

Galicia or Spain / Galiza or Espanha?

(www.deportivo-la-coruna.com/forum) 11th October 2004 to 28th October 2004

Michel (11/10/04, London, England) What are peoples thoughts on a 'Seleccion Galega' (Galician national football team)? I'm a proud Galician and strongly believe in our nation having its own independent football team – instead of supporting Spain...

Chronic Inebriety (12/10/04, Brighton, UK) Well Galicia isn't a nation, is it? It's just a province.

If you don't want to support Spain, then fair enough, but why are you a "proud Galician"? What have you to be proud of by being Galician?

The can is open, the worms are crawling everywhere.

Bagsie (12/10/04, Vaasa, Finland) Scotland and Wales have it... So why not Galicia? If the majority of Galicians would want to have it I would accept the decision. But even with whole Spain being represented the success have not been so good as I think it could be, and politics have big part in this tragedy...

Galicia would be just one of the small ones then, but I could live with it. And hey - Greece should not have won EM - right? So anything could be possible.

Anton (12/10/04, Sydney, Australia) Yeah, I think it's a shame that Spain is so divided!! everyone wants to be region orientated, not nation - it's sad...

Chronic Inebriety (12/10/04, Brighton, UK) I may have my facts mixed-up, but isn't Galicia just a province? Scotland is a country and Wales is a principality, which is presumably why they have their own teams (although if principalities are allowed in, then would Monaco be allowed in if they stopped parttaking in club football?).

Bagsie (12/10/04, Vaasa, Finland) Scotland is not a country - It's part of the United Kingdom. Even if some Scots do not like to think so.

Pretty much the same way as Galicia is a part of Spain.

Chronic Inebriety (12/10/04, Brighton, UK) Yeah, but the United Kingdom is comprised of four nations, isn't it? Wikipedia seems to think so.

I thought the UK was fairly unique in that, although most countries are comprised of states/provinces/counties, the UK is made of four *actual* countries.

AP (12/10/04, Moscow, Russia) As to the subject...

I'm sorry but I'm sure this is an absurd idea.

At first, Galicia is just a part of Spain.

At second, such ideas may cause different national problems.

Let's take a look at the Eastern part of Europe. In the last century we had the strongest team USSR. Now USSR splited into many countries who have mediocre football national teams. Russia, Ukraine, maybe Belarus stand out against a background of others but they can't match with the former USSR team.

Xoán (12/10/04, Ireland) You've just opened Pandora's box...

Galicia is a stateless nation, as recognised by the Spanish Constitution (Art. 2) (1978), and the Galician Statute of Autonomy (1981) (based on the one from 1936). Galicia is not a "province", thus Galicia is composed by four different provinces.

The term "stateless nation" is also well defined by international law. Indeed, Galicia joined the League of Nations (predecessor of the UN) in 1933 as an independent entity.

People tend to mix three different concepts: nation, state and country. Maybe we should clarify these three concepts first, because they usually come together, but not always. Also, the concepts of "nation" and "country" slightly differ depending on the cultural approach.

What Galicia is not is a "state" (that's reserved for Spain). But that's a different story altogether.

Bagsie (12/10/04, Vaasa, Finland) Seems funny that Scots are trying to get independence then don't you think?

What ever terms used - Scotland has similar situation as Galicia - just as Xoan described and therefore I think both could have own football team as well. But should them both have - I do not know. It kind of a Depends on the local people

JW2 (12/10/04, Bonn, Germany) I am against any kind of nationalism and having "its own team/flag/anthem/laws" is just part of that sentiment...

Xoan might disagree with that, but I don't see that kind of "national sentiment" in Galicia as there is in other Spanish regions, mainly Cataluna and Pais Vasco... The results of BNG (Galician nationalist party) seem to prove that, they are, in fact, neglectable... Anyway, didn't we have a thread about it already???

And the Scotland, Wales etc. example - in my opinion, this was a historic mistakes, that cannot be easily undone... But why should you repeat a historic mistake?

Xoán (12/10/04, Ireland) I wouldn't consider 20% of the population "neglectable". Also, the electoral behaviour in Galicia is extremely complex and can't be explained in terms of "black or white", "a or b"... Thus, BNG is probably the most "visible", but not the only party representing Galicianness.

The "national sentiment" isn't just expressed through secessionist movements or flags on the streets. A national sentiment can be expressed through a sentiment of belonging, community, culture... you name it... i.e. expressed through language (only 10% of the Galician population are monolinguals in Spanish, and they're concentrated in the cities; that fact in itself explains a lot of things). Plus, Galicia has historically suffered a process of aculturisation, creating a myriad of social, cultural and psychological problems. We can't consider Galicia's social and political panorama as "normalised" (strictly speaking). It'd be unfair to apply to Galicia the same parameters of analysis you could apply for a sovereign state or even other stateless nations such as Catalonia, Basque Country or Quebec. The situation is radically different, from the beginning to the end.

Then again, if we want to continue on with this topic we should first define the terms "nation", "country" and "state", and we should also agree in a basic bibliography, 'cos if we're not all using the same data the debate is sterile.

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **jw2000de**

I am against any kind of nationalism and having "its own team/flag/anthem/laws" is just part of that sentiment...

So, there shouldn't be a World Cup, 'cos that's an exaltation of nationalism (each team with its own flag and stuff).

And how come you consider Wales or Scotland as a "mistake"? Shouldn't they be entitled to their teams if they want to? Isn't that democratic?

JW2 (12/10/04, Bonn, Germany) hehe, you know what I meant... That "we are having our own flag, our own identity and we feel oppression from the Spanish state" was mainly a reference to the separatists from Pais Vasco...

You mentioned Galicia's own language, that's not my point. I'm not in favour of making everything the same, prohibiting the Basques, Galicians etc. speak their own language. This is preserving its identity, which is fair and desirable. You mentioned the language as a proof of national sentiment- but if only 10% of the Galicians are mono-linguals Spanish speakers, this could be the result of school education, couldn't it? My girlfriend, her family and friends all speak Galician (because they were taught it in school), but they are far away from having any national Galician sentiment...

Anyway, in WC 2030 then we could see Bavaria v Sicilia and Cataluna v Normandie... Could be interesting, but not something I do desire.

Chronic Inebriety (12/10/04, Brighton, UK) Thanks for that, Xoan, very interesting reading. You'll have to excuse my ignorance, but it seems Wikipedia isn't quite the authority on *everything*. So Galicia is every bit the nation Scotland is? As far as I was aware, Pais Vasco and Catalonia were the only regions with strong campaigns for independence (although I suppose that's all we hear on the news here). I'd heard about the strength and poularity of the Galician language though. It seems that everyone in Europe speaks at least two languages! If only I could say the same about the people I know...

Xoán (12/10/04, Ireland) As I said, you can't compare the situation of Galicia and other places 'cos they simpy are radically different and respond to different issues. Let's say that we're no better than anyone else, but at least we're "the same". But you're right ChI, we're never "on the news".

Hehe! jw, not all Galician speakers are nationalist, and not all nationalists are Galician speakers... Then again, the situation is quite complex and, specially in the Galician case, it is not "apparent" at all, but worthwhile to investigate. Also, "nationalist" is not a word you can apply to everybody. I don't consider myself "nationalist" in the strict sense. I'd just say that I was born Galician, I feel Galician and... that's it. That's what I am, I can't escape my own nature.

