Leadership styles and public opinion: Communication strategies, media bias and their effects on Brazilian political crisis

Alessandra Aldé

This paper will present the argument that the different leadership styles of the two most recent Presidents of Brazil, Luis Inácio Lula da Silva and Dilma Roussef, are meaningful to their political performance and may contribute to understand party and government choices, as well as their path to the present political crisis. Notwithstanding the objective scenario of international economic crisis, as well as social opposition to PT’s project and practice, a presidentialist system like ours highlights the personality, political and discursive skills of leaders. Although Dilma’s characteristics were a strategical asset when she was chosen to succeed Lula, the same characteristics were to hamper her government to the point of a probable impeachment, as we are about to witness in the coming weeks.

To illustrate the two leaders’ different styles, a brief analysis of a sample of their respective electoral campaigns for the four elections at issue will be presented. This paper brings to discussion a work in progress, and limits itself to describe chosen pieces of the Free Electoral Broadcast Airtime (FEBA) and the main jingle of each campaign, pointing specifically at the candidates’ leadership styles and identity building. Discursive as well as rethorical analysis will be employed.

1. Political crisis and leadership issues: in the light of conjuncture

Brazil presently lives a moment of economic and political crisis visible to the international observer. The incumbent president, first woman in such office, Dilma Rousseff, faces charges of mismanagement and the possibility of impeachment by Congress. It would be a sad end to one of the periods in which Brazil seemed to live up to the promise

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1 Professor at UERJ (Rio de Janeiro State University) and visiting scholar at the Latin American Centre, University of Oxford. Research supported by a CAPES scholarship.
of “land of the future”: in effect, in successive mandates since 2002, the PT or Workers’ Party, through Presidents Lula and Dilma, obtained feats as the reduction of poverty and the establishment of an array of social policies that effectively changed in better the situation of the more vulnerable population. Examples of this success are the steady growth and indexation of the minimum salary, the Bolsa Família cash transfer program, electrification and housing programs, access to university education, popular credit and the progressive formalization of employment.

However, PT’s government started facing problems when the “easy” money of commodities, mainly oil, on which was largely based the financing of social policies, became scarcer due to a slower growing rhythm in China and other international consumers. Dilma’s government was not able anymore to accommodate redistributive conflict as in previous Lula years. Necessary fiscal adjustment encounters opposition by relevant social sectors, supported by a partisan media which has been increasingly critical. PT also faces middle class resentment towards the positive effects of social programs, which have effectively reshaped the once abundant low pay labour market.

The causes of the crisis are thus complex and objective, and not to be analysed in depth here. To some extent, however, the President’s leadership style and constraints have influenced the development and perception of the its extension and responsability. We argue that Lula and Dilma have different political means of broaching the negative agenda, political allies and opposition, as well as public opinion, as this paper will briefly try to demonstrate.

Different types of leadership have been a classic concern for political thought, as evident, for example, in Max Weber’s well known categorization of traditional, charismatic and rational-legal leaders. In a democracy, the leader’s role implies relating to partisans as well as subordinates, the different branches of government, organized civil society, the press and public opinion, and citizens as voters in the electoral moment. In the specific reality of Brazil, Presidents face institutional constraints related to the political and electoral systems, as well as the cultural and social constraints derived from social prejudice and widespread beliefs on what a political leader should be like. In this sense, both presidents faced social and cultural barriers, Lula as the first working class President
in a country where class belonging and formal education have been consistent marks of national leaders, and Dilma as the first woman in charge of the federal executive.

This paper looks at a sample of electoral propaganda by PT during the last four presidential elections, which the party won twice with Lula (2002, 2006) and twice with Dilma (2010, 2014). Our aim is to identify the different strategies and the role of leadership styles in each different political context. It is worth noting the relevant place of television advertising for Brazilian executive elections, with a significant audience to the already traditional Free Electoral Broadcast Airtime (FEBA or HGPE, Horário Gratuito de Propaganda Eleitoral).

2. Institutional constraints

Brazilian presidentialist political system implies institutional constraints related to the formation of majority in Congress and distribution of power among electoral allies. Unlike Parliamentarism, where legislative and executive powers are part of the same project and the “winner takes all”, or a bi-partisan model of Presidentialism with clear congressional majorities, Brazilian leaders must build governing coalitions in a multi-party system, one of the most fragmented in the world.

On the other hand, legislation grants access to a remarkable model of political and electoral broadcast communication, which is free for parties and almost mandatory for citizens. Although designed to favor major players and well established party oligarchies, it grants democratic access to radio and television broadcasting and offers a counterweight to corporate commercial media, historically biased.

