

Spanish Context

Before going to Medina de Rioseco, we asked the Spanish team to share with us some elements of the Spanish context. We wanted to have their subjective approach of their own water. Hereafter is a synthesis of what they shared.

HISTORY

The Two Spain

The two Spains (Spanish: las dos España-s) is a phrase from a short poem by Spanish poet Antonio Machado, referring to the left-right political divisions that later led to the Spanish Civil War, originated in a short, untitled poem, number LIII of his Proverbios y Cantares (Proverbs and Songs).

1936-1939: Spanish civil war opposed the Republicans, who were loyal to the democratically elected Spanish Republic, to the Nationalists, a rebel group led by General Francisco Franco. The Nationalists prevailed, and Franco ruled Spain for the next 36 years, from 1939 until his death in 1975.

One example of the victims of the Nationalists is the poet Federico Garcia Lorca, who was executed with a teacher and anarchist bullfighters who had fought in the city's defense against Francisco Franco's rebellion. It is not clear whether he was shot for being an opponent or an homosexual.

Guernica by Picasso: bombing of April 1937 by the nationalists

1945: Franco's recognition as the Spanish head of state by Britain and France, but he was already proclaimed Generalissimo of the Nationalists and Jefe del Estado (Head of State) in October 1936, and thereafter assumed the official title of "Su Excelencia el Jefe de Estado" ("His Excellency the Head of State")

1959: The Basque nationalist and separatist organization ETA was founded and has since evolved to a paramilitary group with the goal of gaining independence for the Greater Basque Country. Since 1968, they are held responsible for killing 829 people, injuring thousand and undertaking dozens of kidnappings.

1975: Franco is dead. The Spanish makes a transition from the dictatorship to a democracy in the form of a constitutional monarchy.

La Movida Madrile: (The Madrilenian scene) was a countercultural movement that took place mainly in Madrid during the Spanish transition. It represented the resurrection of the economy in Spain and the emergence of a new Spanish identity. Although this hedonistic cultural wave was born in Madrid, it emerged in parallel in other Spanish urban centers, such as Barcelona, Bilbao and Vigo. It was characterized by freedom of expression, transgression of the taboos imposed by the Franco Regime, use of recreational drugs, the "coming out" of the Madrilenian cheli and the "pasota" dialect and a new spirit of freedom on the streets.

Picture of Pedro Almodovar

2008: Spain enters into a financial crisis

* "Apeocracy": I add here a funny video that explains our crisis: (In English)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2C1vBh-Is8>

2011-present: Spanish protests, also referred to as the 15-M Movement, the Indignants Movement, and Take the Square, #spanishrevolution, are a series of ongoing demonstrations in Spain. They demanded a radical change in Spanish politics, as protesters do not consider themselves to be represented by any traditional party nor favoured by the measures approved by politicians. Even though protesters form a heterogeneous and ambiguous group, they share a strong rejection for unemployment, welfare cuts,

Spanish politicians, and the current two-party system in Spain between the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the People's Party (PP). This also includes the rejection of the current political system, capitalism, banks and political corruption. Many call for basic rights, which consist of home, work, culture, health and education rights. According to statistics published by RTVE, the Spanish public broadcasting company, between 6.5 and 8 million Spaniards have participated in these protests.

Belen

Key words: democracy, dictatorship, reaction, revolution, people division

IDENTITY/ MINORITIES / STRUCTURE

Spanish Gypsies or the invisible

When they first arrived to Iberian Peninsula, gypsies were welcomed but later, the Inquisition could not accept their free way of life, customs and traditions. They became were seen as dangerous people, difficult to domesticate and control.

Collective memory

Despite the repression, gypsies reached a kind of comfort since the 2nd half of the XIXth century. That's the beginning of an era, in which the creation of the "collective memory" of the Spanish gypsy community starts. From 1850 to 1950 gypsies were very important in farming economy, which gave them social recognition and respect for the first time, although the repression continued parallelly, which hasn't stop to the day. Due to their incorporation to society, gypsies stopped being nomads, one of their principal characteristics. With their settling, economic, social and cultural exchange began, of great importance for gypsy community. It was then that gypsies defined what today is known (or rather unknown) as "Gypsy Law". In the 50s, due to industrialization, the professions and labours they developed lost their value, returning to the offside.

Gypsy Law

The gypsy community has provide itself of a series of own rules, under which their communal living is regulated, giving them an identity and guarantees as a people. Those rules, never written, have been verbally inherited from one generation to another. There's no way to oblige people to follow the rules, but the total acceptance of the Gypsy Law by the community is the main support for it's accomplishment, and the social pressure, it's guarantee.

