Ethnicity and Violence:

The Case of Radical Basque Nationalism

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to study the role of ethnicity in ETA's 35 year campaign of political violence. I argue that both Francoism and a long tradition of Basque radical nationalism are important in understanding ETA's emergence. In this tradition Spain and the Spaniards (regardless of their political regime) are blamed for the continuous decline of the Basque nation. In order for the Basque nation to return to its glorious Golden Age, it is argued, the Basques need to expel the Spaniards using whatever means are necessary.

I maintain that Basque radical nationalism precedes ETA by at least 60 years. It was the founder of Basque nationalism, Sabino Arana, who looked nostalgically at the Basque past and first proposed a racially pure Basque nation with his motto 'Euzkadi is the land of the Basques'. He also drew on a previous tradition of myths, memories and symbols which depicted Basques as a chosen and noble people who spoke a divine language. All these myths, which gave the Basques a distinct sense of identity, were mobilised by Arana in order to construct a radical project for the secession of the Basque Country. The nationalist discourse they created was based on a Basque Golden Age which was followed by a long period of decline caused by Spaniards. Finally, a renewal of the nation would come when Basques achieved their political independence.

This radical discourse was in a minority until 1968 when ETA committed its first killing. However, Francoist repression 'proved' to all Basques that Arana was right: the Basques were oppressed by the Spaniards and in order to be free they needed to get rid of the Spaniards, by violent means if necessary. Following the teachings of Sabino Arana, members of ETA started a campaign to liberate the glorious Basque nation from the decadent Spanish nation. By promoting a Manichean dichotomy between Basques and Spaniards, ETA managed to use violence as an effective ethnic boundary. Nowadays, radical Basque nationalism has an estimated support of 13% of the Basque electorate. There is nothing to suggest that this is going to change radically in the short-term.

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GLOSSARY

Acción Nacionalista Vasca (ANV) (Basque Nationalist Action)	Radical nationalist political party born in 1930 that combined nationalism with secular and socialist ideas. In 1978, it became one of the founding organizations of Herri Batasuna.
Aberri	Radical nationalist political party that split from the PNV in 1921. Its main leaders were Eli Gallastegi and Manu de la Sota.
Aberri Eguna	Day of the Basque fatherland, which coincides with Easter Sunday.
Abertzale	Patriot. The term is also used to describe Basque radical nationalist organizations.
Alfabetatzerako Euskal Koordinakudea (AEK) (Coordinator of Basque Literacy Campaigns)	Non-institutional organisation dedicated to the teaching of Euskara to adults since the 1960s.
Alianza Popular (AP) (Popular Alliance)	Right-wing party founded in 1976 by moderate Francoists. In 1989 José María Aznar became the new leader of the party and renamed it to Partido Popular (PP).
Alternativa KAS	Five-point programme elaborated by ETA during the democratic transition as a basis to negotiate an end to violence between ETA and the Spanish government.
Askapena (Liberation)	Non-Governmental Organisation born in 1987 which works in the field of international cooperation and solidarity. It has close links with Central America and its ideology is *abertzale* and anticapitalist.
Batasuna (Unity)	Radical nationalist party which inherited the structure and support from Euskal Herritarrok and, previously, Herri Batasuna. It was banned by the Spanish Supreme Court in

2003.

Batua	A standardized and unified Basque language currently taught in schools.
Batzokia	Basque Nationalist Party's social centres. The batzoki usually hosts a bar or meeting place for members and sympathisers of the party. The first of these, the Euzkaldun Batzokija, was opened in 1894 in Bilbao.
Cipayo	Pejorative for the one who cooperates with a foreign ruler. It is mainly used against the Basque Autonomous Police (Ertzaintza).
Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) (Workers' Commissions)	Trade union created in the 1960s which had a crucial role in the democratic opposition against the Franco regime. Its main rival was the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT).
Comunidad Autónoma Vasca (CAV) (Basque Autonomous Community)	One of seventeen autonomous communities created by the 1978 Constitution which covers the provinces of Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and Araba.
Consejo General Vasco (CNV) (Basque General Council)	Pre-autonomy government created by the Spanish Ministry of the Interior in 1977. Lasted until 1980, when the first Basque autonomous elections were held. Its first president was Ramón Rubial (PSOE) and the second and last Carlos Garaikoetxea (PNV).
Egizan	Organisation that has worked for the emancipation of the Basque women since 1988. As a member of KAS group it is said to have close links with ETA.
Ekin (To do)	Discussion group created in 1952 that became the embryo of ETA. Ekin is also the name KAS adopted in the late 1990s.
Elkarri (Among all of us)	Basque peace organisation born in 1992. Most of its members had been involved in the 1980s ecologist and

abertzale protests against the highway of Leitzaran.

Ertzaintza	Basque police force of the Basque Autonomous Community revived in 1982. Basque police officers (Ertzainas) had already existed during the Second Republic (1930-1936).
Españolista	A person who is in favor of centralism; derogatory term for Basques who do not support Basque nationalism or are not nationalist enough.
Etarra	Member of ETA.
Euskadi (Basque Country)	Also the name used for the Autonomous Basque Community which comprises the provinces of Araba, Bizkaia, and Gipuzkoa.
Euskadi Buru Batzar (EBB)	National Executive Committee of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) made up of representatives of the seven Basque Provinces.
Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) (Basque Homeland and Freedom)	Separatist armed group founded in 1959 which seeks an independent socialist state for the Basque homeland.
Euskara	The Basque language, also known as Euskera.
Euskadiko Ezkerra (EE) (Basque Left)	Coalition of parties which participated in the first Spanish elections in 1977 and dissolved in 1993 when they joined the PSOE. The main element of the coalition was Euskal Iraultzarako Alderdia (EIA), a party which had a prominent role in the disbanding of ETApm in 1982.
Euskaldún	Basque-speaker.
Euskal Herria (Basque Provinces)	A cultural entity comprising all the Basque people. Although Euskal Herria has never existed historically it is often used as a name for all Basque Provinces.

Euskal Herritarrok (Basque Citizens)	Radical nationalist party created in 1998 and successor to Herri Batasuna (HB), which had disappeared the previous year.
Eusko Alkartasuna (EA) (Basque Solidarity)	Basque nationalist party of social-democrat tendencies created after a split with the PNV in 1986. Its leader at the time was Carlos Garaikoetxea.
Eusko Gudariak (Basque Soldiers)	Hymn of the Basque army during the Spanish Civil War, currently adopted by ETA's sympathisers.
Eusko Ikasle Alkartasuna (EIA)	Student group in which several of the ETA founding fathers participated. It was dismantled by the Francoist police in 1950.
Eusko Jaurlaritza	Government of the Basque Autonomous Community (a.k.a, Euskadi or Pais Vasco).
Eusko Langileen Alkartasuna - Solidaridad de Obreros Vascos (ELA-STV) (Solidarity of Basque Workers)	Basque nationalist trade union created by the PNV in 1911. Since the 1980s it has been the dominant trade union in the Basque Country.
Euzkadi	Neologism invented by Sabino Arana in 1896 to designate the seven Basque Provinces (also known as Euskal Herria).
Fuerismo (foralism)	Movement in defence of the *fueros*, local charters and laws of medieval origin. The first written reference to a provincial *fuero* is that of Araba in 1332.
Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberacion (GAL) (Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups)	Secret paramilitary group funded by the Spanish state between 1983 and 1987 to carry out the 'dirty war' against ETA, which claimed a total of 27 deaths.
Gesto por la Paz	Pioneer Basque peace organisation. Born in the 1987, its

(Gesture for Peace)	main demand was the disbandment of ETA.
Gora Ta Gora	Basque official hymn.
Grupos Y	Youth groups made up of members of Jarrai which carried out street violence during the 1990s.
gudari (Basque soldier)	Name used for the soldiers which fought for the Basque government during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). ETA members also refer to themselves as gudaris.
Herri Batasuna (HB) (Popular Unity)	Leftist nationalist coalition of parties founded in 1978 and political arm of ETA. HB changed its name to Euskal Herritarrok (those from Euskal Herria) in 1998 and to Batasuna in 2001.
Hegoalde (Southern Euskal Herria)	The four Basque Provinces in Spanish territory (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Araba and Navarre).
Herriko Taberna	Herri Batasuna's social centres, which usually host a bar or meeting place for members and sympathisers of the party.
Ikasle Abertzaleak (Patriotic Students)	Student Union mainly active in the Basque Autonomous Community since 1988 and linked to radical Basque nationalism.
Ikastola	School where all education is given in Euskara by *andereños* (school mistresses). Originally this was done on the margins of the Spanish education system but this has changed since the 1980s.
Ikurriña	Basque flag designed by the Arana brothers (Luis and Sabino) in 1894 and modelled on the Union Jack.
Iparralde (Northern Euskal Herria)	Name which applies to three Basque Provinces in southern France: Lapurdi, Zuberoa and Basse Navarre. Together with the territories south of the Pyrenees, also known as Hegoalde, Euskal Herria or Basque Country is complete.
Iparretarrak (IK)	Basque armed group founded in 1972 and based in

(Those from the North)	Iparralde. It was the equivalent to ETA on French soil.
Izquierda Abertzale (Nationalist Left)	Name that radical nationalists call themselves. It started to be used after ETA's Fifth Assembly in 1966-67.
Jagi-Jagi	Journal created by Aberri in 1932 and used to launch attacks on the PNV. Its ideology was separatist, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist.
Jarrai (To continue)	Radical youth organisation linked to ETA. Founded in 1979, it was made illegal in 1999. Afterwards, Jarrai and the French organization Gazteriak founded Haika, which was also made illegal in 2001. Its successor was Segi.
Jaingoikoa Eta Lege-Zarra (JEL) (God and Fueros)	The PNV's motto, created by Sabino Arana. The members of the PNV are known as jelkides or sympathizers of the JEL motto.
Kale borroka (Street Violence)	Small acts of violence perpetrated since the early 1990s by youth organisations with connections to ETA.
Koordinadora Abertzale Sozialista (KAS) (Socialist Patriotic Coordinator)	Political and coordination organ of ETA. KAS elaborated the 'KAS alternative' in 1976, a five-point program that would form the basis of hypothetical political negotiations between ETA and the Spanish government.
Langile Abertzaleen Batzordeak (LAB) (Patriotic Workers Committee)	Trade Union founded in 1975 with established links with KAS and the wider network of nationalist organisations.
lehendakari	President of the Basque Government. The office of the president is known as Lehendekaritza.
Mendigoixales (Mountaineers)	Association of Basque nationalist mountaineers; very active during the 1920s and 1930s.
Movimiento de	Network of organizations founded in the later 1970s which

Liberación Nacional Vasco (MLNV) (Basque Movement of National Liberation)	has links to ETA and actively pursue the independence of Euskal Herria. The main members of the MLNV were KAS, Herri Batasuna, AEK, LAB, ANV, Egin, etc.
Pacto of Ajuria Enea	Pact signed on 12 January 1988 by all Basque political parties with electoral representation (with the only exception of Herri Batasuna) rejecting terrorism as a 'means to determining' the political future of the Basque region.
Pact of Estella/Lizarra	Pact signed by all Basque nationalist parties (PNV, EA and EH) and Izquierda Unida on 12 September 1998 in the Navarrese town of Estella (Lizarra in Basque), in which they agreed to intensify, by peaceful means, the nation-building process.
Partido Nacionalista Vasco - Eusko Alderdi Jeltzalea (PNV-EAJ) (Basque Nationalist Party)	Basque party founded by Sabino Arana in 1895. The PNV is the dominant nationalist party in the Basque Country and has been in power since 1980. Its current leader is Josu Jon Imaz.
Partido Socialista de Euzkadi (PSE) (Basque Socialist Party)	Basque branch of the socialist party, PSOE.
Pueblo Trabajador Vasco (PTV) (Basque Working People)	Term adopted by ETA in its Fifth Assembly (1966-67) to refer to the Basque nation in socialist terms.
Pyréenées-Atlantiques	French administrative Department that includes the three Basque Provinces of Zuberoa, Lapurdi, and Behe Nafarroa.
Senideak (Family members)	Organisation of prisoners' families linked to radical nationalism. Founded in 1991, it aims to improve the living conditions of ETA prisoners and bring them closer to the

Basque Provinces.

Statute of Gernika	Statute of Autonomy for the Basque Country signed in October 1979.
txakurra	Literally means 'dog'; pejorative for police forces.
Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD) (Union of the Democratic Centre)	Electoral coalition of parties which governed Spain between 1977 and 1982 and which had a crucial role in the political transition to democracy. Its leader was Adolfo Suárez.
Udalbiltza Kursaal	Assembly of Basque municipalities created in 1999 after ETA declared a cease-fire. It has mostly remained inactive.
Zutabe (Column)	ETA's internal periodical, published from the 1980s.
Zutik (Standing up)	ETA's internal periodical, published from the 1960s.
Zuzen (Direct)	ETA's internal periodical, published from the early 1980s.

The Basque Provinces
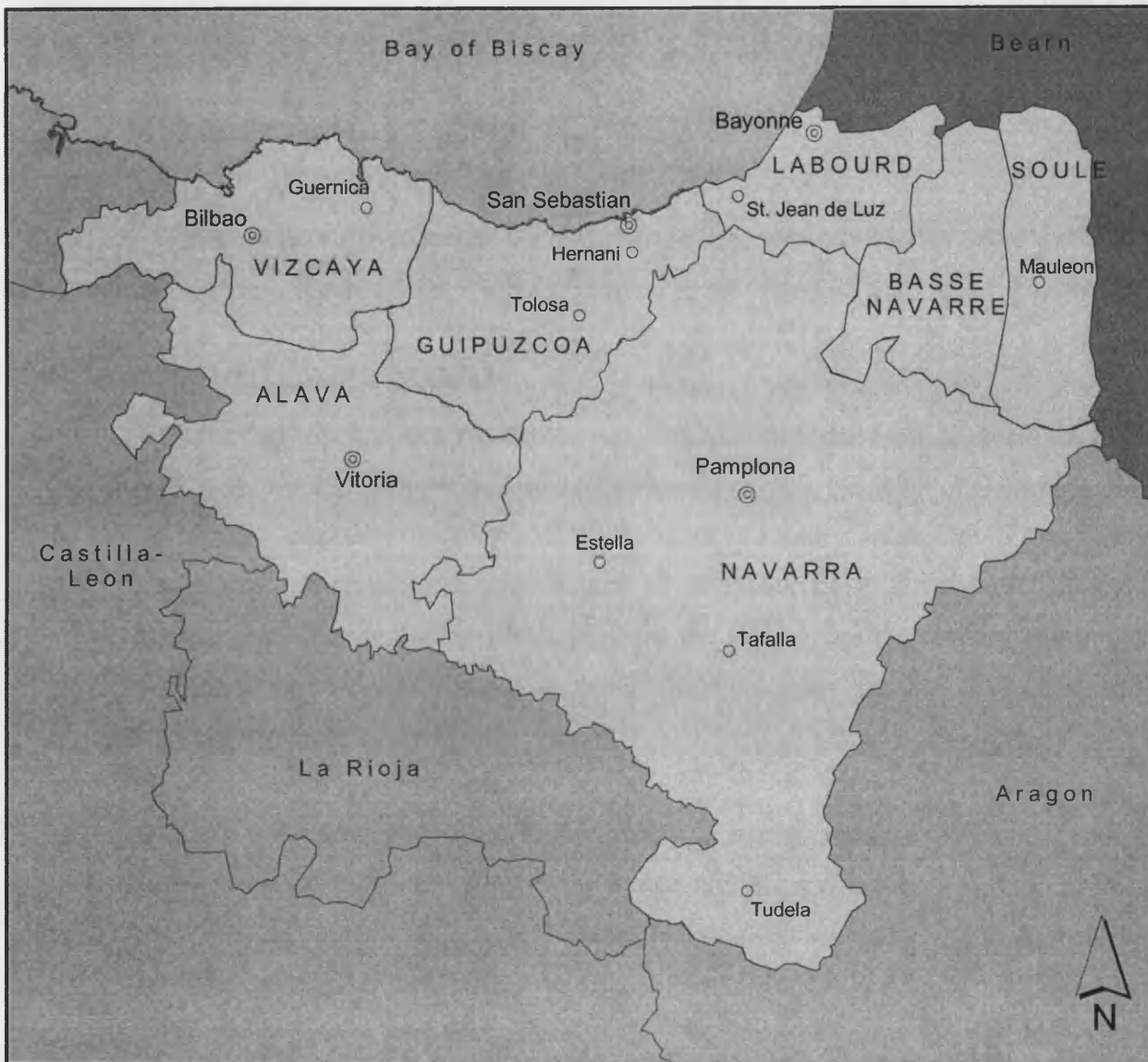
There are seven Basque Provinces: Vizcaya (Bizkaia in Basque), Álava (Araba), Guipúzcoa (Gipuzkoa), Navarra (Nafarroa), Labourd (Lapurdi), Basse-Navarre (Nafarroa Behera) and Soule (Zuberoa). The first four are in Spain and are divided between the Basque Autonomous Community (Euskadi) and the Foral Community of Navarre. The three French Basque provinces form the Pays Basque comprising half of the 'département' of the Pyrénées Atlantic. In Basque, the seven Basque Provinces can be called by the traditional nationalist term Euzkadi (with a z) or the cultural term Euskal Herria, meaning 'country of Basque speakers'.

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INTRODUCTION

It is only the armed prophet, Machiavelli tells us, who can hope to found a new polity.

Elie Kedourie[1]

Of the many ongoing nationalist conflicts in the world, very few have managed to attract as much scholarly attraction as the Basque one. The interest is due to the violent nature of the conflict and also to its timeless and intractable nature. After the death of General Franco in 1975, Spain gradually became a fully democratic country made up of 'regions and nationalities' which enjoy a large degree of independence in a state of 'autonomous communities'. Despite the significant progress, the Basque conflict remains as a powerful reminder of the excesses of Francoism and of the troublesome nature of the Spanish nation-building process.

But, what is the Basque problem? Unfortunately, as is often the case with violent conflicts, there is no overall agreement on what the Basque conflict is (Corcuera 1984). Some Basque nationalists argue that it is a conflict between Basques and Spaniards. Others argue that it is a problem among Basques themselves (Burgo 1994). But could it be both? Should we be talking about Basque problems (Roca 2002)? Not knowing what the so-called 'Basque problem' consists of is, undoubtedly, an aspect of that very same problem. If a problem and grievances are identified, no matter how serious they are, the problem can be fixed if the political will and the necessary conditions are present. In the Basque case, not knowing what the problem is becomes a problem in itself.

An additional problem is that of trying to understand the role of political violence. Does it reflect a real grievance, or is it imagined? Why does ETA continue to kill when Basques enjoy one of the most advanced statutes of autonomy in Europe? Is violence a method that is taking radical nationalists closer to their objectives or has it become a counterproductive strategy? In other words, can we fully comprehend ETA's violence?

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[1] Kedourie (1971: 110).

Purpose of the Thesis

An important part of any doctoral research is to identify a gap in the literature. But even more essential than that is the need to take the reader by the hand throughout the whole journey. The solution is put forward by a renowned Cornell scholar: 'tell them what you are going to tell them, then tell them, and then tell them what you just told them' (Van Evera 1997: 123). Following this advice, this PhD thesis aims to 'tell' three points and aims to make a contribution to the field of nationalism and Basque studies.

First of all, the thesis (re)defines the Basque problem as an ethnonationalist conflict. Two nationalist ideologies, the Basque and the Spanish, fight over the sovereignty of a given territory. Although it is fairly easy to identify the issue of contention and which ideologies are battling, it is much more difficult to point to the actors staging this confrontation. In the Basque conflict, one should distinguish at least two levels of conflict. The first is military and involves the Spanish state and ETA, who both want to hold exclusive control over the Basque territory. The state officially holds the monopoly of violence over the four Basque Provinces on Spanish territory. On the other hand, ETA challenges that authority on the monopoly of violence on a regular basis. The second level of conflict involves Basque people. Basque society is fragmented into roughly two halves: a Basque nationalist half which would like to see increasing autonomy, or even independence, and a Basque non-nationalist half which may be happy with more autonomy but wants to remain a part of Spain. One should be cautious in establishing relationships between being a Basque nationalist and supporting ETA and, at the same time, not being Basque nationalist and supporting the state. Political allegiances are established in a much more complex way. Having said that, violence acts as an ethnic marker and there is no doubt that Basque society is, in itself, divided between those who see ETA as an indicator of a political problem or the problem itself.

Secondly, the thesis argues that ETA's violence cannot be understood without reference to radical Basque nationalism. Most people need a reason - even more, a good reason - if they are going to kill another human being. Hannah Arendt has illustrated this point when saying that violence, like all means, 'stands in need of guidance and justification through the end it pursues' (Arendt 1970: 51). In the Basque case, the justification for violence is provided by

radical Basque nationalism's end goal; a 'Basque nation reunified, socialist and Basque-speaking'. Its origins are to be found in moderate Basque nationalism and, more specifically, within the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV). When looking at the Basque problem, many scholars have sought to explain it by looking solely at ETA. A great number of studies are available on these two topics but they are insufficient if we want to understand the long-term campaign of political violence since, as David E. Apter has shown, 'people do not commit political violence without discourse' (Apter 1997: 2). The case-study of this thesis is radical Basque nationalism, defined as *a separatist movement with particular myths and symbols that advocates the independence of the Basque nation through violent means.*

Thirdly, this thesis identifies the central myth of radical Basque nationalist discourse, the Golden Age, and concludes that its discourse is particularly nostalgic. The essence of Basque radical nationalist discourse is what scholars of nationalism have called the 'triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric' (Levinger & Franklin 2001). Following this model, Basque radical nationalist discourse first presents an idealised past or Golden Age where Basques were politically independent and lived harmoniously. Secondly, Basque radical nationalists define a myth of decline, starting in the Carlist Wars in the 19th century and continuing to the present day. This myth of decline involves the loss of the qualities that made the Basques a separate people. Thirdly, after the two aforementioned myths, comes the myth of regeneration or salvation. According to nationalists, the nation can only be free and pure when it returns to the original Golden Age. But how will this be done? Through all available means, violence included. And it is not difficult to find violence in Basque history. As Cameron Watson (1996) has pointed out, a culture of violence is present in Basque ethnicity, which heavily influences ETA. And it is precisely this need of ETA to relate to the Basque past that gives the organisation its peculiarly nostalgic character. Justifications for ETA's violence are often found in the past rather than in the present. If ETA was fighting for contemporary problems how could it justify its non-participation in the very political process that can solve those self-same problems? On the contrary, ETA presents violence as a historical need, a necessary redeeming act which has been forced upon the Basque people. The quasi-millenarian struggle against Spain is maintained by ETA's creation, invention and use of nationalist history.

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Doctoral theses should be clear in what they are trying to achieve but also in what they are not. The present work is a political and sociological history of radical Basque nationalism. This thesis takes a socio-historical approach and incorporates tools of analysis from the social sciences, mainly from the field of nationalism. Covering a century of history, the thesis aims to identify the main ideological components of radical nationalist tradition while framing it in the political history of Spain. The thesis does not pretend to be a detailed account of how ETA was born and evolved during Francoism and Democracy: there are numerous studies that analyse ETA's organisation and development since 1959. Secondly, it is not a straightforward work of political sociology solely based on analysis and deconstruction techniques. Analyses of nationalism of the latter kind often study a particular ideology in the absence of a historical framework. Thirdly, the thesis does not cover radical Basque nationalism in all the Basque Provinces. Basque nationalism originated in Biscay at the end of the 19th century and unevenly diffused to the rest of the Basque-speaking provinces during the 20th century. The presence of Basque nationalism on French soil is barely significant. Hence, the thesis mainly focuses on the Basque Provinces currently under Spanish sovereignty; the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre. Fourthly, this thesis does not aim to provide arguments for either of the two nationalisms – the Spanish and the Basque - involved in the conflict.

Approach, Methodology and Sources

This thesis will take a modernist stance towards the birth of modern nationalism but will use many of the tools of ethno-symbolism.[2] Hence, I agree with the modernist school of nationalism that argues that nationalism is a modern phenomenon but, following the ethno-symbolic school, I will argue that pre-modern elements are essential if we are to understand modern nations. Hence, this thesis uses Anthony D. Smith's definition of nationalism as

> An ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'.[3]

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[2] The field of nationalism is today divided among four different schools: primordialists, perennialists, modernists and ethno-symbolists. For more information on these schools, see Smith (1998) and Özkirimli (2000).
[3] Smith (2001: 9).

The definition of 'the nation' is a much more complex issue. The field of nationalism is vast in terms of literature but there is no agreed definition of the nation. As pointed out by Eric Hobsbawm, we can find at least two ways of defining the nation; one based on objective characteristics and another on subjective elements (Hobsbawm 1990: 5-7). Some scholars like Walker Connor have described the nation as a belief in common ancestry. Others, like Benedict Anderson, argue that the nation is an imagined political community while others believe we can find an objective set of characteristics that constitute the nation: language, history, laws, tradition, myths, etc. Most definitions of the nation, however, now incorporate both subjective and objective elements. This thesis will use Anthony D. Smith's definition of the nation as

> a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members.[4]

One of the greatest contributions of ethno-symbolism is the emphasis on the role of myths and symbols in understanding why the nationalist message resonates in the masses. Why is it, one could say, paraphrasing Gellner, that nationalist leaders manage to awake the Sleeping Beauty, or nation, with a gentle kiss? It is not because they 'invent' nations from scratch but because the message they propagate is welcomed by the masses. It is usually when there is a pre-existing ethnic bond that calls to unite the nation can resonate. According to ethno-symbolic authors such as Anthony D. Smith, John Hutchinson and John Armstrong, nations and nationalism resonate in the people because they are based on ethnicity. Modern nationalism often replaces other forms of communal identities, taking many of its characteristics and, more importantly, some of its myths. Thus, the answer needs to be found in the continuity of nations and the pre-modern elements, which help us understand the character of modern nationalisms. The ethno-symbolic approach is useful not only in identifying the 'roots' of nationalism but in understanding why each nationalism is particular and 'authentic' in its own way. Nationalisms are based on a set of myths, cultural codes, historical narratives and the impact of these elements are often felt in fully modern ideologies such as nationalism.

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[4] Smith (2001: 13).

Approach and methodology often go hand in hand. The thesis aims to prove the appropriateness of ethno-symbolism to explain Basque political violence. Using a historical, explanatory and evaluative approach, this work will identify the causes of Basque violence and will relate it to ethnicity. Since the thesis covers over a hundred years of radical nationalism, there will be a great deal of historical description but also a sociological evaluation of the myths and symbols that guide radical Basque nationalists. The beliefs and culture of radical Basque nationalism will be analysed in detail in order to identify the internal logic of their discourse, particularly, in their relation to violence. The complexity of the topic requires an interdisciplinary approach, which will mainly draw on sociology, political science and history.

In terms of sources, this research has been made possible by the great number of primary sources collected at the *Archivo de los Benedictinos de Lazkao*, which holds a great number of documents, pamphlets and posters of the Basques' many nationalist forces during Francoism and democracy. This archive was particularly useful when researching ETA and other radical nationalist organisations such as Herri Batasuna, Jarrai or LAB. The archive has been painstakingly compiled by Father Aguirre who, at his own risk, started collecting this material during Francoism. A catalogue which will allow researchers to work much more comfortably in the future is currently being compiled. In Spain, the following institutions were also visited: the PNV's *Archivo del Nacionalismo* in Artea (Biscay), the Library of the Basque University (UPV) in Leioa (Biscay), the newspaper library at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and the *Biblioteca Nacional* in Madrid. In the United States, use was made of the excellent library of the Centre for Basque Studies of the University of Nevada, Reno. In Britain numerous visits were made to the LSE Library (BLPES), the Public Record Office (PRO) and the joy of any researcher: the British Library.

Concepts and Terms

In the absence of politically neutral terminologies the present section aims to clarify four issues of terminology. The first one refers to the use of Spanish parties and institutions; the second to who the Basques are; the third to the usage of Spanish or Basque names and language; and the fourth is about how better to describe ETA's violence.

First of all, the names of parties and institutions are taken in their original language. For example, the following acronyms are used: PNV for the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco*, or Basque Nationalist Party, HB for *Herri Batasuna*, or Popular Unity, and ANV for *Acción Nacionalista Vasca*, or Basque Nationalist Action.

Secondly, we must clarify what it is we mean when talking about the 'Basques'. This thesis takes the view that Basques live in seven provinces which can be described by the cultural term Euskal Herria (or land of the Basques). However, there is no term to describe the political unity of these seven provinces. Due to the territorial fragmentation of the land of the Basques each of these has a different way of describing the extent of the Basque nation. Hence, this thesis uses the term 'Basque nation' as one of an imagined community and not as a way of describing political reality. One might say that the Basque nation undeniably exists but it is the geographical extent that is difficult to establish. Most people would include the Basque Autonomous Community in their definition of the Basque nation, many others would also include the Foral Community of Navarre in that definition, and, finally, a few more would also include the French Pays Basque. This discrepancy is caused by the 'uneven development' of Basque nationalism at the time it was born. Basque nationalism was first born in Biscay and later spread to Gipuzkoa, Araba and Navarre. It is only recently that Basque nationalism has had an electoral presence in the French Basque Country (where it is still unimportant).[5]

Thirdly, there is the issue of the names of cities and provinces. In the Basque lands three languages are spoken: Basque, Spanish and French. Hence, most names can be found in two different languages and sometimes even three. Choosing one of the languages and not another is understood as taking a political stance. In this case, I have chosen the English names where possible. Hence, I talk about Biscay, Navarre, the Basque Country, and so on. Where this has not been possible, I have chosen the Basque name (Araba, Gipuzkoa, Gernika, etc.) and in a few cases I have chosen the more familiar or commonly used terms

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[5] In fact, the development of Basque nationalism fits the three-phase analysis made by Miroslav Hroch. According to Hroch a nation is usually formed in three stages: phase A consisted of cultural revival, phase B consisted of political revival among the political elites and phase C consisted of national mass politics. That pattern was followed in the Basque Country where a cultural revival happened during the 19th century (phase A), later developed in the political aspect by Sabino Arana (phase B) and, finally, taken by an important section of the population in the 20th century (phase C), see Hroch (2000: 23).

in Spanish or French. For example, I have preferred to talk about Bilbao (rather than Bilbo), San Sebastián (instead of Donostia) and Pamplona (rather than Iruñea). Although this might be interpreted as lack of consistency it shows yet another aspect of the complexity of the Basque Country where there is not even agreement over the names of places. Of particular interest is the difficulty of finding a name for the Basque nation. Here I use the term 'Basque lands' or 'Basque Provinces' to refer to the territories of the Basque nation, which covers the geographical extent of Euskal Herria (a cultural term that can be roughly translated as 'Country of the Basque Speakers'). Basque nationalists, on the other hand, would prefer to name the seven provinces with the term Euzkadi, a neologism invented by Sabino Arana. When talking about the Basque Country (or Euskadi, with an 's'), I refer only to the three provinces of Araba, Biscay and Gipuzkoa, and not to the Foral Community of Navarre.

Fourthly, the reader may have noted already that the word 'terrorism' has not been used to describe ETA's violence. There are good reasons for this. Firstly, terrorism is not the best term to describe ETA's violence. When researching violence, one needs to distinguish between random or criminal violence and political violence, not to mention power, strength, force and authority (Arendt 1970: 43). Here the definition of Julio Aróstegui is followed; he describes political violence as 'all actions perpetrated by an individual or collective actors, which are not predicted by rules and aim to control the functioning of any political system or precipitate decisions within that system' (Aróstegui 1994: 44). This definition may include groups whose purpose is to overthrow tyrannical regimes, achieve independence or realise their own project of justice. During Francoism, ETA's violence was distinguished by its instrumental and symbolic character. As such, this follows Michel Wieviorka when he argues that the word terrorism 'does not apply to the Basque experience, at least until the mid-1970s' (Wieviorka 1997: 318). After that date, ETA increasingly used car-bombs and more indiscriminate techniques (Clark 1984: 132). Secondly, as it stands, 'terrorism' is a politically loaded term, often used to describe an unjustifiable use of violence. Using it has clear advantages, the most obvious being that by adopting the term one is clearly positioned against the perpetrator and in defence of the victim, but it may also bring us further away from understanding violence because 'terrorism' is more often defined as a 'problem' rather than a 'phenomenon' (Douglass & Zulaika 1990: 242, Ibarra 1989: 10). Not using 'terrorism' allows the researcher to be more

academically detached and closer to understanding it. When authors describe a group's activity as terrorist they are making a moral judgement and, more often than not, their accounts end up putting forward proposals on how to get rid of it.[6] Having said that, it is impossible to avoid the term 'terrorism' as it is in the public debate about ETA. The reader may find the term unsatisfactory but it will only be used when paraphrasing the discourse of others.