2.1. Coalition presidentialism and executive-legislative relations

Brazilian presidents are considered among the most powerful in the world by Shugart and Carey’s classification (1992). They have total and partial veto power, the initiative of law proposition (and the exclusivity of proposing budget and fiscal legislation),
the possibility of issuing binding decrees and demanding urgency on legislative matters of their interest. Presidents are at the same time chiefs of State and of government, responsible for nominating all the cabinet of Ministers, formed after negotiation with ally parties, as well as appointing the Supreme Court judges. Although the term of office has a fixed duration of four years, Brazilian legislation allows for its interruption through a process of impeachment by Congress, such as the one Dilma may be facing soon. This mechanism was used once, to oust the first president elected after the military regime, Fernando Collor de Mello, who resigned to avoid the process.

A majoritarian electoral system for the executive branch is combined to PR vote for state and federal legislative offices which are simultaneous and unbinding – a candidate may be elected president with a minoritarian party or even not have any legislative representative elected. Parties present open lists of candidates, which are then ranked by voting results; each party has incentive to present as much candidates as possible, in order to maximize vote totals, as well as invest in “vote pullers”, popular candidates who help inflate party totals, essential to reach parliament seats. Only a small percentage of candidates would have enough individual votes to grant election.

In the 2014 elections, for example, eleven candidates ran for President, while the number of parties with representatives in the lower chamber rose from 22 to 28, a world record of party fragmentation. PT, the party of the president elected, made only 70 deputies, or 13.6% of the total 513 House seats. Without a given majority, the resulting coalition Presidentialism implies heavy dependency on legislative alliances and support to ensure governability (POWER, 2010).

In Brazil, since the end of dictatorship and the first elected governments, governability was assured with the distribution of political benefits to allies, such as approval of budget amends and nomination of cabinet members, but also campaign financial support, FEBA-based agreements and plain bribery, as uncovered in the Mensalão scandal during Lula’s first government. In a sense, the cost of majority building became even greater with the clash between PT’s social agenda and a conservative Congress. Although associated to PT’s administration, “buying votes” for bills has been a constant practice in previous governments. The growing perception of corruption is partly due to more independent investigative agencies and greater transparency.
The President and his closer collaborators, such as the appointed Chief of Staff, are in constant negotiation with party leaders to pass bills and secure policies. The executive’s power is reinforced by extreme media visibility, in a scenario where a few open television channels are still the main information source of the majority.

2.2. Presidentialism, personalism and political propaganda

Another peculiar feature of Brazilian democratic institutions is the Electoral Communication system, which allows for great visibility in elections times especially for the executive offices, combined with mandatory vote for all citizens between 18 and 70 years old.

Given the biased journalistic landscape, party access to media broadcast has become crucial to citizen information and alternation in power. Political advertising is aired on radio and television through FEBA, institutionalized distribution of timeslots attributed by law to parties for free access to electronic media; paid political advertising is forbidden in electronic media, but allowed in print press. Although it is free for parties and mandatory for broadcasting companies, government pays for it in the form of fiscal waive. Airtime is divided in two modalities: longer programs at fixed hours and shorter 30 seconds spots inserted during regular programming. In addition to Electoral Airtime on election years, parties are entitled to Free Party Broadcast Airtime, also mandatory for all open access channels and aired in both formats every semester, except electoral ones. Although these should be used exclusively to disseminate party values and platforms, they end up serving as accessory electoral propaganda spaces for party leaders.

Brazilian FEBA follows a distinctive model, its distribution and language differing from the more commercial american model of political advertising, as well as from the ones where parties are granted specific spaces that have to be actively sought by citizens. The system distributes airtime to parties according to the size of their federal legislative representation in the previous election, granting a minimum time to parties with no elected deputy. It occupies national prime time broadcasting and is mandatory for all open radio and television channels simultaneously. According to Albuquerque, it should be analysed as
electoral propaganda, due to the more political nature of the latter concept (2005). Featuring lengthier programs, sometimes several minutes long, campaigns in Brazil resort to a variety of audiovisual formats and styles, in addition to high impact commercial advertising.

The Brazilian model is party oriented: even executive campaigns are granted time according to their size in Congress, and bigger party, PMDB, has used FEBA access as an asset to negotiate participation in federal coalitions. Nevertheless, vote tend to be personalistic, and so do FEBA spots and programs. Despite the variety of formats, personal features, past achievements and positions on issues are more relevant than party ideology and platform.

Brazilian academic research on political and electoral broadcasting has focused mainly on Presidential elections, especially since Collor’s election in 1989.

### 3. Political personae and communication strategies

Given the institutional features of Presidentialism, as well as political history and culture, Brazil has often seen prominent political leaders who rely on their personal charisma and communication skills, such as Getúlio Vargas, Juscelino Kubitschek and Jânio Quadros in the XXth century and, more recently, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, President between 2003 and 2010, whose personal influence was decisive to get former Secretary Dilma Rousseff elected to succeed him, in spite of growing rejection of the Workers Party’s image – if not of its popular policies. Up to the present, PT still uses strategically the ex-President figure and declarations to counter hostile media and congress opposition. Analysts and political science even separate traditional party identification, which was always relatively high for PT, from a new phenomenon seen as “lulismo”.