Oh! When I say 'monolinguals' I refer to native speakers, i.e. pple who has been speaking Galician since they were kids and speak Galician all the time. 90% are. I don't include here those who learnt it at school. It usually is all the way around, you do learn Spanish at school (I never spoke Spanish until I went to school!). ah, you see, this "debate" could take forever... I better stop...

Carlos (12/10/04, Rapperswill, Switzerland) I agree with Xoan. I had to learn Spanish at school cause Galician was not allowed by Franco. I also feel Galician, Galicia is my home. I love the sea, the green fields, the music, the dances and the people. Galicia is in my heart and I like to be also a part of Spain and that Spain is a part of Europe. Ok. And now to the thread: who should play? Is the second keeper of Barça not a Galician?

A.Houston (12/10/04, Nova Scotia, Canada) If you came to North America and someone asked you where you were from and you said "Galicia" or "Catalunya" or "Andalucia", let me tell you most people wouldn't know what you were talking about unless they had some knowledge or European geography or politics. (I, of course, would know what you were talking about).

Xoán (12/10/04, Ireland) But that's everywhere. That happens to me all the time here in Ireland when I say I'm Galician... (and theoretically we're "brothers"!). Fortunately I have a nice speech ready by now.

But that's one of the differences between having a State and not having it. People only remembers "states", not national or regional minorities. If you don't have your own State, you simply don't exist to the eyes of the international community. As simple as that.

But that also is a different story...

Anyway, this is a nice site to check: www.eurominority.org

Feliuk (12/10/04, Watford, England) Wow these topics are always very interesting and I suppose only people that were born in Galicia can really understand the sentiments. I maybe a bit weird where Galicia and Spain are concerned, maybe because I came to England when I was 9 and obviously politics don't really come into it at that age and have not really affected me.

I am Galician and proud BUT I am also Spanish and proud I personally could never separate one from the other.

I grew up in Coruña and 99% of the people there speak Castellano (or Spanish) maybe a few Galician words here and there but on the whole it's Castellano. I know Coruña is a bit unique in this in Galicia and as time has gone by a few more people speak Galician.

But in no way is it the same as when you go to Cataluña and nearly everyone speaks Catalan, although they are also fluent Spanish speakers.

I find this quite upsetting being in my own country and not understanding what people are saying.

I truly believe that too much time,effort and money is spent on all this and how many lives have been lost aswell. Most wars start on similar lines, cultural,religious, etc differences/problems.

In these times when we in Europe are trying to basically unite I personally feel it is a great pity that these things are still around.

I once, I think wrote in this forum can't exactly remember, where does it stop. I'll try and explain.

I am Spanish, I am Galician, I am from the province of Coruña, I am from Coruña. I am from Monte Alto (a part of Coruña) I am from Calle Matadero. What I am trying to say is that you can say I'm Spanish not Galician or vice versa, I am from the province of Coruña but not the Province of Pontevedra, I am from Coruña but not Santiago,I am from Monte Alto but not Los mallos. I am from Calle Matadero but not calle de la Torre.

If you want to can argue about from where you are and people do, but at the end of the day what exactly is it achieving.

Sorry if I have gone on and maybe I still haven't explained myself properly

Xoán (12/10/04, Ireland) Oh! I see what you mean Feli. But there are three elements involved here (as I see it) that you indirectly invoke:

a) History ("how" was Spain constructed and "why" is Galicia a part of Spain - it hasn't always been). This could take forever...

b) Practicalities: the suitability or not (in practical terms) of independence, self rule, more self government... you name it (always peaceful).

c) Sentiment: belonging is a feeling, and that's up to each person. You know my personal opinion already, I'm sure other Galicians have other opinions, and I respect that.

Also, I was in A Coruña this summer and talked Galician freely with everyone... and they answered me back in Galician, and I heard the language on the streets... It's true that A Coruña is an oddity within the Galician context (as in there's a majority of Spanish speakers in that city), but like everything that also has an explanation (another long explanation, but that's going too deep now).

In summary, I - personally - feel Galician. That's what I am. Nothing else. I see the world from my own perspective, and want to communicate with other peoples on equal terms, not through which I consider to be "filters". I'd love to "unite" with the rest of Europe, but on equal terms. I just claim my own right to be myself as a Galician in Europe and in the world, with no intermediaries. Oh yes! and if you apply this to football... well, then you must have a team to represent your country!

Chronic Inebriety (13/10/04, Brighton, UK) Incidentally, I don't think that religion, or even nationalism, is the cause of most wars. Greed is. People can hide that motive under anything they like, but I think greed is the reason for every war we see before us.

Xoan, your knowledge and enthusiasm on this subject is impressive, I only wish that everyone had an open mind about these things.

With regards to Europe, I wish people would stop always trying to pigeon-hole themselves. If you are from Galicia, you have nothing to be ashamed of, the same no matter where you come from. Being from anywhere does not mean you cannot be part of Europe. National (and even regional) pride has always bemused me, why can't people just see we're all the same species?

How do I feel about myself? I'm English, because I'm from England. I'm British because I'm from the UK. I'm European because I'm from Europe. And I am a human, like everyone else. Why do people feel the need to put up so many barriers?

Alan partidge (13/10/04, Australia) Interesting debate.

I agree with a lot of the different opinions on here. I thought I'd throw another view into the ring.

I'm half Galician and have always (and am still) proud of being half Spanish. Technically I can claim I am Spanish as I have nationality. However, after going to live in Spain for a while, in Madrid, I 'discovered' my Gallego-ness. Basically because when I was in Coruna, I didn't feel like an outsider as I did in Madrid. I felt like I belonged, whereas in Madrid I was always treated as a tourist or a foreigner. I didn't mind feeling like a foreigner so much as my Spanish makes me sound like one but the level to which I felt an outsider depressed me. Even without my Spanish background I am European. I feel less of an outsider in Japan than I did in Madrid, and that is crazy. So, my love of Spain has been overtaken by a love for Galicia. When we went out of Euro 2004, for the first time in my life, I didn't care that much.

I don't see anything wrong in wanting a separate state/team. It only becomes wrong in the hands of idiots. Same with religion, politics and power. We can't live our lives catering to the desires of morons though. Personally I would love to see a Galician Eleven stuffing a Madrid eleven.

Carlos (13/10/04, Rapperswill, Switzerland) As I know the first text in "Spanish" was written by king Alfonso XII "el sabio" (the wise) and it was Galician. Is this right Xoan?

Xoán (13/10/04, Ireland) Not really. The first written texts in Spanish appear before that. Around the beginnings of 13th C (I don't remember the exact date). The first known text written in Galician-Portuguese language dates back to 1175 (a bit earlier than the Spanish).

Still, this really is of little interest, 'cos it's almost impossible to determine when spoken Latin became spoken Romance and when Romance languages gave way to modern Latin-based languages. It all happened between the 9th and 12th C, but that's all we know, and the documents are just a rough reference.

