

“DEMOCRACIA SHOW”

This is the title, relatively unknown for the “general public”, of the book wrote by the controversial Spanish investigator Joaquín BOCHACA. With an undeniable demythologizing effort, the work reveals faults, miseries and ridiculous things about different democratic regimes and leaders. Many of them were very prestigious men. This reputation is logically impaired in the light of the unfortunate episodes – tragicomic at times– included by the polemic writer from Barcelona.

This significant title (*“Democracia Show”*) struck my thoughts while I was striving to intellectually “digest” what happened in the convention of the US Democratic Party, held in the middle of the presidential campaign that is taking place in this country at present. In this meeting, the American President Barack OBAMA –and one of the most charismatic ex Prime Ministers of the USA, Bill CLINTON– were present among other important figures.

The thing is that the aforementioned political faction had suppressed from its electoral platform the reference to Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. When the republicans noticed this “imperfection”, they accused their rivals of skimping on support to the Jewish state, with the deliberate intention of drawing –for their own benefit– the numerous Israeli-American group and their powerful *“lobbies”*. In front of this maneuver, democratic leaders saw themselves involved in the urgent need to include once again the subject they had suppressed from their electoral platform. So once they were working on that, they must face the question of “how”... That is: how to reinsert the motion, without causing division, “break ups” or defections from their own ranks...

How did democratic leaders solve the problem posed? Although it may seem hard to believe, they subjected the decision of this issue to an allegedly electoral action, which consisted of asking the people who were present in the convention “*ut supra*” aforementioned, for expressing together their support or rejection to the motion. First, people who declare themselves in favor. Then, those who were against it. Just like that...

Thus, the question –which political significance is not necessary to highlight– was left to the loudest clamor. The hypothetical virtues of this strange criterion have not been properly specified yet. Because the noisy conclusion of public issues, in substitution of the known principles ⁽¹⁾, carries a quasi revolutionary change as regards political decisions.

In effect, this singular innovation opens a complex range of questionings. Some of them related to the suitability of the chosen parameter, as we have just pointed out. Other parameters refer to the concrete possibilities of reliable application. Thus, for example, we can ask ourselves: May the participants make use of megaphones? Did someone consider the possibility that the assembly’s premises have an asymmetric and distorted acoustics? If the meeting is hold in an open place, should the wind's effect be considered? What actions must be taken to prevent a faction from taking the first seats in order to be better heard by the “judge” of the moment? Is it advisable to exchange the citizens' civics for vocal gymnastics? Was it considered the assumption that the circumstantial director of this innovative procedure is hearing impaired or hears better from one ear than the other? What happens if the voter has lost his voice, although partially? Is the electoral action suspended until he fully recovers his voice? By the way,

¹ The judgment of a religious authority, the wise's argument, the dialogic, pacific and spontaneously elaborated consensus, the majority's position...

how can we ensure the effective exercise of mute people in determining the political will? It looks like an Italian one-act farce!

Now, beyond all doubts raised, the truth is that the unusual spectacle in the democratic convention reminded me of an old TV show “*Si Lo Sabe, Cante*” (If you know, sing) hosted by Roberto GALÁN. On that Argentinean TV show, different contestants sang and the winner was chosen according to the applauses given by the present audience... The decision was taken by the TV show host according to how strong the applauses were. The prize was not a trip to the Caribbean Sea or Europe. Neither was a car. But... A canary! (What an innocent simplicity of those times!)

Both in the democratic convention and the TV show hosted by the endearing Roberto GALÁN, the consideration of the applauses given by the public was made “by ear”. In effect, just like Mr. GALÁN did not count with the help of an “applause-meter”, neither did Mr. Antonio VILLARAIGOSA –the “master of ceremony” of the moment– was helped by any device which allow him to accurately determine what shout was louder.



The TV host Roberto GALÁN and the politician Antonio VILLARAIGOSA ^(?).

Beyond these remarkable similarities, it is necessary to explain that the TV show hosted by Roberto GALÁN was much more serious

² Photograph “*Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa*”, taken on 08/14/05, by René MIN. Taken from: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Antonio_Villaraigosa_portrait.jpg?uselang=es, on 09/21/12.

and credible than the democratic convention in question. On the TV show “*Si lo sabe, cante*”, the audience applauded each participant just once and, therefore, the verdict derived from the applause was only one. On the democratic convention, people “voted” three consecutive times, because the person in charge of determining the loudest applause was so disoriented that could not make a decision... Of course, the double repetition of this particular electoral action was a decision taken by the “master of ceremony” without asking the audience about it.

To cap it all, the final decision taken was to reinsert the idea of turning Jerusalem into Israel's capital, despite the "audible balance" indicated "no" during the third "voting". I suggest taking a look at this video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBFd6rdJWfE>, in order to draw your own conclusions.

In short, the democratic convention was carried out in an outrageously messy, arbitrary and –why not– dishonest manner. It is astonishing to discover more simplicity and credibility in an old and “*lame*” Argentinean TV show. Despite the fact that the only thing that was at stake in that TV show was a canary. While in the democratic convention, the geopolitical situation of Middle East and with that, world peace, were the two things at stake. What a difference!

Pablo J. Davoli, Esq.
September 21th 2012.