Structure of the Thesis

These considerations largely account for the structure of the thesis. **Chapter one** is largely theoretical. It reviews the scholarly contributions to the understanding of the Basque problem and takes particular interest in political violence and radical Basque nationalism. The main aim is to understand why radical nationalists are prepared to risk their welfare and, in extreme cases, their own lives for the Basque nation. In **chapter two**, the concept of the Golden Age is introduced along with the story of how the Basque one emerged since the 16th century. The Golden Age is a myth that can be found in practically all nationalisms but which in the Basque case takes the form of an ideal past in which the Basques were an independent nation free from oppression. As an idea, it became central to Basque nationalism as a whole but even more so to radical Basque nationalism. The myth of the Golden Age only resonates if history is 'remembered' by the population. **Chapter three** looks at how Sabino Arana appropriated and integrated many of the Basque myths (the Golden Age included) in his nationalism. Arana created Basque nationalism from scratch and his followers worshipped him as a Master. Given his dominant position it was he who oversaw the political battles within the party he had created, the PNV, and solved any disputes. As **chapter four** states, after his death, the PNV split into two branches and that is how radical Basque nationalism was born. At this time, the radical trend was effectively known as 'the radicals' and openly advocated the secession of the Basque Country from Spain. This trend evolved in different forms and reunited with the PNV in 1930. After the

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[6] Politics can be seen as an effort to solve conflicts of all kinds through an institutional power structure. The defence of that power structure, also known as 'order', becomes a priority of most regimes as much as solving these problems. The main challenge for the maintenance of order is the presence of violence which may take the form of a separatist movement, an attempt to overthrow a tyranical regime, a revolution, and so forth. Those who participate in the power structure are often quick to defend the validity of the system. A clear example of this defence in a democratic state is Connor Cruise O'Brien (1978) *Herod: Reflections on Political Violence*, particularly the chapters titled 'Liberty and Terror' and 'Political Violence'.

Spanish Civil War (1936-39) the PNV entered a period of decline due to Francoist repression. As **chapter five** shows, in the political void of Francoism a new generation of nationalists created ETA. The first ETA of those years was heavily influenced by Basque nationalist writers and the messianic writings of Arana. In a later stage, Aranist nationalism was combined with socialism. In both cases, the myth of the Golden Age was retained as a powerful mobilising factor. **Chapter six** devotes a considerable amount of space to the Spanish transition to democracy and how it was viewed from the Basque lands. It also analyses the expansion process of ETA into the network of organisations that today form the Basque Movement of National Liberation (*Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional Vasco* - MLNV). **Chapter seven** covers Basque radical nationalism during the 1992-2003 period. It is during this period that we can observe a rebirth of Basque civil society. Finally, the **conclusion** summarises the main findings of the thesis.

Chapter One

WHY DO PEOPLE SACRIFICE FOR THE BASQUE NATION?

Blood and time are needed to make a nation

Peixoto, ETA leader[7]

Generations of intellectuals are periodically attracted to the Basque lands and the people who inhabit them. From Wilhelm Von Humboldt and Karl Marx to Ernest Hemingway and Orson Welles, they have all been intrigued by the extraordinary resilience of Basque identity. Whether this is due to the ancient culture, the mysterious Basque language or the out-of-the-ordinary sports and rich folklore, there can be no doubt that the Basques are a fascinating people to study. However, the element that mostly attracts scholars and intellectuals is the Basque conflict and the most extreme manifestation of it, namely political violence.[8] And that violence is best understood as both the expression of an on-going political conflict and as indicator of the intractability of such a conflict.[9] But why is it that the general public feels fascinated by violence?

Providing a coherent explanation of why Western societies are captivated by the spectacle of violence is a daunting task that would exceed the length of this study. However, it is worth pointing out that industrialised societies feel an attraction for violence precisely when it has been removed from their daily lives. As Michel Foucault has proven elsewhere, the state's dependency on violence has been gradually abandoned in favour of mechanisms of surveillance and control, which are highly effective without having to resort to violence.[10] Similarly, Western societies have almost eradicated the possibility of going to war among

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[7] José Manuel Pagoaga (*Peixoto*) cited in Unzueta (1988: 74).

[8] In the absence of a commonly accepted definition, I follow Ted R. Gurr's conception of political violence 'as any use of physical force to maintain or change a political-legal order' (Gurr 1976: 81). In Gurr's definition, it is the state and groups that oppose it that use 'political violence'. His characterization of political violence is clearly distinguishable from other terms such as force, authority, civil violence, collective violence, etc. For further information on terminology see Arendt (1970) and Muro (2002).

[9] Here I follow Lewis A. Coser's definition of social conflict as 'a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals' (Coser 1956: 8).

[10] A symbol of that system of surveillance and social control, as described in *Discipline and Punish*, is the Panopticon. This architectural apparatus assures automatic surveillance because inmates do not know whether the prison tower is empty or not, and when exactly they are being looked at. See Foucault (1991: 201).

themselves.[11] This is not to say that violence has been completely wiped out from world affairs. Civil wars, intra-state violence and international terrorism, that which has been called 'new wars', may even be on the rise.[12] Paradoxically, our interest in and fascination with violence has not been matched with our knowledge of the causes of it (let alone the mechanisms that could prevent it).

This chapter reviews some of the literature that might help us to understand Basque violence. Many of these contributions belong to the area of Basque studies, but on occasions these may overlap with other fields such as the study of violence or nationalism. The selection has been made on the basis that, although partial, all these contributions are helpful to understand why people may make sacrifices for the Basque nation. The comprehension of a multifaceted phenomenon such as violence is no different to the way we learn about other social processes. Each of the academic disciplines - anthropology, sociology, political science, psychology - emphasise a different aspect of the same phenomenon, helping to draw a more accurate picture. An example of what is meant here is provided by the Indian fable of the blind men and the elephant, as told by the American poet John Godfrey Saxe:

It was six men from Industan,
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the elephant
(though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind...

When feeling the elephant each of the blind men perceived different things. When touching the tail the blind man thought it was a rope, when touching the knee one thought it was a tree, when touching the ear one thought it was a fan, and so on. And the fable concludes:

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[11] In the mid-1990s the New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman proposed his now-famous 'Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention', arguing that no two countries with a McDonald's had ever gone to war with each other. Friedman took his cue from an idea that dates back at least 160 years to the writings of Immanuel Kant, and which has been widely researched since the end of the Cold War; namely that democratic states, and especially capitalist democratic states, do not fight each other. For more information see Friedman's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (1999).

[12] Mary Kaldor has argued that the traditional 'Clausewitzean wars' are increasingly being replaced by 'new wars'. These 'new wars' involve involve 'a blurring of the distinctions between war (usually defined as violence between states or organized political groups for political motives), organized crime (violence undertaken by privately organized groups for private purposes, usually financial gain) and large-scale violations of human rights (violence undertaken by states or politically organized groups against individuals)' (Kaldor 1999: 2). For case studies of 'new wars' see Kaldor & Vashee (1997) and Kaldor & Muro (2003).

And so these men of Industan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

The story was recalled by David P. Barash who concluded that violence is a bit like an elephant: 'too complex to be easily tamed or readily understood, maybe even too large to be perceived accurately'.[13] Hence, each of the following sections provides a perspective on the 'Basque elephant'. The first section reviews the contributions on Basque violence, mainly focusing on the armed group ETA. The second fully examines the question of why people make sacrifices for the nation. In this section three main schools are reviewed: (1) the rational choice school that sees violence in terms of its instrumentality and believes that violence is just a means to an end; (2) the authors who believe that violence is born out of discontent and grievances; and (3) the authors who believe the 'seeds of violence' are to be found in culture. Finally, the last section will examine the works which focus their attention on radical Basque nationalism.

1.1. History of Violence: ETA

When explaining Basque violence many scholars have decided to centre their analysis on Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA). This trend has produced an important and detailed historiography of the organisation. Among those who have written the history of ETA we may distinguish three different groups made up of: (1) professional historians; (2) nationalist historians; and (3) journalists.[14] As the next pages show, there can be no doubt that studying the internal history of ETA in detail was a necessary yet insufficient attempt to understand violence in the Basque lands.

Among the work of professional historians, we can count that of José Mari Garmendia, *Historia de ETA* (1979). Garmendia's book used a vast number of ETA documents and

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[13] Barash (2001: x).

[14] The distinction between professional and nationalist historians in the Basque case was first proposed by Núñez-Seixas (1992: 4).

described the ideological and strategic evolution of the armed group through its internal debates and numerous splits. As recognised by the author, the book was probably read by more members of the Spanish security forces than nationalist sympathisers as it provided a first insight into the underground world of ETA. But the aura of secrecy that surrounded ETA was gradually disappearing in the first years of the Spanish democracy and from 1979 to 1981 *Documentos Y* was published. The 12 massive volumes compiled in 10,000 pages all the ETA documents the editors had been able to find. These documents were later used by scholars such as Robert P. Clark and John Sullivan to make their first-rate contributions. Robert P. Clark (1983; 1984; 1987a; 1987b; 1990a; 1990b), who had a somewhat sympathetic attitude towards Basque nationalism, single-handedly managed to establish ETA as a research topic in the US. In the UK, John Sullivan (1988) wrote an exhaustive dissertation that was later published in both Spanish (1986) and English (1988). To date, however, the most interesting *Historia de ETA* (2000) has been edited by the political scientist Antonio Elorza, who managed to coordinate comprehensively the contributions of four excellent ETA specialists; José Mari Garmendia, Gurutz Jáuregui, Florencio Domínguez Iribarren and Patxo Unzueta.

On the other hand, for a taste of 'Basque nationalist history' one could read the works of Emilio López Adán (Beltza) and Francisco Letamendía Belzunce (Ortzi). Both Beltza and Ortzi were Basque radical nationalists who sympathised with ETA and constructed a nationalist interpretation of the Basque conflict. In their view Spain and the Basque Provinces (Euskal Herria) had been at war for centuries and the current struggle was a continuation of that millenarian confrontation.[15] At the same time, these authors stubbornly tried to incorporate class analysis into their works, with different degrees of success. Whereas Beltza has been largely forgotten, Ortzi has continued to attract attention.[16] This is partly due to the academic position he holds in the Basque university (*Universidad del País Vasco*) but also to the fact he lived through many of the events he writes about during his time as MP for 'patriotic' (*abertzale*) parties such as Euzkadiko Ezkerra and Herri Batasuna. For example, his three-volume work on the *Historia del Nacionalismo Vasco y ETA* (1994) is a combination of partisan views and political memoirs which offer the

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[15] For an updated view of such a stance see the best-seller by Mark Kurlansky, *The Basque History of the World* (1999).
[16] For a critique of Beltza's work see Zubillaga (1978: 81).

serious scholar countless avenues of research. Finally, a two volume work considered to be the 'official history of ETA' should be mentioned here. The first volume of *ETA: historia política de una lucha armada* (1992) was written by Luigi Bruni and the second one by Giovanni Giacopucci.

Journalists have also contributed greatly to the understanding of ETA. The number of contributions is too large to be mentioned here and the quality tends to be uneven. This is due to journalism's emphasis on description rather than theoretical analysis. However, the work of three journalists should be highlighted here. The first one is Luciano Rincón, author of the 1985 book *ETA (1974-1984)*. In this book, Rincón argued that ETA had not been able to evolve politically after the political transition and its attitude towards Francoism was 'nostalgic'. During Francoism, he argued, 'Spanish oppression' was clearly seen and felt by most Basques whereas in democracy it was much harder for ETA to be a political reference point. The second contribution is that of Florencio Domínguez Iribarren (1998; 2000; 2002), currently director of the agency Vasco Press and author of various books on ETA during the 1980s and 1990s. His work has been important in providing an accurate picture of how ETA commandos operate, the nature of their composition, weaponry, etc. However, the really remarkable contribution from journalism has been made by Patxo Unzueta (1988, 1997). His main book is *Los Nietos de la Ira. Nacionalismo y violencia en el País Vasco* (1988), in which he emphasised the importance of analysing Basque nationalism and its historical precedent, the movement known as foralism, in order to better understand ETA. According to Unzueta, ETA inherited an exclusivist conception of identity taken from Sabino Arana, and mixed it with socialism and strategic violence to fight the Francoist dictatorship most effectively. However, his real contribution was to point out the fact that the ideological core of ETA had remained the same throughout its history, despite its numerous splits and strategic adjustments. This central idea initiated and justified violence by arguing that the Basque nation was occupied by a foreign country (Spain) and that the only way out was to fight Spain, regardless of her political regime, with all available means (Unzueta 1988: 101). In the light of this analysis of Basque nationalist discourse, previous contributions from historians and journalists seemed superficial, descriptive and unsuccessful in understanding ETA's violence.

Indeed, the introduction of Basque nationalism as an independent variable by Unzueta forces this literature review to take a brief detour. Assuming for a moment that Unzueta was right, all the works that pointed to Francoism as the only precipitant for the birth of ETA would be misguided. What needed to be explained was why there had been a long-term campaign of violence in the Basque Country and not in Catalonia. Both nationalist movements emerged at the end of the 19th century, had suffered the same oppressive regime, Francoism, and had enjoyed similar degrees of socio-economic development: yet they produced completely different nationalist movements. Why was it, then, that the Basque and the Catalan nationalist movements were so different in their strategies?

The same research question puzzled the scholars David D. Laitin, Daniele Conversi and Juan Diez Medrano in the mid 1990s.[17] The first of them, Laitin, denied that the choice of violence had anything to do with 'capitalism, state formation and inequality'. On the contrary, he argued that the conditions that lead to violence required 'a micro foundation based upon social organization in rural and small-town life, tipping phenomena in political recruitment, and spiralling effects of fortuitous events'.[18] Secondly, Daniele Conversi based his explanation on the analysis of national culture and symbols. He concluded that 'Basque nationalism was intransigent and separatist from its very inception' whereas 'the initial Catalan appeal was mildly regionalist and pro-Spanish, rather than fully nationalist' (Conversi 1997: 259). Having identified the 'essence' of these nationalist movements, Conversi comfortably explained in retrospect why, for example, migrants faced a more difficult integration process in the Basque lands than in Catalonia. On the other hand, Díez-Medrano convincingly emphasised 'the different patterns of capitalist development experienced by the two regions, their different structures of political mobilization, and their particular histories' (Díez-Medrano 1995: 15). In his view the different character of Basque and Catalan nationalism was due to their different patterns of economic development. In his own words, 'Basque nationalism represented the frustration of preindustrial Basque elites with the changes brought about by industrialization and centralization' whereas Catalan nationalism 'reflected the frustration of the Catalan bourgeoisie over its inability to shape

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[17] See also Guerin, Daniel and Rejean Pelletier (2000), 'Cultural nationalism and political tolerance in advanced industrial societies: The Basque Country and Catalonia', *Nationalism & Ethnic Politics*, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 1-22; and Payne, Stanley G. (2000) 'Catalan and Basque nationalism: Contrasting patterns', in Shlomo Ben-Ami, Yoav Peled, and Alberto Spektorowski (eds) *Ethnic Challenges to the Modern Nation State*, New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 95-107.

[18] Laitin (1995:3).

Spanish policies according to its own interests' (Díez-Medrano 1995: 191). Although both make tremendously important contributions, neither Conversi nor Díez-Medrano explain why Basque nationalism had developed an armed group and why this had obtained significant social support for a long time. In other words, their emphasis on the national essence and the process of industrialisation was useful to explain the emergence of Basque nationalism but not its pervasiveness, let alone the psychology of national sacrifice.

1.2. Why do People Sacrifice for the Nation?

Few doctrines and ideologies manage to incite individuals to sacrifice as nationalism does.[19] Examples of mass sacrifice can be found in history - from the 300 Spartans at the battle of Thermopylae in 480 BC to the Jews at Masada in 73 AD - but nowhere is the sacrifice more willing than when the nation is at stake. And this qualitative change was rapidly identified in 1792 by Goethe who saw how the French army fought at Valmy against the better equipped Prussian infantry troops, motivated by the battle cry 'Vive la Nation'.[20]

Here, I follow Paul C. Stern in arguing that in order to understand people's willingness to die for the nation 'one must understand how they come to identify with nations and why, once identified, they develop loyalties strong enough to overcome or pre-empt considerations of personal well-being and competing loyalties to family, community, and other groups'.[21] Indeed, the following lines are an attempt to answer that question by distinguishing three approaches to nationalist mayhem. The first section sees nationalist violence as an action carried out by 'rational actors' whose ultimate motive is to maximise self-interest. The second approach believes violence is somehow rooted in frustration. Finally, the third analyses the interaction between violence and culture as a precedent for the development of individual affective ties and collective identification.

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[19] The only exception would be religion; according to authors of the Durkhemian approach, not even that, as there are not many differences between nationalism and religion. They describe nationalism as a 'civic religion' as both perform similar functions. More information can be found in the work of Carlton Hayes (1960), Elie Kedourie (1960) and Anthony D. Smith (2003).
[20] Brubaker (1996: 1).
[21] Stern (1995: 217).

1.2.1. Instrumental Violence

Of the many classifications of violence, an essential one comprises the distinction between reactive aggression and instrumental violence. The first kind is typical of violent offenders or hostile mental patients and is generally impulsive and unplanned. On the other hand, instrumental violence is goal-directed, deliberate and is motivated by the search for personal gain. The latter aspect attracted the interest of Hannah Arendt who believed the 'instrumental character' of violence lay in its capacity to multiply 'natural strength' (Arendt 1970: 46). At the same time, one could distinguish between individual and collective violence. Finally, if one combines both dichotomies it can easily be argued that reactive aggression is more common at the level of the individual (criminal acts, etc.) whereas instrumental violence is usually found in collective violent action. The distinction is well established in the social sciences and it is based on the assumption that, even though individual behaviour is not always rational, collective action usually is.[22] There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, from cold-blooded murder to unpredictable mutinies, riots and rebellions, but on the whole rational choice seems to be prevalent when analysing group violence.

In the social sciences the author who has most consistently applied rational choice to nationalism has been Michael Hechter. The issue of whether violence could be seen as a wilful choice was explored in a paper published in *Nations and Nationalism*. In 'Explaining nationalist violence' (1995) Hechter argued that in most cases nationalist violence was a product of rational choice and criticised academics who asserted the irrationality of nationalism as it contributed to nothing but 'a sense of scholarly self-satisfaction' (Hechter 1995: 64). Hechter's study argued that nationalist groups could strategically adopt violence to attain their political goals. In *Containing Nationalism* (2000) Hechter continued his work on violence as a 'too-frequent by-product of nationalist conflict'.[23] He continued to argue

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[22] A major challenge to his view, however, was provided by the publication in 1965 of Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action*. In the first pages of this political science classic, Olson argued that 'it is not in fact true that the idea that groups will act in their self-interest follows logically from the premise of rational and self-interested behavior. It does not follow, because all the individuals in a group would gain if they achieved their group objective, even if they were all rational and self-interested. Indeed unless the number of individuals in a group is quite small, or unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interest' (Olson 1965: 2).
[23] Hechter (2000: 33).

for the 'strategic use' of nationalist violence and put forward the idea that violence was an indicator of inappropriate institutional arrangements:

> In institutional settings that restrict voice – due to state repression (the African National Congress under apartheid), or to the tyranny of the majority (the Protestants in Northern Ireland) – relatively few strategies are available to nationalist groups. In conditions that preclude exit and voice (Hirschman 1970), the strategic use of violence comes into its own.[24]

In the Basque Country, Pedro Ibarra first used rational choice theory in 1989 to explain why ETA believed violence would help them achieve their goal of an 'independent socialist state for the Basque homeland'.[25] Following a similar argument, the political scientist Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca (2001) argued that ETA was a rational actor who used violence to accomplish a political goal: the secession of the Basque Country from Spain. The reason why ETA employed violent means, argued Sánchez-Cuenca, was because it perceived the Spanish state would not allow the peaceful secession of the Basque homeland. And if this assumption was correct, he said, what the Spanish government needed to do was to convince ETA that violence was not necessary and that political independence was possible by peaceful means. More specifically, the author proposed that the main Spanish parties, PSOE and PP, had to sign an agreement committing them to allow, on the condition ETA disbanded, the secession of the Basques if 'a clear and stable majority' decided so (Sánchez-Cuenca 2001: 22). Although the use of game theory by Sánchez-Cuenca was impeccable, his political sensitivity was virtually non-existent. Even in the unlikely scenario in which Spanish parties agreed to such an enigmatic pact, puzzling questions would be left undecided. Some of these issues would be: Who is to be allowed to vote? What is a majority? And, more importantly, what is a 'stable majority'? Furthermore, why would ETA suddenly trust a state they have been fighting so long? Has ETA's violent history not already shown that radical nationalists do not have any confidence in the democratic process because, in their view, 'covenants, without the sword, are but words'?[26]

The work of both Ibarra and Sanchez-Cuenca helped demolish the widespread view that there is a correlation between political violence and mental illness. In so doing, they had the

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[24] Hechter (2000: 128).

[25] See Pedro Ibarra's *La evolución estratégica de ETA* (1989).

[26] The expression is taken from the English philospher John Hobbes. Cited in Arendt (1970: 5).

support of an array of international contributions, which argued that violence, even terrorism, could be a rational outcome. For example, Martha Crenshaw concluded after reviewing much of the literature on terrorism that the only 'outstanding common characteristic of terrorists is their normality'.[27] Little could be said about what terrorists share in common, other than their willingness to engage in terrorism. In the Basque case, Robert P. Clark's research confirmed what Crenshaw had stated: 'the overwhelming majority of *etarras* are well within the range of functioning and sane human beings; while terrorists in general may be seriously distressed, members of ETA suffer from no greater levels of stress than are observed across Basque society generally'.[28]

Identifying the 'instrumental character' of violence is helpful in understanding why some armed groups are so dependent on violence. When using violence a group becomes powerful and gets the attention it needs. Or as Mao Tse-Tung put it, 'political power grows out of the barrel of a gun' (Keane 1996: 8). However, accepting that violence can be a 'rational outcome' does not mean one should agree with the rationality of the motives. People can be misguided, and plainly wrong, but they can still perform a purely rational action. An individual acts rationally when she or he is doing something according to self interest. And it is precisely at this point where rational choice shows its limitations, as individuals are presented by it as centres of consciousness where preferences are 'given'. The theory fails to comprehend that these 'preferences' are defined socially, not individually, and that the social, economic and political context will have a decisive role to play. For this reason, the next section analyses theories that point to how these preferences might be constructed.

1.2.2. Theories of Social Discontent

When trying to explain violence, most social scientists look for a cause or triggering event. In the 1970s, theories of social discontent elaborated on this cause-effect approach and concluded that, in most cases, a grievance or legitimate cause could explain violent

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[27] See Crenshaw (1981: 379). Complementary and opposing approaches to that of Crenshaw can be found in an excellent volume edited by Walter Reich, *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, ideologies, theologies, states of mind* (1990) and in Peter Merkl's *Political Violence and Terror. Motifs and Motivations* (1986).
[28] In Clark (1983: 423).

behaviour.[29] The feelings of frustration, deprivation and anger were not always identifiable but scholars did not doubt they were there.[30] Ted R. Gurr, for example, argued that 'violence, like those who use it, is complex, but it is not undecipherable' (Gurr 1970: ix). Gurr's major work was *Why Men Rebel?* (1970) where he presented the concept of Relative Deprivation (RD), which was defined in psychosocial terms as a 'perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities'. According to the author, the primary step in the causal sequence in political violence was the development of discontent, the second the politicisation of that discontent, and the final one its instrumentalisation in a form of violence against political actors.[31]

David C. Schwartz (1972) seemingly postulated a different, although equally psychological, approach. For him, political alienation preceded the revolutionary outburst. As he noted, 'all revolutionary organisations are composed both of persons: (1) who have been previously socialised to accept a political system from which they became alienated; and (2) whose loyalties have never been effectively tied to the polity' (Schwartz 1972: 58). Political alienation itself resulted from a psychological conflict between an individual's own value hierarchy and the contradictory values that he perceived to be operative in the political system. In other words, psychological conflict occurred when the values that guided the behaviour of the regime were perceived by the citizens as violating their own individual values. Both Gurr and Schwartz based their explanations on placing the individual in a wide political and social framework. For them, political violence emerged

[29] For an excellent summary of theories of social discontent and a comprehensive bibliography see the chapter by Assad E. Azzi 'From Competitive Interests, Perceived Injustice, and Identity Needs to Collective Action: Psychological Mechanisms in Ethnic Nationalism' in Christopher Dandeker's *Nationalism and Violence* (1998). For a knowledgeable account of how people's preferences are shaped by nationalism see *Perspectives on Nationalism and War* (1995), particularly the chapter by Daniel Druckman on 'Social-Psychological Aspects of Nationalism', pp. 47-98.

[30] This latter point has been criticised by James Scott, author of *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (1976). According to Scott, a peasant might be angry about his exploitation but this does not mean he will try to generate an explosive situation. If such anger was sufficient to spark a rebellion, he rightly argues, 'most of the Third World (and not only the Third World) would be in flames' (Scott 1976: 4).

[31] Gurr makes clear the point that not all discontented men are revolutionaries: 'most of them probably prefer peaceful means for the attainment of their goals to the privations and risks of revolutionary action' (Gurr 1970: 355). Furthermore, he also introduces a variety of RD called 'elite Relative Deprivation' which is common among men who have 'elite characteristics but not high value positions' and affects those leaders 'who are barred from electoral activity, entrepreneurs subject to restrictive legislation, military officers given what they regard as inadequate resources' (1970: 336). Gurr's thesis is based on the frustration-aggression hypothesis and suffers from the same kind of criticisms. One of the main problems with drive theories of aggression is the difficulty of empirical verification. Most of them are formulated in such broad terms that they do not generate specific predictions that could be empirically tested.

out of larger conflicts, and reflected, in however distorted a form, the political beliefs and aspirations of a larger segment of society. Violence would also be an indicator of institutional weaknesses, injustices and inequality. As Charles Tilly has put it, violence is 'at a given time one of the best signs we have [to know] what is going on in a country's political life'.[32]

Theories of social discontent were very influential in the field of nationalism. A Marxist variant of the relative deprivation argument was introduced in the early work of Michael Hechter, particularly in his *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (1975). Also worth mentioning is Tom Nairn's *The Break-up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (1981), which argued that nationalism had originated through the 'uneven development' of history and capitalism. These books took Gramsci's concept of 'hegemony' and Lenin's idea of 'internal colonialism' as their basis and influenced scholars who were writing on the Basque topic. However, these theories were not easily applied to the heavily developed Basque Country. The Basque Provinces were among the first in Spain to industrialise, particularly Biscay, whose banking industry was among the most powerful in the country. The high levels of economic development present in the Basque Country made Michel Wieviorka conclude that

> the political violence characteristic of Spain's Basque Country is very different from the kind of political violence that comes from economic marginality. Rather, a little like Sikh violence in India its origins are connected to myths embodied in a discourse. But this mythic side has been eroded by economic gains. While Spain, in common with other European countries, is suffering from economic recession Basques continue to enjoy a relatively high level of economic prosperity.[33]

For this reason, in order to understand Basque violence (and why people die for the nation) it is necessary to analyse the myths on which Basque nationalism has been build. These myths are cultural representations of the past but also living traditions that can give us an insight into the Basque psyche.

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[32] Tilly (1972: 342).
[33] Wieviorka (1997: 292).

1.2.3. Culture and Violence

The limited explanatory value of theories of social discontent for the Basque case led scholars to explore the relationship between culture and violence. This new approach aimed at researching the cultural elements that preceded violence and/or predisposed Basques to engage in violent collective action. In other words, the aim was to identify the 'seeds of violence' in Basque culture. The contribution to the issue of culture and its relationship to violence has been made mainly from three areas: history of ideas, sociology and anthropology.

1.2.3.1.1. History of Ideas

In this field one should emphasise the figure of Jon Juaristi. Philologist, writer and former activist of ETA, Juaristi is both a polemicist and essential reference on the political debate about the character of Basque nationalism. His two most influential works are *El Linaje de Aitor* (1987) and *El Bucle Melancólico* (1997).[34] In *El Linaje de Aitor*, Juaristi persuasively argued that the Basque romantic literature of the 19th century had an enormous impact on the kind of nationalism the founder of Basque nationalism, Sabino Arana, designed. Foralist literature was a mixture of legend and history and tended to idealise the *fueros*, codes of ancient laws and privileges, as symbols of pre-modern Basque independence. These early nationalist myths heavily influenced the founder of Basque nationalism. Juaristi's interest in Basque nationalism was further developed in *El Bucle Melancólico*, in which the early stages of Basque nationalism were analysed. Juaristi gave an overview of the characters that created, influenced and actively reproduced Basque nationalism. Central to Juaristi's argument was the power of the myths, symbols and those who died for the homeland, all of which acted as 'ancestral voices', a term he borrowed from Connor Cruise O'Brien, calling nationalists to defend the nation.

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[34] Other interesting works are *Sacra Némesis* (1999), *La Tribu Atribulada* (2002) and *Auto de Terminación* (1994), the last one co-edited with Juan Aranzadi and Patxo Unzueta. Among his collection of articles, noteworthy works include: Juaristi, Jon (1984-85), 'Joseph-Augustin Chaho: las raíces antiliberales del nacionalismo vasco' in *Cuadernos de Alzate*, 1, invierno 1984-1985, pp. 72-77; Juaristi, Jon (1989). 'Las fuentes ocultas del romanticismo vasco' in *Cuadernos de Alzate*, 7, septiembre-diciembre 1987, pp. 86-103; Juaristi, Jon (1994) 'Los mitos de orígen en la génesis de las identidades nacionales. La batalla de Arrigorriaga y el surgimiento del particularismo vasco (ss. XIV-XVI)' in *Studia Historica-Historia Contemporánea*, Vol. XII, pp. 191-228.

Another essential author is the historian and political scientist Antonio Elorza. Both Elorza and Juaristi share the view that the origins of Basque nationalism were deeply influenced by the romantic literature of the 19th century and that Basque nationalism was, in essence, of a melancholic character. This romantic literature was described in detail by Elorza, who pointed to the importance of the rural reference for Basque nationalism. Sabino Arana believed that prior to the industrial revolution, the Basques had lived in a harmonious rural Arcadia. That harmony was broken with the beginning of the industrialisation process and the arrival of the Spaniard (whom he called *maketos*). Hence it comes as no surprise that by following these myths, Arana concluded that Basques lived better prior to the arrival of the Spaniard. The idealisation of the pre-industrial stage would make Arana overemphasise the decline of the Basque people during industrialisation.

1.2.3.1.2. Sociology

There have been a few contributions from the field of sociology, that have established the Basque case as an essential component of comparative analyses of the causes of ethnic conflicts. The most important of these studies has been *Radicalismo Étnico* (1997), a study published by the German sociologist Peter Waldman. The main aim of the book was to identify the conditions under which ethnic movements turned to violence by studying the cases of Northern Ireland, the Basque Country and the counter-case of Quebec. In his final analysis, Waldman argued that one of the characteristics of both the Irish and Basque cases was that the violent nationalist movement was under the control of the lower middle-classes. Hence, moderate nationalist options (PNV and SDLP) did not have any sort of control over the radical wing, which wanted to remain politically autonomous (Waldmann 1997: 333).

Another very important contribution to the understanding of violence has been Michel Wieviorka's *The Making of Terrorism* (1993). In this comparative analysis Wieviorka provides an explanation of how a nationalist discourse may be articulated. The volume is devoted to different terrorist organisations such as Hamas, the PLO and ETA, among others. The main contribution of Wieviorka is the identification of common elements to the discourses of all these organisations. Wieviorka argued that all social movements have three fundamental dimensions: the principles of identity, opposition and totality. On the

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other hand, a 'social antimovement' such as a terrorist group exhibits an 'inversion' of these three dimensions.[35] Wieviorka's contribution was extremely valuable as it explained how a discourse for a nationalist movement operates. However, it did not sufficiently explain why such a discourse might resonate.

Secondly, a key contribution has been the book by Gurutz Jáuregui, *Ideología y estrategia política de ETA* (1981), in which he analysed the evolution of the organisation between 1959 and 1968. The main contribution of Jáuregui was to see ETA as a combination of traditional Basque nationalism and reaction to Francoism (Jáuregui 1985: 460). The father of Basque nationalism, Sabino Arana (chapter 3), had argued that the Basques were an oppressed nation and General Franco made that oppression very real. Jáuregui provided a fully satisfactory explanation of why ETA was born and forced scholars of Basque violence to emphasise the cultural factors and the cultural and mythical base of Basque nationalism. Jáuregui's contribution is utterly convincing and is one of the timeless contributions to the field. One of the few shortcomings of Jáuregui's thesis is that, although it manages to explain the birth of ETA, it cannot explain why it survives after Francoism.

1.2.3.1.3. Anthropology

Anthropologists have provided some of the most interesting analyses of the relationship between Basque culture and violence. This is partly due to a great anthropological tradition in the Basque Provinces, which starts with Telésforo de Aranzadi and Jose Miguel Barandiaran and continues with the prolific and erudite Julio Caro Baroja.[36] An area in which a new generation of anthropologists has made an important contribution has been that of the mechanisms of reproduction of both Basque culture and sources of violence. In this group the contributions of Alfonso Pérez-Agote (1984; 1987), Marianne Heiberg

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[35] According to Wieviorka, the *principle of identity* defines the actor and the people in whose name he speaks, the *principle of opposition* defines the social adversary and, finally, the *principle of totality* defines the field of historicity of a social movement. On the other hand, Wieviorka defines 'inversion' as an ideological and practical endeavour by means of which actors remove themselves from the concrete experience of those in whose name they are acting, plunge into terrorism, and become heteronomous figures in struggles that are either not their own, or which are only theirs in some accessory fashion (Wieviorka 1993: 4-6 & 62).

