THE ESTABLISHMENT UPSIDE DOWN: A YEAR OF CHANGE IN BRAZIL[*]

El "establishment" dado vuelta: un año de cambio en Brasil

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ABSTRACT

This was a year of dramatic changes in Brazilian politics, as the established parties and actors that had dominated Brazilian politics for two decades were humbled. The year began with the administration of the extremely unpopular, lame duck President Michel Temer, and ended awaiting the inauguration of far-rightist President Jair Bolsonaro on January 1st, 2019. In this article, we describe and analyze the major events of 2018 in Brazilian politics. From the perspective of legislative and executive productivity, the year was largely uneventful, as President Michel Temer had spent most of his political capital mustering the legislative votes needed to avoid prosecution for corruption. Yet transformations were afoot in parties and civil society. Three of the country's most traditionally important parties – the PT, PMDB, and PSDB – were decimated, and the PT's icon and standard-bearer Lula da Silva imprisoned. Meanwhile, the right and far-right grew in importance, and Jair Bolsonaro won the presidency with the sponsorship of the previously extremely small Social Liberal Party (PSL).

Key words: Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, Lula da Silva, elections, corruption

RESUMEN

2018 fue un año de cambios dramáticos en la política brasileña. Los partidos y actores políticos que habían dominado la política brasileña durante dos décadas fueron humillados. El año comenzó con la administración del extremadamente impopular presidente Michel Temer y terminó esperando el comienzo de la presidencia del candidato de extrema derecha, Jair Bolsonaro. En este artículo, describimos y analizamos los principales eventos políticos ocurridos en Brasil durante 2018. Desde la perspectiva de la productividad legislativa y ejecutiva, el año transcurrió sin incidentes, ya que el presidente Michel Temer había gastado la mayor parte de su capital político reuniendo los votos legislativos necesarios para evitar juicios por corrupción. Sin embargo, durante este año se produjeron transformaciones en los partidos y en la sociedad civil. Tres de los partidos tradicionalmente más importantes del país, el PT, PMDB y PSDB, fueron diezmados y el ícono y abanderado del PT, Lula da Silva, fue encarcelado. Mientras tanto, la derecha y la extrema derecha crecieron en importancia, y Jair Bolsonaro ganó la presidencia con el patrocinio del otrora pequeño Partido Social Liberal (PSL).

Palabras clave: *Jair Bolsonaro, Lula da Silva, elecciones, corrupción*

When Brazilians rang in the new year on January 1, 2018, the nation's future looked uncertain. The country was recovering from economic crisis and saddled with an immensely unpopular lame duck president and a largely unproductive legislature. In legislative and executive politics, little happened during the year, as outgoing President Michel Temer and Congress were hamstrung by scandals and gridlock. Yet ringing out the new year on December 31, Brazilians awaited with substantial optimism the inauguration of a new president the following day: Jair Bolsonaro, a far-rightist whom most Brazilians hoped would restore prosperity and security, despite his controversial and polarizing campaign. In February, the new legislative session commenced with a renewed Congress—including the youngest legislators ever to serve the institution—and without many long-serving former members, who failed to be reelected. An established partisan order that had ruled Brazil for two decades had fallen, symbolized by the election of a president from the "dwarf" (i.e., very small) Social Liberal Party (PSL) in late October. Thus, 2018 was a year of transformation and tumult—and not only among elected officials. The most interesting and important events of 2018 were found on YouTube, WhatsApp, and in the streets of cities around the country.

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the start of 2018, Brazil was scarred by a severe economic crisis, a presidential impeachment, and a political class ravaged by corruption scandals. A state of near continual crises began in June 2013, with an unprecedented wave of political mobilization calling for improved public services and representation (Sweet 2014). Despite an adverse economic scenario, then-President Dilma Rousseff (PT, or Workers' Party) managed temporarily to address popular demands. Still, the seeds of a new anti-establishment discourse had been sewn. Those seeds were fertilized by the Operation Car Wash corruption scandal that began to emerge in 2014, implicating the entire political class.

After President Dilma eked out a reelection victory against Aécio Neves (PMDB) in October 2014, the opposition remained in a state of permanent campaign, calling for a vote recount and casting doubt on the validity of the results (Ribeiro et al. 2016). Eduardo Cunha (PMDB), who became president of the Chamber of Deputies in the new legislative session, worked to undermine the PT's coalition (Nunes and Melo 2017). As Dilma gradually lost the support of her legislative allies, even members of her own PT opposed her for implementing austerity policies that contradicted her campaign platform. The context of economic and political crisis thus favored Rousseff's August 2016 impeachment. Nonetheless, the events of 2016 would show that the PMDB was only a temporary victor in its fight against the PT.

II. PRESIDENT MICHEL TEMER AND CONGRESS: LAME (AND SLEEPING) DUCKS

In the two elected federal branches, 2018 was the unproductive final year of the presidency of Michel Temer, the Movimento Democratico Brasileiro (MDB)[1] party leader who had been the vice president under President Dilma Rousseff until her impeachment and removal from office in August 2016. Though Temer had never won a presidential election, in his first year he maintained stable and broad legislative support. Yet by 2018, Temer's presidency was hobbled. The executive and legislative stasis of 2018 is partially due to Temer's status as a "lame duck," yet it was far more profound than the typical decline in political capital marking the final months of a presidency. Temer spent his final year with his hands completely tied. Beset by corruption charges, an economic recession, and extremely high rejection rates, the president watched even former allies entirely dismiss his leadership during the electoral campaign.

As the former president of the Chamber of Deputies, in executive office Temer initially proved effective at managing the highly multipartisan legislative coalitions that characterize Brazil's unusual institutional arrangement known as "coalitional presidentialism" (Power 2010). At the beginning of his presidency, Temer was viewed as the most efficient coalition manager out of all Brazilian presidents since 1989 (Pereira and Bertholini 2018). A combination of several factors—including the size of his party support, the ideological congruence of his allies, and the proportional distribution of cabinets among them—reduced his costs of governing, allowing him to build and maintain consistently high legislative support.

Temer's strong legislative position enabled him to become an "accidental reformer" (Melo 2018), moving forward with legislative packages aimed at recovery from the recession that began in 2014. In his first year in office, Temer managed to pass a variety of controversial neoliberal reforms, including labor reform and a constitutional amendment capping federal spending for twenty years. By the beginning of 2018, the next item on his agenda was pension reform, as most economists argued the present system would become a major drag on public spending, giving rising life expectancy.

However, two corruptions scandals in mid-2017 took a severe toll on Temer's bargaining power. First, in May of that year, the president was accused of accepting a US $152,000 bribe from Joesley Batista, the owner of a Brazilian foods conglomerate. Then, Temer was charged with obstruction of justice and criminal conspiracy after a close aide, Rodrigo Rocha Loures, was filmed taking delivery of a suitcase with a further US $130,000 (a down payment towards a supposed eventual $11 million bribe). Facing potential trials in the Supreme

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[1]   PMDB (Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro) is the former title of the MDB; the party rebranded itself as the MDB in December 2017, in the context of corruption scandals.

