

October 7, 2017

Dear Friend,

Some Spanish colleagues have given us your email address for us to explain to the international academic community what is happening in Spain.

As you know, we are living through difficult times. For you to understand how things have reached their present state we must explain that Catalonia, one of the richest regions in Spain, has been governed for more than three decades by a nationalist élite that has made every effort to build a specifically Catalan administration in which everything that is to do with Spain will disappear. During this time they have imposed the will of one half of the Catalans, the nationalists, on the other half. Now they are doing so more forcibly than ever and are threatening imminently to separate Catalonia from Spain.

National construction. An [internal document](#) of the nationalist government of Catalonia (dating from 1990) sets out in minute detail its strategy to distort the social reality. Successive regional governments have favoured access by nationalists (and Catalan-speakers) to the teaching profession, to parent-teacher associations, to the governing bodies of the universities, to high positions in the media and, in fact, to all the fabric of government, society, business and trade unions.

This also explains the “spiral of silence” that has for decades hidden and silenced more than half of the people of Catalonia. For that reason the time has come to give status to those workers, who are absent from public life and do not want to lose their rights in Catalonia and their family ties with Spain. The social reality of Catalonia, which the nationalists deny, is plural. Firstly because [more than half of Catalans have Spanish as their mother tongue](#), and secondly because there is not even a nationalist political majority: the separatist government is supported by a majority of parliamentary seats, but not by a majority of votes.

Corruption and political disconnection. In spite of everything, on 8 November 2015, the Catalan Parliament announced the “beginning of the creation of the independent Catalan state in the form of a republic,” adding that “the Parliament and the process of democratic disconnection will not be subject to the decisions of the institutions of the Spanish state, in particular the Constitutional Court.” On 6 September they put themselves beyond the pale. Without even the majorities required by their own Statute of Autonomy, by the guarantees, by the obligatory reports from their institutions, and even ignoring the schedule for the parliamentary debate, they sowed the legislative seeds for a breakaway. In the absence of the main opposition parties, who represent almost half of the chamber, they approved two laws for the “disconnection” from Spain: the Law for the referendum and the Law for Judicial Transition and the Foundation of the Republic, which will come into effect, they say, after the breakaway of sovereignty. And that will be in a matter of hours or days.

In 2010 the independence movement in Catalonia was able to arouse 19% of the population compared with only 10% in 2003. The breakaway described above was reached after a radicalization that started to take off in 2013. In March of that year, the prolonged discontent with the financial cuts that followed the economic crisis was redirected towards Spain. “Spain is robbing us” were the words of Convergència i Unió, the party in power. With that ruse they set out to cover up the corruption of the family of Jordi Pujol, the ideologue of nationalist construction and First Minister of Catalonia from 1980 to 2003. The illegal funding of his party came to light, involving the granting of public contracts to companies close to the party. The current first Minister of Catalonia, Carles Puigdemont, was part of this party, which has now changed its name to PdeCat in order to cover its tracks.

The implications of sovereignty. The underlying idea of sovereignty (which is declared to be indivisible in every Constitutions in the world with some rare exceptions such as Ethiopia or the former USSR) is that everybody has everything and nobody has anything. Sovereignty is a unity of decision, it is a community of justice. Nobody can vote on who can belong to the political community, since this would mean that one part of the population could exclude the other. If the richer regions could vote to leave, we would be submitted to their perpetual blackmail, and the equality of rights and duties would be endangered. Sovereignty over Catalonia also belongs to all the other Spanish citizens and workers; and likewise, the rest of Spain is also the political property of the Catalans.

History of false grievances. Catalonia is not a plundered region and does not have an abnormal fiscal deficit. Spain is in practice a federal state where the Catalans enjoy very wide self-government and none of their rights are infringed. Moreover, even though those who have Catalan as their mother tongue are in the minority, and in breach of judgments from our high courts (which require at least 25% of school classes to be taught in Spanish), in Catalan public schools no subject is taught in Spanish apart from the Spanish language. Moreover, there was never a war of secession in the years following 1700, but there was an international war of succession to the Spanish throne. There was never any historical episode of “Spain against Catalonia”. Their strategy has always been to inflame victimism.

Internationalisation of the conflict. The Catalan government has for many years sought to make use of its own institutions located in the main international capitals to spread their lies and false grievances to the world, illicitly diverting to propaganda activities the funds that should have been used to provide basic services. In this way they hope to have gained allies for this moment of tension. They need this support in order to win politically that which is not democratically viable.