Alfonso X (not XII) "the wise" was king of Castile, although he was of Galician origin (he was supposed to be a Galician speaker and had to learn Castilian when he went there). He became king of Castile (and not Galicia) 'cos he married I don't remember who... you know... one of those stories of kings, queens, princesses and dragons... It was all a big mess back then! He really was a writer, and left us amazing poems in medieval Galician, Spanish, and other languages. As a king he was a bloody disaster (he'd rather spend his days writing poems than governing!).

Michel (13/10/04, London, England) Firstly, Galicia is not just a province - it's a country. Surely, if a place has its own language, culture and people, national anthem and flag, then it must be considered as an independent country. The majority in Galicia speak Galician (and not 'Castilian') as their first language. People do vote for nationalist parties, but remember the old generation that lived under the horrible regime of Franco, are still around and voting and still hold on to his propaganda that was spread at the time. The truth of the matter is that 'Spain' isn't real - there is no such thing - it was something created by Castilians, the same way Spanish is a language - it's Castilian. I would like to add aswell, that I would not like to see a Galician team, because I think it would be better or because it would do Galician football a lot of good - no - it's because I am proud and passionate about my country and I would like to support her!

LIBERDADE PARA GALIZA!

Totally agree with you Alan!! Would like nothing more than a Galicia to beat the so-called Spain - in Madrid!!!

Feliuk (13/10/04, Watford, England) This is were I get a bit confused Spain was created by Castilians and doesn't exist. Galicia was created by ????? but does exist. So maybe the people that were there before the creation of Galicia might consider that they have a right to it or maybe the ones before that ??? how far back do we go?? why do we look back and how far do we have to look back??

Forza Galicia, Forza España and most of all FORZA DEPOR

Chronic Inebriety (13/10/04, Brighton, UK) I'm in your boat here too. Presumably the comment, "'Spain' isn't real - there is no such thing" is intended as an emotive comment on principle rather than actuality, but I still don't think it does that argument any favours. It reminds me of discussions I've had with several people about England in relation to Britain:

Them: What nationality do you think of yourself as?

Me: British.

Them: I'm English.

Me: Well, you're British too.

Them: No I'm not, I'm English, not British.

Me: Well, you were born in and have always lived in the United Kingdom, therefore you are British.

Them: No I'm not, I'm English.

Me: Yeah, but you're English *and* British.

Them: If a foreigner asked you where you were from, would you say Britain or England?

Me: Britain.

Them: I wouldn't, I'd say I come from England.

Me: You come from Britain too, though.

Them: No I don't. I come from England.

Ad infinitum.

Anton (13/10/04, Sydney, Australia)

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **jw2**

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Xoan might disagree with that, but I don't see that kind of "national sentiment" in Galicia as there is in other Spanish regions,
mainly Cataluna y Pais Vasco... The results of BNG (Galician nationalist party) seem to prove that, they are, in fact, neglectable...
Anyway, didn't we have a thread about it already???*
*And the Scotland, Wales etc. example - in my opinion, this was a historic mistakes, that cannot be easily undone... But why should
you repeat a historic mistake?*

Okay - first part i agree with – I hate the way Spain is divided, and I honestly think that Galicia should be part of Spain - sorry Xoan.

But Scotland and Wales a mistake? Soon u will say the Irish are a mistake too!!! but I think the Scots and Welsh are different people to the English!! they are very different situation...

I think maybe it's my own aussie arrogance – I can't imagine states wanting to divide from the country - in Australia we have absolutely NO state pride - we are all Australian - if someone says I'm from Queensland - personally I would care - as long as there aussie that's good enough for me - i think i just cant really grasp this situation - sorry i cant help being stupid in this case...

Xoán (14/10/04, Ireland) Let me repeat myself please There're 3 factors to consider:

a) History: "how" Spain was created and what is Galicia doing there. Instead of trying to demonstrate why Galicia "isn't" Spain I'd love if someone could tell me why it is... since Galicia as a political entity pre-exists Spain by far and so on and so forth (and by definition one has to prove the existence of the positive assertion). I PERSONALLY consider that Galicia's inclusion in the Spanish state was all a mess up motivated by very specific factors in some critical historical moments, thus, an "accident".

b) Practicalities: the suitability or not of independence, self-determination, self rule... whatever you want to call it. I PERSONALLY think that the advantages would outway the inconvenients (although there would be many), basically because Spain never represented any benefit for Galicia.

c) Sentiment: belonging is a feeling, and each person is entitled to feel whatever they want and have their "emotional" say. I PERSONALLY feel Galician, and that's it. I do respect other Galicians point of view, but I also want to be respected for feeling what I am. Nothing more, nothing else. That's why I firmly believe in democracy and that NOTHING is worth a fight beyond words and legality (then again, words can change legality).

IF you want we can go on this forever; For those interested... would you like some interesting references? (not in English, mainly in Galician and Spanish, if you want...). Let's be constructive and avoid mere emotional statements

Bagsie (14/10/04, Vaasa, Finland) What was the situation like in Galicia during the civil war? Was there a lot of brutalities like it was in Catalonia? If I remember right many of Catalanian separatists and innocent were killed there.

Xoán (14/10/04, Ireland) Brutality reached everywhere. Even purely Spanish regions were massacrated. It'd be unfair to compare "who suffered the most", 'cos everybody did suffer an awful lot.

Personally, I can say that the Spanish police tried to kill my grandpa twice 'cos he was speaking Galician on the street... that was the kind of "friendly" atmosphere you'd find right after the war... They got my other grandpa and my grandma had to flee. Then again, "some" would look for any excuse to kill the "others", being this at Galicia, Catalonia or Madrid.

However, not everybody learnt what it had to be learnt from that horrible experience.

Bagsie (14/10/04, Vaasa, Finland) I thought so too...

I just read an article about this war and specially about events in catalunia during that time, I thought it would be the same all around but there was no info of other parts of Spain. Civil war tends to be like you said -no matter where they occur.

Xoán (14/10/04, Ireland) This is a quite good article:

Jaspe, A (2000); "The military uprising of 1936 and the repression in Galicia", in Galician Review vols. 3-4 (1999-00), University of Birmingham (UK), pp. 77-102. If you get the journal... 'cos it's a small journal published at the University of Birmingham (<http://www.hispanic.bham.ac.uk/GalicianReview>).

Michel (14/10/04, London, England) I agree with Xoán, that all suffered in the civil war, and my great grandfather, too, was also tortured in Galicia, as he refused to give up his right to speak and be Galician. This treatment of innocent people carried on for a long time after, but the fear stayed until Franco was gone. On another note, mentioned by someone else, that Galicians are different (like the Welsh and Irish), the same way Basques and Catalans are. Other 'Spanish' areas still have things to say about Galicians, so even the Castilians know we are different. I have a good friend from Madrid that lives here in London, and although it's all in jest, he still relays the general census of Madrid's thoughts on Galicians. All I can say, that Galicia has already lost it's original goidelic language (last speaker of it, died in 17th century... I think), so please do not let us lose our country.

For anyone interested in any issues that are being fought for by independentists in Galiza you can go to: www.ami-galiza.com. Sorry for those of you who do not understand galego, but you will see photos of demonstrations that take place in Galicia and general sentiment of Galician separatists.

