



Working

**'WE ARE GAÚCHOS, WE ARE GAÚCHAS...' INCITEMENTS  
TO GENDERED AND REGIONAL SUBJECTIVITY IN THE 2002  
BRAZILIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS**

**BENJAMIN JUNGE**

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**‘WE ARE *GAÚCHOS*, WE ARE *GAÚCHAS*...’  
INCITEMENTS TO GENDERED AND REGIONAL SUBJECTIVITY  
IN THE 2002 BRAZILIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS**

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**Working Paper #395 – December 2013**

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## ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes Brazil's 2002 presidential and gubernatorial election-campaign discourse, identifying recurrent themes and modes of appeal within campaign discourses. In an introductory section, the conceptual and methodological framework is mapped out, drawing from "anthropology of politics" and media studies scholarship. In this context, a framework for analyzing campaign rhetoric's appeals to a gendered subject and a regional (gaucho) subject is presented. Historical background is provided for the political context and stakes of the 2002 elections, followed by an overview the different types of media used in the campaigns. The analysis proper examines the rhetoric of the presidential campaigns (principally that of leftist Workers Party candidate Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva), followed by analysis of the Rio Grande do Sul gubernatorial campaigns. In the concluding section, the argument is presented that the citizen-subject implicit in the official discourses of the Lula campaign is *individualist* for its concern over everyday-life struggles, *nationalist* for its concern over the country's well-being, and *universalist* for its concern with moral justice. For the gubernatorial campaigns, discursive appeal is constructed with heavy recourse to the "timeless tradition" of authentic (and symbolically masculine) *gauchismo*.

## RESUMO

Este texto analisa o discurso eleitoral nas campanhas presidenciais e para governador em 2002 no Brasil, identificando os temas recorrentes e os apelos de cada discurso de campanha. Em uma seção introdutória, mapeio as abordagens metodológica e conceitual empregadas no texto, derivadas da "antropologia da política" e das pesquisas sobre mídia. Nesse contexto, apresento uma abordagem para a análise dos apelos da retórica da campanha para um sujeito de gênero e para um sujeito regional (gaúcho). Os antecedentes históricos do contexto político e das disputas nas eleições de 2002 são apresentados, seguidos de uma visão geral dos diferentes tipos de mídia empregados em campanha. A análise examina a retórica das campanhas presidenciais (principalmente da do candidato do Partido dos Trabalhadores, de esquerda, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva), seguida pela análise das campanhas para governador no Rio Grande do Sul. Na seção final, o argumento apresentado é que o cidadão-sujeito implícito nos discursos oficiais da campanha de Lula é *individualista* no que concerne as suas lutas na vida cotidiana, *nacionalista* em sua preocupação com o bem-estar do país, e *universalista* em sua preocupação com a justiça moral. Para as campanhas para governador, o apelo discursivo é construído por meio de enfático recurso à "tradição intemporal" do autêntico (e simbolicamente masculino) *gauchismo*.

“Land, people, daring, solidarity. We are a people that has love for its roots and exploratory spirit.... We are Gaúchos, we are Gaúchas, people of many races, of many languages...”  
— Campaign flyer from 2002 PT gubernatorial candidate Tarso Genro<sup>1</sup>

“Radicalism distances society from the government...Rio Grande needs a new alternative!”  
— Campaign flyer from 2002 gubernatorial candidate Germano Rigotto

“I want a civilized Brazil.”  
— Lula campaign slogan, 2002 Presidential Campaign

## INTRODUCTION

“You know,” Vera told me, “candidates are always making accusations and...because in politics we just don’t know if it’s true...Then there’s all those debates on television—one going after the other—it just leaves the voter confused. And that doubt stays with us, even when we vote.” It was on a warm spring afternoon in September 2002, in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil, that Vera, the president of the Vila Cavahada neighborhood association, offered these reflections about the coming elections, then just a few weeks off. A 40-something housewife, Vera participates actively in civic life; she typically votes for politicians with leftist orientations and yet has also been a paid campaign worker in centrist or conservative campaigns. As in most of Vila Cavahada’s households, Vera typically keeps the television or radio turned on during the day while she cleans the house, does the laundry, entertains a guest, or rests.

At the time of our chat, I had been struck by the apparent disconnect implied in Vera’s words between the claims of political campaign discourse, on the one hand, and how ordinary citizens interpret the campaigns and decide for whom to vote, on the other. The way she invoked “we” and “the voter” interested me as well, as these seemed to implicate social identity and collective identification as central to her interpretation of the campaigns. (As a follow-up, I had asked her “We *who*?” and she had responded “the citizen...poor people.”) Finally, embedded in Vera’s words is a certain understanding of “politics” as field of indeterminacy, in which “truth” is fundamentally unascertainable, and as such is alienating to the citizen at election time.

These issues—how campaign discourses ask people to view themselves and how social and self-identity come into play in ethnographically observed talk about campaigns—are the

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<sup>1</sup> All translations from Portuguese to English are the author’s.

central concerns of this text, in which I present an analysis of the official campaign discourse from 2002 national and state-level election campaigns, to which Porto Alegrens were exposed—especially through the medium of television—during the weeks leading up to Brazil’s first-round elections on October 6.<sup>2</sup> This analysis complements an ethnographic analysis, under preparation, of how Porto Alegrens encountered and interpreted the 2002 elections and, within their interpretations, responded to the representational logics and subject positions of official campaign discourse.

### THE PT’S MOMENT OF TRUTH

The 2002 elections came at a pivotal movement for progressive politics in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, and Latin America. Porto Alegre was midway through its fourth consecutive Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT) administration—unparalleled elsewhere in Brazil<sup>3</sup>—affording the PT more than a dozen uninterrupted years to implement its vision of transparent, participatory democracy through initiatives such as the Participatory Budget. In 1999, the PT’s star had risen even higher, as it triumphed for the first time in Rio Grande do Sul’s gubernatorial elections, with the election of bank workers’ union leader Olívio Dutra (who had also been the first PT mayor in Porto Alegre). Now, in 2002, the Rio Grande do Sul PT ran lawyer and two-term former Porto Alegre mayor Tarso Genro as its candidate for governor.

The PT’s lengthy tenure in Porto Alegre (and more recent presence in the state government) had afforded it a degree of control over local politics that many observers deemed inconsistent with its historically oppositional stance toward state power. Even among long-time *Petistas*,<sup>4</sup> consternation grew over PT politicians and former activists who now held well-paying jobs at City Hall. At the same time, the PT had achieved remarkable results in Porto Alegre: making solvent a formerly bankrupt government (Macedo 2000), implementing massive capital investment in poor neighborhoods (Marquetti 2003), and effectively setting in motion both an ethos and practice of direct citizen participation in government decision-making (Baierle 1998).

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<sup>2</sup> If no candidate obtains an absolute majority in the first-round election, a second round is held between the two candidates with the largest number of votes. The candidate with the most valid votes is elected.

<sup>3</sup> During the period 1989–2002, Porto Alegre was the only large Brazilian city in which the PT maintained control over city hall for more than two consecutive terms.

<sup>4</sup> The term *Petista* (which makes a functional noun out of the acronym “PT”) is a colloquial term used to refer to the more ardent PT supporter.

The 2002 gubernatorial elections in Rio Grande do Sul were thus in many ways a referendum on both the accomplishments and failures of the PT experience in Porto Alegre and in the state government.

And then there was Lula, who emerged in mid-2002 as the clear frontrunner in his fourth bid for the presidency. Lula had risen to national visibility through his work as a labor organizer in the late 1970s (particularly as chief architect of a highly effective strike of metallurgical workers in São Paulo in 1978)<sup>5</sup> and as the PT's cofounder and most public member. In 1988, Lula ran for president and lost narrowly to Fernando Collor de Mello, a handsome and wealthy politician from Brazil's northeastern region who was later impeached for corruption. Lula lost again in 1994 and 1998 to Fernando Henrique Cardoso, an erudite sociologist with the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira, PSDB) who was widely credited with having stabilized the Brazilian economy in the early 1990s while serving as finance minister. While known in the social sciences as a key proponent of dependency theory,<sup>6</sup> Cardoso, during his two terms in office, embraced neoliberal economic policy with open arms, supporting trade liberalization, privatization of several national industries, and foreign investment. Cardoso's health minister, José Serra, emerged as Lula's chief opponent in the 2002 election campaigns.<sup>7</sup>

Over the course of three failed attempts, Lula's campaign worked hard to shift his public image from that of a radical socialist who would halt repayment on Brazil's massive foreign debt<sup>8</sup> to a seasoned veteran of progressive politics, committed to improving the lot of Brazil's poor and socially disadvantaged while accepting the terms of the 2002 economic reality in which Brazil found itself inextricably embedded. By early September 2002, one month away from the October 6 first-round elections, national opinion polls had Lula in first place, with between 35 and 40 percent of respondents expressing the intention to vote for him; Serra followed at around 20 percent (IBOPE 2002). Two other candidates trailed with about 15 percent each: Rio de

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<sup>5</sup> See Keck (1992, 49) for a historical description of this strike and its socio-historical context.

<sup>6</sup> Dependency theory argued that poverty in the developing world is perpetuated by economic, political, and cultural dependency on wealthy countries and prescribes import substitution to protect national economies from the ebbs and flows of the international market (Cardoso and Faletto 1979; Wallerstein 1974).

<sup>7</sup> By the time 2002 came around, Cardoso could not run again due to a constitution-mandated two-term limit. See Lemenhe (2002) for a detailed discussion of the intra-party processes through which Serra was selected as the official PSDB candidate.

<sup>8</sup> By December 2001, Brazil's total foreign debt stood at approximately USD \$262 billion.

Janeiro's populist evangelical governor Anthony Garotinho, and Ciro Gomes, a former governor of the northeastern state of Ceará and finance minister under Cardoso.

