

0 Introduction

New pack of cards for new millennium

"As the children became older, as some workers converted in 'conscious', we are under conditions of discovering that a something is developed in the World, by means of ourselves, maybe to our own bill. And what is even more serious, we realize that in this undertaken big departure *we are, at the same time, the players, the cards and the bet*. Nothing could continue if we abandon our game table. Although nothing can put us under an obligation to be seated. And Is this game, worthwhile? Or Is it that we are deceived?".

This way, the evolutionist and French great scientist, Teilhard of Chardin, mentions to our 'conscious' and 'insubstituable' role in the current stage that noosphere lives, during which the men should continue impelling the Evolution towards the future. It can also be applied to the current situation in Venezuela. Something it is developing quickly in our homeland. It is possible that not all have realized yet what is played in this undertaken great departure. We are - at the same time - the players, the cards and the bet. Nothing will be solved if we abandon the game table. Although nothing can put force to be seated and to distribute the new pack of cards without counting on us. But the challenge of participating in this great departure is worthwhile. It is a great opportunity that maybe doesn't show up in many years again. It is an opportunity that demands mature and responsible citizens to be aware that all now is in game for the community.

There are political symbols that help to interpret the ups and downs of the Venezuelan political journey, since it began this big departure to become an independent Republic in the concert of the nations. The aces of the cards can underline, this way, the sharp power of the sword or the receptive power and fond of the glass; other times they highlight the authoritarian and overwhelming power of the coarse one or the purchasing power and overpowering of the gold. An entire narrative reading of our political mythology can be attempted with base in the figures of the

Spanish pack of cards that are not the same of the Anglo-Saxon pack of cards neither of the tarot.

The official history of the school programs speaks to each other in Venezuela of a First Republic (among the years 1810 and 1812), of an Second Republic (between 1813 and 1814), of an Third one (between 1817 and 1820) and of an Fourth Republic that would have begun in 1830 after the failure and contradictions of three republics. On them it has been made a good analysis by the future Liberator Simón Bolívar in "The Manifesto of Cartagena" (December 1812), in his Speech to the Congress of Angostura (February 1819) and he kept them in mind in his Bolivian Constitution (March 1826). Inside this taxonomy does not make too much sense when speaking of a Fifth Republic, but it is already difficult to avoid it.

Francisco Herrera Luque makes a more pertinent and more suggestive reading of our political history. He notices four big landmarks, chosen by four characters. They are the incarnation of Venezuela in four different moments. They are the four faces of our country. The kings of the pack of cards are the representation of four big stages of Venezuela.

"Kings of the Pack of cards has been the men that, soon after a social cataclysm or amid a historical breach, they have been able to change the destination of our country, responding to the command of the collective will. The country changed substantially soon after Cosiata, after the peace of Coche, when the Andean ones arrived, and October 18 1945 (p.166) [...]

They are the incarnation of Venezuela in four moments. They are the four faces of our country in the century and half that takes of existence. The kings of the pack of cards are Venezuela... they were loyal friends, implacable enemies and brave men. They were thieves and guys who take advantage of people, bad husbands and philanderers... The three ascended of canaries; they took the conqueror's' blood and of the conquered races; they came from modest, economic homes and socially... Friends and protective of the foreigners. Enemies of the written letter..." (p. 250-252).

Every symbol is simplistic and it is required of an interpretation to decipher its meanings. This work was made, with success, by the historian and well-known author of "Rajatabla" and "Abrapalabra". For Brito, each Republic - during the period of the four kings- it is born between the blood and fire. Páez arises from War to Death; Guzmán from Federal War; Gómez from Restoring Revolution; Betancourt from October 18th. There is no king without army. General Páez reigns on the 'llaneros' and the slaves recruited for the Independence gestation. General Guzmán reigns on the retinues of peons recruited by the proprietor's leader. General Gómez articulates a national army with control and centralized intendancy. Betancourt, the only king of the pack of cards that is not a military, was able to gain the respect and obedience of those that have the weapons.

