This thesis entitled

COLLOR DE MELLO: A BRAZILIAN NEOPOPULIST LEADER?

BY

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The focus of this study is former Brazilian President Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello (1990-1992), his behavioral patterns and leadership style. This study will be conducted through the analysis of books and journal articles regarding leadership theories and approaches as well as populism and neopopulism. To assess Collor’s behavior, literature will also be used, but primary sources will be crucial, and his discourse will be analyzed, based on his speeches. Concluding this study, the reader will have a complete analysis of Collor’s leadership skills and his neopopulist characteristics. The analysis of leadership, power, coercion and leadership theories led to the conclusion that Collor was a leader, but maybe not an effective leader, if his term is considered as a whole. Collor was a portrait of a neopopulist President, as he had almost all the characteristics and behaviors other Latin American populist Presidents had.

Approved: Thomas Walker

Director, Latin American Studies
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF PHOTOS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. LEADERSHIP – LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Definition</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Power and Coercion</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Leadership Theories and Approaches</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The trait approach</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The style approach</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The situational approach</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The contingency theory</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The path-goal theory</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The team leadership theory</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The psychodynamic approach</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The ethical theory</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The effective leadership approach</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The leader-member exchange theory</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The transformational leadership approach</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Conclusion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. POPULISM – LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Historical Analysis</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ECUADOR</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Velasco Ibarra</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Abdalá Bucaram</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. BRAZIL</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Getúlio Vargas</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Jânio Quadros</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PERU</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Alberto Fujimori</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ARGENTINA</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Juan Perón</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Carlos Menem</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. VENEZUELA</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Hugo Chávez</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. NICARAGUA</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Arnoldo Alemán</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Brazilian Neopopulism</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. COLLOR DE MELLO – A REAL LEADER?</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Credibility</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Being inspiring and forward-looking</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Being competent</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF PHOTOS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Collor - Sports and Action</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Collor, children and the <em>Planalto</em> Palace ramp</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Collor jogging</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Collor and the atomic “menace”</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Collor and his campaign</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The focus of this study is former Brazilian President Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello (1990-1992), his behavioral patterns and leadership style. He chose to adopt the name Collor as his “electoral name,” or the name that was used during the whole campaign and also printed in the ballots; therefore Collor will also be the name used in this study when referring to former Brazilian President Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello. Collor had a skyrocketing successful political career and became President in decent and non-fraudulent direct elections. His fall was also really spectacular.

This study will review the most important theories and approaches on leadership and determine which one most fits Collor’s behavior as a political leader. Another issue to be analyzed is neopopulism. This characterization of the way politicians behave will be reviewed considering the distinctiveness of the Brazilian reality. Populism, as a starting point for the development of neopopulism, and with similarities to the latter movement, will be assessed as well. Collor, considered a legitimate representative of neopopulism in Brazil, will be investigated vis-à-vis his unique manners.

After assessing leadership and neopopulism, the focus will be on Collor. His strong personality and distinctive attitudes will be addressed, and examples of his daily behavior will be analyzed to correlate with both leadership theories and the neopopulist movement.

This study is meant to help develop understanding of the outstanding phenomenon of Brazilian post-dictatorship politics embodied in the former President.
Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello. After a review of leadership theories and approaches, the reader will have a comprehensive overview of the most commonly used leadership styles. These factors will be important when Collor’s behavior as a leader is assessed. The question for this part is: which styles or theories seem to most match with Collor’s performance as a political leader? The theories that most fit Collor’s behavior will be compared and contrasted to Collor’s conduct in the final part of this study, so that the reader would be able to clearly visualize Collor’s leadership skills and the theories supporting his attitudes.

The assessment of neopopulism will allow the reader to be familiar with this style of conducting politics, which is very personalistic, based on the strong personality of the leading politician, and also in commonly vague promises. More than personalistic, neopopulism is a new way of doing politics that has its roots back in the 1920s, in the Populist movement. Populism will not be deeply analyzed in this study, but the origins of Brazilian populism will be covered, to help develop comprehension of the latter movement. The most important question for this part is: what are the characteristics of Brazilian neopopulism? After addressing the neopopulist movement, Collor’s way of managing the country will be easily comprehended, by assessing his style with the characteristics of neopopulism.

The assessment of Collor will be the apex of this study. It will be divided in two parts. First, Collor will be assessed regarding his leadership skills, according to the theories presented in this research. A comparison between his behavior and the leadership theories will provide the elements necessary to define his most predominant
style of leadership. The questions here are: was Collor a real leader? What is Collor’s predominant leadership style? Collor’s leadership style will be further studied through examples of real situations to enhance comprehension on this issue.

Second, the analysis of Collor’s conduct in the political scenario during his government will be performed. The main question is: was Collor really a neopopulist? From the comprehension of Collor’s neopopulist characteristics, the reader will be able to recognize his important role in recent Brazilian political history.

Concluding this study, the reader will have a complete analysis of Collor’s leadership skills, his neopopulist characteristics and will also review many examples of Collor’s attitudes while President. His prematurely skyrocketing career to the presidency, his neopopulist manner of conducting the country, and how these events relate to the managerial theories of leadership will then be understood.

This study will be conducted through the analysis of books and journal articles regarding leadership theories and approaches. A literature review will be also important for the assessment of populism and neopopulism, and books and journal articles will consist of the main sources. To assess Collor’s behavior, the literature will also be important, but primary sources will be crucial. Collor’s discourse will be analyzed, based for the most part on the transcription of his speeches. These resources are critical to provide examples of his drastic attitudes, unique irritability and strong personality, which were broadly covered and broadcasted nation-wide. Also his sporting tendencies were over-exposed by Brazilian broadcasting networks. Assessing his behavioral patterns
through his daily decisions and manners will help the understanding of his leadership
skills and neopopulist tendencies.

Regarding the analytical framework, the dialectical-inductive approach will be
used. This method allows a deep analysis of the various phenomena, through
comparisons and contrasts, assessing the inherent contradiction of each phenomenon and
also the dialectical change that happens in both nature and society.

This inductive approach will allow the matching of the phenomena through a
pathway consisting of analysis of broader levels – theories and principles, and specific
situations – by comparing Collor’s behavior to the theories or principles. As stated by
Searles (1968), “The real nature of induction is found in process of reasoning from some
cases to a universal conclusion regarding all similar cases, some of which are
unobserved” (p. 211).

As a procedural methodology, the comparative method will be used, as it allows
the analysis of real facts and also the deduction from them, reaching the understanding of
abstract and general constant elements. Wolf (1925) explained comparison and analogy
as the “observation of similarities and differences, aided by the process of analysis and
synthesis” (p. 24).

This comparative methodology encompasses three different phases that will be
used in this study:
A. Descriptive Phase – to verify the analogies;

B. Classificatory Phase – to define the typologies or categories;

C. Explanatory Phase – to define the cause-effect relationships.

The descriptive phase will be used in the analysis of the leadership theories and approaches as well as populism and neopopulism. The classificatory phase will encompass mostly the leadership analysis, but patterns of neopopulist behavior may also rise from the in-depth analysis of the issue. Finally, the explanatory phase will establish the casual connections between the theories and Collor’s attitudes, or the cause-effect relationships between the theories and Collor’s behavior (Wolf, 1925).

The analysis of Collor’s attitudes will concentrate primarily on his speeches, as mentioned above. De la Torre (2000) explained that the analysis of political discourses might be erratic if only the “conditions of […] production of discourses” are assessed (p. 13). According to Ípola, the “conditions of production, circulation, and reception of political discourses” should be taken into account (as cited in De la Torre, 2000, p. 13). Based on the documentation found, there are restrictions to the full implementation of the above practice because of the lack of information about the circulation and reception of the discourses; thus, the analysis will be limited to the findings.
I. LEADERSHIP – LITERATURE REVIEW

The subject of leadership in the last 50 years accounted for more than 65 different classification systems. Leadership can be conceptualized as a “trait, or as a behavior, […] or be viewed from] a political perspective, or from a humanistic viewpoint” (Northouse, 1997, p. 1). This study will focus on the analysis of some traits, approaches and theories currently used by scholars and, for the most part, by companies in their real situations. Through the characterization of leadership, power and coercion, it is expected to offer the reader a better understanding of how those concepts will be used throughout this study. Leadership will not be exhaustively analyzed, but the most important and used theories, traits and approaches will be covered.

A. Definition

Leadership can be defined in a variety of forms. Some of the methods to define leadership may focus on group processes, on a personality perspective, on a behavioral approach and on a goal-achievement manner. This study will focus on leadership considering its four central components, based on Northouse (1997) and Kouzes and Posner (1995):

- Leadership is a **process**,  
- Leadership involves **influence**,  
- Leadership occurs within a **group** context;
Leadership involves goal attainment.

Thus, leadership could be defined as: a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to want to struggle in order to achieve a common goal. Leadership as a process implies that the leader influences and is influenced by the group. It also means that “special innate or inborn characteristics or qualities,” like physical factors, personality features, and ability characteristics are not mandatory for a leader, because leadership is a “phenomenon that resides in the context and [that] makes [it] available to everyone” (Northouse, 1997, p. 4). Influence is a crucial component of leadership, and leaders must be able to use it to make the group more willing to work towards the achievement of a set of goals. Thus, leaders must motivate their followers so that the followers will enthusiastically struggle to reach common goals. The group is another very important component of leadership, as the leader must have followers and also the whole group must have common goals, so that leadership can be exerted in its full extension. Having understood the concept of leadership that will be used in this study, other concepts are also important and will be explored in the next section: power and coercion (Northouse, 1997).

B. Power and Coercion

Power is conceptualized in this study as the “capacity or potential to influence,” others’ “beliefs, attitudes and courses of action.” Power can derive from the position a
leader has, his rank or office; thus, it is named position power (Northouse, 1997, p. 6).

Power may also be derived from followers, and in this case is named personal power and is characterized by the actions of the leader that are important for the followers; consequently, there is an increase in the leader’s power when he performs those actions. Therefore, power can be considered both a way of dominating the followers and also a way for both leader and followers to join together in search of a common goal. In this study, power is understood as the capacity of getting things done based on a joint effort of leaders and followers, and both position and personal power will be taken into consideration.

Coercion is a kind of power that makes “use of force to effect change,” involving “threats, punishment and rewards,” influencing others through the use of manipulation of penalties and rewards (Northouse, 1997, p. 7). Coercion will be considered in this study as a counter-productive way of influencing a group to achieve the common goals, and also as a selfish means that the leader may use to get results. This concept is controversial and some authors may not accept the use of coercion as a leadership tool. This study acknowledges this criticism and will explore the fact that political leaders may use coercion when dealing with specific subjects. Considering the boundaries of the concept of power, coercion is probably a less-effective way to influence followers to be willing to help; however, it is certainly very effective to ensure that things will be done, at least in the short run. In the long run, however, it is less likely to succeed.
C. Leadership Theories and Approaches

Eleven leadership theories and approaches will be briefly assessed in this study. The analysis of the theories and approaches will lead to the selection of those that best fit Collor’s style of leadership. The final analysis of Collor’s style will be addressed in section III.

1. The trait approach

The trait approach is one of the “first systematic attempts to study leadership,” and has been used since the beginning of the twentieth century, considering the innate qualities and characteristics that a person should have to be considered a “great” leader (Northouse, 1997, p. 15). Leaders could be identified by a universal set of traits, and several studies were conducted in order to recognize those traits; thus, intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability were defined as the most important traits for a person to be considered a leader (Northouse, 1997).

2. The style approach

The style approach focuses on “what leaders do rather than on who leaders are.” The way leaders combine two kinds of behaviors - task behaviors and relationship behaviors – will determine the style leaders mostly use (Northouse, 1997, p. 52).
Blake and Mouton expanded on those concepts developing a grid of two axes: concern for production refers to “how a leader is concerned with achieving organizational tasks,” meaning it is related to task behaviors; and concern for people refers to “how a leader attends to the people within the organization who are trying to achieve its goals,” meaning it is related to relationship behaviors. The combination of the characteristics of those two axes results in five major leadership styles: “Authority-Compliance (9,1), Country Club Management (1,9), Impoverished Management (1,1), Middle-of-the-Road Management (5,5), and Team Management (9,9)” (as cited in Northouse, 1997, pp. 39-42).

