory of the ruling party candidates within the Commission of Verification of Credentials of the

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<sup>1</sup> The First Republic is the period in Brazilian history that covers the years 1889 to 1930.

<sup>2</sup> From 1889 to 1930, political parties in Brazil operated only at the regional level. The ruling parties had much greater electoral strength than the opposition parties.

Chamber of Deputies<sup>3</sup> was a common practice employed by minority political groups in the first four decades of the Brazilian Republic.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, a crucial result of historical studies is the recognition that electoral abstention was not commonly adopted by opposition members at the time. A certain internal unity was maintained allowing them to take part in successive disputes for legislative positions.<sup>5</sup>

Another advance in political history studies is the identification of the factors contributing to the electoral success of opposition parties. Historiography has highlighted that securing seats in the Federal Chamber of Representatives by minority groups during the First Republic<sup>6</sup> was not uncommon. In general, these investigations highlight regional differences in the ability of minority groups to gain a foothold in political institutions.

It is important to highlight that another recent contribution of political studies is the analysis of the disagreements that arose among the dominant parties during the First Republic. Examining these disputes is crucial for recognizing the characteristics of the political polarization in Brazilian states. It also helps to understand the involvement of former members of the ruling parties in the creation of opposition parties.<sup>7</sup>

It is important to point out the limitations of analyzing the political actions of opposition members at the time. One of these limitations is the study of the electoral performance of the opposition in municipal elections. Understanding the conditions that favored the assembly of a significant opposition electoral base in small towns is incipient. The analysis of the

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<sup>3</sup> The Commission of Verification of Credentials of the Chamber of Deputies had the role of approving the results of the elections for federal deputy, analyzing possible contestations to these results and authorizing the certification of the elected candidates. During this period, the Superior Electoral Court of Brazil did not yet exist. Thus, the Legislative Branch was responsible for analyzing and validating the electoral results.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to RICCI, Paolo; ZULINI, Jaqueline Porto. "Partidos, competição política e fraude eleitoral: a tônica das eleições na Primeira República". In *Dados*. Rio de Janeiro, s/e, 2014, v. 57, n° 2, p. 443-479.

<sup>5</sup> ZULINI, Jaqueline Porto. *Modos do bom governo na Primeira República brasileira: o papel do Parlamento no regime de 1889-1930*. Tese (Doutorado em Ciência Política). Universidade de São Paulo. São Paulo, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to FIGUEIREDO, Vítor Fonseca. *Voto e competição política na Primeira República: o caso de Minas Gerais (1889-1930)*. 1ª ed. Curitiba, Editora CRV, 2017; RIBEIRO, Paula Vanessa Paz. "A terceira estrela da federação": a bancada gaúcha no contexto político eleitoral dos anos 1920 a 1924. Tese (Doutorado em História), Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to ARRUDA, Larissa Vacari Rodrigues de. *Disputas oligárquicas: as práticas políticas das elites matogrossenses (1892-1906)*. 1ª ed. São Carlos, Editora da UFSCar, 2015; SACCOL, Tassiana Maria Parciannelo. *De líderes históricos a opositores: as dissidências republicanas e o jogo político regional (1890-1907)*. Tese (Doutorado em História), Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre, 2018.

fluctuations in the performance of minority political groups in local elections is still at an early stage.<sup>8</sup>

The second limitation lies in state-level opposition party organization. In historiography, there are occasional analyses of how opposition parties organized their municipal committees.<sup>9</sup> In short, studies focusing on the ability of the local leaders of these parties to increase their contingent of voters are still underdeveloped.

Finally, the third limitation is the electoral activity of opposition members not affiliated with a political party. There were antagonists to the majority parties who, despite not having the support of a party, managed to engage a list of supporters. This article highlights the nature and consequences of the electoral strategies of this group of opposition politicians.<sup>10</sup>

### **Paraná opposition in the political context of the 1900s: origins and aspects of party polarization**

To examine the split of the opposition parties in Paraná, it is important to give an overview of the regional political landscape in that decade. Three observations are necessary; first, at that time the electoral scene in the state of Paraná was marked by the presence of two groups, one of which was the Federal Republican Party (PRF), a ruling party. The most important person of this group was the lawyer Vicente Machado da Silva Lima (1860-1907), former president (governor) of the state. The other group was composed of members of a party of the opposition camp, the Republican Party (PR). The head of this party was the lawyer and former senator Generoso Marques dos Santos (1844-1928).<sup>11</sup>

After Machado's death, vice president João Cândido Ferreira (1864-1948) was appointed head of the state's Executive Branch. However, he lost the

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<sup>8</sup> NOLL, Maria Izabel; TRINDADE, Helgio. *Estatísticas eleitorais do Rio Grande da América do Sul (1823-2002)*. 1ª ed. Porto Alegre, Editora da UFRGS, 2004.

<sup>9</sup> LEVI-MOREIRA, Sílvia. *Liberalismo e democracia na dissidência republicana paulista: estudo sobre o Partido Republicano Dissidente de São Paulo, 1901-1906*. Tese (Doutorado em História Social). Universidade de São Paulo. São Paulo, 1991; PRADO, Maria Lígia Coelho. *A democracia ilustrada: o Partido Democrático de São Paulo (1926-1934)*. 1ª ed. São Paulo, Ática, 1986.

<sup>10</sup> The sources used in this paper are regional and national newspapers, as well as parliamentary annals. These sources are available for consultation on the Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira website: <memoria.bn.br>

<sup>11</sup> Refer to SÊGA, Rafael Augustus. *Tempos belicosos: a Revolução Federalista e a rearticulação da vida político-administrativa do estado (1889-1907)*. 1ª ed. Curitiba, Aos Quatro Ventos, 2005.

support of the ruling party leaders at the end of 1907 and decided to resign. In March 1908, Manuel de Alencar Guimarães (1865-1940), interim president of Paraná, attracted the leaders of the opposition to the ruling party. The approximation between these former adversaries resulted in the merger of PRF and PR, which in turn originated the Republican Coalition (CR).<sup>12</sup>

One of the main consequences of the extinction of the opposition party was the ascension of PR members to leadership positions within CR. Among them were Generoso Marques dos Santos and Manuel Correia de Freitas (1851-1932)<sup>13</sup>, a state representative at the time. In this context, they were elected thanks to the ruling party's support.<sup>14</sup> Because of the extinction of PR, the opponents of the ruling party did not have the support of an organization to coordinate the opposition's political-electoral action at the state level at the end of the 1900s .

The second important observation regarding this matter is that local oligarchies were the agents in the concretization of the project to institute the CR party. The party merger that originated CR favored the preservation of the political influence of relatives in the cities in the interior of Paraná.<sup>15</sup> Historical studies have highlighted the long involvement of Paraná families in public administration bodies and political party life.