Court, which is the only court in which sitting Brazilian presidents can be tried, Temer deployed large amounts of patronage to persuade legislators to block the two denunciations. Widespread outrage against Temer's self-interested, cronyistic dealmaking contributed to a dramatic drop in his public approval. Popular support was also eroded by continuing economic stagnation, despite partial recovery. By the end of January, 2018, the Datafolha Institute found that Temer's disapproval rate was around 70%.

Hence, by 2018, lawmakers were much less willing to work with Temer. Pension reform had been a core government goal, but few legislators were inclined to risk supporting a controversial proposal from an unpopular president. By mid-February of 2018, the government recognized that pension reform was unlikely to pass, and diverted public attention with a federal military intervention in Rio de Janeiro, following months of escalating violence. Public safety experts criticized the broad decree to "restore order," arguing that Rio needed long-term, non-military solutions. A month into the intervention, militias allied with public security forces brutally gunned down the leftist, black and lesbian city council member Marielle Franco (PSOL) on a downtown street. Still, the tactic worked as a smokescreen for the government's defeat on pension reform, as the Constitution forbade voting on proposed amendments during a federal military intervention.

And then a new crisis surfaced. In May 2018, truckers launched an eleven-day, nationwide protest in response to spiking diesel prices. Since 2016, fuel costs had exploded, oscillating on a daily basis as a result of rising international oil prices and the depreciation of Brazil's currency. After several attempts to negotiate, truckers announced a mobilization blocking highways, which generated a fuel shortage at gas stations. The government eventually negotiated a deal with the strike leaders, agreeing to state subsidies for diesel, and to allow price adjustments only monthly. These concessions took a significant toll on the public budget and led to the dismissal of the head of Petrobrás, Pedro Parente.

The end of the fuel crisis coincided with the days leading up to the presidential campaign. On May 22, Temer officially declined to run; his former Finance Minister Henrique Meirelles would become the MDB's candidate. This was the first time since 1989 that the party would choose its own presidential candidate, rather than allying itself with the PT (Workers' Party) or PSDB (Brazilian Social Democratic Party). Throughout the campaign, opposition members and former allies treated Temer as a persona non grata -- and Temer responded in kind. Refusing to accept blame for the country's political and economic setbacks, Temer publicly disseminated videos on social media against the campaigns of opponents and former allies. In one, he accused the PSDB's candidate Geraldo Alckmin of spreading fake news about his government; in another, Temer targeted Fernando Haddad (PT), defending his labor reform.

Temer left the office as the most unpopular president since the end of the military dictatorship. As a true "lame duck," he spent his last year evading

political crises and fending off corruption investigation, while doing relatively little to govern the country.

III. JUDICIAL POLITICS AND CORRUPTION INVESTIGATIONS

By 2018, judicial institutions were playing a key role in Brazilian politics. The ongoing Operation Car Wash investigation had resulted in numerous arrests of top politicians on corruption charges since 2014. Among those who had fallen were the former president of the Federal Chamber, Eduardo Cunha (PMDB), who had previously led the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff (PT); the former state governor of Rio de Janeiro, Sérgio Cabral (PMDB); and the former Finance Minister, Antônio Palocci (PT).

However, it was the case of former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (PT), who sought to run for president in 2018, that brought Car Wash to the center of presidential politics. Investigation of the PT leader on charges of bribery, money laundering, and influence peddling began in 2016, in the months leading up to the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff. In July 2017, Judge Sergio Moro convicted Lula in a lower court (i.e., first instance) ruling, sentencing him to nine years and six months for "passive corruption" and money laundering. The former president was accused of hiding his ownership of a penthouse apartment on Guarajá beach, in his home state of São Paulo, which prosecutors maintained had been a bribe from the owners of the OAS company in exchange for favors from Petrobras. In January of 2018, the Federal Regional Court confirmed Lula's conviction on appeal, extending his sentence to 12 years and a month. By that time, Lula had declared his intention to run for president.

The former and would-be future president remained free from prison until April 6, 2018, following a controversial Supreme Court ruling that Lula must begin serving his sentence immediately, despite not having exhausted all his appeals. This decision provoked immediate legal and political backlash; lawyers argued that it was a politically motivated attack on the rule of law. Judge Sergio Moro fueled the campaign's narrative that Lula was being politically persecuted when he released the arrest warrant within 24 hours. Lula took back some control of the timing by refusing to surrender before leading his last political rally, on the birthday of his deceased spouse Marisa Letícia, a day after Moro's deadline. The farewell event took place at the Metalworkers Union headquarters in São Paulo, where Lula had entered politics as a union leader in the 1970s. PT supporters camped for two nights to watch the former president's last speech. At the end of the day, Lula left the building on foot to surrender to federal agents, as crowds blocked the car exit, becoming the first Brazilian president convicted or imprisoned for corruption.

Lula's arrest ended one phase of Operation Car Wash but created an unusual situation; campaigning from behind bars, the PT leader managed to monopolize media coverage of the race. For some, the arrest signified the maturation of

judicial institutions, the end of impunity, and the strengthening of horizontal accountability. For others, it demonstrated the political bias of the court system. The electoral circumstances—and, late in 2018, Judge Sérgio Moro's alliance with the winning candidate—contributed to both interpretations. Questions over Lula's status ended only with the Superior Electoral Court's final decision on August 31, 2018, to bar his candidacy.

IV. CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS

Though relatively little happened in government, 2018 was a year of rupture and transformation in mass politics, definitively breaking patterns established over the three decades since the return to democracy. Changes can be categorized in three areas: the electoral trouncing of the Workers Party, after decades of steady growth; a marked shift in campaign methods and strategies; and the triumph of new patterns of mobilization on the right, combined with the fall of an older, center-right.

The PT and the Left in Disarray

In principle, Lula's imprisonment, the lack of an obvious successor, and the severe blows to the PT more broadly opened space for other candidates and parties on the center-left. The 2018 campaign would be the first since the return to democracy without Lula stumping for votes in political rallies around the country, whether for himself or his surrogates. However, the *petista* (PT) leadership was not at all inclined to step back from the party's long-term dominance on the left. Maintaining that status was the party's primary goal in launching its own presidential candidate, undermining the possibility of a broad leftist coalition.

The PT made several attempts to attract the support of its competitors on the left. Ciro Gomes of the Democratic Workers' Party (PDT, or *Partido Democratico Trabalhista*), however, furiously refused to quit in favor of the PT's project (O Globo 2018a). In fact, Ciro Gomes tried to build a coalition with parties from the other side of the political spectrum, including the Democratas (DEM) and minor parties from the "Centrão," or "broad middle." A third alternative on the left was the former senator Marina Silva (REDE), who had won over 22 million votes in the 2014 presidential campaign. However, her public support for the Car Wash investigation—including Lula's imprisonment (O Globo 2017) —prevented her alliance with the PT. Moreover, although voters on the left strongly desired a coalition between Silva and Gomes, it also failed to advance. Hence, the left faced its most fragmented campaign since 1989.