Lula built his leadership and political images through a long career since its beginning in the 70s, during the military dictatorship, as a Union leader with great influence over the Metal industry workers constituency of São Paulo. In 1980, with the beginning of political
distension by the military regime, he participated in the creation of PT, becoming its main leader. Lula’s persona as a national leader was strengthened in the 80s with participation in the massive movement to demand direct presidential elections, alongside with the all oppositional political parties and social movements. In 1985, Lula was elected federal deputy by São Paulo and participated in the National Constitutional Assembly that discussed and wrote the new Constitution, in effect since 1988. The PT, however, did not sign the final document, and was critical of Congress, which Lula publicly scorned as “300 crooks” (300 picaretas).

In the 1989, the first after the military coup of 1964, Lula made it to the second turn, outvoting several historical political leaders. The election was won by Collor de Mello, but PT was greatly successful in strengthening the party and Lula’s figure as an advocate of change and popular demands. The following elections were won by Fernando Henrique Cardoso (PSDB) relying mainly on the success of the economic stabilization plan known as Plano Real, always facing Lula as his main contender. Lula did not seek other offices beside the Presidency, as the Party gradually grew to be the main oppositional organization during the Cardoso years.

Brazilian main television and news outlets, especially powerful Rede Globo, preferred to support more or less explicitly the more conservative alternatives; FEBA was thus quite important for Lula to build his image as a popular leader, always critical of government and positioning himself as in direct communication with people. Lula has a strong popular identity, having had a poor childhood, moving with mother and brothers from starving Northeast to São Paulo, where he emerged as Workers Union leader. He speaks in a simple and warm manner, makes jokes and swears; his best performances were always live rallies and meetings, standing on the podium with a microphone, more than media rehearsed apparitions, which he had to learn how to do.

In an unequal country as Brazil, Lula’s working class background faced strong prejudice even in the lower classes, who shared a conservative view where politics were seen as an elite business: leaders should be educated, and only a few popular politicians made it to national level. The fact that he made grammatical mistakes, for example, was highlighted by the media and was commonly mentioned as a sign of incompetence.
Dilma’s leadership, on the other hand, has been marked by a technical background and absence of popular communication skills; in fact, she had never run for any elected office until the Presidency, has a very poor relation with strongly oppositional national media and seems unable to deal with the political and economic crisis that has haunted her mandates. Her style can be seen as having negative influence in her perception by citizens and journalists, and had to be dealt with specific communication strategies for electoral campaign. On the positive side, the “tough manager” image could also be related to seriousness and uprightness of character, detaching Dilma from the typical negative stereotypes associated to politicians. It can be said that the features that increase her unpopularity now are the same that contributed for her first election in 2010.

As other female leaders, Dilma also faces stereotypical framing by media, opposition and public opinion. Brazil has a chauvinist culture and one of the worst world records of female political representation, many of the (few) women in office being relatives (spouses, daughters) of traditional politicians. Politics is seen as harsh, its main metaphors relating to war. From female politicians, it is usually expected a specific style of leadership, more accommodating, and attention to issues such as social care. As we will see, Dilma was to build, through communication campaign strategies, a combination of these expectations in order to succeed as a candidate.

To illustrate these different styles, its effects and shortcomings, as well as their reception by voters, media and public opinion, we will resort to FEBA material, where the leaders have a chance to present directly to the electorate an elaborate image of themselves, stressing what they deem to be their strongest assets and striving to overcome possible reasons of rejection. It is a space for rhetorical communication, aimed at persuasion and at image construction. For each campaign, we present discursive analysis of emblematic campaign pieces, mainly extracts from programs and the main musical jingle.

### 3.1. Little Lula peace and love: the 2002 victory

The 2002 FEBA campaign was seen as crucial to help Lula finally getting elected President, after previous attempts in 1989, 1994 and 1998. It was directed by a high profile
adman, Duda Mendonça, who set an emotional tone to programs and spots, addressing Lula’s main obstacles to obtain the support of the majority of voters: his perceived radicalism as a Union leader, and his lack of formal education skills, up to then an expected feature of Brazilian political leaders. Professedly aimed at softening Lula’s image into a new “Lulinha paz e amor” (Little Lula peace and love), more palatable to the general voter, the campaign also benefited from Cardoso’s government negative evaluation. José Serra, the situation candidate, concentrated in presenting his personal qualifications as former Minister of Health, trying to avoid the burden of incumbency and show his differences from Cardoso, but Lula’s identification as “the change” made it difficult to dispute on similar grounds.

3.1.1. FEBA: the PT brand and team

Lula’s 2002 campaign was favored by the wear of previous Fernando Henrique Cardoso’s government, who at the end of his second mandate faced strong disapproval. All candidacies, in effect, disputed the label of “the change”, even the incumbents party’s candidate José Serra, stressing his differences from Cardoso and making jingles about change. Other candidates representing a renewal of some kind, such as Ciro Gomes and even conservative Roseana Sarney, who claimed being a woman was a change, had moments of success during the pre-campaign.

