



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Revolución o reforma

Análisis retórico de los discursos de Francisco Largo Caballero e
Indalecio Prieto Tuero en los meses previos a la Guerra Civil

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ABSTRACT

Title in Spanish: Revolución o reforma. Análisis retórico de los discursos de Francisco Largo Caballero e Indalecio Prieto Tuero en los meses previos a la Guerra Civil. **Title in English:** Revolution or reform. A Rhetorical Analysis of the Speeches of Francisco Largo Caballero and Indalecio Prieto Tuero in the Months before the Spanish Civil War. **Author:** Soledad Miguel **Language:** Spanish **University/Department/Year:** University of Gothenburg, Sweden, Department of Languages and Literatures, 2016 **ISBN: 978-01-979921-6-9**

In the months before the outbreak of the civil war in July 1936 the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) was both radicalized and divided because of the mounting political tensions in Spanish society. The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of the politics of PSOE through a qualitative and contrastive study of the rhetoric used by the party's main two leaders, Francisco Largo Caballero and Indalecio Prieto, in their speeches during the first half of 1936.

The campaign speeches of Largo, who was the leader of the leftist faction of the party, played an important role for the triumph of the Popular Front coalition in the elections in February 1936 and the subsequent formation of a leftist Republican government. Despite this, he advocated a revolutionary policy and was opposed to working with the new government. Prieto, in contrast, was the leader of the centrist faction within the PSOE, supported a reformist strategy and wanted to collaborate with the Republican government.

The methodological approach is interdisciplinary and combines political history, classical rhetoric and French discourse analysis (Maingueneau 1998, 2002). It is also based on an earlier study by the author (Miguel, 2006) and the work of the historian Santos Juliá (1977, 1997).

The main hypothesis is that the radicalization of the socialist movement in the first half 1936 created discursive conditions that were favourable for Largo Cabarello both in the construction of his *ethos* as revolutionary leader and of the message of revolutionary hope that he wanted to spread. For Prieto the conditions were unfavourable, both for his aspirations to be a reformist Socialist leader and for the policy of collaboration with the Republican government of Azaña that he advocated.

This hypothesis is made evident in both the historiographical and analytical chapters. Chapter two recounts the performance of the Socialist movement during the Republic, with an emphasis on the process of radicalization. Chapters three and four highlight the leadership and political actions of Largo Cabarello and Prieto and present an outline of their oratory.

The following chapters (five, six, seven, and eight) develop the analysis by studying the strategies used by the two socialist politicians in constructing their respective *ethos* and political message.

The study is carried out in three steps. First, two speeches (Linares and Cuenca) are analysed in detail using the tools of classical rhetoric. The different parts of the speech (*exordio, narration, argumentation and peroratio*) are examined and, within each part, the *ethos* (discursive and pre-discursive), the role of the speaker and the topics are also examined. In the second step, a contrastive analysis between the speeches in Linares and Cuenca is made, using the concept of scenery (Maingueneau 2007, 1998). And in the final step the results of the analysis are compared with the rest of the speeches delivered by Largo and Prieto during the spring of 1936.

The conclusion is that the hypothesis has been validated. Largos pre-discursive *ethos* was very favourable because it gave him *a priori* legitimacy as a union leader and made it possible to identify him with the stereotypical "conscious worker" in the imagery of socialist culture. By constructing his discursive *ethos*, Largo appealed to the qualities associated with the "conscious worker": honesty, loyalty, self-sacrifice and class pride.

The pre-discursive *ethos* of Prieto was, unlike Largo, burdened by the bad reputation of "republicanism" and had to be countered by a discursive *ethos* aimed at winning the confidence of the radical socialist public. To accomplish this Prieto used a strategy of extreme adaptability to reach the audience he was facing at the moment. To get closer to his audience he displayed his personal feelings (*pathos*); here he is described as an "egocentric and intimate speaker".

Regarding themes, Largo follows the strategy of separating the revolutionary doctrine from the propaganda used in the elections. But once he won the election he began to apply his revolutionary doctrine on the political realities of the moment. This led to a clear underestimation of the danger of a military coup on his part.

The analysis shows that Prieto adapted his message with great discursive ability in an atmosphere of socialist radicalization. He made concessions to revolutionary rhetoric, either by seeking revolutionary legitimacy for himself or by delegitimizing his opponents (the socialist left) by claiming that they weren't true revolutionaries.

The conclusion is that Largo in his speeches created a scenography of hope (proximity of the revolution and the invincible proletariat) while Prieto created a scenery of threat (the danger of PSOE splitting and a military coup)

Key words: PSOE, Socialist Radicalization, Largo Caballero, Prieto, Classical Rhetoric, Maingueneau, Juliá, Conditions of Discursive Production, The Linares and Cuenca Speeches, Discursive Ethos, Pre-discursive Ethos, Scenography