Risks for our democracy. There is [much talk just now about “mediation” and “dialogue”](#). It worries us that there are prestigious public figures and international

institutions that (with the best of intentions) do not realise that by appealing to dialogue in the current circumstances they may in fact be putting pressure on the Spanish government to give in to iniquitous claims that seek to break up the equality of all Spaniards before the law. Social peace and freedom are most urgent now; but democracy and the common agreement on which it is based is also at stake. We believe that the rule of law and the democratic institutions, which the government of Spain must safeguard, now deserve international support in order not to give in to blackmail and to preserve the rule of law in Catalonia against those who demonstrate with chants of “The streets will always be ours.” The secessionists prioritise the images of mobilisation in the streets above parliamentary arithmetic and the law; this is obviously a risk for any democracy. It is enough to look at [the company they keep](#). For that reason we reject out of hand any hypothetical bilateralism of Spain-Catalonia, which would reward the seditious elements and snatch democratic sovereignty from all the other Spaniards.

Principle of legality. Finally, we should not overlook the fact that the so-called ‘referendum’ of 1 October (which took place with countless irregularities that invalidate the slightest hint of credibility) was struck down by our Constitutional Court, just as the Italian Constitutional Court did with respect to the independence claims of Veneto in 2015 or the German Court when faced with the attack from Bavaria in 2016. What is more, unlike the case in these two countries, or in France and Portugal, our Constitution is not “militant”, meaning that it can be amended in ways that could include a federalism that would regulate the exercise of self-determination. To many of the signatories a reform in this direction would seem unjust as it would contravene the indivisibility that, as we have tried to explain, is characteristic of sovereignty. Nevertheless, the separatists have not even wanted to give consideration to this path.

On 1 October, the police had a court order to close the schools that were to be used as polling stations in order to prevent voting; however, two associations closely linked to, and subsidised by, the separatist government connived with the Catalan police (who partially disobeyed their orders) to organise a massive act of sedition. Bringing people out onto the streets in order to break the law; that was the strategy and it was anything but a democratic one. Fortunately, some of the ringleaders of Sunday’s events, the presidents of the organising associations organisers and the chief officer of the Catalan police, are already under judicial investigation for sedition.

The police quickly stopped their charges. Four people were hospitalised and after a few hours there were only two serious injuries: one had been hit in the eye by a rubber bullet, and an elderly man had had a heart attack. In particular cases there is [evidence of manipulation](#) that has been highlighted by the international press; and, as has happened recently in other important international campaigns, [Russia was involved in](#)

the whole thing. Apart from one isolated case. we deny that there was disproportionate use of legitimate violence.

The consequences. Many companies and banks are leaving Catalonia. But it is not only businesspeople who are afraid. [Teachers have come under pressure too](#) as have the judges, who know that the Catalan government has files on the 801 judges in Catalonia, distinguishing the separatists from those loyal to the Constitution, and they recently revealed their fears: “They want to make us choose between the Constitution and the new legality. This is terrible, but we will have no choice but to choose between treason and exile.” Many people are afraid to express their ideas in public, at work, etc. There are children harassed at school because their parents are Guardia Civil officers. Tension is escalating and there is powerful movement from an anti-system party (CUP), which supports the Catalan government and has for some time been threatening violence in the streets.

Some time between Friday 6 and Monday 9 October, the seditious Catalan government is expected to declare unilateral independence.

When the constitutional order is re-established and the fear and the threats have ceased, *all Spaniards* must talk and tackle the legal changes that we consider to be right. But not before, in order not to give up our political equality.

The signatories would be pleased, if you wish to do so, for you to pass on this information on to anyone who may be interested.

Kind regards.

Signatures:

Spanish Members of the European Parliament: Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Teresa Giménez Barbat, Javier Nart, Esteban González Pons, Enrique Calvet Chambon, Beatriz Becerra and Carolina Punset.

