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Euskal Herritarrak Gara: A Study of a People and their History, Culture, and Identity

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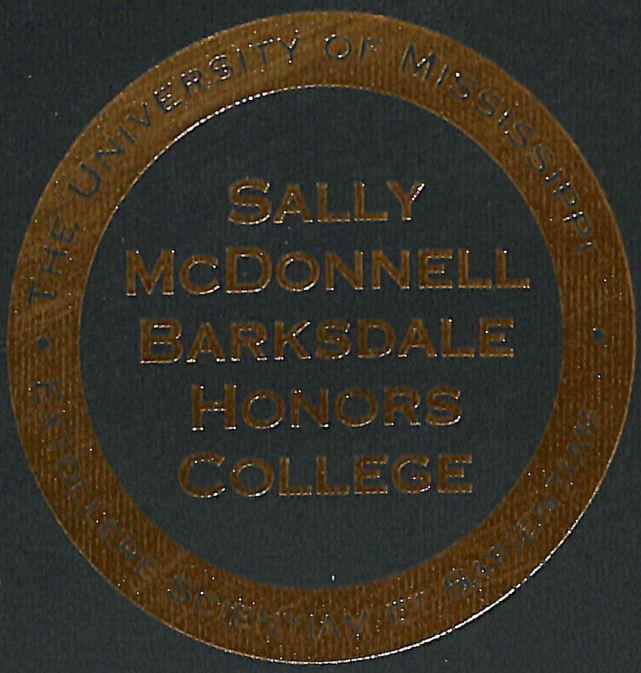

EUSKAL HERRITARRAK GARA: A STUDY OF A PEOPLE AND THEIR HISTORY, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY

by
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ABSTRACT
MADISON REBEKAH HALBROOK: Euskal Herritarrak Gara: A study of a People and their History, Culture and Identity
(Under the direction of Jason Klodt)

Throughout history, Basque nationalism has constantly been defined by a series of struggles to protect their unique culture and identity and by a reaction of the Basque people to resist outside change and influence. This thesis will identify, examine, and discuss both the causes and the effects of this sentiment, and also why and how it has developed the way that it has.

There are a number of factors in which this struggle can be seen. They include the fight to protect the Basque region from foreign invaders, the struggle to retain political autonomy within a larger group, and certain elements of modern Basque nationalism that seek to preserve each person's definition of the Basque identity and nation. Today, differences in expression of Basque nationalism are displayed economically, linguistically, and culturally.

There are many ways to define Basque nationalism, and at the same time there is no one right way to do so. Whether or not a person considers himself Basque depends solely on his own opinion. There is no absolute definition that anyone can give of what makes a person Basque.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The Basque nation in northern Spain and southern France is diverse, having political, geographic, linguistic, and cultural variations throughout the region. It is broken into seven provinces spread over mountains, valleys, and rolling plains with both rural and urban areas. The three major languages spoken are French, Spanish, and *Euskera*, the Basque indigenous language. Additionally, Basques demonstrate their nationalism through a wide range of manifestations. For example, some people express their nationalism peacefully by merely choosing to speak the Basque language while others insist on the expulsion of all immigrants or even the death of non-Basque nationalists. The intention of this thesis is to observe and analyze the causes and effects of Basque nationalism. However, before one can examine Basque nationalism in depth, one must understand the definition of nationalism.

Nationalism is not the same as patriotism. Patriotism is loyalty to a state (or country), but nationalism is loyalty to a nation. What is the difference between a state and a nation? A state is an obvious, agreed upon political entity, such as Spain. It is defined by the land it occupies. A nation, however, is a culture group that relates itself together. Nations are defined by the people that compose them. They can overlap and blur without clearly defined borders (Kaplan 35). The people of a nation are bound by any number of shared values or traits: common ancestry, language, territory, and culture, among others.

Each person as part of a nation has something to contribute. A nation is collectively self-defined by the members therein. Additionally, each person sees his nation differently from the next person and it is therefore difficult, if not impossible, to define any given nation concretely. However, there are some generalizations that can be made.

Most nations develop out of a shared past and progress (or at least attempt to progress) into an idyllic future. Nations tend to grow from groups of people who have a common history and desire the same end result for their people. In this case, the Basque race has a history of thousands of years of living in the same area. They now have political autonomy within the state of Spain, which is the idyllic future that many fought toward for several years. Others see their idyllic future as complete separation and the formation of a new state. This difference in opinion regarding the ultimate future for the Basques demonstrates a difference in nationalism. Perhaps this difference causes separatists to see those that, in their mind, settle for autonomy as not truly nationalist and vice versa. In this case, although the exact manifestation of nationalism differs, the generalization holds.

A nation builds on a set of values that its constituents perceive as universal to everyone in that nation. In one way or another, they use certain methods, whether legal or illegal, to achieve their collective goals (Flynn 31). For example, some Basques see Euskera as universal and necessary for defining the Basque nation. Legal methods of ensuring its continuance include teaching the language and propagating Basque-language schools. Illegal methods include public use of Euskera during the years of nationalist repression under Spanish dictator Francisco Franco.

Nations claim superiority over other groups, and therefore people have stronger loyalty to their nation than to their state. If the values of the nation and the state are ever in conflict, the nation usually wins. Some people living in the Basque country consider themselves Basque; others see themselves as Spanish. In the 1995-1997 *World Values Survey*, 52.5% of 2,094 Basques responded that they felt either completely Basque or more Basque than Spanish. Only 11.9% responded that they considered themselves completely Spanish or more Spanish than Basque, and the remaining 35.6% claimed that they felt equally Spanish and Basque (Guérin 6-7). For the minority that feels mostly or completely loyal to Spain, their nation and state are the same and therefore their highest loyalty is to the state. However, those who consider themselves Basque are more concerned with the survival of the Basque nation than that of Spain. For that reason, some Basques cling to traditional customs such as sports or music instead of embracing the more modern versions. They see the survival of these traditions as paramount to the survival of the Basque nation.

A person will make sacrifices for his nation, the group to which he gives the highest loyalty. For example, some Basques, such as the terrorist organization ETA, are willing to break the Spanish law and risk jail or imprisonment in order to promulgate their idea of the Basque nation, which is a completely separate political entity.

Along with common goals and values, most nations also require some sort of territory out of which to base themselves. Territory "adds definition to what would otherwise be an ambiguous mix of characteristics based on language, religion, heritage, habits, and other criteria" (Herb 2), even for those nationalists who are not physically inside of the region. Although the shared culture and loyalties are what define a nation,

they would mean little without a territory. For example, if someone living in Madrid supported the Basque language and sports, and considered himself or herself Basque, it would be meaningless if there were no Basque country out of which to base those cultural elements. The land represents a collection of all of such elements. Preservation of the land is vital to the preservation of the people and their identity (Herb 1-2). Admittedly, some nationalist identities could survive without any territory, but not many.

For the Basques, this home territory is the *País Vasco*, or Basque country, located in the corner of the Iberian Peninsula between modern France and Spain. At first glance, it may seem to be a united entity with many people being loyal to one unified ideology, but on closer inspection it becomes obvious that the Basque country is not so cohesive. First, it is divided politically into seven distinct zones. In France, there is the *Departamento de Pirineos Atlánticos*, divided into the provinces of Lapurdi, Nafarroa Behereoar, and Zuberoa. Collectively, this zone is known as *Iparralde*, which means "the part to the north" in Euskera. In Spain, there are two Basque Provinces: the *Comunidad Foral de Navarra* and the *Comunidad Autónoma Vasca* (CAV). The CAV is then further divided into the territories of Álava, Vizcaya, and Guipúzcoa (CIDE 13). These last three areas will be the main focus of this paper because they are where the strongest history of Basque nationalism has traditionally been held. This area managed to stay independent from any other organized state for the longest time and is where the modern Basque nationalist movement started. As a result of modernization, the CAV is the region that has had the strongest reaction to immigration. The CAV is also where ETA is most active and has executed the most attacks. With the political changes that occurred after Franco's death, the CAV is also the region with the most governmental support and freedom.

Vizcaya covers 2,217 square kilometers with 80 kilometers of coast along the Bay of Biscay (which is named after Bizkaia, the Euskera version of Vizcaya). It is the most populous province in the Basque country with 1,160,000 inhabitants, and the largest Basque city, Bilbao, is the capital of Vizcaya. Guipúzcoa, to the east of Vizcaya, is only 1,980 square kilometers, making it the smallest province in Spain. Touching France on one side and the ocean on another, its landscape is mostly mountains in the foothills of the Pyrenees and rivers flowing to the Bay of Biscay. Guipúzcoa is home to 684,000 people, and its capital is Donostia-San Sebastián. Álava, being south of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, is the only province in the CAV without a coastline. It is the largest and least populous province in the region with 279,000 people in 2,963 square kilometers. Álava's fertile southern plains provide good land for growing crops, and therefore the province is mostly rural. The only large city is the capital, Vitoria-Gasteiz, which serves as the capital of the CAV as well (CIDE 13-15). From this evidence, the relatively small CAV contains a large amount of diversity. Additionally, great economic variance exists throughout the region due to the diversity of industries therein. The large urban cities have experienced industrialization and modernization while the rural areas maintain a traditional farming lifestyle. In general, the urban areas are loyal to Spain while the rural regions hold on to the traditional past. Also, southern Álava is closer to Madrid than the rest of the CAV, so it is sometimes more loyal to the state than to the Basque nation. This diversity throughout the land of the CAV demonstrates the difficulty in defining a united Basque nation.

Language is another obstacle in assigning a cohesive universal meaning of what it is to be Basque. Although there is a Basque language, less than half of the people living

in the whole Basque area or in the CAV actually speak it. Experts estimate that only 700,000 of the more than two million Basques know the language (CIDE 130). Fewer still are native speakers; many learn it as teens or adults. Those who do speak Euskera also know either Spanish or French because they would not be able to communicate with those around them otherwise. Therefore, the Basques who consider speaking the language a necessary expression of nationalism are forced to compromise and also speak the language of the state. For them, as with other nationalist expressions, nationalism is a consistent choice that they must make when it would probably be much easier to use the ubiquitous language of the state. Although it is a struggle to maintain Euskera, these Basques see its survival, and therefore the survival of their nationalism, as validating that effort.

Basque nationalists see all parts of the Basque country as one complete entity. However, without universal use of Euskera, the national boundary dividing the Basque country into two parts makes communication difficult within that entity. Because of the low percentage of Euskera speakers, the majority language is French in a small part of the Basque country and Spanish in the rest. The desired unity, then, is thwarted by this difference. To further complicate matters, Euskera has at least six distinct dialects, including Vizcaino, Guipuzcoano, Navarro, Labortano, Bajo Navarro, and Saletino, that make intercommunication difficult, if not impossible (CIDE 129).

Euskera has not always been in danger of extinction like it is today. It was the original language in this area. Even through the nineteenth century, the percentage of Basques who spoke Euskera was very high. In 1868, Guipúzcoa boasted a 100 percent proficiency rate, and Vizcaya was close behind with 93 percent. Throughout the twentieth

century, as a result of modernization and the subsequent immigration of non-Euskera speaking workers, these numbers went down drastically. By 1970 they were at 44 and sixteen percent, respectively (Mees 25). But the future of the language is not completely hopeless. During the 1990s, for the first time in history, the number of people able to speak and understand Euskera increased instead of decreased, moving up to 66 percent of people ages six to twenty (Mees 50). In the CAV, the number of speakers in those ten years grew by more than 100,000 (Aulestia 243-244), and Euskera is more common than Spanish in some small places in the Basque Country (Cobarrubias 80). A large part of this growth is due to the Basque-language schools where children are taught the language at a young age and the creation of the Royal Academy of the Basque Language for the purpose of standardizing Euskera. However, even though the language continues to exist and be taught today, it still has a long way to go to be the standard or a unifying factor throughout the whole Basque country.

Other divisions in the Basque country are tied with the historical events that led to the loss of a unified Euskera. These events revolved around the modernization and industrialization of Basque cities, which led to immigration and a decrease of the percentage of native Basques in the region.

The onset of this urbanization was aided by the geography of the area. Being bordered on the west by the Bay of Biscay, winds from the Atlantic bring abundant rain to the area. As a result, the land is green, fertile, and good for agriculture. Growing crops is easy in the southern part of the CAV where hills and plains roll across the landscape toward the Ebro River. In the north, however, the foothills of the Pyrenees Mountains

make farming much more challenging. The birth of modern industry, then, allowed for a drastic change in the demographics and way of life there.

Industrialization favored the north, where farming was difficult, and an abundance of iron ore and easy access to the sea led to the development of large mining and manufacturing industries, such as iron mining, steel production, and shipmaking (CIDE 107). Non-Euskera-speaking immigrants flocked to these cities to fill the need for laborers, which contributed to the decline of the language. All of this change together caused a radical break in the traditional lifestyle of the Basque Country.

Before the mid-1800s, Basque nationalism was relatively uniform. The Basques were a group of people fighting to resist invasions from outsiders time and time again. They fought against change and modernization in order to safeguard their own political, economic, and cultural systems. Divisions did not arise until after they lost their autonomy and started to homogenize with outsiders. Many Basques were unhappy with this movement. For their entire history, they had been separate in some way, but now they were no longer set apart. As a result, modern Basque nationalism was born. After Spain revoked their traditional law system and effectively tried to eliminate expressions of regional loyalty, the Basques began to establish nationalist organizations and formalize ways of preserving their unique identity. This modern nationalism has many facets. For some people, it is political, with the formation of Basque political parties and a goal to regain autonomy. For others, the fight to remain Basque is inseparable from a need to separate completely and form their own state. Separatist movements arise in places where the nation (in this case, the Basque people) is in conflict with a much larger state (Spain) (Kaplan 36). These people rely on terrorism as the means to their end. Some see the

struggle for identity as something cultural, and they work to maintain the traditional sports, music, language, and other practices that they see as uniquely Basque. Although the Basques are unified as a people fighting to preserve their identity, they all have different approaches to Basque nationalism.

There are a few broad themes that have emerged from the study of Basque nationalism, two of which are preservation and resistance. Tracing through history, as above, one can see how the Basques have repeatedly expressed both of these ideas in order to protect their land, culture, and identity. The ideas of nationalism have changed through the centuries, as well as their modes of expression. These ideas include but are not limited to having a unique language, having a traditional agrarian lifestyle, having an independent political system, and respecting traditional elements of culture, such as music, sports, and literature. The constant element is that each person who considers himself or herself Basque classifies his or her actions as markers of Basque nationalism. The best definition, then, of a Basque nationalist is a person who is loyal to the Basque nation above other identities and chooses to manifest that loyalty in the way that seems best to him or her. In that way, the definition of Basque nationalism is completely subjective; it varies from person to person. Tracing its development from its beginnings, this thesis will attempt to understand how and why Basque nationalism has been expressed in certain ways. Attempting to answer the question "What is Basques nationalism?" it will examine specific examples of this nationalism and evaluate the reasons for each.

CHAPTER II: PRE-HISTORY

The Basques have lived in the same region for centuries. Although it was not completely uniform, Basque nationalism was closely tied to a preservation of each person's land until the fifteenth century. However, this uniformity was not out of a sense of unity or relation to one another; it existed because every small tribe had the same desire to be left alone by invaders. At that time, they were all fighting for the same reason but did not consider themselves the same people group. The sense of unity as a Basque nation developed later. The Basque people recognized their identity in their land and their culture (specifically, their legal code), the two most important aspects of Basque culture at the time. Basque nationalism did not assume other representations until after these were both taken away. The history of the Basque country is marked by a series of struggles to resist invasion, protect their homeland, and fight to keep their own way of life.

The Basques can supposedly trace an isolated ancestry for many centuries. In fact, some claim that they are not from the same lineage as the rest of the Iberian people groups (Tovar 45). However, there is no way to know for certain from where, when, and how the Basques first settled the Basque country. There is no anthropological, archaeological, or linguistic evidence to point to the answers to these questions (Collins 15), but anthropologists have made several estimates. The first people to do anthropological investigations on the Basques were Enrique Eguren, Telesforo Aranzadi,

and José Miguel Barandiaran. Their results concluded that "the Basques didn't come from anywhere; they have just lived [there] since very remote times" (CIDE 27, author's translation). People have lived in the Basque country since 150,000 years ago, but not much is known about them (CIDE 27). There are paintings in the Caves of Santimamiñe near the town of Guernica that date to at least 20,000 years ago. Some believe that modern Basques descended from these cave dwellers, while others think they invaded and conquered and took up residency somewhere between 5000 and 3000 BC (Clark 10). The Basques claim being in the Basque area since anywhere between 4000 and 9000 BC (Collins 1-2).

The idea of a Basque race is seen by some as a source of pride, power, and prejudice over those that are not pure Basques. They believe that being descendants of the original Basques defines them as being Basque. That is, they believe that the definition of a modern Basque is a purebred descendant of the first people to settle the Basque country without any intermarriage with non-Basques. People without a pure Basque lineage are seen as low class or invaders into the Basque country. This viewpoint is hypocritical because at some point in their history, the Basques came from somewhere else. Even the purest Basques represent some sort of mixed blood. Also, there are many people today with mixed ancestry or with no Basque lineage at all who consider themselves completely Basque. Therefore, this idea of a Basque race is only one idea of Basqueness. Rejecting all biologically non-Basques adds another aspect to the collective definition of Basque nationalism.