### **ELECTION TIME IN PORTO ALEGRE: THE SATURATION OF MASS MEDIA AND URBAN SPACE**

In the low-income *vilas* of Beira Rio, rare is the household with no television or radio. Even in the district's poorest neighborhoods with little in the way of basic infrastructure, the muffled drone of a newscast, talk show, variety show, soccer game, or *telenovela* pours out through the windows of kitchens, living rooms, and bedrooms during most of the day. In Vila Cavahada, nearly everyone lives in a household with at least one TV, and the vast majority (89.2 percent) watch at least an hour daily. Most adults (90.6 percent) watch TV news on a regular basis, and about three-fifths (63.8 percent) follow the nightly *telenovelas*. Radio use is also common, with 61.6 percent listening at least an hour daily. Most people (65.3 percent) regularly read a newspaper as well, with men somewhat more likely to read newspapers than women (75.0 percent vs. 57.7 percent,  $p=.003$ ). Taken together, these figures suggest the near impossibility—at election time—of avoiding at least some degree of mass media exposure to campaign discourses.

During the weeks leading up to the October 2002 elections, the campaigns were ubiquitous, driven by media “super-exposure” (Rubim 2002, 330). Through a variety of print, broadcast, and electronic media, portrayals of candidates for the presidency, national congress, and state government pushed deep into the everyday lives of Porto Alegrens.<sup>9</sup> As in any large Brazilian city, Porto Alegre's public spaces were saturated with campaign propaganda in visual media such as posters, billboards, and graffiti, and public events such as rallies and marches were common in both the downtown center and outlying low-income neighborhoods of the city. Broadcast media coverage was continuous, with nightly television and radio broadcasts of the *Horário Gratuito Político* (free political hour), in which candidates and parties receive airtime at no charge to make their appeal to the voter, deluging all major networks with campaign

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<sup>9</sup> The Brazilian National Congress is made up of two houses: the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. Each Brazilian state's three allotted senators are elected for eight-year terms, with one elected after a four-year period and the other two four years later. (In 2002, senatorial elections in Rio Grande do Sul were for two openings.) Federal deputies are elected by proportional representation for four-year terms. At the state level, the governor is elected for a four-year term, and members of the Legislative Assembly, called “state deputies,” are elected by proportionate representation to four-year terms as well.



advertisements. The *Horário* officially moves the campaigns from the “pre-electoral” to the “electoral” period and, together with journalistic coverage, plays a major role in the intensification of media exposure during the campaigns. While campaign rhetorics and platforms differ by candidate and party, the broad aim of all *Horário* clips is to “convince voters, demonstrate capacity to rule, prove moral integrity” (Barreira 1996/1998, 11). These segments draw from a common repertoire of formats, including chapters, vignettes, lectures, interviews, and special reporting. Typically, *Horário* clips try to pull the viewer into the narrative structure, to “to keep the receiver imprisoned in the journey developed by the program” (Oliveira 2003). By the time the first-round elections took place on October 6, even the most politically uninterested had been exposed to the appeals of election campaign discourse through the *Horário Político*.<sup>10</sup>

As sociologist Moacir Palmeira (1990, 6) has observed, election time in Brazil’s post-authoritarian era disrupts routinized perceptions of political process and political actors. In part, this is a necessary dimension to the formal democratic process: The pending election, by definition, brings the incumbent’s job security into question and provides the voter with options by way of alternative candidates. The process requires, moreover, that one pay at least some attention to these options, as the vote in Brazil is constitutionally compulsory for all citizens 18 years old and over.<sup>11</sup> Since nonvoters face stiff fines, Brazilians are obliged to consider—even if only at the moment of casting their ballot—possible candidates to lead their city, state, and national government and the possible futures these candidates might bring.

But the notion of “election time” is not merely descriptive. Indeed, it refers to *time*, that is, to a certain temporal suspension whereby ordinary citizens *pause* to imagine (even if only in fits and starts) possible futures for their city, state, and nation and for other collectivities about which they might care. Election time in Brazil is also a privileged moment of access to and felt intimacy with politicians. Through debates, speeches, and news coverage, candidates make their way into people’s neighborhoods, schools, and living rooms far more often than during the rest of the year, leading to an “acceleration, intensity, greater visibility of politics” in daily life

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<sup>10</sup> For example, a national survey conducted in August of 2002 with 2000 adults from 145 Brazilian municipalities indicated that, one month prior to the first-round elections, between 58 percent and 68 percent had watched the “political hour” at least once (IBOPE 2002).

<sup>11</sup> To put this in comparative perspective: of Latin America’s 20 nations, 16 have some form of compulsory voting. Of these 16, six (including Brazil) have mechanisms in place to enforce voting (typically through fines or restricted access to government services for nonvoters) (Fornos, Power, and Garand 2004).

(Rubim 2002, 329). Candidates organize countless dinners and dances during which they provide free food and transportation in exchange for the opportunity to make their pitch to the attending public—a pitch aimed to translate into votes on election day. Immersed in these campaign rituals, the citizen may experience a suspension of social structure, a state of symbolic equality, or even an inversion of customary values, roles, and social hierarchy (Sennet 1999; Turner 1974; Simmel 1971. For community leaders such as Vera and ordinary residents in Porto Alegre’s *vilas*, the campaign period is often also a financial opportunity: a time to make money by working for a given candidate or party (typically handing out campaign materials).

Election time is also noteworthy for the multiple senses of *obligation* implied or explicitly referenced in campaign discourse. As anthropologist Christine Chaves (1996) has observed, few contemporary Brazilian political candidates make overt promises in their campaigns. In place of hollow-sounding *promessas* (which recent political history has left vulnerable to cynical readings),<sup>12</sup> candidates speak of *propostas*, *compromissos*, and *planos* (proposals, commitments, and plans). In some cases, the usage is nearly synonymous with “promise,” signifying an explicit “signing on” to an obligation (conveying the sense, “If I am elected, I will do these things”). Elsewhere, the sense is more about what the candidate *stands for* and *is committed to* than what he or she will actually do. Expressed commitments include specific projects (“I will lower taxes to 10 percent”), efforts on behalf of specific populations (“I will fight for the workingman”), and a plethora of assertions whose realization plans or envisioned outcomes are vague or more obviously subjective (“I will fight to make life better for Brazilians”). These multiple senses of obligation evoked at election time between citizen and candidate are aptly expressed in the notion of *compromisso*,<sup>13</sup> which is perhaps best translated into English as “commitment.” It can be used to refer to a specific obligation (synonymous with “appointment”) or a more general state of commitment brought about by promise or some other mechanism.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The most obvious example here is the impeachment of Fernando Collor de Mello, Brazil’s first democratically elected president in 29 years, who was elected in 1989 and removed from office in 1992 following a highly public corruption scandal. Less concrete (but nonetheless salient) reference points include the widely perceived disconnect between economic stability under Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995–2002) and the ever-worsening socioeconomic conditions for Brazil’s poor.

<sup>13</sup> My usage of *compromisso* is informed by anthropologist Christine de Alencar Chaves’s (1996) study of elections in the city of Buritis (state of Minas Gerais) in the early 1990s. Whereas, however, Chaves posits *compromisso* as election time’s essential dynamic of moral obligation, I treat it as one of several logics of campaign discourse.

<sup>14</sup> Chaves (1996, 132) argues that the modern sense of *compromisso* bears traces of the relationship between rural landowner (*patrão*) and (non-slave) worker (*morador*). This classic “boss system” was characterized by the rural

## POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS AND MEDIA DISCOURSE

Following the vibrant “anthropology of politics” scholarship within Brazilian studies and approaches within media studies,<sup>15</sup> I understand political campaigns as directed towards persuasion of the electorate through the use of images, narratives, and discourses that aim to awaken emotions and feelings of support for or rejection of candidates. In agreement with Barreira, I see campaigns as symbolic conflicts “whose rules of the game are the exacerbation of difference, the heightening of aptitudes and the attempt to appropriate values that express the center of social life” (1998, 10). Put another way, campaigns emphasize a candidate’s distinctiveness and credibility using symbols that resonate with how ordinary people view the world and view themselves.

Official campaign discourse in Brazil is conveyed through a wide range of media. These include mass print and broadcast media (principally television, radio, newspapers, and magazines), in which the campaigns are broached both through advertising spots and journalistic coverage.<sup>16</sup> There are two ways that campaign committees are able to advertise their candidates: (1) by purchasing airtime; and (2) for free on the *Horário Gratuito Político*. Mandated by Brazilian federal law,<sup>17</sup> the *Horário* provides free nightly airtime on television and radio to candidates during the roughly six weeks leading up to the first-round elections and two weeks before the second-round elections. Airtime is allotted in proportion to the number of representatives each party has in the Federal Chamber of Deputies.<sup>18</sup> *Horário* advertisements range from highly stylized to short, hastily produced snippets with mediocre or poor production quality.<sup>19</sup> Outside of mass media, official campaign discourse is circulated through a plethora of printed materials, such as voting cards, flyers, pamphlets, and posters, among others. During the

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oligarch (*coronel*) who would bestow favors on his workers in exchange for their loyalty. While an undeniably hierarchical and totalizing relationship in its time, a nostalgic, romanticized recollection of it resonates with the political notion that an elected official looks after his subjects. See also Franco (1974), Leal (1975), and Queiroz (1976).

<sup>15</sup> See Goldman and Sant’Anna (1995); Palmeira and Goldman (1996); Barreira and Palmeira (1998); Barreira (1998); Magalhães (1998); Kuschnir (2002); Bezerra (2007); de Sá Siqueira (2009).

<sup>16</sup> In addition, electronic media forms such as the Internet are also used by campaigns, although this was still relatively uncommon in the 2002 elections.

<sup>17</sup> The legal rules for the *Horário* can be found in Article 47 of Law 9504/97 (Cretella 1988).

<sup>18</sup> Thus, for example, if a given party controls 20 percent of house seats, it will receive 20 percent of airtime, which it decides internally how to divide among its candidates.

<sup>19</sup> As a form of communicative media, television advertisements exemplify the concurrent use of multiple semiotic modalities (i.e., video footage, photographs, drawings, music, voice, sound effects, etc.) characteristic of late modern “texts” (Kress and van Leeuwen 1996, quoted in Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, 12).

final weeks of the campaigns, such materials clutter public spaces and on election day litter the streets like confetti.

