

What Did They Say? What Did They Mean? Interpreting US Policies through Presidents' Discourses at Historical Landmarks in Europe: A Study of Democracy Attributes

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Abstract: This study investigates how US Presidents addressed the attributes of democracy in their speeches at critical European sites and historical breakpoints. The aim is to analyze the content of the speeches and determine whether there is a change in the emphasis on attributes related to the use of force. By examining projections related to force use, the study seeks to identify traces of US policies for the future of the Russian-Ukrainian War. Three speeches were selected for analysis: Reagan's (1987) and Clinton's (1994) Brandenburg's speeches, and Biden's (2022) Warsaw speech. They were analyzed using the attributes of global democracy indices through the Maxqda program. The findings indicate that the focused attributes of democracy and the overall comprehensiveness of attributes have changed over time. In summary, the analysis reveals that the frequency of the code 'force' in Clinton's and Reagan's speeches has shifted to the code 'power' in Biden's speech. This suggests that the potential military power for deterrence may be strengthened, yet it is not intended for physical deployment in the Russian-Ukrainian war as a means of force.

Keywords: Political communication, democracy and force use, the attributes of Democracy, US Presidents' speeches in Europe, Maxqda analysis.

Öz: Bu çalışma, ABD Başkanları tarafından Avrupa'da kritik ve tarihsel kırılma noktalarında yapılan konuşmalarda demokrasinin niteliklerinin nasıl kullanıldığını incelemeyi hedeflemiştir. Amaç, konuşmaların içeriğini analiz etmek ve demokrasi nitelikleri açısından kuvvet kullanımı vurgusunda bir değişiklik olup olmadığını ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çalışma, kuvvet kullanımına ilişkin öngörülerini izleyerek, Rusya-Ukrayna Savaşı'nın geleceğine yönelik ABD politikalarının izdüşümünü ortaya çıkarmaya çalışmaktadır. Analizlere dâhil edilmek üzere, Reagan'ın (1987) ve Clinton'ın (1994) Brandenburg konuşmaları ve Biden'in (2022) Varşova konuşması seçilmiştir. Seçilen konuşmalar, Maxqda programı aracılığıyla, küresel demokrasi endekslerinin nitelikleri üzerinden analiz edilmiştir. Analiz sonucunda, odaklanılan demokrasinin niteliklerinin ve genel kapsama alanının zaman içinde değiştiği bulgusuna erişilmiştir. Özetle analiz, Clinton ve Reagan'ın konuşmalarındaki 'kuvvet' kodunun frekansının, Biden'in konuşmasında 'güç' koduyla değiştiğini göstermiştir ki bu da caydırıcılık için Rusya Ukrayna savaşında potansiyel askeri gücün desteklenebileceğinin ancak Rusya'ya karşı fiziki olarak (ABD tarafından) kuvvet kullanılmayacağını göstergesi olarak kabul edilebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Siyasal iletişim, demokrasi ve kuvvet kullanımı, demokrasinin nitelikleri, ABD Başkanlarının Avrupa'daki konuşmaları, Maxqda ile analiz.

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Introduction

The globe has undergone very dramatic changes during the last four decades. In almost half a century, humanity has experienced far more extreme events than previous generations lived through in a few centuries. The hot conflict ended just after World War II, but the world entered a Cold War. The countries of the world were divided into at least two groups. The first group adopted democratic principles and liberal political systems, usually referred to as Western countries. The second group consisted of those called Iron Curtain countries, which adopted communist/socialist systems. The Berlin Wall was a symbol reflecting this distinction between the two poles of the global system.

In the 1980s, starting in the USA and the UK, neoliberal policies spread very rapidly and affected almost all Western allies. The last wave of the globalization phenomenon transformed the world into a global village in a short period. Technological advances increased the speed and capabilities of the dissemination of information dramatically. In an environment of accelerating time and shrinking space, the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc rapidly dissolved following the Glasnost (openness) and Perestroika (restructuring) launched by Mikhail Gorbachev, the President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The symbol of the divided world, the Berlin Wall, fell. West and East Germany united again. Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia were also dissolved. Most Eastern European countries integrated their systems with Western values rapidly and returned to their natural positions with the metaphor of a “lost child returning home” (Illner, 1996, p.161). Some countries, such as Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, could not succeed due to internal and/or international reasons. This failure may be attributed to their inability to prepare in time or, more likely, to the unwillingness of the Western Camp.

Between the 1990s and 2000s, a unipolar global system prevailed with the dominance of the USA. However, the September 11 attacks in the USA triggered discussions on the clash of civilizations. While the USA and its allies focused on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, Russia continued to reconstruct and strengthen its economy, capitalizing on the opportunities provided by its natural fossil resources. The unsuccessful operations in Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq, based on questionable justifications, raised doubts about the USA's claims of ‘exporting democracy to the developing world’. Engaging in *large-scale social engineering projects*, such as the *Great Middle East Project*, *Arab Spring*, and *Syrian operation*, inflicted significant and long-lasting damage to the US image.

During this period, the European Union expanded with a strict focus on economic and political integration, neglecting security issues and relying mostly on NATO's

capabilities in this regard. Many European countries, especially Germany as the economic powerhouse, became heavily dependent on Russian natural gas. Russia seized this dependency and the turmoil in Syria and Libya as opportunities and invaded South Ossetia of Georgia in 2008. Similarly, on March 18, 2014, Russia invaded and declared the annexation of Crimea from Ukraine. Concurrently, China silently but carefully continued its economic development and emerged as a global dominant actor, challenging the market shares of previous leaders, especially the USA and Germany.

Summing up the developments after the 2000s, the global system transitioned toward a *multipolar structure*. Finally, as a manifestation of this multipolar system and fueled by the Western world's silence regarding the occupation of South Ossetia and Crimea, Russia initiated another war against Ukraine on February 22, 2022, under the decision of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The war is ongoing and is evolving into a conflict between democratic values and autocratic applications across the two worlds. The world has once again divided over Ukraine. *The shadow of the former Berlin Wall is now cast in the cold waters of the Dnieper River.* The world is entering a kind of *two-and-a-half polar system*, with the USA and its allies on one side, sometimes Russia and sometimes China on the other pole, while the remaining half position remains undefined.