These original Basques inhabited the Basque country long before unifying as a people group. Before the 10th century, "the Basque area was a relatively disorganized and

violent region, dominated by small tribes of fierce mountain people who disliked outsiders and who resisted their advances" (Clark TBI 13). Each tribe remained isolated unto itself and fought only for its own protection. They did not yet identify as a whole nation.

Although the Basques had previously had contact with other groups, such as Ligurians, Illyrians, and Illyrio-Ambiones (Tovar 47), the first major invading group was the Celts who came between 1000 and 500 BC. Some Celts settled in the area, and others just passed through. Not much is known about this period except that they were never able to conquer the Basques (Clark 11).

The Celts were taken over by the Romans. The first Romans came to the Iberian Peninsula around 200 BC. Although they were able to conquer and dominate the other parts of the peninsula easily, they never fully controlled the north. One reason for this difficulty could be the terrain of the Basque country that held little to no value for them (Clark 11). After all, "the area was mountainous and uninviting and lacked obvious resources that would make conquest worthwhile" (Clark TBI 13). Another undeniable reason for the Romans' failure, though, is that the Basques resisted foreign conquest, as is evidenced by the multiple times they revolted against invading tribes and the ways they turned multiple invading groups against each other in order to avoid their land being taken over, which will be seen later. However, provided that they retained certain privileges, the Basques allowed occupation by other peoples. The Romans occupied the Basque region; some evidence of their residency still exists today. They augmented the language, as many Euskera words can be traced back to Latin (Clark 11). In fact, in the southern portions of the Basque country, the people spoke Latin. The Romans built cities,

such as Pamplona in 75 BC. They completely changed the infrastructure of the region by building many roads through the region, establishing iron mines and ports, and bringing new agriculture such as olives for olive oil, grains, and grapes for wine production to the southern areas (CIDE 30). Also, after the Roman period, the Basques had an improved military knowledge (Clark 11).

The Basques and the Romans had a good relationship. The Romans "learned to coexist with the Basques, and the Basques came to learn that Roman occupation did not threaten their language, culture, or legal traditions" (Kurlansky 31). Under Roman rule, the Basques were allowed to keep their traditional land ownership system. Wealthy local land owners were very powerful and had large private estates with an almost serf-like system for the farm workers (Clark 11). The Romans were content to allow the Basques to keep their own traditions and rules as long as they were able to claim the region as part of their empire. Likewise, the Basques were content to allow the Romans to cohabitate as long as they did not feel like they were being controlled. The Basques paid no taxes to the Romans and were under no military occupation. They were allowed to retain their own language and legal code (Kurlansky 31). Latin did influence Euskera, but it was mostly in regards to the new ideas that the Romans introduced to the Basques, such as "olive" and "statue" (Kurlansky 33). To ensure that the Romans never had solid control, the Basques revolted from time to time (Clark 11-12). Even the peasants living in poor conditions and working the land preferred the Basque system to any where their own people were not in control. Given the fact that a Roman system might have been more pleasant than the serfdom that they were in, these peasants must have had strong feelings of loyalty to their own people. The foundations of Basque nationalism were starting to form, even several

hundred years ago. Perhaps today some Basques see their nationalism as a connection with this ancient spirit and the tradition of retaining their own customs.

It is important to note that although the Romans did not have control over the Basques (nor did any other invading group), they did have influence. The Basques were able to defend themselves from the domination of attacking peoples and preserve their own social structures, but they did not completely maintain their original state. The Romans in their hegemony were able to change the agriculture and improve the military. They built new roads and influenced the language. What remained of Basque culture when one alien group was pushed out by another – in this case, their land system – was merely the pieces that they were able to salvage along the way.

Why were some changes employed by the Romans successful while others were not? It could be that the Basques allowed the amendments that they saw as beneficial, such as better roads and military. Perhaps the Romans only forced the changes that they considered important and allowed the Basques to retain their culture in areas that were not worth fighting for. Hence, there are two interpretations of the Basque sentiment at that time. One says that the Basques were concerned with their identity only in a few areas, such as their land ownership system. They were a strong group and were able to resist control by the Romans in those identity-marking areas. There were also areas where they chose to change, such as agricultural crops, because those were not seen as markers of their people. Another interpretation says that the Basques considered every part of their culture as important to their identity, but they were unable to defy invaders. The Romans were a much stronger people who projected the Roman culture onto every aspect of Basque life except for those areas that they did not consider vital for a province of the

Roman Empire. In their mind, it was necessary that the Basques be strong militarily, but not necessary that they give up their land system. There is no way to know for sure, but it is also possible that the actual Basque sentiment was a mixture of these two identities. The feelings of loyalty varied from one person to the next. Some Basques felt strong allegiance to their culture, but others did not. This mixture is evidenced by the fact that Euskera was influenced by Latin, but most Basques did not trade Latin for their own language. Some desired the preservation of the language, but others did not hold on as tightly. Therefore, Euskera remained, but with new influences from the Romans. Enough Basques revolted against the Romans to guarantee the incomplete control held by the latter, but they did not have enough support to completely remove the Romans from their territory.

The Romans had a larger influence on the Basque country than any other occupying group. However, by the middle of the 4th century their control was crumbling and in the early 5th century, their holdings were conquered by a sequence of various Germanic tribes. The Visigoths were the last of these tribes. They took over in 406-467 and ruled for 250 years. The Visigoths did not support the land ownership system like the Romans had. As a result, the Basques did not cooperate with the Visigoths as they had with the Romans (Clark 12). They felt like they were entitled to the freedoms that they had held under Roman occupation. Whereas the Romans allowed the Basques to maintain self-control of their land, the Goths' goal was to "conquer and control the Basque" area (Kurlansky 35). When control of the region transferred, the first Basque socio-cultural revolution occurred. The peasants who had been the land workers seized the land, redistributed it, and changed names of places from the Roman names back to their

original Basque names (Clark 12). This event is a foreshadowing of the Basque affinity for disregarding authority and taking matters into their own hands. Before there even was a unified Basque political nation, some Basques chose to express their loyalty by rejecting external authority. In this case, it was control by the Visigoths; today, that same sentiment can be seen by those that refuse to accept Spanish language, politics, and culture in exchange for their own Basque versions.

The Visigoths did not have complete control of the Basques. They were not able to conquer or absorb the area. During the 5th century, the Basque military carried out raids and fought skirmishes against the Visigoths. In these confrontations, the Basques were successful because of their unified militant style while the Visigoths were disorganized and ineffective (Clark 12). Again, the Basques resisted suppression or control by an outside group. Indeed, there was almost constant warfare between the Goths and the Basques until the Arab invasion (Clark 14). The Basques refused to tolerate anyone else dictating their culture and lifestyle. With the attempted removal of the traditional Basque land possessions, the Basques revolted. It must be, then, that a majority of them considered this system necessary to their culture. Perhaps this land control was the key: other nations could change their language, their infrastructure, and their agriculture, but the Basques refused to surrender their land rights. They recognized that the preservation of the territory was vital for the preservation of their identity.

The next two invading groups were the Franks from the north and the Muslims from the south. The Franks came from modern-day France. In the year 602 they incorporated the Basque country into the newly established Dukedom of Vasconia. It is possible that the CAV was part of this territory, but because of the Basques' history of

unwillingness to submit to other groups, it is likely that the area progressively further south of the Pyrenees was under progressively less authority. Once, in 778, the Frankish king Charlemagne brought his army across the Pyrenees and into Navarra, but the Basques defeated them at Roncesvalles. Also, the Basques seldom fought with the Franks because the latter saw no value or benefit in the in the Basque country. Eventually, this difference in power led to the division of the Basque country into a French part and a Spanish part (Clark 14-15). The Basque areas north of the Pyrenees remained under the control of the Dukedom of Vasconia, which France later incorporated into its state. The southern part, though, joined with the Kingdom of Navarra, which later became part of Spain.

During the 6th century, Basques were caught between the Visigoths and the Franks. They defended their land "by playing one power against another, and by eschewing permanent alliances with both" (Clark 13). The utmost concern for the Basques was their own preservation. By cleverly turning the neighboring groups against each other, they were able to protect their own land without having to fight for it. Then, in 711, Muslims from Gibraltar attacked the Visigoth territory from the south. The Goths left their attempts to control the Basque country in order to address this new problem. Muslim invaders from Africa conquered the peninsula. Although the last Muslims did not leave until 1492, like the groups that came before them, they never had complete control. They tried multiple times to take Pamplona (in 718 and 732) and the kingdom of Asturias (in 718-722 and 792-816), but failed each time. As with the Visigoths, the Muslims were more concerned with fighting the Franks than invading the CAV; because attention was not focused on the Basques, they were safe (Clark 13-15).

It was during this time that the surrounding people groups began to covet the CAV. With Navarra to the east and Asturias to the west both fighting the Muslims, the surrounding areas started to desire that area as their own. The first recorded uses of the names Álava, Guipúzcoa, and Vizcaya appeared during the 8th and 9th centuries that (Clark 15).

The Basques first officially connected and identified as a united group in 905. In that year, King Sancho Garces established the Kingdom of Navarra. This union was the first organized state in Basque history. Many people see it as the first political expression of Basque ethnicity. Also, it was the first time Basques were under a native regime that was effective and responsive to local needs. Perhaps the reason that the Basques tolerated this union was because they were not threatened by it. Instead, they actually benefitted. Previously, they had protected themselves by pushing out others, whereas with the Kingdom of Navarra, they were protecting themselves by pulling in together. The kingdom was strategic for the Basques, as it had both military and diplomatic power. It slowly grew through intentional alliances and marriages and by the 11th century included almost all of the present day Basque country, the Dukedom of Vasconia up to Bordeaux, most of Cataluña, and all of Castilla la Vieja. However, in 1035, after King Sancho El Mayor died, the kingdom split up and the territory slowly was taken over by other kingdoms, especially Castile and Aragon (Clark 15-16).

Also, under the Kingdom of Navarra, self-governing bodies formed in the Basque country for the first time. From its origins, the kingdom was under a "Pyrenees Law" made of laws from its most important cities. Local representative assemblies, called *batzarre*, formed. These committees, the base of popular social and governmental

organization, met in each town to discuss their local issues. Originally, they met under a tree in the town; later, their meetings moved to under the eaves of or inside of a church. Basque life was governed by *fueros*, a medieval law system based on custom and not written down until sometime between the 12th and 15th centuries. The fueros regulated all areas of society, including political, economical, social, and judicial elements. They controlled all political and administrative duties, socio-economic laws, including business, industry, commerce, and agriculture, and judicial and military duties and rights (CIDE 32-34). The Basques have a long history of self-government. Many see these traditional laws as a vital part of their identity as a nation and therefore Basque government and political systems are a recurring theme in their definition of nationalism.

Through the marriage of "the Catholic monarchs," King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile, in 1469, the two biggest kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula joined their regions to form most of what is now Spain. In fact, their territory included the entire peninsula except Portugal and the Kingdom of Navarra. The areas of Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya, and Álava finally fell to Castile when Ferdinand promised to respect the fueros and thereby convinced some of the Basques to turn to his side (Kurlansky 65). Basques turned against their own nation to give allegiance to an outside force because they were preserving true Basqueness in their minds. Although they were giving up their independence to another higher power, they would not have done so if they had thought that their Basque traditions and customs, such as the fueros, were threatened. They saw the preservation of their land and their laws as more important than the higher state to which they belonged. These elements defined their identity. As an independent nation, they had already faced challenges from many other groups, and eventually another would

try to conquer them again. Perhaps the next group would not offer to respect their individual identity. Under Castile, they kept their identity while adding the protection of a larger, stronger state. Exchanging their statehood for this protection was the only way for them to safeguard their Basque identity and protect themselves from mixing with the rest of this new huge political entity.

This was also a clever move on the part of Ferdinand. If he had not promised loyalty to the Basque customs, they would not have given themselves over so easily. At the time, they were absorbing or had already absorbed many other regionalist areas with difficulty. Other regions, including Galicia, Asturias, Granada, Sevilla, Valencia, and their territories in the Americas also had their own individual linguistic, cultural, political, and economic systems and customs that they were unwilling to give up (Clark 18), but "Basque nationalism was from its very beginnings a much more defensive project" (Mees 17) than other nationalisms. Unlike these other regions, the CAV would not be taken by force, as they had already demonstrated with other invaders. Despite being a relatively small nation, the Basques were able to fight and defend their land and customs for the sake of their identity. They were loyal to their own tradition and did not feel any obligation to contribute to or combine with the state in any way.

As a result of Ferdinand's strategic maneuverings, both sides benefitted. Castile took over the territory they wanted, and the Basque country kept their autonomy and continued to govern themselves. To ensure that their rights were protected, the Basques required that every new Spanish monarch swear allegiance to the fueros. The *Juntas de Vizcaya*, or Vizcayan assembly, made of representatives from every town in the province, met in Guernica, at or near the famous *Árbol de Guernica,* an oak tree that is now in the

courtyard of the Vizcayan *Casa de Juntas*. Every king with constituency over Vizcaya had to swear preservation of the fueros at this tree. The foral system lasted until well into the 19th century, and the oak still stands today as a symbol of the Basque institution (CIDE 33).

The modern borders of Spain were almost complete. The last pieces came together in 1512 when King Ferdinand conquered the rest of Navarra (Clark 17) and the current border between Spain and France was established. As Robert Clark put it, "the process of disintegration and reintegration was fundamentally completed" (TBI 13). The Iberian Peninsula had shifted from its original scattered collection of tribes and nations to reintegrate all the former pieces into the unified state of Spain.

The early history of the Basque country laid a foundation for the emergence of Basque nationalism. Before being united as a Basque nation, the isolated tribes fought against conquering groups to defend their own land. These struggles can be considered a way of expressing nationalism because they were fighting out of loyalty to their own group, but cannot be considered Basque nationalism because the collective group was not the Basque nation. However, it developed a sense of ownership of the land that later carried over to Basque nationalism. Also, fighting against a common enemy eventually led to the union of the Basque tribes into one collective group. Because of their long history of having possession of the land, many Basques consider this territory a vital part of their identity.

The Basques refused to give control of the land to any other invading group. Some groups, like the Romans, allowed the Basques to keep their land but changed other elements of society, like establishing new forms of agriculture. Perhaps the changed

elements were not considered part of the Basque identity. If they were, then surely they would have revolted as they did when the Visigoths tried to take their land. Perhaps the Basques saw the changes made by the Romans as beneficial and desirable. Perhaps the Basques regarded the changes made as affecting their identity but were not able to fight larger powers. Some of the Basques considered elements other than the land markers for their identity. For example, they continued to speak Euskera, albeit with some changes, in the Basque country through and after the Roman occupation. This difference demonstrates the diversity of definitions of nationalism that have almost always existed in the Basque country.

The Basques united as a nation under the Kingdom of Navarra. All expressions of nationalism in the Basque country after its founding in 905 can be considered Basque nationalism because they now represent loyalty to the Basque nation. An important development during this period was the formalization of the fueros. Having their own law system was an important expression of Basque nationalism. In fact, it was so important that many Basques chose to sacrifice their separate territory to the Kingdom of Castile in order to safeguard the fueros. For them, that system was more important than being an independent state. Ultimately, though, controlling the political system and controlling the manner in which land is divided are only two of the many ways that some people choose to convey their nationalism.

CHAPTER III: MODERN HISTORY

The modern idea of nationalism can be traced to the French Revolution in 1789 (Flynn 24). Modern nationalism is defined by a group of people, the constituents of the nation, reacting against changes effected by an outside group. The Basques demonstrated pre-modern nationalism as a unified group fighting to preserve their land and their customs. They felt that they were entitled to these elements of their culture and that they had rights as a whole. Modern nationalism is more than identifying as a nation and claiming rights. It is more tangible; the people form nationalist organizations, such as political partites, and create physical symbols of their identity, like the Basque flag. By joining the kingdom of Castile, the Basques gave up claiming their own land. In the 1800s, they lost other traditional customs such as their political freedom and fueros. Consequently, the Basques realized that if they did not resist homogenization with the state, then they would lose the uniqueness of their people. Therefore, during this period they first expressed the need to join together to take pride in their history and preserve their nation as a whole. Preserving their nation, though, has many manifestations for the Basques. These manifestations include preservation of the Basque race and language, the creation of certain Basque organizations such as the Basque Society of Friends of the Country to represent the interests of the people and the preservation of a unified nation, and the foundation of a Basque government in attempts to regain autonomy over the area. Additionally, the Basques faced events that threatened to eliminate their individuality,

such as immigration and nationalist repression under the dictator Francisco Franco. As a result, Basques had to work even harder to preserve their identity. This modern period is marked by the Basque nation fighting against the central state for their separateness.

Modern nationalism did not appear overnight; it was a slow development. In the year 1766, the Basque Society of Friends of the Country was founded. This group was the first to use the term "Basque nation" to identify their homeland. One of their goals was "to tighten more the union of the three Basque provinces of Álava, Guipúzcoa, and Vizcaya" (Clark 23-24). The Basque Society of Friends of the Country was the first known example of people desiring a unified Basque Country to preserve their land. This organization was important because it was the first small step toward organized demonstrations of nationalism.

