



2019

HISTORICAL AND CHAOTIC YEAR



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Albert Gomez Subarroca

*Y2 Graphic Design
Research in context,
imagined worlds.*

*“Those who cannot remember the
past are condemned to repeat it.”*

*“Aquellos que no recuerdan el pasado
están condenados a repetirlo.”*

Jorge Santayana

ESSAY

2019, HISTORICAL AND CHAOTIC YEAR

ABSTRACT

In this reflection, a brief presentation on the revolutions of the year 2019 has been devised, focusing on the main issue in the freedom and independence movement of Catalonia, a movement that has been going on for decades but starting it in the referendum of October 1, 2017.

Key words

Social movements / historical change / freedom / protests / chaos / 2019 / politics / semiotics / international / police repression / human rights / cultures / countries / power / people / collective masses / common goal / future / resistance / Catalonia / Hong Kong / Chile / Ecuador / Russia / Spain / violence / fire /



▲ Chile protests,
2019. JPEG1



▲ Ecuador protests,
2019. JPEG2



▲ Catalonia protests,
2019. JPEG3

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CHAOS

The Cambridge dictionary defines chaos as: a state of total confusion without order.

And it's true that Chaos is really an alteration of the order, but it should be noted that the concept can be pleasant and unpleasant at the same time, at least, I will focus chaos from the point of view of collective revolutions and masses against the disproportionate rules imposed by governments to its citizens, creating a conflict and causing the process of chaos themselves.

And it is that 2019 is a good year to reflect on the chaos and social movements of the world. To date, there have been great upsets in Chile, Hong Kong, Volvia, Lebanon, Italy and Catalonia. Regardless of the country and the subject, we can find elements shared between all protests.

"Beyond an unaccepted law or a rise in rates, there are other discomforts that are usually related to the material conditions of life and freedoms."

(J. G. Mir, 2019)

It is clear that each revolution has its personality, but it is true that among all, similar factors can be shared, such as social inequality, increased corruption and increased political repression.

If we analyze the chaos, in the different photographs of social revolts, from the semiotic point of view they could be perfectly all of the same protest, and this is where all the protests unite, being collective masses always fighting against a goal.

They are very powerful photos that transmit a lot. In all of them we always find a central element, a person, doing an action and being the protagonist of the photography, and then, in the background, there is the action, where in all the photos it is accompanied by fire. In short, all the pictures have the same signified, the fight.



▲ Catalonia protests, 2019. JPEG4

The fire is present in all protests, and its meaning is very powerful. It can be interpreted as being born again, and in all revolts it is a meaning of struggle and life, always accompanied by violence.

In short, it's a reality that photography is also an art, an art that is very fashionable nowadays. It was in the invention of the camera, where the pictures were replaced by the photographs and the way they painted was changed, but so far, the painters were responsible for capturing historical moments and everyday scenes of antiquity, being thus, the communicators of the present and the future.

So, after analyzing the photographs, we could say that in 2019 everything is on fire, because in different parts of the planet, very separated from each other, we find great social movements to achieve a solid goal.

From my point of view, Chaos, it's a very broad word, and it depends on the context that causes me fear or I love it. For example, the chaos that is being seen in 2019 in the revolts of different countries I love. And to me it is essential to bring about this chaos in search of a worthy future, and it is necessary for society to fight for our rights, if we want a better world.

But, on the other hand, I also understand chaos when a forest like the Amazon is burning (from the smallest forest to the largest) or when the Arctic melts, and it's kind of a chaos that scares me.

And it is in this essay that I will begin by explaining the history of Catalonia from the chaos of protests, peaceful and violent, in recent months in my country, also speaking of two key words in social movements, resistance and freedom.



▲ Oil painting of the Catholic kings. JPEG5

RESISTENCE

For what we can understand what is happening nowadays and how we have arrived in this situation we have to go back to 1469, at the union of Spain and Catalonia, the old Castile with the Catalan-Aragonese Crown (Catalonia, Aragon, Valencia and Balearic islands).

With the dynastic union between the marriage of Isabel I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon the origin of the Hispanic monarchy was formed, where the kings re-named them with the name of the Catholic Monarchs.

The dynasty has been changing families throughout history, to this day, where we find the House of Bourbons reigning Spain in the fourth stage of this family. This stage is the subsequent Franco regime, whose kings have been Joan Carles I and Felipe VI. It is a period marked by the entry into a democratic Spain, where monarchs are subject to the Spanish Constitution (of 1978), and that is where we are now, the Kingdom of Spain, a country "in theory" in a parliamentary monarchy.

And as with all history, the resistance has been in the past, it is in the present, and there will be in the future.

It was October 12, 1492 where the first great resistance to Spain emerged, the conquest of America. Christopher Columbus came to the new continent, on the island of San Salvador, believing he had arrived in India, but it was really America, it was as well as he conquered the continent, naming him the new world.

In this conquest, there was a great revolution, that of the indigenous peoples who, until then, lived calmly in their territory where Colon, representing Spain, imposed the language, culture and traditions of Spain, eliminating all indigenous life with arms and the diseases that took from Spain. The resistance of the Indians could not stand the Spanish force and ended up ceding and adapting to the new traditions.

