

# I BELIEVE IN LEGAL DEMOCRACY

It was a cold and rainy day in Barcelona seventeen years ago. Streets were almost empty and there was a sad atmosphere, something incurrent in such beautiful city. The wind pulled up all the leaves of the trees and did not leave any on them. Although the only thing that could fancy you in such a grey day was to be really close to a fireplace or being under a blanket.

That morning, a widow stepped urgently to the closest hospital in the district because she was about giving birth. She had got black hair and green eyes, a pointed but cute nose, thick and beautiful lips and a wonderful smile. She was probably one of the most beautiful women that have stepped on Earth and a really good person.

When she got into the hospital, she was soon attended. After waiting for three hours, finally a splendid little boy full of joy and happiness was born. The child did not really cry at all, and seemed to have a pure soul. However, not everything it was as wonderful as it looked. After five minutes of giving birth, Sonia, the widow, died of a brain hemorrhage. Jorge, Sonia's son, started from this very moment to be under the responsibility of Andreu, his uncle.

As time was passing by, the little Jorge was growing in height, weight, wisdom and maturity. He was becoming a really honest teen, as his parents used to be. However, his uncle was not that trustworthy.

Andreu, Jorge's uncle, was a teacher and worked in a primary school. He used to work from Monday to Friday from 9am to 2pm. He was not a really friendly man and hasn't got too many good friends.

*"In my opinion, my uncle Andreu must not be a really good worker. He is lazy and does not really like his job. He is not a really good guardian either; he does not allow me to go out on weekends and does not let me to buy new clothes or a decent mobile phone. He does not cook well either. His food stinks and tastes horrible! He only cleans his bedroom, but my tiny one (which it only fits a small bed, not even a wardrobe or a desk) is always under my responsibility. I do not blame him about anything, really, but he does not really have to make an extra-effort whereas I do. I wish my real parents were alive!"*

I think my way to see life has changed recently. I have lived in Barcelona all my life. I never travel anywhere else, I hardly heard other language than Catalan. I always been taught that we belonged to a nation that was oppressing us and have no other choice that believing it. Although I heard that my true families of origin were from other areas of Spain, I never met any of my relatives, and have no contact but a lot of curiosity for exploring the reality of my ancestors. I have always felt that I wanted desperately to know the connections

within my own self, my feelings and deepest questions. Honestly, I think that I have never being able to answer them due to the lack of connection to my purest origins. Somehow I have always felt truly Spanish, dreaming of the different areas where my ancestors would be from. Not choosing a specific and concrete area, a man of the North and South, East and West, proud of a wonderful country with so many contrasts and so rich in history, culture, folklore, climates and landscapes. I have always wondered why do we have to choose a unique Spanish reality? Why do not combine all the different wonderful realities given in the different areas that made what we are today? I have always wondered these and other matters in my deepest soul.

I have lived all my life surrounded by people that may think different than I do, and I have done it well. What I mean is that I do not take into consideration if a friend has different views in politics, religion, or culture, and most specifically if this person is pro-independence or not. I would like everyone to be in favour of the unity of Spain, but this is impossible. You cannot change people's mind and tell anyone what to vote or just to see life how you do. I love my uncle Andrés (his real name in Spanish) even though I do not admire him and he is pro-independence. I have friends that support the Catalonia Republic and friends that support to stay in Spain and in the EU in the same level.

I have to say that lately it is being difficult living with people who is pro-independence in a daily basis. I get along with them, I have fun with them but it is like if they have became very extremist. In the latest months this matter of independence is making our lives much harder than never, it is like if there were a wall between the two sides. It is uncomfortable to talk about politics and to speak your mind, which I think it is really important. I love my city, my friends, my uncle and my country. I do not support the independence for the reasons I expressed above, I feel from everywhere in Spain, but other than that, I do not support it for two reasons: democracy and legality.

If Catalonia finally separates from Spain, I would be a foreign in the rest of this country, which would be really bad because I wouldn't have my rights as a citizen. And if I want to work in any part of this country, it's going to be impossible. I wouldn't have the same chances as any other European, starting for not having a European passport. I wouldn't be able to redact an Europass CV and it would be a pain to write one on my own means.

At this moment, at the end of 2017, I am quite disappointed with the actual situation in my land. I am fed up of politicians that only look for their own good; and that is something that an European citizen should not even think about. I believe in democracy, and with that I mean legal democracy. I think that what is happening at the moment here, it is embarrassing.

