

## Summary of the intervention:

I will talk about the subject of my book *The New Wineskins of Spanish Nationalism*, where I explore the strong symbolic rearmament of Spanish nationalism over the last decade and a half. I think of Spanish nationalism as a secular religion whose expansion is due to great creativity and success at three different levels of propaganda. I use a religious metaphor: nationalism – any nationalism – as a secular religion that needs theologians, missionaries and catechists. The theologian puts together a complex worldview; the missionary encapsulates it in simple images to achieve conversion; The catechist teaches the faith in an entertaining way to those who have already converted. In the case of Christianity, its expansion required the same for St. Thomas Aquinas who wrote thirty incomprehensible pages on the Holy Trinity and for St. Patrick who, when he went to Ireland to evangelize the pagans, showed them a three-leaf clover and explained to them that the Trinity was just that: three leaves on the same plant. The same thing happens with modern nationalisms. Spanish nationalism, in recent years, has obtained great successes for its *theological creations*: thick and complex books in which an erudite defense of the Spanish Empire and its historical role is made. But also for missionary *women*: for example, a *boom* in nationalist historical novels, with novels set in the Reconquista, the conquest of America or the wars in Flanders. And also for *catechetical ones*: we can think, in this case, of slogans that come from sport, from an era of success in Spanish sport and particularly from the Spanish national football team. Phrases such as "I'm Spanish, what do you want me to beat you?" are coined in a humorous way to celebrate these successes but end up acquiring a greater meaning, and in their simplicity they convey the same message as the most brainy theological book: being Spanish is not just anything, but a source of pride. Spanish nationalism is effective on these three different levels of propaganda complexity and the left should think about being so in turn. Often, in our field, we have great *theologians* but few and bad *missionaries* and *catechists*, capable of conveying our message in an entertaining way to all audiences. We write highly intelligent treatises that explain capitalism, patriarchy, climate change, etc., in all their complexity, but we are not so capable of encapsulating that knowledge in historical novels, video games...

\*\*\*\*\*

## Biobibliographical profile:

**Pablo Batalla Cueto** (Gijón, 1987) has a degree in history from the University of Salamanca, is a journalist and proofreader. He has been or is a contributor to the newspapers and magazines *Asturias24*, *La Voz de Asturias*, *Atlántica XXII*, *Neville*, *Nueva Sociedad*, *Crítica.cl*, *Jot Down*, *La Soga*, *Nortes*, *LaU*, *La Marea*, *CTXT*, *Público* and *El País*; he has directed *A Quemarropa*, the official newspaper of the Black Week of Gijón, and since 2018 he has been coordinator of EL CUADERNO. He has published the books [\*Si cantara el gallo rojo: biografía social de Jesús Montes Estrada, 'Churruca'\*](#) (2017), [\*La virtud en la montaña: vindication de un alpinismo lento, ilustrado y anticapitalista\*](#) (2019), [\*Los nuevos odres del nacionalismo Spanish\*](#) (2021) and [\*La ira azul: el sueño millenario de la Revolución\*](#) (2023)