3. The situational approach

The situational approach is used as a prescriptive approach to leadership, suggesting different ways leaders can become effective in an assortment of types of organizational settings and tasks. The “demands of a particular situation” drive the behavior that a leader should have to be effective. There are four styles: “S1 is high directive-low supportive, S2 is high directive-high supportive, S3 is low directive-high supportive, and S4 is low directive-low supportive.” A model was compiled – called situational model SLII – to describe how each of the above mentioned leadership styles applies to subordinates who “work at different levels of development, from D1 (low in competence and high in commitment) to D2 (moderately competent and low in commitment) to D3 (moderately competent but lacking commitment) to D4 (a great deal of competence and high degree of commitment).” Effective leadership occurs when a
leader is able to diagnose the development level of subordinates in a task with accuracy and then use the prescribed leadership style that “matches that situation” (Northouse, 1997, pp. 72-73).

4. The contingency theory

The contingency theory focuses on the leader “in conjunction with the situation in which the leader works.” It is a “leader-match theory” that highlights the crucial role of matching a leader’s style with the requirements of a given situation. The style of leadership that has the best chance of being successful is determined by the joint assessment of three variables: “leader-member relations, task structure, and position power” (Northouse, 1997, p. 87).

5. The path-goal theory

The path-goal theory is based on the motivation that leaders are able to inculcate in subordinates in order to accomplish designated goals through enhancing employee performance and satisfaction. It depends on “the ‘fit’ between the leader’s behavior and the characteristics of subordinates and the task.” The expectancy theory is the basis for the path-goal theory, and the former states that employees will be “motivated if they feel competent, if they think their efforts will be rewarded, and if they find the payoff for their work is valuable.” The leader’s role is to provide subordinates what they lack to accomplish the goals in a given situation, and leaders have to select one
leadership style that best matches employees’ and situation’s characteristics. The leadership styles considered in this theory are: directive (leader gives all information related to the task, and set clear goals and timelines), supportive (leader treats subordinates as equals and gives them respect), participative (leader invites subordinates to share in the decision process), and achievement oriented (leader challenges subordinates to perform work at the highest level possible). This theory offers a large set of “predictions for how a leader’s style interacts with subordinates’ needs and the nature of the task” (Northouse, 1997, p. 108).

6. The team leadership theory

The team leadership theory provides a framework “within which to study the systematic factors that contribute to a group’s outcomes or general effectiveness;” and the leader’s critical role is to assist the group in achieving its goals by monitoring the group and taking the necessary action (Northouse, 1997, p. 185).

According to this theory leaders have to make three decisions in search of obtaining highly effective teams: “what type of intervention should be used (monitoring/action taking); at what level should the intervention be targeted (internal/external); and what leadership function should be implemented to improve group functioning.” (Northouse, 1997, p. 185).
7. The psychodynamic approach

The psychodynamic approach is derived from the development of methods for “dealing with emotionally disturbed individual and [...] psychological theories of personality development.” Several concepts were developed by this approach, as follows: “family of origin, individuation, dependence, counterdependence, independence, regression, repression, and the shadow self,” and they lead to the assumption that an “individual can change behaviors and feelings by obtaining insight into his or her upbringing, prior relationships, and psychological development” (Northouse, 1997, pp. 211-212).

8. The ethical theory

The ethical theory applied to leadership provides a set of principles that “guides leaders in making decisions about how to act and how to be a morally decent person,” and relies on two westernized traditional kinds of theories: “theories about conduct and character” (Northouse, 1997, p. 273).

Theories about conduct stress the “consequences of leader behavior (teleological approach) or the rules that govern their behavior (deontological approach),” while “virtue-based theories” are based on the character of leaders, emphasizing qualities such as “courage, honesty, fairness, and fidelity” (Northouse, 1997, p. 273).
Respect, dignity, an “ethic of caring,” the senses of justice, service honesty and community are imperative for leaders to “engage followers to accomplish mutual goals” (Northouse, 1997, p. 274).

9. The effective leadership approach

The effective leadership approach is based on the components of emotional intelligence: “self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills” (Goleman, 1998, p. 94). This approach combines the components above mentioned with various leadership styles in search for the best ways for leaders to achieve better results; thus, leaders must decide which style to use in different situations (Goleman, 2000).

The coercive leader is driven to achieve, implying that initiative and self-control are very important characteristics. This style is effective in crisis, especially when a turnaround is needed and also when dealing with problem employees, however, it is considered the less effective style of leadership in most situations (Goleman, 2000).

The authoritative style is one of the most effective styles, especially when there is a concern with climate and a focus on self-confidence, empathy and the capability of the leader to catalyze changes. It is also useful when a new vision or clear directions are needed (Goleman, 2000).

The affiliative style is based on empathy and the leader manages to build relationships and to establish open communication. Emotional bonds and ample positive feedback are also important issues and this style is better used to “heal rifts in a team or
to motivate people during stressful situations.” It is especially effective when used in combination with the authoritative style (Goleman, 2000, p. 83).

The main characteristics of the democratic style are collaboration, team leadership and communication. The leader “forges consensus through participation” and uses this style when inputs from the employees are needed (Goleman, 2000, p. 83).

The pacesetting style should be used sparingly, because the leader sets “high standards for performance” and does not give feedback on the results. It is especially recommended to get results from highly motivated teams. Consciousness, drive to achieve and initiative are the main characteristics of the pacesetting leader (Goleman, 2000, p. 83).

Leaders use the coaching style to “develop people for the future,” where empathy and self-awareness are their main competencies. This style is valuable to improve performance but it is not focused on “immediate work-related tasks;” therefore, it is one of the less used styles (Goleman, 2000, pp. 83, 87).

10. The leader-member exchange theory

The leader-member exchange theory, known as LMX theory, was conceived as the “vertical dyad linkage theory,” and focuses on leadership as a process “centered in the interactions between leaders and followers.” It establishes two different groups of subordinates, the in-group and the out-group. The in-group entails the subordinates whose relationship with the leader is expanded, while the out-group members are treated based strictly on “formal job descriptions,” rules and regulations. It is believed that
subordinates, to be included in the in-group, have to get along with the leader and have also “to be willing to expand their role responsibilities.” Being included in the in-group means eventually to receive “extra influence, opportunities, and rewards” (Northouse, 1997, p. 129). Another characteristic of this theory is that leadership develops over time, and followers seem to be moving through three phases to conquer more mature relationships with their leaders: the stranger phase (when interactions are generally “rule bound, relying heavily on contractual relationships, […] having] lower-quality exchanges, similar to those of out-group’'); the acquaintance phase (that begins “with an ‘offer’ by the leader or the subordinate for improved career-oriented social exchanges, […] and] is a testing period for both” of them); and finally the mature partnership (when a “high degree of mutual trust, respect, and obligation toward each other” develops and reciprocity takes place; thus, “each affects and is affected by the other” and they are both “tied together in productive ways” in order to “accomplish the greater good of the team and organization,” establishing “high-quality leader-member exchanges) (Northouse, 1997, pp. 116-117).

The positive issues of this theory are the strong descriptive approach “that explains how leaders use some subordinates (in-group members) more than others (out-group members) to accomplish organizational goals effectively,” also positive is the fact that the theory makes the leader-member relationship the “focal point of the leadership process,” and finally it is supported by a multitude of studies (Northouse, 1997, pp. 129-130).

The negative aspects are related to the fact that the theory runs counter to the widely accepted principles of “fairness and justice in the workplace” by using the in-
group and out-group concepts. It is also negative the lack of a convincing explanation for the “intricacies of how one goes about creating high-quality exchanges” (Northouse, 1997, p. 130).

11. The transformational leadership approach

The transformational leadership approach is one of the newest and most encompassing approaches to leadership, and it is concerned with the process of “how certain leaders are able to inspire followers to accomplish great things.” It lays emphasis on the affirmation that leaders need to comprehend and adjust to the “needs and motives of followers.” Leaders are considered “change agents,” being good role models and being able to integrate a “clear vision for an organization,” also empowering “followers to achieve at higher standards,” and acting in such a way that make others want to trust them and giving “meaning to organizational life” (Northouse, 1997, p. 158).

A leader’s behavior is analyzed based on seven areas: “individualized consideration (charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence [these four areas compile the transformational 4 I’s factors], contingent reward, management-by-exception [these two areas are known as transactional factors], and laissez-faire behavior [the nonleadership factor]” (Northouse, 1997, p. 158). The critical areas to achieve a strong transformational leadership are the individualized consideration and the inspirational motivation. Charisma was described by Weber in 1947 as a “special personality characteristic that gives a person superhuman or exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, is of divine origin, and results in the person being treated as a
leader.” The author also recognized the “important role played by followers in validating charisma in these leaders” (as cited in Northouse, 1997, p. 133). Charismatic leaders’ behaviors encompass: a strong sense of role modeling “for the beliefs and values they want their followers to adopt;” a strong appearance of competency to followers; the articulation of “ideological goals that have moral overtones;” the communication of high expectations for followers together with the confidence in “followers abilities to meet these expectations;” and also the arousing of “task-relevant motives in followers that may include affiliation, power, or esteem” (Northouse, 1997, p. 134).

The positive features of this approach are its strong intuitive appeal; the attention dedicated to it by researchers; the emphasis on the “importance of followers in the leadership process,” including followers growth within the leadership process; and also the highlighting the approach gives to morals and values (Northouse, 1997, p. 158).

Several weaknesses features were mentioned, as the lack of “conceptual clarity,” as it is “often too simplistically as an ‘either-or’ approach;” it implies that transformational leadership has a “traitlike quality;” it can be seen a “elitist and undemocratic;” it is limited in the sense that it is derived from and supported by “data that focus heavily on senior-level managers;” and it has the “potential to be used counterproductively in negative ways by leaders” (Northouse, 1997, p. 158).
D. Conclusion

After assessing the concepts of leadership, power and coercion, as well as the eleven theories and approaches, it is important to understand that some theories are similar. Also remarkable is the fact that the concepts are not always used in the same way. As leadership is a process, so is its study. It is a work in progress; therefore, new theories and new approaches to old theories may appear very frequently. Based on the concepts of leadership, coercion and power, and on the definitions and descriptions given in this section, the assessment of Collor in section III will correlate those concepts with his attitudes, and also two theories will be analyzed vis-à-vis Collor’s traits: the leader-member exchange theory and the transformational leadership approach. The next step to be taken is to understand populism and neo-populism, before assessing Collor.
II. POPULISM – LITERATURE REVIEW

Populism as a political phenomenon has been studied using several different approaches. In this study I will focus mainly on the studies by De la Torre and Weyland, since they concentrate their researches on Latin America. Although their opinions are not coincident when assessing populism and neopopulism, they point up some common characteristics of populism that will be described within this study. Some scholars have considered populism as ephemeral, temporary and ambiguous, thus it should not be considered a political phenomenon. De la Torre disagrees with those scholars arguing that populism is a “modern political phenomenon that cannot be shortened to a historical phase of Latin America or to specific economic policies” (De la Torre, 2000, p. xi).

Populism has some characteristics that differentiate it from other political phenomena, as described by De la Torre (2000):

1. The Manichean discourse that asserts the struggle between the people and the oligarchy, or good and evil;

2. The “social construction” of the charismatic leader as the symbol of redemption, “whereas his enemies are created as the embodiment of all the problems of the nation” (the repugnant other) (p. 140);

3. Populist movements are “coalitions of emergent elites with the popular sectors” (Vargas and Perón, for instance, included national industrial bourgeoisie with organized workers, sectors of the middle class, and state employees, whereas
contemporary neopopulist movements have incorporated the very poor with the emergent elites) (p. 140);

4. Populist politics and democracy have a very ambiguous relationship. Populist leaders include previously excluded people in political community but have not respected democratic procedures, and as an example of that, “political and limited social rights have been given priority over civil rights,” and clientelism is always present. Democracy in the populist context is understood as “crowd action and mobilization on behalf of the leader rather than as the respect for liberal-democratic norms and procedures” (p. 141).