[36] For a summary of Caro Baroja's contribution to Basque anthropology see Jesús Azcona (1989) and Joseba Agirreazkuenaga (1992). For a brief overview of the work of Aranzadi and Barandiaran see MacClancy (1993: 109-118). Finally, for an overview of the anthropological interest of the Basques see Joseba Zulaika's *Del Cromañon al Carnaval: Los vascos como museo antropológico* (1996).

(1975; 1989) and Joseba Zulaika (1988) are very important. Their works emphasised, among others, the role the church, the school (*ikastola*), the farmhouse (*baserria/caserío*) and the *cuadrilla*, from which ETA recruited most of its members.[37]

The ethnographic study of Joseba Zulaika, *Basque Violence: Metaphor and Sacrament* (1988), is a rich account that shows how history is perceived in traditional Basque culture as a combination of myth, war, heroism and tragedy, and how these ideas fed the emergence and development of ETA. A widely cited source, Zulaika's cultural conundrum has influenced other scholars such as Cameron Watson. In his excellent doctoral thesis, for example, Watson aimed to identify the 'culture of violence' which preceded ETA. Watson argued that 'a culture of political violence emerged within the structure of the PNV' hence providing ETA with a precedent, or 'cultural repertoire'.[38] That 'culture of violence' was not real but symbolic and was conceived through representations of struggle and warfare quite typical of the historical discourse of Basque nationalism. As he concluded his study, 'struggle and warfare emerged as ideological, symbolic and strategic representations within the historical discourse of Basque nationalism. And that this led, at least in part, to an imagined culture of political violence which assumed a reality with the formation of ETA in 1959' (Watson 1996: 585).

However, the most thought-provoking and timeless contribution from anthropology was Juan Aranzadi's *Milenarismo Vasco* (1982). According to Aranzadi, Basque nationalism was born at the end of the 19th century as a millenarian reaction to the disintegration of traditional Basqueness. In an argument which resembles the work of Elie Kedourie, Aranzadi argued that the basic structure of the Basque nationalist discourse was essentially millenarian. Originated in the Book of Apocalypse (20,4), millenialism was the belief that at the end of time Christ would rule with the Saints a divine Kingdom for a thousand years

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[37] A group of friends (or *cuadrilla*) is predominantly male and involves 8 to 20 individuals, generally of the same age, marital status and lifestyle, hence sharing a common daily timetable. Robert P. Clark has shown that most ETA members were recruited by friends from the same climbing club or *cuadrilla* (Clark 1984: 141-165). Secondly, the *baserria* (*caserío* in Spanish) is a rural, self-sufficient farmstead of about 10 to 15 hectares. The importance of this social and economic unit, says Marianne Heiberg, is that in the Basque country 'a person's first loyalty was always directed toward the farmsted rather than toward a village which in the Spanish sense hardly existed' (Heiberg 1975: 171; 1989: 30).

[38] See Watson (1996: 2). According to David Laitin, violent movements require recruits. In his view, two conditions are necessary to find willing fighters. First, there must be a social stratum in which violence is part of a usual cultural repertoire. Second, there must be members of local social groups, usually from the lower middle class and working class, willing to fight. See Laitin (1995: 14).

before the coming of the apocalypse and the coming of the Kingdom of God. In Aranzadi's view, Basque nationalism resembled this religious structure because it also wanted to build heaven on earth by advocating the restoration of the Basque Arcadian past.[39] This idealised past was described by Aranzadi as the Basque Golden Age, a concept which proved both informative and enlightening. For Aranzadi, the components of the Golden Age were essentially the myth of universal nobility and the late Christianisation of the Basque population. As will be seen in the next chapter, the myth of the Golden Age is one of the essential elements of this thesis. However, the concept will significantly expand the meaning ascribed to it by Juan Aranzadi.

1.2.4. History and Violence: Radical Basque Nationalism

Studies of radical Basque nationalism first appeared in the late 1980s. Up to that point, the analysis had focused on ETA and they were mainly of a descriptive nature.[40] In the present section, I review in detail the three authors who have contributed most to the understanding of radical Basque nationalist discourse. These are Begoña Aretxaga, Jeremy MacClancy and José Manuel Mata López.

A ground breaking contribution was Begoña Aretxaga's *Los funerales en el nacionalismo vasco radical* (1988). The funerals provided Aretxaga, trained as an anthropologist in the US, a superb entry point into the world of radical Basque nationalism and an insight into why some Basques are prepared to die for their nation. In her book, Aretxaga analysed the funerals of ETA members and sympathisers and the messages that were given in those funerals. The main message was to re-affirm the dead person as a hero and a martyr for the Basque nation. Moreover, the funeral was the time when death was symbolically denied and the ethnicity of the community was reinforced. The death of an ETA member was

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[39] Aranzadi based his understanding of Millenarian movements on the works of Eric J. Hobsbawm, Peter Worsley and Norman Cohn (Aranzadi 2000: 59). From Norman Cohn, for example, he learned that these movements, in the same way as nationalism, pictured salvation as: (1) collective, in the sense that it is to be enjoyed by the faithful as a collectivity; (2) terrestrial, in the sense that it is to be realized on this earth and not in some other-wordly heaven; (3) imminent, in the sense that it is to come both soon and suddenly; (4) total, in the sense that it is to utterly to transform life on earth, so that the new dispensation will be no mere improvement on the present but perfection itself; (5) miraculous, in the sense that it is to be accomplished by, or with the help of, supernatural agencies. See Cohn (1970: 13).
[40] According to Nuñez-Seixas, up to 1980s the 'sociological theories for the study of nationalism' were 'hardly taken into account in Spain' (Nuñez-Seixas 1992: 38).

framed in the long history of sacrifices for the Basque nation and his/her sacrifice was seen to have regenerative and positive consequences. According to Aretxaga, this aspect was seen in one of the banners at the funeral of Santi Brouard, a radical nationalist killed in 1988 by a Spanish death squad called GAL. At the entry of the town of Amorabieta, one banner proclaimed 'Shanti, you are not a corpse, but a seed' (*Shanti no eres cadaver, sino simiente*) (Aretxaga 1988: 68).

Hence, death is not seen as a destructive end, but as an optimistic beginning. The ultimate sacrifice becomes an important example and another contribution to the defence of the Basque nation. There is no doubt as to the nationalist interpretation of death in ETA funerals. As Aretxaga points out, one of the constant features of these funerals is the fact that the same poem by Gabriel Aresti was recited. The last verses of the poem are these:

> I shall die,
> my soul will be lost,
> my descendants will be lost;
> but the house of my father
> will endure
> on its feet.[41]

The poem uses the word *etxe*, 'house' in Basque, which can also be translated as 'home' hence acting as a powerful metaphor for the nation. As pointed out elsewhere by Pauliina Raento and Cameron J. Watson, Basque nationalists make an analogy between *etxe* and *aberri* (fatherland) as two traditional Basque elements whose unity needs to be preserved (Raento & Watson 2000: 16). In its idealised nationalist form, the Basque house was represented by the traditional rural farmstead (*baserri*) and, according to Basque laws of inheritance, its preservation as an undivided whole from one generation to the next was considered vital. Hence, when defending the Basque nation, the radical nationalist is doing nothing more than defending his or her home, a sacred entity which cannot be desecrated. The funeral gives meaning to the death of the ETA activist who has honoured his life by defending the Basque home. Moreover, it justifies the use of violence as the sacredness of the home has been violated. How else are Basques supposed to defend their home if the agent who is supposed to defend them (the state) is seen to be the invader?

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[41] In Aretxaga (1988: 69). The importance of the poem has been highlighted by other authors such as Aranzadi (2000), Kurlansky (1999) and Unzueta (1986).

A second contribution to the understanding of radical Basque nationalism was provided by a short yet poignant article by Jeremy MacClancy titled 'The Culture of Radical Basque Nationalism' (1988). His article described radical nationalism in Navarre and how new members entered the nationalist community on different terms than during the time of Sabino Arana. Whereas in Arana's time, one had to belong to the 'Basque race' in order to be a radical nationalist, now one only had to commit oneself to their 'nationalist struggle'. In MacClancy's words:

> Basque patriots are abertzales, a status not defined by birth but by performance: an abertzale is one who actively participates in the political struggle for an independent Basque nation with its own distinctive culture. You are not born abertzale. You make yourself one.[42]

Hence, in this struggle a nationalist is one who actively participates in the activities the collective organises. In a lengthy but crucial paragraph, MacClancy stated that

> In fabricating their own social events, their own fiestas, and, to some extent, their own language, abertzales create a novel, functioning sub-culture of their own, one broad enough to include urban activists, young villagers, punks and skinheads: students of Basque collectively camp out for days; sponsored thousands run in marathons pacing out the extent of Basqueland, all for the sake of raising money to promote the teaching of Basque. They also participate in fiestas celebrating marked aspects of 'Basque' culture, such as wood-choppers, stone-lifters, dancers, troubadours, Basque musicians, and the olentzero (the Basque equivalent of Father Christmas). In fact, there are so many of these modern fiestas that committed nationalists can spend many of their spring and summer weekends going from one event to another.[43]

The most crucial activity in the calendar of events is the attendance at demonstrations. In these demonstrations, the true voice of the Basque nation, the radical nationalists, speaks up. Some of these demonstrations were also an initiation rite for young nationalists. As MacClancy described, clashes with the police were not uncommon and demonstrators often provoked reactions from the police by calling them 'lazy' if they did not charge again. The ritual of attending became more important than the content in itself. This is not to say, however, that the content was entirely neglected. Although the abertzale mobilisations were

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[42] MacClancy (1988: 17).
[43] MacClancy (1988: 17).

modern, their contents were skilfully associated with the millenarian struggle and 'the glorious past of Basque culture and history'.

Finally, this literature review needs to examine the work of José Manuel Mata López, *Nacionalismo Vasco Radical* (1993). His work on radical Basque nationalism is the turning point for the topic because of his rich and abundant research, mainly consisting of group interviews. One of the greatest contributions of Mata López is the framing of the topic. Up until that point, radical Basque nationalism was often interchangeable with the term nationalist left (*izquierda abertzale*). However, as Mata López rightly pointed out in his thesis, the origins of the so-called nationalist left had to be found in an earlier period.

Hence, if we had to summarise the contributions of the three aforementioned authors we could say they all contributed in one way or another to the understanding of radical Basque nationalism. Firstly, Begoña Aretxaga stood out as one of the first anthropologists, together with Joseba Zulaika, who framed violence within the Basque radical nationalist discourse. By analysing funerals, Aretxaga explained how violence was seen to have regenerative power and that no sacrifice is in vain as it honours the fatherland and inspires a new generations of fighters. Secondly, MacClancy explained how within the radical Basque nationalist discourse violence was seen to express the frustrated nation, in which the only remaining option was to fight for its freedom. Hence, since the Basque nation had been defined as an oppressed nation, one had to support the use of violence if one wanted the nation to be reborn. Finally, José Manuel Mata López's truly original contribution was two-fold. First, it referred to the organisational structure of the so-called Basque Nationalist Liberation Movement (MNLV) led by ETA. Secondly it referred to the discourse of this network of organisations. According to Mata López, real Basques could only be nationalists; and real nationalists had to support ETA. Together, these three authors provided a coherent, yet fragmented, view of the 'Basque elephant'.

The main criticism to be made here would be that these authors were mainly concerned with ETA's radical Basque nationalism. None of them felt compelled to refer to the pre-1959 period except to mention the the decline of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) and the rise of ETA. Moreover, they neglected the previous approaches made by anthropological and literary analysis on the importance of myths and symbols. Hence, this

thesis will emphasise the continuity between those more theoretical analyses and the current analysis on radical Basque nationalism. The success of radical Basque nationalism, it will argue, needs to be found in its ability to combine both pre-modern and modern aspects in a coherent ideology.

1.3. Conclusion

It is difficult to explain why some people are prepared to sacrifice their material welfare, even their own lives, for a concept like a nation. Most people prefer to concentrate on their careers and family lives rather than get involved in a violent ethno-nationalist conflict. Theories can hardly grasp the complexity of ordinary human actions, let alone explain why one individual might kill another. The difficulty of explaining group behaviour is made even more extreme by the fact that not all members of a group necessarily share the same motivations. Different degrees of involvement in the national struggle can only be explained by the different interests of each of its members. Not surprisingly, a single theory cannot explain all human behaviour in a community. An added problem in studying violence is that it sometimes seems to have a life of its own. This might be due, as Hannah Arendt reminds us, to the fact that 'violence harbors within itself an additional element of arbitrariness; nowhere does Fortuna, good or ill luck, play a more fateful role in human affairs than on the battlefield' (Arendt 1970: 4). This is not to say, however, that violence is beyond comprehension and that we should base our understanding of it on a self-defeating argument.

The question here is: when will people make this sacrifice? What will cause national sacrifice? Personal sacrifice, I want to argue, will only come about if it has the power of redemption. People will sacrifice for the nation if they feel they are doing a righteous thing. Whether it is an act of self-immolation or the destruction of another human being, the act of sacrifice needs to be seen as both a truthful and necessary act. Prior to this, however, an offence against the nation has to be committed (and defined). Then, the logical consequence for nationalists is to inflict a penalty on those who have caused it. The identification of a grievance, offence or transgression is an essential impetus for the violent process. By using purifying violence, nationalists surrender something they value (material wealth and/or human life) as a sacrificial procedure in order to restore the nation's integrity.

To summarise, for an individual to participate in violent acts, she/he needs to see that his or her act of sacrifice can reverse the declining condition of the nation. No nationalist will sacrifice her/himself in vain, but they will only engage in the necessary acts if they may help preserve the true nature of the nation. In retrospect, their sacrifice will be seen as commendable and wise.

Chapter Two
THE BASQUE GOLDEN AGE

From the start, one discerns in it the (fruitful or calamitous) role taken, in the genesis of events, not by happiness but by the idea of happiness, an idea that explains - the Age of Iron being coextensive with history - why each epoch so eagerly invokes the Age of Gold. Suppose we put an end to such speculations: total stagnation would ensue. For we act only under the fascination of the impossible: which is to say that a society incapable of generating - and of dedicating itself to - a utopia is threatened with sclerosis and collapse.

Emile M. Cioran[44]

Looking at the different waves in which nations have been created, one comes across the same need to 'remember' the national past. This can be observed in the revolutionary period of 1770-1850 as well as in the Afro-Asian decolonisation of the 1960s and 1970s and in the awakening of nations in Eastern and Central Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 (Aranzadi 2000: 255). In all these national geneses, nationalists traced what they considered to be a continuous line of ancestry, which connected them to the national past. Such a genealogy of the present established a clear evolution by sorting out historical facts and explaining the needs and deficiencies of the current time. However, by establishing a progression from the past to the present, nationalists also took up a mission from their forefathers. Great examples and heroic virtue were invoked to show the way the nation should take.

The form and content of the newly re-discovered national past depended not only on the political needs of the time but also on the availability of 'raw materials'. These were reliable written sources on which a robust national discourse could be built. If the political project was to have significant impact, elites had to be careful about neglecting existing building blocks. In most cases, intellectuals and politicians took a middle course and recreated existing beliefs and conducts while, at the same time, adding the elements dictated by the historical context. In the field of nationalism, the relationship between nationalism and history has attracted considerable interest. However, a much less debated

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[44] Cioran (1998: 81).

issue is the form a nationalist past might take. As will be argued shortly, having a glorious past is an essential element for any nationalist movement.

2.1. A Nation's Golden Age: A Necessary Myth

Since its inception in the 1960s, the dominant paradigm in the study of nationalism has been that of Modernism. Represented by authors such as Karl Deutsch, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and John Breuilly, the modernist approach argues that both nations and nationalism are modern phenomena. Furthermore, it sees see the nation as a significant entity in relation to the state. The work of modernist authors tends to neglect issues of ethnicity and identity and concentrate on the conditions that explain the emergence and development of nationalism. Hence they examine historical processes associated with modernity, such as the rise of the nation-state, the spread of capitalism or the emergence of printed communities, among others. The weakest point of these theories, however, is that although they provide an effective explanation of the genesis of nationalism, they do not manage to explain why it continues to attract invariable support. The argument that will shortly be presented suggests that allegiance to the nation can be explained by looking at cultural representations such as myths and symbols.

But before considering the importance of myths for nation-building processes it is important to define what a myth is. A myth, from the Greek *mythos*, means 'tale' or 'story' and according to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) is 'a traditional narrative, usually involving supernatural or imaginary persons and embodying popular ideas on natural or social phenomena'. According to anthropological research, myths are a source of knowledge and a legacy from the ancestors. A mixture of historical facts and legendary elaboration, myths have authoritative symbolic value and reveal meaningful aspects of social reality. The myth also relates the individual to the ritual, and plays a leading part in moral conduct and social organisation. In other words, its function is to inspire and give meaning to both individual and collective existence. Its importance would be similar to that of the Scriptures for Christians or the Social Contract for Liberals. As the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski argued,

[The myth] is a story which is told in order to establish a belief, to serve as a precedent in ceremony or ritual, or to rank as a pattern of moral or religious conduct. Mythology, therefore, or the sacred tradition of a society, is a body of narratives woven into their culture, dictating their belief, defining their ritual, acting as the chart of their social order and the pattern of their moral behaviour. Every myth has naturally a literary content, since it is always a narrative, but this narrative is not merely a piece of entertaining fiction or explanatory statement to the believer. It is a true account of sensational events which have shaped the constitution of the world, the essence of moral conduct, and determines the ritual contact between man and his maker, or other powers that be.[45]

For this reason, myths are important constitutive elements of collectivities. They shape social behaviour and dictate parameters within which individuals and national movements might operate. Coming back to the issue of myths and symbols for the study of national identity, one needs to mention briefly the work of the ethno-symbolists. The Ethno-Symbolist School stands on the opposing side to Modernists and its main concern is the role of the ethnic and national past in the formation of nations.[46] This is most clearly seen in the work of Anthony D. Smith for whom the 'core' of ethnicity is constituted by a complex of 'myths, memories, values and symbols' (or 'myth-symbol complex').[47] This 'core' appears in early times, usually before the nation emerges, and needs to be studied in *la longue durée*.[48] The importance of the 'myth-symbol complex' is that, without it, 'a group

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[45] Malinowski (1963: 249-250).

[46] According to John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (1996: 10), '[t]he main concern of 'ethno-symbolists is with the persistence, change and resurgence of ethnies, and with the role of the ethnic past or pasts in shaping present cultural communities'. For Armstrong (1982), as Smith (1986), myths and symbols play a vital role in unifying populations and ensuring their continuity over many generations. Armstrong considers a range of factors, like nostalgia for past lifestyles, religious civilisations and organizations, imperial mythomoteurs, and language fissures, in creating shifting ethnic identities. Smith examines some of the causes of ethno-genesis, distinguishes between 'horizontal' (aristocratic) and 'vertical' (demotic) ethnies, and traces the patterns by which they give rise to modern nations. He also emphasizes the cultural content of myths, memories, and symbols, notably myths of origin and ethnic election, and memories of the golden age.

[47] Of particular importance for Smith is the 'mythomoteur', a term he borrows from John Armstrong, which stands for the 'constitutive myth of the ethnic polity' which essentially corresponds to the claims of the group's origins and lines of descent. From this perspective, in order to evaluate the characteristics of an ethnie, one should not focus on its class, political or military configuration: 'Rather one has to look at the nature (forms and content) of their myths and symbols, their historical memories and central values, which we can summarise as the 'myth-symbol' complex, at the mechanisms of their diffusion (or lack of it) through a given population, and their transmission to future generations, if one wishes to grasp the special character of *ethnic* identities'. (Smith 1986: 15).

[48] The *longue durée* is Fernand Braudel's most significant and personal contribution to the study of historical time and became the backbone of the French school of historiography known as the Annales. Conceived while he was in captivity in 1944, the *longue durée* consisted of very long, practically immobile environmental time (the *longue durée*), the medium time of economies, societies, and cultures, and the short time of discrete events (the subject of *histoire événementielle*). Far from a simple flow, human experience was registered on all three clocks, operated with speed-ups and delays, and left a vast range of physical as well as mental traces.

cannot define itself to itself or to others, and cannot inspire or guide collective action' (Smith 1986: 24-5). Following Léon Poliakov, Smith argues that myths of descent are of crucial importance. That claim to common ancestry is usually made by using certain 'component myths' such as:

1. A Myth of Temporal Origins
2. A Myth of Location and Migration
3. A Myth of Ancestry
4. A Myth of the Heroic Age
5. A Myth of Decline
6. A Myth of Regeneration[49]

Among these, the most relevant for this study is the Golden Age. Neither a fiction nor a chronicle, the Golden Age is a mixture of history and legend. According to Anthony D. Smith, the concept has been used to describe epochs of 'moral virtue and literary and artistic creativity' for any 'collective achievement from religious zeal to military expansion and economic success' (Smith 1997: 40). As an idealised construction of the past, the myth is usually constructed by those who need to bear the burden of a period of decline. Hence, the emergence of the myth of the Golden Age will be one of the best indicators we have to identify a 'period of darkness'.

The first reference to the Golden Age is found in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, a Greek poem composed after 700 B.C. The poem is divided into three parts and, apart from being a poetic manual on farming and general husbandry, it can be seen as a response of one individual to changes that have occurred in his world. In the first part, Hesiod formulated a scheme of five ages (or races): Golden, Silver, Bronze, Demigods and Iron. 'Race' is the more accurate translation, but 'Golden Age' has become so established in English that both terms should be mentioned. For Hesiod, the members of the Golden Age had been created by Cronus and 'lived like gods'. They were also free from 'toils and grief', never grew old, and 'delighted in festivities beyond all evils'. In short, 'they had all good things'. The poem continues describing the members of the other ages (which were not created by Cronus but his son, Zeus) and their relations with the gods in what is a clear narrative of decline and the degeneration, culminating in the present day Iron race, into which Hesiod wished he

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[49] See Smith (1999: 62-68). Slightly different versions of the listing are provided in *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986: 192) and *Chosen Peoples* (2003: 174).

had never been born. The final age, the antithesis of the Golden Age, was the decadent Iron Age: 'For now the race is indeed of iron. Not ever during the day will men cease from labor and grief; not even at night will they cease from being oppressed' (Hesiod 1996: 67-73). As with other myths, it is difficult to know whether Hesiod's remarks about the past were accurate or were a nostalgic recall of the 'good old days'. What is clear is that the world in which man used to live was perfect and now all was lost.

The case of Hesiod gives some clues as to *when* a Golden Age will emerge. The Golden Age is usually born in historical twilights in which rapid social and economic changes take place. Very often it is a reaction to a definite threat, political or military, from outside the community (Smith 1999: 83). The myth is the result of imagination while being in contradiction with reality. It can be considered an exercise of escapism, but reality tends also to manifest itself in it. That is the reason why myths have contradictory structures. Desires are always implied in myths, such as the lost relative who comes back from the 'other world' to give final instructions of revenge; or the warrior who being surrounded by enemies, becomes invisible and saves his own life and the community. It is the imagination that produces the desire to save the warrior and projects reality in a mythical surrounding. But that imagination does not always remain constant in the life of a community. The community's needs may change and, as a consequence, the content of the myth also has to evolve. Moreover, the Golden Age itself may change altogether. Nowadays, the number of Golden Ages has increased and its presence can be traced to almost any academic discipline, from cinema and animation to radio, comic-books, literature, classical antiquity, astronomy and even economic performance. The term has also been used to describe splendid times such as ancient Athens, Medici Florence, the period 1572-1648 in the Netherlands or 17th century Imperial Spain. The content of each of these Golden Ages may be radically different from country to country but also throug time. In any case, they remain as examples of virtue, splendour and great courage and constitute a revolt against a concrete historical time.

Due to its potential to project an attitude and inspire political action, the Golden Age has become a necessary myth for nationalism. 'All peoples that have a history have a paradise,

a state of innocence, a Golden Age', as Schiller remarked.[50] However, a forgotten Golden Age could torment the nationalist mind and condemn it to sterile nostalgia. What else can be the result of looking for heaven on earth? However, yearning for yesterday can also trigger vigorous political action to recover that same Golden Age. Nationalisms usually link a myth of decline with one of regeneration. In this respect, nationalism takes much from the Judeo-Christian tradition which 'moves from paradise lost to paradise regain, from Eden through the wilderness of Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey, and hence from retrospection to prophecy' (Levin 1970: 5). This structure was similarly present in Hesiod's story - an idealised past, a narrative of decline, and a decadent present - which, since then, resonates in successive Golden Ages. The superior virtues of the Golden Age have become part of almost every national movement as they identify the heroic essence of the nation and the characteristics that need to be emulated. Almost every nation has a time in history which is looked on with admiration and nostalgia. According to the quote from Emile M. Cioran which opened this chapter, myths and utopias are indispensable guiding lights needed in all societies. They help human beings transcend the limits of history and leave an imprint of progress during their brief time on earth.

The Golden Age cannot survive without repetition and mechanisms of social and cultural reproduction. Without them, the myth would be forgotten and would be lost in time. For its survival the myth needs new generations to believe in it, and pass it onto the next one by ritually thinking, writing, and adapting it to new circumstances. And for that to happen, the myth needs to encapsulate universal meaning which can be understood by peoples from all times. People of a community need to identify with the social meaning of the myth. Only if the myth has metaphysical content will people see their reflection and that of their ancestors. That is the reason why the myth so often takes, imitates and repeats an archetype, so people can observe what Mircea Eliade called 'a situation in the cosmos' (Eliade 1955: 3). Having said that, the myth does not only survive because members of the collective spontaneously recognise its intrinsic value. The role of the elites also needs to be recognised in the choosing which myths may be reproduced, particularly if they can spur social change. Because the Golden Age does not have to be historically accurate to be

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[50] Cited in Henry Levin's excellent book, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (1970). Levin also cites Schiller when discussing the universal and the individual response to the Golden Age: 'Moreover, every single man has his paradise, his golden age, which he recollects with more or less rapture according to his more or less poetic nature' (Levin 1970: xv).

accepted, it is unproblematic to argue that intelligentsias might use those myths to achieve their own goals. However, if the Golden Age is to be effective it needs to be perceived as 'authentic'. As Anthony D. Smith has persuasively argued, the Golden Age has to be historically verifiable if it is to last:

> Nationalist fabrications may succeed for a moment, but their inevitable exposure is likely to divert energy and induce cynicism and apathy for the national cause. To inspire wonder and emulation, the Golden Age must be well attested and historically verifiable. *Pure* 'invention of tradition' is ineffective.[51]

Smith rightly states that a *pure* construction is ineffective, but does not say how much fabrication is possible. He is right to point out that it can not be entirely false, but it does not need to be historically accurate either. The level of fabrication allowed fluctuates and its acceptance does not only depend on the resonance it has with the people, but on the power of elites to impose such discourse.

2.2. The Basque Golden Age

By the end of the 16th century the long period of prosperity characterised by Spain's dominance in both Europe and the Americas was over. The country had made colossal exertions in order to control its vast overseas dominions and an overstretched empire was now taking its toll on the country's resources. The kingdom had severe economic problems which, together with epidemics, rising taxes and food shortages, led to popular dissatisfaction. Foreign enterprises to fight 'heresy' had gone tremendously wrong, and in 1588 the supposedly invincible Spanish Armada had suffered defeat in the English Channel. On top of all, the death in 1598 of the king who had governed Spain for more than fifty years, Philip II, marked the end of a century characterised by a mixture of triumphs, disappointments, and miseries.

It is not surprising that the 16th century was followed by a mood of introspection and bitter self-criticism. General disillusionment was felt by the popular classes, particularly in the second half of the 17th century, and a sense of decay prevailed. Intellectuals and scholars turned to analyse the social ills of Spain with great fatalism. The *arbitristas*, for example,

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[51] Smith (1997: 59).

were writers who developed *arbitrios* or proposals for economic and political reform. Their projects for economic, social and moral regeneration were not always feasible but are an important indicator of the worries of the time. Their pessimistic writings focused on Castile, rather than Spain, and the political life of the capital, rather than the life of the provinces.[52] This distinction between Castile and Spain exists because in the 16th century, Hapsburg Spain was not a unified state but an association of provinces which enjoyed their own laws, institutions and monetary systems. The main building blocks of Spain were the Crown of Castile (which included Castile, the kingdom of Navarre and the Basque Provinces) and the Crown of Aragon (which comprised the territories of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia). The political community was united by religion and by a Hispanic monarchy based on a pact between the diverse realms. Comparatively speaking Spain did not differ from other European countries such as France and Britain which also had aggregative monarchies.

But everything changed in the 17th century. The Hapsburg monarchy attempted to take further the process of centralisation initiated by the Catholic Kings by unifying legal codes, taxes, and armies. The bankruptcies of the beginning of the century led the Castilian political elite to advocate tighter control of the different realms of Spain. This move to concentration was seen as a rupture of the pact that sustained the Hispanic Monarchy and, as a reaction, territorial identities came to the fore during the seventeenth century. In 1640, for example, revolts in Portugal and Catalonia represented major challenges to the Hispanic Monarchy and led to the eventual separation of the former and a temporary partial annexation of the latter to France. The problems in Catalonia were motivated by the taxes and military charges that the head of government, the infamous Count-Duke of Olivares, attempted to impose on the region to finance the war against Richelieu's France. The Catalan Parliament refused to cooperate with the Hispanic Monarchy, rightly arguing that the imposition of those taxes were against the local laws of the Principality. The rebellion not only precipitated the fall of Olivares, but also put aside indefinitely his plans to frame a centralised monarchy based on Castilian laws (Elliott 1963).

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[52] An analysis of the role of the Spanish *arbitristas* (proposers of *arbitrios* or expedients) is provided by Henry Kamen in his book the *Later Seventeenth Century, 1665-1700* (1980: 68-70).

The Basque Golden Age emerged in this historical context and in parallel to the moves to unify the Iberian peninsula.[53] The Basque Golden Age is a literary tradition with deep roots in Basque history, which was unified, to a large extent, in the 19th century.[54] It can not be considered as a unified and homogeneous set of practices and beliefs but, rather, an evolving myth. Its significance has to be found in the fact that it provides a vehicle for Basque ethnic identity. Representations of the Basque ideal past reflected conceptions of the historical origins of the Basque community. Hence, we could define the Basque Golden Age as a literary tradition that emphasised the distinct ethnic characteristics of Basques from a mythical perspective.[55] As it can be seen in Figure 1, we can divide the myth into three domains: religious, social and political. The religious domain makes reference to the idea that the Basques are a people chosen by God to set the moral standard in the world. Also in the religious domain we find the idea of Basque being a divine language. The second domain, the social, refers to concepts of universal nobility and purity of blood, meaning free of Moorish or Jewish influence. Finally, the political sphere highlights the *fueros*, or codes of ancient laws and privileges whose maintenance was sworn by the Kings and Queens of Castile down to the sixteenth century, as symbols of its millenarian independence.

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[53] However, in the 15th century Basques obtained satisfaction and material wealth from belonging to a State that was colonizing the Americas. Basques participated as scribes, functionaries, ecclesiastics, technicians, sailors, soldiers in the imperial endeavour and made their presence felt in Castile and the Indies. According to Gregorio Monreal, the 'Basques of Alava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya manifested strong loyalty to the Castilian monarchy throughout the Middle Ages'. Monreal also points out that there was 'clear gratitude' from Basques 'towards the Catholic Kings, who during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries played a major role in the pacification and modernization of the Basque Country'. See Monreal (1985: 19-20).

[54] A cautionary note should be included here. The Basque Golden Age is, to a large extent, an academic construct which unifies a series of Basque authors who elaborated on the mythical aspects of Basque ethnic identity. However, I am not alone in the use of the concept which was first introduced by the Basque anthropologist Juan Aranzadi in his book *Milenarismo Vasco* ([1982] 2000).

[55] These authors also had a good deal of sources which proved the long ethnic history of the Basques. The earliest evidence about Basques living in Northern Spain and Southern France comes from the records of several classical historians and geographers such as Livy, Pomponius Mela, Strabo, Ptolemy, and Pliny. According to all of them, the Basque territories, or *saltus Vasconum*, were occupied by different peoples. From the 8th century onwards, the largest ethnic group, the Vascons, constituted a focus of resistance against the Muslims and the Franks of Charlemagne, who were defeated in Roncesvalles in 788. The first 'Basque' political organisation was the Kingdom of Navarre, which was formed during the IX century. Navarre had its maximum splendour under Sancho III the Great (992-1035). Then, began a decline of his dynasty that ended with Sancho VII (1234) who left no heir. This provoked the introduction of French dynasties in Navarre. During a war between Spain and France, the Spanish king invaded Navarre and incorporated it into the Crown of Castile in 1512. The following year, the first *fueros* were signed between the Kingdom of Spain and Navarre. The *fueros* were agreements between the two kingdoms by which each would keep their own institutions and laws. See, for example, Julio Caro Baroja's *Los Vascos* (1958).

