


Why Venezuela's Democracy Collapsed

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Summary

- Venezuela before Chavez (absence of leadership, corruption, decline of traditional parties)
- The caracazo: Riots that ended in massacre
- The coup (Chavez as empty signifier) Feb 4, 1992
- Constituent 1999
- The presidency and the oil revenue
- The reconstruction of history
- Political polarization
- Control of the media
- Land expropriations
- Chavez and his political forces
- Chavez and the opposition
- Chavez disease and death: The road to redemption
- The cult of Chavez
- Current situation
- Possible scenarios



Venezuela (before Chavez)

- Venezuela before Chavez (absence of leadership, corruption, decline of traditional parties)
- The caracazo: Riots that ended in massacre
- The coup (Chavez as empty signifier) Feb 4, 1992

Hugo Chavez (1954-2013)

- Venezuela before Chavez
- Chavez: Brief bio
- The coup attemp (Feb 4 1992)
- The caracazo



A new Constitution



Constitution 1999

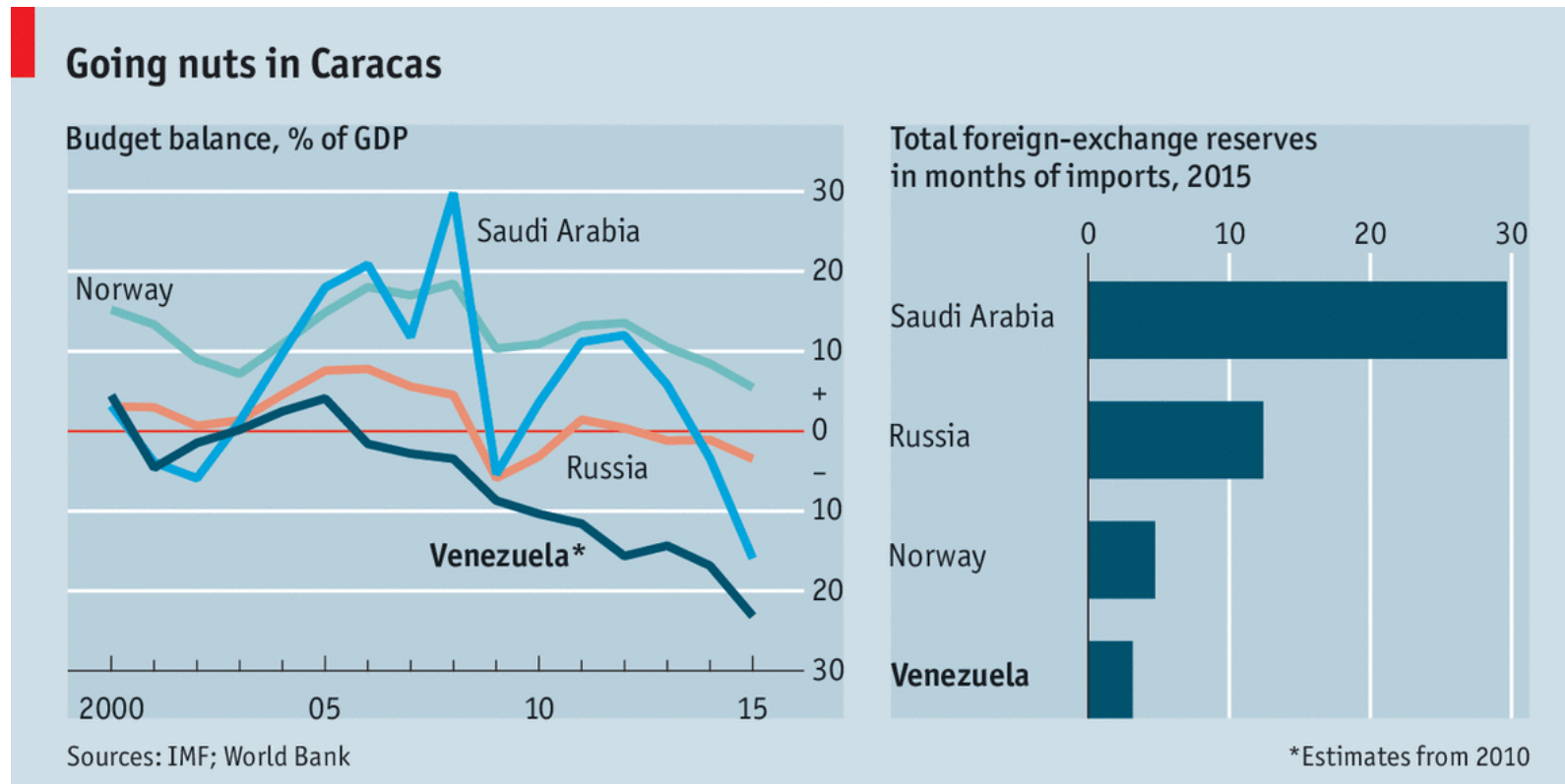


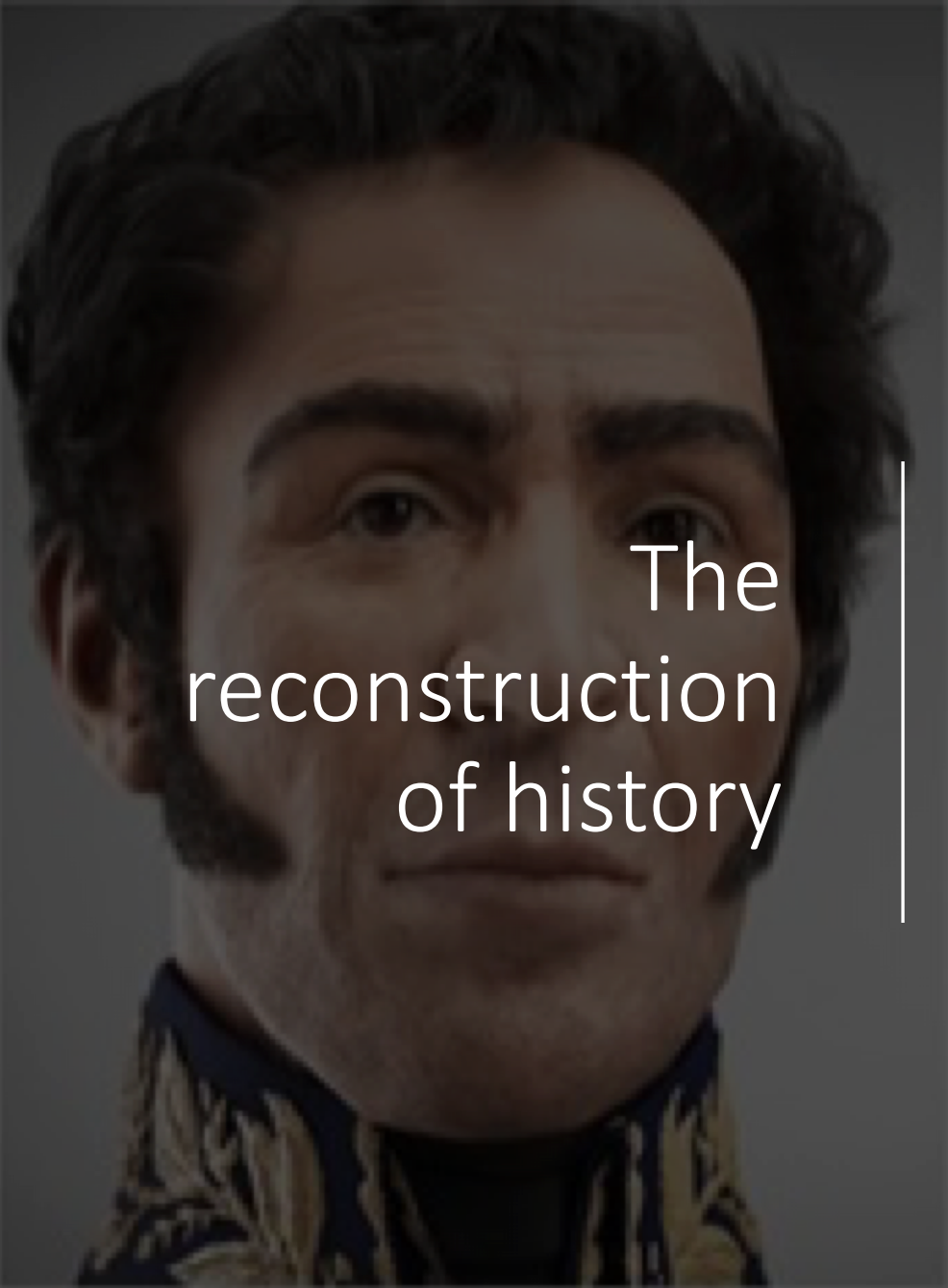
Pros and Cons



Executive power

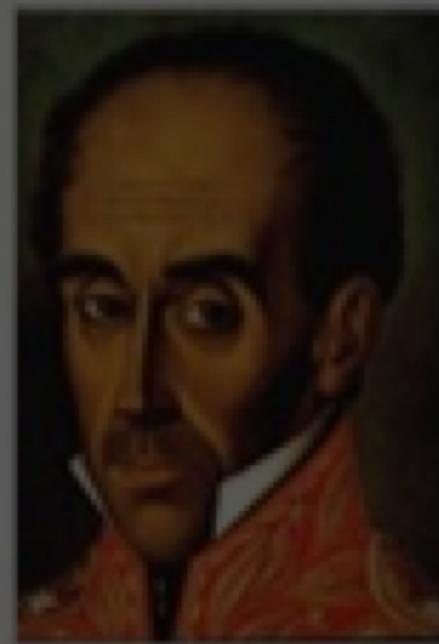
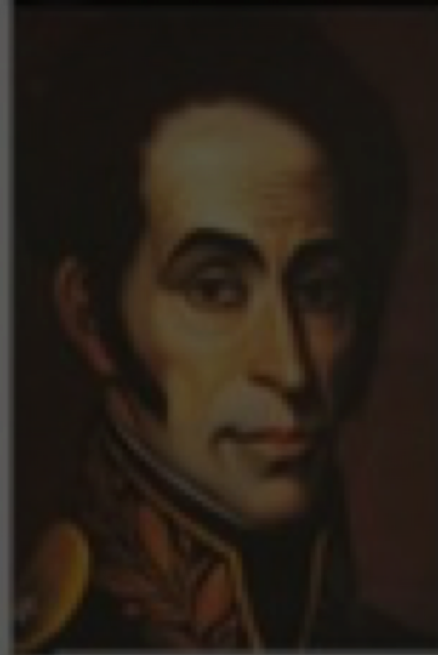
Chavez's and "his" oil revenue