On the other hand, it is important to highlight that such involvement was subject to criticism within the ruling group itself. The founding of CR was marked by dispute among allies who wanted to obtain prominent positions in the municipal political party committees. At the end of the 1900s, the control exercised by relatives over these committees was an obstacle to the emergence of new leaders of the ruling party in small cities. The emergence of CR led to disputes over control of its local units. These disputes took place in different regions of Paraná.

In Castro, a municipality located on the second plateau<sup>16</sup> of the state, the farmer Olegário Rodrigues de Macedo was the CR leader. He used to appoint

<sup>12</sup> On this political moment, refer to GOULART, Mônica Helena Harrich Silva. *A dança das cadeiras: análise do jogo político na Assembleia do Paraná (1889-1930)*. 1ª ed. Jundiaí, Paco Editorial, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 17 jun. 1908, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> In 1908, Generoso Marques was elected 1st vice president of the state of Paraná. *A República*, Curitiba, 8 mar. 1908, p. 1. The following year, Correia de Freitas was elected federal deputy. *A República*, Curitiba, 19 jan. 1909, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> T.N.: Along this text, the expression “cities in the interior of Paraná” and similar ones are used as opposed to the city of Curitiba, which is the capital of the state.

<sup>16</sup> One way to identify the regions of the State of Paraná is by geomorphological criteria. According to this approach, the state is divided into five regions: coastal, Serra do Mar, first plateau, second plateau and

members of his family to central positions in the party and in public bodies.<sup>17</sup> In the coastal city of Guaratuba, brothers Carlos and Alexandre da Silva Mafra served as mayor. In 1908, they managed to nominate some of their family members to run in the municipal elections as CR candidates, to which some party allies did not agree.<sup>18</sup> In short, this period was not characterized by the emergence of new party leaders at the state and municipal levels. On the contrary, it was marked by the control of veteran politicians over the ruling and opposition groups.

The third important observation regarding this matter is that in a political context where there was no state opposition party, the ruling parties were opposed by supporters who were excluded from the electoral slates created by the CR leaders. In this context, party polarization was not only ensured by opposition members standing as independent candidates, but it was also a consequence of deadlocks between the ruling party members over the definition of candidates. These impasses were therefore responsible for the emergence of dissent within the ruling order.

In the municipality of Tibagi, situated on the second plateau, the candidacy of the CR slate in the municipal elections did not have the unrestricted support of the local committee. Some of these members opposed the official candidacies.<sup>19</sup> This situation was not limited to the period following the merger between PRF and PR, it also occurred in the early 1910s.<sup>20</sup>

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third plateau. This division is useful for analyzing periods in which the territory of the State of Paraná was sparsely populated and, therefore, there were only a few dozen cities.

<sup>17</sup> In May 1908, just two months after the creation of CR, a member of the ruling party living in Castro sent a letter to *Diário da Tarde*. He pointed out that the exacerbated power exercised by Olegário Macedo over the internal life of the local CR political party committee led to dissension among party affiliates. Macedo family's control over public administration bodies was also highlighted in the letter. Consider the following excerpt: "The greatest divergence reigns [in the Castro political party committee of CR] because Mr. Olegário Macedo wants to maintain his old oligarchy at all costs, imposing on us the candidacy of his son-in-law for the post of Mayor. [...] Mr. Olegário Macedo is the political leader and the Municipal Mayor here, his son-in-law is the current state judge, one of his brothers is the first substitute for the state judge, another brother is the second substitute for the federal judge, one of his children is the excise tax inspector, one of his nephews replaced the public prosecutor on his leave, the police commissioner is entirely his own person and even the jailer is his kinship". *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 27 maio 1908, p. 2. Our translation.

<sup>18</sup> An anonymous letter published in *Diário da Tarde* in June 1908 has the following information about the links between CR candidates and the Mafras: "In addition to the [candidate] for mayor being like a nephew to Mr. [Carlos] Mafra and his clerk, one councilor is related to him, married to one of his sisters, another one is a cousin and another one the godfather to the mayor's [Alexandre Mafra] child". *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 29 jun. 1908, p. 2. Our translation.

<sup>19</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 24 jul. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> In 1912, in the coastal city of Paranaguá, a group of former ruling party members formed a slate of

On the one hand, the end of the 1900s saw the strengthening of the ruling group in Paraná, but this did not prevent local CR leaders from engaging in conflict. On the other hand, the period was marked by municipalities in which the opposition retained a significant electorate. Therefore, it is important to analyze the changes in the electoral activity of the opposition in the state of Paraná, caused by the disintegration of its former leaders.

### **The dissolution of PR and the reorganization of the political activities of the remaining members of the state opposition**

In this section, the inner structure of PR at its dissolution will be analyzed. It will highlight that some members of this party remained in the opposition; more precisely, it is important to emphasize the remnant efforts to preserve the political unity of the opposition. To substantiate these findings, three key points will be presented.

First, PR had a strong presence in cities in the interior of the state of Paraná in the mid-1900s. In that period, this political group had forty-three municipal committees.<sup>21</sup> The strong presence of PR in small municipalities is evidenced by its candidates defeating government candidates in municipalities such as São José dos Pinhais.<sup>22</sup>

PR's electoral base was insufficient to ensure successive victories over the ruling party. In general, the party's candidates only won seats when the ruling party presented incomplete slates in disputes for positions in the legislature. Thus, the presence of PR members in institutions such as the State Congress and the Chamber of Deputies was a concession from the ruling party. When this concession was interrupted, PR did not present candidates. In 1903, since this concession was not given, no opposition slate for state and federal representatives was presented.<sup>23</sup>

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candidates to run against the candidates supported by the dominant party. The dissidents, however, failed to get elected. *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 22 jun. 1912, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> BRASIL. *Anais da Câmara dos Deputados*. Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Nacional, 1909, vol. 2, p. 373.

<sup>22</sup> In the city of São José dos Pinhais, PR commonly beat the ruling party candidates. In 1899, in the dispute for a seat at the Senate, the PR candidate got 266 votes in the municipality, 56.3% of the votes. On this occasion, the PR candidate supplanted the ruling party candidate in four other municipalities (Campina Grande, Ponta Grossa, Porto União e São Mateus). *A República*, 9 jan. 1900, p. 2. The existence of a loyal electorate of PR is also attested by the fact that, in 1906, São José dos Pinhais and São Mateus remained the places that gave the majority of the votes to the party. On that occasion, the opposition candidate for senator got 136 votes (72.7%) in São Mateus, while in São José dos Pinhais he garnered 280 votes (60.2%). *A República*, Curitiba, 6 fev. 1906, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 14 jan. 1903, p. 1.

