Presentation

> The specific divisions that are made of one dominion into various provinces or parts become highly material, for through them hearts will also become divided. Love for a certain home region, instead of being useful to the republic, is in numerous ways injurious; perhaps because it induces a division in spirit which should be reciprocally united. making the common society more solid and constant, perhaps for it is a cause of civil wars and rebellions against the sovereign, as whenever a certain province deems itself oppressed, its people deem that the obligation that rises above all others in such circumstances is to free the offended home area free of blame. Finally, because it is a great obstacle on the path towards fair administration of justice in all manner of classes and ministries.
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> —Benito Jerónimo Feijoo, "Tomo tercero, Discurso X: Amor de la patria y pasión nacional", in *Teatro crítico universal*, Madrid, Castelia, 2002 [1729], 251-252.

This text by the pre-Enlightenment essayist Feijoo contains a vision that might well strike us as strange: a Spaniard waging a no-holds-barred war on particularisms, on one's *patria chica*,[1] what an inspired Mexican called the "matria". Truth be told, Spaniards and Hispanic-Americans have long held a certain affection for the local, to use a lax, though comfortable, term. But the good Benedictine was writing under peculiar circumstances, ones perhaps contrary to the Hispanic tradition: the War of Succession, just two decades earlier, was a

[1] Translator's note: *Patria chica* in Spanish refers to an intermediate level of identity located at some level between one's birthplace or hometown and the nation or homeland (Fatherland, Motherland).

true civil conflagration –which Feijoo had in mind– whence emerged triumphant the Bourbon Phillip V with the French centralist model that was being imposed upon that neighbor nation.

Without doubt, perceptions of this phenomenon differed on opposite sides of the Pyrenees: up to Feijoo's era (more or less) the fatherland (*patria*, in Spanish), was associated with the nestling warmth of one's natal region, the place where one was born, the home town or village. None of this *Die for the Fatherland*, that distant, exigent, global community, though the French had been willing to make that ultimate sacrifice since the Middle Ages; indeed, considered none more splendorous. The term *patria chica* cannot be translated into English –options are either pedestrian, "birthplace", or carry negative connotations, like "provincialism"– not even the French *Clochemerle*, that imaginary place in Gabriel Chevallier's recent, satirical novel (1934) fits the bill.

So, before proceeding to examine the dyad that consists of "love for the *patria chica* and passion for the nation" in the Ibero-American world, we must first identify what might be original in each one, while keeping in mind that they are inextricably linked in a complex and contradictory complementarity: the strength of one perhaps weakening the other… In all likelihood, it is what some contemporary strategists have understood quite well: by putting your money on regions you dilute the "national fabric" and thus foster globalization (and its minions).

All signs seem to point in this direction: that one's *patria chica* antecedes, by far, any national community. No need to reach as far back as the Greek *polis* as there is no doubt that medieval cities, with their franchises, their *comunitas*, were the motor of that provincial spirit that constituted, way back when, love for the home, a sentiment that extended throughout Europe in the 14th-to-15th centuries. But, beyond Italy, the region of Flanders or Hanseatic Germany, it was in Hispania where it attained its greatest vigor: the heritage of Rome and its colonies, the absence of a feudalism commensurate with that of the rest of Europe, the marked presence of an urban nobility (gentlemen), all combined to give the local an unparalleled savor.

But then the Catholic Kings emerged on the scene and with them a new interlocutor –the modern State. But love for one's home did not vanish: perhaps part of the urban *comunitas* was shifted to the province

–at that time an ambiguous term– the kingdom (eg. Valencia, Aragon, Navarra…), the principality, or the seigneury. Austria's Catholic Monarchy well knew how to adjust to this mosaic of communities, where the term "national" was abhorred (by Olivares, among others).

Which brings us to Columbus and the new world that was delivered right to Castile's door; more grist for the academic mill: while in Europe today people discuss space or, better, territory,[2] in America efforts center on snaring that elusive being that is 'region', the overseas' version of Spain's *patria chica*. And when territory is pondered in America it is to approach territoriality, another form of love for one's home or, at least, one conceived as the socialization of space.