Figure 1: The Basque Golden Age

Religion

Chosen
People

Universal
Nobility

Millenarian
Independence

Society

Politics
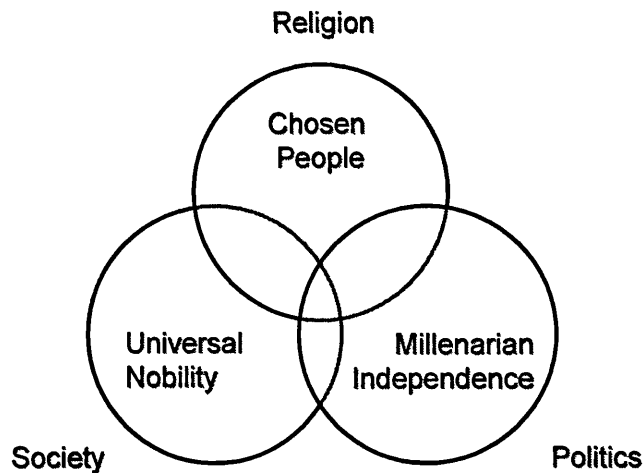
It is difficult to classify the authors who created the Basque Golden Age in one single sphere the authors . None of them did it consciously and it could be argued whether their works or they themselves should be included. The first two domains, the religious and the social, were pre-eminent during the 16th and 17th centuries, in the works of Juan Martínez de Zaldivia, Esteban Garibay y Zamalloa, and Andrés de Poza. They expressed their political thought through historiographical works which, although not very influential at the time, became 'literary weapons' during the 17th century when Spain was trying to impose its influence on the Basque Provinces. In the 18th century, Manuel de Larramendi stands on his own as the most important author and forerunner of Basque ethnic identity at a time of political centralisation.

2.2.1. Religious Aspects of the Basque Golden Age

The religious aspect of the Basque Golden Age is epitomised by the idea of the chosen people. The concept is not originally Basque and it can be found in many nations. From Ancient to Imperial states, through stateless nations or, even, mini-states, the sense of sacredness is a significant factor of national identity. The first nation to make use of the term 'chosen people' were the Israelites who assumed they had been chosen by God to

fulfil the mission of proclaiming his truth among all the nations of the world. The term is a free translation of the biblical terms '*am segullah* (treasured people) and '*am nahallah* (heritage people) and is a recurring theme in Jewish liturgy as expressed in many passages of Scripture[56]. The idea of a 'chosen people' is important as long as it gives a sense of collective mission, whereby the individual strengthens his or her links with the community. Hence, the importance of the idea of the chosen people is functional:

> Briefly, it sees a particular people as the vessel chosen by a deity for a special religious task or mission in the world's moral economy. By performing that mission, the elect will be set apart and sanctified, and their redemption, and that of the world, will be assured. The people in question may be felt to possess special qualities which justify the privilege bestowed upon them, and their destiny is defined in religious terms as redemption through correct and full performance of the sacred task with which they were entrusted.[57]

In the 16th century some Basques thought that, like the Israelites, they were the chosen people. The similarities with Israel are particularly fascinating because Basques did not feel like Israelites, but somehow 'knew' they were Israelites. Examples of Basque attempts to establish a link with Israelites are provided by Parellada de Cardellac in his book *El origen de los Vascos* (1976).[58] For example, he describes how the Basque language was thoroughly compared with Hebrew in a search for similarities. Furthermore, during the 16th century Basque authors like Juan Martínez de Zaldívia considered Basques one of the 10 lost tribes from Israel. For example, in his *Suma de cosas cantabricas y guipuzcoanas*(1564), Zaldivia traces the noble origins of the Basques to the Biblical Flood, and, more specifically to Noah himself:

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[56] One example is the conversation between Moses and God: 'if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine you will be my kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (Exodus 19: 5-6). The idea of the chosen people has historically had a profound and lasting effect on the Jews, because it imparted a special significance to their relationship with God. It implied a covenant between God and the people of Israel whereby Israel was to be faithful to God and obey his commandments, and God in turn was to protect and bless his faithful people. According to Anthony D Smith, 'any backsliding, any infringement of God's ordinances, incurred divine displeasure and punishment, and the possible loss of elect status. That was indeed, the classical interpretation of the destruction of the temple at the hands of the Babylonians in 586 BC, and then again by the Romans in 70 AD' (Smith 1999: 335).
[57] Smith (1999: 335).
[58] See, for example, pages 217 and 218 of his *El origen de los vascos* (1976). The links between Hebrew and Euskara have also been explored by Aranzadi (2000: 414-421).

After that memorable Flood all the human beings perish except the eight souls the Scriptures mention. Those involved in the construction of that tower of Babylon which is mentioned in chapter 11 of the Genesis spoke one of the 71 languages. Tubal, son of Jafet, spoke one of those languages and when he came to Hispania, he brought it with him. But he stopped in the Pyrinees and the Basques and the Navarrese have his language, the Euskera, which Tubal and his fellow travellers brought.[59]

Paradoxically, the Basques of that time liked to compare themselves to the Israelites whilst emphasising at the same time that they did not have Jewish blood. Since 1492, when the Catholic Kings had expelled all the Moors and Jews from Spain, only 'second class subjects' had Jewish blood. Pure ancestry and personal honour were intimately linked and they were a requisite for ecclesiastical appointments. Later on, in 1547 statutes of *limpieza* had spread over Spain and the Spanish Inquisition started its search for *marranos*, or descendant of Jews. The Basques drew from their survival of the Flood their own moral lesson. If they had survived the flood, then, they would have been a living example of what God considered an example of supreme moral behaviour and justice. God decided to chastise all men and women, but awarded one exception, the Basques. At the time, the mention of Tubal is also not rare, because he was considered the father of Hispania and Basques felt truly Spaniards.[60]

A direct consequence of being a 'chosen people' concerned the Basque language. If Basques were the first inhabitants of Spain and they spoke the language of their founding father, Tubal, then their language had to be of divine origin. The dominant myth of origin of the Euskara during the 16th and 17th centuries was that Basque was one of the seventy-one languages which came into being after the destruction of the Tower of Babel. A series of authors pointed to the 'extreme antiquity' of the Basque language. According to Zaldivia, Tubal was given the task of repopulating the Iberian lands, and brought a divine language with him, Euskara. However, the antiquity of the Basque language was mainly developed in the work of the Basque chronicler, Esteban de Garibay (1533-1599). His main concern was Spanish history but he also wrote accounts of the Basque Provinces and even became an authority on the history of Navarre (Caro Baroja 2002: 233). His work emphasised the leading role of Tubal in the history of Spain and emphasised things Basque

[59] Azurmendi (2000: 28).
[60] Parellada de Cardellac (1976: 93-95).

as often as he could. Following Martínez de Zaldivia, Garibay emphasised the ancient origins of Basque when saying: 'one thing is certain, that no author will come up with a language that predates it in Spain'.[61] The consequences of this association have been emphasised by the Basque anthropologist Mikel Azurmendi. By affirming that Euskara was a pre-babelian language spoken in God's Paradise, these authors could argue that those who spoke that language, the Basques, had not committed any sin. They were a people with holy characteristics and language was one of them. God punished the rebel nations during the destruction of the Tower of Babel by depriving them of their original language but 'chose' the Basques among a few others. In fact, the Basque language is a mystery, which has baffled both history and philology and has produced countless mythical explanations.

2.2.2. Social Aspects of the Basque Golden Age

The history of the Basque Golden Age is a living example of how a successful narrative is constructed. This section will analyse one of the most influential aspects of pre-modern Basque identity: the doctrine of 'universal nobility' (hidalguía colectiva), which originated in the 16th century. The doctrine was made official in 1526, when the government of the province of Biscay approved the Fuero Nuevo de el Señorío de Vizcaya by which the status of nobility was applied to all native residents of the territory. The province of Gipuzkoa did the same in 1610 and universal nobility was transformed into a territorial phenomenon which had a positive effect on the inhabitants of the province. The 'Basque universal nobility' was an essential first step for achieving a military or administrative position in the opportunities offered by the exploration and exploitation of the Americas. The Basques of Biscay and Gipuzkoa, all of whom were equipped with noble status, staffed the Spanish state administration.

Moreover, the universal nobility argument was used by some Basques as a defence against the centralising policies of the Count-Duke of Olivares in an attempt to get 'special treatment' for the region (tax exemptions, etc.). On the other hand, the government in Madrid strongly opposed what it saw as an artificial creation purely designed to erode the

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[61] In Monreal (1985: 29). According to Mikel Azurmendi (2000: 39) Esteban de Garibay had read the books of Martínez de Zaldivia, hence the similarities between the two authors. For a detailed analysis of Garibay see Julio Caro Baroja's Los Vascos y la historia a través de Garibay (2002).

state's power to impose its will. An example of that tension between the centre and the periphery was a debate held at the end of the 16th century between the prosecutor of the *Chancilleria of Valladolid* (Royal Court of Justice) and the province of Vizcaya (Biscay). In 1588, the prosecutor Juan García, sent a letter to the authorities of Vizcaya questioning the common saying in the region that 'all Basques were nobles'. The basic contention of the prosecutor was that no noble ancestral estate existed without vassals attached to it. The Seignory of Biscay's immediate reaction was to hire prestigious writers to defend the doctrine of universal nobility. The most important of them was Andrés de Poza, a lawyer who had written a few years earlier a book on the antiquity of the Basque language, who was asked to prepare a reply to the prosecutor. [62] The relevance of the issue was of high importance to the public revenues. In the XVI century, there was a minority of nobles, followed by knights and squires and, finally, *hidalgos*. All nobles and knights were *hidalgos*, but not all *hidalgos* were nobles. *Hidalgos* were nobles and were not required to pay taxes. If a region was able to argue that nobility was territorial, it would institute a damaging precedent, especially at a time when Spanish troops were struggling to keep the Imperial dominions together. The Chancilleria of Valladolid argued that the only way to have nobles, or *hidalgos*, was to have bibs, people who paid taxes. If this difference was not enforced, Jews, blacks and Muslims could easily become nobles and the distinction would not be valid anymore.

The correspondence between Juan García and Andrés de Poza continued for several years and constitutes a fascinating example of how Basques defended the doctrine of universal nobility. [63] To respond to the query of the prosecutor, Poza wrote *De nobilitate in proprietate. Ad Pragmaticas de Toro & Tordesillas*, a complicated text full of legal quotations. His main argument was that the 'historical rights' of the Basques were 'sacred' and 'ancestral'. The most important argument, was as usual, the idea that the noble condition of the Basques derived from their direct descent from Tubal, and not from the Goths, from which Spaniards draw their ancestry. The Basque claim to nobility derived from the mere state of being a native of the land. Andrés de Poza put forward, as early as

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[62] Andrés de Poza had written *De la Antigua Lengua de las Españas* (1587) where he argued that the Basque language was first spoken by Tubal. See Juaristi (1992: 57-58).

[63] Juan García first wrote *De Hispaniorum Nobilitate Exemptione* which provoked an official Basque response, *De Nobilitate in Proprietate*, penned by Andres de Poza. In this treatise, Poza dated the pure ascendancy of Basques back to Tubal but also the Battle of Arrigorriaga which is analysed in detail by Jon Juaristi (1994).

1588, the idea of Basque sovereignty, namely that the relationship between Biscay and the Kingdom of Spain is a free association. If the King of Spain wished to change the relationship with the Basques, he argued, he needed to go to Biscay to renegotiate it, instead of ordering it from Madrid, as he had no authority over them. Poza was the first to argue for the historical rights of the Basques and his example would be later followed by many others.[64]

The exchange of debates between Madrid and the Basques over the *fueros* was to continue for the next three centuries. Parallel to the Spanish state-building process runs the search for the 'historical truth' that could legitimise Castile's configuration as the centre of Spain. The liberal and centralist Spanish project of the 19th century, for example, would produce a resurgence of debates between the Basque authorities and the Spanish state. This time, the exchange of views was between Don Juan Antonio Llorente, canon lawyer and historian, and the Basques Francisco Aranguren y Sobrado and Domingo Lerín y Clavijo. Llorente's *opus magnum Noticias Históricas de las tres provincias Vascongadas,* published between 1806 and 1808, challenged the view that the Basque Country was an independent political entity which in 1200 formed a confederation with Spain. Llorente's main aim was to prove that the Basques never had an independent kingdom which could sign freely the *fueros* with the King of Castile, rather that the *fueros* were a concession of the monarch to those provinces. He did not see any particularity to the history of the Basque people as they had been romanised, invaded and had historical links with Castile. According to his own words, he never opposed the defence of the *fueros* as such but he strongly opposed the defence of such rights based on pseudo-historical facts. The Spanish state shared his views but never helped him to finance his intellectual enterprise. His work, though, had the approval of the Prime Minister Godoy, which gave him full access to Ministry archives and documentation. The Spanish support was made obvious when the great intellectual Jovellanos, a close friend of Godoy, made promises of glory to Llorente if he succeeded in the endeavour of discovering the 'historical truth' (Fernández Pardo 1990: 69-84).

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[64] Gregorio Monreal has pointed out that Andrés de Poza's theory of nobility was faithfully reproduced by other legal experts such as Juan Gutiérrez, Juan de Azebedo and García de las Landeras Puente (Monreal 1985: 26).

The response of the Seignory of Biscay came from the pen of Francisco Aranguren in a short book with a long title: *Demostración del sentido verdadero de las autoridades de que se vale el Dr. D. Juan A. Llorente y de lo que en verdad resulta de los historiadores que cita con respecto al Muy Noble y Muy Leal Señorío de Vizcaya* (1807). In the book Aranguren attacks Llorente's work because, he considers, the sources are not reliable and the conclusions have no validity. The debate with Llorente, as he himself acknowledged, was about: 'the legitimacy of each of our sovereigns on Biscay'.[65] Despite the critique of Llorente's sources, Aranguren does not offer alternative sources from which different conclusions could be extrapolated. Instead he offers a different interpretation of Llorente's very own sources and concludes that Biscay was a sovereign land which had always enjoyed its own laws. The debate continued for some years while both Llorente and Aranguren started to receive extra support from both the state and the Señorío. The historiographical debate was handled with great care by the Seignory of Biscay who saw with anxiety and fear the legitimacy Llorente might give to Madrid's policies. But the debate was not to continue endlessly. Llorente had just finished the fifth volume of his *Noticias Históricas* when the Napoleonic troops crossed the Pyrenees to invade Portugal. Napoleon's attempt to change the dynasty (and install his brother Joseph Bonaparte) provoked a wave of anti-French sentiment among the Spanish people and set off the War of Independence (1808-1812). The revolt boosted Spanish nationalism and initiated the liberal project which set aside, for a few decades at least, the debate over the *fueros*.

2.2.3. Political Aspects of the Basque Golden Age

The political aspects of the Basque Golden Age mainly refer to the Basque *fueros* as symbols of ancient political independence and the principle of pre-modern egalitarianism (*igualitarismo*). Both elements were fully developed by Manuel Larramendi (1690-1766), a cleric born at the end of the 17th century who dedicated himself to a life of tranquillity and study.[66] Despite his quite life, Father Larramendi is one of the most influential pre-modern

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[65] Fernández Pardo (1990: 81).

[66] Manuel de Larramendi soon stood out as one of the brightest students and, later on, academics of the University of Salamanca. According to J. Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras he was a man who lived for philosophy and theology and 'never lost 15 minutes in useless conversations, gossiping, or trivialitites' (Tellechea 1992: 31). The fame and wisdom of the Jesuit scholar spread to the Court and he was called to start working for the Queen Maria of Neuberg, widow of Charles II of the house of the Austrias, as a personal confessor in 1730. However, he did not find pleasure in his comfortable position and three years later, he returned to his solitude.

Basque political thinkers and his memory is worshipped in Nationalist circles for his contribution to Basque self-identity and for having sketched the main goals of Basque nationalism. His politically charged work has earned him the title of forerunner of Basque nationalism by both Caro Baroja and Elorza.[67] In what follows I will analyse some of the contributions Larramendi made in his two major works: the *Corografía de Guipuzcoa*, written in 1754, and his *Conferencias sobre los Fueros* written between 1756 and 1758.

One of the most important of Larramendi's books, *Corografía de Guipuzcoa*, was written in 1750, when Larramendi was 60 years old, and it is an attempt to build a clear 'ethnic boundary' between Basques and Spaniards.[68] The book is divided into two parts. The first half is a treatise of ethnography of the province of Guipuzkoa in which the author analyses the geographical, political and religious character of 'this very noble and loyal province' (*M.N. y M.L. provincia*). The other half explains the distinct character of the Basque and his peculiar lifestyles, clothing, leisure and particular language, Euskara. In the introduction to the *Corografía*, Larramendi says his objective is to define Guipuzkoa and all its inhabitants, because Spaniards often call the Basque people 'Biscaians' when this only applies to people living in one of the Basque Provinces. However, his book does not attempt to

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Larramendi, who could have had a good position at Salamanca, at the time one of the best universities, or comfortably live in the Court, where he had no rival, preferred to spend the rest of his life in the company of books. Among them, he was to find much more comfort than being surrounded by human beings. A short biography of Larramendi can be found in the first pages of his Corografía de Guipúzcoa, edited a hundred years after his death (Larramendi 1882: 5-7).

[67] See De Otazu (1972: 216) and Elorza (1992: 137). Xabier Arzalluz, president of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) between 1980 and 2003 has also highlighted the ideological continuity between Manuel de Larramendi and Sabino de Arana. See Arzalluz Antia (1992: 75). Nevertheless, the figure of Father Larramendi has traditionally been neglected in studies on Basque Nationalism. This is due to two factors. The first concerns students of nationalism, who tend to make a clear distinction between modern and pre-modern sources, leaving individuals like Larramendi out of the picture. The second concerns regards the availability of the works. Larramendi wrote his works in the 18th century but Jesuit censorship impeded their publication during his life-time. His major books are the *Diccionario trilingüe castellano, vascuence y latín* (1745), *El imposible vencido, arte de la lengua vascongada* (1729), *Conferencias curiosas, políticas, legales y morales sobre los Fueros de la M.N. y M. L. Provincia de Guipúzcoa* (1983) and the *Corografía de Guipúzcoa* (1882), which was not published during his lifetime. The *Corografía o descripción general de la muy noble y muy leal Provincia de Gupúzcoa* was printed in Barcelona in 1882 and *Sobre los Fueros de Guipúzcoa. Conferencias curiosas, políticas, legales y morales sobre los Fueros* was published in San Sebastián as late as 1983. The latter was found in the early 1970s in a dusty folder at the Royal Academy of History by the person who became the biographer and expert on Manuel de Larramendi, J. Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras.

[68] What Larramendi tries to do is to emphasise the 'narcissistic minor differences' between Basques and Spaniards. The expression is from Michael Ignatieff who describes nationalism as a movement that emphasises 'minor differences and transforms them into major differences [...] Nationalism is a distorting mirror in which believers see their simple ethnic, religious, or territorial attributes transformed into glorious attributes and qualities. Though Freud does not explain exactly how this happens, the systematic overvaluation of the self results in systematic devaluation of strangers and outsiders. In this way narcissistic self-regard depends upon and in turn exacerbates intolerance'. Ignatieff (1997: 51-52).

distinguish Guipuzkoa from Biscay, but Guipuzkoa from Spain. If his intention was to inform Spaniards of the particularities of his province, he could have described Gipuzkoa's own culture, economy or politics. However, he prefers to trace the biblical genealogy of the Basques and emphasises the 'well-known qualities' of people from Gipuzkoa (*guipuzcoanos*) who have 'a noble blood, free from the races of Jews, moors, blacks and mulattos'.[69] According to Larramendi the Basque directly descend from Tubal and are a pure and noble nation because their blood has never been corrupted.[70] As a matter of fact,

> The nation of the Vascongados, and particularly the Guipuzkoa nation, has been looked after by God with special attention [because its] blood has never mixed with that of any other nation that came from abroad: Moors, Goths, Alans, Siling Vandals, Romans, Greeks, Carthaginians, Phoenicians or any other people. Proof of this truth is the Basque language, which distinguishes us from other nations.[71]

Larramendi argues that it is easier for Basques than for anybody else to recognise their noble origin. They do not need the help of documents or genealogies because they have never been invaded by any of the nations that invaded the rest of Spain. And the indicator of that political independence is the fact that Basque language has always been spoken in the Basque lands, whereas in the rest of Spain different languages have been used.

However the main contribution of the Corografía was to update and modernise the doctrine of Basque egalitarianism (*igualitarismo vasco*). As explained elsewhere by Alfonso de Otazu, Basque egalitarianism had its roots in the doctrine of universal nobility. The latter had been born in the middle of the 16th century and was developed during the 17th by some of the authors already mentioned (Garibay, Zaldivia, etc.). However, it was to be Father Larramendi (Aita Larramendi) who defended and clearly expounded the political implications of the doctrine in the Corografía de Gipuzcoa. According to Larramendi there were two ways of being noble - by 'origin' or by occupation. Hence, one could organically

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[69] The original text says 'viniendo todos de un origen noble y de sangre limpia de toda raza de judíos, de moros y moriscos, de negros y mulatos' (Larramendi 1882: 123). This view was not unusual at the time. On the contrary the view that Basques' racial purity was based in the notion of 'universal nobility' was prevalent among 18th century Basques (Caro Baroja 1998: 91).

[70] The use Larramendi is making of the word 'nation' denotes evolution from the traditional medieval meaning to a more modern one. The word *natio* comes from Latin, and it was first used in medieval universities to designate the sector of the country from whence the students were coming. Larramendi's use of the word is of a medieval character with modern overtones. He wants to overcome the traditional meaning of *natio* in the XVIII century as a territory with unique characteristics, and transform it into an ethnic concept; a concept that allows everyone to recognise the immemorial distinct character of the Basques.

[71] Larramendi (1882: 128).

inherit an original nobility or could acquire it through labour. Within this scheme, Basques have the original nobility which is common to all of them. Larramendi says that Gipuzkoa was different to Rome because the inhabitants of the former could not be distinguished 'between patricians and plebeians' and were 'equal in all things' (Larramendi 1882: 142). Yet again, the importance of this doctrine is that it will be used during the 19th century by both Carlists and nationalists as a political weapon (Otazu 1973: 7 & 101).

The second major book written by Father Larramendi, *Conferencias sobre los Fueros* is best understood in the light of the Bourbon centralising project of the early 18th century, which laid the foundations of the modern Spanish state. The Bourbon dynasty, which still rules Spain today, initiated a series of reforms in politics, imperial policy, finance and the army which attempted to endow its domains with a sense of unity based on French enlightened despotism. Most of these reforms were implemented to pay for the War of Succession (1700-1714) which at the time were fought by the Bourbon and Austria dynasties to confirm their right to the Spanish throne. In 1705 the realm of Aragon showed some reluctance to financially help Castile and Philip V seized the opportunity to enforce his will and suppress the *fueros*, which stood in the way of the reorganisation of Spain. In an infamous 1707 decree, Philip V abolished the *fueros* of Aragon and Valencia and expressed his desire to 'reduce all the realms of Spain to the uniformity of the same laws, traditions and courts and govern them with the laws of Castile'.[72] Nine years later, in 1716, royal laws suppressed the parliaments and local charters of Catalonia and Mallorca - with the exception of civil, penal, merchant, and administrative laws. Meanwhile, Galicia, Asturias, the Basque Provinces and the Kingdom of Navarre, supporters of the Bourbon candidate and firmly within the Castilian kingdom, maintained their institutions and laws.

However, the disastrous state of the Treasury (*Hacienda Pública*) after the War of Succession, forced Madrid to establish tighter control over one of the greatest sources of revenue, the customs system (Fernández Albaladejo 1977: 149). The fiscal imperative was one of the reasons why Madrid tried to remove the internal borders with the Basque Provinces, arguing that an internal border was offensive to the Kingdom and, more importantly, it promoted a great loss for the public revenue while promoting contraband.

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[72] The decree can be found in Kamen (2001: 65).

Thus, in 1717 a Royal Decree established that the Customs Office should move from the border with Castile to the maritime ports of the Basque Country. Basques protested against the decree but they were silenced by threats to use neighbouring ports to export Castilian goods. The move meant that Madrid was slowly eroding the Basque *fueros*. In the Prologue of his *Conferencias*, Larramendi hoped his work would help Basques, who seemed 'blind' and 'mute', and were oblivious to the wound the Spaniards were inflicting on them:

> The pain of seeing Gupúzcoa disregarded increases day after day and this torments me. Does it matter if I write in solitude, when fantasy makes the enemy present, as if I could see and hear them?[73]

Larramendi wrote his *Conferencias* hoping it could help redeem Basques for their historical ignorance and their lack of love for their nation and its 'glorious *fueros*'. He did so by establishing a clear ethnic boundary and pointing to the enemy: Castile. Hence, for Larramendi, the Northern Star was closer to Gipuzkoa than to Castile; the Basque territory was highly homogeneous, and the *fueros* of Gipuzkoa are the oldest of Spain. Larramendi's conception of the Basque people continues the works of Zaldivia, Garibay and Poza and contributes to the enlargement of the Golden Age tradition. Again, Tubal is presented as the father of the Basque Country and the blood of the people of Gupuzkoa is, of course, the most noble and pure one can find. However, the central idea of the work of Father Larramendi is the idea of 'loss'. Larramendi imagines a past in which everything worked because now everything goes wrong. His depiction of the present in contradiction to the past is dialectical but it is not just nostalgic. He had a political solution that might redeem the Basques from their decline:

> If we all get together, we would alarm the French in France and the Spanish in Spain. Where is that union? I would rather be silent. My greater pain is to see the harms that follow this situation. And it seems to be that we won't be able to see them until we lose the few good things we have left.[74]

This paragraph by Larramendi resembles the end of *Bizkaya por su Independencia* (1892), the most important text written by Sabino Arana as it is considered to be the founding act of modern nationalism: '[t]oday. - Bizkaya is a province of Spain, Tomorrow?, Heed these

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[73] Azurmendi (2000: 295).
[74] Azurmendi (2000: 238).

words, Bizkaians of the 19th century, the future depends on what you do'.[75] It is difficult to know whether Arana read the works of Larramendi because the former did not cite his works. In any case, the *Corografia de Guipuzcoa* is the first coherent book on the ethnic identity of the Basques. But more importantly, it is a diagnosis of the decline of the Basques, 'the most pure and noble nation that has ever been in the world'. Larramendi was not only a solitary character, but also a compulsive writer with a clear idea of what the future should be like.

2.3. Basque Romanticism

At the beginning of this chapter, I outlined how important it is for nationalist movements to rediscover a glorious past. Nowhere was this impetus to rediscover the national past greater than in the early 19th century. And nobody felt more urged to awake the 'Sleeping Beauty' of the nation than the romantics.[76] Originally, it was Johan Gottfried von Herder who, at the end of the 18th century, gave a powerful impetus to the search for the linguistic and cultural origins of nations, but his example was also followed by historians, philologists, and archaeologists, who rushed towards the genesis of nations in their respective fields. The interest in national origins continued during the 19th century, when Romanticism gave full attention to native folklore, ballads, poetry and music as well as previously ignored medieval and Renaissance works. Romanticism was concerned with the resurrection of the past and the 'invention of tradition' (Perkins 1999: 52).

Not all romantics were nationalists but the search for origins led, for the most part, to a quest for national identity. Romanticism, which found in the exotic and remote Middle Ages examples of the virtuous and heroic life, provided the ideal for a national renewal. Nationalists started to see their past as mythical, often involving glorious kingdoms, great empires and indigenous political structures. When set in contrast to the past, the present time was seen as decadent and uninspiring, and often just like the ruins of Antiquity. The search for the elements that made the national past 'authentic' was also a search for the

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[75] Arana Goiri (1980: 106-153).
[76] The idea of the nation as a Sleeping Beauty is taken from Minogue (1967), who describes the nationalist intellectual as the Prince who awakens it. Cited in Smith (1986: 191).

elements of decadence in the present. Romanticism often conjured up myths of the glories of the past in an exercise of mere escapism but also inspiration and emulation.

Basque romantics were no different to their European contemporaries and they too attempted to uncover the national past that could nurture the present. The Basque romantic tradition, better known as foralism, was born at the turn of the century and was over by 1890. [77] It was the expression of a traditional society which saw itself being transformed into a modern one. The more the century progressed, and the more modernisation processes accelerated, the more it became increasingly difficult to harmonise both the traditional order and modernity. The peak of this process was the period after the abolition of the *fueros* in 1876.[78] According to Jon Juaristi, the clash between traditionalism and modernity produced four outcomes in the Basque lands: (1) the dismantling of pre-industrial and agricultural modes of production, (2) the dissolution of traditional social relations and (3) the establishment of an education system, (4) and its effects on the decline of religious beliefs and use of Euskara (Juaristi 1987: 20).

Two stages can be distinguished within foralism: the first one comprises the development of a foralist literary tradition of romantic and epic undertones; the second, the politicisation of that tradition into a movement of cultural nationalism. The two stages of foralism were the Basque version of the processes going on in Europe where romanticism and movements of cultural re-discovery preceded the birth of political nationalism. [79] To a certain extent, foralism followed some of the characteristics of European Romanticism. The romantic revolt against classicism and neo-classicism and its emphasis on the more picturesque, original, free and imaginative styles suited very well a traditionalist class which had lost everything it had stood for. The Basque traditionalist class saw in romanticism an opportunity to re-discover the essence of things. Examples of pure and natural things were

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[77] Jon Juaristi (1987b: 93) uses the term 'historico-legendary literature' and has dated the beginning of this movement to Juan Antonio Moguel's *Peru Abarca*, written in 1802 (Juaristi 1987a: 69). The book can be seen as a defence of the disappearing rural society in which the author sees the seeds of regeneration for the Basque people. Written as a 'pedagogical dialogue' between a Basque doctor and a barber, *Peru Abarca* highlights the urban-rural tension of the time.

[78] The glorification of the fueros was also made by non-Basques. For example, two years after the abolition of the fueros, the Catalan Juan Mañé y Flaquer published a book about his trips to 'Euskal-Herria' and described it as a 'true oasis' inhabited by 'a noble people' and contemplated how an 'exotic rationalism' covered all its territory. Mañé y Flaquer was, of course, talking about the abolition of the fueros (Mañé y Flaquer 1878: prologue).

[79] See Kedourie's outstanding book *Nationalism* (1960).

easily found in the Basque past, whereas artificialities were found (and rejected) in the present. And Basque romantics had readily available 'raw materials' in the Basque Golden Age. As shown in Table 1, Basque romantics could elaborate on the many contents and indicators of the Basque Golden Age.

Table 1: The Basque Golden Age		
Domain	Content	Indicator
Religion	Chosen People	Language
Social	Universal Nobility	Race/Blood
Political	Millenarian Independence	*Fueros*

From the abundant Basque foralist literature one can extract two general points: (1) all Basque romantics had a nostalgic vision of the past or Golden Age; and (2) they were all used by nationalists in the following decades. The foralist literature praised the virtues of the *fueros*, symbol of the Basque life, and depicted the Basque lands as an Arcadia. In this harmonious land, Basques lived happily until they had to defend their land from different invasion attempts (that of the Spaniards being the latest). However, from 1876 onwards, the political tone of the works intensified and the Basques were presented as people who cherished their independence and were ready to fight for it. The (re-) creation of this sense of shared history influenced several generations of Basques (Arana among others). A totemic value was clearly ascribed to the *fueros* as they were the spine of the utopian Basque past, distinct from the industrial reality with which Basques were now presented.

These literary works created layers in the minds of many Basques who began to use mythical history as factual history. What were originally literary works, or romantic historiography at best, filled the vacuum of a scientific historiography in the Basque Country. Juaristi (1987: 16) has pointed out that the historical novel, the legend and the ballads and poems of an Ossianic nature became the Basque historiography of the 19th century.[80] The works of the period, although aiming at being historically accurate, were

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[80] The history of Basque nationalism would be highly political up to the 1980s although some good studies can be found in the 1970s. For an excellent review of Spanish historiography on its nationalisms see Núñez-Seixas (1992: 53). For the Basque case, see Granja Sainz (1992: 209).

often accused of being economical with the truth[81]. But as one of the more important authors of the period, Juan Venancio de Araquistain, said when replying to his critics, '[h]istory will make erudite people, but not heroes, especially in the masses. Only traditions, songs, and stories... have the power to inflame the imagination of the peoples'. No one expressed better these political intentions than Venancio de Araquistain. His role was to provide the nation with a series of myths and legends that could inspire the people because, as he argued, 'the nation with more tradition, songs and popular legends will be the nation with more history' (Elorza 2001: 47-47).

2.4. Conclusion

The Golden Age is a myth that portrays an epoch characterised by great prosperity and happiness. The first mention is found in *Works and Days*, where Hesiod nostalgically remembered the 'good old days'. Since then, the Golden Age has become an indispensable element of nationalism. All nationalist movements can identify a point in time when their nation was an example of virtue and goodness. However, the content of the Golden Age may differ according to the political needs of the nationalist movement. Hence, it can be used to describe Arcadian pasts but also times of literary and artistic splendour, scientific discoveries, military grandeur, economic affluence or heroic sacrifices. In any case, having a glorious and epic past is imperative for nationalist movements if they aim to draw political conclusions from their ancestors. The fact that the Golden Age, as all myths, is a combination of historical facts and legendary elaboration should not divert our attention. Nor should we be troubled because nationalist elites manipulate the masses on the basis of tailored-made historical constructs. What is important is that the core of the nation (the people) perceives the myth as authentic and meaningful.