Then, in 1812, the state of Spain adopted a liberal, centralizing Constitution. This act can be seen as the beginnings of a "long struggle between centralism and regionalism" (Clark TBI 14). Because of foral law and nationalist loyalty, many Basques were not happy with these changes. When King Ferdinand died in 1833, a discrepancy arose over who should succeed him to the throne: traditionalists supported his younger brother, Don Carlos, while liberal reformers preferred Ferdinand's infant daughter Isabella and his widow, the regent María Cristina. This disagreement developed into the First Carlist War, which lasted until 1840 (Clark 27). The Carlist motto was "*Dios, Rey, Fueros*," or "God, King, Fueros" (CIDE 33). They saw that both the autonomic and central governments could work together in harmony and supported a traditional regionalist regime. Opposing them were those who preferred a liberal centralist government and a strong Constitution (Clark 27).

In 1837, in the middle of this war, the Basques faced a detrimental change to the regional rights they wanted to protect. Spain adopted a new Constitution abolishing foral councils. This Constitution threatened the independence that many Basques had enjoyed and been guaranteed for so long. With their foral rights slipping, the Basques developed a resistance to the loss of other freedoms. They responded in 1839 with a summit in Bilbao of the governments of Basque provinces to discuss creating a common front against Madrid. A further act of resistance of another form occurred in October, 1840. In that month, portions of the Basque areas revolted against the Spanish government. Their goal in this revolt, called *La Octubrada* was a reestablishment of the fueros, but they were quelled easily without any success. This revolt unintentionally hurt more than helped the Basque cause as Prime Minister Espartero withdrew all foral guarantees from Basques (Clark 29-30).

All of these restrictions together demonstrate ways in which the foral rights were steadily taken away by the central government. The losses appear "to have been deliberately fostered by contradictory promises made by ensuing regimes in Madrid" (Clark 29). Indeed, one must wonder if, once the crown had a unified state, they did not intentionally slowly take away demonstrations of regional loyalty to strengthen their own power. The reactions to these restrictions demonstrate the importance of the foral rights in Basque culture. Two separate groups recognized the changes in the Constitution as a threat to their identity and rebelled against the state as a result. The traditions guaranteed by the fueros were important to their view of the Basque nation. Also, one can notice how it seems that as the Basques lose their rights, the attempts to preserve them diversify. Although the meeting in Bilbao and La Octubrada both had the same goal of preserving a

unified Basque country, their efforts were carried out in two extremely different manners. The summit was a formal political approach while La Octubrada was a social upheaval of the common people.

During this same time period, there were massive amounts of modernization and industrialization, and as a result, immigration, occurring in the Basque cities. As the cities slowly grew, so did the Basque loyalty toward the traditional rural lifestyle. Many Basques saw the changes brought by modernization as a result of their relation with the crown and hence not inherent of the Basque country. Therefore, they desired the expulsion of all immigrants and a reversal of industrialization. Other Basques, though, especially in the cities, benefitted from these changes. They became wealthy as a result of the new business brought by industrialization. Therefore, they favored the modernization and the advantage of a connection with Spain over traditional Basque culture. Some urban Basques were nationalist, but they expressed these sentiments in ways other than agriculture, such as devotion to the language and race. This multiplicity of opinion is another example of how modern Basque nationalism developed slowly into many manifestations: one rural and another urban. This topic of nationalism as affected by the economy will be covered in detail in a later chapter.

The Second Carlist War lasted from 1873 to 1876. It was again between liberal centralists and traditional regionalists. The Basque country was divided with Navarra supporting the Carlists and the liberal cities of Bilbao and San Sebastián supporting a centralist government (Clark 30). Although this split may appear to be a division in the Basque nationalist sentiment, it is not. It is largely due to the fact that by this time, the cities were inhabited by a large number of non-Basque immigrants. In the end, the

Carlists lost the war and as a result, by the *Ley de Abolición Foral de 1876*, the Basques lost autonomic and regional privileges (CIDE 33). The result was "a more culturally than politically successful proto-nationalist movement which stimulated the shaping of a Basque nationalist consciousness" (Mees 7). Although the Basques no longer had their original political liberty, there was a strong cultural awareness of Basque loyalty. Modern Basque nationalism had only just begun to develop.

All the changes described above led to a crisis of traditional Basque identity. The Carlist (and with it, regionalist) defeat, the abolition of fueros, the industrialization, and the arrival of immigrants led to an increased effort to preserve each one's idea of Basqueness, whether that be political, social, cultural, or racial. Modern Basque nationalism, then, started as a rejection of everything Spanish and an encouragement of separate Basque identity and culture, including a fully or partially independent political system. Although it seems that there were (and still are) many different opinions on the best method for achieving a unified Basque nation, or even what that may look like, the glue that is necessary for any interpretation of Basque nationalism is loyalty to the Basque nation (Flynn 98). In other words, the common thread through all expressions of Basque nationalism is the promotion of one or more Basque quality, such as the language or the political system.

The man who is credited as the father of modern Basque nationalism was born June 26, 1865 in Bilbao. Sabino Arana was from a Carlist family that was hostile toward Basque nationalism, and in 1873 they went into exile in France as a result of their beliefs. They returned, however, in 1876, and at age 17, Arana moved to Barcelona to study law. It was here that he witnessed firsthand the developing Catalan nationalism. This

regionalism carried a heavy emphasis on language and culture, along with political independence (Clark 40-41).

During his time in Barcelona, Arana became much more interested in Basque history and language than law, and he even taught himself Euskera. Carlism had experienced a sharp decline in popularity, and on Easter Sunday, 1882, after a long historical discussion with his brother Luis, he finally broke away from his parents' Carlism and turned to a new nationalism (Mees 9).

Arana wanted to give Basques a "national conscience" by focusing on their common race, language, government and political system, customs, and history (CIDE 55). He saw these objective factors as necessary for establishing a mentality that was unique to Basques (Flynn 108). Arana hated anything that could possibly cause the weakening or eradication of the Basque race, including Spanish influences on the culture and language, marriages between Basques and Spaniards, and anyone who was a *maketo*, or non-Basque (Flynn 154). In his mind, "the solution to all the problems and the way to never-ending happiness for the Basques ... would come through the reaffirmation of their own history, culture, and race, the consequent expulsion of everything considered external to that tradition, and the recuperation of the old independence by restoration of the fueros" (Mees 10). In other words, he wanted the Basques to return to the way they had been in the past: a pure-bred people living undisturbed in the Basque country with complete political autonomy.

One of Arana's largest contributions to Basque nationalism was the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (PNV, or Basque Nationalist Party). In 1894, he founded the Basque Society. It dissolved in 1895, but reappeared as the PNV (Flynn 148). The actual party

was founded in 1897 (CIDE 55). Originally, one had to have four Basque grandparents to be a member of the PNV. In 1908, that changed to one grandparent (Flynn 153). However, this emphasis of the bloodline demonstrates the amount of importance Arana placed on the purity of the Basque race. The Basque history and bloodline were a large part of what made a person Basque in his mind. Continuing in the same vein, Sabino Arana also invented the word *Euzkadi*, meaning "the land inhabited by the Basque race," in 1901. It is important to note that this is a racial term, not a geographic one; Arana did not see immigrants to the Basque country as Basques. Also, the name could be extended to cover places outside of the region inhabited by Basques (Flynn 105).

Arana was obviously of the school that defined Basque nationalism in part by being of a pure Basque bloodline. Although Basques do have some distinguishing characteristics, these features do not make them in any was superior to non-Basques. Studies have shown that the Basques claim certain unique physical features: distinctive cranial formation, certain hair and eye coloring, and a disproportionately high percent of type O blood. While 40% of Spain has type O blood, a much higher 55% of Basques carry that same type (Collins 4-5). To be part of the nation, Arana thought, one must be born into it. One may not join by simply picking up on the cultural characteristics.

Before Arana's Euzkadi, the name for the Basque country had been *Euskal Herria*, meaning "The people possessing Euskera." Arana obviously did not see language as a more defining feature of the people than the race. Race was not controllable but language was. A person could not dictate if he or she were born to Basque parents but could choose which language he or she wanted to speak. Arana was trying to be exclusive. Nevertheless, as with the race, he wanted to purify the language (Mees 16).

For that reason, Arana made some orthographical modifications, changing c to k and s to z in many words. He also tried to rid Euskera of words with Spanish or Latin roots and created neologisms that were purely Basque (Mees 10). Hence, Arana based his nationalism on Basque uniqueness. Even to the point of being racist, he focused on the Basque people's shared lineage as critical for their identity. Arana did not emphasize traits that could be characteristic of other cultures, such as an agricultural tradition or a language influenced by Latin. He made changes to Euskera because he wanted it to be unique and therefore a marker of Basque identity as well. In making these changes, though, he was artificially creating the uniqueness that he desired. Arana's ideology was self-contradictory; he saw Basque nationalism as a person's birthright, not acquirable by assuming the cultural traits, but he also saw it as a quality that could be projected onto certain elements where it had not been before – in this case, language.

Although Arana believed territory alone was not something on which to base national identity, he nevertheless claimed it as homeland and stressed the importance of separation from Spain (Flynn 154). He considered all Basques noble and equal under foral law. This inalienable right was inherent in being Basque, not given by any ruler. The suppression of these rights led to his anti-monarchical and anti-Spanish sentiments (Flynn 151). Arana saw Vizcaya as part of Spain merely as a direct result of a royal marriage that had occurred in 1379 and respected Madrid's authority out of friendship but thought of Vizcaya as a distinct entity. In his mind, Vizcaya could leave Spain if they chose to do so (Flynn 106-107). He defended Vizcaya as a distinct nation from Spain (CIDE 55), and in 1890, he published *Vizcaya for its Independence*, calling for separation

from the state (Flynn 106). Later, this secessionist notion spread to the rest of the CAV (CIDE 55).

Sabino Arana also made several significant contributions to the culture of Basque nationalism in attempts to further bind the nationalists. The Basque flag, called the *ikurriña*, is still considered a symbol of Basque nationalism. Arana designed it with the PNV motto, "God and the fueros," in mind. The ikurriña first appeared in 1894 and was declared the official flag of Euzkadi in 1936. Furthermore, Arana wrote the song *Gora ta Gora* in 1895. It is now the official anthem of Euzkadi (Mees 16-17).

Sabino Arana died in 1903 and left the PNV in the hands of his brother Luis (Flynn 106). The party prospered, and for several years it was the organized expression of liberal Basque nationalism. However, it was not the only form of Basque nationalism. There was a more conservative (non-separatist) sentiment that *España Roja* or "Red Spain" was better than *España Rota*, "Broken Spain" (Richards 40). They preferred to stay with Spain, even as they saw the state become increasingly more communist, than to break away and fracture the united Spain.

In the 1920s, the Basques experienced a "culture rebirth" with the founding of the first *ikastolak* (singular *ikastola*). These were schools where the instruction was given entirely in Euskera. The creation of the *Euskaltzaindia*, the Royal Academy of the Basque Language, also occurred during these years. A more important change was the beginning of the Second Republic. Spain adopted a republican democracy in 1931 and José Antonio Aguirre was named president of the PNV. Negotiations with the Spanish government began in attempts to reclaim Basque autonomy (CIDE 55). October 1, 1936 was a historic day for Basque country. On that day, the Basque autonomy bill passed in

the central government (Mees 20), leading to the formation of the first autonomous government of the CAV on October 7, in the auditorium of the house of the Juntas Generales of Vizcaya in Guernica. The mayors of the Basque towns under Republic control voted and chose Aguirre as president, or *lehendakari* (CIDE 60). From Bilbao, Lehendakari Aguirre organized his province as a semi-independent state (Mees 20). It seemed that the Basques were on the verge of winning back their own self-rule.

Hopes of autonomy started to slip in July 1936 when the Spanish Civil War broke out. Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya stayed with the democratic Republic while Álava and Navarra joined the rebel military forces under Generals Francisco Franco, Emilio Mola, and José Sanjurjo. The war was devastating to the CAV. All shreds of Basque independence were "washed away in a torrent of blood during the war and in its aftermath" (Richards 40). Whereas with the Republic the Basques had hope of some sort of political separation, after the war they faced the opposite: repression of any system that differentiated the Basques from the rest of Spain.

The most famous act of the war was the bombing of the small town of Guernica in Vizcaya on April 26, 1937. Rebel planes showed up on that Monday, a market day when the greatest number of civilians was sure to be out in the streets. For hours, the planes kept returning with bombs, terrorizing the citizens and leaving the town in ruins (Kurlansky 199-200). Guernica was certainly no military threat to the rebel forces; rather, "the object of the bombardment was seemingly the demoralization of the civil population and the destruction of the cradle of the Basque race" (CIDE 90). They wanted the attack on Guernica to crush Basque morale, making defeat of the rest of the Republic territory

much easier. Bilbao, the last Basque stronghold, fell to the rebels in June 1937, and the Basque government went into exile (Clark TBI 14).

At the end of the war, the country's death toll was between 500,000 and 1,000,000 people. The new head of state and dictator, General Franco, attempted to rid Spain of everything related to the Republic (CIDE 91-92). He began a violent campaign of repression against the *provincias traidoras*, or "traitor provinces," which refers to the areas that had allied with the Republic (Mees 20). Thousands of Basque nationalists, government officials, and military officers were incarcerated together. The nationalists benefitted from these connections as those who survived formed a close network of nationalist contacts that would later lend experience to the resistance movement (Clark TBI 21). Between 1968 and 1975, the Spanish police imprisoned 2,849 Basques. They mercilessly tortured many of these prisoners as punishment, as a means to obtain information or confessions, and as an attempt to scare the Basques away from nationalism. According to an investigation done by Amnesty International in July 1975, local police forces and the *Guardia Civil* (the Spanish military police) tortured more than 250 people at least once a day in prison, some as many as five times daily. The torture lasted anywhere from thirty minutes to six hours at a time and included "severe and systematic beatings with a variety of contusive weapons, *falanga* (beatings on the sole of the feet), burning with cigarettes, near drowning by being submerged in water while suspended upside down, enforced sleeplessness, and forms of psychological stress, including mock executions, sexual threats, threats to relatives, and the technique known as *el cerrojo* (the frequent fastening and unfastening of bolts on the cell doors in order to keep prisoners in perpetual fear that the torturers have returned)" (Clark TBI 243-244).

Basque liberties "were suppressed and denied during the reign of the centralized authority in the Franco years" (Richards 40). Despite all the tyranny they had faced, the bloodshed of the war and the oppression during Franco's term "made Basques even more aware of their ethnic heritage and bound them together more tightly" (Clark TBI 14). This repression "strengthened the nationalist and independentist feeling in the Basque society" (CIDE 92, author's translation). Although Franco's goal may have been to stifle all Basque nationalist movements, his cruelty actually seems to have had the opposite effect. Until Franco's death in 1975, Basque culture continued to exist and diversify in its expressions.

Francisco Franco held all of the political power in Spain. His regime was antiparliamentarian, militaristic, and quasi-fascist. Franco found strength in military power and unity across the state. This desire for unity is evidenced in his slogan: *España: Una, Grande y Libre* ("Spain: One, Large and Free"). For this reason, he did not allow any sort of autonomy (CIDE 92). Franco emphasized a unified nationalism and stressed the country's shared historical and cultural past (Labanyi 55). After the Civil War, property of Basque nationalists was confiscated and nationalist church clergy were replaced by those more favorable to Franco's ideals. Additionally, to strike fear in the citizens and prevent any potential uprising, Basque political prisoners were arrested and random assassinations were carried out against Basque citizens (Clark TBI 21). "Extreme measures" were taken and "everything related to Basque culture" was prohibited, including the use of Euskera in media and in public, as well as the teaching of it and the ikastolak (CIDE 92, author's translation).

The ensuing period of Basque nationalism can be seen as "the era of exile and clandestine struggle" (Mees 20). Many nationalists were forced into exile to avoid imprisonment, torture, or death, while others fought under cover in one way or another. Basque nationalism was continually strengthened.

One way the Basques began to assert their nationalism and rebel under Franco was through the formation of the *Junta de Resistencia*, or the Resistance Committee. The role of the Junta de Resistencia was to coordinate all underground activities in the Basque country. In March of 1945, representatives of Basque political and labor groups met in Bayonne, France, to organize resistance to Franco. The result was the establishment of Basque Consultative Council to coordinate the Junta de Resistencia with the Basque government and other political groups in exile. This organization was one way the Basques fought undercover against the Franco regime. The Resistance saw great success in a very short amount of time. In May, 1947, a workers' strike began in Vizcaya and spread through industry in other places. Nearly 75% of people in Vizcaya walked off their jobs. Although many of these workers were fired or jailed, the strike was overall considered a success. This event was the first open challenge to the Franco regime since the Civil War. Through this incident, the PNV, the Basque government, and the Junta de Resistencia gained prestige for being able to coordinate so many people. Almost four years later, in April, 1951, 250,000 workers in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa went on strike. Within days the movement spread to Álava and Navarra. Although the strike of 1951 was "the last mass expression of political discontent for many years" (Clark TBI 22), it did serve an important purpose. It showed the Basque nationalists that they had the ability to

fight back against the oppressive government. It was a much more passive form of protest than violent terrorism, but it was an expression of Basque nationalism nonetheless.