All these characteristics are important to understand the way populists have built machines that exchange votes for goods, as other non-populist politicians also have done. Yet the difference resides on the fact that populists have given back (or at least they tried hard to do it) dignity and self-worth to those who are constantly discriminated against in their daily lives. De la Torre (2000) believes that populism will persist while the distinction between common and marginalized people, on one hand, and a few empowered citizens located above the law, on the other hand, remains.

Weyland (1996a) characterizes populism as a political strategy and elaborates three characteristics:

1. A personal leader appeals to a heterogeneous mass of followers, many of whom have been excluded from the mainstream of development, yet are now available for mobilization;
2. The leader reaches the followers in a seemingly direct, quasi-personal manner that largely bypasses established intermediary organizations, such as parties and interest associations;

3. If the leader builds new organizations or revives earlier populist organizations, they remain “personal vehicles” with low levels of institutionalization (p. 5).

De la Torre and Weyland concepts establish a broad view of populism, demonstrating characteristics as the emotional appeal to the popular and marginalized classes, the Manichean discourses, the personalistic and moralistic character of the leader, the clientelism, the strong rhetoric and the lack of a true and consistent political pathway; those characteristics lead to the inclusion of previously excluded people into politics. Corruption and corporativism are also considered important for their presence in most of the governments, as will be demonstrated.

The two scholars’ concepts differ when neopopulism is concerned. De la Torre believes that populism is a political phenomenon that adapted itself to new economic realities; thus, neopopulism has the same basic characteristics of populism, but, in general terms, it adopted the neoliberal practices instead of the import substitution industrialization that was used by populist leaders. Thus, De la Torre concludes that the difference between the old and the new populism is basically the way to face a new economic scenario.

On the other hand, Weyland believes that socio-economic characteristics are crucial to differentiate populism and neopopulism. Weyland believes that “populism
varies, depending on its primary mass constituency;” thus, he describes populism as a political strategy having as followers urban workers and the lower-middle class, while neopopulism has the informal economy sector, both urban and rural, as followers (1996a, p. 5). Therefore, Weyland conceives old and new populism as different political phenomena, although having some common characteristics.

Having conceptualized populism and neopopulism and explained the main differences between them, the history of populism in Latin America will then be assessed. The most important leaders will be briefly portrayed. In the next section, populist leaders in Latin America will be addressed and the following section will basically focus on Collor.

**A. Historical Analysis**

This section focuses on the foremost populist and neopopulist leaders in Latin America. There is a brief description of the governments of Ecuadorians Velasco Ibarra and Abdalá Bucaram; Brazilians Getúlio Vargas and Jânio Quadros (Collor will be assessed in the next section); Peruvian Alberto Fujimori; Argentines Juan Perón and Carlos Menem, Venezuelan Hugo Chávez and Nicaraguan Arnoldo Alemán.

Although this is not an all-inclusive list and some populist leaders may not be present, those leaders are the most important in Latin America, and their populist characteristics are accepted by most scholars, whereas others are whether less important or not considered primarily populists by scholars (Haya de la Torre, García and Goulart).
The leaders that will not be covered in this study include: Peruvians Luis Sánchez Cerro, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre and Alan García; Mexican Lázaro Cárdenas, Colombians Jorge Eliecer Gaitán and Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, and Brazilians Juscelino Kubitschek and João Goulart.

1. ECUADOR

a) Velasco Ibarra

José María Velasco Ibarra was the first Ecuadorian populist leader. He was in office for five different terms: 1934-35, 1944-47, 1952-56, 1960-61 and 1968-72. De la Torre explains that common citizens, especially “artisans, middle class state employees, professionals and […] proletariat” during the 1930s demanded their incorporation in politics and also denied the long lasting practices of electoral fraud and the “politics of notables” (2000, 142). Then Velasco rose as the personification of a popular leader who could fulfill their needs. Velasco’s populist style comprised visits to all parts of the country during his political campaigns, delivery of speeches to the local population and a break in the old style of making politics inside “[…] the salons and cafés of the elites” (1997, p. 12). Velasco actually brought the politics to the public plazas. He personified in his speeches the “honesty, sincerity, patriotism, and good will” that were demanded by the population at that time, transforming his enemies into villains (2000, p. 143).

After the fraudulent elections in 1940 when Velasco was defeated, he tried to lead a failed insurrection, which caused his exile. The political inclusion of the previously excluded population in the 1940 election was one of the reasons for a revolt in 1944 that lead Velasco to the presidency.
Representing the oligarchy, both the Liberals and the carabineros\textsuperscript{1} were targeted by the pueblo, and the Great Absentee – Velasco - was conducted to the presidency at the end of the May Revolution (La Revolución Gloriosa). His rhetorical and Manichean discourse allowed him to rule the country using a semidemocratic system, comprised of the partial inclusion of previously excluded people and honest and free elections. The semi-authoritarian characteristic of his government was evident, as he did not respect the rights of his opponents and seldom regarded constitutions or democratic procedures. An “austere and ascetic caudillo who epitomized the image of a Catholic saint” is a possible way to define Velasco. His discourse included also a personalization of the political problems as well as a transmutation of politics into ethics (De la Torre, 1997; 2000, p. 143; Cockcroft, 1996).

b) Abdalá Bucaram

During the presidential campaign, Ecuadorian Abdalá Bucaram’s style was closer to the mestizo poor people, as he used their “dress style, language, mannerisms, and masculinity,” presenting himself as man of “common origins who had ascended socially and who deserved to be the leader of the nation,” referring to the elites as “effeminates” (De la Torre, 2000, p. 144). Bucaram performed political spectacles all over the country, explored sexuality and spoke about his love for the pueblo, for the poor, and for Ecuador. De la Torre continues the characterization of Bucaram’s style that helped him to present himself as the “Leader of the Poor,” and helped to create the image of the “crazy man (el loco)” (De la Torre, 1997; Cockcroft, 1996).
Bucaram’s greatest problem after being elected was that he was not able to establish alliances “with key institutional players such as the Catholic Church, the armed forces, the press, and political and economic elites” (De la Torre, 2000, p. 144). Unions, students and other popular organizations also were against him. Most Indians also resented Bucaram’s links with the mestizos and his deliberate choice of one less significant group of Indians to participate in his government, antagonizing the most important Indian organizations. As Bucaram had important sectors of the society against him, he became the Repugnant Other, the way in which he previously characterized part of the elites (that did not support his government) (De la Torre, 1997; Cockcroft, 1996).

His recessive and inflationary economic plans (he hired Menem’s former minister of economy, Domingo Cavallo), his arrogant and authoritarian style and his “vulgar” behavior led to his isolation from the centers of power and he was semi-legally toppled, even “at risk of further delegitimizing Ecuador’s fragile democracy” (De la Torre, 2000, pp. 144-145). Clientelism (as poor people needed a patron to protect them and fulfill their needs, and Bucaram personified this messiah) and corruption (his close collaborators were authorized to charge fees to do business with the state) were also present in his government (De la Torre, 1997; Cockcroft, 1996).

On February 5, 1997, after less than six months of his mandate, the largest popular demonstration in 35 years took place, urging Bucaram to resign. In spite of the fact that there was no medical proof, he was dismissed from office by Congress “on the grounds of ‘mental incapacity’ the next day” (De la Torre, 2000, p. 80).
2. BRAZIL

a) Getúlio Vargas

In Brazil, Getúlio Vargas was the first populist leader to become President. The Café com Leite politics, also known as the period of governors, lasted from 1891 to 1930, and had the characteristic of a rotating presidency between natives of the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais. Compromise candidates were selected and democratic elections were realized, where less than three percent of the population was allowed to vote, and the agro-oligarchy ruled the country. The Café com Leite politics collapsed in 1930, when a Paulista president was elected to replace another paulista. Paulistas were afraid of rotating power at that time because their interests, basically regarding coffee plantations, were at severe risk, due to the collapse of the international coffee market.

Having lost the 1930 presidential elections, Vargas led a coup and was conducted to power, naming “interventors” to the states (Gordon, 1998, p. 78). Although an Old Republic politician, Vargas noticed that those times were calling for another system, where an emotional appeal would be much more effective than a rational one (established the slogan Father of the Poor), and promises should be made to everyone, even though not all of them could be accomplished. Vargas included some segments of the population into the political arena, by allowing women and eighteen-years-olds to vote but kept the illiterates - the majority of the population – excluded. He also created social security, and, although a big landowner himself, he championed industrialization (Gordon, 1998; Silva, 1998).
Vargas established the CLT – *Consolidação das Leis Trabalhistas* (or Consolidated Labor Laws, in Lamounier, Carneiro, & Abreu, 1995, p. 31), a series of laws and regulations to normalize labor relations, establishing, for instance, an eight-hour workday, and a minimum wage\(^3\).

Vargas appealed emotionally to the new urban middle-class (the white-collar workers), to the industrial workers (the blue-collar workers), to the immigrants and also to the elites (both rural-agro and urban-industrial elites). He accomplished this by using **clientelism** as a major strategy, having **no political pathway** and **attacking the repugnant other**, the elite (actually he did not attack them furiously because he needed them).

In 1937, Vargas established the *Estado Novo* or New State, a dictatorship that remained until 1945, in which he established **corporativism** through the creation of workers and employers unions under state regulation and tutelage, in an **authoritarian** state and **centralized government**, like Perón’s in Argentina. Many of his opponents were exiled, while others were arrested without a chance to defend themselves. However, his popular radio campaign (broadcasted everyday) and the jingle created for his 1950 campaign, that was used in the following *Carnaval* as one of the top hits, demonstrate his strong **appeal to the masses** (Cockcroft, 1996; Page, 1995; Ribeiro, 2000; Skidmore, 1999).

Vargas was overthrown in 1945 by a military coup but in the 1950 elections he was more popular than ever. His party, PTB - *Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro* (Brazilian Labor Party) was backed by workers, some industrialists, and the lower and middle-class.
Vargas was elected using populist and nationalistic discourses and stayed in office from 1951 to 1954, when he committed suicide. Getúlio left a letter to the nation, also extremely populist, which helped to keep his getulismo style alive for many decades to come (Schwarcz, 1998; Cockcroft, 1996; Page, 1995; Ribeiro, 2000; Skidmore, 1999; Bertozzi, 2001; Mota, M.B., 2001).

b) Jânio Quadros

Jânio da Silva Quadros, another Brazilian populist leader, had close connections to the middle-class workers of the state of São Paulo and used as his symbol a broom, to sweep out the corrupt politicians. Jânio, as he was usually called, posed as an independent candidate (he almost renounced UDN nomination as the party’s candidate for the Presidency because he had no party loyalty at all) and had a messianic approach as a savior of the nation, being considered anti-politician, “antiestablishment and antiparty demagogue” (Lamounier, et.al., 1995, p. 52). In his appeal to the people he used tactics such as delivering public speeches with a wrinkled suit on which he poured grated Parmesan-cheese to imitate dandruff. He used that to reinforce his links with the humble people. His excessive moralism and personalism made him challenge traditional corrupted or illegal institutions, such as the Federal Police, firing corrupt policemen in order to make them efficient in the struggle against smuggling. This was also evident in his attacks against the organized but illegal Jogo do Bicho, an unofficial but very popular lottery and against the also popular Rinha de Galos, a gambling battle between two killer roosters. Moralism also denoted his attitude prohibiting the use of perfume bombs,
which were especially used during *Carnaval* (it was initially used as a seducing tool by the ladies, but eventually became a kind of narcotic, as it had hallucinogenic components). He also forbade the use of bikinis and had a racist and machist attitude that banned men from dancing in Theaters (as dance was something to be performed by women). His struggle against illegality made him remove all the *favelas* (shanty-towns) that were in his way to office, later in his political career, when he was São Paulo’s mayor. He also passed a successful law to ban the use of the sidewalks as parking places, establishing very expensive fines to violators (Cockcroft, 1996; Page, 1995; Skidmore, 1999; Bertozzi, 2001; Mota, M.B., 2001).

