

Una Breve Historia de España

This brief history of Spain is divided into three parts: Overview of the history, more specific information about the important historical periods, major cultural periods

Introduction.

One of the characteristic features of the early history of Spain is the successive waves of different peoples who spread all over the Peninsula. The first to appear were the Iberians, a Libyan people, who came from the south. Later came the Celts, a typically Aryan people, and from the merging of the two there arose a new race, the Celtiberians, who, divided into several tribes (Cantabrians, Asturians, Lusitanians) gave their name to their respective homelands. The next to arrive, attracted by mining wealth, were the Phoenicians, who founded a number of trading posts along the coast, the most important being that of Cadiz. After this came Greek settlers, who founded several towns, including Rosas, Ampurias and Sagunto. The Phoenicians, in their struggle against the Greeks, called on the Carthaginians, who, under the orders of Hamilcar Barca, took possession of most of Spain. It was at this time that Rome raised a border dispute in defence of the areas of Greek influence, and thus began in the Peninsula the Second Punic War, which decided the fate of the world at that time. After the Roman victory, Publius Cornelius Scipio, Africanus, began the conquest of Spain, which was to be under Roman rule for six centuries.

Once the Peninsula had been completely subdued, it was Romanized to such an extent that it produced writers of the stature of Seneca and Lucan and such eminent emperors as Trajan and Hadrian. Rome left in Spain four powerful social elements: the Latin language, Roman law, the municipality and the Christian religion.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Suevi, Vandals and Alans entered Spain, but they were defeated by the Visigoths who, by the end of the 6th century, had occupied virtually the whole of the Peninsula. At the beginning of the 8th century the Arabs entered from the south. They conquered the country swiftly except for a small bulwark in the North which would become the initial springboard for the Re-Conquest, which was not completed until eight centuries later. The period of Muslim sway is divided into three periods: the Emirate (711 to 756), the Caliphate (756-1031) and

the Reinos de Taifas (small independent kingdoms) (1031 to 1492). In 1469, the marriage of the Catholic Monarchs, Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, prepared the way for the union of the two kingdoms and marked the opening of a period of growing success for Spain, since during their reign, Granada, the last stronghold of the Arabs in Spain, was conquered and, at the same time, in the same historic year of 1492, the caravels sent by the Crown of Castile under the command of Christopher Columbus discovered America. The Canary Islands became part of Spanish territory (1495), the hegemony of Spain in the Mediterranean, to the detriment of France, was affirmed with the conquest of the Kingdom of Naples, and Navarre was incorporated into the Kingdom.

The next two centuries, the 16th and the 17th, witnessed the construction and apogee of the Spanish Empire as a result of which the country, under the aegis of the Austrias, became the world's foremost power, and European politics hinged upon it.

The War of Succession to the Spanish Crown (1701-1714) marked the end of the dynasty of the Hapsburgs and the coming of the Bourbons. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 formalized the British occupation of the Rock of Gibraltar, giving rise to an anachronistic colonial situation which still persists today and constitutes the only dispute between Spain and the United Kingdom.

In 1808 Joseph Bonaparte was installed on the Spanish throne, following the Napoleonic invasion, although the fierce resistance of the Spanish people culminated in the restoration of the Bourbons in the person of Fernando VII. In 1873, the brief reign of Amadeo of Savoy ended with his abdication, and the First Republic was proclaimed. However, a military pronouncement in 1875, restored the monarchy and Alfonso XII was proclaimed King of Spain. He was succeeded in 1886 by his son Alfonso XIII, although his mother Queen Maria Cristina of Hapsburg acted as regent until 1902, when he was crowned king.