University professors and public figures: **Fernando Savater** (Philosopher and writer), **Mario Vargas Llosa** (Nobel Prize for Literature), **Félix Ovejero** (lecturer in Economics, Ethics and Social Sciences at Barcelona University), **Teresa Freixes** (Professor of Constitutional Law at the Autonomous University of Barcelona), **Francesc de Carreras** (at Barcelona University), **Teresa Freixes** (Professor of Constitutional Law at the Autonomous University of Barcelona), **Rosa Díez** (MP for PSOE and UPyD), **Camilo José Cela Conde** (Guest Researcher at the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of California), **Francisco Sosa Wagner** (Professor of Administrative Law), **Adela Cortina** (Professor of Ethics and Political Philosophy at the University of Valencia), **Andrés Trapiello** (Writer), **Félix**

de Azúa (Retired Professor of Aesthetics and Theory of Art at the University of Barcelona), **Alfonso Ruiz Miguel** (Professor of Philosophy of Law at the Autonomous University of Madrid), **Francisco Mora** (Professor of Human Physiology at the Faculty of Medicine of the Complutense University Madrid and Adjunct Professor of the Department of Molecular Physiology and Biophysics at the University of Iowa, USA), **Araceli Mangas Martin** (Professor of International Public Law at the Complutense University of Madrid), **Juan Antonio García Amado** (Professor of Philosophy of Law at the University of León), **Manuel Montero** (Professor of Contemporary History at the University of the Basque Country), **Arcadi Espada** (Writer and Journalist), **Joaquín Leguina** (was MP for PSOE), **Roberto L. Blanco Valdés** (Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Santiago), **Aurelio Arteta** (Retired Professor of Moral Philosophy and Politics at the University of the Basque Country), **Manuel Atienza** (Professor of Philosophy of Law at the University of Alicante), **Albert Boadella** (actor and playwright), **Javier Tajadura Tejada** (Lecturer in Constitutional Law at the University of the Basque Country), **Antonio Bar Cendón** (Professor of Constitutional Law and Jean Monnet Professor “ad personam” of Law and Politics of the European Union, in the Faculty of Law of the University of Valencia), **Julián Sauquillo González** (Autonomous University of Madrid, Professor of Philosophy of Law), **Mercedes Fuertes** (Professor of Administrative Law), **Carmen Iglesias** (Spanish Royal Academy /Royal Academy of History), **Javier Fernández Sebastián** (lecturer in the Faculty of Social Science at the University of the Basque Country), **Joseba Arregi** (formerly lecturer in Sociology at the University of the Basque Country, former Minister in the Basque government), **Yolanda Gómez Sánchez** Professor of Constitutional Law (Jean Monnet Professor, *ad personam*, of the European Union), **María José Villaverde Rico** (Professor of Political Science at the Complutense University of Madrid), **Carlos Martínez Gorriarán** (Lecturer in Aesthetics at the University of the Basque Country), **Luis Rodríguez Abascal** (Tenured Lecturer in Philosophy of Law, Autonomous University of Madrid), **Carmen Sanz Ayán** (Professor of Modern History. Complutense University), **Ramón Vargas--Machuca Ortega** (Professor of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of University of Cadiz), **Iñaki Iriarte** (Tenured Lecturer in History of Political Thought in the University of the Basque Country), **Javier Peña Echeverría**, (Professor of Political Philosophy at the University of Valladolid), **Josu de Miguel Bárcena** (Lecturer in Constitutional Law at the Autonomous University of Barcelona), **José Vicente Rodríguez Mora** (Lecturer in Economics, University of Edinburgh), **Manuel Toscano Méndez** (Lecturer in Moral Philosophy at the University of Malaga), **Rafael Arenas García** (former Chair of Sociedad Civil Catalana), **María Elvira Roca Barea** (Doctor of Medieval Literature, has worked at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) and taught at Harvard University), **Nuria Amat** (writer), **Jesús Conill** (Professor of Moral Philosophy and Politics at the University of Valencia), **Antonio Diéguez Lucena** (Professor of Logic and Philosophy of Science at the University of Malaga), **Carlos Fernández de Casadevante** (Professor of International Public Law at the Rey Juan Carlos

