

Name of politician: Sali Berisha

Title of Speech: Speech of the Democratic Party Leader, Sali Berisha at the National Convention

Date of Speech: 24, April, 2005

Category: Electoral

Grader: Sokol Lleshi

Date of grading: 24.April. 2013

Final Grade (delete unused grades): 1

1 A speech in this category includes strong, clearly populist elements but either does not use them consistently or tempers them by including non-populist elements. Thus, the discourse may have a romanticized notion of the people and the idea of a unified popular will (indeed, it must in order to be considered populist), but it avoids bellicose language or references to cosmic proportions or any particular enemy.

Populist

It conveys a Manichaeian vision of the world, that is, one that is moral (every issue has a strong moral dimension) and dualistic (everything is in one category or the other, “right” or “wrong,” “good” or “evil”) The implication—or even the stated idea—is that there can be nothing in between, no fence-sitting, no shades of grey. This leads to the use of highly charged, even bellicose language.

Pluralist

The discourse does not frame issues in moral terms or paint them in black-and-white. Instead, there is a strong tendency to focus on narrow, particular issues. The discourse will emphasize or at least not eliminate the possibility of natural, justifiable differences of opinion.

“Uljen e rendesishme te taksave dhe thjeshtimin e sistemit fiskal, unifikimin e institucionit te doganave dhe tatimeve. Ne qeverisjen tone, askush nuk do te paguaje taksa me shume se 1/3 e te ardhurave te tij. Ne kemi shpallur uljen e TVSH per ushqimet, energjine ne masen 70 % dhe rreth 25 % per te tjerat, uljen e sigurimeve shoqerore ne masen 25 %, ulje prej 15 % te takses se mbifitimit.”

“Tax reduction and simplifying the fiscal system, creating a single custom. No one will pay a tax amount more than 1/3 of his/her revenues, when we will govern the country. We have made it clear that we will reduce the tax for food, and energy at around 70 % and for other taxes at around 25 %, the social insurance contribution will be lowered to 25 %, as well as a reduction of the income profit tax around 15 %.”

	<p><i>Sistem kreditimi te leverdisshem ne mbare vendin per fermeret dhe agrobiznesin, nafta me cmim 40 leke/liter per fermeret.</i></p> <p><i>“An effective crediting system all over the country for the farmers and agricultural business; the price for the oil for the farmers will be 40 leke/liter”</i></p> <p><i>“Sot, perqindja e femijeve analfabete po rritet me shpejtesi dhe po keshtu edhe numri I shkollave qe nuk I mesojne nxenesit. Mesatarja e viteve te arsimit te shqiptareve ka rene nga 11.6 ne 9.2, jane mbyllur 85 % e shkollave te mesme ne zonat rurale, shpenzimet per shkollimin e femijeve tane nga 4.3 % ne vitin 1996, kane rene ne 2.8 % te GDP. Rreth 30-70 % e stafit akademik eshte larguar nga universitetet, autonomia e tyre eshte vetem ne leter.”</i></p> <p><i>“Nowadays, the percentage of the illiterate children is growing rapidly as well as the number of inefficient schools that do not actually teach anything to the children. On average the Albanian citizens have 9.2 years of schooling compared to 11.6 years of schooling; in the countryside around 85 % of the high schools are closed; the expenses for the education of our children have dropped to 2.8 % from 4.3 % that were in 1996. Around 30-70 % of the academic staff have left the universities, and the universities do not have real autonomy”.</i></p> <p><i>“Modernizimi I mesimdhenies, teksteve, zvogelim ne 25-30 I numrit te nxenesve ne klasa, shkolla te pajisura me te gjitha mjetet.”</i></p> <p><i>“We promise to modernize the teaching process, and reduce the number of pupils in classrooms to 25-30 pupils per class. We promise to provide all the necessary material and technology to the schools”.</i></p> <p><i>“Rritja 50 % e rrogave te mesuesve qe dy vitet e para dhe dyfishim I tyre vitin e katert te mandatit qe vjen.”</i></p>
--	---