Prior to this, a brief war with the United States resulted in the loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, in 1898, thus completing the dissolution of the Spanish overseas empire. In the municipal elections of April 12th, 1931, it became clear that in all the large towns of Spain the candidates who supported the Monarchy had been heavily defeated. The size of the Republican's vote in cities such as Madrid and Barcelona was

enormous. In the country districts the Monarchy gained enough seats to secure for them a majority in the nation as a whole. But it was well known that in the country the 'caciques' were still powerful enough to prevent a fair vote. By the evening of the day following the elections, great crowds were gathering in the streets of Madrid. The king's most trusted friends advised him to leave the capital without delay, to prevent bloodshed. As a result, Alfonso XIII left Spain and the Second Republic was established in April 14th. During its five-year lifetime, it was ridden with all kind of political, economic and social conflicts, which inexorably split opinions into two irreconcilable sides. The climate of growing violence culminated on July 18th 1936 in a military rising which turned into a tragic civil war which did not end until three years later.

On October 1st, 1936, General Franco took over as Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. The Spanish State embarked on a period of forty years' dictatorship, during which the political life of the country was characterized by the illegality of all the political parties with the exception of the National Movement. Franco died in 1975, bringing to an end a period of Spanish history and opening the way to the restoration of the monarchy with the rise to the Throne of the present King of Spain, Juan Carlos I de Borbon y Borbon.

The young monarch soon established himself as a resolute motor for change to a western-style democracy by means of a cautious process of political reform which took as its starting point the Francoist legal structure. Adolfo Suarez, the prime minister of the second Monarchy Government (July 1976) carried out with determination and skill -though helped, certainly, by a broad social consensus- the so-called transition to democracy which, after going through several stages (recognition of basic liberties, political parties, including the communist party, the trade unions, an amnesty for political offences, etc.), culminated in the first democratic parliamentary elections in 41 years, on June 15th, 1977. The Cortes formed as a result decided to start a constituent process which concluded with the adoption of a new Constitution, ratified by universal suffrage, on December 6th, 1978.

Between 1980 and 1982, the regions of Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia and Andalusia approved statutes for their own self-government and elected their respective parliaments. In January 1981, the prime minister, Adolfo Suarez, resigned and was succeeded by Leopoldo

Calvo-Sotelo. On August 27th, 1982, Calvo-Sotelo presented to the King a decree for the dissolution of Parliament and the calling of a general election to be held on October 28th. Victory of the polls went to the Spanish Socialist Worker Party (PSOE) and its secretary general, Felipe Gonzalez. The socialists obtained 202 seats out of the 350 of which the Lower House consists and approximately 48% of the popular vote. Felipe Gonzalez was elected prime minister (December 2nd) after the parliamentary vote of investiture. The major losers were the Union of the Democratic Center - which has split up following the defection of a number of its members- and the Spanish Communist Party (PCE). The Popular Alliance, whose chairman was Manuel Fraga Iribarne, made considerable gains (106 seats and approximately 26% of the vote).

The subsequent general elections of 1986, 1989 and 1993 were also won by the Spanish Socialist Party and consolidated the the position of the Popular Party, led by Jose Maria Aznar, as the second largest political force in the country. 25,000 to 10,000 B.C.: The cave paintings of Pinal, Pena de Candamo, El Pental, Pasiega, Ribadesella and Altamira express the existence of a fine culture in the Magdalenian period. 1,100 B.C.: The Phoenicians found Gadir or Gades (Cadiz), Baria Adra, Almunecar and Malaga. 1,000 B.C.: Civilization of the Tartessians. The Celts begin to arrive from across the Pyrenees.

Roman Presence. The Roman presence in the Peninsula followed the route of the Greek commercial bases; however, it commenced with a struggle between this great empire and Carthage for the control of the western Mediterranean during the second century B.C. In any case, it was at that time that the Peninsula would enter as an entity in the international political circuit then in existence, and from then on became a coveted strategic objective due to its singular geographic position between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, and to the agricultural and mineral wealth of its southern part.

The end of the Roman empire in Spain.

Visigothic Kingdom. By the 5th century A.D., the Visigoths were already a Romanized people who considered themselves the heirs of the defunct imperial power. Around the middle of this century, the threefold pressures of the Suevi, from the west (Galicia), the Cantabrian-Pyrenaic herdsmen from the north and the Byzantines from the south, the Betica, forced them to establish their capital in Toledo, in the center of the

Peninsula. The Visigoths have been considered, practically up to the present day, the creators of the first Peninsular kingdom,

Significant dates of this period are:

587: Recared, Leovigild's heir, is converted to Catholicism and removes the barriers between Goths and the Hispano-Romans.