Wherefore this American attachment to home area-region? It was transferred from the Spanish tradition with its urban *comunitas* as those concepts lost strength on the Peninsula in the 16th century. For the city was the anchor of Spain's territorial and cultural domination of America; though not without certain reserve: *i.e.*, not all cities were of Hispanic origin (Tlaxcala, Cuzco…), though all incorporated essential concepts from the Peninsula –honor, hierarchy, loyalty…– Hispanic foundations that were by no means averse to adopting American elements (primarily, though not exclusively, of a material nature). Here I remit to the first part of the article by Alexander Betancourt,[3] though one might debate, with time, the concept of "city as refuge". In America, the city is the center for the condensation of Spanishness, not a retreat. The best proof? The article by Nicolás Caretta on the royal road from Guadalajara to Zacatecas which, by connecting the two cities, became an instrument of conquest, knowledge, ordination and consolidation: abbreviating, of aperture.

Thus, every urban nucleus in the colonial period (and later), became a locus of "civilization", either Hispanic (XVI-XVIII) or Western (XIX-XX).

[2] Though somewhat annoying at times, see Martin Vanier, dir., *Territoires, territorialité, territorialisation: Controverses et perspectives,* Rennes, PUR, 2009, 228 p. «Quand bien même the valeur sémantique du mot [territoire] serait réduite à deux ou trois of ses illustrations originelles, il aurait perdu sa valeur conceptuelle. Et puis on sait bienqu'il to plus servi of type-idéal that of catégorie d'objets effectivement circonscrits. On est revenu d'une ethnologie naïve qui voyait des territoires tribaux one peu partout, comme condition nécessaire, avec l'identité et the culture, du groupe ethnique correspondant» (p. 22).

[3] The coordinator of this section; all articles were received and refereed in 2010.

Territorially speaking, theirs were two missions: first, to establish a space around itself that it thoroughly dominated –its region (without going into greater detail here)– and, second, to forge its articulation into an imperial (or national) network of cities arranged hierarchically over an ample territory that, in the 19th century, would emerge as the State. Of course, this is not to say that some higher, premonitory thought had been erecting the late 19th-century space of "national passion" since the 1700s; but a framework did emerge that was favorable to the passage from one reality (*patria chica*) to another (national territory); namely, the jurisdictions called *audiencias*. How did this judicial-administrative-political entity succeed, over time, in morphing into the Leviathan we know today as it did away with sweet Creole home areas? A long story that, full of autonomies, conjunctions of powers (political, religious), irradiations and flows, constructions of identity and, of course, egoisms.

Without doubt, the articles in this issue can guide us in our inquiries. Like it or not, the role of both Antioquia –later displaced by Medellín– and San Luis Potosí was determined by their history –two cogs, since their birth as mining districts, in the system of colonial extraction– and their geographical location in frontier zones entrusted with the task of consolidating the margins of Empire. However, there is one important contrast between them: Antioquia was in the heart of the territory of the new kingdom of Granada, free of serious political confrontations and, hence, of the need to sustain itself through aggression; but San Luis Potosí was perched on the line that separated two kingdoms (New Spain and Mexico, Nueva Galicia and Guadalajara-Zacatecas), obliged from the outset to fight to keep its lands intact, though it did lose some (eg. Sierra de Pinos). More than other centers in colonial times, its remoteness and regional rivalries meant that it required the protection of Mexico City, and went hand-in-hand with the need to vindicate itself before its rival, Zacatecas. Love for the *patria chica* covered by the tutelary shadow of the Vice-regal capital. This is one aspect.