	<p><i>“Salary increase for the teachers at arounde 50 % during the first two years of our first mandate and doubling the salaries at the end of our first mandate.”</i></p> <p><i>“Decentralizim te buxhetit duke rritur 4 here, pra nga 6 ne 25 % te ardhurat e komuniteteve lokale nepermjet reformes fiskale.”</i></p> <p><i>“We promise to achieve budget decentralization by increasing 4 times, so from 6 % to 25 %, the revenues of the local communities, by completing the fiscal reform.”</i></p>
<p>The moral significance of the items mentioned in the speech is heightened by ascribing cosmic proportions to them, that is, by claiming that they affect people everywhere (possibly but not necessarily across the world) and across time. Especially in this last regard, frequent references may be made to a reified notion of “history.” At the same time, the speaker will justify the moral significance of his or her ideas by tying them to national and religious leaders that are generally revered.</p>	<p>The discourse will probably not refer to any reified notion of history or use any cosmic proportions. References to the spatial and temporal consequences of issues will be limited to the material reality rather than any mystical connections.</p>
<p>Although Manichaean, the discourse is still democratic, in the sense that the good is embodied in the will of the majority, which is seen as a unified whole, perhaps but not necessarily expressed in references to the “voluntad del pueblo”; however, the speaker ascribes a kind of unchanging essentialism to that will, rather than letting it be whatever 50 percent of the people want at any particular moment. Thus, this good majority is romanticized, with some notion of the common man (urban or rural) seen as the embodiment of the national ideal.</p> <p><i>“Ne projektin tone te ndryshimit, ne zotohemi te rivleresojme punen, njeriun punetor.”</i></p>	<p>Democracy is simply the calculation of votes. This should be respected and is seen as the foundation of legitimate government, but it is not meant to be an exercise in arriving at a preexisting, knowable “will.” The majority shifts and changes across issues. The common man is not romanticized, and the notion of citizenship is broad and legalistic.</p> <p><i>“Koha per ndryshim, per ne do te thote sundim I ligjit, barazi e plote e qytetareve para tij”</i></p> <p><i>“Time for Change, as our slogan says, means for us the rule of law and equality before the law for every citizen”</i></p>

<p><i>“In our project of change, we pledge to reconsider and cherish the value of work, and the working man”.</i></p> <p><i>“Ndryshim do te thote ndarje me e mire e pasurive ekzistuese, krijim I pasurive te reja dhe ngushtim I hendekut te tmerrshem qe ndan sot dy Shqiperite: Shqiperine e pakices qeveritare dhe klaneve te tyre, qe rrezatohen tere ditën ne diellin e prosperitetit dhe pasurise qe krijojnë edhe duke fjetur, dhe Shqiperise se qytetareve te thjeshte, te ndershem, patriote qe jetojnë ne te ftohtin Siberian te varferise”</i></p> <p><i>“Change for us means a better distribution of the existent wealth, and creating new wealth. Change means to narrow the bleak gap that separates nowadays two different Albanias: The Albania of a tiny governing minority and their clans, that stare at the sun all day long, that do accumulate their wealth even when they are asleep; and the Albania of the common citizens/people, of honest and patriotic people who live in the Siberian coldness of the poverty”</i></p> <p><i>“Historia ime jane lirite, mundimet, dhimbjet dhe te vertetat e qytetareve te thjeshte dhe tuajat ne teresi”</i></p> <p><i>“What has always defined me has been attention devoted to freedom, to the sufferings, concerns and the concerns of the common citizens/people”</i></p>	<p><i>“Ne projektin tone te ndryshimit ne zotohemi per barazi te plote te te gjithë qytetareve para ligjit, duke filluar nga kryeministri, deputetet dhe drejtuesit e te gjitha institucioneve te tjera gjer tek roja I shkolles ne Vermosh apo fermeri ne Jug”</i></p> <p><i>“In order to complete our project for change, we pledge to achieve full equality before the law of all the citizens, from the prime minister, members of parliament, heads of all other institutions, to the janitor of a school in Vermosh and to the farmer in the South”</i></p>
<p>The evil is embodied in a minority whose specific identity will vary according to context. Domestically, in Latin America it is often an economic elite, perhaps the “oligarchy,” but it may be a racial elite; internationally, it may be the United States or the capitalist, industrialized nations or international financiers or simply an ideology such as neoliberalism and capitalism.</p> <p><i>“Kjo enderr ka ngrire jo se BE dhe NATO ka mbyllur dyert per Shqiperine. E kunderta eshte e vertete, ato jane te hapura, por te bllokuara nga</i></p>	<p>The discourse avoids a conspiratorial tone and does not single out any evil ruling minority. It avoids labeling opponents as evil and may not even mention them in an effort to maintain a positive tone and keep passions low.</p>

muri I korrupsionit qeveritar, monopolet e tyre private, dhunimi sistematik I vullnetit politik te qytetareve, trafiqet kriminale, nga bllokimi I reformave apo reformat ne leter”

“This dream of being part of the EU and NATO has been frozen/suspended not because the EU and NATO have closed their doors to Albania. Actually, the opposite is true. The doors are open, but they have been blocked because of the corruption wall of the government, their private monopolies and the continuous violation of the political will of the citizens, because of criminal dealings and because of the blocking of the reforms or simply by paying lip service to the reforms”

“Shqiperine e pakices qeveritare dhe klaneve te tyre, qe rrezatohen tere ditën ne diellin e prosperitetit dhe pasurise qe krijojne edhe duke fjetur,...”