633: The 4th. Synod of Toledo takes on the right to confirm elected kings. The Jews are obliged to be baptized. The vernacular language, of Latin origin, prevails over that of the Visigoths.

711: The Muslim troops cross the Strait of Gibraltar and defeat the Visigoth king Rodrigo at the battle of Guadalete.

712: Muza ben-Nosair completes the Muslim conquest. End of Visigothic period.

Muslim Spain. It was one of the noble clans, the Witiza family, that, at the beginning of the 8th century, caused the decline of the Visigoth kingdom, by appealing for aid to Muslim and Berbers warriors from across the Strait of Gibraltar to fight the royal usurper. In fact, the Visigothic state apparatus' disintegration allowed the Muslims to make isolated pacts with an aristocracy that was semi-independent and opposed to the Crown. By the middle of the 8th century, the Muslims had completed their occupation and the Umayyad prince Abd al-Rahman, who had fled from the Abbasid slaughter of 750 A.D., took refuge among the Berbers. Finally, supported by one of the Peninsular Muslims tribes, the Yemenies, he managed to defeat, in 755, the Abbasid governor of Al-Andalus and have himself proclaimed in Cordoba Emir, independent of Damascus. In the first third of the 10th century, one of the Spanish Umayyads, Abd al- Rahman III, restored and extended the Al-Andalus emirate and became the first Spanish Caliph. The proclamation of the Caliphate had a double purpose. In the interior, the Umayyads wanted to strengthen the Peninsular kingdom. Outside the country, they wanted to consolidate the commercial routes of the Mediterranean, guarantee an economic relationship with the east-Byzantium, and assure the supply of gold.

Muslim Spain produced a flourishing culture, above all after the Caliph Al-Hakam II (961-976) came to power. He is credited with founding a library of hundreds of thousands of volumes, which was practically inconceivable in Europe at that time. The most distinctive feature of this culture was the early re-adoption of classical philosophy by Ibn Masarra, Abentofain, Averroes and the Jew Maimonide. But the Spanish-Muslim thinkers stood out, above all in medicine, mathematics and astronomy. The fragmentation of the Cordoban Caliphate took place at the end of the

first decade of the 11th century; this came about as a result of the enormous war effort deployed by the last Cordoban leaders and the suffocating fiscal pressures. The thirty-nine successors of the united Caliphate became known as the first (1009-1090) Ta'ifas (petty kingdoms), a name which has passed into the Spanish language as a synonym for the ruin generated by the fragmentation and disunity of the Peninsula. This division occurred twice again, thereby creating second and third Ta'ifas and producing a series of new invasions from the north of Africa. The first time the Almoravides (1090), invaded the Peninsula, the second time it was the Almohads (1146) and the third, the Banu Marins (1224). This progressive weakening meant that by the middle of the 13th century, Islamic Spain was reduced to the Nasrid Kingdom in Granada. Located between the Strait of Gibraltar and Cape Gata, this historical relic did not capitulate until 2 January 1492, at the end of the Re-conquest.

The Re-conquest. 718: Pelayo, a noble Visigoth who has been elected king, defeats the Muslim Army in Alcama in the neighbourhood of Covadonga, thus beginning the Christian Reconquest of Spain.

1065 to 1109: Alfonso VI unites the two kingdoms under his sceptre and takes Toledo.

1102: The followers of the Cid leave Valencia and the African Muslims occupy the Peninsula as far as Saragossa (Zaragoza).

1464: Enrique IV of Castile names as heir to the throne his sister, the future Isabel I, the Catholic, and disinherits his daughter Juana, nicknamed 'La Beltraneja'.

1469: Isabel I of Castile and Fernando II of Aragon are married, thus consummating the unity of Spain.

1492: The Catholic Monarchs, Isabel and Fernando, complete the Re-conquest by taking Granada (January 2nd), taking advantage of the rivalry of the last Muslim governors of Spain. Discovery of America (October 12th).