In both cases, the leading role that the two cities played in their respective regions in the 19th century, and their economic importance at the time (yet to be appraised) led to the creation of an intelligentsia that reacted to the new project of the State. That elite acted through its arms

– intelligence– to endow the Mexican Republic, in the case of San Luis, with some of its finest historical works in the late 19th century: suffice to recall the personality of Primo Feliciano Velázquez. But it was also capable of opposing Porfirian centralism (Camilo Arriaga). Others across the continent would fight with different weapons (Tomóchic, Canudos). The case of Medellín is similar to that of Potosí, but with an original touch: there, the intellectual movement spread with time and reached into the mid-20th century when it articulated with the intervention of North American scholarship (James Parsons 1949; Frank Safford 1967): was something concerted at that moment?[4] It has been said that praising mother's milk mitigates acrid national passion.

But we should not perceive all things through this Manichean lens, for roads belong to both universes. They are part of urban urbanism insofar as they determine the physiognomy of the entrances to the city, separate *urbs* from outlying suburbs, display its very best apparel (triumphal arches) upon the solemn entrance of illustrious personages, and bear the weight of urban justice with the remains of those judged. Moreover, those paths are not necessarily ribbons with which Center binds Periphery: there is a certain degree of indetermination, open options. At least three roadways had been blazed through the vast, empty space between Guadalajara and Zacatecas in the 16th century, and the most oft-traveled at mid-century was not the busiest at the end. What those avatars demonstrate is that, in the end, Guadalajara was never able to transform itself into the regional homeland with which all of Nueva Galicia's inhabitants identified. Indeed, the political exception that the territory of the *Audiencia* of Guadalajara would become in 1821 was foreseeable as early as 1600, due to its inability to nurture a national passion of its own. This double failure explains the importance that the road inland –*i.e.*, Mexico City-to-Zacatecas and points beyond (*Tierra Adentro*)– gained in the early 17th century, and the fact that by 1821 Mexico City was the only (or, at least, the essential) anchor of the Leviathan, from Yucatán to New Mexico.

[4] Around the same time there were similar projects, promoted by the National Research Council; see Robert V. Kemper, "Estado y antropología en México y Estados Unidos: reflexiones sobre los Proyectos Tarascos", *Relaciones. Estudios de Historia y Sociedad*, vol. XXXII, otoño, no. 128, 2011, 209-241.

Caretta's article opens another perspective. Clearly, the concept 'region' is not an exclusively western one, much less Hispanic, as the pre-Hispanic universe knew such realities, even in far-off areas like Los Altos-Juchipila. Those remote circumstances beg the question of determining to what degree geography was the determining factor: the biogeographical, writes the author, the famous, widely debated term "natural regions". Here, the Juchipila River constituted the umbilical cord.

Upon jumping into the mid-20th century, one might say that the national State had emerged victorious over the region, thus relegating the *patria chica* to an archaeology of sentiments (perhaps an exaggeration). But at the very least, we can reflect on new circumstances, based on Carlos Alberto Casas' comparison of Mato Grosso and Chiapas. To some extent –herein the paradox– while casting its nets (*i.e.*, telegraph lines), the State was obliged to create new regions as a means of stirring up national passion. Up to then, with the exception of Minas Gerais, Brazil was but an archipelago bordering the Atlantic, but by creating the western regional entity of Mato Grosso it progressively integrated an almost barren space into the myth of the national community. Brazilians are lovers of the symbolic, as long as it is a vector of modernity: and Getulio Vargas' project to "march to the west" that began with his 1940 trek, would culminate with the realization of Juscelino Kubitschek's 'Grand Idea': erecting the capital of Brasilia (1960).[5] The ritual form that accompanied Vargas' voyage has an inverse, amplified dimension in the ceremonies of 1960: the regional seed planted becomes a splendorous national tree 20 years later, through the magic of the will of the State.

Circumstances in Mexico were distinct in the 1940s, less compelling, less overwhelming, but there was a need to forge a re-oriented, integrating regionalization in one marginalized zone: Chiapas. In that case, the instrument of creation was the INI (National Indigenous Institute), the guiding light, Aguirre Beltrán's brain. The iron fist of the State remained occult, its premeditated, modernizing project wrought through actions designed to persuade, like creating (1953) *Petul* [Pe-

[5] History contains numerous examples of this kind of alternation between capitals: at times with terrible vengeance: Paris and Versalles, in 1789 For the case of Río and Brasilia, see Laurent Vidal, *Les larmes of Rio*, París, Aubier, 2009, 254 p.

dro], the puppet theater performed by young members of the community that targeted a monolingual, indigenous audience. The name Pedro surely brought to mind regional memory and struggles: a complex character he, but with a clear modernizing message, token to the Indigenous, and so acceptable to the national project. Casas Mendoza's article finalizes with the idea of "domesticating" to resolve, in the 20th century, the ambiguous relation of region/nation.