After 1951, the younger generation assumed the Basque struggle. They did not have the experience, contacts, or funding that their parents had (Clark TBI 23). At this point there was development of a radical, violent nationalism. The clandestine terrorist organization ETA (*Euzkadi ta Askatasuna*, or Euzkadi and Freedom) was formed and still exists today. Their goal is preservation of the Basque nation by total political separation. The topic of separatism will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Franco continued to demonstrate repression and violence against the Basques until the day he died. Two months before his death, Franco ordered the death penalty on five political prisoners, two of whom were ETA activists. Even after he died in November 1975, brutality in the repression of demonstrations and torture of prisoners persisted. Police shot and killed five Basque workers on strike in March 1976, and in the same year, celebration of the Basque holiday Aberri Eguna was outlawed. At the time, many Basque citizens felt that nothing or little had changed (Mees 35). Because Basque repression continued after Franco's death, the Basque nationalists were fighting the state of Spain and not just the Franco regime. Essentially, the central government, policies, and institutions were their enemy. Thus, only separation from the state by way of political autonomy could pacify many Basques, and still some others desired complete separation.

After Franco's death, Spain returned to a constitutional monarchy. The topic of regional representation and state-nation relations was unavoidable in the new Constitution. Although the Constitution is based on "the indivisible unity of the Spanish Nation," it also guarantees the right to autonomy and other official languages in the

provinces. Powers are shared among the seventeen autonomous communities (Richards 44). The Referendum on the Constitution passed in 1978 and the Referendum on the Basque Autonomy Statute was approved in October 1979. Shortly thereafter, elections to the Spanish parliament and elections to the regional Basque parliament were held (Mees 35). The autonomy that the Basques had fought for was once again a reality.

Basque nationalism has almost always been defined by some from a political standpoint: in terms of their independence from Spain. The state of the Basques has been cyclical. After their integration into Spain they received political autonomy. They lost their last foral rights in 1876 after the Second Carlist War. Then the Basque country regained autonomy with the Second Republic in 1931, but it was quickly revoked in 1937 at the end of the Spanish Civil War. Only in 1979 did they regain this freedom. It could be said, then, that the central government has the power to control Basque nationalism. Perhaps some Basques, such as ETA militants, desire complete separation so that they no longer have to fight for the right to govern themselves. Perhaps also, as a result of the broken promises and repression demonstrated by the government, many Basques see the state as their enemy, trying to crush their individuality and identity. Hence, modern Basque nationalism is marked by steps taken to fight back against the government and against the rest of Spain. The way that each person chooses to resist the government reveals the elements of Basque identity that he or she values. For example, Sabino Arana valued the uniqueness of the Basque people. He moved the idea of Basqueness away from the land that they occupied in attempts to exclude those without the Basque bloodline. Others valued cultural customs, such as Euskera or the traditional rural Basque lifestyle. Therefore, they fought against what they saw as modernization by the state,

such as the Spanish language and industrialization. The best way for Basques to fight the advances of the state was through new organizations. Since the beginning of modern Basque nationalism, they have created organizations and institutions that represent their cause: preservation of the Basque culture and continuance of its traditions. For example, founding the Basque government was a way to regain control over the legal system that they had lost with the fueros. Additionally, establishing ikastolak was a means to preserve Euskera by ensuring that the Basque children learned it. Also, when Sabino Arana created the PNV, he did so as a means to encourage the continuation of the Basque bloodline. Although diverse, organizations such as these were tangible representations of Basque nationalism and gave the people a structured way to defy the state.

CHAPTER IV: SEPARATISM

The three necessary components of a nationalist movement are a shared set of values, beliefs, or ideology (for example, loyalty to the nation), the specific goals that the group wants to accomplish, and the methods or plan of action necessary to achieve those goals (Flynn 31). Although the majority of contemporary Basque nationalism is moderate, desiring only partial reformation of the system – whether that system is political, linguistic, or cultural – and trying to change it from within, there is a radical branch that uses violence and illegal activities in its attempts to achieve extreme change and even the complete replacement of the political system and the formation of a separate Basque state. The largest power in this radical movement is the clandestine terrorist organization ETA that desires secession from Spain as well as the preservation of the Basque language and race. They represent an extreme version of resistance against the state. Although not everyone agrees with their methods, ETA sees their acts of violence as justified by the ends that they are trying to achieve.

After the Spanish Civil War and industrial and demographic changes in the Basque country, the nationalism there became more radical (Raento 221). This change did not come suddenly; a series of small steps slowly built up to it. A number of other organizations set the foundation for and were forerunners of the current terrorist organization, ETA.

In December, 1945, the PNV launched a youth wing of its party, called *Euzko Gaztedi* (EG, or Basque Youth) in Iparralde. Eleven years later, in 1956, the EG founded a branch in Spain, called *Euzko Gaztedi del Interior* (EGI). This organization served as a link between the PNV and the younger generation (Clark TBI 24).

During this same time, another organization formed that would later fuel the radical nationalism. *Euzko Ikasle Alkartasuna* (EIA, or Society of Basque Students) held their first meeting in September, 1947, in St Jean de Luz, France. Although the organization was headquartered in the Netherlands, they were sympathetic to Basque nationalism and independence. They supported the preservation of Basque culture and language. Because of Franco's harsh anti-regionalist policies, all Basque nationalist support had to be conducted in secret. EIA began publishing and distributing clandestine propaganda – magazines and journals, mostly in Euskera – in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. Unfortunately, because of their youth and inexperience, the members of EIA had difficulty with concealment. In 1950, a breach of security led to the arrest or exile of many leaders of the organization. EIA all but disappeared. The remaining members learned the value and importance of secrecy, a lesson that they carried with them to their next underground organizations (Clark TBI 24-25).

In 1952, six or seven young men from Vizcayan and Guipúzcoan Basque nationalist families, brought together by common experiences (such as being former members of EIA) and by feelings of frustration with the PNV, started to meet. This small group later became known as *Ekin*. The PNV was satisfied with waiting for Franco to be overthrown before reclaiming their autonomy, but Ekin did not share this view; they thought the PNV was being too passive. While the PNV promised not to separate from

Spain while they waited, Ekin wanted an independent Basque state, with or without Franco. Additionally, Ekin disagreed with the PNV about the use of Euskera. They wanted it to be the only official language in the region, but the PNV was more moderate on the subject (Clark TBI 25-26).

The men of Ekin discussed essays and papers and afterward started to distribute a newsletter called *Ekin* (meaning "to make" or "to do"), from which they took their name. Through the years of 1952 and 1953, Ekin grew. They recruited new members, mostly students from the University of Deusto in Bilbao. Starting in 1953, Ekin started discussing with the EGI the possibility of merging, an idea that the PNV supported. As a result, in 1956, Ekin dissolved and joined EGI. However, they were still frustrated by the PNV's inactivity and additionally by the Basque government's idealism that the problems with Franco would disappear. This dissatisfaction led to strained relations between the PNV and EGI (Clark TBI 25-26).

A turning point in the development of radical Basque nationalism came in 1958. A dispute arose between the PNV and EGI. EGI of Vizcaya had made some criticisms of the PNV, and in return the PNV demanded an apology. They also wanted the expulsion of one of the founding members of Ekin. They found no compromise, and consequently, EGI split into two groups: one group was made of the members of EGI that stayed with the PNV, and the other group consisted of the EGI members that no longer supported the PNV, along with the former members of Ekin (Clark TBI 27).

Euzkadi ta Askatasuna (ETA) arose from the youth that wanted to break free from their fathers' generation and inactivity of not fighting the dictatorship but still continue the same battle for traditional nationalism (Hamilton 224). ETA was officially formed on

July 31, 1959, the 64th anniversary of the founding of the PNV (Clark TBI 27). Some of its founding members and leaders were former members of Ekin that had split from EGI in 1958, including José Manuel Aguirre, José María Benito del Valle, Julen Madariaga, and José Luis Álvarez Enparanza, called "Txillardegi" (Clark TBI 25). They still held the same strong ideas about nation and identity as Arana and the older nationalists (Hamilton 224). Additionally, they were secessionist in their goals. They wanted complete separation and independence from Spain by means of establishing their own political entity (Flynn 2). ETA's values were summed up in their four pillars of belief: the defense of Euskera, Basque ethnicity, anti-Spanish sentiment, and the independence of Euzkadi (in both France and Spain) (CIDE 93). Therefore, for ETA, the definition of Basque nationalism was interwoven with these four qualities. They defend Basque territorial, linguistic, and racial independence from any other state and reject all other ideas. With their history of violence, it is obvious that ETA believes that these four pillars are worth killing someone for. Anyone that gets in the way of their idea of nationalism does not deserve to live.

Having a separate political state is not required for a group to identify themselves as a nation (Flynn 19). In fact, before ETA, it is not even certain that any other group wanted separation. As Flynn points out, "the Basque identity had not always been viewed as one calling for recognition of a separate nation as a discrete political entity" (Flynn 104). However, ETA's form of radical, violent, separatist nationalism does not agree.

Although the Basque country is formally part of Spain, they had always had their own culture, including their own political and financial powers (Mees 7). In small pieces, the central government had taken away their freedoms: first, their own land, then their

autonomous government and law system, and finally, under Franco, they faced harsh repression of their culture. Most nationalists were content to strive for autonomy, but ETA was not. ETA wanted complete separation and national independence from Spain. Their mindset was that "a policy of accepting regional autonomy within a centralized Spanish state simply play[ed] into the hands of Spanish leaders who [sought] to buy off moderate Basques with this strategy of limited concessions" (Clark TBI 171). Simple autonomy was unacceptable. In their minds, the provinces were seen as separate from the state, so they had the right to seek independence (Flynn 106). Another argument against autonomy was that by dividing the Basque country into the CAV, Iparralde, and Navarra, the three would be disconnected. Some saw this as abandoning their brothers and sisters and hence encouraging disconnection among the Basques (Mees 52).

There are many reasons why some people see separation from Spain as vital to Basque nationalism. They see territory or homeland as essential for the definition of a nation because it gives both roots (internal cohesion) and boundaries (external differentiation) (Herb 17). Having homeland by itself is not enough to define a nationality. Other elements must be added. However, "territory is a basic requirement in organizing other attributes that form a specific identity" (Herb 1). It is equally difficult to define a nation by territory alone as to define a nation with no territory at all. Most nations need a clearly defined boundary in order to continue existing because the land gives the nation roots. The land is the one unifying identification marker for the whole nation, and so the preservation of the land is vital for the preservation of the nation. Also, the territory "adds definition to what would otherwise be an ambiguous mix of characteristics based on language, religion, heritage, habits, and other criteria" (Herb 2).

In other words, those who want complete separation can not see the intangible characteristics as enough to define the nation. They need a separate state as well. For ETA, then, the independence of Euzkadi is the highest aspiration. Although they also strive for the preservation of the language and the race, those Basque characteristics carry little to no importance without a separate state.

Another benefit of having a separate state is boundaries. Having a separate territory gives boundaries to a nation. Boundaries "enable us to exert control from within and to restrict access from without" (Herb 1). Some Basques want an area where they can enjoy both ethnic and political purity without any outsiders. As long as they are part of Spain, they have no control over immigration into the CAV. They also do not have military power to protect their land. Thus, "because only states guarantee freedom from outside interference, groups yearning to preserve their unique identity tend to inevitably demand independent statehood" (Herb 9). They demand the right to be governed by others who share their values, which they do not see as possible while remaining part of Spain (Clark TBI 5).

ETA existed for many years before they started their armed struggle. Their resistance consisted of little more than graffiti and burning Spanish flags (CIDE 95). ETA's first violent action took place on July 18, 1961: derailing a train of Francoist volunteers headed to San Sebastián (CIDE 93). Also in the 1960s, ETA held an armed campaign against the state government in Madrid (Raento 221). In May of 1962, at the celebration of the First Assembly in Bayonne, France, where ETA was presented as a "Revolutionary Basque Movement for National Liberation," they defined themselves as a

"secret revolutionary organization" (CIDE 93). All of these acts, though, pale in comparison to the violent history of deaths that the organization carries.

ETA was originally accepted as a group of idealists that wanted to defend their land and language. Somewhere on the path to Utopia, they changed (CIDE 96). The first ETA-related killing occurred on June 7, 1968. Xabier Etxebarrieta, a 23-year-old member, killed an officer of the Guardia Civil after being asked for identification. This officer, José Pardines, was buried quietly. Later that day, when another member of the Guardia Civil killed Etxebarrieta, he became the first martyr of their cause. Basque nationalists swore revenge for his death (CIDE 95-96).

During the 1970s and 1980s, ETA violence increased. However, for the most part, their violence was not random and meaningless; they strategically planned every attack "with care to make them as much as possible symbolic and communicative and to minimize harm to bystanders and other noncombatants" (Clark TBI 123). Furthermore, evidence suggests that a great deal of careful planning went into each attack. Upper-level leaders of the organization discussed each event for at least three months and sometimes as much as a year prior to its occurrence (Clark TBI 123). At this point in their history, ETA was mostly concerned with the message that they were conveying. Although they did not have reservations about performing kidnappings and killings of their enemies, they took caution so as not to harm innocent bystanders. They wanted to show the political leaders that they were serious in their demands while minimizing civilian deaths. These carefully planned attacks imply that they were trying to win supporters in the Basques. If they had killed random civilians, ETA would be hated and feared. However, if they only killed the political enemies that represented the state or some non-Basque

entity, they were seen as bravely taking an active stance against the forces that threatened to eliminate Basque culture.

By the Decree-Law on Military Rebellion, Banditry, and Terrorism that passed on September 21, 1960, a military court in Burgos tried all ETA-related criminal cases (Clark TBI 237-238). For that reason, in 1970, when sixteen ETA prisoners were arrested and put on trial, they went to Burgos. Eight were given a death sentence, but this punishment was later changed to life in prison. After this trial, ETA accelerated their movement. Now, it seemed, military action was more important than political reasoning. This shift indicates a decline in the loyalties behind their methods. That is, ETA became more interested in their attacks than in the nationalism that they were trying to promote through them, perhaps due to the success of "spectacular" attacks, such as the killing of President of the Government, Admiral Carrero Blanco in December 1973 (Mees 35). They took satisfaction in the fear that their terrorism was able to instill in the people and the resulting power. One must wonder, then, what was the actual motive behind their attacks? Did the nationalism provoke the violence, or is it the other way around?

Competition between two distinct branches that arose within ETA could supply another possible reason for the increase in ETA violence in the 1970s (Mees 35). In 1974, ETA split into two groups. ETA-político-militar wanted less violence and preferred action through political leadership. They created a political party through which to work, but this branch dissolved in 1982. ETA-militar continued on the same path as before. They were completely radical Basque nationalists that saw armed struggle as legitimate and necessary (Mees 30).

ETA was successful in using their attacks to cause civil unrest. In fact, in the summer of 1975, Franco ordered that the constitutional rights be suspended in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa to allow law enforcement to suppress popular expressions of unrest. During this time, supporting ETA or Basque independence could have been illegal (Clark TBI 170).

Francisco Franco died in November of 1975. However, the conflict between the Spanish government and Basque nationalists remained so severe that the political changes of the late 1970s did not quell ETA's violence (Raento 219). In fact, the transition years were some of the most violent in ETA's history. Before 1977, the most people that ETA had killed in a single year was 20. The rate exploded 1978-1980. In those three years, ETA killed 240 people in their attacks. There are many reasons for this continuance. One reason for the heightened hostility during the transition years could be that ETA was trying to interfere with the new democracy (Mees 35). Also, their goals were not based on the removal of Franco; they were completely concerned with total political independence. After Franco's death, the CAV regained autonomy. They did not, however, gain total independence, so ETA had not won their cause (Raento 225). Moreover, when the Spanish government rejected ETA's KAS alternative (see below), ETA threatened to increase violence as retaliation (Clark TBI 253).

Additionally, insurgent violence creates certain self-sustaining forces that the organizations are unable to break away from. These forces are separate from the wishes of the members or the original reasons for the insurgency. For example, violence may continue because of feuds between factions, for revenge, or as grudge killings. Sometimes people become involved for the sake of acting out violence for a personal

reason in the name of something else. They may use it as a means to some private benefit or agenda. It is possible, as in the Basque case, that there is mutual distrust on the two sides, preventing compromise. Perhaps there is a fear of laying down arms and using civil politics. Or maybe the people involved in ETA just do not know any other way to carry out their agenda besides a violent struggle (Clark TBI 278-279). Any of these reasons individually has the potential to sustain ETA violence without the others. Therefore, the nationalism is not the only driving force behind their actions. In fact, there might be members of ETA that have no nationalist motives whatsoever. In this way, ETA is not a symbol of Basque nationalism, but merely a vehicle for their terrorism. However, one must not assume that every militant is involved with ETA for ulterior motives; surely there are some that use the organization as a means to attempt their political freedom.