His **total lack of political platform** and concrete program to conduct the country led him to disputes with Congress about his stabilization plan, and his attempt to gain power by resigning. His idea was to have Congress reject his resignation, thus giving him emergency powers to rule the country (as happened to General De Gaulle in France), but Congress accepted his resignation. Jânio stayed in power less than one year and resigned in August 1961 blaming “occult forces” (Cockcroft, 1996; Page, 1995; Skidmore, 1999, pp. 150-151; Bertozzi, 2001; Mota, M.B., 2001).

### 3. PERU

#### a) Alberto Fujimori

Alberto Fujimori governed Peru from 1990 to 2000. He had a **personalistic** style of leadership, a **heterogeneous social constituency** with widespread lower-class support, and the **absence of institutionalized forms of political mediations** between the
leader and his followers.” During his campaign, his populist formula cultivated a “man of the people” image, and he proposed a staged economic stabilization plan to avoid the neoliberal shock; however, once he was in office, **contradictorily** he implemented all neoliberal measures. He also **attacked political establishments** to keep his links with his constituency. After the 1992 *Autogolpe*[^5], he started to privatize public companies and he used the money for social causes such as education and health (Roberts, 1995, p. 92).

His political manipulation of social funds was very efficient, since he inaugurated schools and health clinics and usually he wore indigenous clothes (like “the Indian poncho and a woolen cap”) (Roberts, 1995, p. 105). He also established links with *chinitos*[^6] and *cholitos*[^7], his most important supporters, and **combated the white elites** (*blanquitos*). Fujimori also used his **deficient Spanish** to emphasize that both immigrants and *mestizos* were discriminated against by white elites; therefore, he used the slogan: “**a president like you**” (De la Torre, 2000, p. 124).

Fujimori established himself as an **outsider**, with a **strong rhetoric against elite** backed candidate Mario Vargas-Llosa and his neoliberal platform. Fujimori was seen as a leader emerging from the common people – *mestizos* and indigenous – running in a **party created shortly before the elections** (*Cambio 90*), and was also **backed by a federation of small businesses and a Protestant organization**. Thus, his supporters were from a variety of different sectors (Roberts, 1995).

His discourse against neoliberalism was valid only before he was elected, and, soon after his election, he implemented a tough neoliberal stabilization program. Due to
this attitude, he had to change his discourse and he started an “antielitist and
antiestablishment” discourse, targeting the political parties, Congress, and the judiciary.
This “politics of antipolitics” used by Fujimori is quite common among populist leaders,
as they claim to embody the people’s will (Roberts, 1995, p. 98). In conclusion, his most
important characteristics were the personalism, lack of institutionalization, a highly
autocratic style, a willingness to weaken or eliminate his opponents, and also a high
level of corruption (which later forced him to flee to Japan in an attempt to avoid arrest)
(De la Torre, 2000; Roberts, 1995; Weyland, 1996a).

4. ARGENTINA

a) Juan Perón

Juan Domingo Perón was very important for the history of Argentina. After the
first and long democratic period in its history (1916-1930), Argentina was in a difficult
situation, as the unemployment rates were getting higher because of the Great
Depression. In 1929, a group of anti-radical liberals led a military coup against the
President and the so-called “infamous decade” started, marked by gangsterism, political
opportunism and the rule of a conservative oligarchy (Cockcroft, 1996, p. 581). Labor
and political protests arose against the conservatives and a military coup took place in
1943. Juan Domingo Perón was the minister of labor and welfare for this military
government and was becoming more and more powerful. He noticed the American and
British domination over economy and wanted to free Argentina from it; he also was not
very patient with the demands of the oligarchy. His anti-Marxist component was strong.
He forged alliances with workers and unionists, and his importance increased to such a high level that by mid-1945 Argentine society was polarized: those who agreed with Perón and his concessions to labor and his attempts to change rural regulations and those who disagreed with him. His opponents arrested him, but the descamisados urged his release and succeeded.

In 1946, Perón ran for presidency and won. From 1945 to 1948 the increasing wages caused industrial production as well as domestic consumption to expand. His main practices were anti-communist, pro-capitalist, corporatist, nationalist and populist and led him to his second mandate, as he was re-elected on 1951. He also had the backing of the Catholic Church due to his promise to block legal divorce and due to his marriage with his companion, Eva Duarte. Perón’s immense popularity was based on his promotion of the inclusion of workers in the political arena, helping them to have better living standards, establishing social security and recognizing labor unions.

Perón was able to make alliances with the national industrial bourgeoisie, with organized workers, with sectors of the middle-class and with state workers as Getúlio Vargas did in Brazil. Evita also helped, influencing him to allow women’s suffrage, which became legal in 1947.

An economic crisis led to another military coup in 1955, and Perón was forced into exile, but most of the workers remained peronistas. Perón returned to Argentina in 1973 and was elected president a couple of months after that, but died on July 1974; his wife, Isabel, succeeded him to the presidency (Cockcroft, 1996).
b) Carlos Menem

After a period of economic crisis, extreme disrespect for human rights (the Argentine Dirty War killed more than 30,000 people during the 1970s and 1980s) and the defeat in the *Malvinas*\(^8\) War, a new democratic period took place in Argentina, starting in 1983, when a civilian, the middle-class (or radical) Raúl Alfonsín was elected. The economic crisis deepened with the implementation Alfonsín’s economic programs. In this context, peronist Carlos Saúl Menem (*Justicialista Party*\(^9\)) was elected in 1989. Throughout his presidency he made promises to different groups, and adopted an IMF neoliberal economic program, in which he cut back subsides on education, privatized public companies, downsized the government and lowered trade barriers. Domingo Cavallo, his economic minister was very important during this period.

The decreasing inflation, the huge amount of external investment in the Argentine economy and the use of money from privatization for social causes which addressed specific popular segments made Menem very popular, but this neoliberal honeymoon did not last for long, because the financial resources were shortly used for other than social causes.

Menem was not democratic but authoritarian; thus, he disrespected the constitution very often and used decrees to impose his decisions as well as coercion against the media that criticized his attitudes. Corruption was also a key issue in his government. The judiciary was also a corrupt institution and supported Menem’s misdemeanors. Menem also reinforced his links with the military by pardoning all
military that were convicted during the Dirty War. Menem disrupted the meaning of justice as well.

Menem made use of television as a strong medium to deliver his populist messages to the population, portraying an image of savior of the nation. His speeches always mentioned that he came from the countryside and could interpret the desires of the people and he always tried to come up with simple solutions. He was the caudillo that was able to talk to the excluded and disenchanted people using their own language, and he used two symbolic issues: sports and show business. His connections with Maradona, the most important soccer idol in Argentina contemporary history, and his “menemovil,” the car he used to visit poor neighborhoods, were used to strengthen his links with the people (Sarlo, 1994, 35; De la Torre, 2000, p. 126).

Instead of using typical peronist appeal to the workers, he preferred to use more religious appeals to brothers and sisters, resulting in a strong rhetorical call: “Follow me!” Menem won the 1995 elections, after changing the Constitution to allow his re-election and stayed in power until 2000 (De la Torre, 2000, p. 127; Cockcroft, 1996; Weyland, 1996a; Jones, 1998).

5. VENEZUELA

a) Hugo Chávez

After a long period of the alliance between Acción Democrática (AD) and COPEI (Social Christian Party of Venezuela), called Punto Fijo, the Venezuelan people opted for change. The alliance lasted from 1959 to 1994 and in that year Rafael Caldera
Rodriguez, former COPEI member was elected, running for Convergencia Nacional Party. Prior to Caldera’s election, the extremely corrupt Carlos Andrés Pérez ruled the country. On February 4, 1992, Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chávez Frias headed a military coup to overthrow the Pérez government. The coup lasted 12 hours; Chávez was caught and then asked to speak on television in order to order his men to surrender. There were only 72 seconds, and, in them, Chávez assumed total responsibility for the coup and accepted the defeat “for now” (por ahora). Perez was impeached on charges of corruption in 1993, and the AD-COPEI alliance collapsed, allowing CN’s Caldera to ascend to power (DelaCruz, 2000, p. 5).

Chávez was jailed for more than one year and then came back to the political scenario. His renamed party, MVR (Movimento V Republicano10), allowed him to appeal to the working and lower classes, defending the elimination of traditional party-ruled system, the dissolution of Congress, as well as rewrite the constitution, using an anti-elitist discourse. His neopopulist characteristics are present in his leadership over MVR, a weak party that would not survive without him, in his weak political ideology, his strong appeal to the masses (especially the always excluded informal sector of the economy), his strong use of the repugnant other rhetoric against the puntofijistas (people linked with AD-COPEI Punto Fijo Alliance), his dictatorship/democratic style (or a two-faced style of government), his denial of having a salary while in office as President, and his direct appeal to the housewives, who were considered workers after the new Constitution has passed in 1999. He has also distinguishing characteristics from contemporary neopopulist leaders, in that the level of
corruption is very low in his government, he has a military background and he has never used IMF neoliberal programs, because Venezuela has plenty of oil money to be used on social programs. He was elected and took power on 1999 and then called for national unity in order to build a nation of included rather than excluded.

After the new Constitution was written by a Constituent Assembly dominated by Chávez followers, he called for elections and won with a sound 59 percent of the votes, beginning a new term in 2000. One of his first measures was to reverse the politics on confronting OPEC; he decided that PdVsa (*Petroleos de Venezuela*, or the Venezuelan Petroleum Company) was going to reduce its production, as established by OPEC. That measure led to an increase in the price of Venezuelan oil and an influx of money for Chávez to support his social programs, which allowed him to avoid the impositions of the IMF and the World Bank (Cockcroft, 1996; DelaCruz, 2000).

6. NICARAGUA

a) Arnoldo Alemán

Nicaragua had U.S. Marines in its territory from 1909 to 1932, when Augusto Cesar Sandino and his group of guerillas laid down their arms in exchange for the complete departure of the Marines from Nicaragua. Anastacio Somoza was named chief of the National Guard and he eliminated his opponents, Sandino included, installing a dictatorship in Nicaragua. He ran the country until he was assassinated in 1956, and his two sons took power. In 1961, the *Sandinista* National Liberation Front or *Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional* (FSLN) was founded.
In 1979, the FSLN championed a revolution and took power. The wealthy elites that had benefited during Somoza’s dynasty left the country and would support anti-Sandinistan candidate **Arnoldo Alemán** in future elections. During the 1980s the FSLN nationalized many private industries and also confiscated private properties that belonged to the Somoza’s and followers. They also established a government based on social justice, and, in 1984, FSLN candidate and leader Daniel Ortega was elected President.

Due to the Contra War, in which the Contras were backed by the U.S. who feared the Communist menace in Nicaragua, the FSLN government had to spent lots of money for the war efforts instead of using money for social causes; the economy collapsed, and in this context, the 1990 elections were called. Violeta Barrios Chamorro, who was backed by the U.S. and defended the adoption of neoliberal measures, defeated Daniel Ortega. In the same year, Arnoldo Alemán was elected mayor of Managua.

Alemán renovated Managua and his populist style could easily be recognized. His personal **charisma** and dramatic rhetoric to **appeal** to socially and economically **marginalized people**, his **Manichean discourse**, opposing the people to the evil *Sandinistas*, his use of the **repugnant other** – the “darkness” of the *Sandinistas* and especially the “Dracula” Daniel Ortega versus the “light” or his *Partido Liberal Constitucional* (Liberal Constitutional Party) – and the backing of the impoverished people, mainly the informal sector, unemployed workers and demobilized combatants, made him a personification of the messiah.

Alemán was inaugurated in 1997 and continued the neo-liberal program initiated by Violeta Chamorro. Social expenditures have since been reduced, while the
corruption levels increased enormously. Alemán’s administrative incompetence and corruption are the trademarks of his government. (Cockcroft, 1996; Walker & Armony, 2000).

**B. Brazilian Neopopulism**

Um episódio que gostaria de esquecer?