The Basque Golden Age is a literary tradition that starts in the 16th century and ends with 19th century Basque romanticism. The rise of the scientific method and the transformation of the Basques - from ethnic group to nation - will radically change the content of that Golden Age. The boundaries of the Basque Golden Age are unclear but I divided them into

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[81] Even the most 'scientific' works were accused of such historical bias. An example of this is the dispute between Basque and Spanish historiography on the fueros, check Cirujano Marin, Paloma, *Historiografía y Nacionalismo Español (1834-1868)*, especially chapter 3 of the second part 'Centralización y federación: los fueros en el reverso de una polemica'.

three domains - religious, social and political. As a literary tradition, the Basque Golden Age can be seen as a genealogy of the Basque people. In an attempt to establish the continuity between the ancestors and the present time the myth took various forms: the idea of the chosen people, divine language, universal nobility, blood purity, etc. However, the search and identification of a myth of descent was not a Basque abnormality. On the contrary, as Léon Poliakov has proven in *Le Mythe Aryen*, the search for myths of origin was common to all European nations (Poliakov 1971:347). The end of the Basque Golden Age cannot be dated accurately but it roughly corresponds with the emergence of professional historiography in Spain.

The significance of the Basque Golden Age is not its historical accuracy but its extreme historical resilience. The fact that several elements of the myth, the 'usable past', were taken up by Basque nationalists in their writings contributed to the emergence of Basque nationalism. The establishment of a continuous line between pre-modern Basque thought and modern nationalism helped the movement to be perceived as 'indigenous' or 'authentic'. By referring to ethnicity Sabino Arana and his followers could effectively raise the issue of the appropriateness of the Spanish institutional framework for such a 'noble people'. At the same time, by uncritically taking issues of the myth such as the blood superiority of Basques, the doctrine of universal nobility or its original egalitarianism, Basque nationalism was acquiring some of the politics and assumptions of the past. For example, it acquired a long list of historical grievances and national wounds which its political project had to heal. As will be seen in the following section, Basque nationalism rapidly established an ethnic boundary between Spaniards and Basques and had a troublesome time trying to incorporate migrants into Basque lands. The tree of nationalism had been planted on a soil with an extreme potential for exclusiveness.

Chapter Three

THE EMERGENCE OF BASQUE NATIONALISM (1833-1903)

It is evident that the salvation of the Basque society, its current regeneration and hope in the future are all pinned on absolute isolation, on leaving aside all outside elements, on racial exclusion and on excluding all that is not clearly Basque, inexorably rejecting everything that is exotic, immoral and harmful.

Sabino Arana[82]

Basque nationalism was born in Bilbao at the end of the 19th century. At the time, Bilbao was experiencing a rapid process of industrialisation and hosted some of the conflicting cleavages that cut across the Basque Country and much of Spain: traditionalism-liberalism, socialism-Catholicism, Basque-Spaniard and, more importantly, new-old. Besides being the by-product of a city, Basque nationalism is the expression of the traditionalist class. As a result of their defeats in two civil wars, also known as the Carlist Wars, Basque traditionalists had lost their beloved *fueros* and witnessed how Spanish immigrants were coming in their thousands to the industrial Basque lands. These immigrants brought with them new traditions, languages and ideas that were seen as 'foreign' by many Basques. Traditionalists initially reacted to this process by consuming foralist literary works that praised a harmonious vision of a pre-industrial and rural Basque Country. Some Basques made obvious their discontent with the present situation and wanted a return to the Basque pre-industrial society, though this time through nationalism.

Sabino Arana's nationalism effectively articulated the feelings of the traditionalist class by providing a regenerationalist project. His political programme did not come out of the blue; he carefully incorporated elements of previous Basque movements, such as Carlism or Foralism, in order for his message to resonate among other Basques. Paraphrasing Anthony D. Smith, Arana picked up and assembled the 'available raw materials'. Arana associated the evils of industrial society, such as the decline of Catholicism and the declining use of Euskara, with the coming of the Spanish immigrant. The Spanish immigrant, whom he called *maketo*, was the agent blamed for the moral and racial decline of the Basques. Thus,

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[82] 'Extranjerización' in Arana (1980: 1761).

he would dedicate all his work to erecting an ethnic boundary between Basques and Spaniards so to avoid the mixing of the two groups. And the best way to separate both groups was synthesised in one of his mottos: 'Euzkadi is the motherland of the Basques' (*Euzkadi es la patria de los vascos*). Basques would only effectively avoid Spaniards if they had a country. In 1892, Arana wrote:

> Today. - Bizkaya is a province of Spain
> Tomorrow. - ....?
> Heed these words, Bizkaians of the 19th century, the future depends on what you do.[83]

In the first stages, the invitation to secession was badly received, but by the end of his life Arana had managed to attract a wide group of followers and today he is considered one the most influential persons in Basque history. He was the founding father and key reference point for both Basque nationalism and the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV).

Arana's contribution, however, can only be understood when framed by Spanish history. Several other regions in the Iberian Peninsula have a strong ethnic identity: Andalusia, Aragon, Catalonia and Galicia, to name just a few. If we explain the persistence of identity exclusively by the character of their peoples (whatever that might be), then Spain is a country of fabulous regional characters. Rather, it seems that an effective explanation for the persistence of non-Castilian forms of identity associated with the nation or region needs to take in account the weakness of the Spanish state-building project. It is only in the early 20th century that Spain comes to possess a fully effective state-apparatus capable of 'nationalising'. The lack of these strong state structures in previous eras helps explain the persistence of regional and local forms of identity at least until the aftermath of the French revolution. Although developments in Spain did not completely differ from general European trends, Spanish nationalism, its nation-building process and its impact on the wider population has been approached with scepticism by academics and remains a highly under-researched topic.[84] The following section deals with some of the issues of the Spanish nation-building process.

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[83] Quoted in Kurlansky (1999: 166).
[84] For example, the historian José Álvarez Junco has complained about the lack of a study on Spanish nationalism comparable to that of Eugen Weber on France, George Mosse on Germany or Linda Colley on Britain. See Álvarez Junco (2001: 19).

3.1. The Spanish Nation-Building Process

The strong prevalence of peripheral national identities makes Spain a difficult case to deal with. Every hispanicist has to come to terms with why Spain is a state for all Spaniards, a nation-state for a large part of the population, but only a state and not a nation for important minorities (Linz 1973: 36). Also, Spanish historiography is confronted with the very same issue. While the majority of historians agree on the weakness of the Spanish state-building process, they disagree on the level of resonance of Spanish nationalism *vis a vis* peripheral nationalisms.[85] The same debate can be found in other countries where it has been difficult to identify the real impact of the core of the Nation-state over the periphery.[86] In Spain, that core is Castile. In the words of Ortega y Gasset, 'Castile has made Spain'.[87] Castile is to Spaniards what England is to Britons, Prussia to Germans and Piedmonte to Italians: the core *ethnie*.[88] Nowadays, Spain is best defined as polycentric and its citizens are loyal to communities other than the Spanish: the Basque, the Catalan, the Galician, the Canary or the Andalusian. This is the result of a particularly weak nation-building process, which never overcame regional identities. As John Breully (2001: 35) has pointed out, 'divisions by privilege and region blocked the formation of national identity independent of the Castilian monarchy'.

The co-existence of different communities within Spain has its origins in medieval times when the state did not control all its territory. What is commonly considered as the birth of Spain, the marriage of the Catholic Kings in 1470, was not a full unification of the two kingdoms. The dynastic union of Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon joined the two most important crowns of the Iberian Peninsula, but no real effort was made to

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[85] In the early 1990s two renowned historians, Juan Pablo Fusi and Borja de Riquer, debated their views in the pages of *Historia Social* on this very same issue. A first article, by Fusi, argued that it was the failure of the Spanish nationalist project to incorporate the peripheral nationalist elites that produced the birth and development of nationalism in various regions in Spain (mainly Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia). An opposing view, held by the Catalan historian, de Riquer, argued that the reason why the Spanish nationalist project did not succeed was that it did not take in account other pre-existing forms of identity. See de Riquer (1990) and the response by Fusi (1990).

[86] Eugene Weber argues that most of the population of France did not become 'Frenchmen' until the First World War after they had gone through mass education. See Weber (1979).

[87] Ortega y Gasset (1999: 33).

[88] *Ethnies* have been defined by A.D.Smith as 'named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity' (Smith 1986: 32). In the Spanish case, Castile and Castilian became the core of Spanish nationalism in the 19th century liberal historiography and it is best epitomised by Modesto Lafuente's 30 volume work *Historia de España*. See Payne (2000: 96).

integrate both kingdoms. The rule of the Catholic Kings was cemented through the exaltation of a common Christian faith and joint enterprises against 'outsiders' (such as the Moors and the Jews, who were finally expelled in 1492). As Henry Kamen has pointed out, the dynastic 'marriage did not, and could not, create a new united Spain' (Kamen 1983: 10). A similar method of ruling was used later on by the Habsburg dynasty, which came to power in 1519. According to Nuñez Seixas, '[t]he Habsburgs' Spain exhibited the traditional formula of 'aggregative monarchy', that is, the existence of different 'kingdoms' united by a common Crown and the principle of dynastic loyalty, with each of them retaining their diverse laws, taxes, mores and political traditions' (Nuñez Seixas 2000: 483-518).

By the end of the eighteenth century, *ancién regime* Spain was still marked by the strong presence of diverse traditions, political privileges and legal codes. At the time, more than ten languages were spoken in the peninsula, almost every region had its legal and fiscal peculiarities and the territory was fragmented by internal borders. The impact on the identity of the subjects of the kingdom is not surprising; they felt more attached to their local and regional identities than to a Spanish identity. (Álvarez Junco 2001: 75). During the 19th century, a Spanish nationalism will be conceptualised but will lack a fully articulated state to impose the ideology. Thus, reactions came from the peripheries, the most important being those of Catalonia and the Basque Country which, at that time, had successfully retained distinct customary laws and legal codes. The Basque Provinces and Navarre retained political institutions of their own, such as governing assemblies and collective territorial privileges, the so-called *fueros*. The governing bodies changed slightly from province to province, but they all had a general assembly with an executive branch, called *diputación*. The main privileges that came with the *fueros* were the province's exemption from recruitment, taxation and internal tariffs that applied to the rest of Spain (Carr 1992: 74). The *fueros* were the basis of the autonomy for these provinces and turned out to be one of the main targets of Spanish liberalism in the 19th century. People identified with the locality and the region, something the liberals were keen to change. The building of the Spanish national body provoked reactions from both the traditionalists of the centre and the peripheries that saw their privileges vanish. The Basque reaction to these processes is now analysed in the following section.

3.2. Building Blocks of Basque Nationalism

As pointed out in the previous chapter, the origins of Basque identity are found in pre-modern times. Common 'myths of descent' were prevalent among the reading elites and being noble had political advantages. However, the rest of the Basque population did not draw any political implication from their ethnic self-definition. Everything changed with two historical events that unfolded in the 19th century: the Carlist Wars and the foralist movement that followed the abolition of the *fueros*. These two processes contributed to the formation of a cross-class Basque identity and became building blocks of Basque nationalism. In the Carlist Wars, two views of Spain were confronted: the liberal and the conservative. The conservative cause attracted many Basques who felt their concerns would be better defended on that side. The Basques defended their privileges, or *fueros*, from the centralist measures of the liberals and when the *fueros* were abolished, the defeat was mainly interpreted as a Basque defeat. In the second set of events, Foralism started when the Spanish state exerted increasing pressure against the *fueros* at the end of the eighteenth century and by 1876 was at its highest peak. After the abolition decree of 1876, an intense process of industrialisation started in the Basque Country that eroded traditional forms of life and brought the Spanish immigrant to the Basque doorstep. And Basque nationalism seized upon the shared identity created by these events. As Braudel would put it, 'breathing a soul into it'.[89]

3.2.1. The Carlist Wars

In the last decades of the 18th century the French and American Revolutions initiated a process of revolt that continued into the next century. The political systems both revolutions created were as much praised as despised in the European courts and 'tradition' and 'revolution' took leading roles in the transition from the ancien régime to the capitalist, secular, liberal society of 19th century Europe. In Spain, the transition to a modern society confronted the liberals and the traditionalists, who came to be known as Carlists.

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[89] Braudel (1993: 41).

The liberals had come to power during the War of Independence (also known as the Peninsular War, lasting from 1808 to 1814) against Napoleonic troops and had initiated a progressive set of reforms. With the introduction of the first liberal Constitution in 1812, the traditional interdependency of the Church and the state began to change in favour of secularism and a struggle ensued between the two that would last throughout the 19th century. Their project soon encountered resistance from Spanish conservatives, who saw their interests endangered by the proposed changes and preferred 'a traditionalism based on a vision of Spain's Golden Age' (MacClancy 2000: 2). In contrast to liberals who put forward rationalisation measures, conservatives wanted the country ruled by a responsive monarch who would be answerable to his *Cortes* and would uphold the central position of the Church.

Carlism first entered Spanish politics in 1833 to initiate the first of two Spanish civil wars of the 19th century, the Carlist Wars.[90] Dismissed by Raymond Carr as a 'revolution of inadaptables' (Carr 1992: 187), at the time, Carlism gained the attention of Karl Marx, who proposed to study it with open eyes. For Gerald Brenan, the author of *The Spanish Labyrinth*, the Carlists 'had no policy but to return to the seventeenth century' where 'safety and tranquility' could be found.[91] A counter-revolutionary movement, Carlism did not have a political programme outside the defence of the Church and the traditional monarchy. As John F. Coverdale has pointed out, Carlism was a defensive reaction of a traditional society to the threat to its existence posed by liberal political, social, economic, and religious policies (Coverdale 1984: 4).

The social basis of Carlism was made up of the classes tied to the pre-industrial economic structure: peasants, rural owners, clergy and craftsman. Although it is debatable whether Carlism is a Spanish or Basque phenomenon, Carlism took deeper root in the Basque Country than anywhere else in Spain, with the sole exception of Catalonia.[92] As Stanley G. Payne has pointed out, 19th century Carlism 'operated in terms of two dimensions: a

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[90] Some traditionalist historians count three wars instead of two. For example, Josep Carles Clemente calls the Second Carlist War the Catalan rebellion of 1846-1849, also known as 'Guerra dels Matiners'. See Clemente (1990; 2000).

[91] Brenan (1943: 204-205).

[92] For more information on the Spanishness or Basqueness of Carlism see Stanley Payne's article 'Carlism – Basque or 'Spanish' Nationalism?' (1977) and John F. Coverdale's book: *The Basque Phase of Spain's First Carlist War* (1984).

broadly national Spanish movement with steadily diminishing support the farther it spread from the north and east toward the south and west, and a majority regionalist force in the main mountainous region of the northeast, resting mainly on the four Basque Provinces and secondarily on the more hilly or rugged regions of western Catalonia'.[93]

The First Carlist War, from 1833 to 1839, was fought principally in the Basque Country, Navarre, Aragon and Catalonia. Initially a dispute about dynastic rights, the war confronted urban liberalism with rural traditionalism. The triggering event was the so-called *cuestión dinástica* after the death of King Ferdinand VII in 1833. The King had been unsuccessful in producing a male heir, and after his death his daughter Isabelle II was proclaimed monarch. The King's brother, Don Carlos, denied the validity of this promulgation through the Salic law of 1713, which decreed that only male offspring could succeed to the throne. The two sides came to be known as *isabelinos* and *carlistas*, taking the names of the two contenders to the throne. Carlist strength was confined to the rural east (Aragón and Catalonia) and the north of Spain, especially in Navarre and the Basque Country, where there was strong support against liberal centralism and for the traditional Roman Catholic order represented by the religiousity of Don Carlos and his circle.[94] The Church rose up against the government with much support from the lower social classes. The peasants in particular took up arms in support of the Church as many of them were directly displaced by the disentailing laws, and forced to move to the industrialising cities.[95] However, the main Basque cities, San Sebastián, Pamplona, Vitoria and, most especially, Bilbao, remained liberal.[96] Carlism did not appeal to the urban and enlightened classes which saw the liberal

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[93] Quoted in Coverdale (1984: 7).

[94] This is not to say, as nationalist interpretations claim, that the Carlist Wars were one of many 'national' struggles for the independence of the Basque Country. The first author to defend this view was Joseph-Augustin Chaho, in his *Voyage en Navarre pendant l'insurrection des Basques de 1830-1835*, where he presented Carlism as a tactical expression of Basqueness in search of their independence. Others would follow, among them Sabino Arana and more contemporarily the Jewish New Yorker, Mark Kurlansky who writes about the Basques as a people who only 'want to be left alone' (Kurlansky 1999: 36).

[95] By the 1830s the process of disentailment of the Church lands that would gradually strip the Church of its property had begun, creating many problems for the Church and much political resentment. Between 1836 and 1895 some 615,000 properties covering about 10 million hectares changed hands. The idea was originally implemented in order to improve the worsening agrarian situation by redistributing the land in a more economically efficient manner, and more importantly, as a way of relieving Spain's chronic debt crisis. However, the policy was extremely unpopular and led to defenders of the Church forming the largest support base for the Carlist movement. For more information, see Schubert (2003: 60).

[96] In 1835, Bilbao was the scene of an event that decided the course of the war. Conscious of its need of liquidity to fund the war, the Carlist side asked international creditors for loans. The latter made one condition: that a big city should be taken. The decision would prove to be disastrous and Bilbao became the grave both of the Carlist forces and of their beloved leader, the General Zumalacárregui.

political system as better suited to their interests. The strength of the Carlists in the countryside made them an almost impossible force to defeat in the mountains, where the skilful commander of the Basque forces, Tomás Zumalacárregui, used guerrilla tactics against the Queen's troops. The war finally ended with the Treaty of Vergara (1839), which recognised Isabelle as the legitimate sovereign and eroded the autonomous character of the *fueros*.

Between 1847 and the 1860s there were intermittent violent outbreaks in Catalonia, Aragon, Navarre and Guipuzkoa, but these events did not seriously threaten the ruling monarch. Thus, Carlism languished during the 1840s and 1850s, when Isabella's reign was never seriously in danger. However, in the 1860s Carlism began to reorganise, adapting its program in the process, switching its main priority of king for that of Church and preparing for the Second Carlist War.

The Isabelline monarchy fell after a revolutionary outburst in 1868, and the Carlists felt their chance had come once again. All the systems born after the Revolution of 1868 - a monarchy of foreign type and a Republic - had failed to secure public order and ended in disaster. In 1872, the foral governing bodies sponsored a Carlist rebellion which grew into the Second Carlist War (1872-76). The war followed much the same course as that of the first. And yet again, the hegemonic presence of the Carlists in the rural areas was counterbalanced by their fifth column, the Basque cities. As in the first war, the Carlists attempted to siege Bilbao and, again, they were defeated.[97] In the 1830s the leader of the Carlist forces, Zumalacárregui, had died in the siege of the city which, by the end of the century, had become an industrial centre of crucial strategic importance. This time the most popular Carlist generals, Ollo and Rada, died and the whole Carlist cause was defeated. In 1876, after almost four years of fighting, Carlos VII was forced to follow the example of

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[97] For a glimpse of the disastrous Carlist siege of Bilbao during the Second Carlist War, see Miguel de Unamuno's historical novel, *Paz en la Guerra*. Unamuno invested ten years in writing this novel where he described the events he had witnessed as a child. The novel aims at describing and assembling the triggers of 'internal history', what he called the 'intrahistory'. Unamuno clearly distinguished between the noisy 'external history' made by famous people and the silent 'intrahistory' made by ordinary citizens, the real subject of history. Hence, in the preface to the second edition of *Paz en la Guerra*, Unamuno dedicates his work to the nation and describes the real nature of the book: 'This is not a novel; it is a people'. (Unamuno 1999: 124). References to the Carlist Wars are also found in the novels of Ramon del Valle-Inclán and Pio Baroja. See José Extramiana. *La Guerra de los Vascos en la narrativa del 98. Unamuno, Valle-Inclan, Baroja* (San Sebastián Aramburu, 1983).

his grandfather and had to flee across the Pyrenean border (MacClancy 2000: 10). The 'restoration' of the Bourbon monarchy brought Alfonso XII to the throne and with him the most stable regime of the 19th century.

At the Spanish level, Carlism had always been a minoritarian force, but in the Basque Provinces it was equal in importance to liberalism.[98] The Carlists wanted *fueros* for all Spanish regions but it was in the Basque lands that their support was strongest. However, after 1876 all that the Basques had stood for, the *fueros*, were wiped out. After the First Carlist War, the Treaty of Vergara and the Law of 25 October 1839 modified the *fueros* of Araba, Guipuzkoa and Biscay and tolerated those remaining as long as they were not 'prejudicial to the constitutional unity of the monarchy'.[99] The defence of the *fueros*, which had only been marginal in the first war, became a prominent issue in the second. What was initially a dynastic dispute between two Spanish contenders to the throne acquired different overtones in the Basque Country. Since the First Carlist War, the Basques had incorporated their own element into the traditional Carlist motto: *Dios, Patria, Rey* (God, Fatherland, King), and turned it into *Dios, Patria, Fueros, Rey*. The Basque *fueros* were finally suppressed by the Law of 21 July 1876. The Navarrese *fueros*, though, were unaffected as they had already been modified by an earlier law in 1841.

The defence of the *fueros* was seen as a Basque cause. The Carlists' propaganda built an image of liberalism as the enemy of the Basque *fueros* and, in the final analysis, of the Basque people as well. According to Vicente Garmendia, an expert on Carlism, Spain came to be synonymous with liberalism and logically, Don Carlos' cause became, for the Carlists, the 'Basque cause' (Garmendia 1985: 140). After the King Alfonso XII decided to punish the 'rebel provinces' by cancelling their historical privileges in 1876, discontent and frustration spread throughout the Basque Country and, for the first time, the defence of the *fueros* was unanimous, regardless of political orientation (Solazabal 1975: 292). Even though not all the provinces were equally Carlist and many urban liberals were not against the *fueros*, the abolition affected all of them equally. For the first time, Basques were going

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[98] Indeed, Javier Real Cuesta has argued that even after the military defeat of the traditionalist side, Basque politics continued to be polarised between liberalism and Carlism until 1900. He quotes electoral data to demonstrate this: between 1882 and 1898, 104 members of parliament (MPs) were elected in Gipuzkoa, 50 of them were Carlists; in Araba of 60 mp, 20 were Carlists while in Vizcaya only 25 of a total of 96 were Carlists. See Real Cuesta (1985: 308).

[99] Article 1 of the Law of 25 October 1839 on the Fueros. See De Pablo, De la Granja, & Mees (1998: 23).

to receive a punishment as a collectivity. No direct link can be made between Carlism and nationalism since both political options co-existed for a long period. However, nationalism will take over the political space Carlists occupied and will certainly benefit from the discontent, anti-liberalism and anti-Spanishness the defeat of the Carlists had produced in the Basque people.

3.2.2. Foralism

One of the direct consequences of the Carlist Wars was the development of 'foralism' (*fuerismo*). Foralism comprised a group of political and cultural movements that defended and justified the political and judicial system of the *fueros*. As an ideological and political justification, foralism had existed for as long as *fueros* existed. However, it was only when the foral system was subject to attack from the Spanish Bourbon monarchies and the liberal regimes that a corpus of foralism was articulated. Within foralism one may distinguish the literary tradition, which was outlined in chapter two, and the political movement.

The political movement had two clear foci - Navarre and Biscay - and mainly worked towards the rediscovery of Euskara but also of Basque history, traditions and literature (Elorza 2001: 50). The Navarrese *Asociación Euskara* was created in 1878, when Juan Iturralde Suit founded it, based on the ideas of Arturo Campión, a young lawyer. The members of the *Asociación Euskara* were involved in local politics, but their main activity would be the publication of the journal, *Revista Euskara*, where leading Basque intellectuals will write about Basque identity (Elorza 2001: 49-50). The second organisation, *Euskal-Erria*, was created in Biscay in 1876 and was more concerned with the success of its businesses than with local history and religion. These two organisations definitely influenced Basque nationalism and paved the way for its birth in the 1890s.

In any case, the political implications of Foralism after the Second Carlist War were minimal. Foralism was an essentially nostalgic movement which looked back to the paradise the Basques had enjoyed while they had their *fueros*. However, they were unable to propose a political project for the future: that would be the task of Basque nationalism.

3.3. Sabino Arana Goiri

The role of the intellectuals in the nationalisation of the masses has been studied by a wide variety of scholars.[100] Of all of them, none has been more critical of intellectuals than Elie Kedourie, who called them 'marginal men'. For Kedourie (1960; 1971) the intellectuals captured the main injustices endured by the mass of the population and articulated 'a nationalist doctrine whose aim was to eliminate the unjust situation shared by all those belonging to the same nation'. The intellectual can be seen as a 'social thermometer' of a society or a section of society. This is clearly the case for Sabino Policarpo de Arana Goiri (1865-1903), the person to whom Basque nationalism owes its emergence. The founding father of Basque nationalism suffered, as many other Basques, the ideological, economic and political changes of his time.[101]

Basque nationalism needs to be seen as the result of a violent transformation from the ancien régime to a modern industrial society and a reaction to the complete incorporation of the Basque Country in Spain. Indeed, Arana's nationalism was the cry out of a traditionalist who was reluctant to accept the world in front of his eyes; one so different to the utopian pre-industrial world he had been presented with in the romantic literature. Many of his followers were members of Bilbao's middle classes 'who had not yet reaped the benefits of capitalist development and faced the prospect of proletarianization' (Díez Medrano 1995: 75). As can be seen in the following section, the rapidity of Basque industrialisation and the coming of the Spanish immigrant convinced Arana that the Basques should have a state of their own.

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[100] Kedourie (1971), Nairn (1977), Breuilly (1982) and Smith (1991). An analysis of these works can be found in Guibernau (2000).

[101] The Basque case contradicts Marxist approaches to nationalism. Theories of uneven development argue that nationalism is a reaction to the uneven spread of capitalism and tend to associate 'periphery' with 'backwardness'. In the words of Tom Nairn, capitalism 'generates and requires the exploitation of peripheries whose deprived elites have no alternative but to turn to the masses and engage them in the nationalist project' (Nairn 1977: 339). However, Basque nationalism was born in one of the most advanced and industrialised regions of Spain.

3.3.1. Industrialisation

The Basque industrialisation process was conducted by a bourgeoisie with interests in minerals backed by English capital. The legal reforms which followed the abolition of the *fueros* in 1876 allowed for the entry of foreign capital and, due to low taxation, export of natural resources was facilitated. The economic changes mainly occurred in Biscay, while other provinces such as Gipuzkoa, Araba and Navarre went through a similar process later in the 20th century. The reason why the industrialisation started in Biscay was the invention in 1856 of a new system to make steel which made Basque iron essential. The Bessemer process required a low phosphorous iron - called hematite - which was widely available in the open mines of Biscay. Moreover, the mines were very close to the coast and the transport from Bilbao's port was cheap and efficient (Fusi 1975: 15). Ships exported up to 60% of the iron extracted to Britain and came back loaded with coal. As a result, Bilbao's shipping industry experienced an incredible growth, transforming the landscape around Bilbao's river Nervión. [102] For example, a rail line had to be built to connect the mines to the port of Bilbao, and the latter was also modernised to cope with the increasing transit. Taking iron as an indicator, the amount exported increased from 55,000 tons in 1866 to 4,272,000 tons in 1890. From 1885 until the end of the century, the mines of Biscay produced 77% of Spain's cast iron, 87% of its steel and by 1900, 13.2% of the world's iron ore. [103]

The extraction and export of minerals gave way to a rapid and intense growth of capital in Basque hands. The names that have shaped the economy of the Basque Country in the last hundred years were then making their fortunes. The Ybarra family, but also the Chavarri, Echevarrieta, Martínez de las Rivas, Lezama Leguizamón, Allende and Gandarias, among others, boosted the Basque financial sector, making it the most important in Spain.[104]

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[102] Almost all of the industries and the workers would live on the left bank of the river, making a class divide with the right side, where the traditional and industrial bourgeoisie lived. Even today, the divide can be easily distinguished, not only by its distinct urban planning, concentration of population and wealth but also for the fact that the only way to cross from one side to the other for 15 kilometres is a suspended cabin that carries up to 20 or 30 people and a couple of cars in it. Even most of the population of Bilbao lives on the left bank, the first underground line ever built runs under the right margin, mainly inhabited by the high middle class and bourgeoisie.

[103] See Fusi (1975: 17), Ortzi (1978: 112), Conversi (1997: 49), and Kurlansky (1999: 155).

[104] Corcuera has pointed out the important role of these families and their presence in the different economic sectors of the Biscayan economy. The names of industrialists and their advisors coincide with the boards of directors of both the heavy industries and the banking system. See Corcuera (2001: 54).

According to Juan Pablo Fusi, in 1870 there was only one Bank operating in the city - the *Banco de Bilbao*, founded in 1857 - but 37 years later, in 1907, there were five: *Bilbao, Comercio, Crédito de la Unión Minera, Vizcaya* and a franchise from the *Banco de España*. The money in deposits in the local banking system experienced an increase of 914% between 1870 and 1899 (Fusi 1965: 53). And it was this very same Basque capital that allowed the transformation of Bilbao and its surroundings from being a purely extractive area of minerals to a full industrial region. A good deal of the money was invested in building new factories and buildings and also in infrastructure (improvements in the port, roads and railways), which helped diversify the focus of economic activity. Around the heavy industries of mining, iron and steel other minor plants mushroomed, providing the original ones with all the necessary products they needed, from tubes to building materials.

Up to the 1860s, Spaniards had been present only in the mind of the average Basque, but the situation changed dramatically with industrialisation. The population growth of Biscay was well over the Spanish average of that of any other province. As can be seen in Figure 2, the population of Biscay almost doubled in forty years. In 1860 there were 168,205 inhabitants and in 1900 it had increased to 311,361, a difference of 143,156. The flourishing Biscayan industry needed a workforce that neither the province nor the whole of *Euskal Herria* could provide. Between 1860 and 1890, 60,000 immigrants would arrive in Biscay. The immigrants first came from neighbouring provinces like Logroño, Araba, Navarre and Santander, but the increasing demand attracted immigrants from more distant places like Galicia or Castile (Burgos, León and Palencia). The immigrants' main destination was Bilbao. The area of the city which saw the highest increase of newcomers was the left bank of the river Nervión, where most of the industry was located.

Figure 2 Population Growth in the Basque Provinces, 1800-1910
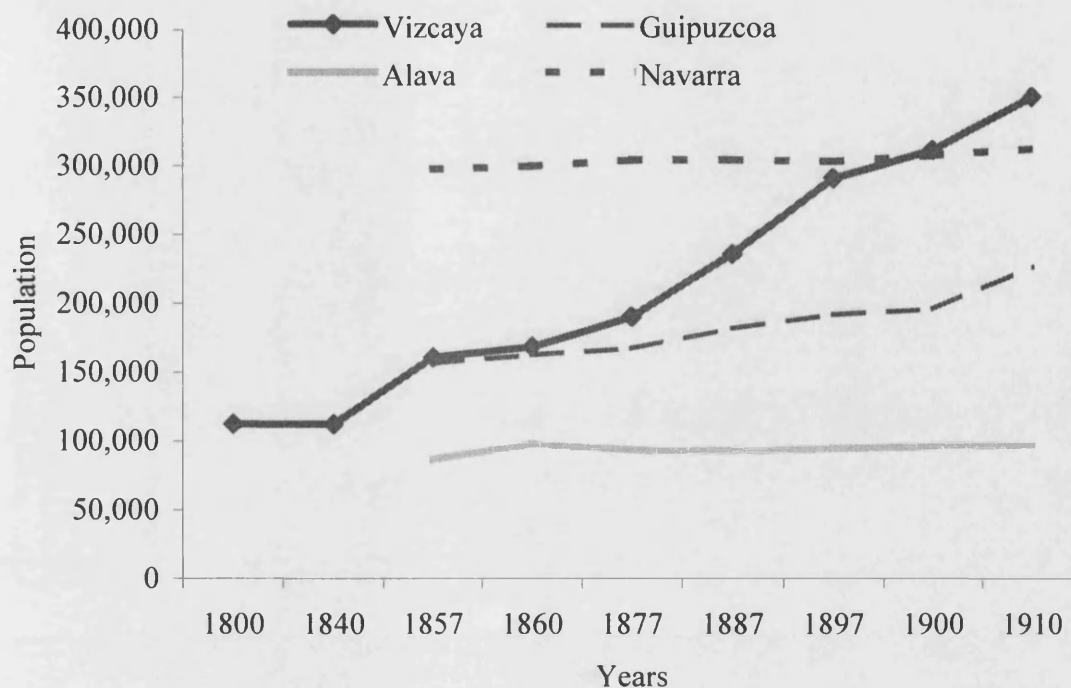
Source: Corcuera (2001: 56)

Workers had to live in overcrowded houses and barracks with appalling hygienic conditions. The barracks had no toilets and beds were often shared by two workers who only could have a bath in the river, the final destination of all the dirty water and detritus of the city. Those who lived in houses lived in slightly better conditions, but they were all threatened by a considerably high mortality rate. According to Fusi, many of the problems Biscay had at the end of the 19th century were due this uncontrolled growth in population (Fusi 1975: 33). The first strike occurred in 1903 and signalled the extreme polarisation between the deprived workers and the privileged industrialists who did not hesitate to show off their wealth by building palaces in the middle of the city. Bilbao, described by Ramiro de Maeztu as the 'Socialist Mecca',[105] was the scene of many labour conflicts up to the 1920s. And it was the factories and the 'earls of the iron and steel industry' that caused the workers's agitation.[106]

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[105] Ramiro de Maeztu in Fusi (1975: 501-504).
[106] Miguel de Unamuno cited in Fusi (1975: 62).