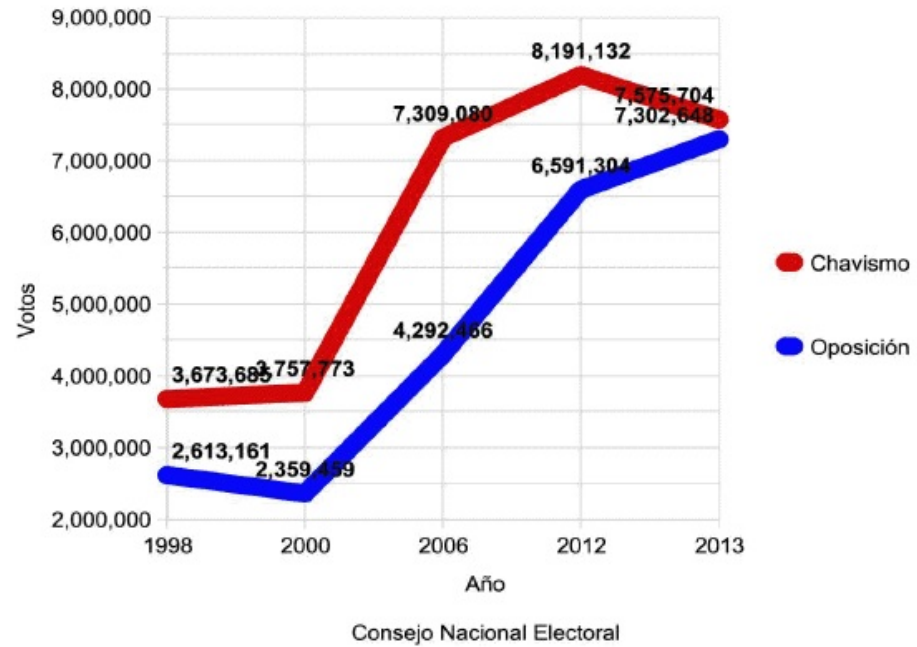


The reconstruction of history

- A popular Bolívar

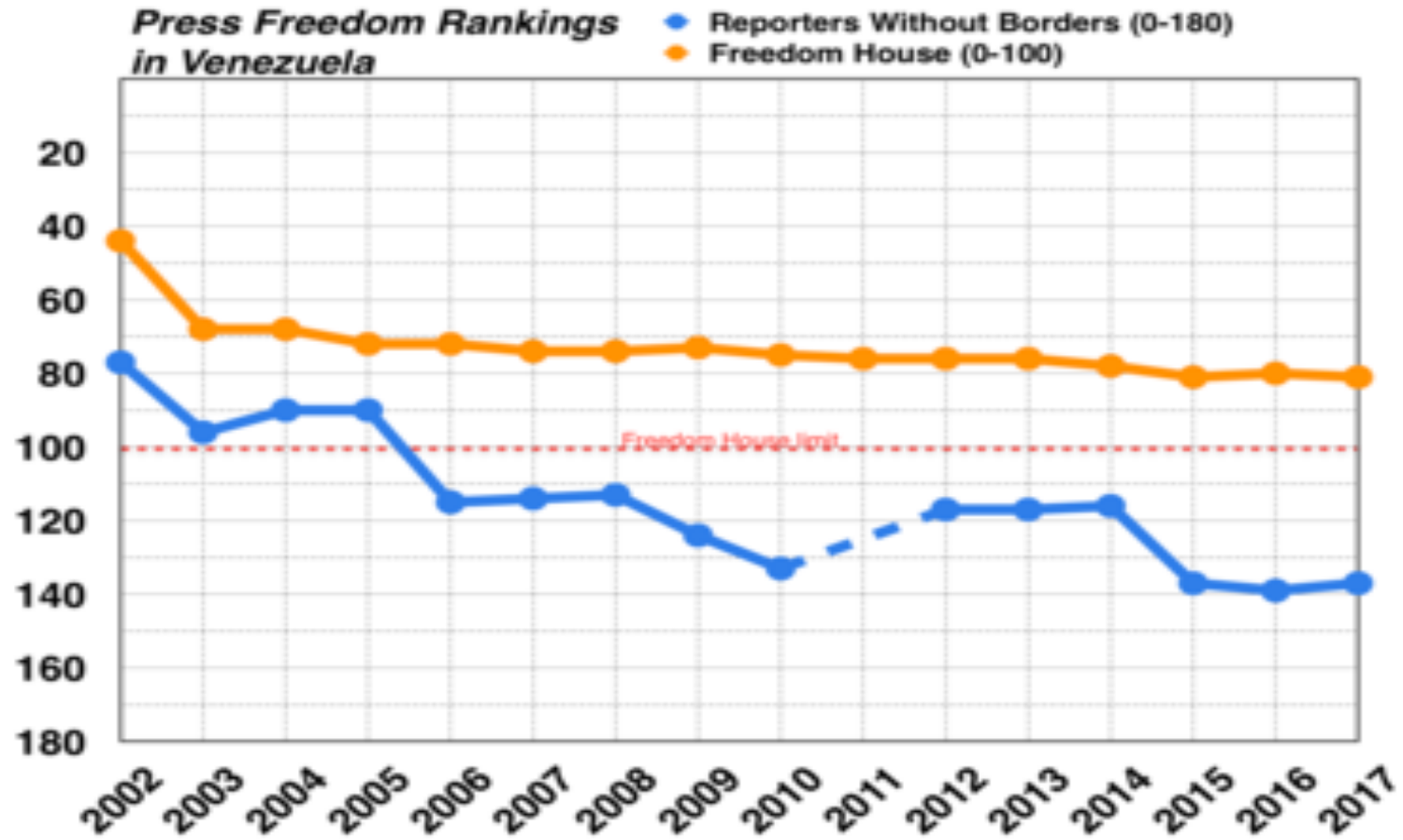



Venezuela: Elecciones Nacionales 1998 - 2013



Polarization

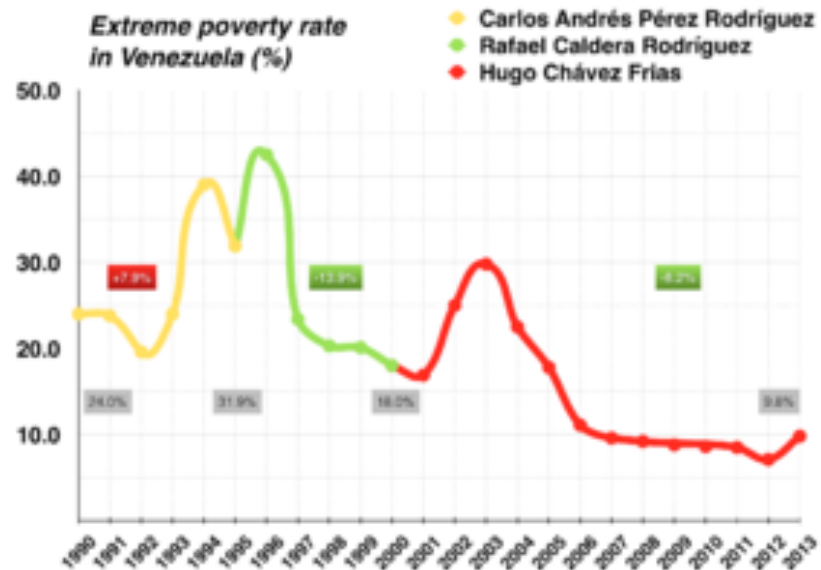
Control of the media





Chavez's
last speech

Chavez and his people



- Chavez appeal to the people
- Bolivarian versus pitiyankees
- Chavez:
Cancer/Elections/Maduro is handpicked:
- Maduro 50.66% y Capriles 49.07%

Current situation

- 5.4 million migrants (end of 2019)
- Up to 2,000 people a day are still pouring across the frontier
- Venezuela's outpouring of refugees is only second to that of Syria.



PSUV

- At least three different factions are recognized in “Somos Venezuela” (chavistas with Maduro), “Movimiento Democracia e Inclusion” (new generation against Maduro) and another force composed of the former Ministers of Chavez that reject Maduro. There is also a military version of this division named “Movimiento Amplio desafio de Todos” headed by Rodriguez Torres who was the Minister of Interior and now is in prison with charges of conspiracy.