“The Albania of a tiny governing minority and their clans, that stare at the sun all day long, that do accumulate their wealth even while they are asleep..”

Crucially, the evil minority is or was recently in charge and subverted the system to its own interests, against those of the good majority or the people. Thus, systemic change is/was required, often expressed in terms such as “revolution” or “liberation” of the people from their “immiseration” or bondage, even if technically it comes about through elections.

“Projekti yne I Shqiperise shpresedhenese ka ne epiqender te tij qytetarin shqiptar me hallet, dertet, familjen, te ardhmen e tij”.

“Our project that will restore hope to Albania, has at its center the Albanian citizen, with his concerns, sufferings, family and his future”

The discourse does not argue for systemic change but, as mentioned above, focuses on particular issues. In the words of Laclau, it is a politics of “differences” rather than “hegemony.”

“Alfa dhe Omega e projektit tone te ndryshimit jane reformat e gjithanshme, te cilat kane per ne shqiptaret rendesine jetike qe ka ajri per fluturimin e zogut.”

“Central to our project of change are the encompassing reforms, which are vital for the Albanians, as much as the air is crucial for the bird to fly”.

<p><i>“Une besoj se detyra supreme e kryeministrit dhe kabinetit te ardhshem eshte te mbroje qytetaret shqiptare nga korrupsioni dhe me duart e pastra...”</i></p> <p><i>“I believe that the supreme duty of the prime minister and the future governing cabinet, is to protect its citizens from corruption and govern with clean hands...”</i></p>	
<p>Because of the moral baseness of the threatening minority, non-democratic means may be openly justified or at least the minority’s continued enjoyment of these will be seen as a generous concession by the people; the speech itself may exaggerate or abuse data to make this point, and the language will show a bellicosity towards the opposition that is incendiary and condescending, lacking the decorum that one shows a worthy opponent.</p>	<p>Formal rights and liberties are openly respected, and the opposition is treated with courtesy and as a legitimate political actor. The discourse will not encourage or justify illegal, violent actions. There will be great respect for institutions and the rule of law. If data is abused, it is either an innocent mistake or an embarrassing breach of democratic standards.</p> <p><i>“...do te dialogoj me opoziten e ardhshme, me partneret sociale, njerezit e kultures, biznesit, mediat, shoqerine civile, fermeret, punetoret, studuesit, nxenesit, studentet, te rinjte, te rejat, nenpunesit per te gjetur ide te reja, per te imagjinuar rruge te reja, per te ndermarre reforma te reja, per te zbatuar projektin e ndryshimit...”</i></p> <p><i>“...I will engage in dialogue with the future opposition, with social partners, people of culture, business representatives, civil society, farmers, workers, students, pupils, students, young people, researchers, and civil servants in order to find out new ideas, to image new paths and to pursue new reforms, so that we accomplish our project of change”</i></p>

Overall Comments (just a few sentences):

This speech is given at the National Convention of the Democratic Party of Albania. It is given during the electoral campaign for the parliamentary elections of 2005. Generally, party conventions are considered important venues for the contending parties to transmit their ideas to the general public. This long speech enumerates a long list of policies and pledges that the leader of the Democratic Party, Sali Berisha intends to accomplish. However, it is not the listing of policies that defines a speech as populist or not. The leader of the Democratic Party talks in the speech about rule of law, equality of the citizens before the law, and it does employ a legalistic or broad definition of citizenship. Nonetheless, this speech has a populist dimension. This dimension is not mentioned all over the speech yet it remains crucial. Sali Berisha talks about two different Albanias: the Albania of a tiny corrupted governing minority that have accumulated a lot of wealth, and the majority of hard-working, common people who are living in poverty. He claims that it is precisely this minority that has obstructed the path to European integration and to NATO for Albania. The leader of the Democratic Party of Albania is not using a Manichaen framework, yet I think there is a division between a bad minority and a good majority, and himself being represented as the real representative of the good majority of common people who have always suffered. In this perspective, I would say that this speech is partly a populist speech. So, I would grade it with a 1.