For the very first time I want to travel around Spain and Europe, running away from this tense atmosphere, where every night a lot of pro-independence neighbours come out hitting their saucepans and making terrible noise. I have heard that a neighbour in Barcelona's Balmes Street is pacifically and in a humoristic way trying to put down that terrible and bothering noise by playing out in his flat's balcony , with the highest volume of the speakers, a typical Spanish song called "Que viva España!", from the famous singer Manolo Escobar. This song was a hit of past century 1960s, given that most of the numerous people who had to migrate from Spain to make a living, used to sing it and feel proud of their country.

Thinking about my travelling, a good option f could be Andalusia. I would like to visit the cities of Seville, Granada or Córdoba. It would also be fantastic to be able to go to Cabo de Gata in Almería, to Tarifa in Cádiz or to Doñana National Park in Huelva. I would also love to meet Andalusians. They are people full of joy and happiness. They are also really funny and it only takes them ten seconds to get a smile of yours. They are also really social and party-goer. They also have "art" inside of them, something that cannot be described in words. They are also known for being able of enjoying life and being conservative with traditions. They are really optimistic and feel really proud of their land, country, culture and people.

Galicia is also a beautiful community. It has amazing Atlantic beaches and incredible big forests. This past weeks there have been several fires in the provinces of Orense and Pontevedra, apart from Asturias and the northern Portugal. This land is specially famous because of its capital city: Santiago de Compostela, and the pedestrian road that takes you there, that was walked two thousand years ago by the apostle Santiago. It has (or had) beautiful landscapes, and delicious typical dishes such as "pulpo a la gallega" or "tarta de Santiago". I would love to do the "camino", because many people say that it is a very deep personal experience that you cannot regret of doing. El camino de Santiago is a religious and spiritual experience that is made by thousands every year walking in a pilgrimage from Roncesvalles near France to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia; more than thousands kilometers walking and meditating as a peregrine.

Balearic islands are also a place where anyone can have fun and party. It has amazing landscapes such as beaches, coves or cliffs. This islands are full of foreigners and are really culturally rich. I would like to visit any island and to feel this great atmosphere that can only perceive here.

Madrid is the capital city and is an embracer city where anyone is accepted no matter where you come from or what you may think. It is culturally rich and has got art and history everywhere. I would love to walk through Paseo de la Castellana, to do the tour of the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium or to watch in person the Meninas of Diego Velázquez in Museo del Prado. I would like to go

to Debod Temple or to have a walk through the Manzanares river. I would love to meet a Madrilenian and being able to live their life even only for one day. They are famous for being open-minded and sympathetic.

Murcia is a region situated in the south-east of the Iberic Peninsula. It is mainly famous because of their people. Apparently, they do not speak well Spanish. From my point of view, I consider that speaking with a specific accent that seems hard to understand does not mean that that person does not know how to talk. They do not usually pronounce the letter "s" at the end of the words, or may do not pronounce some letters. For example "nada", which is nothing in Spanish, they pronounce like "na". Murcia has a gothic and baroque cathedral. It is really nice and I think that one of the best in Spain. Murcia is the seventh largest city of this country by population and has got something that cannot be described in words, but that I should not miss.

I am orphaned and I have thought lots of times that my ancestors may be from any part of Spain or Europe. What I mean is that Catalans need to stay here. I want to be what I am right now: Catalan, Spanish and European at the same time. I do not want anyone telling me what I have to be or what is better for me. I would like politicians to look for everyone's good, not only theirs. They must not skip the law for becoming richer and to be the maximum authority in a territory. They must not play with people feelings. They are causing lots and lots of conflicts. Many couples have divorced because of this movement; there are families that do not speak to each other and many neighbours that if they bump into each other, they can even fight and hit each other.

I personally think that the fault is in education. The only subject that has been given to me since I was three years old in Spanish, is Spanish language and of course, only one hour a week. The government should not allow this. The Generalitat pretends to impose Catalan as the official language, and I find it really stupid. Catalan is only spoken in Catalonia and in Andorra while Spanish is the second more spoken language after Chinese.

Teachers are not the best either. In any other place, teachers only do their work which is teaching. In Catalonia most of them do not teach, some do election campaign, and tell things which are not true. They talk about how bad is Spain, how bad they treat Catalans and that Catalonia pays more taxes than the rest of Spain. In the last weeks, they have been even worse. My uncle Andreu has taught children how to vote yes in the illegal referendum and has introduce politics to really small pupils. They have also criticised the national Spanish police and the civil guard.

Now I am seventeen years old and after a few weeks of travelling around different areas of Spain, I hope to catch up with my studies. Next year I am going to university. I do not really know what I finally will end up doing but I know one important thing. I hope common sense come back and legal democracy will be back in Catalonia very soon. No matter what I choose to do, I

hope it will make good to the people around me, and who knows, it might end it changing my nearest world and the world of all of us.