JW2 (14/10/04, Bonn, Germany) Sorry Xoan if I always have to quote you, but I just cannot leave your points uncommented.

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Xoán**
Let me repeat myself please There're 3 factors to consider:

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Well, this is a point that Feliuk already mentioned. How far back do you want to go? There will always be someone who was there before. Germany was divided into 150 or more separate states in the middle of the 19th century. So your historic argument would give every small entity in the 18th, 17th, 16th century a right for independence...

b) Practicalities: the suitability or not of independence, self-determination, self rule... whatever you want to call it. I PERSONALLY think that the advantages would outway the inconvenients (although there would be many), basically because Spain never represented any benefit for Galicia.

Actually, this is the point that is the most surprising to me.

- Advantages of Independence:

you named it: self-determination, self-rule

- Disadvantages of Independence:

Economy: without a doubt Galicia is one of the poorest regions in Spain - and it's not a coincidence that so many people emigrate from Galicia to places all over the world - the majority of Galicians here lives abroad because of better financial possibilities of life, I suppose... - so how do you want to generate a flourishing economy if everything outside La Coruna, Santiago and Vigo is totally rural???

Loss of income: let's face it. Galicia is one of the main recipients of European funds, the cohesion funds. With its independence, Galicia would lose all of that, because it wouldn't be member state of the European Union anymore (Spain signed, so it wouldn't be binding for any region that's not part of Spain)

Loss of personal rights for Galicians: with the loss of membership in the European Union there would be so many rights that Galicians couldn't take direct advantage of, for example, free movement of goods, workers, capital, residence in the EU etc. Those rights would depend on a new contract with the European Union, and given the restrictions the new member states have had to swallow, it's fair to say that any contract wouldn't give Galicians the same amount of rights.

Result: in my opinion the disadvantages outweigh the advantages by far...

c) Sentiment: belonging is a feeling, and each person is entitled to feel whatever they want and have their "emotional" say. I PERSONALLY feel Galician, and that's it. I do respect other Galicians point of view, but I also want to be respected for feeling what I am. Nothing more, nothing else. That's why I firmly believe in democracy and that NOTHING is worth a fight beyond words and legality (then again, words can change legality)

Fully agree with all you said...

But there is one thing I always asked myself concerning belonging: Why do you feel "more Galician" if you have a Galician passport? Isn't it just a paper that shows your identity nowadays? I cannot remember the last time I had to show my passport for claiming any right, be it in Madrid, in Berlin, in Paris, in La Coruna, London or

wherever? Everybody is free to say: "I'm Galician", instead of "I'm espanol"... My personal point of view is that the last 50 years have brought great things, have teared down so many borders, not only physically but also in the minds of people, that I don't see the need to impose new ones...

Xoán (14/10/04, Ireland) No problem jw, that's why this is a "forum", but if you start I just can't stop!

- History: It's not a question of "going back", but of accumulative issues. Just a few (in political and administrative terms, I don't include cultural ones here): Galicia was the first kingdom of Europe, founded in 411 AD. Since then it has always been a clearly and well-defined administrative and political unit. It played a key role in medieval Europe. It formally remained being a kingdom until 1833. The only real reason why it became under Castillian influence is because large sectors of the Galician nobility supported Dona Joana in the Castillian Dynastic wars. She lost and Isabella won, thus imposed her policy of "taming and castration of the Kingdom of Galicia" (that was the actual name of it!). This was in 1486. Since then the history of Galicia tied to Castille/Spain was rather sad. Last war for self-rule happened in 1846. Before the military uprising that gave way to the Spanish civil war (1936-39) Galicia was on its way to create its own free state.

Then again, Germany (classic example) was finally united following an agreement. That can't be applied to Spain. Also, let's remember that the concept of the modern nation-state is of recent invention. As you well said, it's from the 19th C, following the French experience on centralisation. Madrid tried to follow that model, as in creating new provinces and stuff.. (that's when the Galician kingdom formally disappeared). It was an absolute disaster and we're still paying the consequences of that erratic policy.

The question remains: "why are we a part of Spain?"

- Practicalities: Galicia could be perfectly self-sufficient in many aspects. Galicia produces almost 30% of the hydroelectrical Spanish energy, as well as has 30% of Spanish forestry resources, milk and meat. Galicia is a world fishing power (we represent almost 25% of the EU fishing industry!). Trade in Galicia is, therefore, very intense. You can see this at any Galician harbour.

The only reason why we can't optimally exploit these resources is because of limited financial autonomy. In other words, taxes go to Madrid, and Spain always has priority on purchases (at reduced costs). We're curtailed from international representation, thus we can't negotiate on equal terms with other states. We're basically losing loots of money.

Then again, we can't manage all the funds from the EU. They're re-distributed by the central government and those we get are misused. This is another issue: the puppet autonomous government all Galicians know well.

Instead of using the funds we get from the EU to promote and develop the economy, we waste them in redundant public works. We could have followed the example of Ireland, who were in a worse position than ours, but cleverly invested the money in new industries. From being the second poorest country in Europe they're now the fastest growing economy in the EU.

With independence Galicia would immediately apply for EU membership, but on equal terms with other countries. In fact, why should we lose membership? Isn't this a democracy? What IF people decides they want their independence? Why should the

EU forbid it? There's no reason why we should be thinking about losing EU status. I'm also sure you've heard of the "historical debt"? It's an estimate of how much we've lost in the last 5 centuries due to our "special relation" with Spain. Now Zapatero (Spanish president) admitted that the central government should start re-paying it... aaah... now we're talking...

This is what forced emigration: poverty, but poverty motivated by excessive taxes, military levies, and the orchestrated impossibility of developing and own industry. Add the exploitation of Galicia's natural and human resources, plus prosecution of its own culture for centuries. We were a rural country 'cos that was "expected" from us. Honest to God, it's a miracle we've made it so far.

- Sentiment: If I'm Galician... why should I travel around with a Chinese passport? or American? or Brazilian? Why do I have to pretend I'm someone else when I'm abroad? Why do I have to go through all the process of explaining where I'm from here where I live? Why doesn't anyone know about us? A simple piece of paper, just a silly passport, would make it all change, because a passport is the result (a symbol) of a specific political and administrative reality. Of course, it's not just having the physical document, it's what it implies.

Oh yes! and a football team! that's great publicity!

Then again. I simply can't see the connection between me and some guy from Sevilla... I mean, I have nothing against anyone, but I don't see what makes us Spanish... Should South Americans be Spanish too? Following your arguments, countries such as Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, El Salvador, Timor, Croatia, etc. couldn't be independent, 'cos they're small, they're not very prosperous economically and they used to belong to other countries... There was a time when Ireland was a "province" of the UK... doesn't it sound ridiculous now? This is the same. It's just a question of (historical) perspective.

Seriously, I have a long article on this, with references and so on and so forth. I can upload it next week... at least we'll have some basic document for common reference...

Sorry people, I've warned you! this could go on forever! It's all Michel's fault!

Chronic Inebriety (15/10/04, Brighton, UK) No need to apologise, it's very interesting! But I do take issue with a couple of your points. First of all:

- History: To be honest, I don't think history has any relevance at all when it comes to matters such as these; this is about how decisions will affect ourselves and our children, not about how it will affect our predecessors. I can't for the life of me understand why people get so sentimental about a history of which they were no part.