Unlike Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul, the opposition in Paraná never defeated the slates of the ruling parties.<sup>24</sup> As shown in this study, only in municipal elections did some candidates from Paraná's majority party get fewer votes than their rivals.

On the other hand, dozens of PR municipal committees did not encourage its local leaders to play a continuous role in the electoral game. In Paranaguá, for instance, PR was led by the businessman Mathias Böhn (1864-1907), however, his political activity was very low. In the year of his death, Böhn was still affiliated to PR.<sup>25</sup> At the time, he had not held public office for sixteen years.<sup>26</sup>

Ultimately, the proliferation of PR municipal units is not indicative of the intense electoral polarization between the opposition and the ruling forces in Paraná during the 1900s. Rather, it indicates the ability of the party leaders to maintain a network of supporters in areas distant from Curitiba, the state capital. However, these supporters were not permanently organized to confront the ruling party in municipal elections.

In what follows, the second key point of this section is presented. The abstention of PR did not occur exclusively in elections for federal and state representatives. The clash between two political parties took place in few municipalities. Those who opposed the ruling party were unable to present a unified front. In 1900, the opposition presented candidates for the positions of councilor and district judge solely within the city of Curitiba. Nevertheless, these candidates did not receive enough votes to be elected.<sup>27</sup> In 1904, the same happened again; in other words, the opposition did not endorse candidates for the office of mayor. In that year, the opposition also refrained from indicating candidates for the city councils of different localities.<sup>28</sup>

The strong dominance of the ruling party over municipal institutions is evidenced by the fact that there were occasions when substitute seats were

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<sup>24</sup> Refer to FIGUEIREDO, Vítor Fonseca. *Voto e competição política...* Op. cit.; RIBEIRO, Paula Vanessa Paz. "A terceira estrela da federação" ... Op. cit.

<sup>25</sup> *A Notícia*, Curitiba, 6 dez. 1907, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> In 1891, Mathias Böhn was appointed by the state government to the position of Municipal Intendant of Paranaguá. This appointment was obtained in a context in which the future leaders of PR exercised control over the appointment schemes for public positions in Paraná. *A República*, Curitiba, 22 ago. 1891, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 23 ago. 1905, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> In 1904, in Curitiba, the individuals who were elected as councilors were linked to the ruling party. *A República*, Curitiba, 25 ago. 1904, p. 3. In Assungui de Cima, a city located on the first plateau of Paraná, there was only one alternate. It is therefore plausible to consider that in this municipality the opposition also did not present a complete slate of candidates. *A República*, Curitiba, 25 jul. 1904, p. 2.



occupied by members of the ruling party. From 1904 to 1908, the mayor, councilors, and district judges of Ponta Grossa, a city located on the second plateau, belonged to the ruling group. The occupants of positions in the three spheres of local administration also had kinship ties.<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, the years prior to the reorganization of the regional opposition's leadership were characterized by the stable dominance of family-based oligarchies in central administrative positions of cities in Paraná. In contrast, the opposition was poorly organized within the state's interior.

In what follows we present the third key point of this section. Not all members of the opposition supported the extinction of PR. The most vocal opponent of its dissolution was the physician and federal representative João de Menezes Dória (1857-1934). He was a member of the party's leadership.<sup>30</sup> In the interior of Paraná, some former opposition members were also opposed to the merger of PR with the ruling party. The analysis of the results of the 1908 elections, presented in the subsequent section of this article, further corroborates this assertion. In short, the former contenders of the ruling party found themselves separated that year.

Menezes Dória set himself the task of preventing the extinction of PR. He did not endorse the agreement through which the party merged with PRF. The main task of the opposition leaders during this period was to prevent their political and electoral activity from slowing down. According to Menezes Dória, the dissolution of PR was a decision taken unilaterally by Generoso Marques. The party's local leaders were not consulted on the matter. Thus, Menezes Dória considered that the merger of PR and PRF lacked legitimacy.<sup>31</sup>

In March 1908, Dória issued a statement to his allies. He presented a slate for the positions of state representative, president, and 1st and 2nd vice presidents of the state on behalf of PR.<sup>32</sup> On that occasion, Menezes Dória

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<sup>29</sup> In this context, the Varella family controlled the main public positions in Ponta Grossa. *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 30 maio 1908, p. 2. On the typical forms of political action of the regional oligarchies in the context of the First Republic, refer to LEAL, Victor Nunes. *Coronelismo, enxada e voto: o município e o regime representativo no Brasil*. 7ª ed. São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 2012. To understand the peculiarities of the electoral activity of municipal political leaders in southern Brazil, refer to GOULART, Mônica Helena Harrich Silva. *Coronelismo e poder local no Paraná, 1880-1930*. Dissertação (Mestrado em Sociologia). Universidade Federal do Paraná. Curitiba, 2004; MARTINY, Carina. "Os seus serviços públicos e políticos estão de certo modo ligados à prosperidade do município": constituindo redes e consolidando o poder: uma elite política local (São Sebastião do Cai, 1875-1900). Dissertação (Mestrado em História). Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos. São Leopoldo, 2010.

<sup>30</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 22 ago. 1905, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> BRAZIL. *Anais da Câmara dos Deputados*. Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Nacional, 1909, v. 2, p. 371.

<sup>32</sup> This slate of candidates was composed of the following individuals: Ubaldino do Amaral Fontoura

urged his allies to remain in the opposition camp. In short, he intended to reactivate the recently dissolved party. The following excerpt is an extract from the message through which the then federal representative announced the names of the opposition slate:

I don't think it is fair to divide the *plate of lentils* with our friends from a few localities, leaving the vast majority of the [Republican] Party completely abandoned, and I am glad that I am still ostracized along with almost all of my honored comrades. Sincerely convinced that I am fulfilling my duty not supporting the course of action taken by the illustrious Dr. Generoso Marques, I call on my colleagues to remain united and wait for a Party convention so that we can take the actions deemed appropriate.<sup>33</sup>

This statement shows that Menezes Dória wanted to win the support of the PR allies who had not benefited politically from the party's merger with PRF. Some opposition members were left out of the negotiations regarding the union between the two parties. These proscribed allies were mainly those who served as municipal leaders of PR. On the other hand, the composition of the slate supported by Menezes Dória's political group shows that the creation of CR was not unanimously accepted by former members of the ruling party. In this regard, it is worth noting that Brasília da Luz (1857-1940), one of the candidates supported by Menezes Dória, came from the ruling group.<sup>34</sup>

In that election, three groups of allies supported Menezes Dória's slate. One group was composed of historical opposition members, who did not join CR. The second group was composed of individuals from the ruling order. The physician and former state representative Randolfo Pereira de Serzedelo (1862-1919) was one of the former members who endorsed that slate of candidates.<sup>35</sup> Finally, the third group was composed of new characters on the political scene. Ubaldino do Amaral's candidacy for the presidency of Paraná was supported by labor leaders from Curitiba.<sup>36</sup>

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(1842-1920), lawyer, candidate for the position of president; Brasília Ferreira da Luz (1857-1940), physician, candidate for the position of 1st vice president of Paraná; Amazonas de Araújo Marcondes (1847-1924), businessman, candidate for the 2nd vice presidency of the state; Roberto Glasser (1878-1958), farmer, candidate for the position of state deputy. *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 21 mar. 1908, p. 2. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 21 mar. 1908, p. 2. Emphasis in original. Our translation.