O governo Collor, que nasceu sobre o signo da esperança e da mudança para todos nós, mas trouxe uma extraordinária decepção a todos os brasileiros, pela enorme distância entre as expectativas criadas e a maneira como terminou\(^{11}\). Francisco Gross\(^ {12}\), economist who worked for Sarney’s and Collor’s governments, and was also appointed as President of the Brazilian Development Bank on February 2000 by current Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (cited in Sobral & Aguiar, 2001, p. 71)

After the end of the longest military dictatorship in South America (1964-1985), two candidates ran for the presidency, Paulo Salim Maluf, backed by the military and Tancredo de Almeida Neves, oppositionist approved by the military because of his mild attitude. Despite the huge manifestations in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo during 1984, advocating the “Diretas Já” (or the return of direct elections for the executive branch), the military disagreed with that, willing to maintain their immunity from “persecution for human rights violations” (Cockcroft, 1996, p. 653). Congress then appointed oppositionist Tancredo de Almeida Neves to the presidency. A sudden and still not very well explained infectious disease killed Neves before he could take power. Chances were that the military would step back into office, but a very pacific, disciplined and silent manifestation in the burial of Neves, involving millions of Brazilians, helped convince...
the military that it was the right time to allow democracy to take its beginning steps again. José Sarney, vice-president, took office and conducted a mild populist government, adopting neo-liberal measures to combat inflation, yet inflation was not controlled during his government.

After the fairly progressive Constitution of 1988 established direct elections for the presidency in 1989, several candidates popped up. Leftists Luís Ignácio Lula da Silva and Leonel Brizola were very popular and had strong support from labor and middle-class people. Globo, the huge private Brazilian media conglomerate, decided to support an outsider, Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello, after a series of polls demonstrated that Globo’s favorite candidate, Mário Covas, would be defeated by the leftists in the first round.

Collor was not exactly an outsider, but he tried to pose as one. His family has sugar plantations in Alagoas and owns the Globo branch at Alagoas, the state where he established his political career, despite being born in Rio de Janeiro and growing up there as well as in Brasília. Collor also had political posts at Maceió, Alagoas capital city, during the military dictatorship, as a “bionic” mayor, indicated by the military government. During his campaign he championed honesty, stressing his image as the “maharaja’s hunter,” what he had previously established while governor at Alagoas. He was elected in the second round with a six percent advantage over Lula, “a socialist, most feared by business and clientelist politicians” (Weyland, 1996b, p. 188).

A severe economic crisis (the 1980s were called “a década perdida” or the lost decade by Lamounier, 1991, p. 23) was established when Collor took office in 1990, and
Collor “continued Sarney’s policy of debt-for-equity swaps and privatization” and other IMF-style economic measures, the largest impact being the freeze of individual savings accounts. This economic plan named Brasil Novo (or New Brazil) was strongly based on a privatization plan called Plano Nacional de Desestatização (PND or National Destatization Plan), which was attacked by the Brazilian bishops as a recessive plan (Cockcroft, 1996, pp. 656-657).

In 1992 inflation skyrocketed and unemployment rose to critical levels, while the monthly minimum wage could not “meet the minimal basic food needs for a family of four” (Cockcroft, 1996, p. 660). Pedro Collor de Mello, the President’s brother, denounced Paulo César Farias, the President’s campaign manager, for conducting a corruption chain with the connivance of the President. Collor resigned a few minutes after the senate impeachment trial began, in 1992 (Weyland, 1993).

Collor’s populist characteristics will be assessed through examples in the next sections. To list some of them, charismatic Collor established himself as a savior; he attacked the repugnant others, the elites, the oligarchy, the politicians and the press, in different situations; he appealed directly to the masses; he used Manichean discourse; he had the informal sector as well as part of the elite as his supporters; he made abusive use of decrees, most of the time disrespecting the constitution; his party was a one-and-only-one-man party (PRN – Partido da Reconstrução Nacional or National Reconstruction Party, which no longer exists); he adopted neoliberal measures; he had personalistic, moralistic and emotional rhetoric; he lacked a consistent political pathway and corruption as well as clientelism were present in his government.
His political isolation as well as his cultivated role of outsider “created a propitious setting for corruption.” His former political supporters, whose access to patronage had been diminished by Collor, turned against him. Collor attempted to appeal to those supporters, offering participation in the patronage scheme, but the press denounced it and politicians had no other option than to oppose Collor, which became even easier because of Collor’s anti-political rhetoric. His recessive economic measures and failure to combat inflation as well as corruption were critical in making him lose support from the people. Collor also attempted to split organizational forces, such as business, labor organizations and also parties, trying to disrupt all the established power-relations in order to reign in an absolute way, above all institutions. Thus, his isolation and his attempts to destabilize the traditional corruption and patronage channels left him without any political support; his extremely bad relationship with the press damaged his image among the people, who also suffered with the severe economic measures taken and who, furthermore, felt deceived by noticing that his rhetoric against corruption was a lie. Those factors led Collor to fall, when the Brazilian society massively urged Congress to impeach him, and he decided to resign a few minutes before being impeached (Weyland, 1993, p. 4).
III. COLLOR DE MELLO – A REAL LEADER?

Collor’s characteristics as a real leader will be discussed based on four different approaches. Kouzes and Posner established credibility as a crucial characteristic of a leader; thus, credibility will be assessed, as a first approach. The second approach will address the characteristics mentioned in section I, regarding leadership, power and coercion. Then the leader-member exchange theory and the transformational leadership approach will be discussed regarding Collor’s attitudes. Based on the analysis proposed, Collor’s attitudes will be analyzed to prove how he was a real leader, in spite of the fact that his misdemeanors might affect the analysis.

A. Credibility

Collor had an important component for a leader to be successful, but he might have lost it during his government, if the characteristics suggested by Kouzes and Posner (1995) are taken into consideration. Leadership is based on credibility and the components that comprise the concept of credibility are “being honest, being forward-looking, being inspiring and being competent” (pp. 22-25).

1. Being inspiring and forward-looking

Two of them were present in Collor’s attitudes, he was actually inspiring and forward-looking, and he proved that during his mandate. Collor proved to be inspiring
and forward-looking when he decided to open the economy, especially regarding the automotive market. In spite of the fact that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank mostly influenced his decision, this specific issue demonstrated Collor’s inspiring and forward-looking aspects. Maybe he failed on establishing a neoliberal program with an excessive broad range, but some sectors, such as the automotive sector, that were manipulated by a close and restricted group of few multinational companies, really needed to get more competitive through competition from other companies. Collor stated, “I can open up the automobile market to [Japanese companies]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989c). After a few weeks in office, Collor encouraged the production of popular cars, which means inexpensive (the lowest price of a new car at that time was around US$ 15,000 for a car, and Collor established that the popular car should not cost more than US$ 7,500) and efficient cars. Those cars should have a reduced horsepower (less than 1.0 horsepower) to have enormous fiscal incentives, thus reaching that very low price. Fiat was the first automotive company established in Brazil to offer a 1.0 popular car (the name for those cars), and lots of people had access to their first brand new-cars (in Brazil the market for used cars has been larger than the market for new cars for a long time, and most Brazilians still have used cars due to the high prices of new cars).

Collor’s populist appeal can also be noticed in this example, as he appealed to the masses and told them that the “Carroças” Era (Collor said that the cars produced in Brazil were such low-quality cars that they were comparable to “carroças” or horse-wagons) should come to an end. His inspiring and forward-looking spirit proved to be successful in this
case, and low-power cars, which are very suitable for the conditions of most Brazilian roads and highways, nowadays dominate the Brazilian car market (Mota, C.R.M., 2001).

2. Being competent

Collor’s competency is questionable, but he proved to be competent in some aspects, even though he also gave examples of lack of competency. He was competent enough to convince the Brazilians about his capabilities, effectively cultivating public opinion, which gained him the presidency. He was also competent to govern keeping the military in their barracks even after accusations against him hit the population; thus, competency may be attributed in some ways to him. Rosenn and Downes (1998) point out that Collor started on “transforming Brazil’s ‘inward oriented’ economy into an economy that competes on worldwide terms,” using neoliberal measures as well as reducing “the costly federal payroll that had been greatly increased by patronage appointments during the Sarney presidency.” However, during his government, problems certainly popped up such as “endemic inflation, lagging competitiveness, insufficient investment, decaying infrastructure, and deteriorating social services,” and these examples are sufficient to prove that he lacked competency to manage the country (pp. 16-17).
3. Being honest

**Honesty** is another very controversial characteristic, as it involves values and ethics. Technically, Collor was not attributed the responsibility for the corruption that was present in his government, especially related to his former campaign-treasurer Paulo César Farias\textsuperscript{14}. However, it is hard to believe that the President was not aware of what was going on in the different levels of public administration, particularly in higher and closer levels of it. Paulo César Farias had connections during and after Collor’s government, and many Brazilians and authors believe Collor was also in some ways involved, including the Cali drug trafficking cartel through a connection with the Italian Mafia, the *Camorra* and especially the ‘*Ndrangheta*. Many banks and financial institutions were also part of an intricate system that was established to launder the monies that came from both drug trafficking and the corruption scheme that Farias established in Brazil (Figueiredo, 2000). In spite of the judiciary decision that Collor was not guilty of active corruption, Pedro Collor de Mello, the President’s brother, commented on a conversation with Farias, when the latter himself confessed, talking about corruption: “I’d rather not do that because 70 percent of that money is for the boss” (Mello, P.C. de, 1992). According to the investigation conducted by the National Congress, named *CPI do PC* (or Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry related to Paulo César Farias’ Affairs) another example of lack of honesty can be found. The President established a severe freeze on banking and savings accounts, but companies supposedly involved in the corruption scheme, such as “*EPC, Banco BMC and Banco Rural*” continued to provide monies to Collor’s relatives and close assistants, despite the fact that
they should not have money for that, as almost all money was frozen. The CPI concluded that they were dishonestly informed of the freeze previously and took advantage of that to withdraw lots of money so that it could not be frozen, as it was not deposited in any bank (Mendes, 1992, p. 141)

**B. Leadership, power and coercion**

Adopting another approach to leadership, based on the definition provided in section I, and also on the implications of the use of power and coercion by leaders, and finally on two of the theories and approaches analyzed; it is not difficult to conclude that Collor had, during his mandate, characteristics and behaviors that would match some leadership characteristics, but obviously he also lacked other important characteristics.

**1. Leadership as a process**

As leadership is a **process**, it means that the leader influences and is influenced by the group. **Influence** is another crucial component of leadership, and leaders must be able to use it to make the group be willing to work towards the achievement of a set of goals. Thus, leaders must motivate their followers so that they will enthusiastically struggle to reach common goals. The group is another very important component of leadership, as the leader has to have followers and also the whole group must have common goals so that leadership can be exerted in its full extension.
2. Influencing the audience

Collor had influenced and had also been influenced by his group of followers, a group representing more than 50 percent of the Brazilian voters, upon his election as President. The way he conducted his campaign and also his behavior while in office, the speeches he delivered, his sound slogans, his athletic appeal, his gestures, his strong rhetoric and attitude had an impact on the audience. However, Collor’s attitudes were also meant to fulfill the expectations of the audience, for the most part, and were determined by the response of the audience to them; consequently, attitudes that were approved were reinforced, whereas attitudes not accepted by the audience were occasionally discontinued. Collor certainly set an example for many of his followers and had the acceptance of a great deal of his attitudes, at least during part of his mandate.

3. Use of power and influence

A sound example of how Collor influenced the audience can be found in the massive number of votes he received in his election for the presidency, achieving 42.7 percent in contrast to Luis Inácio Lula da Silva’s 37.8 percent, in the second and decisive stage of the election (Skidmore, 1999, p. 218). However, the way Collor influenced the audience was very controversial. He used both position and personal power and one of his strongest approaches was that he was the “Maharaja’s Hunter,” or an anti-corruption politician. The anti-corruption rhetoric was successful, despite the questionable truth about the Maharaja’s real situation at Alagoas, the state where Collor had been governor.
and where he used this discourse, as broadcasted in *Globo Reporter* on April 2, 1987. Actually the *Maharajas* interviewed during the program did not seem to be rich or corrupted people, but scape-goats (Conti, 1999, pp. 13-14, 41-44, 66; *Globo Reporter*, 1987).