This paper focuses on forms of media discourse that I conceptualize as the representation of official political discourse—formal platforms, positions, and claims—according to the conventions of the given media form and target audience whose vote is sought (Oliveira 2003; Neto 2002). More specifically, my analysis is directed to the *content and context of production and emission* of media discourse, where “content” refers to concepts, visual imagery,<sup>20</sup> and representational logics deployed in campaign materials.<sup>21</sup> Because media discourse employs multiple cross-cutting representational strategies and always confronts the uncertain space between production and reception, it cannot be viewed simply as a set of contents and representations floating in a vacuum but rather as dynamic and unstable congeries of symbolic products that are created and put into circulation through institutions and are infused with semantic “inertia” but without fixed meaning (Oliveira 2003, xx). Media discourse’s capacity to arouse emotion and support among voters depends on symmetry between production and reception (ibid.)—more specifically, a resonance between the images and symbols of media discourse and the self- and social identities of real people. Hence, the architects of media discourse “attempt to mobilize support by relating their claim or cause to a *familiar* sociopolitical frame of reference” (Nelson 1999, 5; cf. Sniderman and Theriault 1999, as cited in Walsh 2004, 22). Election-time media discourse, moreover, provides “interpretive packages” (Gamson and Modigliani 1989, 3, cited in Walsh 2004, 18), which direct the viewer to focus on particular aspects of the issues at hand.

I analyze official campaign discourse using the notion of “appeal,” which I approach from two vantage points. First, I am interested in the cultural symbols and representational tactics through which a given candidate’s appeal is constructed. Second, I am interested in the forms of self that campaign discourse hails its addressee to recognize and inhabit. Within my inquiry into forms of citizen identity incited in campaign discourse, I am especially interested in groups, communities, or causes about which the addressee is asked to *care*, as well as both

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<sup>20</sup> My analysis of photographs of campaign materials is inspired by Roland Barthes’ 1957 essay “Photography and Electoral Appeal,” especially for its emphasis on the rhetorical and symbolic logics (in Barthes’s thinking akin to the logics of myth) through which a candidate’s status and appeal are conveyed (Barthes 1972).

<sup>21</sup> In the absence of interviews with party ideologues and material designers, I make arguments about the intentions of producers (the context of production) based on my familiarity with the official platforms and past election strategies of the parties with which candidates are affiliated.

implicit gendering and regionalizing of imagery and representational logics deployed in campaign discourse and the more overt appeals to a gendered and gaucho subject. This approach to the appeals of campaign discourses privileges the “official” view—how the campaigns view citizens—and lays the groundwork for a more ethnographical analysis of how grassroots community leaders in Porto Alegre encounter, take up, and respond to the subject positions of official campaign discourse.

### METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This paper makes use of two specific types of media discourse: television spots from the *Horário Político* and printed materials posted and circulated widely in Porto Alegre’s public spaces during the campaign period. I have selected the *Horário* since it represents the most common form of mass media exposure to campaign discourses.<sup>22,23</sup> The Brazilian public’s interest in the *Horário*, moreover, has increased in recent years.<sup>24</sup> I have also chosen printed campaign materials, abundantly present in public locations such as bus stops, storefronts, car windows, outside walls, and billboards. Unlike the television advertisements, these are physical objects which must be “read” (literally and figuratively) in order to be interpreted.

With these considerations in mind, I have focused my attention on the presidential campaigns and the Rio Grande do Sul campaigns for governor, with minimal attention to the campaigns for senator and for federal and state deputy. In both sets of campaigns, I devote the bulk of my attention to PT candidates, though with comparative consideration of the opposition (to identify distinctively partisan characteristics of campaign discourse), reflecting this study’s

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<sup>22</sup> During the month of September, 2002, I videotaped six hours of the political hour. With much repetition (that is, broadcasts of the same advertisement on different nights), there were in the end 261 unique segments. Of the sample of *Horário* segments used in this analysis, the vast majority were for individual candidates (with less than ten focused on a party rather than a candidate). In terms of the candidate positions being advertised, the highest proportion (44.8 percent) were for state deputies, followed by federal deputy (37.9 percent), and senator (6.1 percent). In terms of airtime, ads for president were longest, averaging 2–3 minutes, with governor and senator slots averaging about 2 minutes each. Ads for federal and state deputies averaged between 10 and 20 seconds each. In terms of the proportion of minutes of airtime, roughly the same amount of exposure was provided to each type of candidate.

<sup>23</sup> My focus on produced campaign discourse rather than journalistic coverage means that I pay little attention to the “negative visibility” (for example, scandals or accusations of immorality) that accompanies most high-stakes, large-scale elections (and certainly did this one).

<sup>24</sup> According to a national poll, for example, the proportion of respondents professing “a lot of interest” in the *Horário*, rose from 47 percent in 1998 to 60 percent in 2002. During the same period, intention to watch the *Horário* rose from 57 percent to 68 percent (Franzine 2002). Similarly, respondents who stated that the political hour had had “a lot of importance” for the person’s individual vote rose from 33 percent to 44 percent.

broader interest in the leftist moment in which Porto Alegre found itself at the turn of the new millennium. Within each set of campaigns, I am especially interested in how the PT—a historically oppositional party which had become dominant in southern Brazil—constructed its appeal to the voter, and how opposing parties attempted to consolidate anti-PT sentiment.

### **CASE 1. DECENCY, COMMITMENTS, AND CHARACTER: THE LULA CAMPAIGN**

The 2002 Lula campaign was designed and implemented with precision and meticulous coordination, orchestrated by PT strategists and corporate marketing specialists. From early on, campaign strategists recognized that one of their chief tasks was to accentuate their candidate's humble roots and political militancy on behalf of the socioeconomically downtrodden, while highlighting his competence and readiness to preside over Latin America's largest country (Rubim 2002, 345). The major concerns informing public discussions about the pending elections were economic growth, financial stability (including concerns over inflation), foreign policy, and unemployment (Bezerra 2007, 6).

#### **Character and Competence**

Lula's image as a radical leftist militant had been a major factor in his two-time defeat by Fernando Henrique Cardoso in the 1990s. Whereas Cardoso had come to represent economic stability, Lula's public statements that he favored discontinuing repayment of Brazil's foreign debt added to concern that, as president, this man might bring the country's inflation rates up to the skyrocket levels of the 1980s and early 1990s. The collapse of the Argentine economy in November 2001<sup>25</sup> exacerbated these concerns, and by early 2002 influential economists from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were suggesting that Brazil might face a similar scenario under Lula. These concerns about Lula's experience and "radical" positions had led many to ask, "Can we trust this man to govern?"<sup>26</sup>

Anticipating these concerns, the 2002 Lula campaign represented its candidate in a noticeably altered fashion, jokingly referred to in popular discourse as "Lula lite" and "Lulinha

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<sup>25</sup> In November of 2001, in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis of 1998, the Argentine market collapsed, causing the government to default on its international loan repayment and leading to massive inflation and unemployment, and to governmental instability.

<sup>26</sup> The cover of the 9/25/2002 edition of *Veja* magazine, for example, asked, "Is the PT prepared for the presidency?" (cf. Bezerra 2007, 11)

paz e amor” (“Lula peace and love”). Abandoning frumpy clothing and radical posturing (Figure 1a), this Lula appeared in suit and tie (Figures 1b and 1c) and committed himself to ongoing debt repayment. The changes in his physical appearance in these campaign materials were striking: His hair was kept short and neatly styled, and his teeth had reportedly been straightened and whitened. At rallies and in public speeches, Lula now kept his smoking habit entirely out of the public eye.<sup>27</sup> (The Serra campaign, in contrast, safely presumed that its candidate’s respectability and reliability were already firmly established.) The new Lula image was of a mature statesman who had *earned* the chance to enact his vision for Brazil, a vision that had evolved to a less “radical” position while remaining committed to the welfare of the poor and other socioeconomically marginalized groups.<sup>28,29</sup> The selection of Lula’s running mate for vice president, José Alencar, a wealthy businessman from the center-right *Partido Liberal* (Liberal Party, PL), demonstrated, moreover, that Lula was prepared to build alliances with big business and with conservatives. Lula’s movement away from a contestatory image was summed up in his campaign slogan, “*Eu quero um Brasil decente*” (roughly translatable as “I want a civilized Brazil”),<sup>30</sup> and underscored by his oft-stated refusal to criticize his opponents. This stance against negative campaigning is exemplified in a speech Lula gave at a PT rally in downtown Porto Alegre in July 2004:

I’ve said before that I’m not going to speak badly of anyone in this campaign: I’m not going to speak badly of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, I’m not going to speak badly of Serra, I’m not going to speak badly of Ciro or even Garotinho. I’m going to speak well of our city governments. I’m going to speak well of our governments. I’m going to speak well of our militancy and of the program that we’ve presented...to all of Brazil.

*Eu tenho dito que nessa campanha eu não vou falar mal de ninguém. Eu não vou falar mal do Fernando Henrique Cardoso, não vou falar mal do Serra, não vou falar mal do*

<sup>27</sup> See de Oliveira and da Silva (2005) for a detailed analysis of changes in Lula’s physical appearance from the 1980s to the early 2000s.

<sup>28</sup> Bezerra (2007, 6) argues that whereas previous campaigns represented Lula’s base as workers, the 2002 campaign presented him as “a candidate for all” (*um candidato para todos*).

<sup>29</sup> For analysis of the 2002 campaign’s emphasis on Lula as an able “negotiator,” see Rubim (2002, 346).

<sup>30</sup> The term *decente* also conveys the sense of being honest, honorable, dignified, and respectable—all, of course, traits with which the Lula campaign attempted to associate its candidate. The term has an interesting history, however, which is worth mentioning as it sheds light on an important tension in the campaign. Briefly, the notion of “decency” (epitomized in the expression *gente decente* [civilized people]) was used by oligarchic elites during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to distance themselves from the lower classes by asserting their own respectability. The usage reflected a divisive social logic, which presupposed the wisdom of hierarchy. With these etymological observations in mind, the centrality of the notion of “decency” in Lula’s campaign appears as a potential paradox. In my reading, this reflects a profound ambiguity as to whether “Quero um Brasil decente” is an equalizing gesture or reinscriptive of a paternalistic logic of social partitioning.

*Ciro, nem do Garotinho. Eu vou falar bem das nossas prefeituras. Eu vou falar bem dos nossos governos. Eu vou falar bem da nossa militância e do programa que nós apresentamos...a todo Brasil.*

Here, the implicit notion of “decency” seeks to distance Lula from a culture of bickering and accusation. (As we will see in the second case study, this is a rhetorical tactic that PT candidates in Rio Grande do Sul would have done well to make use of.)