Lula's continuing popularity was the PT's main asset in fighting to maintain its status on the left. Even imprisoned, the former president remained the front-

runner in polls until the Electoral Court barred his candidacy (see Figure 1). The cry "the election without Lula is a fraud" became a mantra of Lula supporters in vigils and marches. These mobilizations did not sway the courts; since the beginning of the year, the courts had signaled that they were unlikely to approve Lula's candidacy (Folha de S. Paulo 2018). However, the protests did strategically ensure the former president's continuing presence in the spotlight.

Figure 1. Voting Intentions for the First round (with Lula as the PT Candidate)
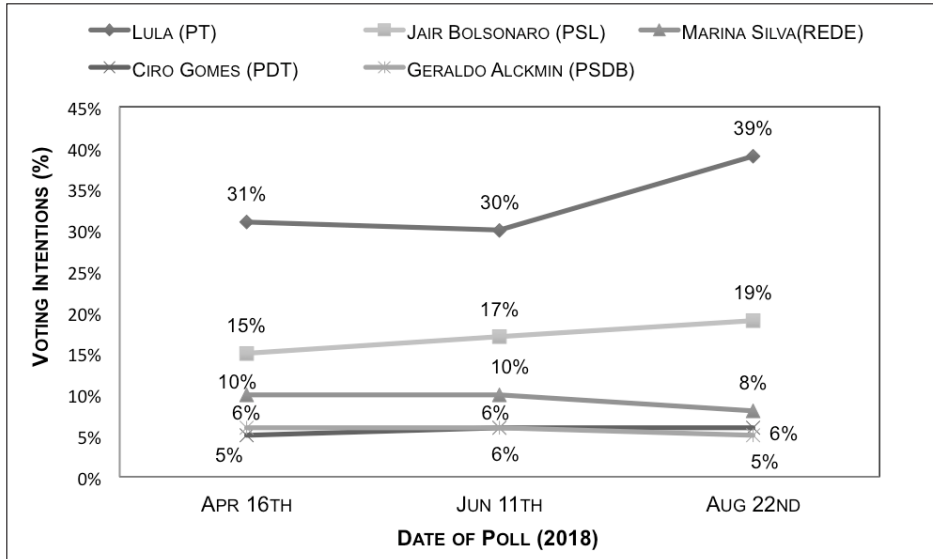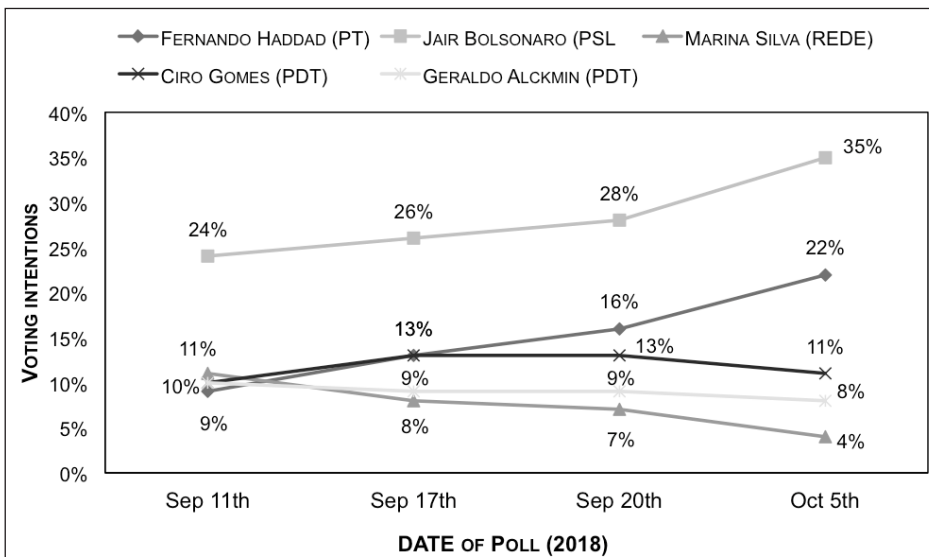

Source: Datafolha (2018)

Yet the PT was keeping a second presidential candidate in the wings. While strong partisans fought for "*Lula Livre*," or "Free Lula," Lula's vice-presidential candidate, Fernando Haddad (PT)—a former national Minister of Education (2005-2012) and mayor of the city of São Paulo (2013-2016) —was strategically waiting in the rearguard. In insisting on Lula's nomination, one of the PT's primary goals was to spend as long as possible strengthening the Haddad's perceived ties to Lula—especially in the North and Northeast, where Haddad was still relatively unknown. Throughout the early months of the campaign, Haddad engaged in rallies, gave interviews, and performed like a real candidate. Atypically, the PT's campaign materials highlighted the names of both Lula and Haddad.

Haddad was only finally nominated as the PT's presidential candidate on September 11, about three weeks before the first-round election; Manuela Dávila (PCdoB), a state representative in Rio Grande do Sul, became his running mate. The Haddad-Dávila campaign strategy was deeply rooted in Haddad's ties

to Lula and role as Lula's former advisor (it is also worth noting that Dilma Rousseff's name was barely mentioned). A gimmick enabled the campaign to maintain Lula's name in its advertising, with the headline "Lula is Haddad" (or "Lula = Haddad"). The accent of the TV announcer in the official campaign videos indicated the PT's target audience: voters in the North and Northeast, regions that, since 2006, had become PT strongholds (Singer 2000; Hunter 2010; Baker 2016; Carreirão & Rennó 2019).

Associating Haddad with Lula was not without risks. Six days before the first-round election, the aforementioned Judge Sergio Moro publicly released testimony of Lula's former Finance Minister Antonio Palocci, accusing Lula of manipulating oil exploration to raise campaign funds. Such information could have derailed Haddad's candidacy—and arguably ultimately affected his performance. Still, the Workers' Party's strategy succeeded in the first round. Within a week of becoming the PT's official candidate, Haddad assumed second place in the polls, leaving behind most rivals (see Figure 2). In the first-round election of October 7, 2018, Haddad received 29.3% of the vote, easily moving to the second round. However, Haddad's performance fell short of what would have been expected of Lula and his distance from Bolsonaro, who took 46.0% of the vote, indicated the obstacles the PT would face in the second round.

Figure 2. Voting Intentions in the 1st round (with Haddad as the PT candidate)

Source: Datafolha (2018)

In the three weeks between the October 7 first-round vote and the October 28 second-round runoff, the PT pivoted. At the elite-level, leaders tried to build a broad coalition "in favor of democracy," establishing linkages that would allow

Haddad to connect with a broader audience, including voters resistant to the PT as a party. The PT abandoned core elements of its brand. For instance, the traditional red background of PT campaign materials was replaced by white, combined with patriotic colors from the national flag (green, yellow, and blue). Haddad also abandoned his weekly visits to Lula in prison in Curitiba.

