

Devoted to the old, afraid of the new

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Segueix-me

Madrid. Tuesday. "Free and Equal". It's not a joke. The old troupe is back. Maybe they have mobilized in case Mariano Rajoy has a weak moment on the day of the meeting. Or in case Artur Mas does some sleight of hand and dupes him, or swings a pocket watch in front of his eyes and hypnotizes him. Or if the Spanish nationalist nation relaxes more than it should and lowers its guard. Or if anyone in the constitutional block doubts the habitual policy of imposition and thinks that they can make concessions, or that there is room to negotiate something with the Catalan representatives.

They, the troupe, are the intellectual cr me-de-la-cr me who protect the true essence, the most genuine collective conscience of authentic Spanish-ness, immutable, perpetual, imperial. That which emerged from an ancient violence legitimized and blessed by the gods, of particularly glorious victories and defeats, at just the right historic moment, by an enlightened generation that conquered and brought together that which had been predestined for unity. They preserve--so that it is not ruined-- the culmination of an exceptional historic process that cannot be altered even by the absence of those who want to escape it. Centuries of domination vouch for them. What a difference between their grandeur and the parochialism of those who, like the Catalan popular movement and its representatives, refer to archaic forms of nationalist egoism seeking to renew and broaden their privileges.

But despite all the belligerence exhibited, they believe that there are not two subjects in conflict, but only one: theirs. There are not two nations, only one: theirs. There is no relation of dominance that fosters a desire for emancipation and freedom in the subordinates; only--according to them-- a sort of compulsive vice, a timeless victimism, that provokes in the Catalan people the strange tendency to behave like bad Spaniards. Disloyal. They don't view us, then, as a hypothetical different subject nor even as political adversaries, but rather just as a deviation, a disease, an anomaly that must be fought and defeated. And it is from this established perspective that they try to define and analyze us. They define us as an inseparable part of themselves, and analyze us as a deformity, like a tumor that is resistant to the most radical treatments. That's why in their most recent appearances they have demanded that the State be harsh in the imposition of its laws. The steel fist.

As for Catalonia, few people here would dare to try to define Spain. Most would be happy to be able to have a respectful, cooperative, and friendly relationship. With a polite, affectionate, and agreed-upon separation. Even though we live in different social structures and in different political moments; or despite the differences between the hegemonic social groups here and there.

We are on the path towards disobedience and defiance of a made-to-order legal system that prevents the exercise of some of our fundamental rights and liberties. We mustn't be afraid. Faced with authoritarianism and the restrictions that are being imposed on us, we have to defend the free expression of the democratic majority will. There is broad agreement on the date and procedure that can't be changed now. For nobody, in any sense.

The “no” from Spain has already been prepared. What 9 November will examine, especially, is democracy, and our ability to make it prevail. We have our own pace. What we are measuring now is the firmness of the commitment of each one of us. There is no room for watching from the sidelines.

Meanwhile, some leaders of parties in crisis are trying out image makeovers: yesterday they were for self-determination, today only if it is legal (within a legal system that excludes it)... In Face/Off (1997), by John Woo, the characters played by Nicholas Cage and John Travolta (Sean Archer and Troy Castor) both underwent face transplants in order to adopt the appearance of each other. Let's not attribute one's own personal confusion and contradictions to confusions and contradictions of a general nature. We have the face we have-- that's it. It's time to take a stand. The current state of Catalan nationalism recognizes Catalonia as a historical and political subject, and the Catalan people as a legitimate source of sovereignty that cannot be challenged nor obstructed with the pretension of subjugating it. Joining the body of Catalan nationalism or not is a political option-- it is not determined by Spain's legality. To speculate about the legalities of the State and the decisions of the Constitutional Court in order to justify entering into or abandon a commitment to the right of self-determination, is to concede the reaction and underestimate the aspirations of the people. It's plastic surgery with a tambourine.

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