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**FIGURE 1**

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**IMAGES OF LULA, 1980s–2000s**

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1a. 1982



1b. 2002 (front)



1c. 2002 (reverse)

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Lula’s character, personality, and credentials are often presented by recounting his life story. References to Lula’s humble origins and demeanor are common, particularly in his television ads. The viewer is shown images of the poor drought-ridden northeast where Lula was born into a family of illiterate farmers. These are followed by his movement into the working class, as a metalworker in a steel processing factory outside of São Paulo, and his politicization, first as a union organizer and then as a national militant who cofounded the Workers’ Party. Lula is also shown to be a man who has *suffered*, a key example being the death of his first wife during childbirth. The impression is of a man who *feels* and is proud to show his emotion. (It also implies his capacity to *empathize* with others who have suffered.) As many adult Brazilians already knew prior to the 2002 elections, this sad story has a happy ending: Lula’s marriage eight years later to Marisa, his public companion and mother to his three children. In a marked shift from previous campaigns, images of and references to Marisa were ever-present in the 2002 campaign and were a key element of the campaign’s intended



appeal to female voters. While emphasizing the candidate's life story (including special attention to the candidate's wife<sup>31</sup>) was by no means specific to the Lula campaign, the focus on Lula's capacity to *feel emotion* and to have *suffered* were distinctive.

Campaign materials also stress Lula's *competência* (competence): the credentials, skills and background preparing him for the presidency. As during his previous bids for the presidency, Lula's campaign had to address his relative inexperience in elected political office, since his sole stint in office had been one term as a federal deputy in the mid-1980s. (His opponents, in contrast, could roll off impressive lists of past and present government positions.) While Lula had held numerous positions within the PT (including having been its cofounder and honorary president), overemphasis on these in the campaign could risk alienating voters with centrist and conservative political affiliations. Lula's *competência*, therefore, was more typically represented in nonspecific terms (e.g., as a leader of resistance against the military regime or as a union organizer) rather than in terms of his multiple positions within the PT. His campaign also tended to "fall back" on accomplishments in cities and states with PT governments. (This rhetorical strategy is exemplified in the speech segment above.)

### **Proposals and Commitments**

For Lula, the question of proposals had special significance, since many Brazilians still associated the PT with an oppositional stance that only made sense when one was "outside the government." This, along with the awareness that he had not held elected office other than his single term as federal deputy in the 1980s, brought many to wonder what Lula would actually *do* if elected. In response, Lula's campaign materials made heavy use of the word "compromisso." In July of 2002, the PT released a detailed proposal specifying the outcomes the Lula administration would pursue. These broke down into four broad categories: jobs, security, agriculture/hunger, and housing. In the employment sector, the Lula government would create more than 10 million new jobs, with special attention to employment for youth, salary increases for workers, and fortifying national industry to increase exports. For security, a range of measures would be implemented to target urban crime of the sort horrifically depicted in movies such as the hugely successful *Cidade de Deus* (City of God), released in 2002. These measures

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<sup>31</sup> Indeed, the wives of two of Lula's opponents were both familiar public figures, a fact capitalized on in their campaigns. Ciro Gomez's wife, Patricia Pilar, was a well-known *telenovela* actress and cancer survivor; Garotinho's wife, Rosinha, was an established politician who later became governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro.

would include efforts against organized crime, control of firearms, and employment alternatives for youth who might otherwise be lured into gangs. Agricultural priorities would focus on family farming and stimulating national food production (especially rice and beans) to better address the problem of hunger. Under “housing,” Lula promised massive investment to confront poor living conditions for households with a gross income of less than three minimum salaries (approximately \$150 USD at that time) per month. While the platforms of Lula’s opponents covered many of the same themes,<sup>32</sup> his campaign’s emphases on the social and economic conditions of workers and on the specific issue of hunger were distinctive.

In the following section, I consider in depth the representational logics informing campaign advertisements communicated through the medium of television.

### **Detailed Analysis of Televised Segments from the Lula Campaign**

I now turn to two television segments from the Lula campaign to shed light on the dominant representational logics and cultural symbols to which the campaigns make recourse. Both commercials were aired during the nightly political hour during the month of September, 2002. The first of these (“Maria and Joana”) was one of a handful of topic-specific spots, in this case focused on the high cost of medicine. (Others addressed such themes as jobs, security, and housing.) The second analysis engages a shorter spot (“João”), which aims to generate visceral emotion through the moving (and fictitious) story of one young man’s struggles. (This spot receives less extensive treatment as it is both shorter and thematically simpler vis-à-vis explicit content.) While these two spots address major themes from the campaigns, I have selected them for the rhetorical strategies through which appeal is constructed, which are strongly representative of the campaigns overall (irrespective of specific theme). For each segment, I characterize key content, imagery, and production style, and then consider “appeals” (both in terms of desirability and interpellation).

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<sup>32</sup> A major flyer from the Serra campaign, for example, explained his priorities as “creating jobs, raising salaries, [and] increasing the role of the federal government in combating crime.”

FIGURE 2

## FRAMES FROM LULA ADVERTISEMENT AIRED DURING “POLITICAL HOUR”



2a. “The High Cost of Medicine”



2b. “I’m going to speak about health”

*Maria and Joana: “This is a very sad story”*

The camera fades into a large open office space, apparently Lula’s campaign headquarters (Figure 2a). The people in the room—seemingly equal parts women and men, older and younger, and dark- and light-skinned—are conversing quietly in small groups. There is a hint of anticipation, as if they are waiting for a performance to begin. This possibility becomes reality as an unseen announcer enthusiastically proclaims:

Attention, Brazil! We now begin the program “President Lula.” Today’s theme: “the high price of medicine.”

*Atenção Brasil! Começa agora o programa, Lula Presidente. Tema de hoje: ‘O Alto Preço dos Remédios.’*

The image of the group is then replaced by a close-up shot of Lula, well dressed and bearing the PT’s star on his shoulder (Figure 2b). He speaks slowly and seriously, looking directly into the camera as if he were attempting to hold the viewer’s gaze.

In this campaign, I’m going to talk a lot about health. And among my greatest concerns is the poor quality of public services and the high cost of medicine.

*Nesta campanha vou falar muito de saúde. E entre as minhas maiores preocupações estão exatamente, a má qualidade dos serviços públicos e o alto preço dos remédios.*

**FIGURE 3**

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**MARIA AND JOANA DROP OFF THEIR CHILDREN ON THE WAY TO WORK**

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3a. Maria dropping off her child



3b. Maria at work



3c. Joana dropping off her child



3d. Joana at work

The scene promptly changes, and the narrator now tells a story of two women, both separated and both single mothers. Maria, the narrator tells us, has a good job and owns her own apartment and car. Accompanying the voiceover are images of Maria dropping off her child with a uniformed nanny and then giving a presentation at a corporate workplace (Figures 3a and 3b). Joana's situation is not as good as Maria's: She is shown leaving her child with an older woman (perhaps her mother or an aunt) and then serving food at a simple restaurant (Figures 3c and 3d). But, the narrator assures us, she is "strong and an optimist, and doesn't complain about life."

FIGURE 4

## JOANA AT THE PHARMACY



4a. Joana hears the cost



4b. Joana considers her predicament

The difference between the two women appears when their children become sick: whereas Maria can easily afford medicine, Joana hasn't enough money. The unfolding scene shows Joana at the end of the month (when finances are especially tight), seeking medicine at a community pharmacy for her sick child (Figure 4a). The camera focuses on her facial expression as the pharmacist tells her how much the medicine will cost (Figure 4b). She pauses and then slowly exits into the rainy night, looking utterly despondent. It is at this moment, the narrator explains, that Joana, "who is strong, an optimist, who rides the bus, lives by herself in a rented apartment and is happy... feels weak and laments her own life."

"This is a very sad story," Lula reflects, speaking slowly and empathetically. "There are two things that one should *never* be without: food and medicine." He then looks seriously into the camera and proclaims, "Be sure about it: I'm going to increase the distribution of free medicine a lot." He pauses and then, shifting into a less personal, more upbeat manner of speaking, describes a project from the northeastern state of Pernambuco (Lula's birth state) that provides generic pharmaceutical products to low-income populations "at people's prices" (*a preços populares*). This project, he explains, is called the "People's Pharmacy" (*Farmácia Popular*) and has now become part of his "plano de governo." In his final line, Lula makes his pledge:

If I am elected your president, I will support this whole project, which will bring about [economic] development for the Brazilian people.



*Se eu for eleito seu presidente, vou estimular tudo projeto, que represente economia pra povo brasileiro.*

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**FIGURE 5**

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**LULA TV SEGMENT: FINAL IMAGES**

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5a. Lula



5b. PT rally

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The image of Lula’s now-smiling face (Figure 5a) fades out and is replaced by the image of a massive rally (Figure 5b) and the narrator’s voice explaining that Lula’s campaign is accompanied by “*muita festa e muita emoção*” (a lot of celebration and emotion).

*Interpellation and Appeals*

The segment begins, “Atenção Brasil!” and thus, from the beginning, frames all that is to follow in terms of national identity and significance. The announcement, “Today’s theme: ‘the high cost of medicine’,” suggests (at least for the moment) a *didactic* format: one in which the viewer will be exposed to information (and Lula’s positions) around a specific topic.<sup>33</sup> In accordance with Magalhães’s (1998, 67) arguments about the Brazilian elections of the 1990s, this format—which seems to say “Listen up! We’re going to talk about an important issue”—performs a distinctive understanding of the pre-election voter: namely, that she or he is “passive” and needs to be made aware (*conscientizada*) of pertinent issues.<sup>34</sup> (This logic gives way, however, during

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<sup>33</sup> The very fact that the Lula campaign controlled enough airtime to devote a four-minute segment to *only one* theme was also a subtle reminder of the PT’s status as well represented in the Chamber of Deputies.

<sup>34</sup> This is true in the literal sense that television is a unidirectional mediated communication technology (Fairclough 2000, 77), but also in the sense that campaign discourse tends to presume a subject who *needs to be informed* of certain things.