The Catholic Monarchs.

1474 to 1516: During the reign of Isabel and Fernando, the outstanding elements are: 1. The taking of Granada (that completed in 1492, January 2nd, the Christian Re-conquest against Muslim rule in Spain. 2. The Discovery of America (12 October 1492) by Christopher Columbus. 3. The setting up of the Inquisition: a Tribunal that not only had religious implications, but was also an instrument allowing royal power to reinforce the authority of the State. The unity of Spain was possible after

the marriage of the Catholic Monarchs in 1469. 4. The expulsion of the Jews. The search for unity did not stop with the final military gesture of 1492 but was prolonged in pursuit of religious and cultural uniformity, culminating in the expulsion of the Jews who refused to convert in the same year that the Reconquest was completed, and in the ensuing expulsion of the Muslims. 5. The pacification of the kingdoms. They tried to reinforce the state apparatus and royal authority to do so and they used the juridical and administrative institutions already existing. The Spanish monarchy appears then as one of the first modern states of Renaissance Europe. 6. An international policy of marriage alliances to consolidate Spanish power.

The Discovery of America.

One of the most significant dates during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs was 12th October 1492: the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. The fact that Christopher Columbus (who was not originally Spanish) appealed to a foreign court to offer his services proved that the discovery of America was not incidental. Portugal and Castilla (Spain) were well-advanced in the exploration of overseas mercantile routes and Sevilla, a wealthy and populous Spanish city, was by then an important commercial center. Unified Spain possessed in 1492 a powerful war machine, a solid economy, an exterior projection, naval experience including the exploration of trade routes and notable scientific-technical potential mathematicians, geographers, astronomers and shipbuilders who had been formed in a melting-pot of three cultures (Jews, Muslims and Christians). Its only rival was its neighbor, Portugal, which, as we know, had put a stop to Spanish expansion in Africa. By the middle of the 16th century, they had settled in the two most important viceroyalties, Mexico on the Atlantic, and Peru on the Pacific.

The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Empire.

1516: On the death of Fernando of Aragon, the Spanish Crown goes to Charles I of Spain and V of Germany, who unites under a single sceptre the Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, plus the Italian and European dominions of the Habsburgs.

1519: Charles is crowned emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (June 28th), which involves Spain in endless wars; the monarch confronts the Ottoman Empire, takes Francois I of France prisoner at Pavia and tries to solve the serious problem of the Reformation.

1556: Charles abdicates and enters the monastery of Yuste (where he dies two years later), dividing his dominions between his son Philip II and his younger brother Ferdinand I. Most of the Empire remains in the hands of the Spanish branch of the House of Austria.

1571: Don Juan de Austria, the half-brother of Philip II, defeats the Turks in the naval battle of Lepanto.

1588: Disaster of the Invincible Armada against England.

The decline of Spain becomes more noticeable.

1700: With the death of Charles II, the dynasty of the Hapsburg comes to an end and the War of the Spanish Succession breaks out, in which France, England and Austria are involved.

1714: The war ends. France imposes Philip of Anjou (Philip V), the grandson of Louis XIV, as king of Spain. Spain loses Belgium, Luxemburg, Milan, Naples, Sardinia, Minorca and Gibraltar.

The Bourbons and the Enlightenment. Carlos II, the last of the Spanish Hapsburg, left no direct descendants, but named as his successor a grandson of his sister Maria Teresa and Louis XIV of France, Felipe of Anjou. Crowned as King of Spain and the Indies, Felipe V was the first Spanish Bourbon King inaugurating with his reign the Spain of the Enlightenment, an epoch of harmonious foreign relations, reform and interior development. The reign of Felipe V can be divided into three clearly different phases: first, that of tutelage from France, then independence, and finally, that of an equilibrium with the great neighboring nation.

1759 to 1788: During the reign of Charles III, the policies of the Primer Minister, Floridablanca, kept Spain out of the conflict in spite of a cautious intervention in the American War of Independence. Charles III carried out a profound reorganization of the nation, reformed its agriculture and introduced the very latest in urban concepts from his native Naples.