Nevertheless, Lula was the best positioned candidate to claim he brought real change, having presented himself as opposition in every previous context. His party had already national visibility and some administrative experience, mainly in Southern Rio Grande do Sul, both at state and capital level.

It is important to note that Lula’s leadership, in this campaign, appears as markedly political, reinforcing the party’s collective role, as a group, to complement individual deficiencies and provide excellence in public policy. Each program had the same opening sequence, a room of people working together overround tables, and was introduced by instrumental energetic music similar to “breaking news” programs. Lula would then personally introduce a different issue for each program, and a table and narrator would
present “Lula’s team” (a equipe de Lula) do tackle it. Members were listed with their name and main qualifications, stressing the aspects in which Lula was seen as less prepared by the public. For example, when presenting his team for Economy, the list would say: Guido Mantega, economist with PhD from USP and specialization on the UK; professor of Economics at the FGV. João Sayad, economist with PhD by Yale University, former Secretary of Finance of the city of São Paulo. The team was presented with grave narration, still pictures of the collaborators and background epic instrumental music. The features stressed in each team excelled exactly where Lula was perceived as weak, namely formal education and past administrative experience, transferring to the team the collective capacity of governing. Lula was depicted mainly as the organizaer, the coordinator who put the team together, as a capable articulator.

The campaign also invested in showing Lula’s smiling and lighthearted side, which had never been present as former Union leader and candidate. In effect Lula was seen as angry and radical. His biography was reenacted in a very emotional tone, narrated in first person by the candidate over black and white photographs. Even the red star, symbol fo PT, as softened. Previously, its sharp points had illustrated (in a Veja magazine cover, for example) the radical and painful political stands of the party. In Lula’s campaign, the star was pictured as a positive symbol, a plaything, even a soft cushion to cherish and hold. In the video that brings the image below, Lula hugs the big soft star, then looks at the camera, smiles and winks.

The campaign jingle further illustrate the new image of the leader emerging from these communication strategy.
3.1.2. **Jingle: “Have faith and say Lula”**

Electoral jingles are a central piece in any campaign. In Brazilian Presidential elections, they have to reach all the diversity of a national electoral, planned to be shown and repeated in prime time TV and radio FEBA, sung in meetings and rallies. This is why it is very common that they use popular rhythms, in particular “forró”, a Northeast dancing rhythm very popular throughout the country, also because of the migration of part of the workforce from original poorer Northeast to the other regions.

The 2002 main jingle is no exception. It brings a colorful videoclip, where red stars are shown in many positive, playful situations, paying tribute also to Brazilian popular diversity, with different people smiling, dancing in beautiful landscapes. It is not a typical oppositional clip; it does not point at the problems the country faces but at the positive future ahead after the change, shown as inevitable.

**Have faith and say Lula**

“There’s no turning off the sun, there’s no stopping time,
There’s no counting the stars that sparkle in the sky
There’s no stopping the river when it flows to the sea
There’s no keeping Brazil silent when it wants to sing
Put this star on your chest, don’t be afraid or ashamed
I want you now, to see you cheering in favor
In favor of what’s right, of the decency that’s left
In favor of a people that’s poor, but noble and hard working
It’s this people’s will, to wish a more decent Brazil
To have right hope and a different life
All you have to do is want it
And tomorrow shall be so
Have faith and say Lula, have faith and say Lula, Lula!”

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Não dá apagar o sol, não dá pra parar o tempo,
Não dá pra contar estrelas que brilham no firmamento,
Não dá pra parar um rio quando ele corre pro mar,
Não dá pra calar o Brasil quando ele quer cantar:
Bota essa estrela no peito, não tenha medo ou pudor,
Agora eu quero você, te ver torcendo a favor
In the first few images, redundant scenarios illustrate what is being said, with stars sparklin, a river flowing and flowers blooming to show the passing of time. Analogically, the wish for change is seen as natural, inevitable, like the glowing of the sun or the flowing of the river.

Then it goes on to show people, usually in groups, holding the red star, showing it to each other, dancing in circle holding a bigger one over their heads, unfolding a big white cloth with a red star printed in it, singing the jingle. Workers, young people, an indian child, all cherish the star, adopt it. It is shown in the wheels of a passing bycicle and in the pocket of a young person dancing. The party symbol is the great protagonist of the jingle, breaking the resistance to its socialist implications, that had previously been used to detract it. Lula himself apperas only in the final images, hugging and patting a giant soft, cushion-like red star. It is clear it is his star, he seems to own or master it, and it is cuddling, not menacingm that he presents it.

Lula presented himself as the legitimate representative of change, attributing central role to party identification, as a team effort and collective qualification to take over the nations highest position.