Lula's later conditional statement, "If elected your president...", which acknowledges his dependence on the addressee.)

As Lula begins to speak, the combination of seriousness and intimacy conveys the impression of a wise friend who needs to discuss a serious matter with you. The matter at hand—"the poor quality of public services and the high price of medicine"—is expressed in such a way as to call attention to a societal problem without directly blaming Fernando Henrique Cardoso or even Cardoso's health minister—and Lula's chief opponent—José Serra. Indeed, throughout this and other promotional materials, Lula refrains entirely from explicit critiques of his opponents. This functions to reassure the addressee of elements of continuity that would accompany a Lula government and to underscore his civilized and "decent" (rather than "radical") character.

As the segment moves into the stories of Maria and Joana, the initial "hook" is an invocation of core values shared by the two women—values that make up a *good person*: hard work, independence, optimism in the face of adversity and suffering, and a mother's love for her child. Generically, the viewer is hailed as a subject who recognizes the nobility of these values and therefore *cares* when, as in Joana's case, a good person encounters hardship. The commercial, thus, appeals to a universal sense of justice. Regardless of class background, the "you" addressed in this segment is *compassionate* and *feeling* (like Lula himself). In a rhetorical move that aims to appeal to both poor and middle-class viewers, the inherent *goodness* of these two women is affirmed and reaffirmed, and the difference highlighted is the simple fact that Joana, who lives from paycheck to paycheck, cannot afford the high cost of medicines.

The segment walks a fine line, as it aspires to valorize a certain nobility in Joana's suffering—and yet without berating Maria. For middle-class viewers, the implicit logic appears as follows: *Even though your lifestyle and financial resources are better than Joana's, you can still see some of yourself in her, since she shares the same basic human values that you possess.* This is strikingly resonant with DaMatta's analysis of the Brazilian *jeitinho* or "little way" (1991), the social gesture through which favors are asked among social unequals. The *jeitinho*, according to DaMatta, functions to humanize an otherwise abstract relationship and to invite the person being asked the favor to consider what it would be like to be the person asking it. From DaMatta's perspective, then, this commercial enacts a sort of jumping back and forth between the public and egalitarian logics of *rua* (street) and the hierarchical, personalistic logics of *casa* (house). This logic is, of course, even more obviously directed at women, who regardless of class

are meant to see something of themselves (or the people they would *like to be*) in both Maria and Joana. The centrality of the maternal impulse to protect one's child thus functions to bring the subjects of a shared category ("women") to empathize *across* the category of class.

Following the same logic, class is also deployed to facilitate identification across the lines of *gender*: Joana's story is, after all, meant to have personal resonance for the great majority of Brazilian citizens living at the poverty line—women *and men*. The story's heartbreaking conclusion—Joana left feeling weak and helpless—is intended as a moment to which any poor person could relate from personal experience, and with which any middle-class person could empathize for its violation of the universally implied moral logic that *this shouldn't happen to a good person like Joana*. Lula's declaration that "this is a very sad story" simultaneously conveys *empathy* and *identification*. On the one hand, Lula's words mark him as a compassionate and feeling person. At the same time, however, there is the subtle suggestion that Lula identifies with this woman, that he too has known the moment of weakness that Joana experiences as she exits the pharmacy.

The segment's manner of representation thus *opens up multiple frames of identification*—most notably along the lines of class and gender but also appealing to identification as mothers (and as parents more generally).<sup>35</sup> Over multiple interpellative moments, the addressee is alternately encouraged to recognize herself (or himself) as Brazilian, as caring and compassionate, and as able to recognize an inherently good person.

Lula's proposal—the implementation of "the People's Pharmacy"—is intended to illustrate his "preparedness" for the presidency and to reassure the voter that that he would come to office with practical, pre-tested, and ready-to-implement plans. His proposal also implies that he is an *innovative* man, willing to try out novel approaches that have shown promise in smaller-scale applications. The format beckons the viewer-addressee to join in Lula's excitement about the idea.

In Lula's statements following the story, there are two instances of explicit *compromisso*. The first of these ("I'm going to increase the distribution of free medicine a lot") is preceded by an interesting imperative: *Tenha certeza* ("Be sure about it") This reassurance carries risk since it

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<sup>35</sup> Race, interestingly, is left largely unmarked in this segment. Both phenotypically and in terms of her lifestyle, Maria would almost certainly be classified as *branca* (white). Joana is far less easily classifiable—or rather, following contemporary scholarship on race and ethnicity in Brazil, her "race" as such is better conceptualized as a situationally invoked identity than as a trait she bears. (See Davila 2000; Hanchard 1999; Sansone 2003. Cf. Sheriff 2001). The actress playing Joana could without doubt be seen as both *branca* and *parda*.



is easily perceived as a hollow campaign promise. To steer clear of this possible interpretation, the segment “cashes in” on the symbolic capital it has tried to accumulate in four short minutes: It asks the viewer to accept Lula’s pledge, questioning neither its underlying motives nor his practical ability to carry it out; it asks the viewer to inhabit a space of fantasy and partake in the excitement associated with the realization of the fantasy’s key elements.

The subsequent pledge (“If I am elected your president...”), expressed linguistically as an indicative conditional, performs the same logic, asking the addressee to simply accept that Lula, as president, would follow through on this idea and would have the means (i.e., political and financial support) to implement it. His speech systematically avoids subjunctives (“if I *were* elected president”) or “second conditionals” (“I *would* implement this program”). Neither pledge uses the language of *promises*, which aside from making itself vulnerable to cynical interpretation on the part of the viewer would also more strongly mark a sense of moral obligation between candidate and voter.

The closing images of this segment (Lula’s shift to a smiling, upbeat manner of speaking (Figure 5a), the massive PT rally (Figure 5b), and the narrator’s references to “celebration and emotion”) signal a final shift in the logic through which the appeal is constructed. Setting aside the grave concerns of a poor mother who can’t afford medicine for her baby, the viewer is asked to shift gears and is reminded that supporting the PT is *festive* (subtly invoking a national stereotype) and is *emotional*.<sup>36</sup> The images of giant crowds convey the sense (typical in election discourse) that this candidate *already has* a huge support base. *So many people support him*, the footage seems to say, *he must be a winner*. The appeal, then, is based on the desire to be a member of a larger group—it thus attempts to confer a sense of belonging—and to invest in a candidate likely to actually win.

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<sup>36</sup> The *festive* element is by no means specific to Lula’s campaign. Indeed, as Kuschner (2002, 244) has observed, “It is practically impossible to think about [Brazilian] election campaigns without taking into account their festive aspect, as a social event, bringing people together to converse, eat and drink.” Having said that, the PT is particularly well known for its large-scale festive political events (Abers 1998, 59).

FIGURE 6

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“MY NAME IS JOÃO...”

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*João: “I never had anything...Viva Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva!”*

I now consider the element of *emotion* as deployed in a heavily aired commercial from the Lula campaign.<sup>37</sup> Appearing during both the *Horário Político* and as a paid advertisement, the one-minute commercial portrays a young man named João, played by an unknown actor. João is dressed in a T-shirt and faces the camera as he tells his story. In the absence of any voiced-over narration (highly unusual for this medium), he speaks solemnly but with intensity. Structurally, his short narrative has three parts, the first of which is as follows:

I just got into college. It wasn't easy but I did it. Nothing was ever easy for me. I went to public school and was raised by my mother. I never had a father, I never had anything. My mom doesn't even know how to read, but she believed in God and in me, that I'll fulfill my dreams no matter what it costs.

*Eu acabei de entrar pra faculdade, não foi fácil, mas eu consegui. Nada nunca foi fácil pra mim. Estudei em escola pública, fui criado pela minha mãe. Nunca tive pai, nunca tive nada. Minha mãe nem sabe ler, mas confiou em Deus e em mim...que vou realizar os meus sonhos, custe o que custar.*

Here again are invocations of universal values, and many of the same ones invoked in the “Maria and Joana” narrative: struggle, suffering, independence, faith, and parental love. The appeal to an emotional sensibility is markedly pronounced, for here we have the underdog speaking for himself in an intensely personal manner. There is an obvious appeal here to the

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<sup>37</sup> This spot can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWmj7Ls4edY>.

poor, who are intended to *identify* with elements of João's story.<sup>38</sup> But there is a powerful universalizing logic operative as well, more fully visible in the second part:

But how many like me—better than me, smarter than me—never had an opportunity in life? They're in the streets, in drugs and in crime. No one is born bad, no one's born a criminal. It's all a question of opportunity, opportunity. The kids in the *favela* also want new sneakers, a new T-shirt, and the right to dream like everyone.

*Mas quantos iguais a mim, melhores do que eu, mais inteligente do que eu, nunca tiveram uma oportunidade na vida. Estão nas ruas, nas drogas, nos crimes. Ninguém nasce mal, ninguém nasce bandido. É tudo uma questão de oportunidade, oportunidade. Os jovens na favela também querem um tênis novo, uma camisa nova e o direito de sonhar como todo mundo.*

Laying down social commentary about the lack of opportunities available to the poor, João reveals himself as *compassionate*: Even as he achieves the first step of his dream of attending college (i.e., getting in), he wonders how many like him (or even more deserving than he is) never had the opportunity. As in the story of Joana, the viewer is meant to experience this as unfair and unjust. (Interestingly, João's narrative seems to associate human dignity with marketplace consumption habits, e.g., the purchase of new shoes and T-shirts.) No explicit critique of the government is made: there is no blaming here. Rather, João's story asks the viewer to recognize that the lack of opportunity for poor people that he describes *exists, is wrong, and should change*. Avoiding direct critique of the Cardoso administration (as throughout Lula's "decency"-oriented campaign), the segment makes appeal to a universal moral injustice. The sense of *compromisso* asserted here, thus, is not between Lula and voter, but rather between voter and the downtrodden of Brazil. Lula is not, however, outside of this structure of obligation and responsibility, since the commercial implies (without ever stating it overtly) that he is the man who can *bring about opportunity* for the less fortunate people João mentions.

The commercial's third and final part is the climax. Now speaking to an unseen crowd, João's voice rises and by the end he is bellowing joyously, with thundering applause in the background:

This is the country of all, of all. My name is João. I'm Brazilian! I love my country. Long live Brazil! Long live São Paulo! Long live Amazonia! Long live Christ the Redeemer! Long live Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva!