The Peninsular War and the Constitution of 1812.

1808-1813: The Spanish people rise against French domination (May 2nd, 1808) and with English help defeat Napoleon. The Peninsular War (Guerra de la Independencia) was a key factor in the cristalization of Spanish Nationality.

1808: The crisis of the Old Order that had opened the doors to the Napoleonic invasion, also coincided with a dynastic crisis that seriously undermined the enormous prestige of a millenary crown. Fernando the

prince of Asturias and heir to the throne, intrigued against Godoy, the Prime Minister, who had been accused by public opinion of being the Queen's lover, and was blamed for all the ills of those troubled times. In March 1808, Godoy fell and Carlos IV abdicated in favour of his son, but the monarchic institution had been irreparably damaged. Napoleon, who had not recognized the rule of Fernando VII, decided to take advantage of the Spanish dynastic crisis to substitute Bonapartes for Bourbons. To do so, he summoned the Spanish royal family to Bayonne and compelled Fernando VII to abdicate in favour of his father, who abdicated in favor of Joseph Bonaparte. This was an act that took place with all the legal formalities and was adhered to by all the principal institutions and personages of the kingdom. The political regime that the Bonapartes attempted to unite was that planned by the Statute of Bayonne on 8 July 1808. Although this document is of great importance from a historical point of view, it has no juridical or practical significance because it never came into force. However, it was the first constitutional text to appear in Spain. The result was a generalized uprising which began on 2 May, immortalized by Goya in his paintings. The Spanish War, as it was known in France, lasted six years. The Spaniards called it the War of Independence, and it was an all-encompassing national war.

The 19th Century.

When the Spanish diplomats attended the Congress of Vienna in 1814, they represented a victorious State, but a ruined and divided nation. The profound crisis of Spain had seriously undermined the Spanish American empire, because many of the American colonies claimed their independence in the first decades of the 19th century. The history of the rest of the 19th century was dominated by the dynastic dilemma produced by the death without male heir of Ferdinand VII. His daughter took the throne as Isabel II, but her uncle, the legendary Don Carlos, opposed her claim, thus giving rise to the first of the two Carlist Wars, which chiefly affected Navarre, the Basque Country and El Maestrazgo, the region which bestrides Castellon, Tarragona and Teruel.

1895: The Cuban war of independence breaks out.

1898: The war with the United States puts an end to the remains of the Spanish colonial empire: Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines are turned over to the victors.

Loss of the Colonies. 1898: In 1898, Spain lost the last of its overseas colonies (Cuba, Puerto Rico and Philippines) but took on Morocco as a protectorate, which was to prove a new source of friction. The nation's delicate economic and social situation was expressed in serious internal tension, with anarchist uprisings in several regions, and street fighting in Barcelona in 1909 and 1917. Primo de Rivera's dictatorship solved some of the multiple problems plaguing the country: he ended the war in Africa, developed local governments and presented an ambitious public works programme. However, the attempt to return to a constitutional government by integrating a consultative National Assembly (1926) failed with the rejection of the Drafts of the Constitution of the Spanish Monarchy (1929).

The Second Republic. 1931: After the municipal elections, the Republic is proclaimed. The revolutionary committee becomes the provisional Government.

Spanish Civil War.

Introduction: 1936 to 1939: A military rising originating in Morocco, headed by General Francisco Franco, spreads rapidly all over the country, thus starting the Spanish Civil War. After a number of bloody battles in which fortunes changed from one side to the other, the 'nacionales' finally prevailed and made a victorious entry into Madrid (March 28th, 1939).

Francoist Dictatorship. 1939 to 1945: Spain stays out of the 2nd World War.

1947: Franco announces the restoration of the monarchy when he dies or retires (Law of Succession).

1953: Spain and the US sign a co-operation agreement providing for the establishment of bases for joint use.

1955: An agreement between the US and the Soviet Union enables Spain to enter the United Nations with other fifteen nations.

1962: HRH Prince Juan Carlos marries the royal princess Sofia de Grecia.

1963: The Co-operation Agreement with the United States is extended for five years more.