Shortly after Franco's death, there were multiple cease-fire negotiations attempted (Clark estimates at least half a dozen) between ETA and the Spanish government. Not all members of ETA wanted to continue fighting; some were willing to discuss peace. These negotiations failed, though, due to obstacles to reaching a settlement that could not be overcome. For example, neither side seemed able to make a genuine commitment or put a substantial amount of trust in the other (TBI 252).

The *Koordinadora Abertzale Sozialista* (KAS, or Patriotic Socialist Coordinating Council) is a clandestine organization started in 1976 that coordinated the *Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Vasca* (MLNV, or Movement for Basque National Liberation). Groups associated with KAS and the MLNV reject autonomy and defend ETA, saying their violence is "nothing but understandable results of an unresolved political conflict

between the Spanish state and the Basque people." Additionally, they refuse to work with any organization or institution that is linked to the state (Mees 43).

On February 1, 1978, ETA-m published the KAS alternative, their requirements for declaring a cease-fire. The KAS alternative is the only agenda supported by the MLNV. It has five requirements: total amnesty for the Basque country; the allowance of all political parties, including those that want an independent Basque state, without reduction of their statutes; the expulsion of the Guardia Civil, the Policia Armada, and the General Police Corps from Euzkadi; an improvement of the living and working conditions in the Basque country, especially for the working class, and a satisfaction of their immediate social and economic aspirations as expressed by their organizations; and finally, an autonomy statute over the CAV with a minimum of national sovereignty of Euzkadi, the use of Euskera as the principal official language, the power of the Basque government to control all law enforcement and military in the Basque country, and the freedom of the people to adopt whatever political, economic, or social structures that they see fit for their own advancement, progress, and welfare (Mees 43). The Spanish government rejected the proposition, unwilling to open these discussions with ETA (Clark TBI 253).

The last hope of cease-fire fell in 1978. It was rumored that José Miguel Beñarán Ordeñana, the pro-cease fire head of ETA's political office had plans to meet with José María Portell, a journalist from Bilbao. On June 28 of that year, Portell was assassinated, and six months later, on December 21, Ordeñana met the same fate. This was the end of hope for peace between Madrid and ETA for then.

ETA's actions continue, even today. In 1994, there were 2,488 political demonstrations in the CAV. Six hundred of these led to incidents (including roadblocks, fist fights, or stone-throwing). In 1997, there was an incident in Bilbao in which the police fired shots at a radical nationalist demonstration. Two were wounded (Raento 228). The Basque president Ardanza issued an "official peace proposal" in March of 1998, and later that year, ETA called a cease-fire for the first time in the organization's history. It did not last long, though. The cease-fire was called off in the winter of 1999, and killing began again in January, 2000 (Mees 1).

Not everyone agrees with ETA and their secessionist desires. The topic divides Basque nationalists, as "one of the central conflicts among [them] has been over the extent to which their nation could reasonably expect to be separated from Spain" (Clark TBI 170). The moderate Basque nationalists, including many leaders of the PNV, are satisfied with autonomy. They are content to have semi-control politically in their own territory without having their own state (Flynn 19). In fact, they see complete independence as neither feasible nor desirable. They know that Spain would never allow it. Also, they feel that Euzkadi is too small to survive on its own as a country (Clark TBI 170-171). One moderate reaction is demonstrated by those who choose to support the CAV government financially. Some Basques living in locations such as Mexico, Venezuela, and Argentina, have prospered and then sent money back to their homeland (Clark TBI 21). Others have started nationalist Basque movements that are anti-violence (CIDE 94).

Only a small minority of Basques support ETA. In the summer of 1975, months before Franco's death, Spanish sociologist Salustiano del Campo conducted a survey to

determine what percentage of the population supported ETA's tactics. He asked Basques their preferred procedure for obtaining their desired form of government. Only five percent chose violence. The largest percentage was those who wanted a referendum to solve the issue (31%), while not surprisingly, a large amount (30%) declined to answer. Only eleven percent of those who indicated that they wanted total independence favored violence (Clark TBI 169). These statistics demonstrate the multiplicity of the expressions of Basque nationalism. The largest percentage was less than one-third of the respondents, so there must be many ideas of the best way to achieve their ideal government, each with smaller support groups. Also, these statistics are fluid in that the question asked about the preferred method but made no mention of a secondary choice if that first preference did not produce the desired end.

Other surveys have been conducted with like results. Three years after del Campo, Basque sociologist José Ignacio Ruiz Olabuenaga conducted a similar survey. Only 3.5% of the respondents advocated armed struggle to achieve Basque independence. In April and May of 1979, the Basque government surveyed the people with six percent responding in favor of an armed struggle for independence. Again, December 1981 to January 1982, the Basque government surveyed, this time with three percent indicating support for an armed struggle. In May of 1982, the Basque magazine *Euzkadi* conducted a survey after ETA attacked the Lemóniz nuclear power plant. Eight percent of respondents supported the move. Through these seven years, the support for ETA and violent action to achieve Basque independence remained constant at about 3-6%, which at that time that would account for somewhere between 56,900 and 97,000 adult Basques

(Clark TBI 170). The vast majority of Basques still do not support ETA and their methods.

Some do not want violence but participate in ETA regardless. There is a pattern where people witnessing the crises facing them and their culture search for social change options without an armed struggle and, not finding any satisfactory solution, turn to ETA. Other outlets where people sought change before turning to ETA include dangerous sports, participation in strikes and protests, other organizations, such as EGI and EIA, and illegal Basque patriotic celebrations. For many people, then, violence is a last resort. They are willing to consider it as a method of fighting the state only when all other options fail. Ultimately, they saw non-violent options as futile and violence as the only answer (Clark TBI 154-155). There are other Basques that either find the change that they want in other outlets or are satisfied with the current Basque situation. Those who turn to violence without wanting it are either more desperate or more impatient than non-violent Basque nationalists. They are willing to break the law or even take the lives of others in order to achieve their desired ends, demonstrating their fierce devotion to their cause.

In regards to violence and secession, there is a wide range of feelings and involvement. Until the 1950s, there was no secessionist movement. Then, with the formation of Euzkadi ta Askatasuna, a radical, violent manner of expressing Basque nationalism developed. This organization started as the last resort of a group of young Basque men that were frustrated by all other methods of action. Statistically, it has remained that way. Only a small number of Basques support violence as a way to achieve their desired political state and many get involved because they see no other viable

option. It is possible that they stay involved because they get caught in one or more of the self-sustaining cycles of violence. Therefore, the members of ETA are one of three kinds of combatants. The first is one that truly desires Basque independence and uses ETA as a means to try to achieve that end. They see violence as the best or the only way to secure a separate political state. The second is one that uses ETA as a vehicle to act out violence for some non-nationalist motive, such as personal revenge or some other agenda. The third is one that originally joined ETA for nationalist promotion, as with the first category of militants, but at some point changed their motive to something more private, like the second category. It is impossible to know what size portion of the organization each group composes. If it is largely the second and the third kind, then the violence will likely never stop. Since their primary goal is not independence, then if they were to achieve their independence, would they be satisfied? Perhaps the answer to this question and the root of this expression of nationalism will not be revealed until independence is achieved. Until then, the bloodshed will continue.

CHAPTER V: INDUSTRIALIZATION, REGIONALISM, AND SOCIAL CLASSES

One reason why Basque nationalism varies through the Basque country (and, more specifically, through the CAV) is due to the number of factors that affect it. On one hand, the northern coast is the area that has experienced the most urban growth. Two of the three largest cities in the CAV are on the northern coast, namely Bilbao and San Sebastián. This great population is due in large part to a high rate of immigration into the region drawn to the jobs created by industrialization. Therefore, many people living along the coast are either non-Basques or the descendants within one or two generations of non-Basques. The rural areas have been better able to preserve the time-honored agrarian tradition along with higher percentages of Euskera speakers. One might assume that for that reason, the cities are less loyal to Basque nationalism than the rural areas on the southern plains of Álava. On the other hand, the coastal area is the area of the CAV that is furthest from Madrid. Because nationalisms tend to blend and overlap near their borders, the southern edge is more exposed to the centralist views and therefore less likely to have a strong loyalty to Basque nationalism. The history and culture actually show that there are groups and areas in both the northern, coastal, industrial region and in the southern, rural, farming region that are strongly loyal to the Basque nation. This evidence reinforces the idea that there is no solid application of Basque nationalism; it is controlled by many factors and varies from person to person. Specifically, events related to industrialization have led to distinct expressions of nationalism. Such differences are

found between the northern and southern parts of the Basque country, between the rural and the urban areas, and among different social classes, especially in the cities. In general, those that are more modern (that is, those that live in the cities and benefit from industrialization) have weaker Basque sentiments, while those that are more traditional (that is, those that either live in the rural areas or live in the cities but do not benefit from the industrial changes) have resented the changes brought by modernization, want to preserve the conventional Basque lifestyle, and have stronger feelings of Basque nationalism.

Basque economic modernization started in the 19th century. Bilbao grew in manufacturing, Vizcaya in mining, and there was similar, smaller growth in Guipúzcoa. Because of their location on the Cantabrian Sea and therefore their easy access, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa also became important trade areas for the rest of Europe. The amount of wealth in these two provinces exploded (Flynn 118).

There are many factors that led to this change. One such cause was the discovery and colonization of the New World. The demand for weapons, ships, and tools made from iron increased. Therefore, the need for iron ore mines, like the ones found in Vizcaya, increased (Clark 22). However, the fueros prohibited the exportation of iron ore before their abolishment in 1876. After that year, the amount of income to the CAV increased drastically. Also, tax payments to provincial governments were mostly for staple items, farmland, and livestock. There was no tax levied for income or wealth, allowing people to attain and retain wealth with almost no limitations or restrictions (Clark TBI 15-16). Furthermore, wealth grew as a result of the establishment of new banks and credit unions (Flynn 118).

The *conciertos económicos* were also a contributing factor to the extreme increase in wealth. Conciertos económicos, first established in 1878, were agreements between the state and Basque provinces that set a non-negotiable tax paid by the CAV and allowed them to negotiate the rest. As a result, the Basques paid lower taxes than the rest of Spain and kept more money in the local economy. This capital boosted development, especially in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa (Flynn 111).

Industry boomed exponentially as a result of the conciertos económicos and new technological developments (Flynn 118). The fueros had not allowed the extraction and exportation of Vizcaya's natural resources, but after they were abolished, the amount of iron ore produced in Vizcaya grew rapidly. In the 1860s, the amount averaged one quarter of a million metric tons per year. By 1876, that quantity grew to almost one-half of a million metric tons, and the next year, it was over one million. At the end of the 19th century, in 1899, Vizcaya produced almost 6.5 million metric tons of iron ore. Great Britain was one of the main consumers of Vizcaya's ore. Between 1874 and 1914, they imported 130 million tons of iron ore from the Iberian Peninsula. In turn, the British capital that was brought into the CAV funded further ore extractions and related growth, such as ship building and railroads (Clark 35).

This development of industry created a multitude of new jobs. As a result, for more than 100 years, the Basque country has experienced a lot of immigration from other parts of Spain (Douglass 3). This movement of people coming to the CAV caused a population explosion and a demographic shift. By the early 1900s, almost half the population of Bilbao was non-Basque (Flynn 119). By 1970, 30% of the people living in Álava, Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya, and Navarra combined had been born in other parts of the

country (Mees 25). Therefore, a large section of the people felt no loyalty to the Basque nation. Some of the native Basques might also have declined to feel loyalty toward their homeland. This fact has the potential to be detrimental to Basque nationalism. The fight for Basque nationalism, as defined by an adherence to anything Basque and a rejection of anything Spanish, comes from within. That is, most people who desire the continuance of the Basque country are actually inside the borders of the Basque country. As a result of immigration, then, people who were not natives came to live in the Basque country, thus diluting the Basque nationalist population. As they married and raised families, the percentage of non-Basques increased and therefore the percentage of Basques decreased. Because the majority of these non-Basques were not Basque nationalists, did not speak Euskera, and supported the industrialism that provided them jobs, the nationalists had to fight against forces outside and inside the Basque country to preserve their customs. Additionally, as the non-Basques diffused the Basque population, it became increasingly more difficult for the Basque nationalists to find others who shared their values. Therefore, immigration hurt nationalism by making it more difficult for Basques to find others with whom to fight against the state.

City growth continued through the 20th century. Between 1940 and 1970, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa both experienced an urbanization growth rate of 3% or more per year. Between 1950 and 1970, the rate was similar in Álava (Clark 9). Spain had the fastest growing economy in Europe (Clark TBI 17). Conversely, rural areas experienced a drastic decrease during this period of industrialization. Between 1950 and 1970, the percentage of people working in agriculture in Vizcaya decreased from 19.4% to 5.1%, in Guipúzcoa, 20.5% to 6.9%, and from 42.2% to 10.6% in Álava (Clark 8-9).

Today, the Basque economy is divided into three sections. The primary sector includes work such as fishing, crop growing, and livestock farming. It is now predominant in the rural areas of the region, but before modernization, it was almost the only type of industry in the CAV. The specific type of product varies by region but may include cattle, sheep, milk, meat, grains, wine, poultry, and inshore and deep sea fishing (CIDE 103).

The secondary sector includes industry, such as manufacturing, iron mining, steel production, and shipmaking. This type of business started to grow in the cities of the CAV in the 1800s. Now it is most prevalent in the Vizcayan city of Bilbao, in the river valleys in Guipúzcoa, and around the city of Vitoria in Álava. Some of the manufactured goods include heavy machinery, automotive or aeronautical components, electronic telecommunications equipment, and chemicals (CIDE 107).

The tertiary sector of the economy is tourism. The CAV has a strong tourism infrastructure, and the industry has been growing significantly since the decline of industrialization in the 1970s and 1980s. In the past ten years, the amount of travelers coming into the CAV has grown by 70%, partially due to the opening of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. Hotels, camping, and rural accommodations have all experienced growth (CIDE 109).

Not everything that resulted from industrialization was beneficial to the Basques. For example, larger cities led to bad living and working conditions for the lower class, increased pollution, and crime (Clark TBI 16). The period of modernization in the Basque country is also a factor that "dramatically accelerated the historic decay of Euskera." Between 1868 and 1970, the percentage of Euskera speakers decreased in

Álava from 12% to 9%, in Vizcaya from 93% to 16%, and in Guipúzcoa from 100% to 44% (Mees 25). Additionally, although the Basques and their investors put much capital in the industries, they paid little attention to resources to accommodate the population growth, such as new transportation, schools, and hospitals (Clark TBI 18). Basque nationalists blamed the non-Basque immigrants for these changes. They saw the outsiders as invaders and have had "considerable animosity" for them since their arrival in the region (Clark TBI 11).

Additionally, many specific social classes blamed industrialization and immigration for troubles that they suffered. The lesser bourgeoisie and professionals could not compete with the elite upper classes. Farmers and residents of small towns did not like the modernization because they saw it as disrupting their way of life. The proletariat who worked for cheap labor in urban factories could not compete with the immigrants who worked for cheaper labor, and therefore they lost their jobs. After a while, a movement to protect these groups and represent their concerns developed. It focused on Basque ethnicity, the survival of Euskera, and hatred of the Spanish government: modern Basque nationalism (Clark TBI 16).

Since its beginning, Basque nationalism in the cities has varied among certain social classes. It "first emerged as a middle-class reaction to the dramatic social and economic change of the Basque coast at the end of the nineteenth century" (Raento 220). Sabino Arana and his family, along with other leaders of the early nationalist movement, were members of the lesser bourgeoisie (Clark 38). The first followers of this modern movement were lower middle class "victims of modernization" (Mees 9). They had been disadvantaged in the economic growth and turned to the Basque nation for comfort and

power (Clark TBI 16). From there, the movement slowly spread to other areas of society (CIDE 55).

In contrast, there were other social classes that rejected Basque nationalism and benefitted more from a connection with Spain. After the economic boom, fewer people held a greater amount of wealth and power (Flynn 120). Because of the increased demand for ships and ports, Spain needed resources from the Basque country. As a result of the increased economic level, a new bourgeoisie class of *jauntxos* formed, meaning "little lords." This upper middle class was the first social class that benefitted from the connection with Spain and therefore did not benefit from any loyalty to the Basque nation (Clark TBI 13-14). Additionally, the upper elite class turned their backs on the Basques in favor of personal gains in business (Clark TBI 16). One can conclude that even in cities, which are traditionally liberal and anti-Basque, there are exceptions. There is variation through the people that demonstrates the difficulty of finding a specific definition of Basque nationalism.

By the end of the 1970s, the industries were dropping off, and unemployment rates began to rise. From 1960 to 1979, it increased from 0.5% to 17% in the Basque country. Also in the region, the GDP dropped 4.5% each in 1978 and 1979 and 2% each in 1980 and 1981. Steel consumption decreased 5%, cement consumption went down 18%, and new housing construction dropped 8.5% in 1980. In that year, unemployment in Vizcaya alone increased 36% and across the CAV, 22% of the people were out of work. The population decreased as a result, with 10,000 people leaving the Basque country in 1980 (Clark TBI 19). During the 1980s, 37 cities in Álava decreased in

population. The effect was similar in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. Even large cities like Bilbao suffered from population loss (Cobarrubias 71-72).