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<sup>38</sup> The association with poverty and working-class identity is underscored by the associations the name João has with "the common man." There are also hints of an appeal to *youth*.

*Esse é o país de todos, de todos. Meu nome é João. Eu sou brasileiro! Eu amo o meu país. Viva o Brasil! Viva São Paulo! Viva a Amazônia! Viva o Cristo Redentor! Viva Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva!*

In a flurry of possible clichés, João’s words posit multiple associations, linking this young man’s story to Brazilian national pride and identity (as if there is something distinctly Brazilian about his life), to regional pride, and to religious faith. Most importantly, however, is the implicit identification of João with Lula himself, for this young man’s story—especially the elements of poverty, struggle, and the valorization of maternal love and support—parallels that of the candidate. To the extent that these elements resonate widely among viewers—as the Lula campaign could rightly expect that they would—the form of identification incited with João is simultaneously an incitement to identify with Lula. Neither here nor elsewhere in the commercial is any reference made to Lula’s credibility, ability to govern, or specific plans (identical in this respect to the “Maria and Joana” commercial). In contrast, the commercial aims to stimulate *visceral* emotional sentiment; it aims to make the viewer *feel passionately* and to locate Lula and the PT as the proper “home” for this passion.

### **Key Patterns Identified**

In the two preceding analyses, I have identified and characterized major rhetorical modalities through which the Lula campaign (through the medium of television) constructs its appeal to the voter. In multiple interpellative moments, the viewer is asked to view herself or himself as, alternately, a national (Brazilian) subject and as a passionate and feeling person who is indignant at social injustice, compassionate toward the downtrodden, and excited to partake in the festive spaces of the PT. The two spots considered are exemplary for their explicit privileging of (and reaching out to) poor people, women, workers, and youth. They also serve to underscore Lula’s character and, in the “Maria and Joana” spot, to emphasize his competence and assuage concern over his former radicalism.

## **CASE 2. GAUCHISMO, NEOLIBERALISM, AND PATRIMONY: THE 2002 RIO GRANDE DO SUL GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS**

I proceed now to analyze campaign discourses of the 2002 Rio Grande do Sul gubernatorial race. I begin with a brief political history of the key players and recognized stakes of the “gaucho elections,” limiting my discussion to the three principal candidates, Antônio Britto, Tarso Genro,

and Germano Rigotto.<sup>39</sup> I then analyze recurrent patterns within campaign materials, focusing particularly on invocations of regional (gaúcho) identity and concerns about privatization and patrimony.<sup>40</sup> While my focus is on the PT candidates, I highlight wherever possible rhetorical tactics that differ from those of opponents.

### ***Santinhos and Folhetos: A Short Overview of Campaign Materials***

In Brazilian elections, the two most common printed campaign materials are the voting card and the flyer. The voting card, colloquially known as a “*santinho*,”<sup>41</sup> is a small piece of paper (slightly larger than a business card) that conveys “the essentials” of a given candidate and guides the voter when casting the ballot. One side typically provides the candidate’s name, party affiliation, photograph, positions, and campaign slogan, and the other side presents the candidate’s numerical electoral code alongside those of other candidates with whom he or she is formally allied.<sup>42</sup> The flipside of federal deputy candidate Roberto Argenta’s *santinho*, for example (Figure 7), provides the addressee with suggestions for senator and governor (both from parties with which he is allied).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> While there were nine other gubernatorial candidates on the ballot, none of these was nearly as popular as Britto, Genro, and Rigotto.

<sup>40</sup> See Oliveira (2003) for another analysis of the 2002 gubernatorial election campaigns.

<sup>41</sup> Literally meaning “little saint,” the *santinho* draws from a Catholic decorative tradition in which images and texts associated with a saint are recorded on a card or small sheet of paper carried on one’s person or placed on an altar or other sacred space.

<sup>42</sup> According to Brazilian electoral law, one can vote for the party ticket (*voto de legenda*), however this is unusual (Banck 1998, 26)

<sup>43</sup> The use of voting cards (commonplace in multi-party democracies) can, of course, run counter to the possibility of autonomous citizen-subjects (i.e., those who reach a decision through careful consideration rather than second-hand suggestion). On the other hand, from a less idealist perspective, voting cards provide a necessary heuristic, helping the voter make an “educated guess.”

FIGURE 7

## VOTING CARD FOR FEDERAL DEPUTY CANDIDATE ROBERTO ARGENTA



7a. Front



7b. Reverse

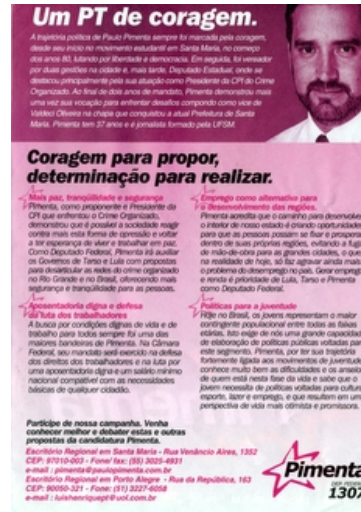
Slightly larger than *santinhos*, flyers (*folhetos*) are also extremely common. With the extra space (and often folded in two to make a small pamphlet), a *folheto*'s content is more variable. Sometimes, the front page is devoted to the bare essentials (as with *santinhos*), with more detailed textual descriptions on the flipside (or inside, if the page is folded). As illustrated in PT federal deputy candidate Paulo Pimenta's flyer below (Figure 8), the front-page photo can also include other individuals with whom the candidate is affiliated. In this case, Pimenta (bearded and tieless) stands next to the PT's candidates for Rio Grande do Sul governor (Tarso Genro) and for president of the republic (Lula), enacting what Bourdieu has referred to as a "delegative" expenditure of political capital (1989, 190), whereby Pimenta's status is presumably enhanced by association with the PT's "superstars." The flyer's reverse goes into some detail on Pimenta's background and specific proposals. A plethora of other printed materials, including stickers, newsletters, booklets, posters, bookmarks, T-shirts, and baseball caps, also convey key campaign images and texts.

FIGURE 8

## FLYER FOR FEDERAL DEPUTY CANDIDATE PAULO PIMENTA



8a. Front



8b. Reverse

## The Gubernatorial Race

The PT's gubernatorial candidate was Tarso Genro, a major figure during the PT's three terms in office in Porto Alegre. Under the first PT administration (1989–1992), Genro was vice mayor to Olívio Dutra, a former bank workers union leader who was elected governor in 1998. Genro served as mayor himself for two terms, from 1993 to 1996 and then again from 2001 to 2002. The second term was cut short when Genro resigned in order to be eligible to run for governor. The announcement that he had won the state-level PT's nomination over the incumbent governor (Dutra) was a disheartening surprise to many left-leaning voters in Porto Alegre, who saw the move as opportunist and neglectful of the duties he had taken on as mayor. For the remainder of his term, Genro's vice mayor, João Verle, took over.<sup>44</sup>

Among ordinary Porto Alegrens, few names were as closely associated with the PT as that of Tarso Genro. As one of the “founding fathers” of the PT administration in Porto Alegre—and as one of its most active ideologues and elected officials—Genro's name epitomized all that the PT had come to stand for. The leader of the centrist faction within the PT,<sup>45</sup> Genro's politics

<sup>44</sup> Verle was mayor during the entirety of my research period (2002–3).

<sup>45</sup> Genro's faction, *Nova Esquerda* (New Left) emerged from the ashes of an older faction with an explicitly revolutionary discourse (the Revolutionary Communist Party, PRC), the ideology of which was completely rethought in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The New Left faction falls among those PT factions

emphasized direct citizen participation in government decision-making and solidarity among a range of socioeconomic minorities, rather than simply solidarity with workers (historically the PT's priority). In contrast with the surly and militant manner of some of his colleagues, Genro's deportment is warm and avuncular.<sup>46</sup> During the 1990s, Genro's daughter Luciana also came into the public eye. With a base in the student movement, Luciana was elected state deputy in 1995 (at 31, Rio Grande do Sul's youngest ever). She was re-elected in 1999 and now, in 2002, was running for federal deputy. Luciana's politics were less mainstream than her father's, especially her public opposition to continued repayment on Brazil's massive foreign debts to the World Bank and the IMF.

Until a month or so before the October 6 first-round elections, Genro's principal opponent was Antônio Britto (Figure 9), Rio Grande do Sul's governor prior to the PT's victory in 1998. Britto's party, the Popular Socialist Party (Partido Popular Socialista, PPS), was allied with the "Rio Grande in First Place" coalition, which included three other center-left parties with strong ties to labor.<sup>47</sup> Britto was a public supporter of neoliberal economic policy, and his most widely remembered legacy (both among supporters and detractors) was the privatization of the state's telephone industry. This issue—privatization—became an ideological lightning rod in the 2002 campaigns, with the Genro camp decrying the auctioning off of "state patrimony" to foreign companies and Britto countering with the charge that isolationist PT policy was bad for the state economy and the gaúcho worker. A case in point, Britto argued throughout his campaign, was an incident soon after his PT successor, Olívio Dutra, assumed office: Prior to departing, Britto had negotiated a deal with the Ford Motor Company and General Motors, offering them hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks to build auto construction plants in Rio Grande do Sul. Citing heavy state debts, however, Dutra refused to honor the arrangement and both automobile conglomerates eventually pulled out. Whether this outcome had been good for the people of Rio Grande do Sul emerged as a central question in both the Genro and Britto campaigns—and it was an especially timely question, given Argentina's ongoing economic meltdown.

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considered *amplo* (that is, moderate), in contrast to "radical" factions. For a detailed telling of this story, and of the PT's factions more generally, see Abers (2000, 57) and Keck (1992, 198).

<sup>46</sup> As Oliveira (2003) has argued, Genro's 2002 campaign discourses tried to associate their candidate with a positive emotion, while simultaneously trying to break the credibility of Britto (and later Rigotto) by connecting them to a negative emotion.

<sup>47</sup> The "Rio Grande in First Place" (*Rio Grande em Primeiro Lugar*) coalition included the Popular Socialist Party (PPS), the Liberal Front Party (PFL), the Liberal Socialist Party (PSL) and the Labor Party of Brazil (PTdoB).



