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# ARAGONESE REGIONALIST ACTION MANIFEST ADDRESSED TO THE ARAGONESE AND THOSE WHO LIVE IN ARAGON



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# ARAGONESE REGIONALIST ACTION MANIFEST ADDRESSED TO THE ARAGONESE AND THOSE WHO LIVE IN ARAGON

## CATALOGUING DATA

<b>ID:</b>	AR0001
<b>Nation / region:</b>	Aragon
<b>Epoch:</b>	Nineteenth century or earlier
<b>Title:</b>	Aragonese Regionalist Action Manifest addressed to the Aragonese and those who live in Aragon
<b>Original title:</b>	Manifiesto de Acción Regionalista Aragonesa a los aragoneses y a los que viven en Aragón
<b>Category:</b>	Manifestos
<b>Description:</b>	Ideological proclamation "to the Aragonese and those whose live in Aragon" on the need for an Aragonese Commonwealth, further to its area of influence in the Ebro Valley, reaffirming the country's historical personality and the need for self-government. It includes a list of basic working rules for the Aragonese Regionalist Action.
<b>Language:</b>	Spanish
<b>Date:</b>	December 6th, 1918
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<b>Reference persons:</b>	Vicente, Gregorio; Camón, José; Lope, Francisco; Perales, Pedro; Sánchez Sarto, Manuel; Sánchez Sarto, Luis
<b>Keywords:</b>	nation, autonomy, regionalism, Aragonese Regionalist Action, Commonwealth of Aragon, regional rights, land reform movement

## CONTEXT

The document was published at the time when the Commonwealth of Cataluña was discussing a statute project for autonomy. The Aragonese were hoping to launch a similar process that would put Aragon amongst the nationalities whose political personality and self-government would be recognised by the Spanish government. The autonomous debate was open in the Spanish government, and in Aragon its three Provincial Councils were promoting the establishment of a Commonwealth of Aragon, following the model of Cataluña, which has been working since 1914. The objective was for Aragon to attain the same concessions given to Cataluña.

## ABSTRACT

Aragonese regionalism must speed up and organise itself to achieve autonomy for Aragon, through need and through right, because of its personality. The Commonwealth of Aragon has to be like the great Council of the Kingdom ( the Aragon government in the Middle Ages), against a system of centralised Provincial Councils that limit themselves to obeying Madrid and spend their budget according to the Government's directives, which transmits its adverse effects. Complete administration of the country is sought, overcoming the inexcusable links with the Government. One attempts to attend to the proper needs of Aragon, economic, public works, territorial organisation (the regions), that will overcome limited provincial municipalism, that will update and revitalise Aragonese regional rights, that will make Zaragoza its capital and maintain cordial but minimum relations with the Spanish government. It is in favour of friendly relations with other people, especially Cataluña and Levante, but without being anybody's colony or appendix. It restores Aragon's proper personality and its wish to defend its interests against third parties.

It adds ten rules to the Aragonese Regionalist Action programme bringing together the aforementioned and other aspects such as the need to have their own Revenue department at every administrative level, a marked agrarian and industrial policy, the creation of an Aragonese Higher Education Centre and taking up government competencies.

## EXCERPTS

"For Aragon, this is more than as a need to survive, it is its very own right, because it has a Status that was and can continue being, and that is good for its survival and its improvement, it thinks now, with the current urgency, about being autonomous and organises itself for this in the best possible way."

"The complete Administration must respond to the Commonwealth and also be completely responsible for the Country, except for the obligatory links with the Government for its unity and the universality of many services that still correspond to it."

"We are Aragonese and we could not, in any way, form an appendix to another region, be an escort to another Entity, be a colony to another People; we maintain the personality of Aragon and our own policies; we have historic links present that join us to other regions in Levante, whose economy is complementary to ours, but if necessary, against whom or any other we would defend the interests of Aragon, without any further limitations that those required by law and by the desire for concordance."



# ARAGONESE REGIONALIST ACTION MANIFEST ADDRESSED TO THE ARAGONESE AND THOSE WHO LIVE IN ARAGON

## FOR THE ARAGONESE AND THOSE WHO LIVE IN ARAGON

Today Aragonese Regionalism is a case of urgency; hours or at the most days, before the law comes in to make the Autonomy of Cataluña a reality; other regions that the Spanish State also governs, are ready to act in a similar way. For Aragon, this is more than as a need to survive, it is its very own right, because it has a Status that was and can continue being, and that is good for its survival and its improvement, it thinks now, with the current urgency, about being autonomous and organises itself for this in the best possible way.

We are lovers of a tradition that is constantly renewed by social instinct, not mere fetishists of a past that was glorious. The right bank of the Ebro, from the Conchas de Haro to the western border of Aragon, a Country with common interests shared with the Aragonese Ebro; and this and that, countries of rich interests; Aragon did not appear in History as it was in the 15th century; because our kingdom started to gain territory, now it can combine itself with that of la Rioja; thus, the Commonwealth of Aragon will improve with the Commonwealth of Ebro; this in itself would be an economic wise move, a move that on its own is not enough to satisfy our regionalist aspirations.