3.2. Leader of the people: the 2006 incumbent election

Lula’s reelection, in 2006, although explained mainly by the success of government’s social and economic results, managed to block the opposition’s strategy of pointing at the corruption scandal known as the Mensalão. As is usual with incumbent candidacies, it followed a more journalistic approach, presenting the government feats in more journalistic language, with data on achievements, news media reproductions and documentary style stories. It still relied on Lula’s identification as “one of the people”,

A favor do que é direito, cada decência que restou,
A favor de um povo pobre, mas nobre, trabalhador.
Ê o desejo dessa gente querer um Brasil mais decente,
Ter direito à esperança e uma vida diferente!
Ê só você querer!
Ê só você querer que amanhã assim será
Bote fé e diga Lula, bote fé e diga Lula, eu quero Lula!
contrasting with oppositional PSDB’s more elitist discourse and candidate, São Paulo’s former governor Geraldo Alckmin.

As incumbent president, Lula had to learn how to deal with Congress pressure for power and benefits. As a popular leader, he strength relied more in direct communication and charismatic discourse than backstage agreements and alliance building. This turned out not to be enough to grant parliamentary support for PT’s policies, which the party ended up dealing in the “old politics” Brazilian mode of political concession and even money bribery. Lula opened up to receiving and responding to the petty demands of local deputies, while maintaining his popular manners and leaving negotiation to other party members. When this was uncovered, in 2005, it became the focus of media negative coverage that has not ceased until the present. It also gave opposition the main theme for upcoming campaigns.

3.2.1. FEBA: Incumbency and popular identity

For this election, Lula faced quite a different challenge. On one hand, he had accomplishments and social and economic numbers to provide voters with pragmatic arguments on continuity (in this sense, it is a typical mandatory campaign). The campaign used consistently reproductions of print press and other media as proof of the good results, especially in economics. It is ironic because mainstream media had been strongly attacking the government since the 2005 Mensalão scandal, and had a biased coverage during all the 2006 electoral period. But the “economics fact”, presenting newspaper covers and headlines as documents, proved that the economy went well, supporting the economic vote.

Besides the pragmatic argument, the campaign presented Lula as a true popular leader, stressing his interest in solving people’s problems and is popular identity. The opening of every program showed Lula as the popular leader of the masses. In a fast sequence, he is shown in several images interacting with people who cherish him, accompanied by the simple chant: “It’s Lula again, with the strength of the people”. There is strong presence of the national colors green and yellow, the Brazilian flag and animated landscapes to illustrate regional diversity. After the Mensalão scandal which implicated
many of its leaders, the party symbols have almost disappeared from the campaign, that focuses the image of Lula as a benevolent leader and the governments feats as his own.

It is the image of the man of the people who achieved the most important political office without forgetting his popular origin. He is shown among the people who smile, touch and admire their leader, who feels confident and at ease. This image is clearly present in the dramatic jingle aired during the first program.

3.2.2. Jingle: President of the People

The main jingle of Lula’s reelection campaign is emblematic of his choice of persona as the popular leader, stressing the identification with the simple and the poor. The refrain is insistently repeated throughout the campaign, accompanied by a rapid succession of faces – marked as workers, men and women – the last one, a dark skinned man in blue uniform, is succeeded by the President’s own, suggesting that Lula is one more of millions of Brazilian workers. The first part of the jingle, with a slower and more dramatic movement, only appears once, during the first FEBA program. A voice in off introduces the song: “Lula has the face of Brazil, and Brazil has the face of Lula”.

President of the People
“IT is useless to try to silence me
Nobody ever will stifle my voice
When the people want, nobody masters

The world lights up, it’s us for him, he for us
Brazil wants to keep moving forward
With the first man of the people, President
He knows how to rule with the heart
And rules for everybody with justice and union
Has the soul of the people, and a face like ours
It is millions of Lulas populating this Brazil (Chorus)
Men and women striving night and day
For a fair and independent country
Where the President is people, and the people is President”

Already in its first three strophes, the jingle brings a clear idea of opposition, the voice of the people rising against a force that tries to “silence”, “stifle” and “master” it. It states a context of dispute and, at the same time, the autonomy of action and clearness of will of the subject, which turns from first person discourse in the first two strophes to “the people” in the third. The melody is slow, a rural sad chant, until the fourth strophe, when text and music become more cheerful – as if the first phrases referred to a past of struggle and suffering, overcome (the world lights up) due to Lula, the man of the people who becomes President. The mutual debt is quite explicit: it’s us for him, and he for us. The people’s will, now, is no more to speak up (as in the beginning), but to “keep moving forward”. In a deeply emotional tone, the lyrics suggest that Lula feels empathy for the people’s problemas because he maintains his popular origin and identity. The refrain, constantly repeated during the campaign, celebrates this identity between the leader and the people: each voter is to feel like a Lula “populating this country”.

Images of people working in every professional (mainly manual professions, men and women). Subtly, a presidential yellow and green sash is drawn by computer effect over the chest of some of the citizens, confirming that “they are the president”.