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**FIGURE 9**

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**ANTÔNIO BRITTO (*HORÁRIO POLÍTICO*)**

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**Figure 10**

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**Germano Rigotto (flyer)**

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“Passion for Rio Grande”

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In the weeks leading up to the first-round elections, a relative unknown emerged as a major contender. A dentist by training, Germano Rigotto (Figure 10) had established his political base in the mid-sized city of Caxias do Sul, where he had served as city councilman and state and federal deputy several times over. The hook of Rigotto’s campaign was that the ongoing acrimony between Genro and Britto was “bad for Rio Grande”—that the feud had reached a

point of such bitter animosity that neither candidate, if elected, would be able to govern effectively. As reflected in the name of the centrist coalition with which his party (the center-left Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement, Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro, PMDB) was allied, “Union for Rio Grande”,<sup>48</sup> Rigotto’s pledge was to bring unity to gaúcho politics.

### Invocations of Regional Identity

The cultural associations of the term “gaúcho” have a long history rooted in the masculine figure of the rural horseman and romantic notions of bravery, honor, independent spirit, manliness, and a close tie to “land” generally and the countryside (*campo*) and farms making up Rio Grandean territory in particular.<sup>49</sup> Rio Grande do Sul has witnessed a resurgence of interest in gaúcho traditions since the end of the military regime, reflected in the growing popularity of urban *Centros de Tradições dos Gaúchos* (Gaúcho Tradition Centers or CTGs), traditional gaúcho barbecue restaurants (*churrascarias*), and gaúcho music and dance. As Oliveira (2003, xx) has observed, in Rio Grande do Sul’s political campaigns, there is a long tradition of candidates who “embody gaúcho rites, using expressions, gestures, [and] clothing in the attempt to compose a discourse closer to the symbolic universe of the voter.”

### Genro

I now focus on the Genro campaign’s use of gaúcho imagery, beginning with text from a major campaign flyer (segment numbers added by me):

(1) Land, people, daring, solidarity. (2) We are a people that has love for its roots and an exploratory spirit. (3) We are a people that looks for the new and the future without fear and without forgetting the lessons of the past. (4) And so, we are pioneers in economic activities, in political mentality, in scientific achievement, in artistic creation. (5) We are gaúchos, we are gaúchas, people of many races, of many languages. (6) We are tradition and daring. (7) We value democracy in the pampas, in the mountains, and on the coast. (8) We are a people that makes history and serves as an example to the country.

(1) *Terra, gente, ousadia, solidariedade.* (2) *Somos um povo que tem amor por suas raízes e espírito debravador.* (3) *Somos gente que busca o novo e o futuro sem medo e sem abrir mão das lições do passado.* (4) *Por isso, somos pioneiros das atividades econômicas, na*

<sup>48</sup> The “Union for Rio Grande” (*União pelo Rio Grande*) coalition included the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), the Party of Brazilian Social Democracy (PSDB, the party of then-president Fernando Henrique Cardoso), and the Humanist Party of Solidarity (PHS).

<sup>49</sup> As Oliven points out, “gaúcho” referred in colonial times to vagabonds and cattle thieves. Later, the term became used in reference to rural farmers and horseback warriors (Oliven 1992, xii). See also Leal (1989) for an ethnography of a late-1980s community of rural gaúcho ranchers.

*mentalidade política, nas conquistas científicas, na criação artística. (5) Somos gaúchos, somos gaúchas, gente de muitas raças, de muitas falas. (6) Somos tradição e ousadia. (7) Prezamos a democracia no pampa, na serra e no mar. (8) Somos um povo que faz história e dá exemplo ao país.*

This text superimposes two narratives so snugly as to give the impression that only one is being told. The use of the first-person plural pronoun (“we”) is critical here to the production of this effect. Using a handful of examples, I will show how the text flickers between a mythico-historical “we,” defined by its essential gaucho traits, and a political “we,” made up of those who have supported the PT in its work in Porto Alegre and, more recently, at the state level.

The first narrative is the story of the gauchos: who they are, what they have done, and what they stand for. (The pronoun used, of course, is “we,” which posits *identification* between the text’s authorial voice—perhaps intended to be Genro himself—and the addressee.) Many of the major elements of the cherished stereotype are invoked: closeness to nature, daring, and innovation. The text’s reference to both *gaúchos* and *gaúchas* (the male and female forms of the noun) underscores Genro’s “reaching out” to both men and women (a common and distinctive rhetorical device in PT discourse).<sup>50</sup> This special attention to a female subject distinguishes the Genro campaign from those of Rigotto and Britto, which almost always fall back on the masculine form.

There are, however, hints that another story is being told simultaneously. Some of the traits listed do not fit quite as neatly into the list as others. (The concept of “solidarity,” for example, was little recognized prior to the mass resistance to Brazil’s military regime in the 1970s and seldom associated with gaucho-ness.) In sentence 3, the reference to a “future without fear” could be read as a logical deepening of the prior sentence’s assertion that gauchos are “daring” and have an “exploratory spirit.” And yet, the specific wording is also reminiscent of a well-known PT slogan, “without fear of being happy” (*sem medo de ser feliz*).<sup>51</sup> Mention of “lessons of the past,” also invites a political reading: Even as its referent is left unspecified, there is the sense that a finger is being pointed at former governor Antônio Britto. By extension, the intimation is that Britto’s politics ran (and continue to run) counter to core gaucho values.

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<sup>50</sup> It is, for example, common in the official printed material of such PT initiatives to find pairings of the male and female forms of “citizen”—as in “each *cidadão* and *cidadã* should participate!”—instead of the standard usage of the masculine form to imply both.

<sup>51</sup> *Sem medo de ser feliz* was the PT’s official slogan during Lula’s 1989 presidential election campaigns. See Sader and Silverstein (1991) for comprehensive coverage of these elections.

The passage's final two sentences (7 and 8) are open to both political and cultural readings. The reference to "valuing democracy" in the four corners of Rio Grande do Sul, for example, appears to be a nod to the PT's accomplishments during its first four years in office under the Dutra administration. And while "we are a people that makes history" can be seen as referring to such glorious historical interventions as the Farroupilha Revolution (during which a group of Rio Grandean warriors proclaimed an independent republic in response to excessive centralization by the imperial government), it also easily brings to mind slogans and catchwords from the official PT lexicon, rooted in direct civic participation by ordinary people, such as "popular participation" (*participação popular*).

Characterization of "we gauchos" as providing an "example to the country" also merits attention. Rio Grande do Sul has historically had one of the highest standard-of-living indices in Brazil—a pattern predating the PT's election in Porto Alegre in 1989. This flyer's wording, then, takes a certain risk, since it subtly implies that "we" deserve credit for the history that has been made in Rio Grande do Sul. This possibility opens up a more overtly political reading, through which the "we" becomes more explicitly *Petista* in composition. To the extent that the "we" is read as a "PT-we," it verges on being self-congratulatory, saying in effect, "Look what we have done while in office! We are the envy of all Brazil!" Lula, incidentally, explicitly supported such a reading when, in his television commercial in support of Tarso Genro, he stated: "*O Rio Grande do Sul é um exemplo para o Brasil*" ("Rio Grande do Sul is an example for Brazil").

The Genro campaign's use of gaucho imagery also aimed to show that more than a dozen years immersed in Porto Alegre's political scene had not led this worldly city dweller to forget the values and traditions of the state's interior. Genro's essential gaucho character is asserted repeatedly in the language, visual imagery, and invoked cultural symbols of his campaign. A television spot produced for the *Horário Político*, for example, begins with pictures of young Tarso in the frontier town where he grew up (Figure 11a): "This boy [*guri*] had a happy childhood. He went to school, and succeeded as a lawyer." In place of the standard Portuguese word for boy (*menino*), the word *guri*, from the dialect of the regional gaucho lexicon, is used. After a brief recounting of his illustrious political career in Porto Alegre, we are shown a flurry of images, with gaucho music (with the signature accordion especially audible) playing in the

background: Tarso sitting down, smiling as he takes *chimarrão*<sup>52</sup> (Figure 11b); Tarso giving speeches in the smaller cities of Rio Grande do Sul's interior (Figure 11c); and traditionally clad gauchos riding horseback in a parade down a major Porto Alegre thoroughfare (Figure 11d). The intended effect here is to show Genro as a man who respects, embraces, and delights in gaucho tradition.

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FIGURE 11

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FRAMES FROM TARSO GENRO TELEVISION COMMERCIAL

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11a. Tarso as a *guri* (boy)



11b. Tarso taking *chimarrão*



11c. Tarso speaking in the interior



11d. Parade of gaucho cowboys

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*Britto and Rigotto*

The Britto and Rigotto campaigns also made heavy use of gaucho imagery and cultural symbols. Rigotto's campaign slogan, for example, declared "passion for Rio Grande" (*paixão pelo Rio Grande*) (Figure 12). Flyers, *santinhos*, and television commercials from the Britto campaign

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<sup>52</sup> *Chimarrão*, a practices recognized as traditionally gaucho, consists in *erva mate* tea, consumed through a metal straw out of an ornate gourd.

invoke similar notions, though putting more emphasis than his opponents on *courage* as an essential gaucho trait. (The cultural symbols deployed in the Britto campaign generally have an implicit masculine character.) Both Rigotto and Britto are regularly depicted taking *chimarrão* (Figures 12a and 12b). As observed by Oliveira (2003, xx), there is no small irony in the Rigotto campaign's use of gaucho symbols, since Rigotto—the man—does not customarily dress or speak in a characteristically gaucho manner.