<sup>34</sup> On the social and political origins of these candidates, refer to OLIVEIRA, Ricardo Costa de. *O silêncio dos vencedores...* Op. cit.

<sup>35</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 20 mar. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>36</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 21 mar. 1908, p. 2.

The unity between supporters of the slate of candidates created by Menezes Dória did not last. It did not create a new opposition party. As evidenced in this article, by the second half of 1908, the leaders of the state opposition were already divided. It is therefore necessary to analyze the performance of this slate in municipalities in the interior of the state. It is important to demonstrate that the migration of ruling party members to the opposition enabled the minority group to have a significant electoral performance in small municipalities. At the same time, it is a matter of investigating the process by which the creators of this slate broke their alliance. The attempt by CR's antagonists to work together in the electoral scene did not last.

### **March 1908 elections: the performance of the opposition candidates and the alliance among the ruling party opponents**

The election for president, vice president, and state representative of Paraná, held on March 22, 1908, was characterized by the victory of candidates affiliated with the ruling party. The dissolution of PR committees presented a challenge for the remaining and newly arrived members of the opposition, as it hindered the implementation of a comprehensive and well-structured campaign. By the time the opposition slate was launched, those committees had been deactivated. The demobilization of the former members of the opposition party happened very quickly. Lacking a party structure, the campaign coordinated by Menezes Dória was carried out in just fifteen days.<sup>37</sup>

In any case, the result of this election demonstrated that the remnants of the opposition maintained a level of cohesion that allowed them to garner votes in most municipalities. To analyze the performance of the slate presented by the ruling party members and the opposition members, it is important to study the data presented in Table 1.

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<sup>37</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 28 jan. 1909, p. 2.

**Table 1** – Votes for ruling party members and opposition members for the positions of president, vice presidents and state deputy in Paraná (1908)

| Municipality              | Region of the state of Paraná | Total – ruling party slate | Percentage – ruling party slate | Total – opposition slate | Percentage – opposition slate |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Agudos                    | First plateau                 | 129                        | 99,1                            | 1                        | 0,9                           |
| Ambrósios                 | First plateau                 | 146                        | 92,4                            | 12                       | 7,6                           |
| Antonina                  | Coastal                       | 395                        | 95                              | 20                       | 5                             |
| Araucária                 | First plateau                 | 266                        | 83                              | 54                       | 17                            |
| Assungui de Cima          | First plateau                 | 72                         | 79,1                            | 19                       | 20,9                          |
| Bela Vista de Palmas      | Third plateau                 | 103                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Bocaiúva                  | First plateau                 | 196                        | 59,2                            | 135                      | 40,8                          |
| Campina Grande            | First plateau                 | 273                        | 93,1                            | 20                       | 6,9                           |
| Campo Largo               | First plateau                 | 467                        | 74,2                            | 162                      | 25,8                          |
| Castro                    | Second plateau                | 484                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Colombo                   | First plateau                 | 178                        | 76                              | 56                       | 24                            |
| Conchas                   | Second plateau                | 139                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Curitiba                  | First plateau                 | 1.883                      | 90,7                            | 192                      | 10,3                          |
| Deodoro                   | First plateau                 | 188                        | 94,4                            | 11                       | 5,6                           |
| Entre Rios                | Third plateau                 | 204                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Espírito Santo do Itararé | Third plateau                 | 323                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Guarapuava                | Third plateau                 | 431                        | 99,7                            | 1                        | 0,3                           |
| Guaraqueçaba              | Coastal                       | 177                        | 91,2                            | 17                       | 8,8                           |
| Guaratuba                 | Coastal                       | 35                         | 39                              | 55                       | 61                            |
| Imbituva                  | Second plateau                | 318                        | 87,6                            | 45                       | 12,4                          |
| Ipiranga                  | Second plateau                | 334                        | 89                              | 41                       | 11                            |
| Irati                     | Second plateau                | 267                        | 98,5                            | 4                        | 1,5                           |
| Jacarezinho               | Third plateau                 | 440                        | 99,8                            | 1                        | 0,2                           |
| Jaguariaíva               | Second plateau                | 438                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Lapa                      | First plateau                 | 511                        | 49,95                           | 512                      | 50,05                         |
| Morretes                  | Coastal                       | 257                        | 73,5                            | 87                       | 26,5                          |
| Palmas                    | Third plateau                 | 264                        | 93,6                            | 18                       | 6,4                           |
| Palmeira                  | Second plateau                | 379                        | 50,9                            | 365                      | 49,1                          |
| Paranaguá                 | Coastal                       | 566                        | 88,5                            | 73                       | 11,5                          |
| Piraí                     | Second plateau                | 130                        | 60,4                            | 85                       | 29,6                          |
| Ponta Grossa              | Second plateau                | 579                        | 98,6                            | 8                        | 1,4                           |
| Porto de Cima             | Serra do Mar                  | 78                         | 96,3                            | 3                        | 3,7                           |
| Porto União               | Third plateau                 | 170                        | 97,1                            | 5                        | 2,9                           |

*continue*

*conclusion*

| Municipality          | Region of the state of Paraná | Total – ruling party slate | Percentage – ruling party slate | Total – opposition slate | Percentage – opposition slate |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Prudentópolis         | Third plateau                 | 224                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Rio Branco            | First plateau                 | 179                        | 59,6                            | 121                      | 40,4                          |
| Rio Negro             | Second plateau                | 695                        | 85,3                            | 119                      | 14,7                          |
| São João do Triunfo   | Second plateau                | 158                        | 63,9                            | 89                       | 36,1                          |
| São José da Boa Vista | Second plateau                | 530                        | 99,6                            | 2                        | 0,4                           |
| São José dos Pinhais  | First plateau                 | 362                        | 96                              | 15                       | 4                             |
| São Mateus            | First plateau                 | 288                        | 97,2                            | 8                        | 2,8                           |
| Serro Azul            | First plateau                 | 194                        | 59,1                            | 134                      | 40,9                          |
| Tamandaré             | First plateau                 | 186                        | 47,3                            | 207                      | 52,7                          |
| Tibagi                | Second plateau                | 486                        | 99,8                            | 1                        | 0,2                           |
| Tomazina              | Third plateau                 | 308                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| União da Vitória      | Third plateau                 | 170                        | 98,8                            | 2                        | 0,2                           |

Source: *A República*; Curitiba, 30 mar. 1908, p. 2.