All of these changes together put stress on the way many people saw Basque nationalism. "There are obvious social, cultural, linguistic, economic, and political challenges" with a rapid, mass change of people. The Basque nationalist movement could be seen as the effort of a "Basque cultural survival" through this change (Douglass 3). As the cities grew and more non-Basques moved in, the traditional Basque lifestyle was threatened. The non-Basques did not support the Basque sports, language, or political traditions, putting them in danger of being replaced by their Spanish counterparts. This threat spurred the development of a nationalism focused on the preservation of Basque culture.

Because of the perceived danger of urbanization, one aspect of Basque nationalism is a strong rural, anti-urban sentiment (Flynn 158). However, there are many cultural, social, and political differences between urban and rural areas (Raento 224). The truth might be that there are strong pockets of nationalism in both rural and urban areas; they just have different modes of expression. For example, in rural areas, Basques express their nationalism through the preservation of the ancient traditions of agriculture and Euskera. The levels of both these traditions are higher in the rural areas because they have no industrialization and therefore no immigration to bring any changes. In essence, they still live as if the industrialization never happened. On the other hand, in urban areas, Basque nationalists must fight change in order to preserve their idea of the Basque nation. Therefore, they tend to express their nationalism through the formation of nationalist organizations to promote their ideology, such as ETA and the PNV, and institutions such

as the ikastolak and Euskaltzaindia, to preserve their unique characteristics, as well as through the continued active involvement in Basque traditions, such as Basque sports, to ensure their survival.

In the 1940s, Spain was still 60% agricultural (Clark TBI 17). Because of industrialization, this percentage changed. By the 1970s, only 10% of the Basque country was agricultural and 10% of Basques were small farmers, peasants, and farm laborers (Clark 8-9). The rural areas on the coast and in the mountains of eastern Vizcaya and southern Guipúzcoa can be seen as the core of traditional nationalism because of their isolation. These areas have not been exposed to much non-nationalist sentiment, so therefore they have not been as influenced by it. Southern Álava is also largely rural, but because of the proximity to Madrid, that area is less nationalist (Raento 221). Those that see rural areas as being the standard for traditional Basque nationalism see modernity as the only cause for the disappearance of the Basque nation (Tovar 52).

There is evidence, though, that cities are equally as nationalist as the rural regions. Public demonstrations and conflict are more common in the provincial capitals and industrial centers. These areas have the highest number of ETA members and the demonstrations there are most likely to lead to violence, which is how some people express their Basque nationalism. However, it is also true that the urban areas have higher amounts of non-nationalist votes (Raento 225). Also, during the Second Carlist War, the liberal cities of San Sebastián and Bilbao supported the central government while the farmers and peasants sided with the traditionalist, regionalist Carlists (Clark 28, 30).

Some people see a nationalist division between the three provinces of the CAV rather than between rural and urban areas. In the 1890s when Sabino Arana founded

modern Basque nationalism, the movement had a very strong presence in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, especially among the small town and rural populations, but it was not nearly as strong in Álava (Flynn 98). The "Vizcayan and Guipúzcoan mentality" refers to people who have a hard time relating to or accepting those in the border zones who are anti-nationalist (Raento 227). On the other side, there are organizations in the traditionally anti-nationalist south that have increased the nationalist sentiment there. For example, *Unidad Alavesa* in Álava sees the PNV as being a false representative of Basque nationalism. Based in Vitoria, they think the PNV "imposes Vizcayan interests," such as their economy and politics, on them. For the UA, being Basque means having the freedom to decide how to organize and govern themselves without control by other areas (Raento 226). One can see that there are drastic differences between urban and rural areas as well as between the provinces.

In terms of geography (north versus south or rural versus urban), Basque nationalism is fractured. That is, there is little solid or uniform expression of nationalism across any demographic. With modernization, there are many factors that developed into different expressions of nationalism in the Basque country. The rural areas have had little to no modernization, and as a result, the majority of these locations retain the traditional lifestyle that the Basques have exercised there for many centuries. The urban areas are more complex because they contain a mixture of nationalists and non-nationalists.

There are stronger pockets of nationalism within some subgroups of the cities, such as among the middle class and in the coastal area that is the furthest isolated from the rest of Spain, but of course there are always exceptions. To draw a broader conclusion, then, one must examine why there are such differences in the cities. In

general, the non-nationalists favor the state over the nation because they benefit more from a connection with the state. Some are immigrants from other parts of Spain that find their identity in being Spanish and not in being Basque. Others are native Basques that have a financial advantage from being part of the state. The urban nationalists tend to not fall into either of these categories. Instead of encouraging the changes brought by industrialization, they are fighting them. Like Sabino Arana, some Basques romanticize the pre-industrial Basque country and desire a reversion to that state. That change is unlikely, though, so they react in one of two ways. Some compromise by allowing change to continue but maintaining their traditional identity markers, such as Euskera or their customary sports and festivals. Others desire a separate state so that they can control the immigration and create an entirely Basque population. One must consider is how the economic stability in the Basque country influences the desire to form a separate state. Having their own resources, the Basques might not see themselves as dependent on Spain. If the raw materials and infrastructure were not there, however, there might be a smaller secessionist movement. Thus, this infrastructure is another factor that shapes one of the many facets of Basque nationalism.

Chapter VI: Language

The Basque language has been called "the most significant symbol of Basque" nationalism (Mees 12) and "the most significant distinguishing factor of Basque ethnicity" (Clark TBI 11). Entwistle says, "in respect of its uniqueness, the Basque language merits the description 'great'" (1). Along with a racial line, it is one of the longest reaching features of the Basque people. Because it has been a marker of the people for so long, many Basques see it as an important part of their identity. However, although it has survived for thousands of years, in the past two centuries, Euskerea has been in danger of disappearing for a number of reasons. As a result, Basques must now choose whether to speak Euskera or Spanish. The result is that many Basque nationalists are now working to help safeguard and ensure the survival of Euskera. Others, however, demonstrate that they do not see the language as vital to the Basque nation, yet they still consider themselves completely Basque. This division further demonstrates the multiplicity of expressions of Basque nationalism.

All evidence suggests that the language has existed as long as the Basque people themselves. Livy, a historian of the Sertorian War (77-74 BC), and other Roman historians have written about the Vascones, a tribe living in or near the Basque region. These scholars found their language incomprehensible (Clark 10). In fact, scholars are unable to connect Euskera with any other existing language. Languages do not develop in isolation. Therefore, the fact that Euskera is linguistically isolated testifies to its antiquity

and longevity (Collins 12). It has survived while all others in its original language family have disappeared (Tovar 18).

Many historians believe the reason Euskera has survived while others have not is because of the Basque people's lengthy isolation (CIDE 29). Like the people, it had contact with others but was never dominated or taken over. Also like the Basque people, Euskera is resistant to change. It has experienced a slower rate of evolution than other languages. The vocabulary is "perceptively the same now as it was in the 16th century," with dialect regions also remaining similar (Tovar 33). Its ancient and modern forms are grammatically similar (Collins 12).

Euskera has been influenced by its contact with other languages, especially in vocabulary borrowings (Tovar 109). Language similarities are expected in areas where they overlap (45). Linguists have studied these similarities in attempts to find related languages. Many connections have been suggested, but Euskera cannot definitively be related to any Indo-European, African, Caucasian, or Iberian language (Trend 14). There is insufficient evidence to clearly categorize the Basque language in any other known language family (Hammond 2). More than likely, it is "the sole surviving, anciently established, non-Indo-European language of Europe" (Collins 11).

As linguists studied the similarities in Euskera and other languages, they discovered many possible relations. One popular idea is that Euskera is related to Caucasian languages (Jacobsen 28). There are many parallels between the two groups. Although this comparison does not prove anything definitively, the similarities seem more than a coincidence (Tovar 39). These correspondences may indicate a relationship many millennia ago (37). Then again, they might not demonstrate any type of

relationship at all (Jacobsen 27-28). No Caucasian groups are known to have come to the Iberian Peninsula. Perhaps, then, if this language connection could be proven, it would provide a clue as to from where and when the Basque lineage came to the Iberian Peninsula. However, not enough evidence exists to determine a definitive relation.

More likely relations are foundwith languages that invading groups brought to the Iberian Peninsula. For example, one such possible relation is with the Hamitic and Semitic African languages, such as Berber, Hebrew, Assyrian, Arabic, and Egyptian. Enough similarities exist in the vocabulary "to affirm a primitive relationship" (Tovar 42). However, this similarity could also be the effect of influence by the Muslim invaders from northern Africa who occupied much of the Iberian Peninsula for many centuries. Another possible relation is with Germanic languages. German has influenced Euskera vocabulary, but any likenesses could be from the Germanic Visigoths that also occupied the Peninsula for a period (Tovar 48).

Euskera also has connections with Latin, the language spoken by the Romans. The names of some Basque locations can be traced back to Latin beginnings. Additionally, some elements of Basque syntax and morphology could only be due to contact with Latin or another romance language (Tovar 47-48), and some Basque words with Latin roots still survive. For example, *pake*, which means "peace," is from the Latin word *pacem* and retains the original pronunciation (Trend 18).

The language that Euskera has had the most contact with is Spanish. Therefore, it is not surprising that the two languages have influenced each other greatly. Traits of Basque that are also found in Spanish include a resistance to the initial "f" on a word and the different constructions of the object of a transitive verb (Tovar 49). Right-gapping,

putting an adjective after the noun it modifies, and adding a subordinator ("non") at the head of an embedded clause are changes to Basque influenced by Spanish (Hammond 7-9). Additionally, vowels and consonants have close to the same pronunciation in the two languages. For example, in Euskera, as in Spanish, a "v" is pronounced the same as a "b" (Entwistle 16). Hammond also points out that some unusual phrases are translated the same in Euskera and Spanish, further indicating influence. For example, to say that someone is a certain number of years old, the exact translation means that he or she "has that many years." To talk about taking a walk, one would actually say "give a turn." Additionally, to say that someone is correct, the phrase used means he or she "has reason" (3-4). However, some of these phrases have equivalent translations into French or other languages. Therefore, this proof of influence might or might not mean anything; it is highly speculative. Evidence of influence from Basque to Spanish also exists. The palatization of vowels in Euskera could have led to the "ll" and "ñ" sounds in Spanish. The abundance of Spanish auxiliary verbs and the use of the future tense to express probability are possibly borrowed from Euskera (Hammond 5-6).

Many words in Spanish and in Euskera can be traced from one to the other. For example, *esker* in Euskera means "right," and led to the word *izquierda* in Spanish with the same definition. Also, the word *harri*, or "stone," in Euskera became *pizarra* in Spanish, meaning "slate" or "blackboard." Some Euskera vocabulary with more modern uses came straight from Spanish. The pronunciation stayed the same; only the spelling changed. For example, *coche* became *kotxe*, meaning "car"; *calle* became *kale*, meaning "street"; *helicóptero* became *elikoptero*, meaning "helicopter"; *escalera* became *eskailera*, meaning "staircase"; *ducha* became *dutxa*, meaning "shower"; *mecánico*

became *mekaniko*, meaning "mechanic"; and *frigorífico* became *frigorifiko*, meaning "refrigerator" (Hammond 3). There are also some cases where it is difficult to know which influenced the other. For example, the words meaning "paper" are similar in English, Euskera, French, Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Greek, and Latin (5).

Many Basques claim Euskera as part of their identity because of its uniqueness. However, these influences from other languages demonstrate that it actually is not unique at all; it is lexically related rather closely to other tongues, especially Spanish, which they hate most of all because it represents the state. Therefore, this form of expressing nationalism is not really as representative of the uniqueness of the Basques as they would like.

Why do some still insist on speaking Euskera, then? Why is there such an effort to maintain and preserve the language? It is possible that they are not aware of these borrowings, but with words like "coche" and "kotxe," that excuse is not likely. A more reasonable explanation is that the uniqueness outweighs the external influences. Although Euskera has some vocabulary from other languages, the majority of its grammatical structure is still the original tongue. Despite a few borrowed words, Euskera and Spanish are very dissimilar; being able to read or speak Spanish does not make one able to understand Euskera by any means, unlike Galician and Catalan. In this way, the language is still a means to set the Basques apart from the state. Also, because no other nation in the world speaks Euskera, Basque nationalists can use it as a way to unify the Basques. As Euskera is easily recognizable upon sight, a Basque is reminded of his or her homeland upon seeing it, even without being literate. In this way, "national dominance is enforced effectively by stamping it on the landscape of an entire region" (Herb 23). In

other words, by putting Euskera signs, advertisements, and location names all over the Basque country, Basque nationalists are trying to subconsciously instill the same nationalism in other Basques.

Euskera has been the language of the Basque country for many centuries. The earliest surviving texts are from the late Middle Ages (Collins 9). The first known writing is a book written by Aymeric Picaud in 1140. Starting in the 10th century, pilgrims from all over Europe visited Compostela where Santiago, also known as Saint James, is supposedly buried (CIDE 31). Picaud wrote the *Codex Calixtinus*, the story of Santiago's pilgrimage, after he visited the area (Tovar 20).

Because of its far-reaching connection with the Basque people, it is not surprising that so many people identify it as a marker for Basque nationalism. In fact, some people see it as the only marker for Basque nationalism; in other words, some believe that if one is not *euskaldun*, or Euskera-speaking, he or she can not claim loyalty to the Basque nation. One source says, "in the long history of this people, Euskera has been – and is – the element that shapes the Basque nation" (CIDE 125, author's translation). Douglass calls it "the most emblematic feature of Basque identity" (5). By this standard, Basqueness is defined by speaking Euskera.

If it is true that in order to be truly be Basque, one must speak Euskera, then the vast majority of people living in the Basque country can not call themselves Basque. Clearly, many people consider themselves Basque without speaking the language, such as Luis Arana, the brother of Sabino Arana and the second leader of the PNV (Mees 13). Therefore, few Basques actually see it as a marker for nationalism.

Because of the small number of Basques that require Euskera for their identity, only a small number of Basques are working to promote its survival. Therefore, Euskera has faced a series of challenges that threatened to eliminate it through its history. It has been declining in use and importance since the Middle Ages. It was severely deteriorated as a result of modernization and Francoist repression during the 19th and 20th centuries. By the beginning of the 1800s, it was mostly spoken by peasants and coastal fisherman (Flynn 152). One hundred years later, typically only girls learned the language. Men had to go into the professional world and speak Spanish while a woman's job was to marry well and carry on the Basque traditions (Mees 12). Other aspects of modernization, such as communication, travel, and military, sped the loss of Euskera (Tovar 34). As Basques were traveling and communicating outside of the Basque country, they had to modernize themselves; it was not feasible for them to retain an ancient nationalist language. Some liberal Basques did not see any reason to retain the language. In the early 1800s, Wilhelm von Humboldt predicted the total loss of Euskera, and in 1901, philosopher Miguel de Unamuno encouraged Basques to let Euskera die in favor of the more practical Spanish (Mees 12). Another challenge is the disunity of the language. Currently, there are six dialects: Vizcaíno, Guipuzcoano, Navarro, Labortano, Bajo Navarro, and Saletino (CIDE 129). Among these, there are at least 25 subdialects, and even separate villages and generations have their own differences (Entwistle 15). Euskera's persistence in spite of these hardships is a testament to the loyalty and hard work of those who desire its continuance. Additionally, this linguistic diversity suggests geographic isolation of the speakers, further proof of their small number. If everyone in the Basque country spoke

Euskera, its evolution would be much more uniform. There are, however, small pockets of speakers scattered around the area, allowing for distinct evolutionary paths.

The danger of extinction strengthened national sentiment related to the language. For example, although Sabino Arana did not say that language was the only indicator of Basque identity, he did believe that it was one of them (Flynn 152). He thought the amount of speakers was too small in his time and wanted to boost the status of the language to keep it from disappearing (Mees 51). Apparently, others agreed with him. Before the Spanish Civil War, the PNV campaigned for the revival of Euskera (Flynn 152). Many saw its near disappearance as effects of Spain trying to wipe out Basque identity (152). The speakers of Euskera saw it as a link between themselves and their ancestors and therefore as a vital part of the continuance of Basqueness (Cobarrubias 63). In this sense, then, their nationalism is a project of nostalgia. Much like those who desire a regression to an agrarian economy, they resent the state for the changes that it has brought and want to hold on to the pre-industrial version of the Basque country.

As a result of the threat of disappearance, Euskera experienced a tremendous growth, and there is hope for its survival. For example, four soccer stadiums filled with people to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of *Bai Euskarari* campaign, a movement founded to promote the normalization of Euskera by implementing it in specific uses. Thousands of children attend ikastolak, and the *korrika* is a biennial fund-raising marathon to raise money for these schools. Adults are learning Euskera, too; many are teaching and attending AEK classes. Additionally, some radio stations, TV stations, and newspapers broadcast and publish entirely in Euskera, and there is now a Basque language association, called *Euskararon Taldea* (Urla 44). Euskera is not an easy

attempt to preserve their language. In 1968, the Academy set the criteria for the unification of Euskera and created Euskera Batua, the official unified dialect. It is based on a mixture of the current dialects (CIDE 129). They want it to be common and accessible for everyone. Conversely, popular culture sometimes stimulates revival of the language by using slang and wordplay that "exploit[s] the dialectal variability" (Urla 47). From this viewpoint, Euskera's uniqueness and diversity makes it valuable and desirable. Hence, many motivations cause the spread of Euskera, but all reach the same ultimate result.