Brito notices that:

"the thrones of the kings of the pack of cards are founded on the gold and the blood, but they are legitimated by the ideological crown that the intellectuals confer them. Páez's dominance laid the foundation on the history of Venezuela written in epic key by José María Baralt and Ramón Díaz. That is the incense that pays him the clique of 'plumíferos' called perpetual adoration. Laureano Vallenilla Lanz, Gil Fortoul and Arcaya knit for the Meritorious laurels of democratic Caesarism. The coup d'etat of October 18 is called Revolution by Rómulo Gallego, Andrés Eloy Blanco, Mariano Picón Salas".

Brito finishes affirming that

"none of the kings of the pack of cards culminates a revolution. Everything makes the indispensable changes so that they can continue the same abysmal inequality between masses and oligarchies, the economic orientation toward the external markets and not toward the internal consumption. All their republics felt abandoned by the masses to which mobilized politically to assure the economic social immobility".

The Fourth Republic was not overthrown to the force; there was only a couple of intents that were defeated militarily in 1992. Fourth Republic fell for itself, it eroded, when allowing that the crisis pointed out was increased and it engendered like a nemesis the "phenomenon" Chávez. With myopia and very divided to each other, the directing categories of the country thought that they could facilitate the appearance of a "saving messiah" that fixed the things. And the masses, frank and preys easy of tinsel utopias, they didn't take in acclaiming him. They were several the striking moments of this joint:

- 1) the irresponsible offensive of Democratic Action against the program of adjustments of CAP (Carlos Andrés Pérez) years 1989-1992;
- 2) the fatidical speech of Caldera, February 4 the 92;
- 3) the conspiracy of the "notables" and Pérez's weakness in face of them;
- 4) the disastrous restoration intent between 1994 and 1999;
- 5) and as corollary of all the above-mentioned, the underestimate of the new leader's appearance in regard to the implications of Hugo Chávez Frías emergent figure.

The events were being happened in an overpowering sequence that would rot today to understand each other -in clear allusion to Antonio's thought Gramsci- like an able strategy of peaceful taking of the power and progressive establishment of the hegemony on some legitime bases of the civil society.

December of 1998, 6 Chávez wins the presidential elections.

February of 1999, 2 Oath like boss of the State in the face of Caldera (salient president) and declaring without indigestion that makes it in front of a "moribund Constitution (that of 1961) " .

July of 1999, 25 Chávez wins 127 of the 133 benches of the National Constituent Assembly, for a new Constitution.

December of 1999, 15 A referendum welcomes for majority of the people the Great new Letter that governs today.

In consequence, we cannot refuse that Chávez has -in the origin of his command- a clear legality and democratic genuineness.

"A dream rose, marvelously, on a widespread feeling that united the rejection of the past with a deep will of change. The society was resolved to transform everything: their laws, their institutions, their leaders and their parties. You didn't discuss the necessity to begin of zero and to reconstruct the nation with patience, effort and sacrifice, without forgetting the made errors but without stopping to look for in them the valid references to get ahead".

(Miguel Henrique Otero, Director of *El Nacional*, December 9, 1999)

In his serious one and detailed study that he has on Venezuela about Hugo Chávez, Carlos Blanco picks up in succinct form what they were the main factors that prepared the coming of the one Major to the control of the State (*Revolution and Desilusion* 2002) :

"The idea that the country had to be changed was extended toward many sectors of the society. The deterioration of the political parties, the sensation that the public institutions didn't work (as in the case of the Congress) or they were terribly rotten (as the Judicial Power), the conviction of the limitless growth of the poverty and of the dramatic impoverishment of the middle class, the notion that the centralism of the State had arrived to an unbearable limit, the necessity that the electoral system changed and that they settled down mechanisms that allowed to reflect the will of the electorate neatly, the evidence that the pattern of financier operation of the economy and of the society it was arriving to an unbeatable exhaustion, next to talkative campaigns of the call 'accusation journalism', they were factors that outlined the necessity of the change like an urgent demand of the Venezuelan society, especially of their elites and of influential sectors of the society in the

managerial, comunicational, political, intellectual and union environments [...] Chávez was mounted in the wave of dissatisfaction that was generated as effect of the inability of the elites of understanding the exchange rate that the society and the State needed, he picked up the frustration for the failure of the undertaken changes and he claimed to fulfill the urgent tasks of the rentist era".

In synthesis, too many expectations and hopes were generated that, of not being satisfied properly, could be reverted the step of the time, against who transformed into "*the providential commander*" in Venezuela for the 21st century.