

LAST201: Popular Culture in Latin America

week two: January 17, 2017

What is the People?

- What is the People?
- “El pueblo unido”
- The Rise of Populism
- “My Message”
- Final Thoughts
- Pending Questions

What is the People?

- as much a *political* concept as a cultural one
- Roman Republic: SPQR
- Age of Revolutions: popular sovereignty...
- ...displacing traditional monarchies
- French Revolution: the “third estate”
- a *revolutionary* idea

We the People of the United States, in order
insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defence, promote the general Welfare, and
and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America

Article I.

Section. 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States
of Representatives.

Section. 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year
in each State shall have ^{two} Representatives, ^{Qualifications} requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.
No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years
and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included
Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound
not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years
and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number
not less than thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such Enumeration
shall be made, the Number of Representatives shall not exceed thirty; Massachusetts eight; Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one; Connecticut
five; Delaware one; Maryland six; Virginia ten; North Carolina five; South Carolina five; and Georgia three.
When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.
The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.
Section. 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen
for six Years, and each shall have one Vote.

What is the People?

- a declaration: “We the People”
- a guarantee of legitimacy
- a justification for action
- a name: “in the *name* of the people”
- a threat: “el pueblo unido jamás será vencido”
- a *performative* identity

What is the People?

- is the people one thing?
 - what *are* the people?
 - does it have one voice or many?
 - what are the tensions within the people?
 - how do they come about?
 - how can they be resolved?
-
- e pluribus unum?

“El pueblo unido”

- song written in 1970s Chile, under Allende
- part of Chilean “new song” movement
- made famous by Inti-Illimani
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxnARSurEiA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhpSwSBbdxM>

The Rise of Populism

- late 19th Century: mass immigration to Americas
- particularly to “Southern Cone” (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil)
- industrialization, modernization, urbanization
- threatening strict colonial hierarchies
- *a modern identity*



Juan Domingo Perón



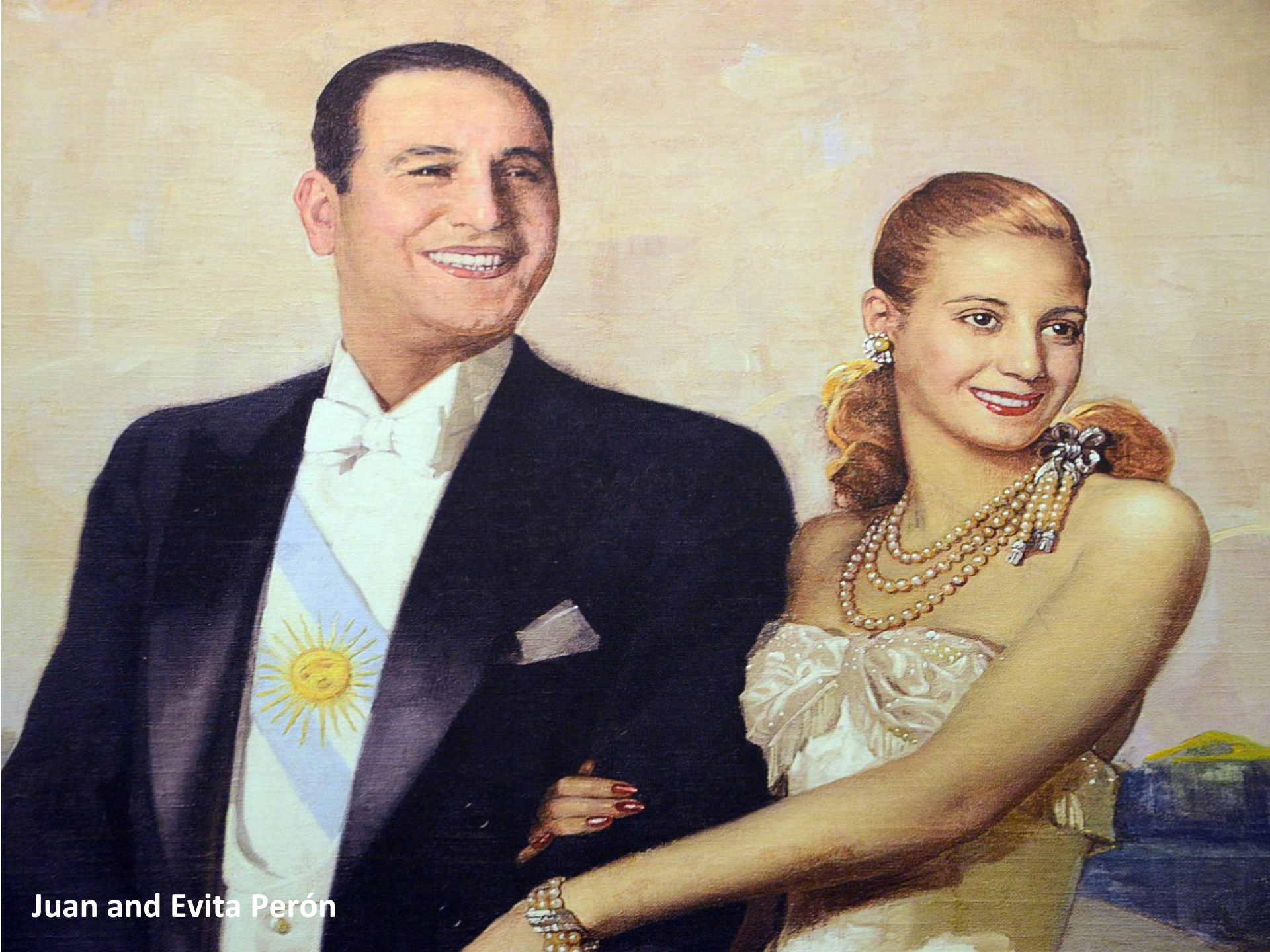
October 17, 1945: La Plaza de Mayo

Guion
CINEFANARIO POPULAR
SEMANARIO DE TODO EL AÑO
142 MIÉRCOLES 24 DE ENERO 1940



Nativity  **HITLER, MUSSOLINI**

Eva Duarte



Juan and Evita Perón



Juan and Evita Perón

The Rise (and Fall) of Populism

- 1943: military coup; Perón Secretary of Labour
- 1944: Perón meets María Eva Duarte
- 1945: Perón dismissed and jailed
- October 17, 1945: mass protests; Perón freed
- 1945: Perón wins elections and becomes President
- August 22, 1951: Evita refuses VP candidacy
- July, 1952: Evita dies (of ovarian cancer)
- 1955: Perón ousted by military coup
- 1973: Perón returns, with new wife, Isabel
- 1974: Perón dies; increasing violence in country
- 1976: Isabel deposed in military coup

The Rise of Populism

- embattled, antagonistic
 - strong sense of opposition to an elite
 - usually fixates upon a charismatic leader
 - tensions seen as having external causes
 - usually nationalistic
-
- neither left nor right... but both?

“My Message”

- What is the People for Evita Perón?
- What is *not* the People?
- What are the characteristics of the People?
- What is Evita’s relationship to the People?
- Is this an *example* of “popular culture”?

Final Thoughts

- the people is revolutionary, performative, and modern
- but also both flexible and vague
- a “shifter”
- defined more by what it is *not* than by what it *is*
- a matter of emotion more than logic
- is the people a (structure of) feeling?

Pending Questions

- If the people is a political category, should “popular culture” also be so?
- Or is the “popular” in popular culture different from that in popular sovereignty?
- If expression/representation are a problem for the people, are they also for popular culture?
- Or does popular culture *resolve* problems raised by the political notion of the people?