

# Great expectations

Elections, as important as they may be, do not by themselves create a new reality

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Emotions running high, still. Excited faces; grimacing faces. Results. Urgent analyses. Conversations. Justifications. Negotiations. Expectations. When the established powers feel that they haven't renewed their dominance, as has been the case in many places, they often bring up their own problems as if they belonged to everyone. And they convey their alarm, their disgust, and their pessimism as if it should affect everyone, because they attribute to themselves alone the representation of the fundamental worries of "all" of society. With few exceptions, they seek refuge in disappointment, bad omens, and distrust. That people don't pay much attention is a sign of the precariousness of that predominance. And for many sectors of Catalan society, these are days of hope.

Shift. The polls hinted at it, but it wasn't clear. It was not a simple dance of votes with ephemeral consequences. Nor the result of a passing electoral fad. It is not only that the Catalan political map has changed --which it has. It has been too hard for the political system to incorporate the social change that has now happened, that some seers underestimated it. The political map, however, has already begun to reflect a full range of fundamental changes. The shift that started continues. It is related to the uninhibited emergence of a new hegemony, leftist and pro-independence. The leap of this past Sunday is very important. International attention has focused on the emblematic weight of Barcelona city, which, in turn, can be related to similar European political trends. Democratic radicalism. And we must add to this the signs of an institutional reorganization and renewal throughout the country. In general, the desire for a democratic revolution is clearly making progress; the forces in favor of urgent and broad social and economic transformation are making progress; the call for immediate institutional regeneration and broadening of the forms of political participation is making progress; and support for sovereignty and the process for construction of a Catalan state that collects, synthesizes, and is committed to all of these other goals is making progress, too.

The complexity of reality defies our capacity for understanding. Even if we try as hard as we can, in the end, it is unattainable. For this reason, theories on the functioning of societies are useful. And we resort to guidelines and methods that help us to think and to interpret the past and the present. It is with this baggage that we manage to make sense of all that is happening around us and in our own lives, and direct our actions (even our vote). But these guidelines are tools, formal distinctions. They are metaphors, outlines, and games that we use because they reveal meaningful aspects of reality. It is not that reality "is this way", but only that we are used to "seeing it this way". To read and interpret Catalan political reality we often talk about basic axes: a national axis, a social axis, the axis of old and new politics, an axis of democratic regeneration ... These axes are pieces, patterns, of our way of thinking. But in our real life everything that refers to these theoretical axes combine in constant action, in a string of practices and behaviors that do not allow any kind of reduction or simplification.

Anyone who gets used to compartmentalizing social reality and reducing it

to a field of limited variables could end up conceiving politics itself as a simple artifice. These days, sectors of the establishment have tried to pressure CiU and President Mas to desist from holding elections on 27 September (27-S). As if this wasn't about a group and a leader with a defined project of their own, but only a kind of political marketing company, adaptable to all types of circumstances, that would have to adjust its position to the tastes and needs of a select few of its usual "clients". Meanwhile, ignoring the evidence of the results, other voices are demanding, once again, an unfeasible candidacy for 27-S, based on only one axis and ignoring all the others.

Elections, as important as they may be, do not by themselves create a new reality. Rather, what they do is reflect and hasten it. They reinforce and express social and political moments and processes. And this is what happened on Sunday and it will happen again in September. Recent Catalan political life has been characterized by a simultaneous public awareness regarding the need to have a more just and equal socioeconomic model, and the consequent need for having all available resources and capacities expected in the neighboring nations. And it is on this basis that we will obtain a plural majority for independence on 27-S, for social change and for democratic regeneration.

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