4. Use of coercion and influence

There are other examples of influencing the people, that had very effective results, although they demonstrate a less than ethical way of doing it and are close to the concept of *coercion*, or use of force to effect change. Collor used a frightening method to influence voters during his runoff campaign against Lula in the final round of the 1989 Presidential Election. Messianic Collor called Lula “a dangerous radical who would expropriate [voters] property” (Skidmore, 1999, p. 218). He also tried (and was successful) to destabilize President Sarney’s virtual candidate, *SBT* TV and Media owner and very popular TV entertainer himself, by attacking Sarney and his candidate. Collor attacked Sarney and, after denouncing Sarney’s links with Santos, Collor stated, “[…] you lavished favors on your friends and relatives […].” Santos never became a candidate. In the same speech, he appealed to the people saying, “I ask you permission, my people […]” and then he severely attacked Sarney and threatened him, saying, “I will indeed expose your filth and I will jail the corrupt” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989a).
5. Being influenced by the audience

Collor influenced but was also influenced by his audience; therefore; he tried to adapt to different situations. After being elected, Collor met the Brazilian Ambassador for UNESCO, José Guilherme Melquior in Europe. Collor mentioned his lack of ideological bases and asked Melquior for advice about that because he did not feel comfortable being labeled as right wing (he considered Delfim Netto and Roberto Campos as examples of right wing politicians) and he was definitely not left wing. Melquior told Collor that he was a “liberal socialist,” as conceptualized by Bobbio, Matteucci, and Pasquino (1992). Melquior suggested that Collor should get closer to various groups, and Collor followed Melquior’s recommendations. To achieve that goal, Collor used symbols of a multitude of different groups, from military to religious, from sports practitioner to extreme capitalist consumer, from intellectual to playboy. His behavior was clearly intentional and was meant to establish connections with the different groups, trying to be considered as part of each of those groups. Despite his intentions, his behavior proved that he understood the importance of those groups and was influenced by them (as cited in Conti, 1999, pp. 336-337). Collor manipulated his own beliefs according to his needs. He declared himself a “Christian reformist” opposing conformist politicians, as well as asserted that he was a “sportsman,” and he frequently used radical sports to prove he was courageous and sporting (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989e).
C. The leader-member exchange theory

The leader-member exchange theory focuses on the interactions between leaders and followers, establishing two different groups of subordinates, the in-group and the out-group. The analogy of this theory on leadership to the attitudes of Collor during his government is remarkable. The theory states that the in-group has expanded relationships with the leader, while the out-group is treated in ways based strictly on formal job descriptions, rules and regulations. The analogy presented in this study considers Brazil as a huge company, so all sectors are considered as departments and all the people as employees.

Based on the proposed analogy, it is possible to affirm that Paulo César Farias and the group of companies and organizations that participated in the corruption scheme could be considered the in-group, as well as Collor’s close assistants and ministers, whom he favored as much as he could.

The out-group increased during his government. In spite of his frequent appeals to the descamisados (or shirtless ones, workers and unemployed people, both in a poor situation), he did not improve their life standards considerably. The press was component of the out-group, as well as the politicians, and later on the businessmen and other sectors. Collor did not consider different opinions, he did not accept diverging opinions, and he tried to impose his opinion. The leader-member exchange theory did not mention disrespect to individuals as a characteristic of a leader; however, the out-group embodies somehow a group of employees, or analogically, sectors of the country, that the leader would not take into full consideration. Collor attacked the politicians
stating, “[…] these people close to Sarney are the real thieves, the gang […],” he also harassed the press declaring, “[…] I am under attack of this crappy press. I will make them take all this garbage back through their mouths, and through other bodily orifices as well,” as well as he showed aggressiveness to a congressman (Ulysses Guimarães) and the businessmen affirming, “he [Guimarães] is the senile, sclerotic puppet whom São Paulo economic oligopolies [businessmen] have designated as the advocate of civil disobedience” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992a).

Collor did not allow the out-group to try to come closer to him; instead he narrowed the in-group and broke any old link of patronage between politicians and businesses, betraying former followers, both politicians and businessmen.

**D. The transformational leadership approach**

The transformational leadership approach focuses on the ways leaders inspire their followers, being change agents and good role models and also empowering followers to achieve at higher standards. Several aspects are assessed by this approach, but this study will focus on charismatic leadership and on inspiration, as well as on the leaders as change agents and role models. Although having all these characteristics may not be enough for a leader to be effective, they certainly identify a person with leadership traits.

Collor inspired many Brazilians, as mentioned in the beginning of this section, through the automotive industry. He also set a good example being a sportsman, as previously mentioned. He doubtlessly was also a change agent, as he implemented
neoliberal measures that impacted severely the Brazilian economy, and he also broke (or he tried to break, at least) most of the patronage links between the politicians and the business, as mentioned previously. His rhetoric of change was also strong; he mentioned it explicitly, by stating, “[...] with the advent of my government this country will begin to change” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989a). Another example of his attitude as an agent of change can be seen in this speech: “I must stress that the understanding, efforts, creativity and vision of the modern Brazilian businesspersons have played a decisive role in this process of change” (Mello, 2001b). However, Collor used many of those attitudes in order to benefit primarily himself and his close group of beneficiaries, rather than for the whole country to follow his example and then be able to achieve higher standards.

Charisma, another important component of this approach is defined as of divine origin, giving to its owner superhuman or exceptional powers. A charismatic leader must have a strong sense of role modeling, what Collor in a strict sense had, at least in some occasions. The leader must communicate high expectations for followers, appearing as strongly competent to them. Related to high expectations, Collor declared, “[...] I believe that we Brazilians must dare to be great […] Brazil doesn’t have to be second, it must be first” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989d). He seemed to communicate his high expectations, but indeed he did not make them happen.

Charisma also involves affiliation, power, or esteem. Collor, again, had rhetoric very strongly related to the inclusion of the “descamisados” (poor workers) as mentioned previously, trying to include the informal sector of the economy, but, again, it was much more rhetoric than practice. His rhetoric favorable to the affiliation and esteem of the
Brazilian people also vanished shortly after “the Brazilian Indiana Jones,” as President George Bush, Sr. used to call Collor, took office (Rosenn & Downes, 1998, p. 1). Collor said, but did very little in order to bring about a situation in which “Brazilians will again be proud of their country” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989d). So, according to this approach to leadership, Collor would have the skills and maybe the willingness to be a transformational leader. Yet, during his government, most of those characteristics were lost. His leadership skills, that undoubtedly existed, were being less used as time went by, during his government.

E. Conclusion

Finally, if we consider credibility as a crucial characteristic of a leader, Collor certainly raised the highest expectations in Brazilian people, but he lost his credibility quite quickly during his government and that is one of the reasons that led to his downfall. Examples such as the freeze of the saving accounts, the whole Plano Collor (or Collor’s Economic Plan) and the assault of corruption in his government prove that his credibility faded quite quickly.

Regarding the use of power and coercion, I addressed the uses Collor made of them. Putting them together, credibility, power, coercion and leadership styles, it is quite obvious that Collor had some of the characteristics that define a leader. Thus, Collor can be considered a leader. However, if we consider that a leader must be a positive role model, must also achieve important results and must make their followers be willing to follow him in order
to reach higher standards, then Collor would barely be considered a leader. My conclusion is that Collor was a leader when he took office. During his term he used his leadership skills in a way that caused him to lose his credibility, causing him to lose his ability to conduct his followers.
IV. COLLOR DE MELLO – A REAL NEOPOPULIST?

Based on the authors mentioned in a previous section, populism can be characterized by numerous characteristics and behaviors. This study will encompass the assessment of many of the following traits, focusing on Collor as a neopopulist (according to Weyland) or as a new populist (as De la Torre would prefer to refer to him): the Manichean discourse; the social construction of the leader as a symbol of redemption; the attacks against the repugnant other; the coalition of emergent elites and popular sectors; the ambiguous relationship with democracy; the political inclusion of previously excluded people; clientelism; the direct appeal to a heterogeneous mass of followers; the bypass of organizations by neopopulists; the establishment of organizations as personal vehicles with low level of institutionalization; the personalistic and moralistic character of neopopulists; the strong rhetoric; the lack of consistent political pathway; the corruption and the corporativism. The above traits were partially or totally present in Latin American populist governments during the 1900s and still persist in some countries today (Venezuela and Nicaragua, for instance).

Collor’s sporting manners (comparable to Menem’s ones) have already been mentioned (see also Photos - Collor - Sports and Action); however, other characteristics of his will be addressed, such as his neopopulist neoliberalism style, his approach as an outsider, his anti-politics approach and his use of small notes (or bilhetinhos). This study
will focus on Collor and relate how most of the above-mentioned traits fit Collor’s neopopulist style.

**A. Manichean discourse, strong rhetoric, and direct appeal to the masses**

Manichean discourse, strong rhetoric and direct appeal to a heterogeneous mass of followers are very personal and important characteristics of Collor. The massive financial and ideological support of Globo TV and the use of electronic media enhanced Collor’s access to different popular sectors, as well as to the high levels of society. Menem has also used TV as a strong media for delivering his populist speeches in addressing the Argentine people. As mentioned in the previous section, when addressing the use of coercion during the runoff campaign against Lula, Collor’s rhetoric against the risk of voters’ properties’ expropriation was strong and was probably well-accepted by the high classes, who would consider him as “the lesser evil” (Skidmore, 1999, p. 218; Weyland, 1996b, p. 188).

Regarding the appeal to different sectors of the society, Moisés stated that Collor’s voters “included sizable sectors of the population that are excluded from Brazilian society, that is, the destitute, the poorest, the functional illiterates […] as well as a proportion of middle income brackets, and factions of the highest income classes” (as cited in De la Torre, 2000, p. 124). Collor constantly referred to the Brazilian people as “my people” and used an expression used by Argentine Perón, *descamisados*, when addressing the poor people (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992c, and Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989a).
Collor’s use of the expression “my friends” to address the people is also remarkable (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1991a). Collor also asserted that he was “unwilling to waste a single opportunity to maintain contact with people,” and the most important examples were his daily “ascent of the ramp at Planalto Palace (see Photos - Collor, children and the Planalto Palace ramp and also Collor and his campaign), […] his Jet Ski rides, [and] his bicycle trips,” and his presence in Formula 1 events (see Photos - Collor - Sports and Action), when he was always surrounded by people to applaud him (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1990b). Populist Collor rhetorically declared, “[…] first, we must note very precisely my very close relation with the masses” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1990c).

His Manichean discourse can be exemplified by this declaration: “the time of corruption among dishonest politicians will end. The time of the well-meaning men has arrived; our turn has come […]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989a). As already exemplified, Collor rhetoric and Manichean discourse can also be found in his speeches, as follows: “I don’t have a trace of inferiority complex. On the contrary, I believe that we Brazilians must dare to be great […] Brazil doesn’t have to be second, it must be first” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989d).

His rhetoric and appeals to different groups were also present when he declared that he would improve military salaries, because “generals don’t earn much;” and also when he repudiated corrupt suppliers, stating, “anyone who has accounts receivable with the government is going to receive his money at a discount of 15 percent, which is the commission he charged the government. Those who complain will get audited” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989c).
Collor’s followers included small-business owners such as José Clóvis Lodetti, who voted in the past for Jânio Quadros and who also participated in Collor’s campaign, believing Collor was his only hope. Taxi drivers such as Cristovam José da Silva solicited votes for Collor from all his passengers, believing that all Collor should do was to get rid of the “maharajas.” Merchant José Carlos Pascotto did not like politics, and affirmed that the old politics left him cold, but Collor looked like would be able to do something different, according to him. Former Communist Party of Brazil militant Álvaro Lins Cavalcanti, who lived underground from 1969 to 1980, was also supporting Collor (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989c).

Collor also demonstrated his rhetoric and appeal to heterogeneous groups when he said, “I am not deserting the struggle nor my commitments to the poor and the have-nots” and he included a Manichean approach when he stated, “It was because I kept faithful to [the poor and have nots] that I saw combined against me the most perfidious interests of selfish elites and pretentious leaders […]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992c).

The above examples demonstrate how Collor’s Manichean discourse and rhetoric and also his appealing to a heterogeneous mass of followers worked.