1969: Juan Carlos de Borbon y Borbon is formally invested as Crown Prince, one day after Franco names him as successor with the title of King.

1975: General Franco dies (November 20th). King Juan Carlos takes the oath as King of Spain at a joint session of the Cortes and the Council of the Realm. A chapter of Spanish history was forever closed and the doors of freedom and hope were opened for the Spanish people.

Democratic Transition. The new king was as determined as he was prudent in his efforts to assure Spain a rapid democratic process, transforming the institution he incarnated into a 'Monarchy for all the Spanish people'. However, it was not an easy task. It was necessary to 'respect' the legal conditions inherited from Francoism, along with a good many of his political groups.

1982: On October 28, new general elections were held. The PSOE obtained an absolute majority. Felipe Gonzalez is invested as Prime Minister. This event can be considered as the culmination of the transition period and it represented the definite consolidation of the democratic process.

The Parliamentary Monarchy. The Spanish Constitution, which was unanimously approved by Parliament and voted by 87.8% of the citizens in a referendum held on 6 December 1978, provides in article 1 for a Parliamentary Monarchy of the classical liberal European style, with certain peculiarities to take into account the Spanish situation. Article 1.3 reads: 'The political form of the Spanish State is that of a Parliamentary Monarchy' The Constitution provides for separation between legislative, executive and judiciary and gives institutional backing to the King as Head of State and supreme head of the Armed Forces. Sovereign power is held by a two-chamber Parliament, called the Cortes, whose members are elected by all of the citizens who are 18 or over, for a maximum term of four years.

Language and Culture. The culture of any country or group is best understood as a sort of continuous flow, with the creative energies of new talents contributing to change. At any single moment, culture is a complex amalgam of past glories and the current avant-garde. This is true of any society, but there are few whose culture is in such close contact with present-day reality, so deeply rooted in popular tradition, as the Spanish. The great names in Spanish arts have all been strong characters, with the confidence to break away from established mores, and have always been closely involved in the society in which they lived and which they portrayed. Think of Goya and Velázquez in painting, Cervantes and Quevedo in literature, Falla and Albéniz in music...

This very Spanish characteristic has given rise a very Spanish culture, in a nation whose cultural heritage has been enriched by the many external influences to which it has been subjected in the course of its long

history. The Iberian Peninsula's geographical position has made it a natural bridge between cultures of the north and the south of Europe and Africa. The vicissitudes of its history have transformed it into a crossroads for many different cultures. For this reason, its cultural heritage offers enormous wealth and diversity, and perceptible in it is the human imprint of an agitated and intense past.

Among the first primitive peoples inhabiting the Peninsula were the Celts, whose culture was responsible for, according to all available evidence, the large animal sculptures, such as the Guisando bulls in Avila; and the Iberians, whose culture is a mixture of different Mediterranean influences, illustrated by the three female sculptures on exhibit in Madrid's National Archaeological Museum - the Ladies of Elche - from the hill of Los Santos (Montealegre, Albacete) and of Baza. The Greeks also founded colonies along the Mediterranean coasts, where they left an important artistic imprint in such places as Ampurias (Gerona).

Roman Imprint. Romanization culturally unified the Iberian Peninsula and left, in addition to language and numerous social institutions, abundant artistic remains. Some of them are fundamental for the understanding of Roman art, such as the aqueducts in Segovia and Los Milagros (Merida), the Alcantara bridge or the arch in Medinaceli (Soria), the ruins at Bolonia (Cadiz), Sagunto (Valencia), Tarragona, Ampurias and the circus at Tarragona. Two exceptional Roman remains are those of Italica (Sevilla) and Merida, with its splendid theatre, in which, every July, an international festival of classical theatre is offered. The great amount of Roman ruins in this city led to the construction of the National Museum of Roman art, opened in 1986. If during its first five centuries Hispania was shaped by Rome, the favor was soon returned in the form of its most capable sons - some of whom became emperors: Trajan and Hadrian. Marco Anneo Seneca, Lucio Anneo Seneca, Marco Anneo Lucano represented an exceptional family. Rome's legacy impregnated institutions and the world of Law. It introduced, through vernacular Latin, almost all of the Peninsula's languages with the exception of Euskera (Basque language): Castilian, Catalan, Gallego and Portuguese.