The class-struggle between newcomers and urban old-timers crystallised along ethnic lines as most of the workers were Spanish and all the industrialists were Basque. Hence, it was not difficult for Sabino Arana to demonstrate the wickedness and greed of Spanish workers compared to the generous Basques. But in order to better understand Basque nationalism we need to briefly examine how the vital experiences of Arana influenced his political thought.

3.3.2. Biography and the Nationalist Project

Sabino Arana was born in Abando, now part of Bilbao, on 26 January 1865. His family owned a shipbuilding firm in Biscay, building wooden ships that were quickly becoming obsolete. As financial supporters of the traditionalists during the Second Carlist War, they had been forced to leave for France. From his exile in the French Basque Country, an eleven year old Arana witnessed the victory of liberalism, the abolition of the *fueros* and the seizure of the family's possessions in Bilbao. According to Arana himself, he 'converted' from Carlism to nationalism in 1882 after a discussion with his brother, Luis de Arana, about Biscay. Realising that his brother's knowledge of the history of Biscay was much superior to his own, Sabino started frantically studying the history and the laws of Biscay, as he himself explained in his essay, *Bizkaia por su Independencia*;

> but after one year of transition, the shadows that hid my knowledge of the motherland disappeared, and offering my heart to God, eternal lord of Biscay, I offered all I am and all I have for the restoration of the motherland' (Arana 1980: 158).

The new project absorbed all of Arana's energy. After his father died, in 1883, he moved to Barcelona to study law where he rarely attended exams. Rather, he taught himself and researched Basque language and history, finally dropping out of the programme. His time in Barcelona coincided with the first steps of the Catalan bourgeoisie towards nationalism, but he did not get involved in any significant political activity. On the contrary, Catalanism became a model not to follow. In his later article, *Errores catalanistas* (1894), Arana would compare Catalonia to other regions in Spain that have tried to reform Spain from within and contrasted it with the Basque Country, a nation that had 'never [been] dominated by Spain'. While 'the enemy of Catalonia was the central power', the Basques' enemy was Spain, the

'foreign nation that had subjugated them'.[107] After his mother's death in 1888, Sabino Arana and his brother Luis returned to Bilbao, where both of them began their political careers.[108]

In 1892, Sabino Arana published the most important writing of his carrer, *Bizkaya por su independencia: Cuatro glorias patrias*, in which he articulated for the first time his doctrine on the eternal independence of Biscay and how the Basques had lost their freedom. Previously published in a journal as a collection of essays, he only mentioned Biscay, not *Euzkadi*, hoping that other Basques would see the truth in his words and would follow him.[109] In the book, Biscay had been independent since time immemorial and had to fight to maintain it in four mythical battles against Castile: at Arrigorriaga (888), Gordejuela (1355), Ochandiano (1355) and Munguía (1470). However, he provided a contemporary explanation for the loss of that eternal independence: it was not the military victory of the Hispanic Monarchy over Basques but the increasing hispanicisation (*españolización*) of the latter. *Bizkaya por su independencia* was initially ignored, but in subsequent years it had an enormous influence.

Seven months after the publication of *Bizkaya por su independencia* Arana had another opportunity to provide followers with a historical hallmark. On this occasion he presented his thesis to an audience of professionals - mainly *fueristas* and liberals - at the *Caserío de Larrazábal*. In what came to be known as the Larrazábal Speech, Arana defined what Basque nationalism should be. He described the humiliation of Biscay by Spain, that 'miserable nation', mentioning the need to rescue Biscay from 'infectious foreign molecules' and complained about the Spanishness of all Basque political parties. Near the end of the speech he apologised for using Spanish, 'a foreign language', and encouraged those present to cheer for the independence of Biscay (*¡Viva la independencia de Bizkaya!)*(Arana 154-160). His radical theses were received by his fellow diners with

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[107] See 'Errores catalanistas', in Arana (1980: 405).

[108] But first Sabino tried to get into academe. He competed with Resurreccion Maria Azkue and Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo for a professorship of *Euskera* at the *Instituto Vizcaíno*. Although neither Arana nor Unamuno got the position, this was the first of many encounters. They would become political opponents for life: Unamuno turning to cosmopolitan values and Arana turning nationalist (Conversi 1997: 58).

[109] Arana published the essays 'Cuatro Glorias Patrias' between 1889 and 1890 in the Historical Section of the *vasquista* journal, *La Abeja*, directed by Professor Resurección Maria de Azcue. He retitled it *Bizkaya por su Independencia* in 1892. Reproduced in Arana (1980: 107-153).

accusations of 'mad and visionary' (Arana 1980: xxxv). [110] But the defeat at Larrazábal did not discourage the young Sabino who shortly afterwards founded the newspaper *Bizkaitarra* and the club *Euzkeldun Batzokija* (which had already adopted the motto *Jaun-Goikua eta Lagi Zarra* (God and Old Laws)). He wrote almost all the articles of *Bizkaitarra* and became the president of the informal club. According to the official biographers of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), the statutes of the latter 'incorporated some of the main elements of the first Basque nationalism: its endogenous character, its religious integrism and its interpretation of the foreign sovereignty in a dynamic and independentist tone' (De Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez 1999: 33). On 31 July 1895, Ignatius Loyola's Saint's Day, Arana founded the *Bizkai-Buru-Batzar* (BBB), core of the later PNV, an organisation that initially only covered the province of Biscay. [111] The nationalist press later mushroomed and the *Baserritarra*, *El Correo Vasco* and *La Patria* were born. Nationalist activities attracted the eye of the government in Madrid and both the BBB and the *Bizkaitarra* were closed down. Arana was sentenced to four and a half months in prison, where he continued to work. In his cell, he wrote several articles and composed the hymn *Eusko Abendearen Ereserkija*. The repressive measures came too late for an Arana who had already managed to group a small number of collaborators and a large number of nationalist organisations. Among them were the newspaper *Bizkaitarra* (1893), the club *Euskaldun Batzokija* (1894), the political organisation *Bizkai Buru Batzar* (1895), the publishing house *Bizkaya'ren Edestija ta Izkerea Pizkundia* (1896), the recreational club *Centro Vasco* (1899), the magazines *Euskadi* (1901) and *La Patria* (1901), and the language academy *Euskal Zaleen Biltzarra* (1902).[112]

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[110] Daniele Conversi's depiction of events regarding the publication of the book and the later speech is misinformed. He believes the speech happened 'a few days' after the publication of *Bizkaya por su Independencia*, when it actually happened seven months after (3 June 1893), and sympathetically describes how 'impressed' the 'admirers and friends' at Larrazábal were with Arana's speech. On the contrary, at Larrazábal the seventeen 'admirers and friends' responded with cold silence, which was to turn into radical opposition against Arana's theses. See Conversi (1997: 58-9). For a more accurate version see Arana (1980: Xxxv) and De Pablo, Mees, & Rodríguez Ranz (1999: 32).

[111] *Bizkai-Buru-Batzar* (BBB), which can be translated as Supreme Council of Vizcaya, was the board that made the executive decisions of the Basque nationalists at that time (although still confined to Biscay). Today's PNV structure has, at the top of the pyramid, the *Euskadi-Buru-Batzar* (EBB) and is the directive organ of the party. The EBB is made up of the president of the party, top officials and representatives from all the Basque territories including Navarre and Southern France. See the official web of the PNV: www.eaj-pnv.com.

[112] Arana (1980: xxxv-xiv).

3.3.3. Political Doctrine

After Spain's humiliating defeat in the short 1898 colonial war against the United States, some segments of the Basque bourgeoisie and a large portion of the middle classes became increasingly interested in nationalism. The loss of the last colonies of the Spanish overseas empire (Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines) in the age of imperialism and colonial prestige brought about a deep cultural pessimism and a loss of confidence in the Spanish national project.[113] What came to be known as *El Desastre* produced a general feeling of shock, humiliation and, eventually, a depreciation of the centralised state. It also signalled the end of the image of Spain as a great European power, a 'dying nation' as Lord Salisbury put it, and strongly influenced a whole generation of intellectuals.[114] But more importantly, *El Desastre* signalled a turning point and initiated a sequence of events that led to the decline of the political system known as the Restoration Monarchy (1874-1923). During the Restoration, political life was based on the alternation (*turno pacífico*) between the two dynastic parties, the liberals and the conservatives, and on the rigging of elections by *caciques* or local bosses. After 1898, however, Spain came to know the involvement of the masses in politics and the decline of the local *caciques*, which paved the way for the emergence of Basque nationalism as a mass movement.

In May 1902, four years after el *Desastre*, Arana attempted to send a telegram of congratulation to President Roosevelt for having granted independence to Cuba.[115] Not only

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[113] The Disastre of 1898 was a second phase of loss of overseas territories. Between 1810 and 1825 Spain lost thirteen immense territories: Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia, Central America, Paraguay, Urugay, Santo Domingo and Florida. One of the chief causes for the independence movements was the impact of liberal ideas of democracy and self-determination on the Creoles, who had an inferior status in relation to the Peninsulars. In fact all the great leaders of the South American independence movements were of Creole origin. These include Simón Bolívar, José de San Martín and Agustín de Iturbide. Of the vast colonial empire Spain once held in Latin America and the Asia Pacific only Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Guam and the Marianas remained in the late 1820s. In the second phase of 1898, Spain lost Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

[114] José Ortega i Gasset named the turn of the century artists and writers 'the generation of 1898', a group who responded to *El Desastre* by seeking to analyse the character and essence of a newly diminished Spain and identify the solutions to regain its original greatness. The generation of '98 was divided between the proponents of Europeanization and *casticismo* (a recovery of traditionally Spanish essences), both of them solutions for Spain to regain its original greatness. The Basque philopher Miguel de Unamuno believed Spain had to return to the roots of Castile and should not Europeanise itself. Ramón María del Valle Inclán felt that Spain should be more Catholic, the way it used to be, and should therefore not look to the rest of Europe as an example. And Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, a Valencian novelist, felt Spain should become a Republic again. On the effect of 1898, see Balfour (1997).

[115] The telegram said: 'Roosevelt. President of the United States. Washington. In the name of the Basque Nationalist Party, I congratulate Cuba, which you have liberated from slavery, most noble federation, on its

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did the telegram never make it to Washington, but the telegraph officer informed the appropriate authorities and Arana was imprisoned. Due to their leader's precarious health, a group of more than 8,000 followers signed a petition asking for his release.[116] But the response of the head of the Spanish government, Segismundo Moret, was clear: 'The peace of Spain outweighs the life of one man'.[117] The Government in Madrid felt that the time had come to take measures against nationalist organisations. In its questioning of Arana, the judicial authority showed great interest in the PNV's organisation and membership, in accordance with the government's desire to crush Basque nationalism. After almost half a year of imprisonment, Arana left for Vichy in Southern France where he hoped to be safe from the authorities' harassment.[118] Arana died on 25 November 1903, at the age of thirty-eight. To the government's despair in Madrid, the death of the young nationalist did not bring peace to Spain, as Moret had hoped, and his nationalist politics were going to be effectively continued by others.

Sabino Arana created a movement that could stand on its feet long after he was gone. He had provided Basque nationalism with all the necessary elements: he invented a name for the 'land of the Basques', *Euzkadi*, a flag, the red, green and white *ikurriña*, modelled on the Union Jack, and a national anthem, *Gora ta Gora*. His contribution was widely acknowledged and the day of his political conversion, Easter Sunday 1882, became the Basque national holiday, *Aberri Eguna* (the Day of the Fatherland). He also provided the motto of the new politics that extended the foralist 'God and *Fueros*' (*Jaungoikua eta Foruak*) to 'God and Old Laws' (*Jaungoikua eta Lega Zarra*). But not only did he invent all of the nationalist paraphernalia, Arana also managed to construct a nationalism with foralist romantic undertones which appealed to many of his contemporaries.[119] In the next

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independence. You have shown in your great nation, exemplary generosity, learned justice and liberty, hitherto unknown in history and inimitable by European powers, especially the Latin ones. If Europe were to imitate this, then the Basque nation, the oldest people, who, for the most centuries, enjoyed the kind of liberty under constitutional law for which the United States merits praise, would be free. Arana y Goiri.' In Kurlansky (1999: 175).

[116] Gallastegi (1993: 149).

[117] Arana (1980: XLIII).

[118] Arana thought he might be incarcerated for 16 years and kept secret the place where he was hiding and even made some of his close collaborators believe he was in Paris (Corcuera 1991, vol.2, 31). Arana would not be the first to evade Spanish justice by crossing the border and certainly not the last. Other nationalists and ETA members would take shelter in France during Francoism and democratic Spain. On the use of France as a refuge by ETA, see Sagrario Morán Blanco, *ETA entre España y Francia* (1997).

[119] Jon Juaristi (1987: 199) shares the view held by Antonio Elorza (2001) and Javier Corcuera (1991) that the foralist literature had a decisive influence on Arana. However, Arana carefully selected the arguments and

sections, the main elements of his political doctrine - race, language, religion and the use of history - are discussed in detail.

3.3.3.1. Race

Sabino Arana believed 'race' was the essential element of the nation. There were other elements that defined a nation - language, government and laws, character and traditions, and what he called historical personality - but Arana devoted most of his efforts to defining the Basque race and establishing mechanisms to preserve it.[120] His view was that Basques were a 'pure race', an ethnographically different people which should avoid mixing with foreigners as it would prompt a further decline of the nation. There were elements of the nation - such as language - that could be recovered if they entered a period of decline but race was not one of them. Race was the 'substance of the nation' (Arana 1980: 404).

Not surprisingly, Arana saw the coming of the Spanish workforce as a threatening 'invasion'.[121] Since the process of industrialisation was unstoppable, Arana's desperation led him to propose a last resort ethnic separation between Basques and Spaniards. But first, he had to devise ways of identifying a Spaniard. Basque workers were already doing so and referred to Spanish workers as Chinese, Manchurians, or Koreans. However, Sabino's favourite expression was *maketo*:

> In this country, a maketo is the person who comes from Maketania and its neighbouring islands [...] And Maketania is the country that shares its north border with France, the Basque lands and the Cantabrian sea; in the west, with Portugal, and the south, with Africa'.[122]

For Arana, Spaniards were inferior and contact with the so-called 'stumpy ears' was polluting. Hence, when Arana said that 'the *maketos* are our Moors' he was drawing on

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symbols that helped to reinforce the ethnic boundary between Basques and Spaniards and rejected the ideological claims of any historical linkages between the Basques and other peoples of Spain.

[120] Arana's constitutive elements of a nation can be found in his article '¿Qué somos?' published in *Bizkaitarra* (16 June 1895), see Arana (1980: 606). He elaborated on the notion of the Basque race in the following articles: 'Del orígen de la raza euskeriana', 'La pureza de raza', and 'Del orígen de nuestra raza'. See Arana (1980: 71; 545; 1340).

[121] See, for example, 'Los invasores', 'La invasión maketa', 'Efectos de la invasión', and 'Extranjerización . See Arana (1980: 197; 261; 1326; 1761).

[122] Corcuera (2001: 245).

pre-existing memories of what a foreign element was.[123] He was not only adding a powerful metaphor to his Manichean view of the world but he was resorting to historical memory and ideas of purity of blood and universal nobility which were so important to Basques. The infectious character of second-rate races, Arana would argue, could not be treated lightly and a clear policy against them should be put into practice. For example:

> If a Spaniard ever begged you for money, move up your shoulders and reply to him in euskera: *Nik eztakit erderaz* (I do not speak Spanish). If a Spaniard that has just arrived to Biscay asks you where is this village or that street, reply *Nik estakit erderaz*. If a Spaniard was, for example, drowning in the river and was asking for help, reply to him: *Nik eztakit erderaz*.[124]

Since his definition of Basqueness was based on myths of origin and blood descent, the only way to recognise a Basque was through the genealogy of their surnames. At the same time, if married, true Basques should have spouses of similar purity. Arana himself refused to marry a Basque *bilbaína* with Spanish surnames and chose instead a peasant girl of low social status, Nicolasa Achica-Allende, who had all four Basque surnames. Although his choice drew some opposition from his own followers, Arana was sure of the adequacy and authenticity of his choice. The girl, he said, represented Basqueness because 'all Basques descend from villagers'.[125]

The fact that Arana's racism is closer to anti-Spanishness than to racism *per se* has led some scholars to make apologetic remarks on Arana's use of race.[126] It is true that Arana did not single-handedly invent anti-Spanishness from scratch nor racism; however, he certainly contributed racist elements to the idea of an independent Basque state. In his article, *Efectos de la invasión* (1897), he explained how the worst grief for the Basques is not to lose their language, history or institutions but to continue 'in contact with the children of the Spanish nation'. Speaking in the 'ethnographic sense', he referred to the 'physical and natural' category of the 'Spanish race' which is substantially different to the 'Basque race'.[127]

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[123] 'Nuestros moros' in Arana (1980: 196).
[124] Corcuera (2001: 385).
[125] Ironically, after Arana died in 1903, Nicolasa contradicted the standards of her own husband and married a Spanish policeman. Arana's quote about the rural origins of Basques is from Elorza (2001: 182)
[126] See Conversi (1997: 60) and Douglass (2002: 107).
[127] 'Efectos de la invascion' in Arana (1980: 1326).

3.3.3.2. Language

For Sabino Arana the Basque language was an essential indicator of a distinct national identity. In his own words, 'Euskera was the language of a people that had never been dominated by Spain'.[128] His interest in Euskara took the form of articles and books, such as a grammar and a treaty on etymology. In a writing for the journal *Euskal-erria*, he referred to Euskara as 'an essential element of the Basque nation' and linked the disappearance of Euskara to that of the nation: 'where Euskera ends, moral and religious degradation starts'.[129] Bilbao, where the use of Euskara was in clear decline, was the best example of this moral decline and Arana used to refer to it as 'the infamous prostitute of Biscay'.[130] He was not the first one to have this opinion. Wilhelm F. von Humboldt had visited the Basque lands at the dawn of the century and could hardly find anything to say about the flourishing city of Bilbao 'because the continuous transit of foreigners has displaced the national traditions, which can only be found in the countryside and the mountains, and even the language is highly impure and mixed with Spanish' (Humboldt 1998: 164). Whereas Humboldt marvelled at the 'primitive simplicity' of Basques, Arana worked frantically in order to keep that simplicity.

Having defined his nationalism in terms of race, Arana used language as a *de facto* ethnic boundary. The noble Euskara allowed Basques to protect themselves from contact with Spaniards and it was his duty not to teach the 'national language' to Spaniards. According to Sabino Arana, one of the errors being made in Catalonia was the attempt to integrate Spaniards by teaching them their national language. Basques should learn from that example and should reject Spaniards as foreigners. And if Spaniards ever learnt Euskara, Basques should abandon it and speak something else because language:

> is the means to preserve ourselves from contagion from Spaniards and avoid the crossing of the two races. If our invaders learnt euskera, we should abandon it [...] and speak, instead, Russian, Norwegian or any other unknown language to them'.[131]

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[128] 'Errores catalanistas', Arana (1980: 403).
[129] Arana (1980: xxxiii).
[130] Corcuera (1991: 33).
[131] 'Errores catalanistas', Arana (1980: 404).

The nationalist use of the language was crucial to Arana. All patriots needed to speak Basque but there could be nothing more dangerous than non-nationalists speaking Basque:

> Speaking euskera is worth nothing if one does not feel a patriot. The most important thing is patriotism, even if one does not speak euskera. The Patria will not be saved by euskera, only by patriotism. Propagate patriotism, and with it euskera will also propagate. If you propagate euskera as a nationless language, the enemies of the Patria will multiply.[132]

In Arana's eyes, though, Euskara was just another element that differentiated the two nations: 'there is more difference between Euskara and any of the Spanish languages than between the latter and the language spoken by the inhabitants of India'.[133] And if there was any doubt as to how different the languages were, Arana would make them different. As Conversi has pointed out, much of Arana's work aimed at purifying Euskara of Hispanicisms (Conversi 1997: 64). Thus, *erdera* (foreign) elements of the language would be eliminated and replaced by Basque neologisms 'based on logic' (Corcuera 1997: 34). Among his contributions to the language were the name for his country, *Euzkadi* (from *Euskal*, meaning 'Euskera speaking', and the suffix *di*, meaning 'together'), the name for fatherland, *aberri* (from *aba*, father, and *erri*, country) and its 'logical consequence', *abertzale*, or patriot.

In the later stages of his life, Arana finally understood the peasant's dismissal of Euskara, because it was 'of no use for his son', and, abandoning his reactionary understanding of industrialisation, Arana embraced modernity. So, the solution for the decline of Euskara was to create 'industries and shipping companies' and 'nationalise all spheres of human life' so that Euskara was of some use. Surprisingly, at the end of his life, Arana shared the views of his opponent Unamuno and other Basque intellectuals who considered Basque 'the language of the stables' (Heiberg 1975).[134] However, Arana's late 'discovery' of the

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[132] 'La Patria' in Arana (1980: 1307).

[133] 'Errores catalanistas', Arana (1980: 403).

[134] The Basque philosopher Miguel de Unamuno even said that agglutinating languages like Basque were not capable of articulating sophisticated ideas. Euskara has a rich vocabulary but a limited number of abstractions. In an agglutinative language like Euskara, argues Mark Kurlansky, new concepts are formed by adding more and more suffices: *etxea* being the word for house or home is the origin of other words like *etxean* (at home), *etxera* (to the house) or *etxetik* (from home). That is the reason why Basque only has 200,000 words compared to 60 million words compiled in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (Kurlansky 1999: 22 & 164).

possibilities of industrial society in the 1900s did not fundamentally change his understanding of language.

3.3.3.3. Religion

According to Antonio Elorza (2001: 181), Sabino Arana was aware at all times that he was founding a political religion. Although this might be a bit too daring, there is certainly no shortage of Catholic symbolism in Arana's work, the most important being the crusades. Religion was present at all stages of Arana's life and, not surprisingly, this also influenced his thought. The college he attended in Bilbao, the *Colegio Orduña*, was directed by Jesuits who taught in accordance 'foralism and traditional Catholicism'.[135] The good practices he acquired in the college accompanied him all his life. He remained a devoted believer and even spent the first stage of his honeymoon in Lourdes.[136] He openly admired the figure of Saint Ignatius and the Society of Jesus he founded, the most 'colossal and sublime work of the saint'.[137] As an homage, Arana created the Biscayan version of the PNV, the *Bizkai-Buru-Batzar*, on the festival of Saint Ignatius in 1895, with the motto *Jaungoikua eta Lagizarra* (God and old laws).

Arana also saw his evolution from Carlist to nationalist in religious terms and talked about his 'political conversion'. The day he was 'illuminated' by his brother, Easter Sunday 1882, later became the Basque national day (*Aberri Eguna*). From 1888 onwards, Arana reconciled religion and politics and would sign most of his works with the acronym GETEJ (*Gu Euzkadirentazat Ta Euzkadi Jaungoikuarentzat*; We for Euskadi and Euskadi for God). Furthermore, nationalism was a way of doing good on earth, it was a way of reaching God:

> Ideologically speaking, God comes before the Patria [...] but in Biscay to love God it is necessary to be a patriot, and to be a patriot it is necessary to love God.[138]

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[135] See Corcuera (2001: 191).

[136] See Corcuera (2001: 347). Elorza (2001: 182) also quotes a hilarious letter from Arana to Engracio de Aranzadi in which Arana explains how he had diarrhoea during his honeymoon and how it could be better described as a shit-moon (*luna de mierda*).

[137] See Arana (1980: 1734). Arana wrote two articles where he praised the excellences of the Jesuit organisation: 'Apuntes sobre la Compañía de Jesús' and 'La Fundación de la Compañía'. (Arana 1980: 1734-1738; 328-338).

[138] 'Areitz Orbelak' in Arana (1980: 615).

Arana's nationalist project was of an eminently religious character. In his view, the project of regeneration that nationalism embodied (the independence of *Euskadi*) brought the Basques closer to God. Even the ultimate sacrifice, 'dying for the nation' was not a mundane thing to do, but 'a death for God'.[139] In the current situation Basques were being 'infected' by contact with Spaniards, who had only brought 'weakness, corruption of the heart... and the end of human society'.[140] The nationalist project went beyond politics; 'it [was] about saving souls'. No other cause was more noble and saintly than this and had a divine blessing: 'if the cause is just and necessary as a remedy for a grave moral damage, God orders us to carry it out. God wants us to carry it out, and what he orders is never useless or impossible'. It was clear that: 'Biscay, if dependent on Spain, cannot address God, cannot, in practice, be Catholic' (Arana 1980: 1331-1333).

3.3.3.4. History

The fourth building block on which Arana's political doctrine was based was 'history', or rather, his 'use of history'. History adds to the other three components - race, language and religion - and, at the same time, permeates all of them. As he said, Basques were not Spanish because of four elements: 'race, language, laws and history'.[141] His understanding of religion and the use of race and language as ethnic boundary markers is unmistakingly based on his understanding of Basque history. His nationalism is, above everything else, a restoration of the lost Basque freedom, a historical recovery. His main aim was to recover Basque 'historical consciousness' and invoke the sacrifices but also the glories of the ancestors.[142] For example, in 1899 Arana argued in an article titled 'Regeneración' that the renewal of the Basque nation could only happen if Basques understood why until very recently they 'lived free and happy' but had now 'lost everything' (in clear reference to the *fueros*). The way forward for Basques, according to him, was to learn their 'own history' and identify 'their enemies'.[143]

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[139] Arana (1980: 1272).
[140] Arana (1980: 1328). He also wrote two articles about the idea of regeneration: 'Regeneración' in El Correo Vasco (11 June 1899), 'Camino de la Regeneración' in El Correo Vasco (20 June 1899), and 'Degeneración y Regeneración' in *El Correo Vasco* (28 July 1899).
[141] '¿Somos Españoles?' in *Bizkaitarra* (17 December 1893). See Arana (1980: 181).
[142] See 'La Historia' in *Baserritarra* (6 June 1897). See Arana 1980: 1295.
[143] Arana (1980: 1673).

Deeply influenced by the writers of the Basque Golden Age and the Carlist propaganda, Arana provided an idyllic image of the Basque past. For Arana, like others in the 19th century, 'the Basque Country appeared as an oasis of liberty, purity and peace, without vagrants, thieves, assassins or social problems' (Garmendia 1985: 138). His ideology is also a continuation of the foralist tradition that talks about eternal independence, sings the excellence and invincibility of the Basques, and maintains the identification between 'God and *Fueros*' from the Carlists (Corcuera 2001: 657). The influence of such literature has led authors like Jon Juaristi to identify abundant 'legendary elements' in Arana's work.[144] An example of this foralist influence and the nostalgic attitude towards the pre-industrial past can be clearly seen in an article titled 'La Patria' that Arana published in *El Correo Vasco* in 1899. In that short article, Arana explained the reasons that would lead a Basque to love La Patria. This was not the fact that the nation was great and wealthy, he argued, but because it was 'rich in virtues and it deserved sacrifices' to return it to the state in which 'many literary works talked about her: bathed in sunlight and with the splendour of all her virtues'.[145]

However, his approach to Basque history is epitomised in *Bizkaya por su independencia* where he describes four battles the Basques fought against Spaniards. However, at a deeper level, what Arana wants to 'show' is how the pact that binds together Spain and Biscay never existed. Significantly, he starts the essay with a Greek phrase inscribed before the Oracle at Delphi, *Gnothi Seauton*, 'know thyself'. Then he continues by inflating four historic battles between Basques and Castilians into an epic struggle for Basque independence, the most important of them being the 888 Battle of Arrigorriaga, where Castile suffered defeat at the hands of Biscaians. For Sabino, the battle of Arrigorriaga is the symbol of the eternal independence of Biscay, which dedicates itself to the defence of 'universal nobility'. Arana talks about 'Basques' as willing to talk to the Spaniards only as their equals. At the time, nobody questioned either the myth of the universal nobility or the battle of Arrigorriaga being chosen as a symbol of the struggle of the Basques (Otazu 1986). The general acceptance of these myths supports those who argue that it does not really matter if myths are historically accurate or not but only if they resonate.

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[144] See Juaristi's El Linaje de Aitor, especially chapter 8: 'Nacionalismo vasco y literatura fuerista: el legendismo en la obra de Sabino Arana Goiri.' but also Elorza (2001), Corcuera (2001) and Unzueta (1988).
[145] Arana (1980: 1729).

When juxtaposing his idealised vision of the past, almost a Golden Age, with the present, Arana saw nothing but decay. The time in which Basques were truly living as Basques was long gone as Basques no longer care about their virtuous past. As he would repeatedly warn his contemporaries, 'Blessed are the people who know their own history'.[146] Therefore, the solution cannot just be institutional and political, it also needed to be moral and religious, a complete programme of regeneration. But for the Basques to voluntarily engage in such a separatist project, they first need to study 'the glory of their past in order to understand their current degradation' (Kurlansky 1999: 162). The teaching of the past is fundamental because history is not only a succession of events, battles and kingdoms but sets the moral standard of the community. As Arana pointed out,

> What is national history...but a painting where a people is taught their past life, the ways to avoid evil and obtain good both for themselves and in their relations with other peoples, and a testimony of the rights it has enjoyed?'.[147]

Also the agenda for the future is implicitly set when national history is invoked. What the nation has or hasn't done in the past sets the parameters of legitimate change and can legitimise or subvert the existing political order (Boyd 1997: xi). Arana, who perfectly understood the integrative function of myths of origin and destiny, could only expect future generations to be more informed about the Basque past and restore the pre-industrial independence of the Basque nation.

3.4. Conclusion

The emergence of peripheral nationalisms, such as the Basque, can only be understood when framed within the historical processes of 19th century Spain. According to Nuñez-Seixas the rise of all these nationalisms is due to the combination of three factors: the final defeat of the traditionalists after the Carlist Wars, the sudden economic and social transformations of industrialisation, and the loss of confidence in the Spanish national project after Spain's catastrophic defeat in 1898 (Nuñez-Seixas 2001: 493). Indeed, the

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[146] Arana (1980: xxxii).
[147] Arana (1980: 1327).

defeat of Carlism provided Basque nationalism with a militaristic past of glories and defeats. The political violence of the Carlist Wars was seen by Sabino Arana and many of his followers as a defensive move by the nation and another example of the Basques' courageous attitude. The industrialisation process facilitated the development of the middle classes and brought the Spanish immigrant to their doorstep. The modern and unstable world that industrialisation created was made much worse by the political decline of Spain in the late 19th century, particularly after the loss of colonies in 1898.

However, these three historical processes – the decline of Carlism, industrialisation and the1898 Disaster – provide the causes for the emergence of Basque nationalism but do not explain the ideological basis of Basque nationalism. In other words, the above-mentioned modernist approach effectively explains why Basque nationalism was born in industrialised Biscay and not rural Araba but leaves crucial questions unanswered. For example, why did Basque nationalism defend the total independence of *Euskadi*, rather than putting forward a set of proposals for nationalist reform? And why did Basque nationalism so clearly emphasise the need to erect distinguishable ethnic boundaries between Spaniards and Basques? Can these Basque peculiarities be explained by the loss of Cuba and the Phillipines? The answer to these questions is a definite 'no'.

The content of Basque nationalism is explained by two factors: firstly, the personal character of Sabino Arana and, secondly, the previous history of myths and legends compiled by the foralist literature. Arana's nationalism is a personal response to a radical group of changes that was affecting *fin-de-siècle* Biscay. The loss of Basque identity, epitomised in the foral abolition and the moral and racial decline he witnessed in his contemporaries, made him design a political project for national regeneration. The religious element of his nationalism was obvious. By not speaking Euskara, the chosen language, Basques were committing a sin against God. In order for them to continue being a chosen people they need to embrace nationalism. Secondly, foralism is the indigenous variable that partially explains the content and form of Basque nationalism. That literature elaborated on the mythical Basque past that included the eternal independence from Castile and an idealised vision of the harmonious rural Basque past (in clear contradistinction to the threat of modern-looking liberalism). The members of the Basque middle-class who initially supported nationalism shared with Arana this archaic vision of the Basque past. Arana's

work continued the cultural work of the foralist writers and the political work of the Carlists. Arana's success in starting a vigorous and energising Basque movement is also explained by his concern in rooting his movement in the pre-existing literature of the Basque Golden Age which praised the virtues of the Basque *fueros*, the purity and nobility of the Basque people and the divine character of Euskara.

To conclude, Arana defines Basque identity with already existing elements (*fueros*, language, and so on), but also incorporates new elements such as a nationalist vision of history and race as a scientific category. His principles were non-negotiable and his ideological corpus did not leave much room for interpretation: his nationalism was doomed to confrontation rather than consociation.