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Xoan**
Then again. I simply can't see the connection between me and some guy from Sevilla... I mean, I have nothing against anyone, but I don't see what makes us Spanish.

I can see what makes you and some guy from Sevilla both Spanish - you both come from a region recognised internationally, both politically and geographically, as Spain. Hence you are Spanish. This is nothing to be ashamed of. You are also Galician. Again, this is nothing to be proud nor ashamed of. You can debate 'till the cows come home as to whether Galicia *should* be part of Spain, but currently it *is* part of Spain. That's a hard fact. You're Spanish - so is the guy from Sevilla. You're European too - do you have a problem with that as well?

Xoán (15/10/04, Ireland) History is the "science which studies the past in order to, when possible, understand the future" Without history no human reality can be understood or interpreted. History is in the making, and it's fundamental to know where you come from in order to make sense of your present situation and think about where you want to go. It's only that, but at the same time history can't simply be dismissed.

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Chronic Inebriety**

I can see what makes you and some guy from Sevilla both Spanish - you both come from a region recognised internationally, both politically and geographically, as Spain. Hence you are Spanish. This is nothing to be ashamed of. You are also Galician. Again, this is nothing to be proud nor ashamed of. You can debate 'till the cows come home as to whether Galicia should be part of Spain, but currently it is part of Spain. That's a hard fact. You're Spanish - so is the guy from Sevilla. You're European too - do you have a problem with that as well?

I agree. That's a hard fact. I want to change that fact, 'cos facts can be changed. It's also a fact that Bush is the president of the US, it's a fact that North Korea is a dictatorship, it's a fact that there are wars all over the world... but it doesn't mean this is necessarily positive or that it has to be like this forever. It was a hard fact that Depor was a second division team too!

If you believe in democracy, and if a well defined People, previously independent, and with a strong collective consciousness, freely and democratically agree to decide their own future... what's the problem then? Maybe we should discuss how the current model of state was created and why so many people are reluctant to change it. That's what happens to Spain. There also is a difference between independence and the right to exercise self-determination.

I do know that other Galicians don't think as I do, that's why I say I respect it 'cos I do believe in democracy. Then again, my principles won't change and I hope to end my days in an independent Galicia (although I just have 1% chances of seeing that happening).

Oh yes, Spain is not a geographical unit. Far from that. As a Galician I'm both Iberian and European. Spain is a political and administrative construct, not a geographical reference beyond the political map.

Let me repeat myself again-again: Some years ago most of us would have thought that the independence of countries such as Latvia, Slovakia, Ireland, etc. was unfeasible, a chimera... Could you tell that people now that they have no right to their own country? There are documents where it's stated that Holland or the Philippines were Spanish provinces... doesn't it sound ridiculous? But back then it was perfectly normal... The only difference is that we were not successful when we had a chance due to a number of unfortunate events, but that doesn't mean renouncing to ones' convictions, does it?

Feliuk (15/10/04, Watford, England) Xoan, I have a hypothetical Question for you. Galicia becomes a country.

But the province of Coruña now wants to be it's own Country called Brigantum. What would you say?

Xoán (15/10/04, Ireland) hehe!

Well, IF the people there decide that independence is a good option for them... why not celebrate a referendum? I wouldn't have any problem with that, quite the opposite, proving that they have a point and that there's a large sector of the population claiming for that.

However, I know this would never happen because of two simple reasons: 1) the province as we understand it today has no real social transcendence in Galicia; 2) There never has been any secessionist movement within Galicia, ever. You know that there's a common conviction in the unity of the Galician territory - "Galiza Terra Nai" (something which does not happen with the Sp.St., thus at least there're different opinions!).

But then again: we shouldn't be afraid of the popular will, and if that province wanted independence from a hypothetical Galician republic... we could talk about it and organise it in a civilised way.

I'd happily include the right to self-determination of any Galician "bisbarra" (region) in a hypothetical Galician constitution . That's something we don't have in Spain: the mere OPTION to vote for that (they have that in Canada in relation to Quebec, and it works)

Chronic Inebriety (15/10/04, Brighton, UK)

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Xoán**

History is the "science which studies the past in order to, when possible, understand the future"

Quite!

Without history no human reality can be understood or interpreted. History is in the making, and it's fundamental to know where you come from in order to make sense of your present situation and think about where you want to go. It's only that, but at the same time history can't simply be dismissed.

Yeah, I don't think I put my point across very well before. Of course history is crucial in that it shows us what has worked in the past and what hasn't, it gives us something to learn from and it's fun to find out about. But what I meant was that I don't think people should get emotionally attached to history. You argue the case for Galician independence very well from a social and economic point of view, but I don't think that the fact that Galicia was the first kingdom in Europe is anything other than an interesting piece of trivia. (In fairness, I just looked back at your earlier post, and admittedly you actually talked about history from a critical point of view rather than an emotional one, which is fair enough. So I'm just preaching my opinions now. Don't take this as a personal attack!)

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Xoán**

It's also a fact that Bush is the president of the US, it's a fact that North Korea is a dictatorship, it's a fact that there are wars all over the world... but it doesn't mean this is necessarily positive or that it has to be like this forever. It was a hard fact that Depor was a second division team too!

I suppose I'm just re-iterating my point again here. I perfectly agree that something being a fact does not mean it shouldn't be changed, and if Galicia were to become

independent of Spain, then it's population would too. But presently, someone from Galicia is Spanish, and that isn't a fact there's any point in denying.

Xoán (15/10/04, Ireland) haha! No worries ChI

But... of course Galicia is part of Spain - from an administrative and political point of view. Nobody can deny that!

I'm just claiming for my right to decide whether or not I want that. And my claim is not unreasonable, as I am able to support it with solid and well documented social, cultural and historical facts. That's all.

Still, my question remains open... "why is Galicia a part of Spain?" (in the sense of "how" it got there in the first place...).

When Galicians wonder about this, and when they reconsider what benefits we got from Spain (if any), that's when they change their minds and abandon 'Spanish-centrism'

Feliuk (15/10/04, Watford, England) Xoan, If I read you correct the thing holding Galicia back is Spain. I cannot understand this point. What you are saying is that it's not Galicia's (or Xunta's) fault that there is hardly any multinational companies in Galicia, (I only know off Citroen and Zara) that the major employment areas are Agricultural and fisheries, that no cheap airlines fly to any Galician airports bringing tourism or an easy route for business flyers.

You mention taxes, you saying that if Galicia was independent people wouldn't pay taxes??

Isn't it true that Galicia is one of the regions of Spain along with Andalucia that gets most help from The EU?? Is that Spains fault aswell??

Sometimes the grass is greener on the other side, but I'm not sure it would be for a Country called Galicia.

I only really have Coruña to go by as a reference, we have a lovely Paseo Maritimo and a tram, cost millions and no one wanted it. Why is the money not spent on enticing companies to go there or trying to create industrial zones or help for the self employed. This was done by Galicians in Galicia or is that Spains fault aswell?? Anyway enough said on this topic. Peoples views will always differ I suppose.