As evident from the concise historical overview, humanity has witnessed a multitude of significant changes within the relatively short span of the last half-century. From a world embroiled in a hot World War to the tensions of the Cold War, then further transitioning to the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and collaboration between the West and East on issues such as nuclear weapons control, followed by extensive global economic integration and dependency, and currently showing signs of division once again. Amidst this dynamic progression, certain pivotal events have emerged as breakpoints, symbolizing the spirit of the time, notably exemplified by the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Intriguingly, just before and after these breakpoints, U.S. Presidents visited Europe and delivered speeches at critical sites, conveying messages that declared the priorities of the U.S. government. As highlighted by Bracciale and Martella (2017, p.1313), political communication involves two key aspects: *form* and *content*. The authors argue that these aspects interact and influence events. Politicians, including presidents, are perceived as goal-oriented actors who make rational decisions to maximize their benefits (Geber and Scherer, 2015, p.362). Within this framework, the speeches of political leaders serve as valuable tools for extracting clues about possible policies that may be pursued, influencing subsequent events.

Taking this assumption into consideration, three of the most noteworthy speeches deemed worthy of analysis are as follows:

1. President Ronald Reagan's speech in Brandenburg-Berlin, Germany, on June 12, 1987.
2. President Bill Clinton's speech in Brandenburg Gate-Berlin, Germany, on July 12, 1994.
3. President Joe Biden's speech in Warsaw, Poland, on March 26, 2022.

According to Luebke (2021, p.635), authenticity holds a prominent place in political communication, encompassing four dimensions: consistency, intimacy, ordinariness, and immediacy. The author suggests that politicians operationalize these dimensions using corresponding indicators as part of their political strategies. Analyzing speeches made by U.S. Presidents in Europe can offer insights into the authenticity of each speech, shedding light on potential U.S. policies and strategies in the region. Hence, the three speeches mentioned earlier have been selected as a sample group for analysis. The following explanations briefly outline why these specific speeches were chosen.

The first speech chosen is President Ronald Reagan's address in Brandenburg in 1987, delivered just before the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, and preceding the fall of the Berlin Wall. This speech was a critical and pivotal attempt with the potential to reshape history.

The second speech is President Bill Clinton's speech at Brandenburg Gate-Berlin in 1994, presented after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany. This period marked an acceleration in global cooperation toward a peaceful world among powerful nations.

The third and final speech selected is President Joe Biden's recent address in Warsaw, Poland, on March 26, 2022. Given just one month after the commencement of the Russian-Ukrainian War, the world was once again divided into distinct parts. The speech was delivered from Poland, Ukraine's neighboring country and a NATO member, facing the threat of becoming the next target by Russia and grappling with the significant impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war through hosting a large number of migrants crossing the borders.

According to Bracciale and Martella (2017, p.1315), the topic dimension of political communication identifies the main argument of a political message. Topic indicators encompass *political, policy, campaign, personal issues, and matters related to current affairs*. In particular, this study focuses on policy issues, referring to specific

matters to be examined or resolved, such as explaining programs and introducing proposals for addressing agenda problems.

Taking these assertions into account, this study aims to answer the following questions through the analysis of the selected sample speeches:

1. Which attribute/s of democracy are predominantly focused on by the presidents in their speeches?
2. Is there any discernible change over time regarding the attributes of democracy given more importance, reflecting the evolving U.S. approach to democracy? If so, what is the direction of this trend?
3. Which among the selected three speeches is the most comprehensive regarding all attributes and/or dimensions of democracy?

Current literature suggests that international news occupies a relatively subordinate position in today's global village, both in terms of information supply and demand, compared to domestic political news (Aalberg, van Aelst, and Curran 2010; Segev 2019; Tianru 2020). The speeches made by U.S. Presidents, as representatives of a global actor, draw attention from around the world, not just within the country. While there are studies investigating the speeches of U.S. Presidents, such as Dai and Kustov (2022, p.383), who constructed the most comprehensive corpus of U.S. presidential campaign speeches (1952–2016) to analyze the prevalence of populist rhetoric, these studies often focus on election campaigns rather than international relations or security.

In another study, Shulman et al. (2022) conducted research in laboratory conditions to explain and predict decision-making in low-information political environments. Their findings demonstrated how communication influences information processing and how these processing experiences inform political decisions relevant to everyday life. Although this research is related to voting behavior, it offers insights into how political communication and words impact people's behaviors.

A review of the current literature reveals a gap in research focusing on the issues and messages intended for an international audience. Despite studies concentrating on country-level election campaigns for analyzing speeches by political leaders and their impact on voter behavior, there is a lack of attention to speeches directed at international audiences. Considering the claim of Bucy and Evans (2022, p.254), asserting that political communication is a dynamic, interdisciplinary field that has gained stature and international reach, empirical studies on this subject are crucial.

The ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war and efforts for NATO expansion also necessitate an analysis of speeches given by leaders at historical landmarks. This

study addresses the gap by selecting three speeches from different U.S. Presidents at critical breakpoints in Europe for analysis.

The Attributes of Democracy According to Global State of Democracy Indices

Democracy and communication are closely intertwined concepts in today's global information era. As asserted by Emmer et al. (2012, p.233), communication media is an indispensable element in the political process of democratic societies. Despite the common usage of the term democracy, Maleki and Hendriks (2015, p.1) highlight that its understanding and operationalization vary among different actors. For instance, Diamond (1999) distinguished between electoral and liberal democracy almost two decades ago. While the electoral aspect of democracy diffused rapidly, the same cannot be said for its liberal counterpart (O'Donnell, 1993, p.11–12; Møller, 2007, p.381).

Andersen, Møller, and Skaaning (2014, p.1203) express a similar sentiment, stating, "The great dilemma of democracy revolves around the state. *Political liberty can only be effective and stable when the power of the officialdom backs it.*" As democracy spread globally, debates on its typology, quality measurement, and dimension designation persisted, accompanied by increased efforts to assess the level of democracy and democratization. Lauth (2015) introduced the 15-Field-Matrix, integrating *three dimensions of democracy* based on *contestation* and *participation* distinctions of Dahl (1971). The three dimensions are *freedom* (free self-determination), *equality* (legal egalitarianism), and *control* (protection through legal and political control).

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) contributes to these efforts with the Global State of Democracy (GSoD) Indices, systematically capturing global, regional, and national trends related to democracy. These indices offer scores for democracies worldwide from 1975–2020, incorporating empirical indicators related to democracy's attributes, sub-attributes, and subcomponents (Skaaning, 2021, p.9). Democracy, considered a universal value (Beetham, 1999, p.18), is grounded in principles related to *popular* and *political control* over *authoritative decision-making*, *political equality*, and *impartiality*.

To measure these broad principles, IDEA's GSoD Indices focus on five key issues: (1) *effective popular control over public decision-makers (vertical accountability)*; (2) *citizens' possession of politically relevant freedoms and power resources*; (3) *effective checks on executive powers by other authorities (horizontal accountability)*; (4) *impartial and predictable implementation of the law by public authorities*; and (5) *people's access to and utilization of various political participation opportunities at different levels* (Skaaning, 2021, p.13).