The above characteristics were strongly present (although might also be present in other populists, but maybe not so evidently) in the following populist presidents, as explained in previous sections: Manichean discourse - Velasco Ibarra, Bucaram, and Alemán; rhetoric – all populist Latin American Presidents; and appeal to different sectors of the population – also all populists did that, but the audiences varied according to the social conditions in their epoch and to their major target groups. Vargas and his
discourses for the workers of Brazil (or “trabalhadores do Brasil”) became famous when he deliberately pronounced the sentence slowly, syllable by syllable, to cause more impact in the audience (Sevcenko, 1998, p. 587; Schwarcz, 1998, p. 528).

B. Symbol of redemption, savior, personalistic and moralistic styles

Regarding the social construction of the leader as a symbol of redemption, Collor used the image of a savior as seen in his speeches: “[…] the Brazilian people today do not care whether the candidate is rightist, leftist, centrist, tall, short, fat, or thin. The Brazilians want someone who will solve their problems” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989b) and “I am the hope of that immense majority […]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1990c). Also personalistic and moralistic characteristics can be found in Collor’s speeches. In another speech from Collor, to Stragety (SIC) Research Seminar, he declared his fate to be a savior, based on this personalistic approach:

Almost 50 years later, in 1989, I was elected president of Brazil in the first democratic presidential elections in 29 years. I was only 39. I had been the youngest mayor, I had been the youngest governor, and I had also been a representative to Congress. In 1989 I was poised at a crossroads ready for action, fired for reform, committed to change, and I developed a plan for Brazil’s future based on democracy, prosperity and social equity. It’s that plan and what’s happened to it and my vision of the future that I am going to speak about today. (Mello, 2001a)

A combination of characteristics can be seen in his other speeches, the most important ones being the redemption style, the use of “repugnant others,” personalistic approach, and the Manichean discourse: “During my first days in office I knew I had to
rescue Brazil's economy as soon as possible. I implemented reforms almost on a day to day basis, facing a furor of opposition from sectors of the intelligentsia, political parties, businesspersons and the unions” (Mello, 2001a). Also speaking like a savior and using personalistic and moralistic rhetoric, Collor stated in two different speeches, “On September 18, 1990 I personally closed the gigantic hole built in the center north of Brazil to explode the first Brazilian atomic device” (Mello, 2001b; see Photos - Collor and the atomic “menace”) and “I will give you [addressing an audience at The Swedish Institute of International Affairs in 1997] an overview of what I did as president to bring Brazil into the Modern Age […]” (Mello, 2001c). Also strongly rhetorical, savior-styled and personalistic, Collor said “[… but there I was standing alone realizing we could not wait” (Mello, 2001c).

Other populist presidents also used the image of saviors or the redemption for the people as well as moralistic and personalistic approaches, like Jânio Quadros (a moralist savior); Getúlio Vargas, seen as “Chefe-guia”(or the leader who could guide the people), “Pai dos Pobres” (or Father of the Poor), and “Amigo-pai” (or father and close friend) (Schwarcz, 1998, pp. 527-528); Velasco Ibarra, defined as “[…an] image of a Catholic saint” (De la Torre, 2000, p. 143); Bucaram (the Leader of the Poor, and the light that could defeat the darkness); Fujimori, stating he was “a leader like you” or “a man of the people” (De la Torre, 2000, p. 124).
C. Political inclusion of previously excluded

Collor also defended the inclusion of previously excluded sectors of the society to the political arena. He used the political inclusion approach, as well as a mix of Manichean discourse and attacks on the repugnant others, as demonstrated in this speech: “Brazilians will again be proud of their country. The time of corruption among dishonest politicians will end. The time of the well-meaning men has arrived, our turn has come […]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989a). Political inclusion was certainly one of his favorite matters, so he declared, “I would certainly defend the position of the small and medium-size farmers, the ones who are working […]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989d). More than using political inclusion rhetoric, he also appealed to heterogeneous masses, posing as the savior, when he said publicly:

My friendly people of Brazil, [...] I want to concentrate [...] my thoughts and [...] my concerns to the immense majority of the Brazilians [...] the shirtless ones, the barefoot ones, and the ones who want social justice in this country, so that they can live with dignity. (Mello, 2001d – author’s free translation of the original version\(^8\) that was in Portuguese)

The political inclusion of the people is a recurrent issue for all populist leaders. Velasco Ibarra included *el pueblo*, a large mass of previously excluded people, composed by artisans, middle class state employees, professional, proletariat, among others, but kept illiterates excluded. Bucaram did the same, approaching the *mestizos* and the very poor people. Vargas included women and eighteen-years-old people, who were then allowed to vote, and also workers of all sorts and the incipient industrialists, keeping illiterates excluded, as did Velasco Ibarra. Jânio Quadros kept close relations with the
poor people, appealing to them as mentioned in previous sections. Fujimori included immigrants and poor *mestizo* people, known as chinitos y cholitos, while Perón addressed the workers and unionists, as well as women and the *descamisados*, offering them dignity and political inclusion. Menem addressed the workers, while Chávez included working and lower classes, and also the excluded informal sector of the economy, as well as the housewives, which he included as workers. Alemán addressed the marginalized people, especially the informal sector, composed of unemployed workers and demobilized combatants.

**D. Outsider approach, by-pass of organizations; corporativism, clientelism, establishment of organizations as personal vehicles with low level of institutionalization, and lack of political pathway**

Collor also by-passed the established and traditional *organizations*, in his attempt to break all paternalistic, *corporate*, and *clientele*ic links, in order to establish new links that could be more advantageous for him and his in-group. Collor argued that “We need to get away from the bureaucratic, paternalistic, interfering, and inefficient state by dismantling our gigantic and national state machinery” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989e). While pretending to be the savior, Collor also attacked the repugnant other using a personalistic style and Manichean rhetoric, when he addressed paternalistic and corporativistic matters, as follows:

I had to reject the statism, the collectivism, and the all powerful manager state. I had to undo Brazil's protecionist, paternalistic and corporate policies that would burden our society and hamper our full entry into modernity. (Mello, 2001c)
Collor also included an anti-politics rhetoric in his speeches, trying to pose as an outsider saying, “The elections are going to take place without regard for partisan or ideological issues [...] it is happening because the politicians and parties have frustrated all of us by their inability to put their words and programs into practice” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989e).

The criticism of the political parties is also remarkable in the previous example. Collor declared, “There is total and absolute incompatibility between a presidential regime and a political-party system that is strong, cohesive, and doctrinal” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1990a). Actually, Collor’s PRN (Partido da Reconstrução Nacional or National Reconstruction Party), as well as Fujimori’s Cambio 90 (The change of the 1990s) were parties created shortly before the elections, and with no consistent political pathway and also with low levels of institutionalization, and could be considered “one-man parties,” because they were totally dependent on their single leaders, Collor and Fujimori. Those parties were created as personal vehicles. Other populist leaders did the same; Chávez and his MVR (Movimento V Republicano10) and Bucaram and his Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano (or Roldosista’s Ecuadorian Party) (De la Torre, 2000, p. 111). They also used those parties as instruments to bypass the traditional organizations.

The approach of an outsider, an anti-politics strategy, and an independent candidate was also used by Fujimori and Jânio Quadros (who lacked party loyalty and political pathway, relying only on moralism). Vargas, despite having two parties backing him, the “PTB (Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro or Brazilian Labor Party) and the PSD (Partido Social Democrático or Social-Democrat Party)” had no political pathway
(Skidmore, 1999, p. 124), going back and forth from an authoritarian dictatorship to a semi-democratic regimen.

**E. Repugnant other**

One of the most powerful rhetorical devices that populists had and still have is the attack on a “**repugnant other**,” a person, a social class, a group, an organization or political party. Collor mastered the art of assailing his opponents. The following example illustrates that, when he was trying to explain why his opponents were so furiously attacking him and trying to impeach him: “They were the axis of the establishment; supporters of ‘national security,’ and my reforms required each of them to sacrifice for the national benefit” (Mello, 2001a). Another example can be seen is the following speech, when he criticized opponents who aimed at damaging him politically: “[…] cruel, malignant, low-level and very distorted campaign” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1991b). The following examples demonstrate Collor’s use of Manichean discourse, as well as a strong rhetoric against the repugnant other, criticizing his opponents as “tribes of dissatisfying people,” or “odd alliance” of opponent forces:

I will not be held responsible for presenting Brazil in the eyes of the world as a banana republic governed by tribes where dissatisfying people of all beliefs rebel and oust the president who has been elected by most inhabitants in the country. (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992c)

Immediately, I faced a furor of opposition, all in the name of “national security,” from the establishment, supporters of an autarchic economy and “strategic” state companies. My opponents were an odd alliance of the military, intelligentsia, businesspersons and unions. All four had their own agendas and formed an axis
against me because my reforms were in the national benefit and might even require some personal and corporate sacrifices. (Mello, 2001c)

Collor’s rhetoric also incorporated Manichean characteristics (both right and left poles were attacked, as well as the business and the public sectors) when addressing the repugnant others, as can be noticed in the following example:

[...those] who rooted me out of office were those sectors that opposed my actions while in office. Being more specific, those highly corporativists sectors, from both right and left wings, from the business sector and also the public sector. (Mello, 2001e – author’s free translation of the original version that was in Portuguese)

Another sound example of his rhetoric of the repugnant other was given by Collor about his judgment, as follows: “If they do these things to me, a President of the Republic, imagine what can happen to any common citizen who does not have that privilege” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992b). Anti-politics’ (as Jânio Quadros and Fujimori) and anti-opponents’ rhetoric can be found in the following declarations:

[…that] scoundrel [Deputy Ibsen Pinheiro] always took advantage of public funds, and now he wants to accuse the deputies of doing it, […and Deputy Ulysses Guimarães] is the senile, sclerotic puppet whom São Paulo economic oligopolies [businessmen] have designated as the advocate of civil disobedience, […] these people close to [former President] Sarney are the real thieves, the gang. (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992a)

Other examples of the same characteristics that can prove Collor’s competence on assailing the rivals follow: “The sham trial staged against me is nothing but the culmination of a sentence fabricated by political adversaries and rivals […]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992c); and “Under pretexts, the longstanding oligarchy conducted an impeachment trial […]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992c).
This strong populist rhetoric against the repugnant other is well represented in other populists such as Velasco Ibarra, as he transformed his enemies into villains and Bucaram, who assailed the “effeminate elites.” However, as Collor did, Bucaram also became the repugnant other for his own people. Vargas criticized the elites, but not very effusively because he knew that he needed them, whereas Fujimori violently condemned the white elites (or blanquitos), as did Chávez the puntofijistas, and Alemán the darkness embodied in the sandinistas.

**F. Corruption**

Corruption was and is a characteristic of almost all populist governments. In a continuum based on corruption in their governments, only a few would be in the no-corruption side. Jânio Quadros and Chávez would probably be close to the extreme of no-corruption, followed by Velasco Ibarra and Vargas. On the opposite side, Bucaram, who was rooted out of office because of the extreme corruption in his government, Fujimori, who escaped to avoid being arrested on charges of corruption, Menem and Alemán, the ones who, although very corrupt, were not directly punished yet. Collor’s corruption scheme, famously known as PC Scheme (from Collor’s campaign treasurer, Paulo César Farias’ acronym), led him to his downfall, as already exposed in this study. The best examples of the way the “boss,” Collor was involved can be found in the books written by Rosenn and Downes, and Mendes, but especially in Conti’s and Figueiredo’s books. As cited previously, Collor was probably involved with the Italian Mafia and Colombian drug trafficking cartels, and Paulo César Farias summarized Collor’s
participation in the corruption scheme, regretting, “I’d rather not do that because 70 percent of that money is for the boss” (Mello, P.C. de, 1992).

