

Democracy is rule with consent of the ruled; of all by dialogue, of majority by voting. Parliamentarism is government with parliament consent by all or by majority; and voter consent by proportionality.

In one week the Spanish illegitimacy crisis--caretaker government voted into power by a parliament 2-3 elections ago--is 10 months old. Martin Caparrós in "Spain, without government" (INYT 29 Aug 2016): Spain, reconquered from Moros 2 January 1492 by the reyes Católicos, has always had a government, sometimes two, but never none.

By end of October a Rajoy-PP government may be confirmed--using political tricks and arithmetics with abstentions more important than No or Yes--meeting a budget deadline. (An anti-corruption Big Coalition against Rajoy-PP--the problem, not the solution--might have been better; or at least a PP without the key responsible, Rajoy).

A new election law is needed. Switzerland? A 7 member coalition cabinet: 2-3-2 for parties left-center-right and 3-2-1-1 for German-French-Italian-Ladino-the "magic formula"--and direct democracy with referendum-initiative in 2,300 "Gemeinde" for key issues. For Spain, 6-8-6, and 9-5-3-2-1 for Castellano-Catalan-Basque-Gallego-X? Think.

What can we conclude after 10 months arithmetic deadlock?

[1] Very little changed in the daily life of most Spaniards. But then Spain has two pillars: strong local authorities that can adjust to new situations by passing regulations, and extended families with much absorption capacity. Remarkable local ayuntamientos, like Marinaleda in Andalucia: a municipal cooperative financing employment, cheap housing and kindergartens and very high equality, like Mondragon in the Basque country: a world famous site for cooperativism. The extended families: visible on Sundays in Spanish restaurants, 20-30 at the table, babies galore, children running, like in old paintings.

A strong Spain--but with men killing women in nuclear families.

[2] The faith in politics and politicians is at an all-time low. The politicians are seen as egomaniacs, self- and party-centered, not people- and Spain-centered, authoritarian, often not consulting their party base, let alone the Spanish people. Enjoying unlimited TV access, campaigning rather than solving anything. Playing games among themselves and not even good at it; simply incompetent, or corrupt. A Spain constructed in Madrid itself a construction, doing their things.

And people do theirs, in a Spain of communities linked by ALSA buses--N-340 connecting the peripheries from the Pyrenees to Portugal, as opposed to N-I-II-III., Iberia, RENFE radiating from the Madrid center; modeled on Jacobin super-center Paris for control.

[3] The extension from two- to four-party system, with Podemos and Ciudadanos, did not renew the old system. New parties behaved like the old, playing games, electioneering. Ciudadanos made a deal with PP; Podemos did not manage with PSOE. This, a Spain with the right united and the left divided, will like the other two last some time.

[4] The big losers are Pedro Sánchez, the authoritarian leader of PSOE, and PSOE itself, split into abstainers and not abstainers partly by regional criteria (Andalucia). Podemos may pick up left-wingers and PP right-wingers--Felipe González seems already to be one. Sánchez may never really come back, nor PSOE. And Podemos has united with a left confirming a Marxist-Communist prejudice; unacceptable, anathema.

[5] The big winners are Mariano Rajoy and PP, playing that game competently. Rajoy as the

strong, indispensable who can make order out of chaos produced by the others, with a little helper on the side.

One bad non-event: a military parliamentarism does not work coup, promising free elections within half a year, maybe endorsed by a Yes or No referendum with no choice between models for Spain. Spain is now "back to normal"; not to a two-party system but to that past normal, to a one-party system with fragmented opposition. A potential tragedy.

For an overview, a spectrum of options for Spanish politics.

On one end decentralization into 8,122 municipios (like in Italy 7,998 comuni, below France's 36,681 communes-arrrondissements, above USA around 2,500. And 4,5 different linguistic-cultural nations. Motto:

Zapatero: Spain as Comunidad de Naciones, Community of Nations.

On the other end centralization with regions-provinces-local authorities all steered the same way from Madrid; by parliamentary- democratic or by military-dictatorial means, or by a mix. Motto:

Franco: Spain as Una, Grande, Libre; One, Great, Free.

The former is too loose, the latter faces fights for diversity. Spain is between integration and freedom. The missing link was the "poderes fácticos", real powers, landowners-military-clergy, even inside the family as brothers; Franco's "normal Spain", to restore.

A confirmed Rajoy-PP government will tilt the balance towards more centralization adding new poderes fácticos: real economy business and finance economy speculation elites, increasing the inequality. The victims of one quarter unemployment and one half youth employment will not benefit but lean on the pillars and braindrain Spain abroad. Inequality increases, as Spain accompanies model USA on the way down.

A better policy: lift the bottom up. Rural cooperatives blowing life into the countryside. Small businesses. Separation of savings and investment banks. Stock holders in banks--not tax-payers--responsible for bank failures. Democratize businesses. Democratize families, joint decision-making, parity, not killing. No more USA as model for Spain.

Rajoy-PP will do none of that, but local communities, inspired by Marinaleda and Mondragon could, for the good of the people and Spain.

And inside EU cooperation with other fringe countries, the GIPSI Greece-Italy-Portugal-Spain-Ireland to break the German strong-hold on the region with solidarity and industrial production. A GIPSI car?

Spain is living its drama. And there is never a final word.