The Middle Ages. The expansion of Christianity in Spain coincided with the beginning of the Germanic invasion. Few vestiges of Visigothic art have survived and they seem to reveal more Byzantine and North African influences than Roman ones. The horse-shoe arch, arched twin windows

separated by a column, and tunnel vaults characterize the primitive Christian churches (Santa Comba de Bande in Orense and San Pedro de la Nave in Zamore).

The Moorish invasion and subsequent period of the Re-conquest produced an amalgam of three cultures. Their harmonization and cultural exchanges represented one of the most fruitful processes of European culture. The perpetration of the Classical legacy was guaranteed by Alfonso X's School of Translators in Toledo and Seville. Alfonso X (the Wise) supplemented the legislation initiated at the beginning of the Visigothic period with the Code of Eurico (466), the Codex Revisus de Leovigildo and the Liber Iudiciorum (656), by promulgating his Siete Partidas, and he also contributed to the world of science (Lapidario). The conjunction of Arab-Christian culture generated the double phenomenon of Mozarabic and Mudejar art. In the 11th century, Andalucia and Valencia were rival centers of Islamic culture. Poetry reached its zenith with the outstanding Ibn Zaydin, Ibn Khafaja and the poet King Al-Mu'tamid. But the two best poets were Ibn Quzman (d.1160), innovator of the classical meter with his introduction of muwasahas and zejeles. Among philosophers, the extraordinary Averroes (1126-98 Cordoba), who produced a series of commentaries on Aristotle's works deserves special attention.

Literature developed significantly. The primitive epic poem had been blended with the troubadour and jongleurs' lyrical poetry of Provenance origin and later adapted to Gallego, the language of Galicia. And in addition to the popular minstrels' verses, a clerical verse form appeared. Gonzalo de Berceo became the first poet of the Castilian language with his 'Milagros de Nuestra Senora'. Alfonso X, the Wise, has already been referred to in relation to his 'Siete Partidas', but the 'Cronica General' of Spain that he had written, and the 'Cantigas de Santa Maria' he composed in Gallego, deserve mention. The first collections of short stories appeared during his reign: the 'Libro de Calila e Dimna' and a first theatrical piece: the 'Auto de los Reyes Magos'.

Renaissance Century. The 14th century was an extraordinary prolific epoch during which the influence of Italian Humanism was widely felt. Some of the leading literary figures of the times were Juan Ruiz, the archpriest of Hita, who wrote the 'Libro del Buen Amor'; Juan Manuel, nephew of Alfonso X and the creator of the 'Conde Lucanor', and the royal chancellor of Castile, Pedro Lopez de Ayala, author of the 'Cronicas' and

the verses 'Rimado de Palacio'. But the great revolution in all spheres would be ushered in with the publication of 'La Celestina o Tragicomedia de Calixto y Melibea', Spain's second most important literary work after 'Don Quixote'.

The Golden Century. The period between the Renaissance and the Baroque, Spain's 'Golden Age' really spanned two centuries (the 16th and the 17th) and it is the most fecund and glorious age of Spanish Arts and Letters. The novel would reach its highest level of universality and Spanish expression with Miguel de Cervantes' 'Don Quixote' and other clearly Spanish works such as the picaresque novel: 'Lazarillo de Tormes' and Mateo Aleman's 'Guzman de Alfarache'. It would be also a Golden Age for poetry. In the 16th century, Boscan and Garcilaso de la Veda adapted Italian lyrical poetry to Castilian which found its maximum expression in the mystical poetry of Fray Luis de Leon and San Juan de la Cruz, and in the prose of Santa Teresa.