The information in Table 1 provides the basis for four findings. First, the opposition slate did not receive any votes in only eight of the 44 municipalities. During the first half of 1908, two of these municipalities saw a small opposition electorate emerge.

In the municipal elections in Conchas held in June of that year, the opposition received 105 votes (13%).<sup>38</sup> In the same context, the opposition in the municipality of Prudentópolis presented candidates for city councilor and mayor. The slate was not competitive, as it obtained only 35 votes (8.4%).<sup>39</sup> It should be noted that from March to June 1908, the political life of Paraná was marked by the emergence of opposition groups in cities in the interior of the state. These groups fought on their own the ruling party's domination of municipal institutions.

Ultimately, the performance of the opposition in Paraná changed after the March 1908 election. Indeed, the contenders of the ruling party remained uncompetitive. However, at that time there was a change in the electoral practices adopted by the opposition since the early years of the

<sup>38</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 3 jul. 1908, p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 3 jul. 1908, p. 1.

Republican regime, namely electoral abstention became less frequent among representatives of the minority group.

In what follows, the second finding is presented. It is important to mention that the opposition candidates received more votes than the ruling party candidates in three municipalities, namely Guaratuba, Lapa, and Tamandaré. It is worth noting that Lapa, and Tamandaré were electoral strongholds of individuals who held significant positions within the ruling party. Therefore, newcomers to the opposition maintained a support base both in the vicinity and in cities distant from the capital.

Lapa, a city located on the first plateau, was the stronghold of former state president João Cândido Ferreira. This political leader was the mayor of this municipality in the early 1890s.<sup>40</sup> Tamandaré, a city located near the capital of Paraná, concentrated most of Randolfo Serzedelo's allies. In the middle of the decade, Serzedelo became a member of the local party committee of the ruling party.<sup>41</sup>

At the time of the 1908 municipal elections, both had been involved in the political life of small municipalities for more than ten years. Their move to the opposition camp did not end their influence on the electoral dynamics of municipalities located around Curitiba. They played a decisive role in winning votes for the slate launched by the representative Menezes Dória.<sup>42</sup> In short, this parliamentarian garnered backing from local elites, characterized by their permanent positions in public administration and control over a voter base.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, it is important to discuss the happenings at the coastal city of Guaratuba. Since the beginning of the Republican regime, the ruling party members had encountered obstacles to gain support in this municipality. In 1892, for example, Ubaldino do Amaral was elected senator while affiliated with the majority party. However, he received less votes in the city of Guaratuba than the lawyer Manuel Alves de Araújo, who belonged to the political group of Menezes Dória.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 25 jul. 1894, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 8 set. 1895, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 28 mar. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> The origin of João Cândido Ferreira's political activity dates back to the Second Reign (Segundo Reinado). At the end of the 1880s, he aligned himself with leaders of the Lapa Liberal Party. At the beginning of the Republican regime, he joined the ruling group in Paraná. *A República*, Curitiba, 20 abr. 1908, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> On this occasion, in Guaratuba, Ubaldino do Amaral garnered 21 votes, while Manuel Alves de Araújo obtained 38. *The Republic*, Curitiba, 21 jun. 1892, p. 2.

In the 1908 election, historical opposition figures gained the support of dissident government party members. They also secured the backing of voters in Guaratuba, a city where the ruling party had lacked a substantial base of support since the early 1890s. This leads us to the third statement of this section.

Table 1 shows that there was fierce competition between the ruling and the opposition forces in some municipalities in Paraná. The defeat of the opposition was not characterized by derisory votes in all the electoral colleges. In four of them, the group led by Menezes Dória obtained 40 to 49% of the votes. Next section will show that the electoral strength of local opposition leaders was not ephemeral. In cities such as Bocaiúva, the June 1908 elections saw an almost even split between ruling party and opposition voters.

### **The 1908 municipal election in Paraná: the opposition members' moves on the political scene**

On June 21, 1908, elections were held in most of Paraná's municipalities. This election showed CR's stable dominance of the electoral game in Paraná. However, there were cities in which the opposition obtained a small space in the political institutions. There was no state coordination of the opposition's electoral activities. Thus, the parliamentarian Menezes Dória did not remain the leader of the minority group for long. At the time of the municipal elections, the Paraná opposition was divided into three wings.

One wing was composed of government members who migrated to the opposition when CR was created. They tried to reactivate PRF. At the time of the 1908 municipal elections, this attempt did not attract many supporters in the interior of Paraná. One of the few municipalities in which this political party committee was reinstated was Serro Azul, a city located on the first plateau.<sup>45</sup>

The second wing was composed of individuals who had no links with parties but did not exempt themselves from presenting candidacies. They lived in cities like Morretes, located on the coast of the state. In 1908, independent voters unsuccessfully presented a candidate for mayor of the city.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 18 set. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 30 maio 1908, p. 2.

Finally, the third wing was composed of representatives of the labor movement.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, the ties between these representatives and Menezes Dória did not last. In 1908, the workers presented a slate of candidates for city councilor and district judge in the city of Curitiba.<sup>48</sup> In short, the 1908 municipal elections in Paraná showed that the state opposition was divided. It was composed of groups that did not cultivate an alliance among themselves. It is therefore important to analyze the performance of the slates of candidates of the ruling party. For this analysis it is important to observe the information in Table 2.

**Table 2** – Votes for ruling party and opposition slates in the municipal elections in Paraná State (1908)

| Municipality         | Region of the state of Paraná | Total - ruling party slate | Percentage - ruling party slate | Total - opposition slate | Percentage - opposition slate |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Antonina             | Coastal                       | 395                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Araucária            | First plateau                 | 309                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Bela Vista de Palmas | Third plateau                 | 137                        | 99,2                            | 1                        | 0,8                           |
| Bocaiúva             | First plateau                 | 187                        | 52                              | 173                      | 48                            |
| Colombo              | First plateau                 | 291                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Campina Grande       | First plateau                 | 195                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Campo Largo          | First plateau                 | 157                        | 22                              | 558                      | 78                            |
| Castro               | Second plateau                | 320                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Conchas              | Third plateau                 | 699                        | 87                              | 105                      | 13                            |
| Curitiba             | First plateau                 | 6.319                      | 68,2                            | 2.944                    | 31,8                          |
| Guaraqueçaba         | Coastal                       | 133                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Guaratuba            | Coastal                       | 57                         | 72                              | 22                       | 28                            |
| Imbituva             | Second plateau                | 268                        | 69,2                            | 119                      | 30,8                          |
| Irati                | First plateau                 | 224                        | 73,4                            | 81                       | 26,6                          |
| Lapa                 | Second plateau                | 712                        | 54,8                            | 585                      | 45,2                          |
| Morretes             | Coastal                       | 278                        | 74,3                            | 96                       | 25,7                          |

*continue*

<sup>47</sup> The presentation of this slate was not the first participation of workers in the political life of Paraná. In the 1890s, there was a worker's party (PO, *Partido Operário*) in the state. However, it nominated candidates in a few elections. In 1896, this party took part in its last dispute. On that occasion, because the ruling party presented an incomplete slate, PO elected one state deputy. *A República*, Curitiba, 23 set. 1896, p. 2. The group of workers who ran as candidates in the 1908 municipal elections did not reactivate PO. The involvement of these workers in the electoral scene in the state capital was only circumstantial. Thus, at the end of the 1900s, the political activity of workers in Paraná continued to be intermittent.