Opposition

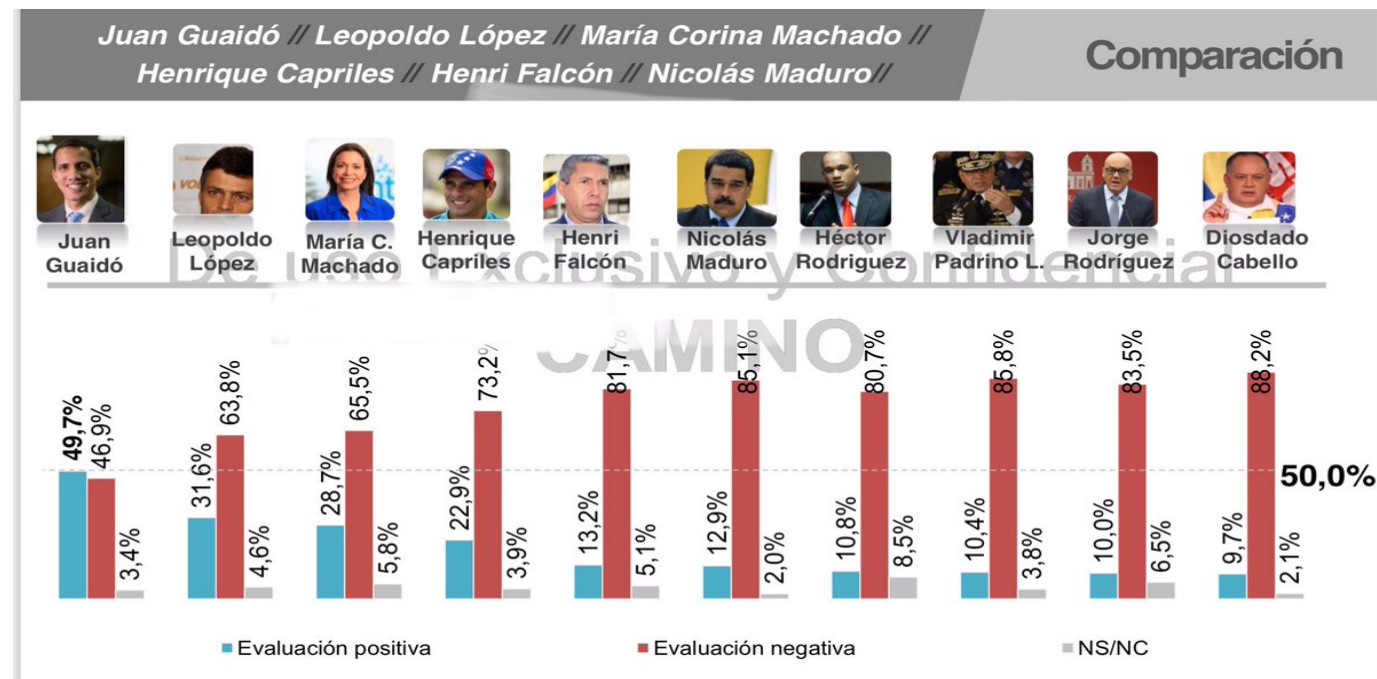
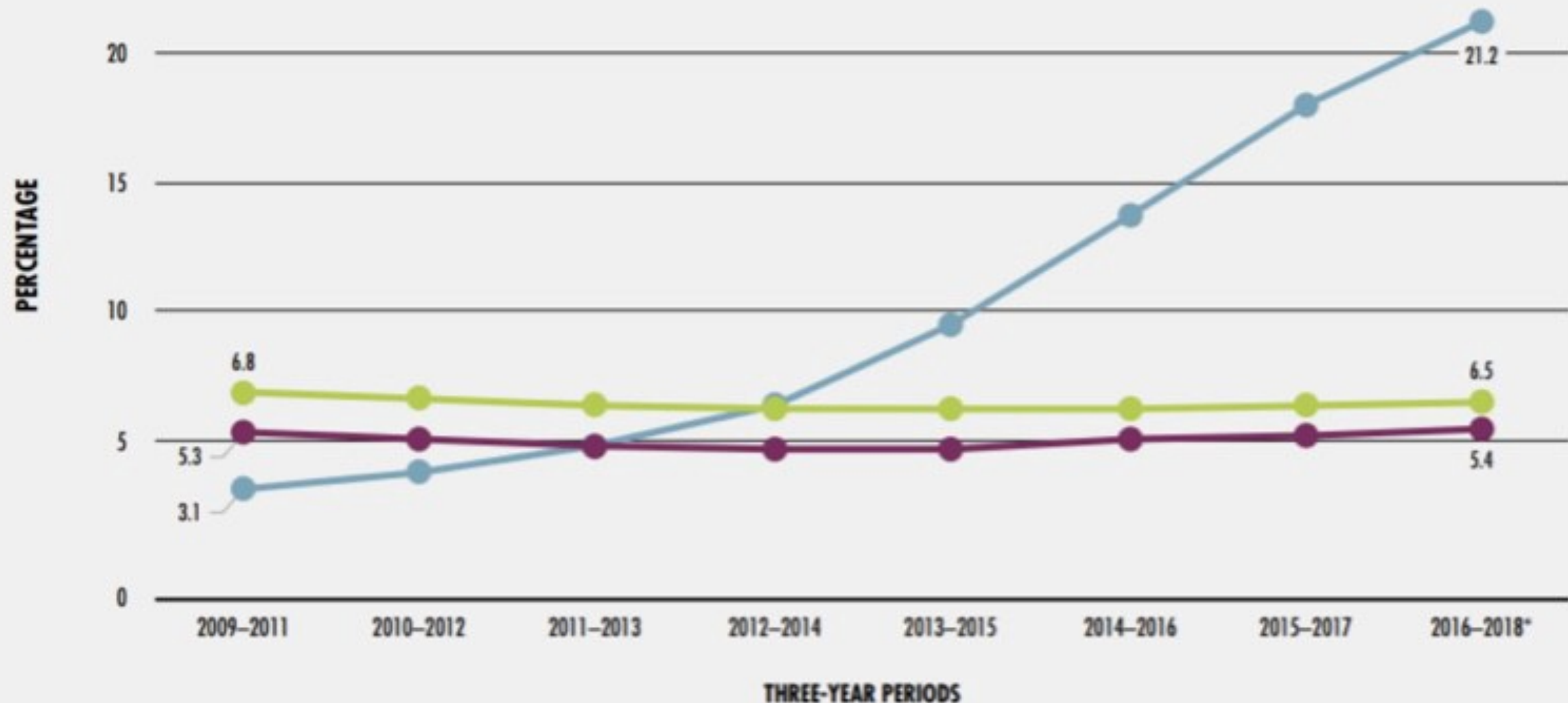