University in Madrid), **Carlos Mougán** (Tenured Lecturer in Moral Philosophy, University of Cadiz), **Ignacio Tirado** (Lecturer in Private, Social and Economic Law at the Autonomous University of Madrid), **Antonio Hermosa** (Lecturer in Aesthetics and History Philosophy at the University of Seville), **Martín Alonso** (Retired Lecturer in Philosophy), Juan Antonio Cordero Fuertes (École polytechnique, Paris), **Juan Antonio Cordero Fuertes** (École polytechnique, Paris), **Gabriel Cabello** (Lecturer of History of Art at the University of Granada), **Francisco Castilla Urbano** (Lecturer in History and Philosophy at the University of Alcalá), **Roberto Colom** (Professor of Psychology and Biology Health at the Autonomous University of Madrid), **Juan Ignacio Martínez Pastor** Spanish National Distance Education University (UNED), **Lidia Valera Ordaz** (lecturer in the Faculty of Journalism, at the University of Valencia), **Miguel Peña Méndez** (Lecturer in the Faculty of Fine Art at the University of Granada), **Isabel Echevarría Isusquiza** (Department Hispanic, Romance Philology and Theory of Literature), **Juan Bonilla** (Writer), **Albert Boadella** (actor playwright), **Juan Antonio Negrete** (Lecturer in Philosophy), **Tomás Valladolid Bueno** (Lecturer in Philosophy), **José Ángel González Sainz** (Writer, Lecturer and founder of the Antonio Machado International Centre), **Luis Alberto de Cuenca y Prado** (Poet), **Miguel Ángel Quintana Paz** (Professor of Ethics and Political Philosophy), **Roberto Ramos Fontecoba** (Responsible of the editorial Página Indómita).

As leaders of this project, we remain at your entire disposal to provide you with any other information you may require on this issue.

With best regards,

Maite Pagazaurtundúa (MEP, ALDE) and **Fernando Savater** (Philosopher and writer).

Links to some interesting documents in English:

- **Identity poison plan carried out since 1990 by the Catalan secessionist governments.**

<https://www.docdroid.net/RSxImxx/catalan-government-in-the-90s-identity-poison-plan.pdf>

- **Letter sent to Jean Claude Juncker by five founding members of ;Basta Ya! (Fernando Savater, Carlos Martínez Gorriarán, María San Gil, Rosa Díez, Maite Pagazaurtundúa), association awarded the Sakharov Prize for its civic struggle against ETA and against the theoretical foundation of exclusive ethnic nationalism in the Basque Country.**

<https://www.docdroid.net/fGzjFve/letter-to-eu-leaders.pdf>

- **In Defence of The Freedom of Expression of Professor in Catalonia (International Manifesto)**

<https://lectureresxlalibertad.blogspot.com.es/?m=1>

- **“Call to the democratic Left on the events in Catalonia”**

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/group-of-social-scientists-working-at-various-universities-and-citizens-in-barcel>

- **Marginal Revolution (ECONOMY BLOG). About Catalonia:**

-About language policy:

<http://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2017/10/catalan-spanish-language-issue-comments.html>

-About institutional disloyalty:

<http://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2017/10/separatist-sentences-ponder.html>

- **Some articles from El País in English:**

-What is really happening in Catalonia? (05/10/2017)

https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/10/03/inenglish/1507025584_438952.html

-Who in Europe supports the Catalan secessionists? (05/10/2017)

https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/10/04/inenglish/1507129814_170926.html

-Catalan police leader under investigation for sedition by High Court (04/10/2017)

https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/10/04/inenglish/1507110391_236888.html

-There's fake news in Catalonia too (02/10/2017)

https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/10/02/inenglish/1506943013_999238.html

- **Some Spanish press articles translated into English:**

<https://voicesfromspain.com/>

- **Some research articles:**

-Roberto Garvía & Thomas Jeffrey Miley (2013): “Linguistic immersion” and political conflict in contemporary Catalonia. *European Journal of Language Policy* 5.1, 5–40

<http://online.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/doi/abs/10.3828/ejlp.2013.2>

- Thomas Jeffrey Miley (2007): Against the Thesis of the “Civic Nation”: The Case of Catalonia in Contemporary Spain, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 13:1, 1-37

-Thomas Jeffrey Miley (2014): Democratic Representation and the National Dimension in Catalan and Basque Politics”, *Journal of politics culture and society*, 27:291–322

-Enric Martínez and Thomas Jeffrey Miley (2010): The constitution and the politics of national identity in Spain, *Nations and Nationalism*, 16 (1), 6–30.

- **Catalonia: Political group leaders discuss the situation with Frans Timmermans (04/10/2017)**

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20171003IPR85246/catalonia-political-group-leaders-discuss-situation-with-frans-timmermans>