<sup>48</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 18 jun. 1908, p. 2.



*conclusion*

| Municipality         | Region of the state of Paraná | Total - ruling party slate | Percentage - ruling party slate | Total - opposition slate | Percentage - opposition slate |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Palmas               | Third plateau                 | 260                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Palmeira             | Second plateau                | 87,4                       | 100                             | 402                      | 12,6                          |
| Paranaguá            | Coastal                       | 578                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Piraquara            | First plateau                 | 135                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Ponta Grossa         | Second plateau                | 304                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| Prudentópolis        | Third plateau                 | 385                        | 91,6                            | 35                       | 8,4                           |
| Porto de Cima        | Serra do Mar                  | 58                         | 72,5                            | 22                       | 27,5                          |
| Rio Branco           | First plateau                 | 192                        | 58                              | 138                      | 42                            |
| Rio Negro            | Second plateau                | 555                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |
| São José dos Pinhais | First plateau                 | 559                        | 68                              | 261                      | 32                            |
| São Mateus           | Second plateau                | 371                        | 97,3                            | 18                       | 2,7                           |
| Serro Azul           | First plateau                 | 245                        | 62,5                            | 147                      | 37,5                          |
| Tamandaré            | First plateau                 | 207                        | 50,5                            | 203                      | 49,5                          |
| Tibagi               | Second plateau                | 271                        | 64,8                            | 147                      | 35,2                          |
| Triunfo              | Second plateau                | 156                        | 66                              | 80                       | 34                            |
| União da Vitória     | Third plateau                 | 148                        | 100                             | 0                        | 0                             |

**Sources:** *A República*, Curitiba, edições de 22, 23, 24, 25 jun. 1908; *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, edições de 2 e 3 jul. 1908.

The information in Table 2 leads to three conclusions. First, there were no municipalities in which a slate of opposition candidates overtook the official slate. In 12 municipalities, the candidates of the ruling party did not participate in the dispute. In a context characterized by the absence of a state opposition party, CR local antagonists differed in their greater or lesser ability to recruit allies and develop uninterrupted political activity. The mobilization of the opposition to win votes in the 1908 March elections was not accompanied by the creation of a stable electoral base in municipalities in the interior of the state. In short, the performance of the opposition in small jurisdictions remained very uneven.

In fact, there were attempts to present independent slates in municipalities where opposition candidacies were not made official. However, some members of these slates withdrew their candidacies. Local opponents of the ruling party encountered obstacles in their attempts to find candidates

willing to run in elections against CR. In this regard, it is important to highlight the happenings in the municipalities of Morretes, Castro and Paranaguá.

Some independent voters presented candidates for mayor and city councilors in these cities in 1908. In Morretes, the businessman João de Deus Freitas was the mayor candidate endorsed by a group of 12 allies.<sup>49</sup> However, six signatories of the manifesto presenting this candidate withdrew their support. The campaign defectors were former allies of the ruling party.<sup>50</sup>

Without support, Freitas' candidacy failed. Table 2 shows his votes were not significant and indicates that an opposition campaign to municipal elections in Paraná was an initiative of independent voters in the 1900s. In general, these voters were not committed to establishing local party units. They were not linked to opposition leaders elsewhere and were not committed to taking part in other campaigns against the official party.

In Castro, the *Conciliação Geral* slate was also unsuccessful. The opposition candidates who were part of it did not run a consistent election campaign. Consequently, its members soon left.<sup>51</sup> In Paranaguá, some veteran politicians were considered to join an independent slate. Alberto Gomes Veiga and Manuel do Rosário Correia were members of this slate as candidates for mayor and councilor, respectively. They came from the Conservative Party. However, this slate was not presented. Thus, in 1908, the ruling party had no opponents in the election held in Paranaguá.<sup>52</sup>

During this period, there were no politically active historical opposition figures in the interior cities of the state. Alberto Veiga, for example, cultivated ties with the ruling party. In 1908, the defeat of the independent candidates was followed by the incorporation of this businessman into the government slate.<sup>53</sup> It is therefore noted that the individuals occasionally considered to compose the slates of the minority group did not maintain strong connections with the exponents of the opposition in Paraná.

The creation of these slates was the initiative of voters who were not consistently involved in the regional party scene. In small cities, the absence of opposition groups with a solid electoral base created a situation in which

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<sup>49</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 2 jun. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 9 jun. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 16 jun. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 18 maio 1908, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> In 1908, Alberto Veiga was included on the ruling party's slate and was elected councilor. In 1912, with the support of the official party, he was re-elected to this position. *Diário da Tarde*, 22 jun. 1912, p. 1.

independent voters considered including politicians from the ruling party in their slates. Due to the rudimentary organization of local opposition groups, it was not uncommon for government candidates to participate in elections without facing opponents.<sup>54</sup>

In what follows, the second statement in this section is supported. In 1908, former members of the ruling group kept their electorate cohesive in some cities in the interior of the state. In this regard, it is worth revisiting the cases of João Cândido Ferreira and Randolfo Serzedelo. In the municipal elections in June of that year, Ferreira remained a political leader in the municipality of Lapa. Table 2 shows that the opposition obtained 45.2% of the votes in the city. This enabled Ferreira's political group to elect two councilors.<sup>55</sup> In other words, in this municipality government candidates were defeated by opposition representatives.

In this context, Serzedelo maintained his influence over the political life of the municipalities of Rio Branco and Tamandaré. The opposition slates presented in these localities were not supported by a party. They were identified only by the name of their creator.<sup>56</sup> Table 2 shows that *Chapas de Serzedelo* did not have a much lower vote than the ruling party's. In fact, the opposition in Rio Branco saw a slight increase in its electorate in the municipal election of June 1908 compared to the election held in March of the same year.

