



Independent views in freedom

Spain, a country without self-esteem

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Spain languishes dragged down by its lack of self-esteem and its perpetual and sterile internal struggles. Detached from its vital sustenance, the nation is gradually weakening, and the wickerwork that holds it together is slowly falling apart. Nations are amalgamated through a common language, common customs and common religion or values, but also through a shared history and achievements of which to feel genuinely proud together. That is why Spain's enemies, both internal and external, seek to destroy our traditionally shared language, our customs and religion and demonize our history. All the strong nations of the world are nourished by historical successes to be proud of, and they attach so much importance to this relationship that they often embellish their feats with myths that only tangentially touch reality. Spain is the antithetical case, because in spite of having a brilliant past - in some cases unique in the History of Humanity-, it assumes as its own the false and negativist narrative of its enemies who make it believe that its history is shameful.

Our country, for example, could feel genuinely proud of having been the cradle of the parliamentary system with the Decrees of León of 1188, which, although ephemeral, brought together elected representatives of towns and cities with the king, the Church and the nobility, and protected individual rights against the arbitrary abuse of the powerful. It remains the oldest known documented reference to parliamentarism, nearly three decades before the 1215 English Magna Carta. Spain could also be proud of having expelled the Muslim invader after the long and hard Reconquest, but political correctness prevents celebrating the end of what it now calls the "coexistence of the three cultures", as if the relationship between prisoner and jailer could be defined as "coexistence". Indeed, the Reconquest ended the unbearable apartheid suffered by the Christian majority at the hands of the Muslim minority in power. But if we do not celebrate the victory at Lepanto, which in 1571 stopped the Turkish ambition in the Mediterranean and whose 450th anniversary went, of course, unnoticed a few days ago, how are we going to celebrate the brilliant victory, against all odds, at the Battle of Navas de Tolosa in 1212, which became the turning point of the Reconquest?

However, the most relevant Spanish legacy is the incredible feat of the discovery, conquest, civilization and evangelization of America, described by Charles Lummis as "the greatest, longest and most marvelous series of great feats recorded in History". No wonder our national holiday is celebrated on October 12th,

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in whose memorable dawn, in 1492, the cry of Land Ho!, launched from the crow's nest by Sevillian sailor Rodrigo de Triana, would change the history of the world forever. It is difficult to overstate the courage and determination of Columbus' expedition heading west into the unknown. The same virtues apply to Hernán Cortés, who, with barely 400 men, a dozen horses and six small cannons, led the revolt of the other indigenous peoples subjugated by the Aztec tyranny and conquered the vast Mexican empire. To these names could be added those of Pizarro (conqueror of Peru), Valdivia (Chile), Cabeza de Vaca and so many others, and include other distinguished explorers such as Juan Sebastian Elcano, who completed the first circumnavigation of the globe under the Spanish flag and whose 500th anniversary passed obscurely, once again, in the country where it took place.

Here we come up against the absurdity of the new political correctness, which considers the original Indians a group of Mother Theresa-kind of peaceful guys representing an advanced civilization, singing songs all day, exchanging pleasantries, eating nuts and fruits (vegans!) and exchanging flowers while the Conquistadors were evil people thirsty of blood and genocide (why a country supposedly interested in exploitation would be interested in decimating those it wanted to supposedly exploit as slaves is a paradox too difficult to understand to me). This narrative insults Spain with impunity because Spain does not believe in itself. The reality is that Spain brought to America a civilization infinitely more advanced than the one it found there. Even though it had some knowledge of irrigation and urban planning, the society that the Spaniards found was in many aspects in the Stone Age, since it did not know iron, copper, bronze, the wheel or the plow (in the 16th century!). The interesting Mayan calendar cannot make us forget that the Egyptians had developed a 365-day solar calendar perhaps 3,000 years earlier. The Aztec and Mayan pyramids and temples, which did not know the arc, pale in comparison with the Egyptian Pyramids, built 4,000 years earlier, with the Parthenon in Athens, built 1,500 years earlier or the Roman Colosseum, built 1,000 years earlier, or with the magnificent Romanic and Gothic cathedrals, erected centuries earlier. And how can we compare the prehistoric and simplistic pre-Columbian art with the Greek or Roman sculptures of millennia before, or the perfection of the then contemporary paintings and sculptures of Michelangelo, Bellini, Titian or Raphael? Faced with the clearly predatory colonialism of other European powers or the United States, Spain was genuinely concerned with the advancement of the peoples of America. The Conquerors brought culture (the first University of Mexico was founded in 1553, while the first official British University in India dates from 1847) and the wonderful Christian religion, which put an end to paganism, horrendous human sacrifices and cannibalism (what do you think the Indians did with the thousands of prisoners sacrificed?). Spain also created a body of legislation that was enormously advanced for the time, as attested by the constant concern of Queen Isabella the Catholic for the rights of the Indians or the moral and legal debates on the same issue that had place between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in the Valladolid Debate, the first (and only, for centuries)

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moral debate in European history to discuss the rights and treatment of indigenous people, an unparalleled landmark event at the time. Likewise, our country encouraged intermarriage, which fused our peoples (we still call Latin American countries "sister nations"), a phenomenon that did not occur in other European powers due to racism. Let's remember that interracial marriage was not legalized in the "land of the free" – the United States- until 1967, more than four centuries later. Naturally, the Conquest took place by the force of arms and not with flowers and hippie songs, and there were excesses and injustices, from which the History of Humanity will never be spared. But the balance is, on the whole, absolutely extraordinary. The Spaniards found a civilization fragmented by perpetual wars, poor, primitive and oppressed by superstition and tyranny, and when the Empire fell in the 19th century, they left a continent united by a common language, culture and religion, free, civilized and prosperous. America was Spain, and its inhabitants, Spanish citizens. Thus, the 1812 Constitution of Cadiz defined the Nation as "the gathering of all Spaniards from both hemispheres", since we did not have colonies, but provinces and overseas territories.

Finally, Spain (and not only Madrid's region) could also celebrate the victory in the War of Independence at the beginning of the 19th century, in which the Spanish people, with British help (of course, the Brits call it differently - The Peninsular War – and demand the star role), beat the invading French troops, but not before the French left a trail of death and blind destruction of our historical heritage all over the country. Even today, it is difficult to travel through Castile without finding a church or monastery that was not vandalized or burned by the barbarian defenders of the paradoxical Enlightenment. The successful guerrilla warfare that bled the Napoleonic troops has become famous, but it is equally remarkable that the first defeat suffered by Napoleon's Grande Armée in all of Europe was against the regular Spanish Army at the Battle of Bailén. However, how is a country with inferiority complex going to celebrate the victory over its northern neighbor, which it considers to be the everlasting standard bearer of light and progress?

The pride with which Spanish society used to remember these deeds is conspicuous by its absence today, an omission whose relevance goes unnoticed but which slowly withers the feeling of belonging that is essential for the survival of the nation. The enemies of Spain congratulate themselves, because they find no opposition to their destructive agenda. The time has come to draw the line.

Fernando del Pino Calvo-Sotelo