FIGURE 8

THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA SHOWS A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE
IN THE PREVALENCE OF UNDERNOURISHMENT IN RECENT YEARS



Possible Scenarios

- The worst scenario and apparently the one that is succeeding at this point is that Maduro's regime has been able to resist the opposition's attempts to call for elections. His alliance with China and Russia, but especially the control of the military elite and the crude repression that he has used in the past has worked for this government. They have been able repeatedly to make time and to deal with crisis while acquiring more external debt and imprisoning more of the opposition.
- The second scenario is the Norwegian one. These negotiations have been taking place sometimes behind the scenes among the leaders of both coalitions. The opposition wants elections with a new electoral center and without Maduro as a candidate. The government keeps refusing this idea. They don't want to count the votes. They prefer to keep playing games like the charade of the National Constituent Assembly that they installed when they lost the National Assembly legitimate elections. In spite of this, Norway keeps looking at solutions that include both sides of the equation and that brings some relief to the already hurt population. At this point the conversations were cancelled but it is possible they could be relaunched.
- A third and very distant scenario is that the military regime, pressed by the USA, Canada and the EU and its sanctions and by the state of the population forces Maduro to call for elections.
- Other people, are expecting a more miraculous solution: a humanitarian intervention or a sort of imposition among Maduro's regime that forces his resignation and subsequent elections.

Conclusions

- Populism in Venezuela turned to a tyranny
- PSUV only has 12% of popularity
- Maduro 3%
- Maduro who has been unable to re-capture or recuperate charisma in the way that Chavez had. It is for this and several other reasons that the movement has witnessed a degeneration of itself, characterized by an attempt to enforce the very 'charisma' that it lacks through repression. Furthermore, that 'charisma' continues on but separately for a now deceased and 'deified' Chavez.