As my Gran always said we should have had 1 language, 1 religion and 1 money and 90% of the worlds problems wouldn't be here.

Michel (15/10/04, London, England) We could go on forever with this subject, but I, like Xoán, believe that Galicia should be independent once more. Spain is meant to be a democratic country but still denies our right to self determination! I personally am a strong separatist and believe we need to get tougher and not be led by the Xunta that is just a puppet on strings pulled by Madrid.

The young generation is where I think independence will come, as their 'Galician-ness' is a lot stronger with a lot of them having galego as their first , and in some cases, their only language. They are doing their bit in this struggle. See www.amigaliza.org (Some really nice political murals, shown here, unfortunately for some, its all in 'real' galego).

In conclusion, I want a Galician national team - I don't support Spain - I never will - and I await the day I can proudly hold my pasaporte galego in my hand

Xoán (16/10/04, Ireland) Yes Feli. You read correct: Spain has traditionally held back Galicia. And that's a hard fact that can be easily demonstrated. It's not even a personal

opinion, as it's now openly admitted by the Spanish government (again the "historical debt"). I already gave a couple of figures and I can produce reliable sources. It's not for no reason that we have terms such as "Dark Centuries" and "Long Night of Stone". They're intrinsically linked to Galician culture.

Then again, the Xunta has played a critical negative role in Galicia's economy, as it has been unable to boost it. And we all know who is the president and how he gets the votes. He has no real interest in reinforcing Galicia's self-government, and without more self-government we can't really represent ourselves at the international arena. Also, A Coruña is an oddity within the Galician context. Everybody knows that. Everybody knows who lord mayor Paco Vázquez is and how he operates... He likes to spend and build stupid things, and he owes many favours to many people. He also represents a very particular line within his party. In case you don't know, half of city was built on speculation (no wonder there're jokes on him being a "mafioso"). Obviously, Galician people have a huge amount of responsibility in all this, and that's precisely why we have to start thinking in a different way. I personally believe that we can't go on like this, 'cos we're losing competitiveness (if we have any), we're lagging behind other European regions (and the gap is widening), not to mention the fact that we're losing some key cultural traits, including the language (and this is no accident). I mention taxes 'cos historically Galicia has always been overtaxed, when most of these taxes would go to Madrid (references/sources abound). Today the taxes paid in Galicia first go to Madrid and then they're re-distributed, and we always get less than we should get. Actually, the press is now following the discussion on the new allocation of State funds. Yesterday's newspapers (14/10) were quite interesting... we're getting peanuts again...

I've already explained why we get all those funds from the EU. We get the funds 'cos our economy is crap, despite its huge potential. The idea is to change that trend, and we won't be able to do it until we can sit at the meetings of the EU on equal terms and/or we can sign international treaties. There're plenty of academic studies on this too. Now the Spanish government is thinking about letting the autonomous governments participate at the EU summits... ah... now... 'five centuries later' (sort of speaking)... it was about time!

It took us all this time (centuries) to grab a minuscule autonomy. Every time Galicia enjoyed some degree of democracy the claim for self-rule arose, slowly but steadily. As it happens now. It's just a normal consequence.

There's no progress without autonomy, there's no autonomy without financial resources, there are no resources without your own voice at the international arena, without the capacity to decide by yourself. We don't have that. That's what I ask for. We have our little autonomy. We are recognised as a nation by the Spanish constitution. Why can't we decide by ourselves then? Why do we have to be patronised? For the last time: Why can't we have the democratic chance to decide? Why is people so afraid of a possible referendum? How did we get here in the first place?

Why couldn't we make it? We can't live on EU funds forever. 'I trust the Galician people'

PS: if we all had 1 language, 1 religion and 1 currency there wouldn't be human culture Remember what Castelao said: "only dogs speak the universal language... they all bark the same way" With no diversity and mutual respect, there's no future.
PS2: Now... I'm quite sure I made clear that Galicia is not a "province"... didn't I?

PS3: Believe it or not some people would have called me “radical” and this conversation could have not been possible with them, at all. Thanks God I’m in a civilised forum where people can argue hard but with fair play, and where people understands that discussing one’s idea by means of reasoning is not being radical, but consequent.

PS4: Sorry Michel, I don't really agree with the guys at AMI... but hey, they have their say too... For those who can read Galician: <http://basesdemocraticasgalegas.org/principal.htm>

And... I think I'll rest my case... for a while...

oh... and we never talked about the construction of the current model or nation-state in 19th C and all that... well, that's for another day...

Anton (16/10/04, Sydney, Australia) WOW some good points here!!

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Xoan**

Then again. I simply can't see the connection between me and some guy from Sevilla... I mean, I have nothing against anyone, but I don't see what makes us Spanish...

The fact that makes u similar is if u have cultural values - for me – that’s all that defines a country really - are u similar culturally? for me I haven’t been to either Spain nor Galicia, but from what i get u are similar, therefore should really be a nation - but that last bit I’m not 100% on as I’ve never been there...

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Chronic inebriety**

*But what I meant was that I don't think people should get emotionally attached to history...
...but I don't think that the fact that Galicia was the first kingdom in Europe is anything other than an interesting piece of trivia.*

History defines who and what we are! i think emotional attachment is inevitable!

As for the second part - I think its very important - look at all the other kingdoms at that time - they are nations now - this is a very important fact I think! it shows that at one time they were like a nation, which I think is extremely important to their argument that it should be now be recognised as one!

Alan_partidge (16/10/04, Australia) European people are 'similar' should we make one big country called Europe? Where does your idea of Spanish-ness come from if you have never been to Spain? As a child, the only Spain I knew was Galicia. As an adult I came to know other parts of Spain and I realised that there is a distinction. I don't see why anyone would think that celebrating that distinction is a negative thing. We're not at war with each other in most of Europe now.

Xoán (16/10/04, Ireland) Two personal stories now, but maybe relevant to what Anton and Alan said:

An old lady from Vilalba saw his son going to Mondonhedo to study. The two towns are just 20/30 kms away... As the son went away the lady was crying and saying: "oh my poor son, he's going away... he'll never come back to Spain!" (!) Another old lady I met felt frustrated about the German tourists in the area, as they would only speak German or English and she couldn't communicate with them... Then

she said: "why can't they speak Spanish like us?" The lady couldn't speak Spanish. She was a native Galician speaker and he never realised the difference. When you are born you are told you're this or that. It's not until you meet other people from other places when you realise who you really are and how similar or different you are to them.

Those two old grannies would think that a guy from Sevilla is a foreigner (if they ever meet one), just as if they were from any other country. Likewise, I don't feel at home when I go to Madrid or any other purely Spanish place. I find it familiar. I like it. I appreciate the good things in Spain and I'm able to communicate... but I feel the same here in Ireland, where I live. In both places I'm ok and happy, but I also know it's not my country.

There's a common European background, a common European culture, but that European sentiment was built with the contribution of a myriad of different peoples. Minorities are an intrinsic part of Europe (www.eurominority.org). One important thing: claiming who you are doesn't mean being against anyone. I'm not against Spain. I know that there are many things in common and I have Spanish family, but I also have Portuguese (extended) family, and still I know they're from another country. Portugal: a very familiar country - almost the same (I don't even have to speak a different language!) - but different altogether.