Table 2 also shows that in Campo Largo, a municipality adjacent to the state capital, the opposition outnumbered the ruling party. There, CR was led by José Ribeiro de Macedo (1840-1917). Former member of the Conservative Party and yerba mate trader, José Ribeiro was a local political leader.<sup>57</sup> However, he was unable to stop the growth of the opposition group in the 1908 June election.

In Bocaiúva, the opposition did not win the elections. The ruling party, however, acknowledged that their rivals had been active throughout the election. According to an anonymous correspondent for the newspaper *A República*, opposition supporters tried to attract voters through vote buying. An excerpt from the correspondent's letter shows that, in 1908, the opposition in Paraná was very committed to competing with the government. Therefore,

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<sup>54</sup> In 1900, in Paranaguá, independent voters considered creating a slate of candidates for the municipal elections with former members of the ruling party. This initiative did not prosper. As a result, the ruling party in that town had no opponents in the election. *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 18 jul. 1900, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 29 jun. 1908, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 22 jun. 1908, p. 1.

<sup>57</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 13 jun. 1908, p. 1.

several strategies were used to prevent CR members from running local institutions, including alleged electoral fraud.

In the last municipal election [in Bocaiúva], despite the hard work exerted by the opposition and all various forms of misconduct they orchestrated, as well as the pouring of money on unsuspecting voters, they were unable to elect what is guaranteed to them by the rosary. Although on the day of the count the counting board exceeded its duties in the interest of certifying the candidate who received the least votes for the position of Municipal Mayor, Benedito Bandeira Ribas, it only proved that it was not able to fulfill its duties.<sup>58</sup>

The opposition members in Bocaiúva not only demonstrated their ability to organize themselves to promote their candidates, they understood that success in the election depended on factors such as controlling the appointment of members of the electoral boards and counting boards. In 1908, CR representatives did not have the prerogative to count the votes in the municipality.

Bocaiúva's ruling party's challenge to the counting of the votes for mayor brought them a positive result. Giordano Dias de Almeida Batista, CR local leader, took office instead of Benedito Ribas.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the intensification of competition between the ruling party and the opposition led the representatives of the first group to appeal to the Judiciary to continue in charge of Bocaiúva's administration.<sup>60</sup> It is important to note that the appeal to the Judiciary was not an isolated event.

When CR was created, some of the councilors from interior cities did not join that party, but moved to the opposition. In Lapa, the councilors remained integrated into João Cândido Ferreira's political group. Therefore, they fought CR candidacies and mobilized to prevent candidates elected by this party from taking their seats in the municipal legislature. In Tamandaré, Serzedelo allies also sought to prevent those elected by CR from being certified as councilors. The main way to prevent this was to annul the votes of the ruling party members in certain polling stations. In any case, the ruling party

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<sup>58</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 3 ago. 1908, p. 2. Our translation.

<sup>59</sup> *Almanack Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, 1910, vol. 2, p. 20.

<sup>60</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 23 jul. 1908, p. 2.

members in the municipalities in question managed to take office in 1909 by court decision.<sup>61</sup>

After the 1908 municipal elections, there was a new attempt to create a state opposition party in Paraná. However, this project did not contribute to unifying the electoral action of CR antagonists. On the contrary, some of the opposition did not support this initiative. It is therefore necessary to analyze the political destiny of the leaders of the Paraná opposition in the context of the aforementioned election.

### **The 1909 parliamentary elections and the political fate of opposition leaders in Paraná State**

This section analyzes the electoral activities of opposition members from Paraná in two elections that took place from 1909 to 1912. It must be demonstrated that both elections were impacted by the dissolution of the state opposition party. One of these impacts was the low level of integration between the opponents of the ruling party. Consequently, difficulties arose in establishing a new party designed to combat CR. Another result was the emergence of independent candidates who split the votes of the opposition electorate. In order to develop this approach, four statements will be presented.

First, it should be noted that in the second half of 1908, Menezes Dória abandoned the idea of maintaining an active opposition party. As a result, his links with other opposition leaders became less solid. During this period, he abandoned the task of assembling new slates of candidates. Eventually, he began to move around the political scene without making any party commitments.

Menezes Dória ran as an independent candidate in the election held on January 30, 1909 for the Chamber of Deputies. In the *Political manifesto* that he published during the campaign, the candidate for re-election stated that he did not intend to support any proposals. He also stressed that he was not linked to a party.<sup>62</sup> It is clear, therefore, that his alliance with the dissident members of the ruling party did not prosper.

In fact, those who had left the ruling camp established a new opposition party in Paraná. At the end of 1909, the opposition group was fragmented. On

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<sup>61</sup> *Almanack Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, 1910, vol. 2, p. 3472.

<sup>62</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 28 jan. 1909, p. 2.

one side were Menezes Dória allies, on the other side were Randolpho Serzedelo allies. In this regard, these sectors of the opposition differed according to their movements in the electoral game. Menezes Dória presented himself as the legitimate representative of the opposition, since he had been an opponent of the group that controlled the government of Paraná since the 1890s. He, therefore, felt that his mandate as a federal deputy could be renewed without the support of a party.

The opposition wing to which Serzedelo belonged advocated for the establishment of a new political party. They sought to attract allies by expanding the local units of a party. Thus, the supporters of this former state deputy restored the Federal Republican Party.

In what follows, the second statement in this section is supported. In November 1909, the project to reactivate PRF was conceived by veteran politicians from the ruling group. Brasília da Luz and Randolpho Serzedelo were involved in the state committee of the party, to which also belonged the state deputies Caio Graco Machado Lima and Osório Guimarães. The similarity between these party leaders and Menezes Dória was that their initiatives to lead the Paraná opposition were not marked by the formulation of a programmatic ideology. To a large extent, PRF's founding *Manifesto* consists of a criticism of the party merger that took place in Paraná in 1908.<sup>63</sup>

The presence of Brasília da Luz in the PRF central committee is an indication that the political group led by Menezes Dória on the threshold of 1909 had been fragmented by the end of that year. In order to support this statement, it is necessary to know the political destiny of the other members of the slate presented by the state opposition in March of that year. There were three peculiar destinies.

One of them was marked by the estrangement from the parties in the late 1900s and early 1910s. Roberto Glasser and Menezes Dória were in this category. They did not join PRF. In this regard, the main political activity of these allies consisted of locally organizing the presidential campaign of Bahian senator Rui Barbosa. Menezes Dória and Glasser worked in the coordination of the Civilist Campaign<sup>64</sup> in Paraná.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 14 nov. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> The Civilist Campaign was the movement to support the candidacy of Rui Barbosa (1849-1923), a jurist from Bahia, in the 1910 presidential election. Barbosa was the opposition candidate, while Marshal Hermes da Fonseca, who won the dispute, was supported by most of the ruling parties. The supporters of Barbosa's candidacy preferred a civilian rather than a military person to be president of the Republic.