In Table 1, these five attributes of democracy, 16 sub-attributes, and 71 indicator codes are given:

Table 1

Attributes and Sub-attributes of Democracy and Codes as the indicators

Attribute	Sub-attribute	Codes (Indicators)
1. Representative Government (free and equal access to political power)	1.1. Clean Elections	Clean election, Free election, Irregularity
	1.2. Inclusive Suffrage	Suffrage, Voting, Equal
	1.3. Free Political Parties	Political party, Campaign, Solidarity
	1.4. Elected Government	Election, Citizen
2. Fundamental Rights (individual liberties and resources)	2.1. Access to Justice	Access to justice, Civil liberties, Justice, Equal, Legal system, Tribunal, Fair
	2.2. Civil Liberties	Liberty, Rights, Freedom, Religion, Security, Ethnicity, Race
	2.3. Social Rights and Equality	Social rights, Equality, Welfare (Prosperity), Economy, Women, Gender, Health, Education
3. Checks on Government (effective control of executive power)	3.1. Effective Parliament	Effective Parliament, Executive, Parliament, Legislature, Power, Force, State control
	3.2. Judicial Independence	Judicial independence, Independent, Court, Political issue, Law
	3.3. Media Integrity	Media integrity, Critical media, Media

4. Impartial Administration (fair and predictable public administration)	4.1. Absence of Corruption	Absence of corruption, Corruption, Public authority, Public administration
	4.2. Predictable Enforcement	Predictable enforcement, Enforcement, Law, Enforce laws
5. Participatory Engagement (instruments of and for the realization of political involvement)	5.1. Civil Society Participation	Civil society, Society, Engagement, Self-generating, Autonomous
	5.2. Electoral Participation	Electoral participation, People, National election, Legislative
	5.3. Direct Democracy	Direct democracy, democratic, Democracy
	5.4. Local Democracy	Local democracy, Free elected, Local governments
<p>Source: Developed from: Skaaning, Svend-Erik, (2021). "The Global State of Democracy Indices Methodology Conceptualization and Measurement Framework, Version 5 (2021)", International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) publication, Strömsborg, Stockholm, Sweden.</p> <p>These features are utilized to assess the democracy levels of countries worldwide and are published annually. These widely accepted attributes and sub-attributes offer a valuable tool for content analysis.</p>		

Methods and The Analysis of the Speeches of Three US Presidents

To analyze the aforementioned speeches of three US Presidents delivered in Europe, the above-mentioned attributes and sub-attributes were employed as categories and indicators, serving as codes for qualitative content analysis through Maxqda software. The answers to the research questions were subsequently derived from the analysis results.

Analysis of Reagan’s Speech in Brandenburg, on June 12, 1987

After the analysis of Ronald Reagan’s speech given in Brandenburg-Berlin on the 12th of June 1987, the ratios according to the frequencies of the codes mentioned can be seen in Figure 1:

Figure 1

Attributes of Democracy in Reagan's Speech in Brandenburg, on June 12, 1987

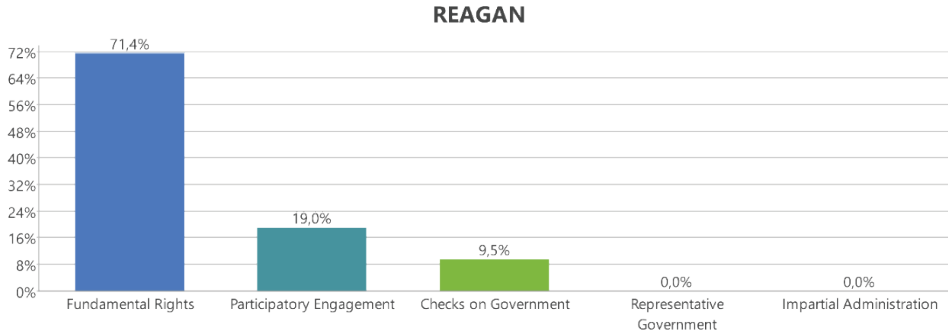
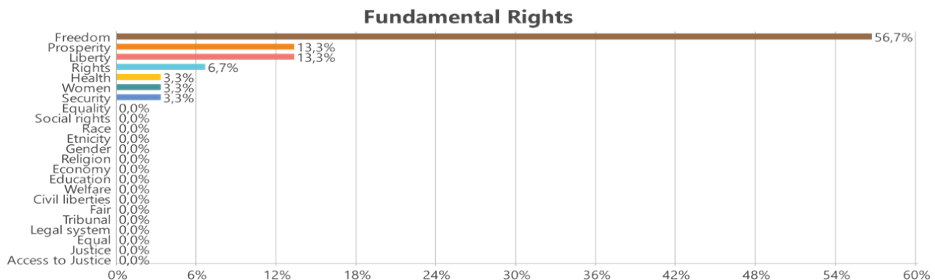


Figure 1 illustrates a significant emphasis on the attribute of *Fundamental Rights* (FR), constituting a dominant percentage of 71.4%. Although President Reagan did make some references within the domains of *Participatory Engagement* (PE) at a rate of 19.0% and *Checks on Government* (CoG) at a rate of 9.5%, there was a complete omission of any mention within the domains of *Representative Government* and *Impartial Administration* attributes.

After giving the figure related to the attributes of democracy, the following three figures show the analysis results for sub-attributes in Reagan's speech in 1987.

Figure 2

Codes of the Attribute of Fundamental Rights in Reagan's Speech in 1987



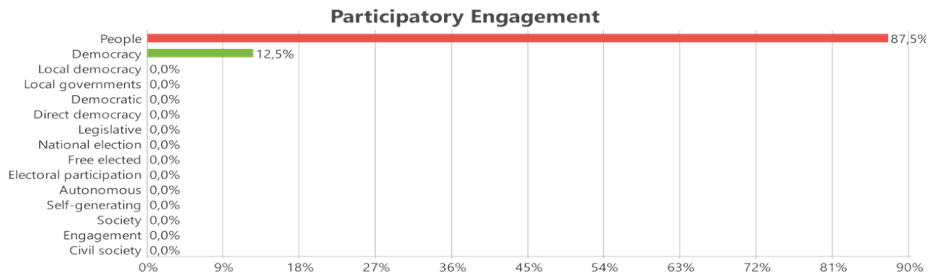
In Figure 2, *Fundamental Rights* emerge as the primary focus of Reagan's discourse, constituting the most visited attribute of democracy. Within this category, codes such as *freedom* (56.7%), *prosperity* (13.3%), *liberty* (13.3%), and *rights* (6.7%) were the most frequently mentioned. Notably, terms like *health*, *women*, and

security had marginal mentions, each accounting for 3.3% of references. However, other codes encompassing equality, social rights, race, ethnicity, gender, and justice were entirely absent from his speech.