Yet formal partisan alliances did not materialize in time and sufficient number. After losing in the first round, Ciro Gomes spent most of the second-round campaign in Paris. His support for Haddad's candidacy was limited to the vague declaration, "Not Him" ("Ele Nao," a reference to a popular refrain in the social movement opposing Bolsonaro). Marina Silva, who had left the PT in 2009 and whose previous co-partisans had severely attacked her 2010 campaign, announced her support for Haddad just six days before the election. All of the remaining candidates declared their neutrality, with the exceptions of Guilherme Boulos (PSOL) and José Maria Eymael (DC). Although several public figures unassociated with the PT endorsed Haddad's candidacy, including the former Federal Minister of Supreme Court, Joaquim Barbosa (PSB), and former São Paulo State Governor, Alberto Goldman (PSDB), Workers' Party leaders were unable to marshal the broad support they had expected. Ultimately, the PT's inability to cement elite alliances presaged its voting returns. On October 28, Jair Bolsonaro received 55.1% of the valid vote in the second-round campaign, to Fernando Haddad's 44.9%.

To what extent can Haddad's loss be attributed to changes in mass partisanship? Scholars describe the PT as entering a golden era around 2002, triggered by a shift in the party's brand during Lula's first victorious presidential campaign: from relatively far-left and confrontational positions, to a more moderate and mainstream platform (Hunter 2010; Ames, Garcia and Smith 2012; Baker 2016; Lupu 2016; Samuels and Zucco 2017). In Lula's two terms in office, PT support rose dramatically, reinforced by strong and redistributive economic growth as well as effective social policies (see Figure 3). A new pattern of party attachment evolved, as Lula's successful administration attracted a new pool of "pragmatic supporters" (Hunter and Power 2007; Baker 2016; Samuels and Zucco 2017).

However, this shift ultimately brought its own risks, as new PT partisans were more attuned to government performance and more likely to blame the party for shocks. Since 2013, the PT government had faced an economic recession, corruption scandals, and political instability. Though the PT maintained higher support than any other party, its partisanship gradually fell from around 30% in 2013, albeit recovering slightly after the impeachment in 2016.

Figure 3. Party Identification (1989-2017)
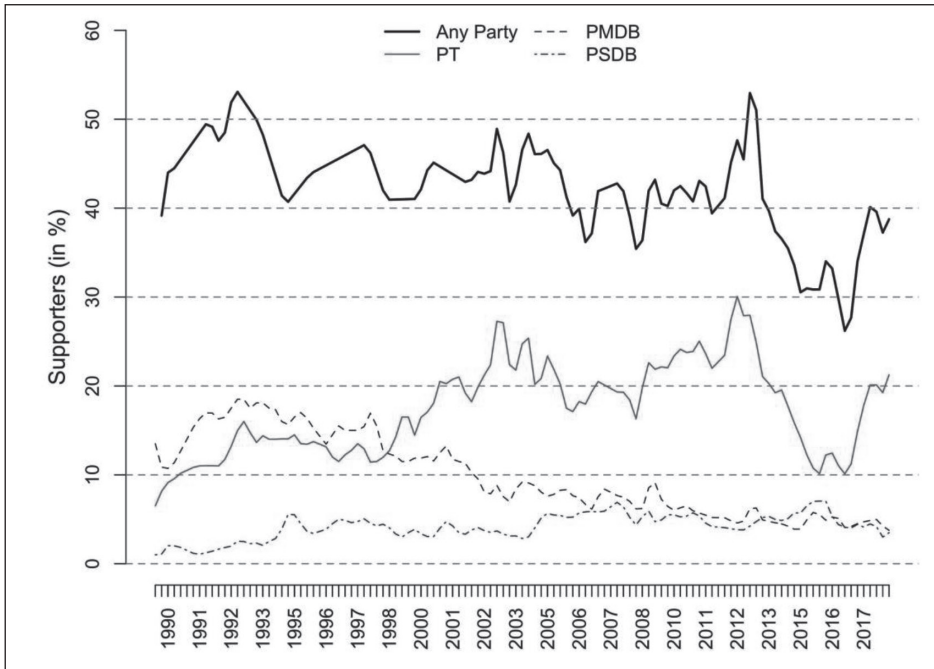
Source: Data shared by César Zucco (personal correspondence, 2019)

Yet in most narratives, *antipetismo*, or opposition to the PT, is a more salient and unusual feature of the 2018 campaign than positive sentiment toward the PT. The notion of *antipetismo* has recently come to play a central role in theories of Brazilian political behavior. Samuels and Zucco (2017) argue that positive and negative attachments towards the Workers' Party constitute the major cleavage of the party-system since redemocratization in the 1980s. In fact, the authors interpret *antipetismo* as a direct consequence of the growth of *petismo*—that is, the PT's status as the country's best loved party also led it to become the most hated

Unfortunately, a lack of consistent longitudinal data on rejection of the PT makes it hard to evaluate the extent to which *antipetismo* may have increased between prior elections and 2018. As shown in Figure 4, data from IBOPE demonstrates that rejection of the PT rose during the first-round campaign. Nonetheless, the work of Samuels and Zucco (2017) strongly indicates that *antipetismo* represents a long-term pattern of social identification, with a sociodemographic base that partially overlaps with that of the "PT hard-core." Has *antipetismo* grown significantly enough to explain the electoral results of 2018? Or are new sociodemographic patterns of *antipetismo* developing? Without further data on long-term shifts, we recommend caution before attributing the PT's 2018 defeat to *antipetismo*.

Figure 4. Party Attachments toward the PT (2018)
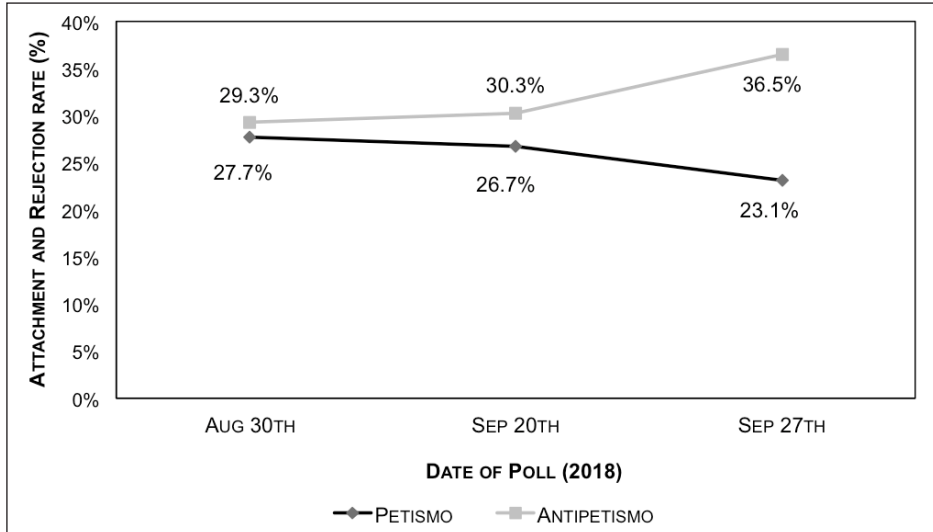
Source: Ibope (2018)

Hence, 2018 revealed serious weaknesses on the Brazilian left. On the one hand, the Workers Party proved to have lost its ability to mobilize a broad and cross-sectional coalition, or "*Frente Ampla*," at either the institutional or street levels. We still do not know whether this situation is transitory or permanent. On the other hand, it is worth noting that no other party of the left was able to escape the PT's fate in 2018.