Chapter Four

BETWEEN AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE (1903-1939)

The mission of nationalists is to save the people God wanted us to be part of from national dissolution and Latin impiety through the reinstatement of their rights and race according to Catholicism. Basque nationalists were established by Arana-Goiri and were moulded by the great spirit of his work and, like him, we are all members of a religious organisation.

Engracio de Aranzadi[148]

The argument so far has been that the emergence of Basque nationalism can be explained in three different historical times: (1) the long-term formation of Basque identity (as in the writings of Zaldivia, Garibay, Poza and Larramendi); (2) the defeat of the 'Basque cause' in the Carlist Wars which affected several generations of Basques; and (3) the rapid industrialisation of the Basque Provinces, mainly Biscay, which affected Basque urban middle-class indidivudals like Sabino Arana.[149] The previous chapter also argued that the writings of Arana were deeply influenced by the foralist literature and the Basque Golden Age as it could be seen in his emphasis of 'purity of blood', myths of descent, noble origin of the Basque language, and so on. The goal of the present chapter, however, is to move away from Basque nationalism as a whole and identify the birth of radical Basque nationalism.

4.1. The Basque Nationalist Party: Growth and Fragmentation

The PNV had traditionally been divided between moderates and radicals. Both groups united in their respect of Arana, the undisputed leader, but his death in 1903 left Basque nationalism with no reference point and guiding light. The disappearance of the *Maestro* triggered internal fights for the control of the party and for the 'real interpretation' of the apostle's words. Moderates and radicals accused each other of misinterpreting Arana for

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[148] Aranzadi (1931: 229)

[149] These three levels or scales of measuring time were first proposed by Fernand Braudel's structuralist approach to history which distinguished between: 'the quasi-immobile time of structures and traditions (*la longue durée*); the intermediate scale of 'conjectures', rarely longer than a few generations; and the rapid 'time-scale events', usually the lives of individuals. See Braudel (1993: xxiv).

years and claimed to be the legitimate followers. The dispute was long and irreconcilable because Arana's works were deeply eclectic. Arana had never managed to reconcile his two main convictions - separatism and moderation - in one single doctrine and in his own political party.[150] Once he was gone, both doctrine and party gave birth to two very different trends of Basque nationalism: the moderate and the radical.

During the first three decades of the 20th century the PNV oscillated between its moderate and radical extremes. The first to realise this pendular movement was the Spanish historian Antonio Elorza, who described the period between 1903 and 1937 as one characterised by 'autonomy' and 'independence'. Years later, the biographers of the PNV, Santiago de Pablo, Ludger Mees and José Antonio Rodríguez Ranz, extended that period and argued that the whole history of the PNV could be described as a 'Patriotic Pendulum' between autonomy and independence.

4.1.1. Beyond Party-Politics

During the period that starts with the death of Sabino Arana in 1903 through to the start of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1923, the PNV established itself as the only Basque nationalist force. The PNV grew from being a minoritarian political party to a social movement touching upon all spheres of life. By the 1920s, the transition from political party to social movement could be seen in the social background of its supporters. According to Díez Medrano (1995: 78), the social composition of the PNV during these years included members of the working class, members of well-to-do bourgeois families, and mostly members of the lower middle class: artisans, salaried workers, clerks, salesmen, and small-scale merchants. Consequently, the electoral results during these two decades were the best of the first half of the 20th century and the PNV had to wait until the 1980s to obtain similar results. This is not to say that the PNV had a hegemonic position in the Basque Country; it actually shared the political scene, on much inferior terms, with monarchic and socialist parties. In fact Basque nationalism was geographically confined during the 1920s to the province of Biscay, and during the 1930s to Biscay and Gipuzkoa. In Araba, the PNV had a minor presence and in the elections of 1936 almost disappeared

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[150] See Elorza (2001: 303) but also José Luis de la Granja (1991: 101) and Anchustegui Igartua (1995).

from the political scene. In Navarre, the Carlists had commanding control over the political scene. To the delight of modernist scholars of nationalism, the strength of Basque nationalism coincided geographically with the most industrialised areas. As the historian Juan Pablo Fusi has pointed out, industrialisation (and nationalism) was of an 'impressive intensity' in Biscay, but it was a lot milder in Gipuzkoa, and almost non-existent in Araba and Navarre (Fusi 1984: 12-22).

The first significant nationalist victory of the PNV was the election of Sabino Arana to provincial deputy of Biscay in 1898. The following year the nationalists were elected to the council of Bilbao and by 1907 they had succeeded in having one of their men, Gregorio de Ibarreche, as Mayor of the city. The reason why the PNV did not have much of a presence during the early stages of the century is that it was not perceived as a decisive force. Moreover, the PNV participated for the first time in national - meaning Spanish - elections in 1918. Although the party had been founded almost two decades earlier, in 1894, participating in Spanish elections would have meant accepting Spanish sovereignty as elected deputies had to take the oath on the Spanish legal system to be allowed to sit in the *Cortes* (Parliament). However, in March 1917 the PNV obtained the majority in the *Diputación de Vizcaya* and in the 1918 elections to the *Cortes* the PNV got six out of the seven MPs of the province and one out of five in Gipuzkoa (Fusi 2000: 231). By the 1930s, the PNV made itself a space in the Basque political scene, gaining the respect, and the votes, of people from a wider spectrum. The PNV was fundamentally different to other parties as it could attract voters from all of society. Although the PNV cannot be strictly described as a catch-all party, it was able to integrate all social classes on behalf of the 'interest of the nation' (Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez 1999: 120). There were three processes that allowed the expansion of the party: firstly, the increasing professionalisation of the party; secondly, the effective use of the printed media by the nationalists; thirdly, the expansion of Basque nationalism to other spheres of social life (leisure, youth and unions).

Basque nationalism spread unevenly from its Biscaian epicentre to the neighbouring Basque territories. Thus, the provincial organisation of the PNV in Biscay, the *Bizkai Buru Batzar* (BBB), was extended to Guipuzkoa in 1908 and to Araba and Navarre three years later, in 1911. All the Basque Provinces under Spanish jurisdiction, known in nationalist circles as *Hegoaldes*, had their own provincial organisations and met in the executive body

of the party, the Supreme Council of Euskadi or *Euskadi Buru Batzar*.[151] The nationalist press also followed the same pattern. In the early 20th century Biscay had two nationalist newspapers: the *Euskalduna*, controlled by the moderates, and *Aberri*, under the influence of the radicals. The PNV understood the importance of the press for nation-building and, after an initiative of Luis Arana, it was decided that each province ought to have its own newspaper. What came to be known as the 'Trust of the four nationalist weeklies' originated in the founding in 1907 of the newspaper *Gipuzkoarra*, followed by *Bizkaitarra* (1909), *Napartarra* (1911) and *Arabarra* (1912).[152] The newspapers were financed by the PNV and, paraphrasing Clausewitz, were seen as a 'continuation of politics by other means'. Sabino Arana himself, who had founded the original *Bizkaitarra* in 1894, saw in the press a way of socialising the masses in matters of national importance and a way of participating in public matters.

Hence, the party and the newspapers were the two pillars of Basque nationalism. Around them a whole range of organisations mushroomed, each of them touching upon a different sphere of social life. Of all of them, the most effective in terms of political socialisation was the *batzoki*, a bar-restaurant owned by the PNV where political and cultural activities were organised. The first *batzoki* was opened in Bilbao in 1894 by Arana himself. In the rest of the Basque capitals *batzokis* were opened in the following years: the first one in San Sebastian (1904), followed by Vitoria (1907) and Pamplona (1909). According to the anthropologist Marianne Heiberg, by 1910 all the important towns and cities of Biscay and Gipuzkoa had *batzokis* while the presence 'in Navarre and Araba was negligible outside the capital cities' (Heiberg 1989: 70). The *batzoki* was open to every citizen and, due to its non-profit character, was a popular and accessible place where Basques could safely get their first taste of nationalism.[153] The *batzoki* provided the average Basque with the opportunity to socialise in a nationalist environment in their daily visit to the bar. In the Basque Provinces, it is common for a group of friends (*cuadrilla*) to meet regularly after work. The

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[151] Nowadays, the *Euzkadi Buru Batzar* (EBB) includes a delegate from the Ipar Buru Batzar, the organisation that represents the Pays Basque. See www.eaj-pnv.com.

[152] It might surprise the reader that the weekly from Gipuzkoa was born in 1907 and preceded by two years the birth of *Bizkaitarra*. However, the Biscayan newspaper had not really been born in 1909, as it was only a rebranding of *Aberri*. See Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez 1999: 96.

[153] In the Basque Country, all political parties own bars which are clearly distinguishable by their names. The PNV has *Batzokis*, the socialist party PSE has *Casas del Pueblo*, the Basque nationalists EA has *Gaztetxes*, and the political wing of ETA, Batasuna, has *Herriko Tabernas*.

most frequent activity of the *cuadrilla* is a pub crawl (*txiquiteo* or *poteo*) of the local bars where every member of the *cuadrilla* has a small glass of wine or beer.

The growth of the PNV seemed, to the eye of the outsider, unstoppable. Arana had first warned in 1899 that the 'regeneration' of Euzkadi depended on the creation of 'Basque societies, Basque newspapers, Basque theatres, Basque schools and even Basque charities'.[154] His followers were now expanding the influence of the PNV to specific sectors of Basque society. The first to be targetted was the Basque youth. In 1901, *Euzko Gaztedia* (Basque Youth) was created and soon became the most active cultural promoter of Bilbao, 'the real lung of the nationalist movement', organising lectures, workshops, theatre, music and Euskara classes. [155] In 1912, the *Jaungoiko-zale Bazkuna* (The Association of Enthusiasts of God) was founded to give Christian education in Euskara. In 1911, a nationalist and Catholic union was created for Basque workers (*Solidaridad de Obreros Vascos-Eusko Langileen Alkartasuna, SOV-ELA*)[156] and in 1922 women were provided with their own organisation (*Emakume Abertzale Batza*, EAB). The strategy of the PNV was designed to create a 'micro society' or, as the future Basque president put it, 'a whole new civilisation on Basque soil'.[157]

4.1.2. Arana's 'Spanish Evolution'

The moderates and radicals of the PNV crystallised during the last decade of the 1800s and fought bitterly for the control of the party. However, the event around which their antagonistic positions truly unfolded was around Arana's so-called 'Spanish evolution'. The debate on the 'evolution' started in 1902, shortly after the weekly *La Patria* published a report about Arana's plans to accept Spanish sovereignty in order to obtain an advanced form of autonomy for the Basque Country.[158] According to the newspaper Arana had asked his followers for

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[154] Arana (1980: 1674).

[155] *Eusko Gaztedia* changed its name to Juventud Vasca in 1903. See Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez 1999: 105.

[156] The Solidarity of Basque Workers (SOV-ELA) changed its achronym to STV-ELA in 1933 (*Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos-Eusko Langille Alkartasuna*). See Daniele Conversi (1997:69).

[157] The quote is from José Antonio Aguirre, Basque Lehendakari during the Spanish Civil War. Cited in Elorza (2001: 259).

[158] The article was titled 'Grave y trascendental' and was published on the 22 June 1902 in the weekly *La Patria*, official organ of the PNV. The article was followed by a one-year debate in the pages of *La Patria* and other newspapers. See Arana (1980: 2173-2186). For a complete account of the 'evolution' see Corcuera

a final vote of confidence to edit and expound the program of a new Basque party that is also Spanish, aspiring to the well being of the Basque Country under the Spanish state without infringing established legality, offering a general plan for the reconstitution of the Spanish state with special autonomy for the Basque Country... adjusted to the needs of modern times...[159]

To be more precise, Arana wanted to create a new political party, the League of Pro-Spanish Basques (*Liga de Vascos Españolistas*) which aimed at obtaining 'the most radical degree of autonomy possible within the unity of the Spanish state'.[160] The proposal would force the PNV to abandon its separatist programme in favour of a more moderate, even regionalist programme, which adopted Spanish sovereignty.

His proposal produced a two-fold reaction from the PNV cadres. While the moderate *euskalerríacos* embraced his proposal, the radicals remained sceptical and puzzled about the real extent of the 'evolution'. Among the sceptical were the most devoted followers of Arana who saw in the evolution the tactical move of a genius, although they could not quite make sense of it. Among the radicals, there was Arana's own brother, Luis, who accused him of being 'mad'. Sabino begged his brother to trust him in a letter that carried a hint of his real intentions:

> we must become pro-Spanish (*españolistas*) and work with all our soul for a program of that character. The Fatherland demands it of us. This seems a contradiction, but if people trust me, it must be accepted. It is a colossal stroke, unknown in the annals of political parties. All my reputation is tarnished and the work of many years, carried out at the cost of many sacrifices, is undone, but you will understand me.[161]

Arana, however, did not have time to make himself understood. Suffering from Addison's disease, a disorder that provokes weakness, low blood pressure and a progressive pigmentation of the skin, Arana did not find the energy to write the statutes of the new

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(2001: 585-614), Payne (1975: 79-82), Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez (1999: 51-57) and Pablo, Mees & Granja (1998: 51-57).

[159] Translation from Payne (1975: 80). The original in Spanish can be found in Corcuera (2001: 587).

[160] Interview to Arana in *La Gaceta del Norte*. Cited in Jemein y Lambarri (1935: 299).

[161] In Payne (1975: 80). The letter was sent from Bilbao's prison in June 1902 to his brother Luis. Arana had been incarcerated because of his telegram to Roosevelt where he congratulated the President for the US victory over Spain in 1898. To get his message to his brother, Arana used one of his most loyal 'disciples', Engracio de Arantzadi 'Kizkitza', as a courier. See Arana (1980: 2174-2175), Corcuera (2001: 571-640) and Arantzadi (1980: 112-113).

party as he died on 25 November 1903 at the age of thirty-eight. With his sudden disappearance, the only person who was respected by both moderates and radicals was gone and it was now up to the PNV to decide what to do with the 'Spanish evolution'.

Was Arana really serious about the Spanish evolution? Scholars remain divided about the event. Some authors have pointed that in the later stages of his life the harassment of the Spanish authorities intensified[162] and Arana might have felt the need for a change of strategy (Solozábal 1975: 363; Payne 1975: 81; Conversi 1997: 68). However, other authors remain doubtful about the real extent of the evolution and see it as a 'tactical retreat', not an abandonment of separatism (Beltza 1978: 159; Corcuera 2001: 591-4; and Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez 1999: 52). The latter view can be supported with two reasons. First of all, putting Arana's political experience in perspective, this later reformist evolution is not consistent with all his critiques of the moderates and the regionalist attitude of the Catalan nationalists. Secondly, Arana nominated a successor, Angel Zabala (Kondaño), who opposed the evolution. The question that really matters is why would have he nominated someone who strongly opposed his later view if he wanted the evolution to prosper?

The academic debate is important because the same arguments were used, at the time, by the PNV cadres to disentangle the 'real meaning' of the evolution. The moderates, a group of male professionals of the middle and upper classes who favoured reform and compromise rather than transgression or revolution, totally supported Arana's evolution and proposed to follow the autonomist path. The radicals, also known as *jelkides* or *jeltzales (followers of the JEL motto)* and who saw themselves as the true heirs of Arana (*sabinianos*), believed that the 'evolution' was just a tactic to avoid the authorities' harassment, attract more supporters and wait for better times.[163] Angel Zabala finally solved the debate in 1907 by approving a Manifesto which was especially designed to reconcile the two factions. According to Javier Corcuera, Zabala managed to impose his view and the 'evolution' was presented as a mysterious and inexplicable event, promptly abandoned by Arana before dying (Corcuera 2001: 641).

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[162] On 2 May 1902 the Basque Centre was attacked and the suspects were not prosecuted. On 30 May that year, Arana was imprisoned for his letter to Roosevelt and, in the following month, some councillors were suspended from their activities. See Corcuera (2001: 573-585).
[163] Eli Gallastegi (1935: 88-89).

Zabala eluded establishing the sort of relationship that the Basque Country and Spain should have and blocked any debate about what was going to be the policy of the PNV: autonomy or independence. [164] The Manifesto had forced the moderates and the radicals to discuss the political and institutional future of the Basques within the party, although never putting it in explicit terms (Pablo, Mees & Rodriguez 1999: 134). By doing so, Zabala temporarily managed to keep the party united. However, in the following years it became clear that the debate on the 'Spanish evolution' was nothing but a badly healed wound. Not everything can be blamed on Zabala; Arana himself had problems in synthesising in a sole coherent programme his two main convictions: separatism and moderation. Given the influence of Arana on the PNV it is not surprising that the party also oscillated between fundamentalism and realism. In fact, the official biographers of the PNV have described the whole history of the party as a pendular movement between 'autonomy' and 'separatism'. [165]

4.1.3. The Split between Moderates and Radicals

In the years that followed the debate on the 'Spanish evolution' both the moderates and the radicals consolidated. Each of the two trends grew stronger and increasingly irreconcilable. Some older members of the party maintained the ideological equilibrium between autonomy and separatism, at least in theory, but no one could replace Arana in the role of arbitrator. [166]

The radicals were separatists and believed they were defending the 'doctrinal purity' of the party. They were also known as *aberrianos* for their involvement in the weekly newspaper, *Aberri*, from where they launched attacks on the moderates. The newspaper had been created by the Basque Youth in 1907 and was the backbone for radical nationalists. Moreover, it was the platform from which they criticised the ambitions of the moderates who now controlled the PNV. The following 1919 editorial of *Aberri* typifies the analysis of the situation by the radicals:

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[164] Miguel Artola cited in Jáuregui (1981: 35).

[165] See de Pablo, Mees and Rodríguez (1999), El Pendulo Patriotico. This view is also shared by Elorza (2001: 303).

[166] Engracio de Aranzadi, Kizkitza, and Luis de Eleizalde, Iturrain, were some of these people. See Elorza (2001: 307).

At the same time the [Basque] Nationalist Party is gaining quantity it is also losing in quality. The Aranist spirit is cooling down and that austerity of principles and patriotic intransigence the Master instilled into the first Jeltzales is being mystified. We are going from concession to concession, from surrender to surrender, forgetting our primitive fierceness.[167]

The *aberrianos*, Gurutuz Jáuregui has argued, did not elaborate a concise social and economic programme; they merely proposed that Basque nationalism should be based on radical intransigence (Jáuregui 1981: 39). The main representatives of the *aberrianos* were Eli Gallastegi, Luis de Arana Goiri, Manu Egilor, José de Arriandiaga (Joala), Friar Evengelista de Ibero and Santiago de Meabe.[168] However, the undisputed leader was Eli Gallastegi, *Gudari* (patriot), who regularly contributed to the pages of *Aberri*. His articles were later compiled in a book, *Por la libertad vasca* (1933), which unfolds the ideology of the radicals. Gallastegi agreed with Arana that *Euskadi* was an occupied nation that needed to be independent from Spain and France. However, he did not merely replicate Arana, and incorporated a progressive social element to Basque nationalism.[169] Gallastegi had deep sympathy for the living conditions of workers and believed that Spanish workers in the Basque Provinces should be respected. For Gallastegi, it was attitude that mattered, not ethnic origin. He preferred a well-integrated immigrant who was concerned with Basque issues to an ethnic Basque with Spanish tendencies. In this sense, Gallastegi strayed from Arana's emphasis on the purity of race. He also contradicted Arana when arguing that socialism and nationalism were not two irreconcilable ideologies and that some sort of fusion was possible.[170] Part of his writings was dedicated to the nationalist struggles of other nations from which the Basques could learn. In this respect, he looked closely at the cases of Ireland, Morocco, Cuba, Haiti, Macedonia and India. In the case of the latter, he was profoundly impressed by the way Gandhi was implementing the emancipation of India

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[167] According to Camino (1991:87), the editorial was published in December 1919 in *Aberri* and was most probably written by Ceferino de Jemein, the author of the first of many biographies on Arana. The original text reads: 'A medida que el Partido Nacionalista va ganando en cantidad, va perdiendo en calidad. El espíritu sabiniano se va entibiando y aquella austeridad de principios e intransigencia patriótica que el Maestro infundió en los primeros Jeltzales, se va mistificando. Vamos de concesión en concesión, de dejación en dejación, olvidándonos de nuestra primitiva fiereza'.

[168] Santiago de Meabe adopted the pseudonym of GEYME, an acronym which stood for 'Cheers to Euskadi' and 'Death to Spain' (*Gora Euzkadi! y Muera España!*). See Elorza (2001: 307 & 245).

[169] See Trifón Echeberria in Ibarzabal (1978: 118).

[170] Gallastegi (1993: 43-68 & 104-126).

through civil disobedience.[171] However, his main contribution to Basque nationalism was the need for the PNV to 'nationalise' all social activities. For Gallastegi, the struggle for independence needed to be reproduced on all fronts.[172] Basque nationalism had to permeate all social activities and 'nationalise' the masses in their fight against Spain. Following this idea, two more organisations were founded: in 1912 the association of mountaineers, the *Mendigoizale Bazkuna* first saw the light and ten years later, in 1922, the *Emakume-Abertzale Batza* (Association of Nationalist Women) which clearly mirrored the *Irish Cumann nan Ban*.[173]

At the other end of the spectrum, the moderates were confident of their contribution and disregarded the *aberrianos*. They had entered the PNV in 1898 and, after convincing Arana of the need to participate in elections, had saved the party from disappearance.[174] They were known as *euskalerríacos* because they had participated in the *Sociedad Euskalerria*, a foralist party of Bilbao which failed to attract popular support. Their leader was Ramón de la Sota y Llano, a powerful industrialist who kept good relations with the industrial and financial bourgeoisie and who saw in nationalism a way to influence Spanish politics to his own benefit.[175] Their pragmatism, together with the money, prestige and the good candidates accounted for the transformation of the PNV into a modern political party (Heiberg 1989: 64). The *euskalerriacos* did not exclude the possibility of establishing alliances with Spanish political forces. Their view could not be more opposed to Arana's radicalism but 'doctrinal purity' was temporarily abandoned in favour of the party's survival. The PNV's new strategy proved to be right and after the fusion with the *euskalerriacos*, the party obtained their first electoral results, having Arana elected in September 1898. The positive trend continued in the following years, in tandem with the

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[171] Eli Gallastegi, 'Las grandes inquietudes de los pueblos. La Marcha Heroica de Mahatma Gandhi' in *Patria Vasca*, nº5, abril 1930. See Gallastegi (1993: 22-23).

[172] Under the influence of Gallastegi, ETA adopted this strategy in its Fifth Assembly (1967) when it divided its action on the cultural, economic, political and military fronts. See chapter 5.

[173] *Emakume-Abertzale Batza* was constituted on 7 May 1922. The idea for the association had come after a Sinn Fein member, Ambrose V. Martin O'Daly, had given a conference in Bilbao and represented a breakthrough in Basque politics. Women had been traditionally seen as the nationalising agent in the Basque home but now they could enter politics on equal terms to men. The move was significant if we take in account that women were granted the suffrage almost twenty years later.[173] Gallastegi proposed Ireland as a model, particularly Sinn Fein. As Eric Hobsbawm has pointed out, the Irish showed the young Basques the real meaning of 'revolutionary nationalism' (Hobsbawm 1990: 139).

[174] For more information on the group and how they came closer to the PNV, see Corcuera (2001: 313-324).

[175] Ramón de la Sota was an industrialist of Bilbao's *ría* with a powerful network of contacts. See Elorza (2001: 245).

adoption of more moderate postures. In the long run, says Corcuera, the positions of the *euskalerriacos* would be dominant (Corcuera 2001: 331). Undoubtedly, the *euskalerriacos* had contributed to the electoral growth of the PNV but had also brought a different understanding of making politics. The moderate and the radical conception co-existed but it was only a matter of time before these centripetal forces split the party.

The two wings of the party finally came to an irreconcilable disagreement in 1916, when the moderates attempted to rename the PNV in order to show Basque society the changing nature of Basque nationalism and faced the fierce opposition of the radicals. The idea behind the change of name was to create a movement for all Basques, a truly national movement that did not represent any sector or class of society in particular but all Basques. However, the renaming was more than that in the eyes of the radicals. The PNV theoretically continued the path signalled by Arana but its attitude and political praxis was coming closer to the thesis advocated by the moderates. The PNV had slowly turned to 'autonomism' while neglecting the most radical aspects of Arana's doctrine. Independence was no longer a goal and the PNV demanded from the state a return to a pre-1839 situation, before the first abolition of the *fueros*. The reasons for that change were mainly of an economic nature.[176] During the First World War, Spain's economy had been blessed with neutrality and among all the areas in Spain, the Basque Country benefited the most. Realising the extraordinary gains made by industrialists and manufacturers, the state tried to introduce a new tax on the benefits resulting from the war. The initiative faced the opposition of the Catalan regionalists and the moderate Basque nationalists who, at the time, had close links with Basque capitalism. Basque capitalists, who were funding the nationalists, realised that to maximise their gains they had to be integrated into the political and economic structure of Spain and pressured the PNV to defend their interests. In the end, the PNV adopted a political project based on the defence of a political autonomy for the Basques within a multinational Spain.

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[176] A detailed account of the ideological change and its relationship to the economic causes can be found in Elorza (2001: 239-257) and Heiberg (1989: 73).

Thus, in 1916 the PNV abandoned its original name for that of *Comunión Nacionalista Vasca* (CNV) to indicate their ideological shift.[177] The first reaction of *aberrianos* came in the form of a 1917 editorial titled 'In defence of doctrinal purity. What is Basque nationalism?'.[178] The newspaper leader argued that Basques had been an independent state before being invaded by France and Spain and that, in consequence, sovereignty could only be regained by returning to that original independence (Elorza 2001: 329). The renaming continued to be a source of bitter antagonism and in 1921 the polemic finally broke out again. In June that year, the weekly *Aberri* published an article by Jesús de Gaztañaga, 'La bandera sabiniana. En defensa de la pureza doctrinal', which attacked the moderates Manuel Aranzadi, Eleizalde and Kizkitza (Camino 1991: 88). The *aberrianos* position was that the reformist proposals of the CNV were an act of treason to Arana's 'doctrinal purity'. The members of the CNV, whom they accused of being 'Phoenicians' and *españolistas*, were ready to trade separatism and revolutionary nationalism in exchange for financial support of the financial-industrial bourgeoisie.

The critiques of the radicals grew and in 1921 they were finally expelled from the CNV. Their leaders, among others, Gallastegi, Errasti, Uribe-Echebarría and Vitorica, were obviously the first to go. The organisations that supported their views, especially the Basque Youth, also ceased to have the protection and support of the *Comunión*. After their expulsion from CNV, the *aberrianos* decided to (re-)found later in the year the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco-Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea* (PNV-EAJ) in a clear attempt to recover the 'doctrinal purity' of the Master. The fear of a split, which had worried the cadres of the party after Arana's death, became a reality. The difficult equilibrium achieved in 1907 by the Zabala Manifesto had only silenced, not reconciled, the opposing moderate and radical trends. However, the reasons for the split were not only of an internal nature; the international context had a decisive influence. After World War I the international recognition of the right of self-determination for small nations, epitomized in Wilson's fourteen points, had fuelled the emergence of more radical options in both Catalonia and the Basque Country.

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[177] The party started to be known as *Comunidad Nacionalista* from 1913 but the name was only officially changed in 1916 when the new statute was approved. See Pablo, Mees & Rodriguez (1999: 102).
[178] The article was published in *Aberri* in December 1917 and was signed by the editor-in-chief, Jesús de Gaztaña. See Elorza (2001: 329).

With the control of a party of their own, the Basque Youth prepared itself to put into practice its radical view of politics. Their first step was in 1923 when, together with Galician and Catalan nationalists, they signed what came to be known as the *Triple Alianza* (Triple Alliance). The aim of the Alliance, according to the founding text, was to group 'patriots of Catalonia, Euzkadi and Galicia' in order to gain, collectively, 'the national freedom for all three peoples'.[179] The pact was subscribed to by separatist organisations such as the PNV or *Estat Català* but also by more moderate groups like the Galician *Irmandade Nazionalista Galega* and the Catalan *Unió Catalanista*. In the end, the radicals managed to impose their tone in the text, making the *Comunión Nacionalista Vasca* (CNV) and the Catalan host, *Acció Catalana*, withdraw their final signature. According to Xosé Estevez, the Triple Alliance was characterised by its 'radical separatism', 'utopianism', 'anti-Spanishness', 'doctrinal character' and lack of 'pragmatism' and 'organisation'.[180] The Alliance was signed on 11 September, the Catalan national day, and was followed by a demonstration 'in which the Spanish flag was ostentatiously abused' (Ben Ami 1983: 54). The pact was immediately criticised by the Spanish government and the press and precipitated an already planned *coup* two days later. On 13 September 1923, and partly due to the activities of the Triple Alliance, the captain-general of Catalonia, Miguel Primo de Rivera, established a right-wing military dictatorship signalling the end of the period known as the Restoration Monarchy.

4.2. The 'Basque Problem': Authoritarian and Democratic Responses

With the disappearance of Arana, the radicals grew in numbers and strength within the party. After 1916, the radicals officially represented a different form of nationalism. However, their role in the following two decades was going to be secondary as turbulent times were about to come: not only the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, and the intensity of the Second Republic, but a Civil War that was going to change radical Basque nationalism forever.

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[179] Estévez (1991: 656).
[180] Estévez (1991: 640).

4.2.1. Primo de Rivera, 1923-1931

Primo de Rivera's personal conviction was that the defining characteristics of the Restoration - politicians, political clientelism, *caciquismo*, and parliamentarian liberalism - were the causes of Spain's decadence. During the Restoration Monarchy (1874-1923) the two dominant parties, the moderates and progressives, had come to an agreement known as *turno pacífico*, in which they decided to alternate in power, and the civil governors and local bosses (*caciques*) rigged the elections accordingly. Primo personally detested these professional politicians for having destroyed Spain and suggested his dictatorship was to be a merely transitional solution until 'capable men' were found to lead the country towards a better future.[181] According to the British historian, Raymond Carr (1992: 543), Primo's political thought was 'primitive', 'personal' and 'ingenuous'. Primo saw his role as that of a surgeon who had to operate upon a sick nation and 'promised a short rule in which the treatment of the gravely ill nation would be one of 'amputating the gangrened limbs'' (1983: 58). For years, since the Disaster of 1898, Spanish intellectuals (*regeneracionistas*) had demanded an 'iron surgeon' (*cirujano de hierro*) capable of regenerating and renovating Spain.[182] Furthermore, Mussolini had come to power a year earlier, in 1922, and stood as the model for any would-be European dictator.[183]

The Primo de Rivera coup was also a response to the grave economic situation, the failing military action in Morocco, the actions of organised labour and the 'separatist threat' epitomised by the Triple Alliance. His coup had the backing of the Church, large sectors of the army, conservative parties and the King himself, which would all remain central

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[181] In his proclamation on the eve of the coup d'etat Primo de Rivera emphasised that: 'Our aim is to open a brief parenthesis in the constitutional life of Spain and to re-establish it as soon as the country offers us men uncontaminated with the vices of political organisation. We will then hasten to present these men to Your Majesty so that normality can be established as soon as possible'. Cited in Carr (1982: 564).

[182] The expression 'iron surgeon' was coined after the 1898 Disaster by Joaquin Costa, a member of the Regenerationist Movement and author of *Oligarquía y Caciquismo*, a book which criticised the corrupt political system of the Restoration Monarchy. The *regeneracionistas* wanted to cure the structural maladies of the Spaniards and their country, developing its economy, educating its people, and reforming its government: in short, 'restoring Spain's pulse'. (Ben Ami 1983: 117). The expression 'revolution from above' was a concept from the conservative politician Antonio Maura and 'saviour of the Fatherland' was coined by Manuel Jover.

[183] His admiration for the 'virility' of Italian fascism was no secret. He admired Mussolini's 'tenacity, his faith', and 'his formidable work' (Ben-Ami 1983: 131-2 & 191). The impact of 'Mussolinism' can be traced to the use made of the State party founded in 1924, the *Patriotic Union*, and the *Somatén* militia which mirrored their Italian counterparts (Italian Fascist Party and militia). He also believed the corporatist state was the only answer to class struggle.

institutions during his regime. For example, the Church became a dominant institution in education and also had some influence at university level. The military, on the other hand, would be the right hand of Primo throughout the duration of the regime. Early in the dictatorship the Military Directorate consisted almost entirely of generals and military men with extensive powers. The military also took over posts of civil governors, local governments and courts. They all saw in Primo a 'saviour of the fatherland' who could purge the country of the vices of its political elite, restore law and order, revive conservative values and introduce a range of social and economic reforms.

As a soldier, Primo de Rivera was imbued with a strong sense of nationalism which defined his dictatorial regime. He was uncompromisingly loyal to the country, the Church and lastly the Monarch, and established a regime based on the appeal to improve, reform and restore the patria. The Spanish nationalism of Primo de Rivera could be traced to his foreign policy, particularly in regard to Northern Africa, and his economic policiy, which aimed to create an autarkic national market by means of state monopolies and regulatory bodies. However, his nationalism could mostly be seen in his internal policy and his desire to create a united Spain at the expense of peripheral nations such as Catalonia and the Basque Country.