It's noteworthy that Reagan chose to emphasize the term 'prosperity' instead of 'welfare.' The analysis reveals that *freedom* and *liberty* were the central themes of Reagan's speech under the *Fundamental Rights* attribute. Further breakdown indicates that, within Fundamental Rights, the most visited sub-attribute by Reagan was *Civil Liberties* (codes: freedom 56.7%, liberty 13.3%, rights 6.7%, and security 3.3%), collectively accounting for 80%. The second sub-attribute visited under Fundamental Rights was *Social Rights and Equality* (codes: prosperity 13.3%, health 3.3%, and women 3.3%), making up the remaining 20%. Remarkably, *Access to Justice* stands out as the only sub-attribute under *Fundamental Rights* that did not receive any mention during Reagan's speech.

Figure 3

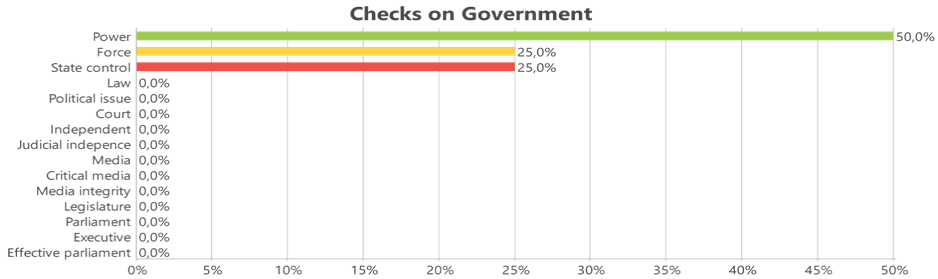
Codes of Participatory Engagement Attribute in Reagan's Speech in 1987



Participatory Engagement (PE) was the second most visited attribute of democracy by Reagan, and Figure 3 shows that, within this attribute, the code people represent the *Electoral Participation* sub-attribute with a high ratio of 87,5%. The second sub-attribute indicated by the code democracy was *Direct Democracy*. *Local Democracy* was the only sub-attribute not visited within Reagan's speech under the PE attribute of democracy.

Figure 4

Codes of Checks on Government Attribute in Reagan's Speech in 1987



Checks on Government (CoG) ranked as the third most visited attribute of democracy by Reagan, albeit with a limited ratio of 9.5% (see Figure 1). Figure 4 further illustrates that, within this attribute, all the mentioned codes—*power*, *force*, and *state control*—represent the *Effective Parliament* sub-attribute. Notably, the other two sub-attributes, *Judicial Independence* and *Media Integrity*, did not receive any mention within Reagan’s speech under the CoG attribute of democracy.

Following the graphical representation of the codes mentioned during Reagan’s speech, Figure 5 provides the code cloud of the speech:

Figure 5

Code Cloud of Reagan's Brandenburg Speech in 1987



The code cloud distinctly showcases an ordered hierarchy, with the most prominent words being the indicator codes for (1) *freedom* (Civil Liberties under FR), (2) *people* (Electoral Participation under PE), (3) *prosperity* (Social Rights under FR), and (4) *liberty* (Civil Liberties under FR). These four indicators stand out as the primary focus of Reagan’s speech. In essence, Reagan’s emphasis was predominantly on the

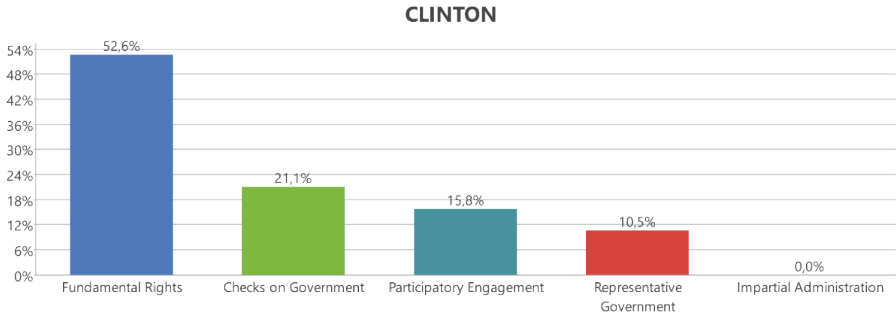
Civil Liberties and *Social Rights* sub-attributes of the *Fundamental Rights* attribute of democracy, followed by *Electoral Participation* under *Participatory Engagement* and *Effective Parliament* under *Checks on Government* attributes.

Analysis of Clinton’s Speech in Brandenburg Gate-Berlin, on July 12, 1994

After the analysis of Bill Clinton’s speech given in Brandenburg- Berlin on the 12th of July 1994, the ratios according to the frequencies of the codes mentioned can be seen in Figure 6:

Figure 6

Attributes of Democracy in Clinton’s Speech in Brandenburg Gate-Berlin, on July 12, 1994



In Figure 6, akin to Reagan’s speech, there remains a pronounced emphasis on the attribute of *Fundamental Rights (FR)*, albeit with a reduced rate of 52.6% (compared to 71.4% in Reagan’s speech). *Checks on Government (CoG)* secured the 2nd place with a share of 21.1%, while *Participatory Engagement (PE)* held the 3rd position at 15.8%—a reversal from the pattern observed in Reagan’s speech.

Clinton’s speech presents a distinct variation: the *Representative Government (RG)* attribute of democracy was mentioned, constituting 10.5% of the discourse. This attribute was entirely neglected by Reagan in 1987. However, the result remains unchanged for the *Impartial Administration (IA)* attribute, as it was not represented by any indicator word in Clinton’s speech in 1994. In summary, both presidents omitted any mention of the IA attribute of democracy.

After giving the figure related to the attributes of democracy, the following four figures show the analysis results for sub-attributes in Clinton’s speech in 1994.

Figure 7

Codes of Fundamental Rights Attribute in Clinton's Speech in 1994.