Campaigning 2.0: Smash Your TV, Pick Up Your Smartphone

Second, 2018 involved dramatic changes in campaign strategies, including the declining relevance of radio and television advertising, which are allocated in Brazil through the federally mandated *horário eleitoral gratuito*, or Free Electoral Broadcast Airtime (FEBA). Studies of prior presidential elections found a positive relationship between candidates' electoral performance and the number of advertising minutes they received (Borba and Aldé 2017)—though results must be treated with caution regarding endogeneity, as 90% of advertising time is determined by a party's share of seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

However, any prior correlation between airtime and performance vanished in 2018. As Table 1 shows, the PSDB candidate Geraldo Alckmin monopolized 44% of the total FEBA but finished the first round with only 4.8% of votes. The candidate with the third highest airtime, Henrique Meirelles, received only 1.2% of the first-round vote. By contrast, Jair Bolsonaro (PSL) got 45% of the first-round vote with only 8 seconds of TV and radio campaign broadcasting. Across

all candidates, the correlation between airtime and first-round vote in 2018 was a statistically insignificant .07, raising serious questions about the continuing relevance of this mainstay of Brazilian campaigning.

Table 1. Distribution of TV and Radio Airtime in the 2018 First-Round Presidential Race (FEBA)

Presidential Candidate	Interparty Coalition	Airtime
Geraldo Alckmin (PSDB)	PSDB, PRB, PP, PTB, PR, PPS, DEM, PSD e Solidariedade	5 min 32 sec (434 spots)
Fernando Haddad (PT)	PT, PCdoB e PROS	2 min 23 sec (189 spots)
Henrique Meirelles (PMDB)	MDB, PHS	1 min 55 sec (151 spots)
Álvaro Dias (Podemos)	Podemos, PSC, PTC, PRP	40 sec (52 spots)
Ciro Gomes (PDT)	PDT, Avante	38 sec (51 spots)
Marina Silva (Rede)	Rede, PV	21 sec (29 spots)
Guilherme Boulos (PSOL)	PSOL, PCB	13 sec (17 spots)
Eymael (Democracia Cristã)	Democracia Cristã	8 sec (12 spots)
Jair Bolsonaro (PSL)	PSL, PRTB	8 sec (11 spots)
Cabo Daciolo (Patriota)	Patriota	8 sec (11 spots)
João Amoedo (Novo)	Novo	5 sec (8 spots)
Vera Lúcia (PSTU)	PSTU	5 sec (7 spots)
João Goulart Filho (PPL)	PPL	5 sec (7 spots)

Source: Superior Electoral Court (2018)

What led to the declining importance of traditional mass communications technologies? Three factors likely played a role. First, the shift may be partially due to changes in electoral legislation in 2015, which reduced the FEBA from 45 to 35 days and from 25-minute slots to two 12.5-minute slots (though the display of short spots was expanded from 30 to 70 minutes per day).

Second, a traumatic campaign event likely accelerated the shift away from television. On September 6, Bolsonaro was stabbed during a campaign rally; he lost 40% of his blood, was hospitalized for more than three weeks, and had a colostomy bag until late January 2019. Though Bolsonaro had previously been ambivalent about participation in televised debates, the stabbing provided him with a strong, publicly acceptable justification for withdrawing from traditional campaign activities. He participated in no subsequent debates, and no televised debates were held at all during the second round. Hence, by the time the PT officially nominated Fernando Haddad, his leading opponent was unavailable for public engagement on television.

In the two months following the stabbing, Bolsonaro's public appearances were most often via videos streamed or posted on the Internet. The day of the attack, conservative evangelical Senator Magno Malta rushed to Bolsonaro's bedside

and recorded the first post-attack interview with Bolsonaro, which he posted to the social networking site YouTube (Estado de São Paulo 2018). Though Bolsonaro was released from the hospital on September 29, he remained under doctor's orders to limit public appearances. As a consequence, Bolsonaro often teleconferenced into his own campaign events, live-streaming speeches from his backyard.

As these events suggest, the third and arguably most important reason for the decline of television is the growth in social media. Social media had already become central to Brazilian social life. In the mid-2000s, Brazilians were early and eager adopters of the now-defunct Orkut social networking site, and Facebook had become dominant by the beginning of the following decade (Citounadin 2018). Social media penetration is high relative to many other middle-income countries; by January 2019, 66% of the entire population was estimated to be "active" social media users, with 61% accessing via smartphone (Hootsuite 2019). Moreover, users spent more time per day with social media than users in many other countries. A 2018 survey of 41 countries found that Brazilian Internet users aged 14-64 ranked second only to Filipinos in the amount of time spent online daily (9 hours and 29 minutes) and in time spent on social media (3 hours and 34 minutes) (Hootsuite 2019). Three social media platforms dominated: YouTube (95% of active social media users), Facebook (90%), and the WhatsApp messaging app (89%).

These three platforms became a principal vehicle for campaign communications in 2018. Study after study documented the overwhelming volume of electoral commentary transmitted and consumed via Facebook and WhatsApp (for overviews, see Datafolha 2018 and El País 2018). At the end of the second-round campaign, the Datafolha Institute (2018) found that 46% of voters said that they had read election information on Facebook, and 22% had shared such information; the equivalent figures for WhatsApp were 46% and 26%. Yet the targeted nature of WhatsApp—in which messages are sent directly to phone numbers associated with specific users and messaging groups, rather than posted publicly as on Facebook—made this platform particularly useful for campaigning. Large WhatsApp groups of family and friends disseminated electoral content and evaluated candidates. Campaigns harvested batches of cell phone numbers from Facebook profiles and other venues to create WhatsApp messaging groups to disseminate ads and memes (Magenta, Gragnani and Souza 2018).

In this new, more fluid and less readily monitored media environment, fake news became rampant. Drawing on Fernando Haddad's actual role as Minister of Education in supporting a high school curriculum promoting tolerance of gay rights—a curriculum evangelical opponents had derided as a "gay kit"— viral memes accused Haddad of sexualizing children. One fake news item alleged that Haddad had tried to give children in public daycare centers milk bottles shaped like penises; others accused him of trying to decriminalize adult sexual contact with minors, or of trying to force children to become transgender

(see, for instance, Smith and Lloyd 2018). Meanwhile, anti-Bolsonaro groups promoted conspiracy theories such as that his stabbing had been faked, and that he was secretly dying of cancer.