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3 “Não adianta tentar me calar
Hoje ninguém pode abafar a minha voz
Quando o povo quer, ninguém domina
O mundo se ilumina, é nós por ele, ele por nós
O que eu quero é seguir em frente
Com o primeiro homem do povo, presidente
Ele sabe governar com o coração
Tem a alma do povo, e a cara da gente
São milhões de Lulas povoando este Brasil (Refrão)
Homens e mulheres noite e dia a lutar
Por um país justo e independente
Onde o presidente é povo e o povo é presidente”. 
In the tenth strophe, the lyrics returns to the theme of conflict, stating that people’s daily activity is to “struggle” night and day. But it suggest that the fight is now political (for a fair and independent country), and not anymore for survival.

The closing phrase suggests that this fight can be lead by Lula in the name of the people, as its representative, not only through vote, but in a more atavic fashion by the link of identity.

3.3. The faithful follower: making of “Dilma presidenta” in 2010

As a consequence of the Mensalão scandal, which involved several PT’s leaders accused and arrested for bribing parliament members to approve party proposals, the election of 2010 found the party short of natural candidates. Lula’s choice was for Dilma Rousseff, a former cabinet member who, however, had never stood for election.

The campaign strategy counted on Lula’s success and persona to popularize Dilma, using her more technical profile to the advantage of the candidate, presented as a loyal follower of Lula’s successful policies and not a “typical politician”, negatively viewed by most of the electorate. The campaign dealt in a subdued manner with the gender factor, in spite of stating that Dilma would be “the first woman President”; femininity had to be dosed with “masculine” authority to dodge gender prejudice, an important feature of Brazilian politics, where feminine representation if one of the smallest worldwide.

The party strategy was to link Dilma to Lula, which was repeated by media and voters, who saw Dilma (sometimes critically) as “Lula in skirts” (Lula de saias). As a matter of fact, he appears insistently in all campaign material, and his confirmation and patronage were used to give the unknown candidate legitimacy.
The gender issue was tackled by President Dilma in building her image – if not in pursuing a female agenda, much to the regret of human rights and free choice movements. Symbolically, she adopted the gendered “Presidenta”, instead of the also correct but neutral “President”. Previously to being chosen as Lula’s successor, as Minister of Mines and Energy and Chief of Staff of his government, Dilma was pictured as a stern bureaucrat, not worried about her looks, aggressive with subordinates, a “tough boss” without much empathy. According to opinion polls, she was perceived as masculine, occasionally as a lesbian. Surprisingly, though, it was a feature that helped her to be seen as fit for the office. Both in 2010 and 2014 she faced female competition in the Presidential run by Marina Silva, environmentalist leader who had participated as Lula’s Minister in the first mandate. To voters, however, Marina was seen as weak, more associated to female stereotypes (sometimes called depreciatively “mulherzinha”, little woman) and not capable of dealing with the harshness of political world.

Thus the campaign had a double challenge facing gender stereotype: Dilma had to be “feminine enough” not to be placed in the lesbian drawer, avoiding prejudice, but to be seen as a leading woman, with relative political autonomy and strength. Lula could avow her, but voters must trust she could face the “sharks” of Brazilian politics.

3.3.1. FEBA: the converging biographies

As is usual in FEBA major campaigns, the programs aired at afternoon and in the evening are different, aiming at the different audiences. The first program was a quiete conventional biography of the candidate, yet to be introduced to most of the electorate. It
focused Dilma as a caring but efficient woman. On the evening program, which usually reaches a broader audience, Dilma is presented as the right arm of the president, someone who helped him plan and execute the main national projects – up to then, a hidden shadow, for only during the previous year had government attempted to have her appear more in public occasions. Her looks also underwent a studied change, including plastic surgery, a new wardrobe with more feminine and sharp style, no glasses in public, use of makeup, smiling and addressing public meetings.

The first segment is an epic superproduction, in which Lula and Dilma addressed each other from the geographic extremes of the country while aerial shots showed the progress and achievements of government. Once more, party symbols were absent from the campaign, treated like a personal commitment to Lula’s leadership and heritage. They addressed each other personally in the first person, Dilma using a more formal “president”, and Lula calling her “Dilma”.

### 3.3.2. Jingle “In your hands I leave my people”

The jingle “In your hands I leave my people” was not the official main jingle of the 2010 campaign, presented earlier that year in the PT convention. But it marked the radio and television FEBA first programs and the whole campaign. It is also very important for our argument on the identity building of both politicians. In effect, it brings President Lula, then very popular, speaking in first person and addressing his chosen candidate.

The first musical accords are overlapped with 1) sounds of footsteps and images of Lula walking alone in the presidential palace, looking out, and 2) journalistic images and narration of Lula’s victory in 2002. The song is melancholic and dramatic, slower than usual for national jingles.