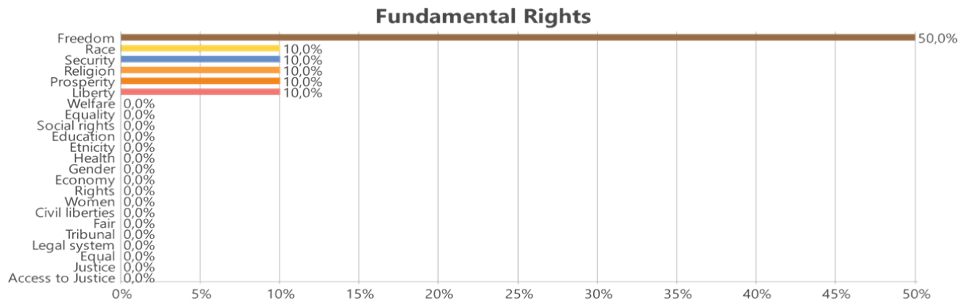
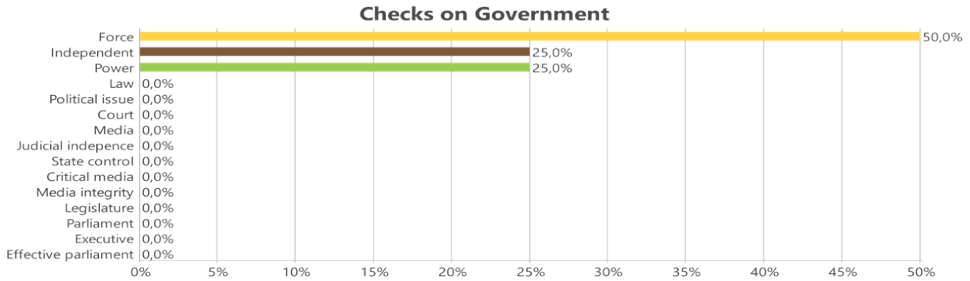


Figure 7 reveals that akin to Reagan, Clinton placed a strong emphasis on the *Fundamental Rights (FR)* attribute of democracy, with a slightly reduced rate of 50.0% compared to Reagan's 56.7%. Under FR, *freedom* remained the central focus for Clinton, mirroring Reagan's speech. However, Clinton introduced additional codes such as *race* (10.0%) and *religion* (10.0%), alongside *security* (10.0%), *prosperity* (10.0%), and *liberty* (10.0%)—codes also mentioned by Reagan. Unlike Reagan, Clinton omitted certain codes, including *rights*, *health*, and *women*, which were part of Reagan's discourse in 1987. Similarly, the remaining codes encompassing *equality*, *social rights*, *ethnicity*, *gender*, *justice*, and the term *fair* were not addressed during Clinton's speech, paralleling Reagan's pattern. *Freedom* was the primary focal point of Clinton's speech, mirroring Reagan. However, *liberty* shared the second-place spot with four other codes: *race*, *security*, *religion*, and *prosperity*. Under the FR attribute, the most visited sub-attribute by Clinton was *Civil Liberties* (codes: freedom 50.0%, race 10%, security 10%, religion 10%, and liberty 10.0%), accounting for 90%. The second sub-attribute visited under FR was *Social Rights and Equality* (code: prosperity 10.0%), making up the remaining 10%. Similar to Reagan's speech, *Access to Justice* stood out as the only sub-attribute under the FR attribute that did not receive any mention in Clinton's speech.

Figure 8

Codes of Checks on Government Attribute in Clinton’s Speech in 1994

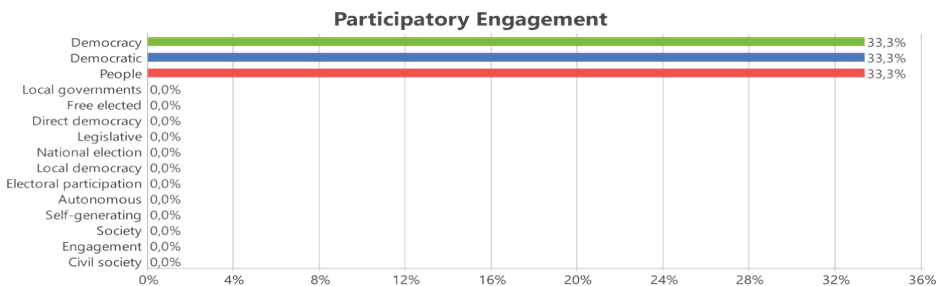


Checks on Government (CoG) emerged as the second most visited attribute of democracy in Clinton’s speech, a shift from Reagan’s where it held the third position. Clinton allocated 21.1% of the discourse to CoG, as depicted in Figure 6. Figure 8 reveals that, within this attribute, two of the mentioned codes—*force* and *power*—represent the *Effective Parliament (EP)* sub-attribute, a sequence similar to Reagan’s speech but with a difference in the omission of the code ‘*state control*’ under EP. Instead, Clinton introduced the code ‘*independent*’ as an indicator of the *Judicial Independence (JI)* sub-attribute, a notable addition absent in Reagan’s 1987 speech where JI was entirely neglected.

However, unlike Reagan, Clinton omitted the code ‘*state control*’ under EP. Notably, the *Media Integrity (MI)* sub-attribute under the CoG attribute was the only one not mentioned by Clinton in 1994, whereas both the *Judicial Independence (JI)* and *Media Integrity (MI)* sub-attributes were omitted by Reagan in 1987.

Figure 9

Codes of Participatory Engagement Attribute in Clinton’s Speech in 1994

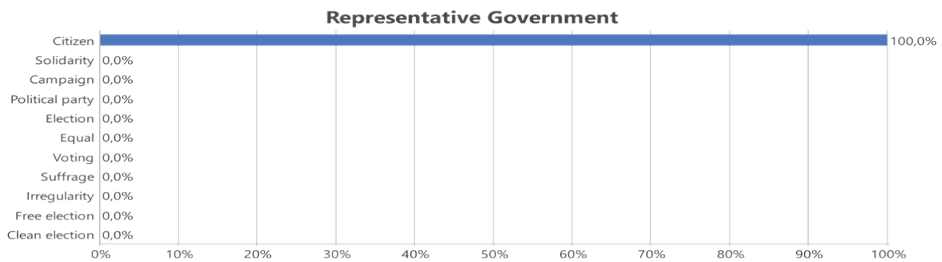


Participatory Engagement (PE) occupied the third position in Clinton's discourse on democracy (Figure 6), a shift from Reagan's speech in 1987 where it held the second place. In Figure 9, it is evident that, in Clinton's speech, the code 'people' from the sub-attribute *Electoral Participation (EP)* shared an equal ratio of 33.3% with the codes 'democracy' and 'democratic' from the *Direct Democracy (DD)* sub-attribute of the PE attribute. This distribution reflects a shift toward a more balanced representation compared to Reagan's speech.

In Reagan's speech, 'people' under the EP sub-attribute had a notably higher ratio of 87.5%, while the code 'democracy' under the DD sub-attribute followed with a lower ratio. Similar to Reagan's speech, *Local Democracy* was the only sub-attribute not visited within Clinton's discourse under the PE attribute of democracy.