If we accept the proposal of Friedhelm Schmidt-Welle –and others– then in writing the "universal" history of San José de Gracia, Luis González was doing "regional" history. Does "regionalist" history –or any other "regionalist" human discipline– exist? Clearly it does, if we ponder this erudite approach, shut in upon itself, local histories, especially in the years before the 1960s. The author applies this to literature, that of the first half of the 20th century. But focusing on literature –a thing as varied as life itself– moves the scheme a little, one must admit, through references to "customisms" and other "classicisms" or "traditionalisms". Moreover, in moving from one work to another, the author crosses borders untroubled by our "-isms".

Schmidt-Welle opens interesting perspectives in speaking of regionalism. His emphasis perhaps marks a path towards the national, accenting differences with other nationalisms: a path that traverses other forms of customism; but avoids becoming an accomplice of the State. His indigenism may be the basis of strong social criticism. We find examples of all this in the Latin American milieu, from *Raza de bronce* (1919), to *Juan Pérez Jolote* (1952), or *La rebelión de los Colgados* (1954). From literature and particularism, his denunciation can impact the national. Recalling *Raza*, Alcides Arguedas writes in his *Memorias* (1945): "this book has worked upon the national consciousness slowly for over twenty years"; towards love and national consensus, by defending the *patria chica* (and its humanity)?

The documents that Damián González presents do not distance us from these themes, for they too remain in the sphere of regional history; in this case, the state of Oaxaca and the arrival of what is today its 'black gold', coffee, late in the final quarter of the 19th century. The originality of this regional process lies in its insertion into a juncture not only national, but international. The invention and produc-

tion of chemical colorants in Germany abruptly cut off the source of Oaxaca's wealth in mid-century, forcing the great cochineal merchants to find a substitute. Globalization and its effects shorten distances, put far-off places in dramatic contact, superimpose themselves on the national; we need not wait for the 20th century to verify this.

This change in activity was a founding event, one still present in the collective memory of the inhabitants of the first municipalities affected, for structures and contexts were modified so radically: lands were privatized towards 1930, accompanied by a spate of violence in which the State could not intervene, especially in 1951-1952. The chronology of events irresistibly reminds us of the era, in that same decade, that people in Colombia's coffee-producing regions call 'the Violence'; the same rapacity, the nation equally impotent, just rivers of blood, more copious in the Colombian case.

So, just when one might think that national construction has been secured, social and economic disequilibriums propitiate an unexpected, undesired regression to the regional; what one actor in the documents calls, using a euphemism, "administrative demoralization" or, from the opposite viewpoint, "exploiting the ignorance" of the municipality and its residents. So great was the proximity between local and regional authorities in the delicate context of land reform that, in the end, the dispute could only be resolved in the confines of Mexico City; taking us back to the era of "the carrot and the stick"… the Porfiriato… hard times.

But there are more harmonious periods, as the two essays on the *Google* phenomenon show; globalization in its maximum expression, exterminator of both love of home and national passion. Unsolicited, almost simultaneously, but through different channels, these two texts arrived; complementary, as the reader will see. To add spice to the affair, recall that just a few weeks ago *Google* was accused in France at the behest of a private company which argued that its policy of no-cost access made *Google* guilty of anti-trust violations, allowing it to achieve a monopoly that could lead to substantial financial rewards later on. The dice have been rolled…