Gypsy Culture

Gypsy culture has no literature, it's spoken, transmitted from generation to generation. For the gypsies what constitutes their culture is their language, their gypsy laws, their customs, traditions and rites, which are very influenced by Spanish culture. There's a minority percentage of gypsies with university studies, however the best known face is the one which deals with misery, shanties and marginalization.

Gypsies in numbers

In Spain 600.000

In Madrid community 60.000

In Castilla y León 29.000

In Valladolid 9.000

Efrain

Key words: Spanish norms, stereotypes, rules, gypsies, minorities, identity, transmission, repression, discrimination

+ put his pdf since he wrote a very personal text on it and pictures...

GENERATIONS / POLITICS

The generational shift in Spain

Spain is facing an aging process. The elderly population grows faster than the young one does. Lots of people from the “young” generation are leaving Spain, because there's no job, politics are decreasing opportunities.

The Monarchy has suffered a process of devaluation. Surveys and talks clearly revealed the king and his family were losing their popularity. Then the king announced his abdication on his son, Felipe VI. Even the most anachronic structure in Spain, the Monarchy, is suffering a Generational change.

3 years ago, the 15M movement was born in Spain. A political, social, economical and cultural movement, related to Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street, that suddenly raised in the public squares of Spain. During almost one month, thousands of people from very different backgrounds, most of them leftist young people, occupied the main squares in the cities, complaining about the political situation, in which public, social and cultural systems are being erased to promote the private benefit and the “Market Law”. 15M was known for being absolutely horizontal, with no visible leader or structure. But...3 years later, the movement is still alive, people is still gathering in assembly, creating cooperatives and social projects, and hundreds of evictions have been avoided by the movement. And, in consequence... In the last European Elections, a new political party was founded in Spain. It's called “Podemos”, which means “We can” (Ugly name, yes). The party incorporated a big part of the political discourse held by the 15M movement. They had a huge success in the UE elections, and they're still growing for the general elections in Spain.

For one time, it seems that Politics is something real and changable, from my generation's point of view.

Nacho

key words: politics, generation, shift, structure, immigration

+ put his diaporama

WATER / FLUX / TERRITORIAL BALANCE / DEMOCRATIC RIGHT

The water in Spain: The Canal of Castilla as a connecting element between time, people and cultures.

There have been big differences between people ways of life based on their natural water supplies, mostly because of one factor: abundance (north of Spain) or scarcity (Castilla, and many other regions). With knowledge and technology, these distances get shortened.

The **Canal of Castilla** was one example of this. It was created in 1973 to facilitate better communication between the quite dry region of Castilla and the atlantic-climate area of North of Spain. The construction was divided in four “ramales” or canals. The one connecting Palencia to Rioseco (78 km) is called **Ramal de Campos**.

Transmission

This project provided valuable transmission of:

- Knowledge: thanks to the people and merchandise displacement.
- Culture: from the different people and knowledge mixture.
- Economic: goods and merchandise movement through the canal enriched drier regions, as better water supplies provide higher and richer output/production.

Memory

Originally the “Ramal de Campos” was used for commercial navigation, hydraulic power for **factories (flour,**

leather, paper, armament), water mills, shipyards, sewing machinery and forges, and fishing. Nowadays, the canal is part of our cultural heritage and is a touristic attraction.

Law

Spanish laws have always defended water as a public property and provided people with it. But the Canal was expensive and there was a moment when the politics made a deal with a private company to finish the works and exploit the Canal for seventy years. After that, it became again a state property for the people. Nowadays, under a democratic state, governments have started a privatization-water-process throughout the country. They have already achieved it in Cataluña, and they are trying hard in Madrid with *Isabel the Second Canal*. Fortunately this process is stopped thanks to strong social protests and demonstrations.

*key words: water, democratic right, memory, transmission,
Laura*

TRADITION / TRANSMISSION / ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Easter, one of the most popular celebration in Medina de Rioseco

Easter is a religious celebration shared in all Spain. The paradox of Easter is that 80% of the population participate in the celebrations, the processions, carry the “pasos” (images of JesusChrist, and representations of his life) and are part of the “Cofradías” (different religious associations in every district); but the rest of the year the most of them are not practitioner.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9O7I29t3aOA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7mRnCrjURU>

It is an intergenerational event. Every year, the “procesiones” (processions, name of the parade), are almost the same. During the May’ crosses, the children do their own “pasos” and “procesiones”.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dX_97pF8RJK

La Jota, a traditional dance

During the San Juan celebration, many people dance “La jota”. It is a common dance in the Spanish folklore. It is a good example of how tradition are shared by a generation to another since every generation dances “la jota” even if it is not that common in all parts of Spain.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqUd480lquk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lu5EQGCMjtE>

Key words: transmission, memories, intergenerational relationships, dance, annual celebration, tradition, popular festival