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**FIGURE 12**

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**TAKING CHIMARRÃO: FRAMES FROM RIGOTTO AND BRITTO CAMPAIGNS**

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12a. Rigotto



12b. Britto

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Two aspects distinguish the Genro campaign's invocations of *gaúchismo* from those of Rigotto and Britto. The first concerns the use of gendered language: Whereas Rigotto and Britto use “gaucho” to refer by implication to both men and women, Genro's campaign systematically follows every mention of “gauchos” with “and gauchas.” As such, it makes an explicit appeal to women voters. More subtly, it interpellates a viewing subject who *cares* that such a distinction be made in the first place. The Genro campaign discourse, thus, inscribes an alternative reading of the masculinist cultural figure of the gaucho. The inscription aims, moreover, for a sense of unity—that no contradiction be perceived between “and gauchas” and the implicitly masculine character of the gaucho.<sup>53</sup> The PT discourse deployed in the Genro campaign is also distinctive for the way it associates “traditional” gaucho values with a (partisan) ideological focus on *participação* and active citizenship. Indeed, the Genro campaign frequently asserts resonance

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<sup>53</sup> This is extremely close to Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) notions of “articulatory” and “antagonistic” practices, through which certain differences become reconciled into a unified totality or marked, respectively, in discourse.



between (and even unity in) the timeless values of “daring” and “pioneer spirit,” and democratic participation.

### **Defining the Terms of the Debate: Patrimony, Privatization, and Acrimony**

As discussed above, a central element in the early months of the gubernatorial campaigns (before Germano Rigotto overtook Antônio Britto as Genro’s chief rival) was the question of privatization. In Genro’s campaign materials, Britto is represented as having betrayed the gauchos through privatization measures. The following text comes from the cover of a Genro campaign flyer:

People know that today’s Britto is the same one who sold the gaúcho state, who let our industry go bankrupt and ignored our agriculture. He governed for few and turned his back on Rio Grande. [...] He applied Cardoso’s neoliberal prescription to Rio Grande do Sul—firing employees, closing hiring, and reducing resources for health and education. It’s the same policy that brought Argentina to misery. [...] Now that the [Argentine] crisis is on TV everyday, none of them admits to being neoliberal, to defending the sale of public property and the firing of civil servants. It’s all pure election campaign propaganda so that they might return to power and repeat everything all over again.

*As pessoas sabem que o Britto de hoje é o mesmo que vendeu o estado gaúcho, que descartou a falência da nossa indústria e desprezou nossa agricultura. Governou para poucos e virou as costas para o Rio Grande. [...] Aplicou a receita neoliberal de FHC no Rio Grande do Sul – demitindo funcionários, fechando vagas de trabalho e reduzindo os recursos para a Saúde e a Educação. É a mesma política que levou a Argentina à miséria. [...] Agora que todos os dias a crise está na TV, nenhum deles assume que é neoliberal, que defende a venda de patrimônio público e a demissão de servidores. É tudo pura propaganda de campanha eleitoral para voltarem ao poder e repetirem tudo de novo.*

The text summons the addressee to recognize the ill effects of Britto’s policies, expressed in hyperbole (“sold the gaúcho state”) and named as *neoliberal*. Its potent symbolism, however, goes beyond the mere material consequences of Britto’s policy: It accuses him of having betrayed “the gauchos” and all that the gauchos stand for. The text cites the Argentine crisis as proof of neoliberalism’s inherent flaws and asserts that Britto now denies his “true” (neoliberal) self. (This state-level discourse differs from that of the national Lula campaign, as it explicitly and repeatedly attacks Cardoso.) Britto, for his part, countered with accusations that the PT’s isolationist policy had betrayed the gaúcho worker, for whom “citizenship” had become a hollow and disingenuous discourse.

As in the Genro and Britto campaigns, the Rigotto campaign—devastatingly effective in the end—made universally framed claims about what is good for the gauchos. Sidestepping questions of patrimony and privatization, however, Rigotto—in a move strikingly reminiscent of Lula’s rhetorical embrace of “decency”—singled out the acrimony between his two opponents, arguing that the bitter feud had placed unhealthy distance between government and society and that it had compromised either politician’s ability to govern effectively if elected. This rhetorical strategy is epitomized in the following two campaign texts. The first comes from a commercial from the *Horário Político*. Declaring a “manifesto to the gauchos,” the text scrolls down the screen while read by a grave-voiced announcer. The second text is the flipside to the Rigotto campaign’s principal flyer (Figure 13, reverse of 10).

Rio Grande do Sul looks on—scandalized—at the unprecedented escalation of accusations, insinuations, and criticism between the candidates Antônio Britto and Tarso Genro. This behavior of personal and political destruction between adversaries unacceptably lowers the level of electoral debate. These expressions of hatred and radicalism make it impossible for either Tarso Genro or Antônio Britto to govern.... And what’s worse, the concentration of the debate on questions of personal and political morality, true or not, leaves the greater interest of Rio Grandean society aside. It is urgent that gauchos get away from this destructive and useless confrontation. As for us, we will continue presenting constructive proposals and not aggressions and personal attacks that shame our state.

*O Rio Grande do Sul assiste escandalizado uma escalada sem precedents de acusações, insinuações e críticas entre os candidatos Antônio Britto e Tarso Genro. Este comportamento de destruição pessoal e política entre adversários rebaixa inaceitavelmente o nível da disputa eleitoral. Essas expressões de ódio e radicalismo inviabilizam a possibilidade de Tarso Genro e Antônio Britto governarem... E o que é pior: a concentração do debate em questões de moralidade pessoal e política, verdadeiras ou não, deixa de lado o interesse maior da sociedade riograndense. É urgente que os gaúchos se afastem deste confronto destrutivo e inútil. De nossa parte, continuaremos apresentando propostas construtivas e não agressões e ataques pessoais que envergonham nosso estado.*

Rigotto was by no means the first to bemoan the bitterness of the ongoing quarrels between the PT and Antônio Britto. Indeed, Rio Grandean had witnessed the same diatribes four years before, when Britto (as incumbent) faced Olívio Dutra. But Rigotto’s focus on this issue in 2002 was ingenious for putting a new spin on an old theme: that this PT-Britto rancor had now passed beyond the point where either could govern effectively. To make its case, the text (as elsewhere in the Rigotto campaign) animates a highly ambiguous notion of “radicalism” (lines 2,



5 and 7 of Figure 13) which conflates the PT's ideologically leftist *politics* with its putatively bitter *polemics*. The “destructive” character of the disputes referred to in the “manifesto” are substantiated in the flyer (lines 3 and 4): By alternating between administrations with diametrically opposed ideologies, continuity of government policy is compromised. Genro is condemned by implication—the memory of Olívio Dutra's reneging on the Ford and General Motors deals is still fresh in public memory—and Britto, were he to be elected, would surely undo whatever projects had been put in place under Dutra. The clear implication here is that as long as the PT and Britto are the only options, Rio Grande do Sul's development will remain at a standstill. Following a representational logic that is structurally identical to Genro and Britto's mutual accusations of betraying the gauchos, Rigotto asserts the enmity between his opponents as shameful to the state.

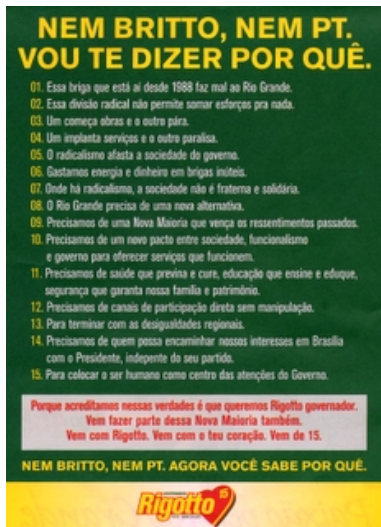
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FIGURE 13

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RIGOTTO FLYER

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Neither Britto, Nor PT: I will tell you why

1. This argument, here since 1988, is bad for Rio Grande
  2. This radical division doesn't add up to anything
  3. One starts projects and the other stops them
  4. One puts in place services and the other paralyzes them
  5. Radicalism distances society from the government
  6. We spend energy and money on useless arguments
  7. Where there's radicalism, society isn't fraternal or sympathetic
  8. Rio Grande needs a new alternative
  9. We need a New Majority that conquers past resentments
  10. We need a new pact between society, functionalism and government to offer services that work
  11. We need healthcare that prevents and cures, education that teaches, security that guarantees our family and patrimony
  12. We need channels of direct participation without manipulation
  13. An end to regional inequalities
  14. We need someone who can pursue our interests in Brasília with the President, regardless of party
  15. To put the human being at the center of the government's attention
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CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding analyses, I have characterized the major discourses informing the 2002 election campaigns and the forms of subjectivity these discourses incited. Examining recurrent symbols and representational logics, I have illustrated how official campaign rhetoric constructed its

appeal in order to incite identification and investment. In examining the Lula campaign, I have shown how both televised advertisement spots and printed materials attempted to portray their candidate as a man of competence, character, and “decency,” who had matured over the years into a respectable, capable leader who could be trusted to look after Brazil’s well-being in a globalized world. As highlighted in my analysis of two *Horário Político* spots, the Lula campaign used television to incite various forms of identification and investment. Chief among these are appeals to a universal sense of moral justice and to the core values of struggle, suffering, and parental love. The Lula campaign was also distinctive for its overt appeals to women, poor people, and workers, all of whom were meant to *feel close* to a candidate who knows their suffering from personal experience.

The Rio Grande do Sul gubernatorial campaigns, meanwhile, focused on the form of economic policy (“neoliberal” vs. “isolationist”) that would best serve the interests of workers and was most in keeping with a putatively authentic gaúcho tradition. As the Genro and Britto campaigns reinscribed this dichotomy, the outsider campaign of Germano Rigotto called on Rio Grandians to reject this divisive logic which, he asserted, had become so rancorous as to compromise either man’s potential efficacy as governor. This bitterness in the regional campaigns contrasts with the national PT campaign (the latter with its focus on “decency”). All three gubernatorial campaigns aggressively interpellate a gaúcho subject, making heavy use of regional symbols, with the PT candidate Genro asserting an association between direct democratic participation in the contemporary world to traditional gaúcho values.

With such a multiplicity of discursive incitements in media discourse around the 2002 campaigns, Vera’s opening remarks about feeling confused at election time seem more than understandable. Indeed, the image these analyses leave of the campaigns is that of an ongoing background cacophony of competing attempts for the voter’s attention. Within the appeals of the campaigns, significant risks are taken (as in the gubernatorial campaigns’ heavy reliance on gaúcho imagery, which may not be appealing to everyone), and these risks affect the likelihood that campaign discourses will successfully inculcate the forms of subjectivity they encode. Having mapped out in this paper how campaigns view citizens, the next (and complementary) analytic step is to examine *how citizens view campaigns—and view themselves through campaigns*.

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