This parallelism achieves its full dimension upon realizing that the two pens (Andrew Roth, Pascal Renaud), though not opposed,

write from the two poles of this debate, (North) America and Europe (France). It is no longer about nation and region, as such, but about the market economy and cultural exception, supranational (or North American) logic *vs*. particularism (Gallic). It is Goliath-*Google vs*. David-Gaul: and I am very much afraid that this time David will not emerge triumphant. The effort, the battle that the then Director of the National Library of France began in the year 2000, seeking to unite Europe's largest institutions in the great, unifying, project of a virtual European library (and something more), was compromised, and has produced only partial results, no common ground with *Google Book Search*, and its goal of digitalizing 15 million books (2 million of which are now ready). *Gallica.fr* with its one million books and documents and great user-friendliness has been isolated, shelved –we must accept– in its homeland (love for the motherland… and national culture). It may be possible to bring those energies together: the most ambitious program is one by the European Commission, *Europeana*. A total of 15 million objects have been digitalized and are offered free of charge through links that lead to institutions (libraries, museums) in the 27 member nations. Even so, it pales in comparison to the impact of *Google's* accomplishment.

These events linked to supranational phenomena, with a problematic spatial connection, place earthly justice in a surreal position: in this regard, the old Bern convention (1886), that all parties recognize, states that "the protection of the rights of authorship is regulated exclusively in accordance with the legislation of the country in which said protection is requested". That's all well and good, but recently, in order to prosecute criminal actions committed beyond national borders, French justice interpreted the Bern accords distinctly, holding that "the legislation of the country whose protection is requested is not that of the country in which the injury is received, but that of the State of the territory where criminal acts are committed".[6] Therefore, *Google* can seek the protection of North American justice leading, clearly, to the conclusion that there is very little that any State institution can do today against

[6] http://scinfolex.wordpress.com/2009/09/26/proces-googlele-seuil-the-martiniere-bientot-le-monde-to-lenvers (consulted 15-03-2012).

certain giants: the Leviathan is no longer where we expect to see him, Big Brother has the ears of *Google* "carts", or so we are told.An upside-down world (!), and a worrisome one in which cultural products become an ever more inaccessible (read: expensive) merchandise. Recall that the cost of a subscription to a foreign journal in the United States is $4,753 dollars: clearly, the cost of Mexican social science journals was not taken into account in this calculation, for that would have reduced this figure substantially.

Having penned all this, and expressed all the obligatory lamentations, one fact emerges: over the past 10-15 years the search engines, databases and archival and bibliographic collections digitalized across the planet mean that research is no longer produced as before, at least not in the human sciences: the instruments, horizons and thematic issues have all changed. And this applies to journal editors as well, as I have written elsewhere. *Hallelujah*! Should I be willing to sell my soul to the Devil for this?

One who never sold his soul was the Franciscan Friar Jacob the Dane (*Jacobo el Daciano*), portrayed here in a study by Alberto Carrillo. Though at the time all that glittered was not gold –"the clergy that come to these parts are vile and act out of interest", wrote the Viceroy of New Spain, don Antonio de Mendoza, in 1550– the demands of evangelization and the liturgy were pressing in those early years, so one solution proposed was to recruit "those of the land" for the priesthood. They could be "pure Spaniards" as the Bishop of Michoacán, don Vasco de Quiroga, desired; but others (certain Franciscans) thought it was feasible to educate a native elite "from childhood", and then extract from that stratum a well-prepared indigenous clergy. The world turned on its head once again (!)… teaching Latin to the sons of the indigenous nobility at the convent of Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco! At the same time, of course, this constituted a concerted effort to break the bonds of love with the indigenous homeland (conceived in a multiple, community, cultural sense), but with no guarantee of (religious) passion. The only outcome that could be presaged was that the program would be an utter failure.

This was the framework in which good Friar Jacob inscribed the "extraordinary" project of evangelizing the lands of Michoacán. His

was a lone voice in the desert demanding that the recently baptized be granted admission into the priesthood. Fine thoughts, indeed, but what was genuinely "extraordinary" is that his brush with heresy earlier in Denmark had not left him rigid in his concepts. Perhaps he felt the religious war required allies and that the aboriginals of America would make good recruits. And to attract them to his side, what better instrument than that of the sacraments, those that Protestants decried? We cannot forget that Friar Daciano died in Tarecuato in 1566, just after the Council of Trent had shut its doors (1563). But the Franciscan's message from that remote corner of the New World breached frontiers (Northern Europe, the Peninsula, New Spain), sheltered by the cover of the universal –Roman– Church.