It should also be noted that the beginning of the reign of Charles IV in 1788 and until the end of the first Republican in 1874 were the 86 years where Spain suffered more revolts and wars in history, among them, highlighting the French invasion or wars carlists.

In short, throughout history, we find many resistance against Spain, since all the changes and transitions of history are two-sided, the winner and the loser. But today, we find a resistance or more important as those of history, the independence of Catalonia.

And it is that the resistance of the Catalan people has not been new in 2019. Catalanism goes back to 1830 and was a political and cultural movement that strengthened and recognized the language, culture, history, politics and national of Catalonia as one Identity of nation, as a different country.

The resistance of the Catalan people towards Spain, that is Catalanism, was again erupted after the referendum on self-determination of Catalonia from October 1, 2017 to the present day.

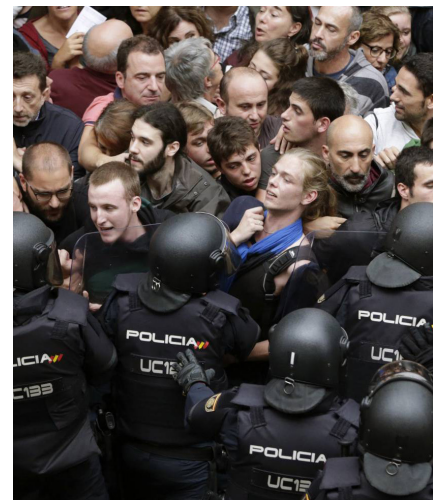
I'm a participant in this new Catalan resistance, I vote for the referendum, called 'illegal' by the Spanish Government, together with 2,286,217 of which 2,044,038 people if we vote for freedom of our people.

All participants we attended one of the resistors largest Catalan people, historically speaking, towards the brutal police violence by the Spanish police. These images and videos went through the entire world and there were important personalities in different countries that conveyed their discomfort in seeing what was happening in a country within the European Union, such as the British writer J. K. Rowling.

"This is repugnant and unjustifiable" (J. K. Rowlingm 2017).



▲ Dióscoro Puebla,
Oil painting from the discovery
of Cristóbal Colón, 1862.^{JPEG6}



▲ resistance of the Catalan
people to the referendum
of 2017.^{JPEG7}



▲ Violence in the referendum,
Barcelona, 2017. JPEG8

In short, everyone did not understand the police repression in front of a people whose only wish was to vote in the referendum on self-determination, if they voted, a fundamental human right and that any person should be able to exercise.

And it is that all those images and videos summarize the connotation of the resistance of a part of the Catalan people, Catalanism, towards Spain, whose purpose was to veto freedom in 1st of October.



▲ The Freedom Concert
Camp Nou, Barcelona, 2013. JPEG9

FREEDOM

Freedom has always been the goal of Catalan in the whole history of Spain. From this objective movements, associations, revolts, political parties, and many other effects have emerged defending the values of Catalan identity within Spain and being able to say proud that we are Catalans.

But why do people feel Catalan? Is Catalonia so different from Spain?

In fact, Catalonia is equal or older than Spain, before the union of Spain already existed Catalan and Catalonia that coexisted in the Iberian Peninsula with Castile and Castilian, that is why we have very similar things, origin was very close.

The flag for example; If we analyze the flags from the semiotic point of view, the two share the same colors, red and yellow, but in different representation, representing and communicating each one different regions.



▲ Catalan flag,
"La Senyera."



▲ Spanish flag,
"La rojigualda."

The Spanish flag is also called "rojigualda" and is composed of three horizontal strips of color, with the red, yellow and red order (top to bottom), with the yellow stripe in the middle. The colors are accompanied by the shield of Spain in the yellow part helping to communicate the power of the monarchy and the unity of the country.

In the Catalan flag, called "Senyera", we find nine horizontal strips of colors, yellow and red alternating, beginning the series of colors by the yellow. This communicates history, where the legend says that a Catalan warrior, with his four fingers, took the blood of a hurt companion and stamped the four stripes on a yellow shield, communicating never surrender and fighting until final. The flag became stronger when it was banned by Franco's regime.

It should be noted that we also find the republican and Francoist flag in Spain and the independentist version of the "senyera" called "estelada", which is inspired by the flag of Cuban freedom, which currently has the country center-American.

The Catalan “estelada”, linked to the supporters of independence, dates from the early twentieth century and was born from the fusion of the four traditional bars of the Catalan flag, with a starry triangle on the left. An element that historians consider inspired by the flags of Cuba and Puerto Rico. (A. B. Collins, 2016).

The flags play a very important iconic role in semiotics. The meaning that each person can interpret in all the previous flags is different and changes depends on the ideology. For example, for a pro-independence, myself, the Spanish flag don't transmit good vibrations because they directly relate to the repression that Spain has in Catalonia and, on the other hand, I'm proud of the flag and the starred, since I defend this ideology, the one of a free people.