The YouTube video sharing site also played a role, far beyond simply hosting videos such as the Bolsonaro interview mentioned above. By 2018, the platform had come to serve as a site of dialogical communities of ideas, especially on the right. One important community had arisen surrounding the expatriate, self-styled philosopher Olavo de Carvalho. From his home in Virginia in the United States, Carvalho had built a sizable Brazilian following by posting hundreds of videos railing against "cultural Marxism" and "globalism," and outlining a far-rightist political vision. Carvalho rose to new prominence when Jair Bolsonaro adopted him as his 2018 campaign's "guru." Other important YouTube channels for rightist organizing sprang out of the Movimento Brasil Livre (MBL), a rightist/libertarian social movement that rose to prominence during the movement to impeach Dilma Rousseff. The MBL's channels became foci for right-leaning commentary, memes, and fake news, and several young YouTube activists associated with the MBL were elected to the National Congress and state legislatures, including the 22-year-old Kim Kataguiri (DEM), who became the youngest federal legislator ever elected.

On balance, the social media campaign benefited Jair Bolsonaro and hurt Fernando Haddad. First, right-leaning groups appear to have been more agile in taking advantage of the potential of social media, including for promoting fake news. Business groups amplified the Bolsonaro campaign's efforts by purchasing packages or bundles of WhatsApp messages that in many cases constituted illegal campaign donations (Mello 2018). Second, because upper-class and well-educated Brazilians have greater access to social media than their lower-class fellow citizens, pro-Bolsonaro social media campaigns tended to reach precisely the voters whose class backgrounds predisposed them toward Bolsonaro (Bolsonaro's support was strongly correlated with income). Indeed, Datafolha found that access to social media was substantially higher among Bolsonaro than Haddad supporters—a phenomenon likely driven by both class and campaign effects (2018). As a result, investigations show that the volume and tone of election-related social media messages, including fake news, was on balance strongly pro-Bolsonaro and anti-Haddad. Thus, social media eliminated and perhaps even reversed the Brazilian left's historical advantages in social movement organizing at the grassroots.

The Rise of the New Right

The third major set of changes involves the transformation of the right. The impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in 2016 ended 14 years of PT rule, leading to the brief ascent of the PMDB (later MDB). As president, Temer represented the triumph of a center-right that combined moderate social conservatism,

liberal and pro-austerity economic principles, and a commitment to the horse-trading and institutional give-and-take that had come to characterize Brazilian democracy at the elite level. Yet by the end of 2018, this triumph was undone.

None of the historically important centrist or center-rightist parties nominated a viable presidential candidate in 2018. As mentioned above, Temer's MDB nominated the financier Henrique Meirelles. Though highly regarded in elite economic and political circles, and despite his association with one of Brazil's most important political parties, Meirelles eked out only 1.2% of the first-round vote. The PSDB, which, together with the PT, had dominated presidential politics over two decades suffered a similar failure. The long-time governor of Sao Paulo, Geraldo Alckmin, had won 42% of the first-round vote in the presidential election of 2006, yet he received only 4.8%, or a little more than a tenth of his 2006 total, twelve years later. Alckmin's anemic performance was particularly noteworthy because, as noted above, he had entered the election with substantial advantages of electoral resources, political capital, and television and radio airtime.

Thus, the 2018 election highlighted a weakness on the center/center-right of which observers had long been aware: those parties' very shallow roots in society. Such was Alckimin's inability to catch on in public opinion polls that Brazilians joked his multitudinous television ads were selling a "*picole de chuchu*"—a popsicle made of a famously flavorless gourd vegetable (akin to "squash popsicle" or "zucchini popsicle"). But the problem was not simply Alckmin's lack of charisma. Rather, the PSDB and PMDB were partisan "*picoles de chuchu*." Academics had long noted a phenomenon they called the "embarrassed right," or "*direita envergonhada*," in which rightist politicians avoided campaigning on their own ideological positions (Power and Zucco 2009). Parties of the "Centrao" and the center-right had historically performed well electorally by campaigning on the basis of personalistic appeals and reputations; the parties themselves had virtually no support in the Brazilian electorate (Samuels 2006). Yet by 2018, such appeals were insufficient to shore up the vote on the right.

In the decade leading up to 2018, a more programmatic, less clientelistic and transactional brand of rightist politics had begun to take shape. At the elite level, Power and Rodrigues-Silveira (2018) noted the emergence of an economic right, a religious right, and a law-and-order right, each focused on specific policy changes. Meanwhile, pundits emphasized a triumvirate of three legislative caucuses: "*Biblia, Bala e Boi*," or "Bible, Bullets and Beef" (referring to evangelicals, pro-gun-rights legislators, and agribusiness/anti-environmental interests). In civil society, new rightist currents mobilized as well. Groups such as the MBL skillfully used social media, yet they also built and tested their organizational capacity through street-level events such as the World Cup-related protests of June 2013 and the social movement demanding the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in early 2016. Meanwhile, evangelical, Pentecostal, and neo-Pentecostal churches, which had long been organizing to elect evangelical legislative candidates, began to show their political muscle.

Evangelicals would prove to be particularly important in the election (Smith 2019). By 2018, evangelicals constituted nearly a third of the Brazilian population, and they had demonstrated their capacity to elect candidates even into executive office, where winning required majority support. Mobilized by fears of changing norms related to sexuality and gender, many evangelicals were early and strong adherents to Jair Bolsonaro's candidacy, which was intolerant of sexual minorities and opposed what they called the "ideology of gender." Identity politics also played a role. Though identifying as Catholic, Bolsonaro had long attended an evangelical church; his wife was evangelical, and he had been baptized in the Jordan River by the prominent evangelical pastor and politician, Everaldo Dias Pereira. Relatively late in the campaign, evangelical, Pentecostal, and neo-Pentecostal clergy endorsed Bolsonaro, apparently following the lead of their own congregants (Prado 2018), thereby giving Bolsonaro an aura of inevitability on the right. Ultimately, statistical analysis estimates Bolsonaro would likely have narrowly lost the presidential election without evangelicals (Alves 2018). Polls conducted a few days before the second-round election found that Bolsonaro received 69% of evangelicals' declared (i.e., known and non-blank) vote intentions, while he received only 51% of those of Catholics and 45% of the non-religious (G1 2018a).