Figure 10

Codes of Representative Government Attribute in Clinton's Speech in 1994



Representative Government (RG) held the fourth position among the visited attributes of democracy in Clinton's 1994 speech (Figure 6), a notable addition as it was entirely absent in Reagan's discourse in 1987. Figure 10 illustrates that, within this attribute, the code 'citizen' represents the *Elected Government (EG)* sub-attribute, holding a dominant ratio of 100.0%. This code was the sole indicator within the RG attribute, emphasizing the role of citizens in the elected government—a distinctive feature in Clinton's speech absent in Reagan's 1987 address.

After the above graphics, which reflect the codes mentioned in Clinton's speech, the code cloud is given below:

Figure 11

Code Cloud of Clinton's Speech in 1994



In Clinton's speech, the code cloud, organized from the most prominent to smaller words, reveals that the indicator codes of (1) *freedom* (Civil Liberties under FR), (2) *force* (Effective Parliament under CoG), and (3) *citizen* (Elected Government under RG) occupied the first three positions. Notably, the first indicator, *freedom*, and the corresponding attribute *Fundamental Rights* were consistent with Reagan's speech. However, the second and third indicators shifted, replacing Reagan's '*people*' (Electoral Participation under PE) with '*force*' (Effective Parliament under CoG) and '*prosperity*' (Social Rights under FR) with '*citizen*' (Elected Government under RG). The cloud further includes indicators such as '*independent*' (Judicial Independence under CoG), '*liberty*' (Civil Liberties under FR), '*democracy*' and '*democratic*' (Direct Democracy under PE), and others, as visible in the code cloud.

In summary, Clinton's focus, like Reagan's, was predominantly on the *Civil Liberties* attribute of *Fundamental Rights*. However, there were notable differences, with Clinton prioritizing *Effective Parliament* under *Checks on Government* and *Elected Government* under *Representative Government* following *Civil Liberties*. This contrasted with Reagan's emphasis on *Fundamental Rights*, followed by *Electoral Participation* under *Participatory Engagement* and *Effective Parliament* under *Checks on Government*. Additionally, Clinton's inclusion of the *Representative Government* attribute, particularly using the indicator '*citizen*', rendered his speech more comprehensive, covering at least four out of five attributes of democracy, in contrast to the three covered by Reagan.

Analysis of Biden's Speech in Warsaw, on March 26, 2022

After the analysis of Joe Biden's speech given in Warsaw – Poland on the 26th of March 2022, almost just one month after the Russian-Ukrainian war started; the ratios according to the frequencies of the codes mentioned can be seen in Figure 12 below:

Figure 12

Attributes of Democracy in Biden's Speech in Warsaw, on March 26, 2022

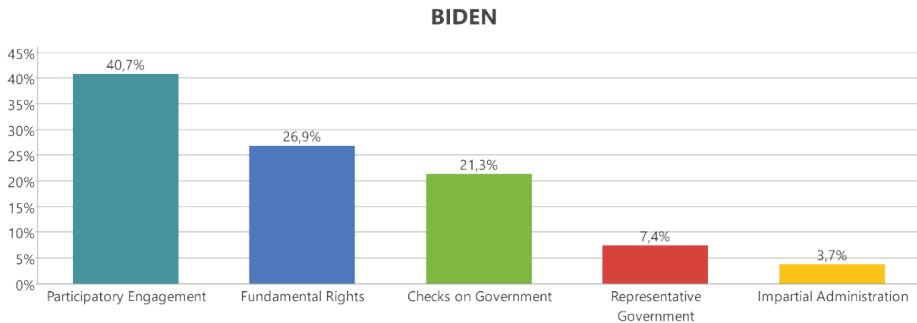


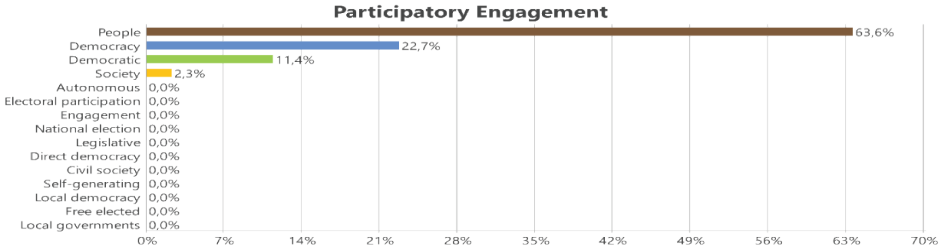
Figure 12 illustrates a distinctive pattern in Biden's speech (2022) compared to Reagan's (1987) and Clinton's (1994) addresses. *Participatory Engagement (PE)* took the lead, a notable shift from Reagan's where it held the second position, and Clinton's where it was in third place. Notably, *Fundamental Rights (FR)*, the primary attribute in both Reagan's and Clinton's speeches, lost its leading position in Biden's discourse, moving to the second most mentioned attribute. *Checks on Government (CoG)* maintained its presence among the top three attributes in Biden's speech, securing the third position, similar to Reagan's speech but divergent from Clinton's where it was in the second position. A distinctive feature of Biden's speech was the mention of the *Impartial Administration (IA)* attribute, albeit with a minimal ratio of 3.7%. This attribute had been entirely neglected by both Reagan in 1987 and Clinton in 1994.

In addition to references to the *Representative Government (RG)* attribute, similar to Clinton, Biden introduced the IA attribute, marking the first mention of this component. Despite its low ratio, this inclusion rendered Biden's speech the most comprehensive among the three, covering all five attributes of democracy with varying ratios.

After giving the figure related to the attributes of democracy, the following five figures show the analysis results for sub-attributes in Biden's Warsaw Speech on March 26, 2022.

Figure 13

Codes of Participatory Engagement Attribute in Biden’s Speech in 2022

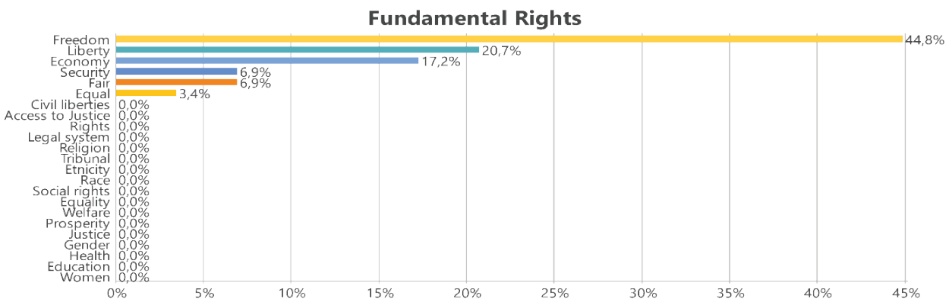


In Biden’s speech (Figure 12), *Participatory Engagement (PE)* emerged as the most visited attribute of democracy, a distinctive shift from Reagan’s 1987 speech where it held the second position, and Clinton’s 1994 speech where it occupied the third place. Figure 13 further details that, within Biden’s PE attribute, the code ‘people’ from the *Electoral Participation (EP)* sub-attribute took the lead among the indicators. Following closely were the codes ‘democracy’ and ‘democratic’ from the *Direct Democracy (DD)* sub-attribute, securing the second and third positions.