**G. Ambiguous relationship with democracy**

Collor’s **ambiguous relationship with democracy** is exemplified by his authoritarian use of decrees to govern. Collor really used a multitude of decrees, as did Menem. Other populists also did not value democracy, establishing dictatorships and authoritarian regimens. Velasco Ibarra, for instance, had a semidemocratic system, in which he kept all illiterates (the majority of the population) excluded and “abolished the constitution of 1945” (De la Torre, 2000, p. 79); he was also semi-authoritarian, as he constantly disrespected his opponents’ rights. Vargas established a dictatorship in 1937, that lasted until 1945, the *Estado Novo* (or New State), when he imposed a very authoritarian and centralized government (Gordon, 1998; Silva, 1998). Both Collor and Bucaram failed to establish alliances with the different sectors after taking office, and their authoritarian and arrogant styles developed an extreme isolation from the centers of power. That eventually led them to their downfalls. Fujimori was also authoritarian when he imposed the *Autogolpe*, changing the rules to be kept in power. Chávez has a Manichean style known as dictatorship-democratic style, as he rotates democratic and dictatorial measures.
**H. Neoliberalism**

A characteristic evident in the neopopulists or new populists and not in the old populists, the adoption of neoliberal IMF-style measures, was also present in Collor’s government. The following speech, although also personalistic and having a strong component of bypassing organizations (Collor never recognized the efforts of his team; according to his discourse, he himself was responsible for all the decisions and apparently for the implementation as well), makes obvious his neoliberal style of conducting the Brazilian economy:

> My key-words here were: free-market, competitiveness and productivity, constructed on the solid basis of democracy. This is what I did: In March 1990, I announced the end of the moratorium on our $115 billion foreign debt and we began payment negotiation. At the same time I abolished restrictions on imports. Those restrictions actually listed 800 specific products that could not be imported into Brazil. Cars and computers were on that list. After I abolished this list, I established a tariff reduction schedule through 1994. The goal was to reduce average tariffs from 40% to 14% in those years. We ultimately accomplished that.

> My inauguration was on March 15, 1990. On the same day I introduced Plan#1 to control inflation and freeze assets. During the last 15 days of March, inflation fell from 90% to 44% in April and to 8% in May. In January 1991 I introduced Plan#2 to scrap prices and wage indexes and to accelerate foreign trade. At that time, we had already stopped discriminating against foreign capital and it was flowing into Brazil. […] In October 1991 I finally began privatization. (Mello, 2001a)

Other examples of his neoliberal style may be found in these two speeches: “I support free enterprise [therefore he rejected *FIESP*’s – São Paulo’s Federation of Industries – support, allegedly because that organization was part of the oligarchy and did
not want the market to be opened]” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989e); and “I support a wholesome partnership between the national economy and international capital” (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1989e).

Other neopopulists or new populists also adopted neoliberalism as their economic pathway, due to the strong recommendations of the IMF (International Monetary Fund). The exception to the rule is Chávez, who reverted a non-compliance in accordance with OPEC’s policy and, thus acquired lots of monies to fund his program, which therefore allowed him to avoid the adoption of the IMF neoliberal program. Bucaram, Fujimori, Menem, Alemán and Collor did not have the monies from petroleum as Chávez did, and, having economic crisis in their countries and strong pressures from international organizations, all of them adopted or maintained neoliberal policies.

I. Conclusion

In summation then, populist and neopopulist (or new populist) characteristics can be found in Collor’s discourses and attitudes, as shown in this section. His behavior also allows the characterization of Collor as neopopulist, as he demonstrated most of the characteristics that are present in other populist and neopopulist leaders, as exemplified previously. Interestingly, Collor also has other traits that make him very similar to another Brazilian populist leader, Jânio Quadros. Some of the characteristics have already been mentioned, but small details, such as the use of small notes (“bilhetinhos”) by both leaders are very remarkable. Quadros used them mostly to give orders and Collor to provide press releases to be read by his spokesman. Both of them, as well as
Fujimori, had a strong anti-politics, outsider approach (Skidmore, 1999, p. 150; Page, 1995, pp. 210-211 and Mello, F.A.C. de, 1992d). Both of them were “[…] messianic, [had campaigned based on[…] morality […] and attack[s] on […] opponents as the incarnation of immorality”, “loner” [or outsider], switched parties frequently and relied on his direct, personal appeal, not on any identification with a party or ideological tradition;” also, both were arrogant and “thought they could impose their will on political scene by force of their personalities” (Rosenn & Downes, 1998, pp. 12-13). Both left office due to their inability to establish strong relationships with different sectors because they tried to break or attack the traditional political, corporative and clientelist forces (Bertozzi, 2001).

Compared to other leaders, Collor also used symbols of masculinity (he once mentioned his “saco roxo” (Bertozzi, 2001), which is the popular way to say that a baby is male, observing his “dark purple balls”), similarly to what Bucaram did, declaring that his balls were bigger than President Febres Cordero’s. Menem used masculinity as well as sports in his rhetoric, mainly soccer and Argentine idol Maradona, as did Collor, jogging publicly several times every week (see Photos – Collor jogging), practicing karate and jet-skiing (Mello, F.A.C. de, 1990b). The tough image he cultivated during the campaign prevailed during his mandate, as explained by Lamounier (1991); Collor has an image of “truculência e autoritarismo” or truculence and authoritarianism (p. 31).

Finally, Collor was truly a neo-populist President, as has been explained, and won 35 million votes in the second round of 1989 Presidential elections mostly because of his populist style, which was demanded by the Brazilian population at that time.
CONCLUSION

This study was meant to analyze the most important theories and approaches that assessed leadership as a managerial tool during the 1900s and also the 2000s. The study was conceived by a description of the main characteristics that entail the most relevant theories and approaches. Power and coercion, as well as their connections with leadership were also examined.

After assessing leadership, populism and neopopulism (or new populism) were addressed, and the characteristics as well as the foremost Latin American populist Presidents were reviewed, based on their major accomplishments and traits. The Historical analysis section recounted the main aspects of the governments of each of the leading Latin American populist Presidents, while the Brazilian neopopulism section portrayed Collor’s government, from the Presidential campaign in 1989 to his resignation in 1992.

The final two sections were dedicated to the assessment of Collor’s speeches and behaviors before, during and after his Government.

Collor can be defined as a real leader, due to his characteristics and manners, but, considering leadership a process, it was quite clearly demonstrated that Collor gradually lost his credibility. Thus, his power of leading the Brazilian society also faded. His lack of credibility among other reasons ultimately led him to his downfall. The analysis of leadership, power, coercion and two different leadership theories led to the conclusion that Collor was a leader, but maybe not an effective leader, and also that he lost his power
of influencing the Brazilian people during his mandate, due mostly to corruption and to his isolation from the power centers.

Collor was a portrait of a neopopulist President (or new populist), as he had almost all the characteristics and behaviors other Latin American populist Presidents had. His abrupt rise probably determined his sudden downfall. His use of some populist traits was very significant; he really mastered the use of anti-democratic measures, recurrently adopting the use of decrees to govern. His appeal to the masses, his strong rhetoric, his Manichean discourses, and his lack of a political pathway were also remarkable. Collor was a real neopopulist President, and interestingly he had similarities with another Brazilian populist President, Jânio Quadros; also noteworthy is the fact that both resigned, the former because of corruption and isolation from the power centers and the latter, again, coincidently, because of his isolation from the power centers.

Collor had a meteoric career as a Brazilian President, but the Brazilian people will not forget his attitudes so soon. Democracy seemed to be win out in that fight, but only history will tell. It is still too soon to tell.
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PHOTOS

All the photos were retrieved from Collor’s personal webpage on May 19, 2001. Most of them may not have any reference to dates or venues, because they lacked that information in their original version posted in the Internet. The quality of the image is also based on the original version. (Mello, F.A.C. de., 2001. Photos. Collor’s Personal Webpage. Retrieved May 19, 2001 from the World Wide Web: http://www.collor.com/photos.htm).

1. Collor - Sports and Action. Collor at Formula 1 Brazilian GP in 1990 (Formula 1 is a very popular sport in Brazil).
2. **Collor, children and the Planalto Palace ramp** – Ramp descent during his presidency.

3. **Collor jogging** – followed by a number of children and followers, during his presidency.

4. **Collor and the atomic “menace”** - Collor symbolic gesture of definitely closing the only Brazilian site for nuclear tests, on September 18, 1990.
5. Collor and his campaign – “Collor, não esqueça deste povo” is written in this banner (or Collor, do not forget these people), during his 1989 presidential campaign.
FOOTNOTES

1 A repressive elite police force in Ecuador.
2 Anyone born in the Brazilian state of São Paulo.
3 According to Mota, M.B., Vargas was known as the “Father of the Poor” because of his populist attitudes, but the creation of the minimum wage, despite a populist measure, made Vargas be considered by contemporary historians as “Mother of the Rich” because that minimum wage was established by Congress, were the elite’s dominance was the rule at that time.
4 União Democrática Nacional (National Democratic Unity)
5 Fujimori’s presidential coup.
6 Peruvians with oriental descent. Although Fujimori was Japanese, candidate Vargas-Llosa called him chinito, a pejorative way to characterize him as an immigrant.
7 Poor mestizo people
8 The Malvinas War opposed Argentina and England on the ownership of a couple of islands at the South-Atlantic, strategically important for England to have access to the South Pole, and for the Argentine military government to raise nationalism within the people. England won the war and adopted the name of Falkland Islands and the military got very undervalued by the Argentines, what led them to plan the return to democracy as soon as possible.
9 Also referred to as Peronist Party.
10 Fifth Republican Movement. The original name was MBR, Movimento Bolivariano Republicano or Bolivarian Republican Movement, but no parties were allowed to use Bolivar in their names after a law was passed in 1997.
11 Original in Portuguese, author’s free translation: “What is an episode to be forgotten? Collor’s government should be forgotten. It was born under the perspective of hope and change for all of us, but it raised an extraordinary deception to all Brazilians because of the huge gap between the expectations raised and the way the government was terminated.”
12 Francisco Gross is a respectful economist who worked from 1985 to 1987 as director and vice-president of BNDES and BNDESPAR (both Brazilian development banks), and assumed the Brazilian Central Bank in 1987 and again in 1991 and 1992, during Collor’s term, being appointed as president of BNDES again in 2000.
13 Although this can be considered a neoliberal measure as well, I considered that it spills over neoliberalism, because the goal was to reduce patronage.
14 Technically is this text means that Collor has been judged but has not be convicted, therefore, based on the judicial system, he was not involved with the corruption system. He is still being judged and he might have been convicted on minor trials, but no important trial has related him to the corruption that was present during his government. According to Figueiredo (2000), Collor was absolved of the charges of active corruption on December 12, 1994 (p. 401).
15 Bobbio et al. (1992) defined liberal socialism or socialist liberalism as a third way, an alternative to communism and capitalism. Liberal socialists do not believe, as the orthodox Marxists, that socialism can only be set through revolutions: socialism, an heir of liberalism, will succeed it gradually after assimilating its crucial characteristics. Western capitalism and Soviet communism will experience a gradual reduction of their contrasting characteristics and reciprocal differences, and will then converge to liberal socialism, according to the authors (pp. 81-85).
16 According to Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary-Electronic 2.5 Version, 2000, the etymology of the word Manichaean or Manichean is “Late Latin manichaeus, from Late Greek manichaios, from Manichaios Manes, 276 A.D., Persian founder of the sect, date: 1556” and its
meanings encompass “1: a believer in a syncretistic religious dualism originating in Persia in the 3d century A.D. and teaching the release of the spirit from matter through asceticism; 2: a believer in religious or philosophical dualism,” being Manichaean both an adjective and a noun, and Manichaeanism a noun.

17 Curiously all of Collor’s speeches as a candidate were somehow celebrated during the famous nightly news “Jornal Nacional,” while the opponents were either neutrally mentioned or openly attacked in the same news. Note based on the author’s opinion.

18 Original version: “Minha gente amiga do Brasil, [...] voltar [...] meu pensamento e [...] minhas preocupações para a imensa maioria de brasileiros [...] aos descamisados, aos pés descalços, aqueles que querem justiça social no País, para poder viver condignamente” (Mello, 2001d).

19 Original version: “[...] quem me arrancou da Presidência foram aqueles setores que se viram contrariados pela minha ação de governo. Mais especificamente, aqueles altamente corporativos, de direita e de esquerda, do empresariado e do setor público” (Mello, 2001e).

20 F.B.I.S. has more than 800 documents about the subject, most of them Collor’s speeches and comments, and the important ones are mentioned in this paper.

21 Original in Portuguese, author’s free translation: “Coup’s story: the version of the story told by whom actively participated in it.”