**In your hands I leave my people**

“In your hands I leave my people  
And all I loved most  
But I only do so for I know  
You will continue what I’ve done  
And my country will be better
And my people, happier
The way I have dreamed and always wished

When I pass through my Northeast
I saw all we have already done
But also what you will still do
I know you care about the South
Because it hosted you
when you needed most
I know you love the Southeast
My São Paulo, our Rio
And your Minas Gerais
That saw you young and brave
And soon will see you first [female] President
In the North I know you never
Forget the people, the forest and waters
In the Centre-West I know
You will take care of the seed
That with much love I have planted
Now the hands of a woman will lead us
I will go ahead, feel nostalgia
But happy, with a smile
For I know, my people gained a mother
With a hearth that goes
From the Oiapoque to the Chuí [geographic extremes]
In your hands I leave my people

4 "Deixo em tuas mãos o meu povo
e tudo o que mais amei
mas só deixo porque sei
que vais continuar o que fiz
E o meu país será melhor
e o meu povo, mais feliz
do jeito que sonhei e sempre quis
Quando passo no meu Nordeste
vejo quanto já fizemos
Mas ainda o que farás
Sei que o Sul tu tens carinho
Porque ele te acolheu
Quando precisavas mais
Sei que amas o Sudeste
Meu São Paulo, nosso Rio
E tua Minas Gerais
Que te viu jovem e valente
e logo te verá primeira presidente
No Norte sei que jamais
O povo, a mata e as águas esquecerás
E no Centro-Oeste eu sei
que cuidarás da semente
que com muito amor plantei
Agora as mãos de uma mulher
It is clear from the first strophes it is a goodbye song from Lula to the people. He walks melancholically through the palace, then appears passing by car and waving to populars, who wave back and thank him: one of the men joins his two hands and lightly bows his head in appraisal. Lula seems as he would prefer not to leave – in effect, running for a third mandate is forbidden by Brazilian law, but surveys showed Lula would have had popular support in the case it was allowed. Images of roads unfolding, boat, truck and citizens of diverse ethnicities, working (truck driver, bread baker) dancing and smiling (children), in typical clothes (afro-brazilian dress) combine to show a happy people in the first part. The second part goes on to mention each of the five Brazilian geographical regions, with beautiful typical images, while the lyrics state the motives of affection by both leaders: Northeast, where Lula was born, and São Paulo (Southeast), where he grew and make his career, are owned by him (“my”). Dilma’s biographical relation to Minas Gerais (Southeast), which saw her “young and brave” and Rio Grande do Sul (South) which “hosted you when you needed more”, after persecution and torture by the military regime. Rio de Janeiro, an emblematic city to all Brazilians, is affectionately treated as “ours”.

The jingle (as well as the overall campaign tone) was criticized for being patronizing. In effect, it is as if the people belong to Lula, who is entitled to hand them to his chosen candidate. Possessives abound: my people, my region, city, state; your hands, your state; our region. As in other campaign pieces, discourse is made in a direct first person mode, as if Lula is talking to Dilma. This jingle is one of the emotional highlights of the campaign.

Mentions of gender are less important, here, than the link between the present President, Lula, and his chosen candidate. They share the same view of a nation described geographically to be lead and cherished. However, the change is pointed when Lula says the first “Presidenta” and “the hands of a woman will lead us”.

vão nos conduzir
Eu sigo com saudade
Mas feliz a sorrir
pois sei, o meu povo ganhou uma mãe
que tem um coração
que vai do Oiapoque ao Chuí
Deixo em tuas mãos o meu povo.”
3.4. Dilma brave heart: revival of the young militant

Dilma’s first government led to popular approval, as she continued most social programs, even though facing elite opposition and media criticism. However, she was praised for her perceived honesty, as a change from corrupt party leaders. This was even presented in the news with a subtle gender framing, when she was named the “house cleaner” (faxineira) for firing Ministers who were found to be involved in scandal. However, criticism was dominant, and the second election as won over the narrowest margin of votes, so far, in Brazilian history. Results were so close that engaging the former party militants, many of them disappointed with the party’s corruption charges, was crucial to grant victory.

Thus, the campaign aimed both at publicizing achievements, usually understated in the news, and pointing at the more popular and social drive of PT’s government, mainly by comparison to previous Fernando Henrique Cardoso years.

In this election, Dilma has already built a character of her own. The song features “the people” as main voice, and focuses on the courage of the President. As with Lula’s reelection campaign, there is an implicit enemy, a menacing other that might take away the conquests of the Lula years.

3.4.1. Jingle: Dilma, brave heart

Dilma, brave heart
“Dilma, brave heart, Brazilian strength, nerve of this people
Dilma, brave heart, nothing will hold us from moving ahead
You never looked away from the people’s suffering
That’s why I want you again
That’s why I want you anew
You never wavered when fighting for us
That’s why I’m close, on your side
With you and Lula to keep moving ahead
Woman of clean hands (I’m with you)
Woman of free hands (I’m with you)
Woman of firm hands, let’s live a new hope
With much more future and much more change
What’s good will continue  (Repeat)
What’s not, we will improve
Brave heart!"5

Despite the emphasis on Dilma’s courage, the lyrics to this jingle are not aggressive, and Dilma is presented by herself: the only mention to Lula is a collective one. She shares compassionate features (not looking away from suffering, fighting for the people). The repetition of the gender “woman” is associated to the positive personal characteristics of the candidate: she is honest, firm and free (from political commitments other than the people.