If the ecclesiastical career was indeed closed to the Indians in the 16th century, it was in part because they were accused of being inveterate drunkards; though at that time (it seems) they had not yet yielded to the vice of smoking (*pisietl*). But things change, and tobacco became the second most important source of revenue for the colonial State. With the birth of the Republic, people continued as vice-ridden as ever, but tended to forget their duty to the tax authorities. *Such times… such mores!* This is what we may lament upon reading Marciano Netzahualcoyotzi Méndez' elucidation from Tlaxcala: how republican love for the homeland shrinks when it touches one's purse! The passion for money is the great truth!

What is certain is that "the original sin" –*i.e.*, the national deficit– reached 3.6 million pesos annually in the 1820s. As so often occurs in such affairs, the national State sought to shift the blame onto the shoulders of state governments by selling them tobacco (1824). But that policy proved no more efficacious and failed to staunch smuggling; worse yet, huge amounts of tobacco products disappeared from state storehouses… the typical response of a poorly-paid bureaucracy.

But all things have nuances: at the regional level smuggling centered in Huamantla, a community strategically located near the tobacco-producing zones of Córdoba and Orizaba. Socially speaking, fiscal measures mostly affected the popular classes, as sales of cigarettes decreased more drastically than those of cigars. In the end, to

synthesize, income from tobacco sales for Tlaxcala's treasury plummeted by 85.5% in that decade.

The real challenge of how to articulate all these conflicting interests at the individual, regional and national levels is taken up by Edwin Rap in his article written from the *land of the rising sun*, the territory of Nayarit, where he introduces the Anglo-Saxon concept of *performance* into the neoliberal politics inherited from *salinismo*, what we good Latinos translate as *representation*, a term rich in polysemia. Rap presents a view of politics delivered with great pomp, plates of beans served personally to Nayarit's voters. Frankly, and simultaneously, it portrays the temptations of power –the local cacique, here present– and authority's capacity to provide followers with plates of lentils, or some similar repast, and how legitimization emerges at the same time from those very beans –that's life, however prosaic– and the voters. All this takes place in a renewed, regionalized milieu, a ritual that in a certain sense takes us back in time. What is innovative is the election that may modify the meaning and modes of representation: we see united before us in one precious description many of the rungs that lead from the local level to the gates of national politics.

Upon descending from the spheres of cultural analysis, we encounter topics and substantial entrees well known in Mexican regional political life: struggles for power between caciques and followers, the manipulation of organizations, demands for resources, meetings carefully prepared by press campaigns accompanied by bountiful banquets, huge urns of meat and drink. Just as before, like the feasts celebrating the Patron Saint of the parish or confraternity: the difference resides in that many guests are "hauled" there by pick-up truck. Of course, the speeches have a distinct tone: no discussion of paths to Heaven or of the price of beans or tobacco; though the enthusiasm of the faithful –read: voters– is quite similar. Unlike earlier times, no recriminations against the Church are heard; in the Nayarit of the 90s criticisms of the central State rain down, for it has forgotten its promises and commitments. The words echo: speechifying, in every case, with a keen view to future negotiations. Finally, as the humble, honest, accessible servant, conciliator, possessor of an

authority like that of the *pater familias*, the candidate goes on cultivating Christian moral qualities in his revolutionary discourse under the *habitus* of populism.

As always in politics, the ideal of change ensconced in a logic of continuity. Perhaps this will one to accept that yesterday's history is today's ethnography, and the latter tomorrow's prospective. This ongoing metamorphosis will continue to be possible as long as what is at stake is the love of science and passion for truth, however relative they may be.

Traducción al inglés de Paul C. Kersey Johnson