The 16th century would produce one of the masters of Spanish painting: Domenikos Theotokopoulos, 'El Greco' who did most of his work in Toledo where many of his paintings are preserved: 'El expolio' (Christ Stripped of his Garments), 'The Martyrdom of San Mauricio', 'The Resurrection of Christ' and 'The Burial of Count Orgaz' represent a decisive moment for Spanish and universal painting. Among the first 17th century painters who depicted realism were Ribalta and Ribera. but his style reached its summit with Diego Velazquez (1599-1660), whose many works hang in the Prado Museum: "Las Meninas" (The Maids of Honour), "The Surrender or Breda", "The Forge of Vulcan", in addition to his famous portraits of Philip IV, prince Baltazar Carlos and of Conde Duque de Olivares. Velazquez was a Madrid painter but Zurbaran and Murillo worked in Seville devoting themselves to religious themes. The Golden Age also has its own architectural style, a spartan and purist reaction against the filigree work of the Plateresque, a style resembling silversmiths' work. Its most remarkable monument is Philip II's Monastery of the Escorial, begun by Juan Bautista of Toledo and finished after Bautista's death by Juan de Herrera.

The Age of Enlightenment. The spirit of Enlightenment appeared in Spain with the Bourbon dynasty. Indeed, the dynastic change in Spain ushered in extraordinary progress in political thought, science and culture. The 18th century, introducing the Age of Enlightenment, brought about advances in education, science, public works and a rational conception in

both politics and life in general. The creation of new cultural institutions began during the reign of Philip V with the founding in 1714 of the Libreria Real which would become the National Library and the Royal Spanish Academy of Language.

Romanticism: the Artistic Expression of Liberalism. Romanticism, an artistic and literary expression of Liberal thought, was initially introduced in Spain in 1820 and acquired its maximum importance during 1830-40, a decade marked by the return from exile of many liberals following the death of Ferdinand VII. They had been influenced by late French Romanticism to the exclusion of the English and German models. Mariano Jose de Larra (1809-37) represented its maximum exponent and its influence was still felt at the turn of the century through the poetry of Gustavo Adolfo Becquer (1836-1870) and partially in the grandiloquent drama of Spain's first Nobel Prize winner, Jose Echegaray.

The Generation of '98 was almost obsessively preoccupied with what came to be known as the 'Spanish problem', and thus rediscovered the beauty of the somber Castilian countryside and developed a considerable stylistic renovation avoiding the characteristic 19th century rhetoric. Some members of this Generation attained truly universal standing, as is the case of the Basque Miguel de Unamuno, who, in his 'Sentimiento tragico de la vida', anticipates the reflections and the basic themes of Existencialism. Another Basque, Pio Baroja, the great realistic novelist, narrates with such simplicity, naturalness and dynamism that it is not surprising that Hemingway proclaimed him his master.

The Generation of 1927. (La Generacion del 27) In the 1920s, the regenerating winds of aesthetic avant-guardism blew across Europe with vigor. Outstanding Spanish personalities such as Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel figures largely in the movement. The work of the former was intimately tied to his Spanish roots and an excessive and baroque temperament, full of contrasts that seemed to characterize Spanish art.

It was Picasso, who, with the Cubist style, wrote the first page of 20th century painting. Admirers of this painter from Malaga can appreciate his Guernica, the portrait depicting the horror of the Nazi bombing of this Basque town during the Civil War, in the Museo de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid. In Barcelona, art-lovers can visit Avino Street, the symbolic cradle

of Cubism embodied in *Las Senoritas de Avignon*. There is also the splendid Picasso Museum in the center of the Gothic quarter, which houses a number of works of his youth, as well as many engravings and the series of paintings inspired by *Las Meninas* of Velazquez. Madrid was the birthplace of the Cubist, Juan Gris, who succeeded in reducing the objects he painted to their chromatic mass and elemental geometric properties. Also associated with surrealism is Salvador Dali, an exceptional artist, who liked to provoke bourgeois sensibility with shocking and calculate gestures. Dali had lived with Luis Bunuel and Federico Garcia Lorca in the 1920s at the Student Residence (Residencia de Estudiantes) in Madrid.

Since 1978 a decade has sufficed for Spanish culture to regain a vitality in which it is easy to sense the joy of freedom. Today the cultural policy carried out by the Spanish authorities is centered on the support of creativity and on the creation of infrastructure.