The growth of Euskera has political support, which is necessary for establishing use of the language in areas such as education and legal work (Cobarrubias 66). Of all the areas in the Basque country, the CAV has the strongest legislation and the largest budget for normalization, which means that it has the most hope for revival there (77-78). By the 1979 Basque Statute, Euskera and Spanish are co-official languages of the CAV and "all citizens have the right to know and use both languages." Additionally, "the popular institutions of the autonomous community... will guarantee the use of both languages" (CIDE 132, author's translation). Because of the co-official status, most public signs in the CAV are in both Spanish and Euskera (Herb 23). This constant reminder encourages loyalty to one's national language.

Even some non-Basques see the language as essential to their identity. For example, in the town of Arrasate, one bar's mostly female bartenders are the daughters of non-Basque immigrants. Although they are not genetically Basques, they consider themselves as such. Some have learned Euskera as adults because they feel that the

language is a necessary part of assuming the Basque identity (Kasmir 180). However, some of the other bartenders see themselves as Basque without learning the language.

Clearly, Euskera is not essential to everyone's definition of the Basque identity. In fact, there are many such definitions, no two of which are alike. Some require language but others do not. Additionally, some interpretations of Basque identity require Basque descent, but some interpretations, like those held by these female bartenders, do not. Having neither Basque language nor race, they consider themselves Basque regardless. Therefore, despite what some may say, neither characteristic is required for a Basque identity.

Today, there are an estimated 700,000 speakers of Euskera (CIDE 130). Basques who favor the language as a symbol of nationalism have gone to great lengths to integrate it into modern life. The Basque country has invested a lot of money into normalizing it into education, media, politics, and everyday use (Douglass 5). In order for Euskera to survive, it must expand demographically, functionally, and geographically through the people (Cobarrubias 65).

Euskera must be extended through new demographics. This expansion requires the addition of new uses and new users (Cobarrubias 70). The addition of new users includes teaching the language to those that do not speak it and increasing the birth rate in families that do speak it (76). Basques who desire the spread of Euskera will be more involved in teaching it to others. They will also ensure that their children learn the language. Hence as the number of adults who speak Euskera increases, so does the number of children who speak the language, resulting in a greater overall increase in the number of speakers. This growth is demonstrated by the 8000 teachers who received

training to teach Euskera in 1987. In that same year, 28% of elementary students had been taught school in Euskera (70).

Parents who desire to educate their children in Euskera now have a great opportunity to do so. The Basque government has almost entire control of the education system (Mees 48). This power has allowed a huge change in the promotion of Euskera. Education of Euskera was expedited in part by having a modern society that could quickly adapt and establish educational facilities (Flynn 153). Before the 1960s, almost the entire school system was in Spanish. This system began to change with the founding of the first ikastolak, private primary schools that instruct in Euskera. Then, when the CAV administration assumed power, they combined promoting ikastolak with also introducing Euskera in public schools. Now, parents have three language education options for their children: a school with instruction entirely in Spanish and with Euskera offered as a course, a school taught approximately half in Spanish and half in Euskera, or a school with instruction entirely in Euskera and with Spanish offered as a course. Most parents choose the second or third model, demonstrating their desire for their children to learn the language. From 1990 to 2000, the amount of students in the first model decreased from 29% to 13% while the number in the third model increased from 34% to 55%. If parents did not feel so strongly connected to the language, they would not insist that their children learn it.

Higher education instruction is also offered in Euskera. The *Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea*, or University of the Basque Country, is a public institution that was established during the transition years in Spain. In the year 2000, a total of around 60,000 students attended classes on its three campuses. In some departments, students can take

nearly all of their classes in Euskera (Mees 48-50). Across the entire CAV, 25% of university courses are offered in Euskera (Cobarrubias 70).

In order to spread functionally, Euskera must be used in areas where it is not usually used or used little (Cobarrubias 65). This type of spread is "the aspect of normalization that contributes most significantly to the change in social identity" (69). In other words, if Euskera can be the standard in new areas of society with Spanish as a secondary option (instead of the other way around, as it is now), the whole Basque society may start to view it as a necessary part of the Basque identity. Starting in the early 1980s, the Basques tried to normalize Euskera in every function, which was difficult to do all at once because it was costly, confusing, and frustrating. Instead, normalizing must be done incrementally with small changes made over time. This type of extension is much more realistic and makes the goal of functional spread achievable. It also requires strategic planning to spread through different uses. However, "substantial progress has been made in the area of functional spread." Indeed, the Comprehensive Language Act passed, ensuring its right to spread to other institutional areas (Cobarrubias 66-68).

In only a few places geographically is Euskera more common than Spanish. Of all the provinces, Guipúzcoa has the highest density of Euskera speakers. Therefore, to make it more common and available, Basques must make efforts to spread the language to Álava and Vizcaya. This effort may include adding new schools or starting new programs for adult education. Normalization in urban areas continues to be difficult, even with incredible effort (Cobarrubias 80). These regional differences testify to the differences in nationalism therein. For example, Guipúzcoa, being surrounded by Iparralde, Navarra, Vizcaya, and Álava, is the area of the Basque country that is most isolated from any non-

Basque region. Also, although some cities like San Sebastián have experienced industrialization, it was nowhere near the amount experienced by Bilbao in Vizcaya. As a result, it did not experience the same high levels of immigration. For these reasons, the majority of Guipúzcoa has been able to retain closer to the original sentiments and expressions of nationalism, such as Euskera. Conversely, fewer Basques in the less Euskera-literate areas see the language as crucial to their identity, or maybe they do not see themselves as Basques at all.

Euskera is not totally safe yet; it is still in danger of extinction by its competition with Spanish and French (Cobarrubias 63). In 1979, only 30-40% of Spanish Basques spoke Euskera with mastery (Clark 7). That percentage is a minority. Compared to the more than half of all Basques who spoke Euskera in the 1860s, the change is ominous. There will be challenges in saving Euskera (Douglass 5). Implementing and normalizing it is slow. Although the number of overall users may increase significantly, some functions still have a very small number of users (Cobarrubias 71). Such areas include higher education and information technology. Another challenge is training educators to instruct in Euskera (69).

Two opposing forces are fighting to determine the future of Euskera in the Basque country. On one hand, changes brought by modernization and by being part of the larger state have increased the number of Spanish speakers. On the other hand, Basques are fighting to preserve Euskera. Not only do they want to ensure the survival of the language, but they also want to increase the percentage of speakers and the functions in which it is used, thereby reversing the effects of the state. Undoubtedly, for ease of communication, it would be easier for them to speak Spanish, but they choose Euskera

instead as a way to deliberately express their nationalism. In this sense, the Basque identity is a choice. Some Basques speak Euskera even though it is difficult to learn and impractical in some functions. Their hope is that not only will Euskera eventually be easier to learn because it will be every Basque's first language, but also that Euskera will be a practical language because it will be so widespread. Although this desire for the universal use of Euskera is highly romanticized, the current reality is that it is still a minority language. As a result, speakers must compromise on the extent to which it is used. Until Euskera is the most common language in the Basque country and thereby a dominant component of the Basque identity, language will not have a unified role in the definition of Basque nationalism.

CHAPTER VII: MODERN CULTURE

A number of traditional Basque customs are seen by some people as an essential part of the definition of Basque nationalism. These include but are not limited to the sports they play, the music they listen to, and the literature that they read. Within these three categories, much variation exists with respect to their history and the way that each is used to express nationalism. Some are unique to the Basque country, and others represent the continuance of other traditional elements of Basque culture. Regardless, they all serve in some way to represent the Basque nation. Such a diverse expression of nationalism is further support for the fact that Basque loyalty can be expressed in countless ways.

Supporting traditional Basque sports is one way of expressing loyalty to the Basque nation. These activities are mostly based on the work associated with rural vocations and pre-modern activities. Other traditional sports, such as *pelota*, a type of handball game, are variants of sports identified mostly or totally with the Basques (Urza 245). Although these games began as work, tests, and bets, they are now sports that require technique and training (CIDE 183). Additionally, because these activities are based on traditional Basque games and customs, support of them represents support of the older Basque lifestyle instead of the modern one.

One traditional Basque sport is *aizkolari*, or chopping logs. Beech trees were originally cut for use in making houses and boats. Now, the sport is performed to test

stamina between two or more competitors. They must chop a predetermined number of logs, which are usually one meter in diameter, into two pieces horizontally. These competitions usually last over an hour. Another sport is the *sega apustua*, or harvesting race. Originally, farmers had to cut their crops quickly before the rains ruined them. Now, the competitors, called *segalari*, cut as many crops as possible in a fixed amount of time, usually an hour. They still use scythes because the slopes of the fields make it difficult to use a tractor or mechanical harvester. The crops are collected and the one who has cut the most by weight is the winner. A third traditional Basque sport is sardine fishing boat racing, which developed from competition between boats during embarkation. Today, crews made of three rowers, or *arrantzale*, and one coxswain race for sport. The most famous races are the Bandera de la Concha in San Sebastián, and the most famous teams are from coastal towns such as Pasajes, Hondarribia, and Urdaibai. Stone lifting is a fourth example of these traditional activities. The sport started with carrying large stones either while working in the stone quarries or to use as markers along land boundaries. The participants, called *harrijasotzaile*, lift pieces of granite of spherical, cylindrical, cubical, rectangular, or irregular shape (CIDE 184-186). Other Basque athletes include *palankari*, or iron bar throwers, *gizon proba*, or stone draggers, and *korrikalari*, or long distance racers (Urza 246). The Basques also race animals for sport, including oxen, cows, donkeys, horses, mules, and chickens (CIDE 183).

Pelota is a well-known Basque sport that did not develop from rural activities. It is thought to have evolved from the same game as tennis. Basques play many versions of pelota, but they all have the same basic rules. Played inside or outside, players hit a small ball against a wall, usually using their hand, although some variations call for a racquet, a

club, or a basket. The ball must stay inside the bounds of the court and after zero to one bounces, the other player or players hit it back (Urza 247-248). Pelota is the most common Basque sport. Almost every town has a pelota court, called a *frontón* (CIDE 184). The game has become very prestigious for the Basques. It is a source of pride and bragging rights between towns (Urza 247).

Although both are seen by some as expressions of Basque nationalism, Traditional Basque sports fall into one of two different categories – those based on rural activities and those based on more traditional games. It is possible that some only view one category as nationalist and not the other. Some, for instance, might think chopping logs is representative of the Basque nation while pelota is not. In that case, the implication is that their nation is based on the rural origins of the activity and not the sport itself. Conversely, if a Basque considered pelota as representative of the Basque nation but not stone lifting, then several possible conclusions that might be drawn. First, they might base their nationalism on the unique traits of the Basque country. Many cultures have a traditional agrarian structure with traditional activities that accompany such a structure. However, several different cultures have their own versions of handball games, so this reason is unlikely. Secondly, they might value pelota highly because of its prevalence through the Basque country and its ability to unite the people. Almost every town has a pelota court, but few towns still recognize and practice the rural sports. These Basques want to give their people a physical representation of their unity. A third possible reason for such bias is modernity. If someone supports pelota but not the other traditional activities, it is possible that he or she favors modernization and rejects the rural sports because of the past that they represent. However, because both traditions are

related to Basque activities of the past, it is also quite possible that many support both forms of sports as representative of Basque nationalism.

The Basques value these sports because they are part of their tradition and history (Urza 245). Rural work is unnecessary; all of the work accomplished in the rural activities can now be done by machine (CIDE 183). Playing pelota is challenging physically. It requires courage to hit the especially hard ball with one's bare hand. The athletes must endure injuries and constant abuse, which sometimes can end their careers. One must be able to tolerate pain, be a consistent and accurate hitter, and possess stamina, agility, and cleverness to be a successful pelota player (Urza 248-249). However, the Basques still enjoy the sport because it "is culture, given that it expresses what and how [their] ancestors did it" (CIDE 185, author's translation). Basques see these sports as a "nostalgic cultural performance" and desire to connect with the past (Douglass 7-8). Those who follow this culture of traditional sports do so because they see it as a way of preserving the culture of their family, some more closely than others. For example, Iñaki Perurena is a famous stone lifter from Navarra. He has broken several records and can lift 588 pounds with only one arm. His total lifting record is 705 pounds. His fifteen-year-old son is following in his footsteps as a stone lifter and can already lift stones weighing 174 pounds. Perurena sees the sport as a representation of their customs and identity and for that reason, he says, they keep organizing the competitions and events (CIDE 185-186).

Both of these activities – pelota and the rural sports – are important to Basque nationalism because they represent a connection with the past. In this sense, their nationalism is connected to traditional Basque customs. Just as they play the same sports

as their ancestors, they hope that their descendants will also play the same sports as they do. They associate a continuance of the Basque nation with the continuance of these competitions.

Those who see traditional Basque sports as an expression of nationalism are working to preserve these activities. The average age of spectators is rising because the Basque youth are not as interested in the traditions as the older generations. In order to fight this trend, physical education classes at the ikastolak incorporate pelota into their curriculum so that children will grow up seeing it as part of their culture (Urza 256). However, the traditional sports are also changing. For example, some women now want to compete, but these sports are too difficult for women so they are being modified. Also, because the tasks performed by these athletes are no longer necessary, the motivation to perform them is disappearing. As a result, sports are likely to evolve into something that is more enjoyable for the participants (252). Ultimately, the traditional sports will survive, but in new forms. They might develop into professional or commoditized versions of the same games (259-260). This change is a sign that not enough people desire the continuance of these activities to preserve them in their original form. It indicates, then, that the number of Basques who see these traditional sports as vital to their identity is now in the minority, while they used to be a majority. Likely as a result of modernity, the loss of Basque traditions resulted in some people strengthening their national sentiments related to these activites. However, the overall support for them has dropped.

Other than the traditional Basque activities, one sport is extremely popular in the CAV as well as across the rest of Spain: soccer. In Spain, as well as in many other parts

of the world, soccer is a "cultural phenomenon" (Crolley 304). Close ties bind the teams and the regions they represent. Some Basques see supporting their team, the *Athletic Club de Bilbao*, as a symbol of Basque nationalism. Indeed, through history, the Athletic has been important in the nationalist movement (Urza 257). Even as far back as the early 1900s, the team was a Basque symbol. After the Spanish Civil War, people chose which team to support based on their political leanings. That is, those who chose to support the Basque nation also chose to support the Athletic. During the Franco years, soccer was highly political. The team leadership was almost completely controlled by the central regime, and Franco exploited and manipulated soccer to support the idea of single state nationalism. The response was quite the opposite; fans looked to their national teams to symbolize opposition against the state. The Athletic games were one of the few places where the Basques were allowed to wave their ikurriña and sing their Basque anthem during this era (Crolley 304-305).

Since the end of nationalist repression under Franco, the Athletic continues to be a symbol of national pride and identity. For example, they only hire Basques to play on the team (Urza 257). People see supporting the team as equivalent with supporting nationalist sentiment, and therefore opposing Madrid and the central government. For that reason, some non-Basques support the Athletic because in their minds, when the Athletic wins, Madrid loses (Crolley 305). Soccer is thus a traditional Basque sport. Although it is much more common than the other sports discussed, many Basques support soccer in order to support the Basque nation.

This idea that supporting a popular, contemporary sport shows loyalty to the nation is contradictory to the idea that the traditional, old-fashioned sports are the only

acceptable sports-related symbols of nationalism. However, it is undeniable that the Athletic manages to preserve the Basque values while still playing a universal sport. The *Ultrasur* is an extremist group that supports the Madrid soccer team. The members of this organization hate Athletic fans who claim to be Basque instead of Spanish. They perform violent acts against the nationalist fans in the name of "cleansing Spain of its impurities" (Crolley 307). Such groups would not exist if the Athletic were not seen as a nationalist organization. There is diversity in the way Basques use sports to express nationalism. Traditional activities represent the continuance of old customs; contemporary ones represent apartness and the rejection of any other state. In these two different ways, though, there is an underlying theme of loyalty to the Basque nation.

Some Basques regard Basque music as a manner of nationalist expression. However, like sports, there is a traditional expression and a more updated version. Some play certain instruments like the *txalaparta* in order to preserve the traditional music style. The txalaparta is a tablet made of long pieces of wood lain horizontally with a total measurement of about six and a half feet long, eight inches across, and three inches tall. This tablet is supported at the ends by two chairs or overturned baskets and played by two *txalapartariak* at a time, each with two wooden sticks that they use to hit the txalaparta directly from above. This instrument is used in local celebrations. For example, in the San Sebastián area, members of the town gather to make cider. Afterwards, they have dinner and play the txalaparta. The music can be heard for over three miles in every direction. Many people hear it and recognize it as a signal to join the party (CIDE 161-162). In this sense, the txalaparta is a tool for bringing together the Basque people and an instrument for creating unity among them. Those who support this traditional Basque

music may see it as something common that unifies the Basque nation. Without the music, the people would have one less reason to consider themselves a cohesive group.