<sup>65</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 29 jan. 1910, p. 1.

The opposition members' second destiny was restoring a political party. Brasília da Luz, former candidate for 1st vice president of the state, reactivated PRF to oppose CR in the election that took place in January 1909 for the positions of federal deputy and senator.<sup>66</sup>

Finally, the third destiny was joining the ruling party. This meant the opportunity to win elections and develop a stable political career. Among the members of the slate created by Menezes Dória in 1908, Amazonas Marcondes and Ubaldino do Amaral returned to the ruling group. The only difference between their methods was how fast they reestablished connections with the leaders of the ruling party. In 1909, Marcondes had already joined the majority party. That year, the support of the ruling party members enabled him to win a seat in the state legislature.<sup>67</sup> Ubaldino do Amaral, on the other side, was the candidate supported by the Paraná ruling party members in the campaign for the Senate in 1915.<sup>68</sup>

In what follows, the fourth statement of this section is supported. Menezes Dória's ties with the opposition in PRF were severed in the election to the Chamber of Deputies in January 1909. On this occasion, the party presented Randolfo Serzedelo as a candidate for federal deputy and the dissident ruling party member Leôncio Correia (1865-1950) as a candidate for the Senate. The editor of *A República*, a newspaper linked to the ruling party members in Paraná, made the following observations about the composition of this slate: "A poster has been nailed to the street corners urging people to vote for Mr. Correia for senator and Mr. Serzedelo for deputy. And Mr. Menezes Dória? These are the people who keep talking about betrayal!"<sup>69</sup>

Menezes Dória and PRF candidates were defeated in this election. However, the incipient party structure built by PRF in the second half of 1908 ensured that Serzedelo obtained a more significant vote than Dória.<sup>70</sup> The fact that the PRF candidate had supplanted a former opposition leader did not strengthen this group on the state political scene. The party led by Serzedelo was dissolved in mid-1909.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 14 nov. 1908, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 1 dez. 1909, p. 1.

<sup>68</sup> *Gazeta de Notícias*, Rio de Janeiro, 6 jun. 1915, p. 2.

<sup>69</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 20 jan. 1909, p. 1. Our translation.

<sup>70</sup> On that occasion, Randolfo Serzedelo obtained 8,666 votes. Menezes Dória got 552 votes. *A República*, Curitiba, 2 mar. 1909, p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 31 maio 1909, p. 1.

During this period, the disintegration of the opposition was not an uncommon event in the political life of states. In the 1909 parliamentary elections, there was a split in the opposition in the state of Sergipe. Consequently, there was a profusion of independent candidacies for the Chamber of Deputies. The opposition also got disorganized in the state of Pernambuco. It was divided into three groups, and each had their own candidates for federal deputy.<sup>72</sup>

Paraná was among the states whose oppositions presented few candidates. Aware of the impossibility of beating ruling party candidates, they believed that launching a full slate of candidates would disperse the votes of their small electorate among not very competitive candidates. Consequently, a recurring strategy of state oppositions was to recommend that the electorate voted for just one candidate.<sup>73</sup>

Finally, the fourth statement in this section is supported. The effects of the disintegration among the opposition were still noticeable in Paraná's political life in the early 1910s. At that time, there was no active opposition party. Thus, a political scenario that prevailed in the state in the early 1900s was restored. In such a scenario, the opposition members were not sufficiently cohesive to run for office in the executive branch, nor were they organized to support candidates for parliamentary positions.

To corroborate these assertions, it should be noted that there was no opposition slate for the Paraná Legislative Congress in the October 31, 1909 election. The disorganization of the state opposition is also evident in the fact that it did not launch a candidate for the position of 2nd vice president of the state on this occasion.<sup>74</sup> Thus, by the end of 1909, the integration among the opposition members in Paraná was lower than in the first half of 1908. This situation was not reversed at the beginning of the following decade. In 1912, the opposition members from Paraná remained far apart in the election for the Chamber of Deputies. To corroborate this, it should be noted that the four opposition candidates stood as independent candidates in this election.

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<sup>72</sup> *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, 16 jan. 1909, p. 1.

<sup>73</sup> On the electoral strategies adopted by the state oppositions in the context of the First Republic, refer to FIGUEIREDO, Vítor Fonseca. *Voto e competição...* Op. cit. On the voting rules adopted in Brazil from the 1900s onwards, refer to PORTO, Walter Costa. *O voto no Brasil: da colônia à 6ª República*. 1ª ed. Rio de Janeiro, Topbooks, 2002.

<sup>74</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, 1 dez. 1909, p. 1.



On this occasion, Menezes Dória was unsuccessful in his attempt to become a federal deputy.<sup>75</sup>

In Paraná, it was only in 1913 that a new opposition party emerged. It was the Liberal Republican Party (PRL), led nationally by Rui Barbosa. In Paraná, this party included some members of the Civilist Campaign, such as Roberto Glasser. In 1915, however, PRL was dissolved after its main leaders migrated to the ruling party.<sup>76</sup> During this period, Menezes Dória and Serzedelo experienced the decline of their influence over the political actions of the Paraná opposition.

## Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to study the political actions of the opposition in Paraná, a state characterized by the failure of initiatives to increase the unity among the candidates of the ruling parties. Three results of this paper can be highlighted. First, the transfer of the leaders of the regional opposition to the ruling party in 1908 ended the minority party in the state and promoted the disintegration of its former members.

Second, the absence of a political party did not result in the opposition completely abstaining from the elections. Indeed, there was no state coordination of the political movements of the opposition members based in the interior of Paraná at the end of the 1900s. Menezes Dória and Randolfo Serzedelo were unsuccessful in unifying the opposition under a single party. However, there were dissident ruling party members in the small municipalities who formed an alliance with the remaining members of the opposition group. This alliance allowed for the introduction of candidates to counterbalance the dominance of the Republican Coalition in the interior of the state. In certain cities, this alliance sparked intense disputes between the ruling and opposition slates. Thus, local opposition leaders were responsible for continuing the fight against ruling party members after the Republican Party's committees were deactivated.

Third, the Paraná opposition remained divided throughout the late 1900s and early 1910s. This division was indicated by the emergence of individual candidates. The short-term existence of minority parties was further evidence of the limited electoral activity of government antagonists.

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<sup>75</sup> BRASIL. *Anais da Câmara dos Deputados*. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1912, vol. 1, p. 38.

<sup>76</sup> Refer to GLASSER, Roberto. *Discursos (1914-1915)*. 1ª ed. Curitiba, Papelaria Requião, 1955.

In this context, those who sought to control the opposition group experienced a reduction of their influence in the political and electoral life of the state. As a result, from the 1910s a new generation of opposition leaders emerged in Paraná.

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