The Commonwealth that Aragon will form, has to be like a great Council of the Kingdom. The bad impression that the current municipalities and Councils give to citizens, did not come about from them, but because they were forced to only obey and pay, transmitted the irrefutable, angry and even adverse energy, that they received from the Government.

The complete Administration must respond to the Commonwealth and also be completely responsible for the Country, except for the obligatory links with the Government for its unity and the universality of many services that still correspond to it; but that Autonomy must have economic freedom that it needs to increase, through active management, our origins of wealth and the means to a quick and strong rise of our higher

education, now the first in line, because it has the least looked after, as it was nearly completely unattended. Thus Aragon, with its own resources will be able to attend its own needs without owing, like up till now, its public works to outside systems, nor expose the fault of the votes being or not being reliable, as happens today with the Spanish Government's Legislative Bodies, not personally responsible, but due to inevitable ignorance of nearly everybody concerning countries that are more knowledgeable, and these are, for each of those representatives, the best in the Government's territory.

Aragon has, as well as a good municipal history, the historical type of municipal communities formed by one region for the common good; analogously, a few months ago, the Community of the Municipalities of Aragon was set up, also inviting those on the borders. We must support and develop that Institution with all our efforts, because it is a social force that can multiply strengths that alone would fail, and with few would not be able to do much.

But that Community will not be enough to lead Aragon, that mere municipal Community, will only be able to produce, more and better than isolated municipalities, the proper activity of the Municipalities and that is not all that Aragon will need. It would be better to extract from this Community of municipalities, and this would be our greatest desire, the Commonwealth Governing Body; but that Body, even if it was related by origin, would not be by nature or condition or in the running of it.

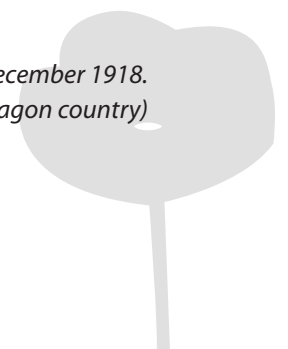
We love our regional Rights; but we want them alive and ready to be changed according to society; this also requires, like our Economy, a socially conscious authority, and only the country that it affects can do this, all of it and only it. This work must be undertaken by governing politicians of an autonomous Aragon not on in impulsive or passionate way to obtain their votes, but with the obedience to the reasoned agreement of our lawyers.

Autonomous Aragon needs a capital, and many circumstances make Zaragoza the indisputable one, but this must not be to create, instead of a current central state, a regional centralism. Just in the same way that subjects are not made for human authority that governs them, the capital is not for the good of the capital but for the territory and the people that it heads. In any case, the closer the capital is, then the easier the towns will make their protests heard if they had to do so.

We shall maintain cordial relations with the Spanish government; reduce its activity to just proportions, we will love it as a link between towns to whom continuity of territories and community interests suggest fraternity. We shall maintain an affectionate relationship with the regionalist nuclei throughout the Spanish territory, especially with Cataluña, a model already set up and to whom all Iberian regionalism owes its first tough start, which was later used by all.

We are Aragonese and we could not, in any way, form an appendix to another region, be an escort to another Entity, be a colony to another People; we maintain the personality of Aragon and our own policies; we have historic links present that join us to other regions in Levante, whose economy is complementary to ours, but if necessary, against whom or any other we would defend the interests of Aragon, without any further limitations that those required by law and by the desire for concordance.

*City of Zaragoza, 6th December 1918.  
(Signed by many well-known people from the Aragon country)*



## RULES

- I. Recognition of the Aragonese personality.
- II. Constitution of the Commonwealth of Aragon, as a representation of its personality and as an instrument for its economic and cultural activities.
- III. Delegation by the Commonwealth of Aragon of those administrative duties that are developed according to the variety of countries that apply it (public works, professional teaching, etc.)
- IV. Effective recognition of the autonomous personality of the municipalities, separating all duties where at present they are mere agents for the Government.
- V. Own Revenue department for each Aragonese entity (Commonwealth, province deemed appropriate to exist, municipality, groups for special aims).
- VI. Civil Rights for Aragon, not as a mere storage area for traditional rules, but as a live production according to the needs of each era.
- VII. Connection of the capital of Aragon, to all the regions and municipalities of the country, mainly for the defence and improvement of the interests of those regions and municipalities.
- VIII. Agrarian policy, representative of the current huge interest in Aragon, without spurning industry, a complement to farming in any educated people.
- IX. Creation of a Higher Education Centre protected by the Commonwealth, and whilst this is obtained, by the official and non-official bodies most representative of Aragon and organised in such a way that its work corresponds to its title.
- X. Preference for the defence of Aragon's interests especially regarding other political group interests, allowing freedom to act in them, according to each individual's convictions.

## SOURCES

*El Ebro*, 20th January 1919; reproduced by Carlos Royo Villanova: *El Regionalismo Aragonés*. Zaragoza, Guara editorial, 1978, doc. VII, pp. 51-54.

Comments: Aragonese Regionalist Action Manifest, the first Aragonese regionalist group set out in various Aragonese regions.