Another traditional instrument is the *txistu*, a vertical flute with three holes on the bottom. It is designed so that one may play the melody on the txistu with one hand while hitting a drum with the other hand to keep rhythm. The txistu is the most widespread popular Basque instrument and has a long history linked with the Basque people. In ancient times, the *txistulariek*, or txistu-players, were an important part of the culture because of the role music played in many aspects of life. They related music to work, parties, and celebrations of important events. Some documented historical uses for txistus include alerting fishermen to the presence of a whale, entertainment while working, relief from pain, sadness, or anxiety, and accompanying newlyweds home after their wedding. Today, the instrument is still important. Most city governments and all provincial governments in the CAV have their own band of txistulariek that performs concerts throughout the year (CIDE 162). Continuing the tradition of playing the txistu allows the Basques to connect with their past. Those who identify this customary music as a marker of nationalism see it as something that they can all share and relate to. These instruments are a tangible representation of Basque unity.

Not all Basque instruments have an ancient tradition like the ones mentioned above. For example, the *trikitixa* is the most recent Basque instrument. A form of accordion, it did not spread to all parts of the Basque country until the end of the 19th century (CIDE 163). Nevertheless, some Basques consider it as a traditional marker of Basqueness. This instrument might be considered a marker for Basques simply because society deems it as such. After all, it is certainly not unique to the Basque country; other

cultures also have accordions. Furthermore, being relatively new, it does not have a historic tradition with the Basques like many other instruments. Therefore, this Basque identity is constructed; it is represented in many different manners. Each person can create his own definition of national identity, and hence the possibilities of nationalist expression are limitless.

Kepa Junkera is a Basque musician known across Europe as a trikitixa virtuoso. When others see him playing this instrument, they identify it with the Basques, reinforcing the idea that the instrument is a unifying element. However, his music is not purely Basque. He mixes the trixitixa with jazz (CIDE 165). Therefore, this music that others identify as Basque is actually a mixture of the traditional and contemporary. The things that one perspective sees as purely Basque are seen by another as a compromise. Because of the way Basques and non-Basques identify these instruments with the Basque region, some see them as a necessary part of identity with the Basque nation.

There is also a more modern strand of Basque music. Although several different styles of contemporary Basque music exist, they are all part of a new definition of Basque nationalism. Mikel Laboa, a contemporary Basque singer, has been one of the greatest influences on the young Basque generation. Interested in the traditional music but wanting a more modern style, he mixes it with poetry and experimentalism. He does not deny that the traditional music can be one demonstration of Basque nationalism; he merely updated it. This combination of the traditional and the contemporary is Laboa's own way of expressing his loyalty to the Basque nation. In 1965, Laboa and other Basque artists formed the band Ez Dok Amairu. Their desire was to renovate the traditional music and to create a style that was politically and socially engaged. Although the band

broke up in 1972, the change they made was important (CIDE 164). They played music that was considered Basque but with political and cultural undertones. Ez Dok Amairu combined two demonstrations of Basque nationalism – music and political desires – and created an opportunity for a new expression of nationalism. In the same way, the music of the popular Basque punk band Hertzainak carries political themes, and some of their songs are on the subject of identity. Although they claim to be loyal to the Basque nation, in songs like "Rokanrol Batzokian" ("Rock and Roll in the *Batzoki*," the PNV social club), they criticize the PNV and the traditional Basqueness that is represented in images of the txistu, the anthem "Gora ta Gora," and members of the PNV (Kasmir 182-186). Like ETA, they are nationalist, because they support their own idea of the Basque nation, but they also want political change.

Perhaps new traditional styles begin in this manner: they are at first seen as new and contemporary but slowly develop into a recognized expression of nationalism. Perhaps even the instruments now known as traditional, like the trikitixa, were once seen as radical and new. If so, then one can see clearly the fluctuation in Basque nationalist expression.

Brothers Fermín and Iñigo Muguruza and Treku Armendáriz founded the band KORTATU in 1983. Their music is a mixture of ska, punk, and reggae with sociopolitical lyrics. Six years later, the Muguruza brothers, along with Mikel "Anestesia," Kaki Arkarazo, and Mikel "Bap," formed NEGU GORRIAK. This new group was influenced by rap and punk music. In 1997, Fermín recorded an album with the group DUT. Their style is predominantly reggae with a heavy hip-hop influence (CIDE 165). The development of these new styles diversifies what is considered Basque

music. The nationalist sentiment supposedly unites and unifies the Basques under one category, but as new possibilities open, that unification seems less and less likely or possible.

Basques support their traditional music for many reasons. One ideology claims that the traditional instruments, like the traditional sports, are a connection with the past. They represent the history of the Basque people and are a way of keeping alive their customs. Most Basques who continue these traditions do so because they perceive that they ensure the survival of the Basque nation. Another ideology says that the modern Basque music is an expression of nationalism, not because of the instruments or the style employed, but because of the lyrics. Supporters of this type of music do so mostly because they agree with the nationalist ideas expressed in its lyrics. A third possible group that supports one or more of these nationalist forms of music without any nationalist motivation at all; they simply enjoy the music. In that case, the music is part of culture without being any sort of nationalist representation. Basque music as a whole, then, is not necessarily nationalist, but it can be. However it is expressed, the music gives Basques an element of their culture to celebrate.

Like the traditional music, Basque literature has a long history that is still developing today. For a long time, works published in Euskera were mostly translations from other languages. Before 1879, 101 books had been published in Euskera. Only four of these were of any literary nature (CIDE 143). Even today, half of Euskera novels are translations (Goiriastuena 87-88).

Some people, especially those who hold similar feelings for Euskera, see Basque literature as essential to Basque nationalism. It gives them "a coherence of national

consciousness and national pride" (White 141). In fact, one slogan says *euskaltzale* = *abertzale*, meaning "Fond of the Basque language = Basque nationalist" (Goiriastuena 98). Since the language is a large part of their idea of nationalism, then maintaining that language is important to them. The growth and preservation of Basque literature is essential for the future of Euskera in a modern world (147). Like speaking the language, reading and writing it is a choice. Using Spanish would be much easier, but some choose to use Euskera. This choice could be to make a statement and go against the norm. It might also be because they simply prefer Euskera (145). Regardless, they are more loyal to their regional, national language and identity than to their Spanish state. Basque literature has little value outside of Spain other than being "an interesting anthropological object or oddity" (Gabilondo 112). Therefore, its continued existence demonstrates a desire within Spain, and, specifically, within the Basque country, for it to exist. Those who fuel its survival are those who see it as a necessary component of Basque nationalism.

Until the end of the 19th century, Basque literature consisted mostly of translations of other texts as well as non-fiction such as *El Imposible Vencido* (*The Impossible Vanquished*) by Larramendi, the first Euskera grammar book published (Tovar 25). However, in the 1890s, a new spirit of Basque literature emerged. New genres started opening, such as poetry and the novel. Coinciding with the birth of modern Basque nationalism, this "Basque literary renaissance" spurred the growth of Basque literature (CIDE 145). Today, Basque literature covers a wide array of genres, including crime fiction, science fiction, humor, adventure novels, travel books, contemporary history, and non-fiction, to name a few (Goiriastuena 94).

Since the 1890s, Basque literature has experienced a spectrum of variation in its style and expression. During the first half of the 20th century, poetry was the best Basque literature, as narrative forms had not been well established yet. The Spanish Civil War was devastating for Basque literature. During the war, many authors were killed or exiled, and their writing suffered harsh repression during Franco's ensuing regime. The literature during that period was highly censored; no Basque names were allowed in any of the writing. In fact, the repression of the language was so harsh that it extended to the prohibition of Euskera inscriptions on tombstones. During the 1940s and 1950s, other than a few poems, publishing in Euskera was impossible (CIDE 145-146).

"The '56 Generation" is the name given to the group of writers who attempted to modernize Basque literature by breaking away from political, religious, and folkloric roots. They wanted to revolutionize the whole category of Basque literature and make it entirely modern. In other words, their view of Basque nationalism included literature written in Euskera that differed from their ancestors' tradition. Members of this movement included Jon Mirande and Gabriel Aresti. These new forms of literature indicated a shift toward a type of literature with no set style; the unifying factor for Basque literature was the language. Since the 1960s, Basque literature has embraced new topics and genres, such as existentialism, rejection of existentialism, experimentalism, short stories, and fantasy (CIDE 146-147). Currently, the most relevant authors are those that adhere to the lyrical novel that was first popular in the 1970s, such as Laura Mintegi's 2001 *Sisifo Maite Minez* (*Sisyphus in Love*) (149).

Basque literature has developed immensely over the last few centuries. Despite changes in genre and style, Euskera remained a constant element. Therefore, one must

define Basque literature as works written and published in the Basque language. Clearly, those that support this literature as a marker of Basque identity do so for the continuance of the language, which is important because of reasons laid out in chapter six. Additionally, written works can long outlast Euskera speakers. If, at some point in the future, the language is no longer spoken, the literature will still preserve it. Therefore, in terms of continuation, reading and writing Euskera is more important than speaking it. Ideally, though, it will continue to be read and spoken for the sake of conservation.

Those Basques who appreciate literature as a marker of their identity are those who write it and those who read it; there is no other way to guarantee its continuance. As with speaking Euskera, producing or consuming Basque literature is a choice. A Basque author has a much smaller base of readers than those that write in Spanish, leading to less revenue for themselves. Readers have a much smaller selection of works to read than in Spanish. However, Basque literature perseveres because of those that are committed to it, the language, and its representation of their nation.

Aside from the fact that writers are committed to it based on their loyalty to its representation of nationalism, Basque literature has survived thanks to many other factors. For example, people are more accepting of Euskera now than in the past. Because of its status as a co-official language in the CAV, more people are exposed to it. Euskera has a much larger presence in education, media, and entertainment like music and movies. Because of this exposure, the people either know the language or want to learn it. They are then able to read Basque literature. As the number of readers increases, the demand for new literature increases. Consequentially, more material is currently being produced than ever before. During the late 1970s, around 250 books in Euskera were

published annually. By 1985, that number had doubled to around 500 and by 1990 that number had doubled again to around 1000. In 1999, over 1100 Basque books were published (Goiriastuena 84-85). In that year alone more books were published in Euskera than in the entire period between 1900 and 1939. Between 1976 and 1992, approximately 10,500 books were published in Euskera (Mees 50). As authors get older, they continue to write while a younger generation begins writing. Now, for the first time, there is a set of Basque writers routinely publishing new works. Literature also has support from the Basque government. For example, the government uses money from public funds to sponsor literary contests and awards. They also grant subsidies to the publishing industry (Goiriastuena 85-86).

There is also a non-written form of Basque literature. *Bertsolaritza*, a Basque oral literary tradition, can be described as "sung improvisation" (CIDE 139, author's translation), or a spontaneous sung poem. Like some other expressions of Basque nationalism, this tradition is relatively new compared with the Basque race. However, it retains some connections with the primitive troubadour traditions (Tovar 32).

Bertsolaritza began as entertainment at local festivals in the 1800s and early 1900s. The performers, called *bertsolariak*, had little education and composed clever or ironic verse to amuse the audience (Aulestia 228). The tradition has evolved since its inception. For example, at its beginnings, most participants were illiterate Basques from rural areas. However, through the past century, the number of people attending higher education and the Euskera literacy level have both increased. This change has increased the standards of bertsolariak. In the 1997 national competition, seven of the eight finalists were students in or graduates of a university (234-235).

The art of bertsolaritza has a few different forms, all with the same general rules. Its modern form has developed through the years. The bertsolariak improvise and sing poetry with lengthy meter or rhythms (Aulestia 233). They follow strict rules about rhyme and rhythm and must be able to make logical rhyming verses without repeating rhymes or words and with little forethought or preparation (CIDE 140). The structure was not always so rigid. At the time of the first competition, the songs had no elaborate rhythm or rhyme scheme (Aulestia 229). The specific expression of bertsolaritza has also developed different forms. One form of bertsolaritza is the *bederatzi puntukoa*, meaning "nine-pointer." This form consists of fourteen lines and nine rhymes. Another form is the *hamarreko nagusia*, or "long ten." It is made of ten-line stanzas with the odd numbered lines carrying ten syllables and the even numbered lines containing eight (233). Additionally, the topics covered by bertsolaritza have evolved through the years. The topic is constantly changing to include the sociopolitical issues facing the Basques (227). Hence, those who see bertsolaritza as a way of connecting with the past participate even though the tradition has changed since their ancestors' time.

As it has developed, bertsolaritza has become more accepted as an expression of Basque nationalism. At one time, the Basques rejected the bertsolariak because of their low social status and low income. There was a stereotype that the bertsolariak sat in the bar all night long drinking and were good for nothing. Additionally, the Basques saw bertsolari as second-class literature. Compared to written poetry, it was devalued as an art form (Aulestia 240). Since the first *txapelketa* (championship) in 1935, held in San Sebastian, bertsolari has certainly risen in status. The first champion participated because he saw the oral literature as a way to reach and unite the Basque people (228-229).

Although its unpopularity kept it from being a marker of Basque nationalism at the time, bertsolari has recently exploded in status. Now, the competitions are held in stadiums and concert halls (Douglass 7). Every four years, the national championship takes place "in a stadium filled with people" (CIDE 139, author's translation). Obviously many Basques regard it as a unique Basque tradition and a unifying characteristic for their people.

Bertsolaritza is a way of preserving the Basque language by speaking it. Unlike traditional literature, it is not going to outlast spoken Euskera. However, it will possibly be more effective in advancing the preservation of the language than the traditional literature. For someone who is not a native Euskera speaker, bertsolaritza requires less effort than reading or writing a whole book. Drawn by the entertainment of the competition, it is possible that some who do not normally speak Euskera are willing to support this form of the language. Additionally, the shift from lower to upper class performers increases its longevity. It is more socially acceptable now than it was 100 years ago, and more people are willing to be involved. Having more people involved increases the chances that bertsolaritza will survive, and with it, Euskera. Thus, there are two forms of Basque literature tied to nationalism – one written and one spoken – and they both work to preserve the language. Even those that support either or both of these elements of Basque culture for other reasons, such as entertainment, actually support the preservation of the language as a result.

In each of these three elements of Basque culture – sports, music, and literature – some qualities are uniquely Basque, such as the txalaparta and txistu, along with the bertsolaritza, while other qualities are common to many cultures, such as books and punk rock music. There are also traditional elements, like the ancient tradition of the Basque

literature and the rural activities associated with some Basque sports, and some modern elements, including the electric guitar and soccer. There is no way to objectively determine if one is better than the other, the traditional or the contemporary; rather, individuals will subjectively determine what they think best represents the Basque nation. Ultimately, through different means, they all preserve the Basque culture, in a way, which is the supreme goal. Although these variations do not provide cohesion to the Basque nation as a whole, they do give unity to smaller subgroups of Basques. As a result, this diversity benefits the Basques by giving more people the opportunity to find a nationalist expression with which they can relate. As more manifestations of Basque nationalism develop, more people will become involved with the nationalist movement, thus further ensuring the continuance of the Basque nation.

CONCLUSION

The definition of Basque nationalism, for many reasons, differs greatly through the people. The most cohesive definition for such nationalism that one might be able to articulate is that each person supports whatever it is that he or she considers Basque and rejects whatever it is that he or she considers not Basque. However, the fact that each person establishes his or her own version of loyalty to the Basque nation demonstrates the exact subjectivity of the definition.

Two additional features of Basque nationalism work together to further diversify its meaning. First of all, from its beginning, Basque nationalism has been evolving. It started as the desire to control their land and political system. When the Basques lost their fueros and autonomy, the focus of nationalism shifted to specific elements of traditional culture, such as their language and agrarianism. Even today, the Basques are still adding new music and sports to the definition of Basque loyalty. Basque nationalism is thus still developing. In many modernized aspects of Basque culture, such as in the economic sectors, there is a duality where both the contemporary and the traditional are seen as Basque nationalist by different people. Neither is right or wrong, objectively; they are merely different. The second feature of Basque nationalism is that most, if not all, Basques do not view their nationality as defined by only one of these elements, but rather as a mixture of several. It would be difficult for someone to seek the continuance of Euskera without also being concerned with literature or the dominance of ikastolak in the

education system. In the same way, most people who support the Athletic Club also demonstrate devotion to the ikurriña that they wave and the "Gora ta Gora" that they sing at the games, all of which are symbols of Basque unity. Therefore, the evolution of new aspects of Basque nationalism and the way that these new elements can be combined with any number of pre-existing nationalist expressions display the almost infinite, ever-increasing collection of expressions of Basque nationalism from which to draw.

Additionally, in many ways, Basque nationalism is a choice. Because it is usually in direct opposition to or a way of distinguishing oneself from the state, one must choose whose interest to support. One may even construct a personal identity by agreeing with certain points from both sides – for example, an immigrant lacking Basque bloodline that supports industrialization while also reading Euskera – or by creating new expressions of Basque nationalism and declaring them as such – like Sabino Arana forming words such as Euzkadi. This choice, though, is not always that simple. Many times, people make the unconscious decision to follow the same expression of nationalism as their parents or, like some modernists, to merely follow the path that most benefits them. Clearly, there are boundless expressions of Basque nationalism. However, despite their fractured condition, in their own way, each contributes a small piece of what it means to be Basque. By adding to this larger collective entity that defines itself from within as the Basque nation, they can say with pride "*Euskal Herritarrak gara*" – We are Basque nationalists.

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