But one other social group was just as critical as evangelicals: the middle and upper classes, typically called "*Classe A*" and "*Classe B*" in Brazil. Though pundits tend to emphasize religion's role in Bolsonaro's victory, the correlation between social class and support for Bolsonaro is just as strong as that between religion and voting. Polls found that among Brazilians with family incomes up to 2 minimum wages, Bolsonaro received only 44% of declared vote intentions; while he got 68% among those at or above 5 minimum wages (G1, 2018a). Upper-class voters' support for Bolsonaro appears to have been rooted in *antipetismo*, as Bolsonaro looked to be the most electable right-of-center candidate. For financial and industrial elites, Bolsonaro's association with the well-regarded, University of Chicago-trained, neoliberal economist Paulo Guedes was sufficient to signal Bolsonaro's commitment to the orthodox economic principles experts hoped would jumpstart economic growth.

Jair Bolsonaro's candidacy also appealed to various demographically smaller but important groups on the right—in many cases capitalizing on latent cleavages previously unexploited in electoral politics in the present democratic era. In the context of high homicide rates and popular alarm over security, Bolsonaro benefited from his association with the military, security forces, and gun-rights activism. A former army captain who had entered the military in the early 1980s, during the dictatorship, Bolsonaro had built his first political following by staging a rebellion against the salary policies of the military's new civilian leadership—a rebellion that led to both his discharge and his political career. Bolsonaro's passionate defense of the military regime and its use of torture, as well as his refusal to call that regime a dictatorship, appealed to military interests as well as a small group of anti-democracy advocates calling for a

return to military rule. His advocacy of liberalizing rights to firearm possession and ownership created new electoral divides over gun rights, further cementing his appeal to law-and-order groups. Finally, Bolsonaro's resistance to climate-related environmental policy cemented the support of rural, agribusiness interests.

The Backlash against Bolsonaro

Bolsonaro's unusual candidacy polarized Brazilian public opinion. Yet citizens on the center-left and left objected to more than just the candidate's rightist policy stances. Rather, Brazilian and international anxiety over Bolsonaro was arguably related just as much to his brand of identity politics—namely, his derogatory statements about women, Afro-Brazilians, and LGBT groups—and to worry over his adherence to liberal democratic norms. In international media, article after article featured lists of Bolsonaro's most offensive statements: from telling a female legislator that she wasn't "worth raping," to his claim that he would rather have his son die than be gay, to his assertion that Syrian refugees arriving in Brazil were the "scum of the earth." Critics also worried about Bolsonaro's potentially anti-democratic impulses, including his support for the military regime and torture, his antagonism toward mainstream media, and his skepticism toward open political dialogue in schools.

Where the partisan left proved largely ineffective in mounting a coherent response to Bolsonaro, civil society groups arose to try to do so—but they arrived late to the game. In September, the hashtag *elenao* (#nothim) began trending on various social media platforms, calling for voters to support anyone but Bolsonaro, while a Facebook group called "Women Against Bolsonaro" grew to more than two million members.

The international political science community was also alarmed, fearing that Bolsonaro's illiberal attitudes, his support for the military regime, and his voiced suspicion of the Brazilian electoral process might constitute an existential threat to Brazil's three-decades-old democracy. Harvard political scientist Steven Levitsky became a prominent voice in international and domestic media speaking out against Bolsonaro's candidacy (Levitsky-Bizzarro 2018). Levitsky drew on evidence from his recently published book *How Democracies Die* (2018; with Daniel Ziblatt), arguing that democracies can erode and backslide when elites fail to safeguard against illiberal candidates. Though with less intensity, Harvard political scientist Scott Mainwaring also spoke out on the unprecedented nature of the election (Schenoni and Mainwaring 2018).

In the Brazilian academic community, by contrast, an active debate arose. While some academics held that Bolsonaro indeed constituted an existential threat to democracy, others either defended Bolsonaro or argued that Brazilian political institutions were sufficiently strong to check Bolsonaro's worst impulses. One of the most prominent proponents of the optimistic view was the political scientist

Carlos Pereira from the Getulio Vargas Foundation. In an interview (**Ruan de Sousa 2018)** after the first round, Pereira claimed that Brazilian democracy was "not at risk," given the capacity of political institutions and voters to hold Bolsonaro to account. By contrast, Maria Hermínia Tavares and Fernando Limongi were in the former group. Tavares (2018) compared Bolsonaro to the presidents of Venezuela, Poland, Hungary and the Philippines, highlighting a factor that could make Brazil even more vulnerable to the new president's authoritarian inclinations: the tools available to the executive in Brazilian presidentialism. Limongi made one of the most forceful statements, calling on political elites to unite to stop Bolsonaro's ascent. Limongi argued that Bolsonaro gave no guarantee that he would follow the rules of the game, considering his authoritarian and intolerant stances. These latter scholars evoked a broader conception of democracy, beyond regular and fair elections, when they called attention to the risks to civil rights and the danger of political violence and attacks on the press.

V.   LOOKING FORWARD: FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT

When the campaign finally ended, Brazilian commentators generally expected that Jair Bolsonaro would adjust his anti-establishment discourse to assume the role of an elected president. According to this view, he would abandon his broadsides against political parties as soon as the rules and realities of the political system became apparent, in order to ensure some level of governability in his new administration. However, the first actions of the future Bolsonaro government violated the principles of "coalition presidentialism" (Abranches 1988), extensively described by political scientists.

In announcing that he would not govern through partisan horse-trading and backroom deal-making (a model known as "*toma lá, dá cá*"), Bolsonaro signaled disdain for the traditional Brazilian pattern of political bargaining under extremely fragmented multiparty presidentialism. When their parties lack a legislative majority, Brazilian presidents have historically built post-electoral coalitions to pass legislation (Melo and Pereira 2012; Pereira and Bertholini 2017). In order to build a broad coalition, chief executives usually delegate powers (Melo and Pereira 2012) by allocating cabinet seats to parties that supported them in the campaign or to those that subsequently join the government. Those parties in turn commit to the president's legislative agenda (Batista 2017), avoiding—or at least reducing—the costs of individual and case-by-case legislative negotiations. This system of exchanging legislative support for control of agencies has ensured the stability of the Brazilian political system over the last 30 years—a feature highlighted by the most pessimistic predictions (Mainwaring 1993; Ames 2001).

As the incoming president, Bolsonaro decided to ignore this system, refusing to build an interparty majority coalition. Besides his own party, the PSL, Bolsonaro

assembled a cabinet including only three parties: DEM, Novo, and the MDB. However, even the nominations from these parties did not result from the usual inter-partisan bargaining with party leaders. Instead, they constituted personal choices of the new president and his closest allies. And even if they had, Bolsonaro's cabinet would have represented parties controlling just 23% of the seats in the lower chamber—insufficient to guarantee anything approaching safe passage for legislation. Bolsonaro was the first president since 1989 not to seek a legislative majority through cabinet appointments, despite having the highest Coalition Necessity Index (ICN), as shown in the table below. Only Fernando Henrique Cardoso, in his first term (1995-1998), formed a coalition with as few parties as Bolsonaro. However, Cardoso managed to secure 381 seats out of 513 in the Federal Chamber of Deputies.