It's the same sensation anywhere in South America you go (being a Galician): it's all familiar, you can speak either Spanish or Portuguese, you see Galician references everywhere (thanks to all the emigrants), you really feel good there... but... you know you're Galician and that you're in a different country.

I have to admit that one of the mistakes of some "Galicianists" (if I can say that in English) is that they tried to encourage Galician-ness as opposed to Spain. That's wrong. And no, I'm not contradicting myself: We have to be aware that maybe Spain didn't represent many good things for us (no wonder the Spanish "Golden Age" were Galicia's "Dark Centuries"), but after all we've suffered (including a number of wars), we should be able to talk about this sitting around a table and having a coffee. It's the 21st C and Europe has suffered too much. If you want, you can see it as simply "house keeping", making everybody reasonably satisfied. In the Spanish State, most people in some territories are far from being reasonably satisfied. You can't simply ignore them (us). What sort of country would that be? After all that I've mentioned in this thread we're STILL in the same place we were before the Civil War. This can't go on like this forever...

The first thing an independent Galicia should do is signing an agreement of friendship and co-operation with Spain within the framework of the EU, on equal terms. That's my "dream".

Oh... that was an emotional post now... not many objective references... maybe it's because it's Saturday... sorry...

PS: Anton, Galicia IS a nation. It's admitted by the Spanish Constitution (see first posts). At least we've got that. Then again Spain is a multi-national state. Remember that the terms "nation", "country" and "State" usually come together, but they're not the same.

Xoán (16/10/04, Ireland) I'm bloody boring and repetitive... aren't I?

Ralo (16/10/04, Los Angeles, USA) Absolutely not! I agree with you 100% You covered all the points brilliantly. I would only like to add that as a Galician I feel more Portuguese than I do Spanish. We have more in common, most importantly the language!

Chronic Inebriety (17/10/04, Brighton, UK)

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Anton**
History defines who and what we are! I think emotional attachment is inevitable!
As for the second part - I think its very important - look at all the other kingdoms at that time - they are nations now - this is a very important fact i think! it shows that at one time they were like a nation, which I think is extremely important to their argument that it should be now be recognised as one!

History doesn't "define who we are" - it defines where we come from, only a small part of ourselves. It provides reference points, it allows us to trace the steps to where we've got. But I think emotional attachment is only relevant to our own experiences. I'll try to be a bit more clear; I think of Britain as my home. It's where I've always lived, and a place I have affection for because it's life as I best know it. But I can't get emotional about anything prior to my life, because it was nothing to do with me. It's easiest to show what I mean by taking the second part of your post. The fact that other kingdoms at the time of early Galicia are nations now (please let's not get pedantic about nation/country/state terms for the time being) *isn't* important at all in deciding whether or not Galicia should become independent of Spain. The process of how they became states may be useful in terms of educating us, but if Galicia is to become independent, it should be based on practical factors rather than history. Big decisions such as becoming an independent state should be aiming to improve life for those in the present and the future, even if that means disregarding parts of the past.

Xoán (17/10/04, Ireland) Yep. I mostly agree. History "explains" things, but here we've discussed both the 'practicalities' and the 'reasons', and that's when history kicks in. History explains how we got there, and why we are the way we are. "Those who don't know their roots lose their identity", as the song goes. History helps to explain why there's a longing for more self-government and/or independence in Galicia. Today's Galicia is marked by the heritage of both the times when we were independent and the times when we were (are) not. It's inevitable to compare, to assess that. It becomes a 'practicality' when your economy and social structure has been so dramatically affected by all these (historical) changes. It doesn't mean it can't be changed, actually, one of my favourite quotations is: "Our history lies ahead" (hope my translation is right from "a nosa historia está á nosa frente"). Then again, we can't repeat mistakes we made in the past. History is also useful in that.

Pedantic? Sorry I've ever seemed to be 'pedantic'... I think I wasn't... just trying to make points clear, and some concepts are simply important...

Chronic Inebriety (17/10/04, Brighton, UK) Sorry, that wasn't meant to be an insult directed at you at all! You haven't been pedantic, and I'm glad that you've tried to point out the differences between the terms, but I didn't want someone else to read my post and say "But Galicia is a nation too! Or did you mean a state? What are you on about?" etc. It was for the purposes of clarity, that's all!

Anton (18/10/04, Sydney, Australia) I think I have to defend myself a bit here

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Alan Partridge**
European people are 'similar' should we make one big country called Europe? Where does your idea of Spanish-ness come from if you have never been to Spain? As a child, the only Spain I knew was Galicia. As an adult I came to know other parts of Spain and I realised that there is a distinction. I don't see why anyone would think that celebrating that distinction is a negative thing. We're not at war with each other in most of Europe now.

I was referring to cultural values, and I'm HIGHLY doubtful all European culture is similar, or even some, German vs Spanish – I'm petty sure it's different... my idea of Spanishness? well to be honest it comes from actual people from Spain... I know quite a few, I have some friends from there, and I have spoken to tourists about this, and actually one of them was very interesting he was Basque and EXTREMELY against Basque territory separating from Spain!! which I was quite surprised at! - and I'm not saying you're at war; I don't know why you brought that up - but feelings against each other are evident from what I've heard - from people from Spain - apparently Basques and Catalonians don't like each other, which is negative – doesn't mean you're at war!! – that's what I heard from a Basque person... so that's where my view comes from, actual people from Spain...

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Xoan**
ps: Anton, Galicia IS a nation. It's admitted by the Spanish Constitution (see first posts). At least we've got that. Then again Spain is a multi-national state. Remember that the terms "nation", "country" and "State" usually come together, but they're not the same.

Okay it's a nation but independent nation is what I meant... or country if you will...

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Chronic Inebriety**
History doesn't "define who we are" - it defines where we come from, only a small part of ourselves. It provides reference points, it allows us to trace the steps to where we've got. But I think emotional attachment is only relevant to our own experiences. I'll try to be a bit more clear; I think of Bristol here in Britain as my home. It's where I've always lived, and a place I have affection for because it's life as I best know it. But I can't get emotional about anything prior to my life, because it was nothing to do with me.

History defines a large part of who we are, what our overall feelings are towards people, other nations etc... Look at the history of Yugoslavia, we have a lot of immigrants from that area here, and I've met a lot of them, I haven't met a person from Serbia who likes someone from Albania, and likes and tastes here are governed by history in this case, and a lot of beliefs they have are determined from history. They haven't changed into people like Australians they are still very much themselves - their history has effected them...

Using your example was good, but the history I was referring to does effect u, it effects how your home is, imagine if your home was different, i.e. was effected by a historic conflict - that would effect your views which defines a part of who u are, it also effects your family, which effects your beliefs directly or indirectly, u can argue how big or little the effect is, but it has an important effect directly or indirectly on u as a person... it may not completely define u (which I shouldn't have said, that was misleading to my point) but it does define a big part of what you believe, which defines a big part of who you are...

