

**Country:** Brazil

**Leader:** Jair Bolsonaro

**Title of Speech:** Av. Paulista

**Date of Speech:** September 30, 2018

**Category:** Campaign

**Grader:** Eduardo Ryo Tamaki

**Date of grading:** February 8, 2019

**Final Grade (delete unused grades):** **0.5**

0 A speech in this category uses few if any populist elements. Note that even if a speech expresses a Manichaeian worldview, it is not considered populist if it lacks some notion of a popular will.

<b>Populist</b>	<b>Pluralist</b>
<p><b>It conveys a Manichaeian vision of the world, that is, one that is moral</b> (every issue has a strong moral dimension) <b>and dualistic</b> (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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- “Brazil is ours, good people, workers, conservatives, Christians who preserve family values, who do not want gender ideology in classrooms, who want Brazil doing business with the whole world, without ideological bias”</li><li>- “Brazil is ours. We are different from them, we are not leftists, we abhor communism, we abhor socialism”</li></ul>	<p>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 <b>narrow, particular issues</b>. The discourse will emphasize or at least not eliminate the possibility of natural, justifiable differences of opinion.</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.

- "It's the last chance we have to get away from this politics that have been plundering the Brazilian people for 30 years so far"

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.

Although Manichaeic, 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.

Even though he doesn't say "popular will" on a direct way, this passage evokes the idea of something close to that: the interests of the people.

It is not that populist, on a way that "popular will" would be, but it is something that needs to be acknowledged.

- "We want a president with exemption, who is free to appoint a team of ministers, technical and competent, and committed to the interests of the Brazilian people and not of political parties"

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.

**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 also 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.

- “It’s the last chance we have to get away from this politics that have been plundering the Brazilian people for 30 years so far”
- “Enough of PT and PSDB, Brazil is ours, it’s mine, it’s yours”

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.

**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.

- “We want change, we want to move away from communism, give a brush of the politics that exist in Venezuela. We do not want this for our Brazil”
- “Let’s fight until the last second! It’s the last chance we have to get away from this politics that have been plundering the Brazilian people for 30 years so far”

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.”

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.

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.

There is nothing that goes with the "everything counts approach" but he does not say anything that suggests that he respects the rights and liberties of the opposition, but he also does not say anything that let us think otherwise.

### Overall Comments (just a few sentences):

This speech is very short, so I tried to think of intensity over quantity. Following that, I searched how intense the populist traits were in his speech.

There is a clear Manichaeian distinction when he talks about the "good people", there is also cosmic proportion even though it is not that intense.

There are also a few mentions to the people and what he calls "the interest of the people": Even though he doesn't say "popular will" on a direct way, that passage in question evokes the idea of something close to that. It is not that populist, on a way that "popular will" would be, but it is something that needs to be acknowledged.

The enemy is not that present in his speech. Is something more subtle, but that can be perceived.

There is nothing that goes with the "everything counts" approach.

He does not say anything that suggests that he respects the rights and liberties of the opposition, but he also does not say anything that let us think otherwise.

In terms of Nationalist traits, there a few things that are worth highlighting:

- There is subtle praise of the virtues and distinctiveness of what can be identified as the "core nation";
- There is the presence of a rhetorical frame that argues for protecting the status of the dominant nation at home to save the nation: Here is worth highlighting that the group that he makes reference to, the ones that he talks to are not the currently political dominant ones, but instead they are seen as the ones with the true "values", the ones who are in favor and fight for the traditional family - on a heavily conservative way