Table 2. Necessity of Coalition per term

Term	Coalition Necessity Index (%)	Effective Number of Parties
Cardoso 1	57,8	8,1
Cardoso 2	56,5	7,1
Lula 1	71,3	8,4
Lula 2	79,8	9,3
Rousseff 1	85,8	10,4
Roussef 2	86,54	13,4
Temer	82,84	13,4
Bolsonaro	89,86	16,4

Source: Bertholini and Pereira (2017)

Instead, the president-elect decided to try a new strategy for forming a majority, announcing that he would work with "interparty thematic groups." In fact, some of his party-affiliated ministers were appointed by interest groups linked to legislative caucuses, rather than party leaders. The case of his Minister of Agriculture is one example: the agricultural lobby nominated the federal deputy Tereza Cristina (DEM), rather than her copartisans. Evangelicals and Pentecostals constituted a second interest group and caucus that received appointments. For instance, Damares Alves, a pastor linked to the conservative former Senator Magno Malta (DEM), was nominated to the Ministry of Women, Family and Humans Rights. She rapidly gained notoriety on social media for her statements about gender and religion, such as that girls should wear pink and boys should wear blue.

Yet other groups without formal legislative caucuses were also represented in Bolsonaro's cabinet (see Table 3). Bolsonaro's incoming administration featured eight military officers—the largest number since the return to democracy—

including Infrastructure, Science and Technology, Mines and Energy, and the Government Office. The government also followed recommendations from Bolsonaro's aforementioned "guru," Olavo de Carvalho; several of Carvalho's followers were assigned to important cabinets posts, such as Education (Ricardo Vélez), Environment (Ricardo Salles), and Foreign Affairs (Ernesto Araújo).

Table 3. Bolsonaro's Cabinets Nominations

	Cabinets	Ministers
Party-affiliated ministers	Local Affairs	Onyx Lorenzoni (DEM)
	Science, Tech and Innovation	Marcos Pontes (PSL)*
	Agriculture	Tereza Cristina (DEM)
	Tourism	Marcelo Álvaro Antônio (PSL)
	Citizenship and Social Action	Osmar Terra (MDB)
	Health	Henrique Mandetta (DEM)
	Environment	Ricardo Salles (Novo)
Non-partisans ministers	Defense	General Fernando Azevedo*
	Mines and Energy	Almirante Bento Costa Lima*
	Infrastructure	Tarcísio Gomes Freitas
	Secretary of Government	General Carlos Alberto Santos Cruz*
	Economy	Paulo Guedes
	Justice and Public Safety	Sérgio Moro
	Education	Ricardo Velez/Adam Weintraub[1]**
	Foreign Affairs	Ernesto Araújo
	Regional Development	Gustavo Canuto
	Transparency	Wagner Rosário
	Women, Family and Humans Rights	Damares Alves
	General Attorney	André Luiz Mendonça
	Institutional Security Department	General Augusto Heleno*
	Secretary-General to the President	General Floriano Peixoto[2]*

*Military Ministers
[1] Ricardo Vélez was replaced by Adam Weintraub on early April.
[2] The General took office after the resignation of Gustavo Bebianno, a former leader of Social Liberal Party (PSL), by mid-February
Source: www.planalto.gov.br

Another way Bolsonaro's cabinet was unusual is in creating "super-sized ministries" that consolidated several smaller cabinet positions, headed by "gold medalists" widely supported by specific segments of society or interest groups. The aforementioned University of Chicago-trained economist Paulo Guedes was placed in charge of the new, consolidated Ministry of the Economy. As a proponent of an ultra-liberal vision of the economy, the future minister declared

his commitment to privatizing public companies, reducing public bureaucracy, and reversing the fiscal deficit by passing structural reforms, including most importantly reforming the pension system. However, Guedes was also known for an explosive and undiplomatic personality that observers worried might negatively affect his chances of sealing the necessary political bargains to pass those reforms.

Another key position in Bolsonaro's cabinet was that of the Ministry of Public Security. This new, consolidated cabinet post was assigned to Judge Sérgio Moro, the aforementioned judicial official who led the Car Wash investigation that culminated with the imprisonment of the former president Lula. In nominating Moro, Bolsonaro aimed to redouble his administration's efforts to fight both corruption and crime. However, the president-elect's choice of ministers also fueled ongoing speculation about the political biases of the Car Wash operation and its interference on the electoral result, including factors such as Moro's decision to release Palocci's testimony just days prior to the first-round election.

As 2018 drew to a close, commentators worried that Bolsonaro's "new way of governing" could put his administration at risk. Despite having a generous toolbox of legislative powers (Raile, Pereira, and Power 2010), Brazilian presidents must take party leaders seriously, since they control an array of legislative resources including the power to set the legislative agenda, to make decisions related to roll-call voting, and to amend proposals (Figueiredo and Limongi 1999; 2000). Leaders of "thematic" legislative caucuses do not have the same constitutional prerogatives; moreover, these groups tend to vote less cohesively. As a result, negotiating with caucuses cannot provide the same level of predictability, nor can it reduce uncertainty to the same extent, as negotiation with party leaders. Moreover, commentators feared that the president-elect's party, the PSL—full of inexperienced politicians, with weak leadership and structure, and lacking state and municipal roots—would have difficulty in legislative coordination, particularly when opposed by the Workers Party, with its extensive legislative experience. It appeared that Bolsonaro might be on a path that toward making "the problem of cycling majorities a routine" (Pereira and Bertholini 2018). Certainly, his government looked likely to test the limits of governability under multiparty presidentialism.

VI. CONCLUSION

As 2018 drew to a close, Brazilians were, to a significant extent, reunited by a new optimism about the future. They had high hopes for their soon-to-be president's ability to restore economic order and public security after his inauguration on January 1, 2019. In mid-December, polls revealed that only 5% of Brazilians approved of the administration of President Temer, but 75% thought that Bolsonaro and his team were "on the right path" (G1 2018b). Meanwhile, 64%

expected the Bolsonaro administration would be "good" or "great," while only 14% said they expected it to be "bad" or "terrible."

Despite Bolsonaro's honeymoon in public opinion, experts remained uncertain over the future of coalition politics and democracy. Bolsonaro would face pressure to respond quickly to the economic crisis and high unemployment, raising questions about his ability to coordinate in a highly fragmented, multiparty system. Questions also remained about Bolsonaro's agenda. To what extent would the new president be willing and able to implement the conservative platform of his core supporters? And how would society respond to those conservative policies, given that many citizens voted for Bolsonaro due to rejection of the political establishment, rather than support for reactionary ideology?

Meanwhile, the left and center-right licked their wounds. The PSDB became engrossed in an internal dispute over whether to follow Bolsonaro's right turn, or pivot back to its social-democratic roots. The PT had managed to maintain its dominance of the left, especially in the legislative branch, but it was far from clear the party would be able to keep other political actors gravitating around its orbit. For both new politicians and the recently routed establishment, and on all sides of the political spectrum, the coming year brought uncertainty -- for better and for worse.

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