The song is a popular “forró”, and the images suggest it can be listened by anyone, anywhere – not only during FEBA. The first images show a young man typing the campaign’s site address in a desktop computer, then clicking on the “jingle” item and placing his headphone to listen. This piece suggests that the citizens have the initiative of supporting the candidate and her government, choosing to hear the song outside from FEBA situations. Although it was not the first election in Brazil where Internet and social media played some political role, in effect Dilma was helped by mobilization through the web, especially during the very tight second round.

One other interesting choice of the campaign in building Dilma’s leadership style were the references to her past guerrilla record, as a fighter for democracy, against the military regime. An old picture of Dilma arrested as a young woman was widely used, and

5 “Dilma, coração valente, força brasileira, garra desta gente.
Dilma, coração valente, nada nos segura pra seguir em frente
Você nunca desviou o olhar do sofrimento do povo
Por isso, eu te quero outra vez
Por isso, eu te quero de novo
Você nunca vacilou em lutar em favor da gente
Por isso eu tô juntinho, do seu lado
Com você e Lula pra seguir em frente
Mulher de mãos limpas (tô com você)
Mulher de mãos livres (tô com você)
Mulher de mãos firmes, vamos viver uma nova esperança
Com muito mais futuro e muito mais mudança
Dilma, coração valente, força brasileira, garra desta gente
Dilma, coração valente, nada nos segura pra seguir em frente
O que tá bom, vai continuar
O que não tá, a gente vai melhorar (2x)
Coração valente!”
hit social media during second turn, being transformed in Facebook avatar by voters supporting her.

The polarization of Presidential contests, in this respect, favored PT both in 2010 and 2014, which relied heavily on the comparison argument and the underlying menace that the country could lose the conquests of the Lula years and “go back” to the previous negative scenario, attributed to the rival PSDB, then running with former Minas Gerais governor Aécio Neves. This strategy resonated mainly with a majority of the population benefited from PT’s policies, and was sufficient to give the party a narrow victory, although facing a mounting economic crisis and new corruption charges, this time, linked to the country’s state oil company, Petrobrás.

4. Conclusion

Lula and Dilma, with their different backgrounds and personal features, demonstrate the relevance of leadership styles on political outcomes, governability and legitimacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lula</th>
<th>Dilma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6 It is worth noting that the corruption schemes revealed and prosecuted under PT’s government are not new to Brazilian politics, but have been framed by mainstream media as belonging almost exclusively to its administrations. If anything, the fact that they are being investigated and punished in such a scale is a novelty.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workers Union origin</th>
<th>Political militant, anti-regime guerilla origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party “founding father”</td>
<td>Lacks party endorsement and legitimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social movements, grassroots</td>
<td>Cabinet, bureaucratic profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election record</td>
<td>Not a politician: never ran any election before the Presidency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular, charismatic</td>
<td>Authoritarian, centralizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis management (mensalão)</td>
<td>Crisis management (petrolão)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching civil society with public agenda</td>
<td>Insulated both from party and the masses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Populism; good communication skills</td>
<td>Poor communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraints from popular origin</td>
<td>Constraints as female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Dilma’s case, the same features that made her a rational choice to win the 2010 election are now affecting negatively her chances of overcoming the present political crisis. In a moment when most PT leaders faced corruption charge, but Lula managed to keep his popularity, she was presented as a technical follower, a faithful public servant with no political attachments, who did not belong to a political class seen as crooked and self-interested. She was seen as honest and qualified, politicians skills such as party history and
dialogue with parliament being underplayed in the presidential campaigns. Even the fact of being a woman, which was useful when stating a subordinate place towards the factual leader Lula, has appeared in strong chauvinist lines in the national press, more radical outlets making editorial choices that come close to gaslighting.

Lula has been appointed by her as Chief of Staff, but the appointment itself was challenged as illegal by the opposition and is now being judged by the Supreme Court. If Lula comes back in such a position, his leadership skills may be relevant to save the government – furtherly admitting Dilma’s hardship in dealing with the office. On the other hand, his electoral positive background is feared by opposition in next 2018 elections, as a possible recovery for PT’s present low popularity rates.

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6. Videos

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HU45_nQD-H8 – first program Lula 2002 (20/8; all candidates evening FEBA)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgIzwkgMKjA – first programa Lula 2006 (15/8)

https://youtu.be/4vet_tVe9HI - first program Dilma 2010 evening

https://youtu.be/XqHe-VQ4F5o - first program Dilma 2014

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL9khvYFy7c – jingle Lula 2002

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHEPKs_00ww – jingle Lula 2006

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4V-DqiPH0aY – jingle Dilma 2010

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5_CdW9K3TU – jingle Dilma 2014