This pattern mirrored the 1994 speech by Clinton, where the same codes held the first three places with an equal ratio of 33.3%. Notably, in Reagan’s 1987 speech, the code ‘people’ under the EP sub-attribute dominated with a significantly higher ratio of 87.5%, while ‘democracy’ under the DD sub-attribute trailed with a lower ratio. Therefore, concerning the *Participatory Engagement* domain, Biden’s speech exhibited a similarity to Reagan’s, maintaining an unchanged trend in the omission of the *Local Democracy* sub-attribute, which was absent in all three presidents’ speeches.

Figure 14

Codes of Fundamental Rights Attribute in Biden’s Speech in 2022

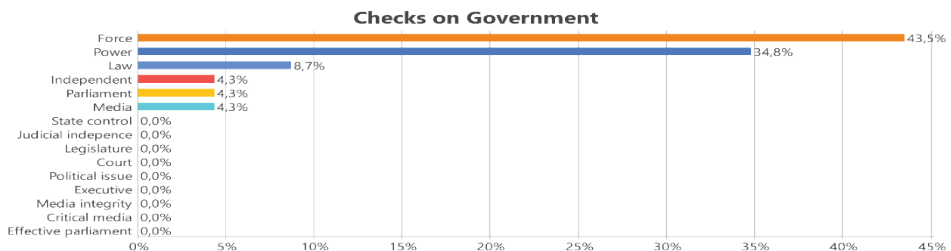


Among the three speeches under investigation, in Biden's speech (Figure 12), a notable departure was observed as the *Fundamental Rights (FR)* attribute of democracy did not secure the most mentioned position, instead taking second place after *Participatory Engagement (PE)*. Upon examining Figure 14, it becomes evident that within FR, the second most visited attribute by Biden (in contrast to Reagan and Clinton, where FR held the first place), the most frequently mentioned codes were 'freedom' (44.8%) and 'liberty' (20.7%). These were followed by 'economy' (17.2%), 'security' (6.9%), 'fair' (6.9%), and 'equal' (3.4%). Interestingly, codes like 'race', 'religion', and 'prosperity', which were mentioned in the speeches of Reagan and/or Clinton, were completely omitted by Biden. The mentions related to 'freedom', 'liberty', and 'security' aligned with Reagan and Clinton. However, in contrast to Reagan's speech, Biden's speech excluded codes like 'prosperity', 'rights', 'health', and 'women' while differing from Clinton's speech by omitting 'race' and 'religion'.

It is notable that codes such as 'equal/equality' and 'fair' found a place in the mentions for the first time in Biden's speech, indicating a deviation from the trend of neglecting *social rights, ethnicity, gender, and justice* observed in Reagan and Clinton's speeches. *Freedom* remained the central theme of Biden's speech within this domain similar to Reagan and Clinton, but specifically focusing on the FR attribute and not across all attributes. 'Liberty' retained its second-place status, but notably, 'economy' entered the discourse as the third most mentioned code. Consequently, the FR attribute's most visited sub-attribute in Biden's speech was *Civil Liberties* (codes: freedom 44.8%, liberty 20.7%, and security 6.9%) at 72.4%. The second sub-attribute, *Social Rights and Equality* comprised 'economy' (17.2%) and 'equal/ity' (3.4%), amounting to a total ratio of 20.6%. Importantly, the *Access to Justice* sub-attribute under the FR attribute was acknowledged for the first time, covered by the code 'fair' (6.9%). This shift in emphasis within the FR attribute contributed to the distinctive character of Biden's speech.

Figure 15

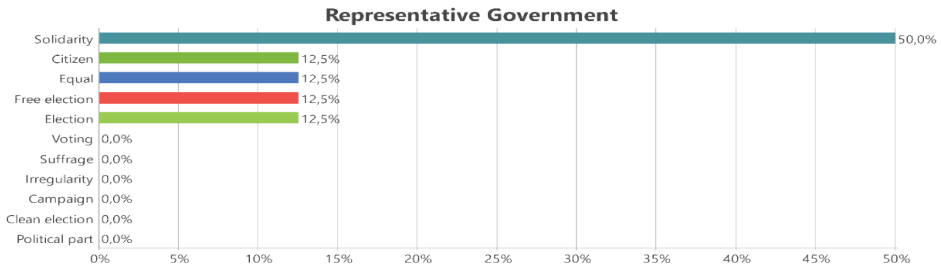
Codes of Checks on Government Attribute in Biden's Speech in 2022



In Biden’s speech, *Checks on Government (CoG)* emerged as the third most visited attribute of democracy, akin to Reagan’s emphasis (while it held the second position in Clinton’s speech) with a ratio of 21.3% (Figure 12). Figure 15 illustrates that within the CoG attribute, two mentioned codes, ‘force’ and ‘power’, representing the *Effective Parliament (EP)* sub-attribute (similar to Reagan’s speech but with their sequence changed, and mirroring Clinton’s speech with the same order) took the first two places within the domain. Together with the code ‘parliament’ (4.3%), the *Effective Parliament* sub-attribute constituted 82.6% of the first sub-attribute mentioned under the CoG attribute. This was succeeded by the *Judicial Independence* sub-attribute (codes: ‘law’ 8.7%, and ‘independent’ 4.3%) with a ratio of 13%. Notably, distinct from both Reagan and Clinton’s speeches, the *Media Integrity* sub-attribute of CoG found a place for the first time with the coded ‘media’ (4.3%). Consequently, Biden’s speech was the first among the three to encompass all three sub-attributes of the CoG domain (It is worth noting that Reagan omitted Judicial Independence (JI) and the Media Integrity (MI) sub-attributes in 1987, while Clinton omitted the Media Integrity (MI) sub-attribute under the CoG attribute of democracy in 1994).