The same goes if you look at national anthems of each region, the Spanish and Catalan.

The Spanish anthem, called “La Marcha Real” refers directly to a military march, connecting with the homeland, power and monarchy, and it's only a musical melody, without a letter. On the other hand, the Catalan anthem, called “Els Segadors,” refers to a defeat, and means that you never have to give up and always have to go forward, despite losing, together with the power of the Catalan people.

And the culture in which we see as the anthem, the great collective effort of the Catalan people and the individualism of the Spanish people, for example “Castells” and “The Bulls”.

“Everything is done and everything is possible.”
Martí. M. P. (1981).

As the Artist says Miquel Marí i Pol, the Catalan people has been the whole history labeled as a fighter and collective, and it is true that the Catalans like to do things collectively, as the example of the Castellers, and what I personally admire most of my little country.

The “Castells” is a Catalan word that means castles, It's one of the most characteristic features of Catalan culture and consists in the construction of human towers, where with the collective effort the Catalans can crown the whole castle.

While in Catalonia we have castles in Spain there are the famous bulls, considered art by many Spaniards. An activity that goes against animals and consists in bulling the bull and torturing it until its death, symbolizing Spain, since the symbol of Spain is Toro, another sign of power before the Catalan bull (the symbol of Catalonia), communicating effort and work.



▲ Francoist flag.



▲ Republic flag.



▲ Independence flag.



▲ Cuban flag.



▲ Spanish bullfights. JPEG10



▲ The Tarragona Human Tower Competition “Castells”. JPEG11



▲ “Sardanes”
typical Catalan dance. JPEG12



▲ Map of the Catalan language,
Generalitat de Catalunya,
2012. JPEG13



▲ Partido Popular, right. JPEG14



▲ PSOE, left. JPEG15

Another clear example of Catalan collectivism and Spanish individualism is reflected in dance in where we find “Sardanes” and “Sevillanas”. The “Sardana” is a typical Catalan dance where many people need to do it again and communicate collective effort and fellowship, however “Sevillanas” is a typical Spanish dance, originated in Andalusia, where it is individual.

Personally, for me, I also like some aspects of Spanish culture but it's true I love what the “castles”, “sardanes” and other Catalan cultural activities mean, all of them collective, it's a pride to say that I'm Catalan!

I'm proud to be able to speak a language just as old as Spanish, which, progressively, has grown bigger in face of the adversities in history, and that today is the ninth most spoken language in Europe with 13.529.127 of speakers (computer graphics of the Gneralit de Catalunya of July 2012), is official in the sovereign state of Andorra and is co-official with Spanish in three Spanish autonomous communities: Catalonia, Valencian Community and the Balearic Islands.

Catalan language, like many other things, has been persecuted many years. Where else was persecuted in Franco where the dictator Francisco Franco wanted to eliminate all the Catalan identity, where Catalan was affected, imposing Spanish and Spanish culture throughout the state.

Today, the Catalans, we can speak of our language thanks to all our family who, during the Franco regime, spoke at home, hidden from the Franco regime, that can be spoken in Catalan from home in prison.

Unfortunately, at present, there are political parties that want to return to the past, giving importance to Spanish and eliminate Catalan, with a closed ideology, such as the “Partido Popular”, the largest party right, the blues.

And if we analyze the colors of the political parties from a semiotic point of view, they have a connection with the past. The red, it has always been the color of the republicans, those opposed to the Franquist regime, those who defend a republican state without monarchy, where, nowadays, this color is that of the governing party, the PSOE (socialists).

Instead, in the past, those of blue were those of the “Blue Division” a group of Falangists who sent Franco to help Hitler in World War II, and those who today use the Blue colour are the defenders of those values.

And it is for these old ideologies, which are booming in Spain, which I consider to be more Catalanist than ever and I join the 2.044.038 ‘YES’ to fight for a worthy future.

AFTER THE CHAOS

It is for all these reasons that every September 11, national day of Catalonia, the independentists left on the streets to carry out great demonstrations and peaceful movements.

We go out to express our desire to get a free Catalonia, where all people can choose how they want to live, in short, a new state that defends the pluralism of a land and listens to all its citizens.

I'm convinced that after chaos always comes calm, but what I don't know is when the Catalan chaos will end.

Undoubtedly, while there are political prisoners in the 21st century in Europe, while we have Falangist political parties that want to eliminate an identity and while there isn't freedom of expression in Spain, it will be chaos and I will be a participant, together with all the Catalysts that go out day by day on the street and do not want to shut up in an oppressing state.

For me it's essential that a society protest against those who govern. A society that protests and manifests will undoubtedly be a winning society.

What I feel right now, from the UK, seeing all the chaos generated in Catalonia in 2019 is indescribable. I feel anger, impotence and pride at the same time. I think that the Catalan people are managing to communicate the problem well and the recipients from around the world understand the meaning of why we fight and I hope someday to achieve the most precious right for a human being, freedom.

"We will suffer again, we will fight again, we will win again!"
(Lluís Companys, 1934).



▲ Catalan demonstrations. JPEG16

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