Chronic Inebriety (18/10/04, Brighton, UK)

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Anton**
history defines a large part of who we are, what our overall feelings are towards people, other nations etc... look at the history of Yugoslavia, we have a lot of immigrants from that area here, and I've met a lot of them, I haven't met a person from Serbia who likes someone from Albania, and likes and tastes here are governed by history in this case, and a lot of beliefs they have are determined from history.

This is precisely what I'm talking about. You say you haven't met a person from Serbia who likes someone from Albania. Why do you think that is? Not all people from one country are bad and the other country are good, but by emotionally attaching themselves to history, people build up prejudices. If someone from Serbia met an Albanian, but didn't know that the Albanian was from Albania, do you think they still wouldn't like them?

Why does history define "our overall feelings towards people"? My experiences of meeting people defines my feelings towards someone, not a history which I didn't take part in.

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Anton**
using your example was good, but the history I was referring to does effect u, it effects how your home is, imagine if your home was different, i.e. was effected by a historic conflict - that would effect your views which defines a part of who you are.

Why would it affect my views? Can you explain this? I really don't see how whether or not my home was affected by an historic conflict could affect my views on anything. At most it would bring attention to something I wasn't aware of, but it wouldn't affect my views.

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Anton**
it also effects your family, which effects your beliefs directly or indirectly, u can argue how big or little the effect is, but it has an important effect directly or indirectly on u as a person... it does define a big part of what you believe, which defines a big part of who you are...

Again I have absolutely no idea where you are coming from. Why is it that because history affects my family, it affects my beliefs by default? I'll say this again - history only defines where we come from, we do the rest ourselves. The way in which we critically analyse history defines our beliefs more. But that isn't history itself, it's our own minds making sense of it. When people emotionally attach themselves to history, they cannot critically analyse history as fairly, because they have become blinkered by bias.

Xoán (18/10/04, Ireland) Well, history affects us inasmuch as it shaped our present reality. The social and economic conditions you live today are the result of the history of your country, and everyone is directly or indirectly exposed to that. Then again, this is all in permanent change, and as a conscient individual you can take an active part in that process, of course.

Anton (19/10/04, Sydney, Australia) Precisely Xoan that's exactly what I mean. If say - Brighton was bombed by the US (I know it's a bit fictionary for Brighton but if it does happen) and the place where your parents worked was blown up - that was an economic resource for your country - you became poor because of it, wouldn't your views change towards the US? I would guarantee mine would be different - things like this!

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **chronic inebriety**
Not all people from one country are bad and the other country is good, but by emotionally attaching themselves to history, people build up prejudices. If someone from Serbia met an Albanian, but didn't know that the Albanian was from Albania, do you think they still wouldn't like them?

It's funny you mention this point, I know a Serb who met an Albanian thought he was okay - found out he was Albanian and stopped talking to him completely now he

hates him... so that does happen - why? because Serbs hate Albanians (a historical reason!) - quite sad in my opinion but true! so hence history has determined his belief and views...

Your beliefs and views are who you are - well a massive part of you! they effect everything down to your personality...

Xoán (19/10/04, Ireland) Then again, you can change that when you become selfaware of it.

Chronic Inebriety (19/10/04, Brighton, UK)

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Anton**
if say - Brighton was bombed by the US (I know its a bit fictionary for Brighton but if it does happen) and the place where your parents worked was blown up - that was an economic resource for your country - you became poor because of it, wouldn't your views change towards the US? I would guarantee mine would be different - things like this!

Of course I would be angry towards the US government for an apparently unprovoked attack. But I'd be angry if the US did that anywhere, not just where I live. The fact that it directly affected me is neither here nor there. I'd be angry about the fact that the US was making people live in poor conditions for no good reason. That's a practical reason for being angry towards the US government.

If, on the other hand, the place that was bombed contained Britain's top-secret evil plans for taking over the world and loads of inter-continental missiles being prepared to launch (and this was the reason for the attack), I wouldn't be angry towards the US government. I would think it was a shame that people were having to live in poor conditions as a result of the attack, but would appreciate that it was vital in trying to get international peace. The only thing I might be angry about would be the fact that no aid was being provided to help rebuild where I lived.

So yeah, Galicia or Spain?

Anton (20/10/04, Sydney, Australia) I dunno Chronic. I reckon your feelings would be different if it happened to u than to someone else, u just would be able to help it...

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **xoan**
Then again, you can change that when you become selfaware of it

Touché

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **chronic inebriety**
So yeah, Galicia or Spain?

Yeah I think we went off a little bit.

For me my answer is Spain (sorry Xoan) but remember this is coming from a person from 100's of miles away!! You have a personal attachment to it, so you can ignore me if you wish

Gareth (27/10/04, England) A Galician team would be the equivalent to the Catalunya team wouldn't it?

You cannot compare it with the United Kingdom.

Wales used to be an independent nation but in the middle ages, the English invaded but it was still not part of England but rather a country ruled by England. With the heir to the throne being named ruler for the country - therefore the Prince of Wales. Wales is no longer under English rule, it is under British rule and it also has some

autonomy. I don't like to see Wales as a principality as the Prince is not Welsh - just whoever happens to be the eldest son of the King/Queen.

Xoán (27/10/04, Ireland) er... the only thing that "made us" Spanish was that we were invaded and colonised.

That's why there're problems today: because in all these years we haven't been able to find a durable compromise, only temporary patches. This whole conversation revolves around that: do we become independent? do we remain in the Spanish state? In either case... how do we do it? how do we go around this?

Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country don't claim for independence and/or more self government just because they're bored and spoilt and they have nothing else to do (as some people in Madrid think), but because there're critical issues yet to be solved. And... actually, many believe that the history of Wales and Galicia run parallel. Each case is different but... why can't we compare them? I don't get that...

Gareth (27/10/04, England) Because Wales is a much more independent country than Galicia.

Galicia may be compared to Cornwall in England, a county which has its own language and a few Cornish people consider themselves Cornish and not English. Wales on the other hand has never been part of England so it is a rather different issue

Xoán (27/10/04, Ireland) hmmm... if "Britain" is Spain/Spanish State (the States), then England is Castile, and Galicia never was part of Castile. Thus, in the strict sense, Galicia is not "Spain" although it's part of the Spanish State (in any case, this last issue can be largely discussed and I won't go there now).

At present, Galicia is far more independent in administrative and political terms than Wales. This is a hard fact, sorry.

The Galician kingdom was founded in 411 AD and remained until 1833, as it was mentioned somewhere earlier.

We've had our new national parliament since 1981 and the powers and competencies endorsed to the Galician government clearly surpass those of the Welsh autonomy. Honest, we're on the same boat, i.e. both Galicia and Wales are the perfect example of what is called "stateless nations" Did you know that there's a Welsh-Galician Association? They promote twinnings between towns and all that stuff..

Xoán (27/10/04, Ireland) PS. Cornwall could be "compared" to Asturias... or even Andalucia, that is, regions with a strong character and sense of belonging but with no national claims.

Gareth (28/10/04, England) there are actually a few extreme Cornishmen who want independence! I don't think there's very many though and they're a bit mad!

Alan_partidge (28/10/04, Australia)

(QUOTE) Originally Posted by **Gareth**
Because Wales is a much more independent country than Galicia.

Why do you say that?

Original discussion from www.deportivo-la-coruna.com/forum,
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