Figure 16

Codes of Representative Government Attribute in Biden’s Speech in 2022

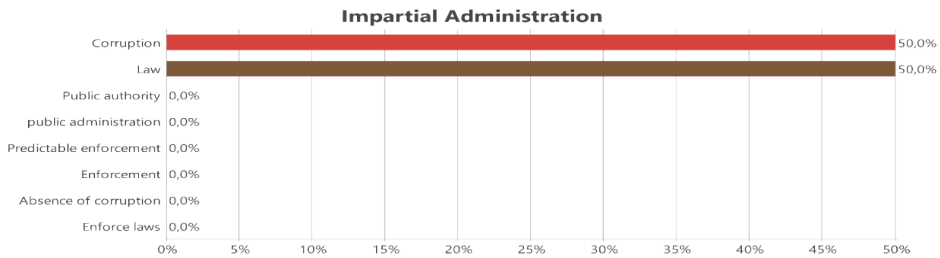


As the same as Clinton in 1994 (Figure 6), the *Representative Government (RG)* was the fourth most visited attribute of democracy by Biden in 2022 (Figure 12) as well, despite it was not mentioned by Reagan in 1987. Figure 16 above shows that, within this attribute, the code *solidarity* representing the sub-attribute of *Free Political Parties* has the first place with a ratio of 50%. It was followed by four other codes equally distributed with each having a 12,5%. The code *citizen* (which was the first with a high ratio of 100,0% in Clinton’s speech) represents the sub-attribute of *Elected Government (EG)* together with the code *election* and with both of the codes the *EG* sub-attribute was mentioned at 25%, while the sub-attributes of the *Inclusive Suffrage* (indicated by the code *equal* – 12,5%), and *Clean Elections* (indicated by the code *free election* – 12,5%) followed them. To sum up, Biden covered all four

sub-attributes of the *Representative Government* attribute also as he did for *Checks on Government*. These features increased the comprehensiveness of Biden's speech in 2022 concerning the attributes of democracy in comparison to the previous two speeches given by Reagan in 1987, and Clinton in 1994.

Figure 17

Codes of Impartial Administration Attribute in Biden's Speech in 2022



Impartial Administration (IA) was visited for the first time as the fifth most visited attribute of democracy (Figure 12) in Biden's speech in 2022 since this attribute was entirely neglected by the previous two presidents in their speeches included in the sample group (Reagan in 1987, and Clinton in 1994) of the study. Figure 17 shows that, within this attribute, the code *corruption* (*Absence of Corruption* sub-attribute under IA), and *Law* (*Predictable Enforcement* sub-attribute under IA) represent the attribute with a ratio of 50,0% each. So, Biden's speech is the first and only one mentioning the *Impartial Administration* domain of democracy among the three speeches within the sample group.

After the above graphics reflecting the codes mentioned in Biden's speech, the code cloud is given below:

Figure 18

Code Cloud of Biden's Warsaw Speech in 2022



In Biden's speech, the code cloud, arranged in descending order from the most prominent to the least, clearly reveals that the indicator code (1) 'people' (Electoral Participation under PE) is at the center and most visible, followed by (2) 'freedom' (Civil Liberties under FR), (3) 'democracy' and 'democratic' (Direct Democracy under PE), and (4) 'power' (Effective Parliament under CoG). Unlike Reagan and Clinton's speeches, 'people' took the first place for the first time, and 'freedom' fell to the second place. Different from Clinton's speech, 'force' (Effective Parliament under CoG) was replaced with 'power', and 'citizen' (Elected Government under RG) fell among the other codes. This indicates that the *second most mentioned code in Reagan's speech*, 'people' (Electoral Participation under PE), climbed to first place in Biden's speech, and the code 'force' (Effective Parliament under CoG) in Clinton's speech was replaced by the code 'power' of the same domain. In summary, it is possible to assert that *Biden primarily focused on Participatory Engagement*, while both *Reagan and Clinton concentrated on the Civil Liberties of Fundamental Rights*. Furthermore, *Biden covered almost all sub-attributes and all five attributes of democracy*. These findings provide evidence that Biden's speech has a more comprehensive approach to the attributes of democracy.

Results and Findings

After conducting a content analysis using the Maxqda software program and applying the Global State of Democracy indices to three selected speeches, which were delivered at historical breakpoints in Europe by three U.S. presidents, the following results were obtained:

(1) Changing Focus of Attributes Over Time: The analysis revealed a shift in the focused attributes of democracy over time. Both Reagan's speech (1987) and Clinton's speech (1994) predominantly emphasized the attribute of *Fundamental Rights (FR)*. In contrast, *Biden's Warsaw speech (2022)* placed a higher emphasis on *Participatory Engagement (PE)*, marking a change from the previous trend.

(2) Evolution in Focus Trend: The analysis results demonstrated a slight evolution in the trend of focus related to the content of discourses in the speeches, *moving from Fundamental Rights to Participatory Engagement*.

(3) Comprehensive Nature of Biden's Speech: The analysis provided evidence that President Biden's speech in Warsaw, Poland, on March 26, 2022, was the most comprehensive of the three. *Biden's speech covered all five attributes and sub-attributes of democracy*, with varying ratios. Notably, Representative Government (RG) and Impartial Administration (IA) attributes, neglected by Reagan and omitted by Clinton, were addressed by Biden, enhancing the comprehensiveness of his speech regarding attributes of democracy.

In conclusion, the analysis of the three speeches aligns with the respective geopolitical contexts of the time. The Brandenburg speeches by Reagan in 1987 and Clinton in 1994 occurred during the period surrounding the fall of the Berlin Wall, marking a significant era of rapid globalization, integration, and the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union. The second speech, emphasizing the code 'force' as a physical means of power, coincided with NATO expansion and the reorganization of NATO forces in Europe.

In the final speech, delivered during a hot war following Russian attacks on Ukraine, the attribute of *Participatory Engagement* took precedence over *Fundamental Rights*. This shift reflected the urgent need for Western allies to participate in designated sanctions against Russia to safeguard fundamental rights. Additionally, the replacement of the code 'force' with 'power' in this speech reflected a *strategic shift*. Power, defined as convincing allies to achieve political results, was favored over direct physical force. Despite declarations that NATO would not directly engage in the conflict, Western countries leveraged their power to support Ukraine, aiming to prolong the war and weaken Russia over time.

Notably, the Biden administration opted not to activate power as a force directly, suggesting a preference for supporting the conflict through a proxy war primarily fought by Ukrainians. This strategic choice is reflected in the shift from the frequency of the code 'force' in Clinton's speech to the code 'power' in Biden's speech.

It's important to acknowledge a limitation of this study, as only the frequencies of the codes were used for analysis, focusing on the words indicating categories in content analysis. Future research could benefit from a discourse analysis that delves into the positive and/or negative meanings of sentences, potentially employing latent analysis for a more nuanced understanding. This study sets the groundwork for further exploration and interpretation of the underlying discourse in these speeches.

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