Basque nationalists suspected they might be the 'gangrened limbs' Primo was talking about and were cautious in their initial reactions to the coup. *Euzkadi*, the newspaper of the moderate CNV argued that

> with respect to our opinion of events, our readers will understand that we are not able to give it. Freedom to write does not exist today, and, not existing, we renounce everything which isn't strict information.[184]

On the other hand, the *aberrianos* radically opposed the new regime, and through their newspaper *Aberri* affirmed:

> How [can] a Spain be loved which asks for [and] which demands sacrifices, butchery through offering mines to the rich, attacks on the poor and misery to everyone?[185]

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[184] *Euzkadi*, 16 September 1923. Quoted in Watson (1992: 33).
[185] *Aberri*, 14 September 1923. Quoted in Watson (1992: 33).

The reaction from Primo was immediate. Four days after the publication of the article, *Aberri* and the radical PNV were banned and some of its leaders were forced into exile.[186] The article had given Primo the excuse to approve a wider decree against separatist attitudes that he had planned to approve anyway.[187] In Primo's eyes, one of the diseases that could be lethal to the Spanish nation was the claim of other 'regions' to nationhood and, as the 'iron surgeon', he was willing to extirpate them. A month later, the authorities closed the *batzokis* and the premises of the Basque Youth and left the mountaineers' organisation, the *mendigoxales*, with the monumental task of organising the cultural opposition to the dictatorship.

For Basque nationalism the period under Primo de Rivera's dictatorship was one of cultural regeneration. Both Basque nationalist parties, the CNV and the PNV, withdrew from the political scene, partly due to the repressive measures but also due to the belief the dictatorship was not going to last long. At the beginning of his rule, Primo had promised that he would return the sovereign power to Parliament after three months. However, in 1925, two years after the coup, he was reluctant to resign and explained that there remained 'a lot of work to do' (Ben-Ami 1983: 89). The moderate CNV had its newspapers constantly scrutinised by the censors and had to go through a depoliticisation process in order to avoid the censor's fines. Only the less 'political' organisations of the CNV, such as the women's charities, were fully active during the 1920s.[188] The radicals comfortably moved in secrecy and organised the Basque resistance against the dictatorship (Camino 1991: 101). The same would happen thirty years later when, under Francoism, radical Basque nationalism created ETA. However, unlike Franco, Primo showed some understanding of the cultural differences within Spain and allowed the celebration of non-nationalist events. In this regard, said Cameron Watson, traditional sports such as boat races and *pelota* games were encouraged (Watson 1992: 86). Other events included the *aizkolari* or wood-chopping competitions, the *irrintzi* contests, in which the winner was the person who could yell in the shrillest voice, and the *bertsolari* contests, improvised oral poetry

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[186] Gallastegi fled to the Pays Basque and then to Mexico. Other leaders forced into exile were Eguileor, Gaztaña, Uribe-Echevarría, Areitioaurtena and Robles Aránguiz, president of the Bilbao office of SOV. Pablo, Mees, Rodríguez (1999: 175).
[187] Decree Against Separatism, 18 September 1923.
[188] The best account of Basque nationalists during the dictatorship is provided by Pablo, Mees & Rodriguez (1999: 150-160). See also Ramos (1985 & 1988).

contests between Basque troubadours or *bertsolariak*. For Primo, Basque culture was not a threat to Spain but a sign of Spanish cultural richness. Euskara, which would be fiercely prosecuted during Francoism was now allowed and Primo admitted 'eight specialists to the Royal Spanish Academy as representatives of the distinct linguistic diversity of Spain' (Watson 1992: 74).

Nevertheless, any cultural activity with a political message had to be organised in the countryside, away from the eyes of the *upetistas*, or supporters of Primo. The nationalists started their 'symbolic fight' against the dictatorship away from urban areas: in the mountains. The Association of Mountaineers organised excursions to the mountains where Basques could safely sing their nationalist songs, hand out pamphlets and openly display Basque *ikurriñas*. Although it was forbidden, they also visited Arana's grave on the anniversary of his death.[189] For the nationalists who dared to challenge the dictatorship, the consequences were repression and exile. Eli Gallastegi, the leader of the *aberrianos*, was one of the protagonists of many of the incidents against the dictatorship. One of them was Gallastegi's wedding reception when 400 guests turned the event into a celebration where nationalist songs were chanted and leaders of the party gave speeches against Primo's regime. The event ended when the police entered the restaurant, pistols in hand (Jemein y Lambari 1935: 346). The second, and more serious event, was Gallastegi's participation in a conspiracy against the Spanish regime. Gallastegi had contacted other separatist leaders like the Catalan Francesc Macià about a plot to overthrow the regime (Elorza 2001: 360). However, in 1926 Gallestegi fled into exile where he continued his political activity. In Saint Jean de Luz he founded the Euskadi Independence Commission (*Euzkadi-Azkatasuna-Aldezko-Batzarra*) which worked for the international recognition of the right of self-determination, mainly in the Americas. In the US, Argentina and Mexico, the Commission attracted enough funding from the Basque diaspora to allow the publication and distribution of the journal *Patria Vasca,* which established the political thought of the *aberrianos*. According to Elorza (2001: 362), the Commission argued the 'rights', 'character' and 'national soul' of Basques were a consequence of its racial specificity. From exile, Gallastegi continued to maintain contacts with other nationalist causes in an effort to

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[189] See Jemein y Lambari (1935: 348-351).

'internationalise' the Basque problem. His contacts were especially intense with the Sinn Fein, a movement he particularly admired.[190]

On 28 January 1930, Primo de Rivera resigned as Head of state. The dictator had ceased to have the support of the army and the King Alfonso XIII and there was growing opposition from the oligarchy and the republican forces. With the disappearance of Primo de Rivera, Basque nationalism ceased to appear as radical, romantic and extravagant as in earlier years. To many in the lower-middle classes it began to appear the most effective means of defending their interests and way of life. As the foundations of the Spanish monarchy began to crumble and civic institutions were threatened with collapse, Basque nationalism provided a new means of identity and security, a firm defence of values both traditional and modern. As Gallastegi admitted, the dictatorship had favoured Basque nationalists very much (Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez 1999:175). Primo's repression had been effective in completely annihilating nationalist politics, but it had achieved the opposite effects to those it pursued. Indeed, the decree against separatism made nationalists retreat from it but led to a regeneration of Basque culture that prepared Basque nationalists to advance in the political arena. The dictatorship had the opposite effect on Basques as it reinforced the image of Spain as the Basques' arch-enemy. In their fight against Spain, the nationalists ceased to see the minor differences between the CNV and the PNV, and after the demise of Primo, the two parties fused in 1930 with the name Arana had created for the nationalist movement: PNV.

4.2.2. Second Republic, 1931-1936

The fall of the dictatorship dragged down the Crown, which Primo had used to support his regime, along with it. Spaniards had already experienced what the 'iron surgeon' and the King could do and were now ready for a new regime: a Republic. Alfonso XIII melancholically recalled this attitude when he meditated about the condition of the monarchy. 'We are not in fashion', he lamented.[191] The process that brought about the demise of the monarchy started with a pact signed in the Basque coastal city of San Sebastián by republicans, socialists and Catalan nationalists in August 1930. The 'Pact of

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[190] Gallastegi (1993: 11-40).
[191] Cited in Carr (1992: 576).

San Sebastián' was followed by a revolutionary movement in which the PNV refused to take part. On 12 April 1931 the coalition of republicans and socialists triumphed in the municipal elections of the main Spanish cities, and two days later a Revolutionary Committee issued an ultimatum to King Alfonso XIII and asked him to resign. The king abdicated and the Committee, acting as Provisional Government, proclaimed the Second Republic with Niceto Alcalá Zamora as its first Prime Minister.

One of the unintended results of Primo's dictatorship was the reunification of the Basque radicals and the moderates into a single party. On April 1930 the uncompromising PNV and the temperate CNV reunited under the name of *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (PNV). Within the party, the *aberrianos* led by Eli Gallastegi reconstructed their movement around the newspaper *Jagi-Jagi* and, yet again, became an active trend promoting and engaging in debate with the moderate wing of the party, the *euskalerriacos*. The debate between autonomy and separatism continued. However, the Second Republic saw the moderates' turn to engage in a debate with Madrid and achieve a statute of autonomy that ruled out forever the radical aspirations of the *aberrianos*. Under the leadership of Jose Antonio Aguirre, the PNV maintained a pragmatic policy with Madrid, marked by sporadic confrontation, which silenced any criticism from the radicals. In Madrid politicians perceived the PNV, and Basque nationalism in general, as a 'right-wing, Catholic, and xenophobic movement' (Fusi 1984: 189). The self-fulfilling images of 'the other' of both Basques and Spaniards made the granting of a Basque statute of autonomy a problematic issue which was only solved in 1936 with the approval of a Statute of Autonomy. In contrast, Catalonia had obtained her home-rule statute in September 1932.

The Second Republic also cleared the way for the creation of new parties and in 1930 *Acción Nacionalista Vasca* (ANV) was born (Granja 1987: 62). Most of the founders of ANV came from the moderate CNV and complained that nationalism was too often equated with Arana's doctrine. For them, the Second Republic was an opportunity to renew the core elements of nationalism and establish a new relationship with the other peoples of Spain, a relationship that was not based on the constant repetition of the 'historical rights' of the Basques but on the will of the majority of the Basque people. When referring to the Basque people, the ANV did not share the view of the PNV that only ethnic Basques were real Basques. For the ANV 'race' should not be an essential element of the nation:

The hate of the *maketo* is over. Outsiders to the [Basque] country love it more than members of the Basque race.[192]

From the ANV's perspective, the PNV was in the throes of ideological stagnation and it did not take long before the two conceptions of nationalism confronted each other in the pages of the nationalist press.[193] The disagreement revolved around the religious issue and the relationship with other non-nationalist parties, such as the monarchic right, the republicans and the socialists (Granja 1987: 55). The ANV did not accept the motto of the PNV, JEL (God and Old Laws) but it could not be described as anti-Aranist. According to Payne (1975: 108), the party 'was not anti-Catholic or even particularly anticlerical, but stood on the principles of non-confessionalism, republican democracy, and greater attention to social reform'. In relation to the forces of the Second Republic, the ANV supported the system and in the first municipal elections of the Republic joined with the republican and socialist forces. Their nationalism was irreproachable, as they did not support any kind of Republic except one based on federal principles. The ANV presented Basque nationalism with an opportunity to modernise, incorporate liberal principles and move away from the archaic principles that dominated the PNV. In the end, the ANV remained an irrelevant party in electoral terms but had a deep impact on later generations of radical Basque nationalism. The historian José Luis de la Granja summarises in six points the main contributions of the ANV: (1) it was the first party to present a leftist and nationalist alternative to the PNV; (2) contributed to secularise Basque nationalism; (3) opened the door for Basque nationalism to establish political alliances with the left; (4) fused liberalism, socialism and nationalism; (5) anticipated the PNV's move to support the democratic system, and 6) established a historical precedent for radical Basque nationalism (Granja 1986: 612-613).

The hegemony of the PNV remained undisputed as it managed to galvanise the nationalists during the 1930s. For an indicator of the state of Basque politics and its unique relation to Spain it is worth analysing the electoral results of the Republic. The first Parliamentary elections were held in 1931 in order to ratify the new constitution. In Spain as a whole voters endorsed the new regime and the left-wing coalition swept the peninsula. In Navarre

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[192] Quoted in Granja (1986: 45).

[193] Mainly in the newspaper of the ANV, *Nacionalista*, and the ones owned by the PNV, *Euzkadi* and *Bizkaitarra* (Granja 1986: 55).

and the Basque Country the political spectrum was also divided into two blocks: right-wing and left-wing (see Table 2). However, the political tone of the discussion was slightly different to that of Spain. In the Basque Country, the debate was centred on the Statute of Estella. The Statute, says Granja (1990: 108), allowed the Basque lands to establish a Concordat with the Vatican, which would stop any anti-clerical legislation from the new republican government in Madrid. The right-wing coalition was made up of Carlists from Navarre, Catholic and republican parties and the PNV. They obtained the absolute majority of 56% of the votes in the Basque Country and 53.1% in Navarre. The right-wing block, which was dominated by Navarrese Carlists and Basque nationalists, won a clear victory, gaining 15 of the 24 *Cortes* seats for both Navarre and the Basque Country (Payne 1975: 122).

Table 2: Results of the 1931 General Elections in the Basque Country and Navarre

	Participation (%)	Right (%)	Left (%)
Basque Country	82.2	56.0	44.0
Navarre	83.5	53.1	30.7

Source: Stanley G. Payne (1975: 122) and Granja (1986: 625).

The left obtained 44% of the votes in the Basque Country and had its stronghold in the urban areas. In Navarre, most of the leftist votes came from the southern part of Navarre, also known as Rioja Alavesa. The Basque Provinces continued to be largely conservative and were denounced by an angry socialist leader, Indalecio Prieto, as a 'Vaticanist Gibraltar' (Payne 1975: 122). The campaign of the Left had been based on an attack on the Statute and the defence of the Second Republic. The Basque Statute, points out Granja, had to be liberal or there would be no autonomy at all for Euskadi (Granja 1990: 108-109). Indeed the project did not pass Parliament and was only approved in 1937.

In the next two elections of the Second Republic - in 1933 and 1936 - the development of Basque politics gradually approached the issues and concerns of the rest of Spaniards. In the 1933 elections, the left-wing government lost the elections and the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights (CEDA) took power and managed to keep it until the 1936 elections, when it lost it again to the Left. As shown in Table 3, the voting pattern of

Basques in both elections roughly coincided with that of the rest of Spain but continued to have unique characteristics such as the electoral growth of the PNV.

Table 3: Results of the PNV in General Elections, 1931-1936

	Araba (%)	Biscay (%)	Guipuzkoa (%)	Navarre (%)	TOTAL (%)
June 1931	4,615 (21,8)	31,209 (50,8)	35,901 (14,5)	46,419 (12,7)	211,456 (22,4)
November 1933	11,525 (29,0)	79,258 (57,4)	236,177 (46,1)	69,325 (9,2)	625,263 (31,3)
February 1936	8,958 (20,8)	72,026 (51,6)	72,026 (51,6)	14,799 (2,0)	465,205 (23,0)

Source: Pablo, Mees & Rodriguez (1999: 278).

As seen in the electoral results, by the 1930s the PNV had ceased to be a minority force and appealed to roughly one quarter of the population of Navarre and the Basque Country. This was due to the PNV's evolution from a right-wing, Catholic and xenophobic movement into a social-Christian, moderate and, of course, Basque party. According to Fusi (1984: 189), the PNV, like Basque society in general, had been modernised and now included a new 'generation of militants of Christian and democratic background' which pushed with 'determination to see some form of political self-government' for the Basque Provinces (Fusi 1984: 186-189). The appeal to the masses has been best summarised by Stanley Payne (1975: 107):

> To many in the lower-middle classes it began to appear the most effective means of defending their interests and way of life. As the foundations of the Spanish monarchy began to crumble and civic institutions were threatened with collapse, Basque nationalism provided a new means of identity and security, a firm defence of values both traditional and modern. To middle-class youth, it had a new allure as a creative and reforming (temporarily underground) force, radical with respect to the pre-existing political structure yet pious, middle-class and integrative.

As pointed out by Granja (1986: 630), the geographical concentration of Basque nationalist activity would coincide with the division of the Basque Country at the start of the Civil War in 1936. Biscay and Gipuzkoa were monopolised by the PNV and the leftist coalition, *Frente Popular*, while the provinces that sided with Franco, Araba and Navarre, voted for a Catholic-traditionalist option. But unaware of its near future, Basque nationalism

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reorganised and started drafting a statute of autonomy for the Basque Provinces. The pursuit of political autonomy in the Basque Provinces followed a different pattern. The insufficient social support for the PNV, essentially confined to Biscay and to a lesser extent Gipuzkoa, made Basque nationalists turn to the Carlists in order to gain the necessary votes to propose home rule, as the initial step towards independence. Although Carlists defended the *fueros* and a similar theocratic and ultramontane view of politics to that of the PNV, they refused to support Basque home rule. Basque nationalists then turned to the Spanish socialist party, PSOE, which had a stronghold in the industrial area of Biscay, and finally the statute was approved in the Spanish parliament in October 1936. In the end, a statute was approved which covered Araba, Gipuzkoa and Biscay but left Navarre out. However, this was all essentially a moot point, given the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.

4.2.3. The Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939

The Civil War was not a fight between Spanish nationalism and peripheral nationalisms, but there is little doubt that the rebels saw the development of home-rule statutes during the Second Republic as a direct threat to the national unity of Spain. The fears of Spanish nationalists were clearly expressed by the leader of the Spanish right, José Calvo Sotelo, who preferred 'a Red Spain to a broken Spain' (*antes una España roja que una España rota*) (Tusell 1998: 651). However, the national, or regional, issue was not a deciding factor in the outbreak of the Civil War even though it was later used as a justification by the rebels (Granja 1990: 185).

Among the reasons that triggered the war there was the perceived disintegration of national unity but also religious, ideological and land property issues. The Second Republic had secularised the state and there was now a strict division between earthly and other-worldly issues. In the words of the President of the Republic, Manuel Azaña, Spain had ceased to be Catholic (*España ha dejado de ser católica*). The Republic had also launched an attack on landowners (*terratenientes*) and favoured the demands of workers and peasants' movements which demanded radical social changes. For all these reasons, Franco and others saw the Second Republic as the culmination of a long period of decadence which had started in the 18th century and which could only be stopped by returning to the Spain of

the Catholic Kings.[194] In order to do so, Spain had to be regenerated, if necessary by force. As Franco later affirmed, 'There is no redemption without blood, and the blood that has brought us redemption is a thousand times holy.'[195]

In the months that preceded the war, rumours of a coup d'etat spread all over Spain and were even discussed in the press. The government transferred the members of the military who could lead an insurrection to distant destinations. Many of them were sent to Northern Africa. General Francisco Franco, for example, was sent to the Canary Islands but on 17 July 1936 he flew to Morocco and, with the help of the Moroccan Army, the Spanish Foreign Legion and the Assault and Civil Guards, started a military uprising. On the following day, on 18 July 1936, Franco launched his offensive on the Iberian peninsula. The Spanish Civil War had started.

In the first days of the insurrection, the Second Republic's warships desperately tried to blockade Franco's troops from crossing into Spain but Franco had other means of transportation: the Junkers and the Savoia-Marchetti transport planes Hitler and Mussolini had given him. The role of both Germany and Italy was crucial at this stage and continued to be so as they instructed Franco and his officials on how modern warfare (based on a co-ordination of ground and air attacks) was to conducted (Iturralde 1978: 69 & 222). On the other hand, the Republican government realised from a very early stage that the USSR was not going to provide any significant support and started making alliances within Spain. Hence, the republic formed a government of national unity which was a 'direct representative of all the political forces and different fronts that fight for the survival of the democratic Republic and against the rebels'.[196] In a clear attempt to bring the Basque nationalists to its side, the Second Republic granted a statute of autonomy to the Basque Country and the nationalist Manuel de Irujo became minister without portfolio of the Largo Caballero war cabinet. [197]

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[194] Fontana (1986: 15).

[195] General Franco in 21 May 1947. Quoted in (Reig Tapia 1986:13).

[196] Iturralde (1978: 174).

[197] The Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country was approved in the *Cortes* in October 1936. The Basque Socialist leader Indalecio Prieto, who had a crucial input in the negotiations, later complained that Basques had only intervened in the war to defend the statute, not the Second Republic. See Granja (1990: 185).

The first ever Basque statute of autonomy was passed in the Spanish parliament on 1 October 1936 and, mirroring the Catalan one, only had 14 articles. Although the text did not mention the incorporation of Navarre into the Basque Country or the historical rights of the Basque nation, it allowed the Basques to keep the Economic Concerts by which they were financially independent (Granja 1990: 259). Regardless of the resistance of the radicals, particularly Luis de Arana, the PNV accepted the offer and José Antonio de Aguirre, former striker of the Athletic de Bilbao and mayor of Getxo, was elected first *lehendakari* (president) of the Basque autonomous government. For the nationalists, the statute was not the end of their struggle but a step closer to regaining their pre-1839 political independence. As the newspaper *Euzkadi* pointed out, the statute was a 'temporary goal, a step to freedom' (De Pablo, Mees, Rodríguez 2001: 19). In a clear effort to recall the historical past, Agirre took his oath under the sacred oak of Gernika with these words:

> Humble before God
> Standing on Basque soil
> In remembrance of Basque ancestors
> Under the tree of Guernica, I swear
> To faithfully fulfil my commission[198]

However, as the Basque historian Tuñón de Lara (1987: 25) has pointed out, by the time Aguirre took charge, as minister of defence, of the Basque army the provinces of Araba, Gipuzkoa and Navarre were already in Francoist hands. However, the Basque government managed to recruit an army of almost 40,000 *gudaris* (Basque soldiers), mainly in the province of Biscay, which fought an overwhelmingly superior insurgent army of 60,000 men. In Navarre people had supported the coup and General Mola, in charge of the Northern front, was 'cheered in Pamplona, with Carlists lining the streets shouting 'Long live Christ the King'' (Kurlansky 1999: 185). Navarre was a Carlist and traditionalist bastion, just as it had been the place from where the idea of the Francoist insurrection had sprung. Furthermore, it would be from Navarre that Mola launched his three-front offensive against Gipuzkoa and Biscay (Tuñón de Lara 1987: 23). At the end of the war, Franco would recompensate the faithfulness of Navarre by allowing it to keep its *fueros*, in clear contrast to the provinces of Biscay and Gipuzkoa which were declared to be 'traitor

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[198] Iturralde (1978: 177-178).

provinces'.[199] Araba also supported the insurrection while Biscay would be the only Basque province that would fully maintain the Republican order. The case of Gipuzkoa is somewhat more complex, where a late insurrection (on the 21st, not on the 18th) was combined with the fragmentation of the republican power (Fusi 1987: 45).

According to Paul Preston, Franco saw the eradication of Basque nationalism as a 'necessary solution of a political and historical problem' (Preston 1994: 224). But the event that came to represent Franco's attitude of hatred was the bombing, on 26 April 1937, of the Biscayan town of Gernika.[200] The three-hour bombing levelled 90% of Gernika, left 1,645 corpses and became the first aerial raid in history that targetted civilians.[201] Both the dive and the saturation bombing would be later used by both the Axis powers and the Allies during the Blitz on other urban centres: Berlin, Dresden, Potsdam, Coventry and London. As Goering recognised during the Nuremberg trial, the war in the Basque Provinces had been 'a testing ground for the Luftwaffe' (Tuñón de Lara 1987: 31).

The effectiveness of the Italo-German support in Gernika made Franco mobilise his forces to seize Bilbao. The Biscayan capital had twice been the graveyard of the Carlists in the 19th century and it prepared itself for another siege by surrounding itself with an 'Iron Ring', a system of trenches which mirrored the Maginot Line. Conscious of the challenges ahead, General Mola ordered planes to drop propaganda in which he warned Biscaians that '[i]t is my objective to end rapidly the war in the North. If you surrender, nothing will happen to you. If submission is not immediate, I will raze all Biscay to the ground, beginning with the industries of war. I have the means to do so' (Iturralde 1978: 215). However, the rebels easily pierced Bilbao's 'Iron Ring' as a deserter named Captain Goicoechea gave away the plans of the fortifications. On 19 June 1937 Francoist troops entered Bilbao and started a fierce wave of repression. The Basque Army, which had been founded by Aguirre a year earlier, retreated into the neighbouring province of Santander.

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[199] In a law-decree of 23 June 1937 (Conversi 1997: 229).

[200] On a market day, thirty-seven German Heinkels and Junkers, accompanied by at least three Savoia-Marchetti, twelve Fiat Fighters and possibly six of the first Messerschmitts, dumped one hundred thousand pounds of high-explosive and incendiary bombs on the village of Gernika. The bombing horrified the international press and inspired the famous painting by Pablo Picasso. However, the bombing of Gernika was only made possible by the combined efforts of the Condor Legion and the Italian Aviazione Legionaria, commanded by Colonel Wolfram von Richthofen, cousin of the First World War ace, Manfred von Richthofen, the 'Red Baron'. (Preston 1994: 237)

[201] For more information on Gernika see Southworth (1977) and Tuñón de Lara (1987).

Away from their homeland and with the superior nationalist army moving westwards, the *gudaris* decided to surrender to the Italians in August 1937 in what came to be known as the 'Capitulation of Santoña'.[202]

Before the events of Santoña, the *Euskadi Buru Batzar* (EBB) of the PNV had already moved its command centre to Anglet, in the Pays Basque. From the new headquarters, in *Villa Endara*, the PNV tried to co-ordinate the activities of the nationalists, who were scattered around the French and Spanish Basque Country, Paris and Barcelona (at the time capital of the Republic). The end of the Civil War forced the PNV to move its activities to other cities, mainly London, New York and Paris. In the British capital, it opened a Basque National Council (*Consejo Nacional de Euzkadi*), an organisation representing the Basque Government to the British Government. First commanded by José Ignacio Lizaso and then by Manuel de Irujo, the former minister of the Republic, the Council helped the Foreign Office in translation and information tasks.[203] The New York office of the PNV was headed by Manuel de la Sota and Antón de Irala, representatives to the US State Department. Finally, the *lehendakari* Jose Antonio Aguirre and the Basque Government established their residence in Paris. But the start of World War II caught Aguirre in Belgium between enemy lines. In an eventful story, Aguirre avoided being arrested by the Nazis for over a year and fled to New York via Berlin.[204] The rest of the executive joined him in New York where they finally established the Basque government in-exile. From America, Aguirre designed a campaign for the liberation of the Basques that would dominate the activities of his government for the next 15 years. Aguirre established diplomatic relations with most of the Western and Latin American democracies, hoping to obtain support for the Basque cause.

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[202] The negotiations with the Italians had taken two months and it was agreed that all Basques who surrended would be Italian prisoners of war and would be protected from reprisals while nationalist leaders would be allowed to leave by sea (Payne 1975: 217). At the same time, Franco's troops arrived in Santander and replaced the Italian contingent. After assuring the Italians the terms of the capitulation would be respected, the Basque prisoners were handed overto Franco's forces. Immediately afterwards summary trials began and hundreds of death sentences were passed. The Italians, says Preston, 'were appalled by Franco's duplicity and cruelty' (Preston 1994: 285). Franco distanced himself from the promises his subordinates had made and ignored the complaints from the Italian officer who had arranged the surrender. By doing so, he had the Basques surrendering at little cost, seriously weakened the Republican position in the north of Spain and kept the Biscayan industries intact. It also showed Basque nationalists that his word was never to be trusted.
[203] See Foreign Office 930/148. See also Anasagasti & San Sebastian (1985: 103-108).
[204] See Aguirre's book *De Gernika a Nueva York, Pasando por Berlin*. For a summary see Anasagasti and San Sebastián (1985: 93-101).

With the end of the Civil War in 1939, the dream of the Republic was destroyed, and along with it, the aspirations of Basques who thought an accommodation of the Basque nation within Spain was possible. The strategy of the moderate PNV had, in the end, proved positive as Basques had obtained a statute of autonomy. However, the authoritarian Spanish response showed Basque nationalists, especially the radical trend, that Spain could never be trusted. The war came to be perceived by successive generations as yet another aggression of Spain against the Basques and not as a fight between Fascism and democracy.

4.3. Conclusion

In the period from 1903 to 1939, Basque nationalism expanded from a petit-bourgeois association based in Bilbao to a nationalist movement capable of taking charge of the - albeit brief - Basque Autonomous Government in 1937. The spine of the movement was the party Sabino Arana had founded in 1895, the Partido Nacionalista Vasco, and around it a number of organisations mushroomed to cover almost every aspect of social life. From press to dance and theatre to women, youth and trade unionism, all these organisations framed their individual issues into a wider 'national problem'.

The PNV of these years harboured a radical and moderate wing which battled over the years for the control of the party. Both elements had been present in Sabino and only his charismatic leadership had managed to avoid a serious schism in the party. His reluctance to negotiate political principles went hand in hand with his political gift for making tactical concessions. His 'Spanish evolution', for example, needs to be seen in this light as a temporary solution, not a radical strategic change. However, after Arana died in 1903 the moderates and the radicals surfaced and turned the 1903-1953 period the PNV, if not its whole history, into an alternation between independence and autonomism.

Arana's political doctrine contained a dialectical tension between radical and moderate postulates and allowed different people to read different ideas into his texts and draw different political conclusions. The radical projects were prevalent at times of crisis, decline or failure of the autonomist side. For example, the radicals were strong after the Irish Easter Sunday in 1916, during the 1920s dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, and in the 1930s with Jagi-Jagi. And as we will see in the next chapter, the oppressive nature of the Francoist

dictatorship and the dark night of moderate nationalists also allowed the emergence of a radical faction known as ETA which was to be prevalent in the next historical period.

The importance of the Civil War can hardly be over-emphasised. First, the conflict exhibited the ideological fragmentation of the Basque Provinces. At the outbreak of the war only Biscay and a small part of Gipuzkoa remained faithful to the Republic, whereas Araba and Navarre sided with Franco. Internally, the Basque Provinces were also deeply divided by class rifts, as was the case in the rest of Spain.[205] However, the war was perceived by Basque nationalists as another of many wars between the Basques and Spaniards. And this is precisely the second important consequence of the war: the '1936 War' entered Basque historical memory as another indicator of Spanish aggression. Basque nationalists, for example, argued that the repression in the Basque Provinces was harsher than in other provinces, hence contributing to an ethnic understanding of the war.[206] Years later, the first ETA members considered themselves to be *gudaris* continuing a fight started by their ancestors.[207] Whether this was historically accurate or not, the fact that a nationalist reading of history had entered the Basque psyche was a victory to the memory of Sabino Arana.

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[205] Molinero & Ysàs (1994: 65-66).

[206] Paloma Aguilar (1997) has effectively shown that this was not the case.

[207] For example, on 28 October 1978 the political party Herri Batasuna organised a demonstration with the slogan 'For the gudaris of yesterday and today' (Por los gudaris de ayer y hoy). Herri Batasuna (1999: 72).

Chapter Five

RADICAL BASQUE NATIONALISM DURING FRANCOISM (1939-1975)

In order to be a patriot, it is necessary to love the freedom of the fatherland. To love the freedom of the fatherland, it is necessary to hate to death those who enslave it.

Sabino Arana Goiri[208]

5.1. Francoism and the Birth of ETA, 1939-1968

On 1 April 1939, the Spanish Civil War had come to an end. In the Basque Provinces, however, the fight had ended in the summer of 1937. Having destroyed the morale of the Basque population in Gernika, the insurgent General Mola confidently moved his troops further north to besiege Bilbao. He captured the city in June 1937, dealing a final blow to both the short-lived Basque autonomous government and the dream of an independent Basque homeland. The fall of Bilbao also signalled a weakening of the Republic's positions in the north and brought Franco much closer to victory. Two years later, in April 1939, the Spanish Civil War came to an end and the regime known as Francoism was born.

During the early years of Francoism the Basque government in exile decided to stake all their political prestige on the so-called 'diplomatic card'. In short, Lehendakari Aguirre and his aides supported the Allies in their war against the Axis and hoped to link the fate of Franco to that of Hitler and Mussolini. However, with the unfolding of the Cold War, Spain became a powerful ally against 'the Soviet threat' and the USA decided to sign co-operation treaties with Franco, which helped the latter consolidate his regime. In an overwhelming atmosphere of guilt and defeat, a new generation of nationalists who had not participated in the Civil War grew and developed in the political absence of the PNV. They were young autodidacts and fused nationalist and socialist ideology, not yet knowing they were going to create a deadly organisation called ETA.

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[208] Arana (1980: 615).

5.1.1. The Nationalists' Silence

During the Spanish Civil War, Lehendakari Aguirre warned the Republican Government that his forces would only fight on Basque soil and resisted demands to move his troops to other fronts. Hence, after Araba, Gipuzkoa and most of Biscay had been taken by the insurgent forces, Bilbao was the last hideout on Basque soil. But with the fall of the city in June 1937 the *gudaris* had to leave their homeland in order to avoid prosecution from the incoming authorities.[209] Having fled to the neighbouring province of Santander, Aguirre could not find any reason to continue the fighting. From the Republic's perspective, it was clear that Basques had been defending their statute of autonomy rather than the Republic. In the words of Indalecio Prieto, 'The [Basque] nationalists were not mistaken in their attitude during the war. They participated to save the Statute [of Autonomy]'.[210]

For Basque nationalists, the nine months' experience of autonomy had been a negotiation success and a landmark in their relationship with Madrid. The only previous experience of political independence for the Basques was the quasi-mythical Kingdom of Navarre in the Middle Ages, which mainly lived in the minds of Basque patriots. The moderates of the PNV claimed they had achieved this important political concession by negotiating with Spain (rather than confronting her). On the other hand, the radical faction of the PNV never endorsed the statute and one of its leaders, Luis de Arana, resigned from the PNV on the day the statute was approved (Payne 1975: 179). According to Sabino's brother, the Civil War was a problem of the Spaniards and that Basques should never get involved in it. For the rest of the Basque population, however, the statute was a historical milestone and they did not hesitate to support it. The statute provided an autonomous system of government for the provinces of Araba, Gipuzkoa and Biscay, but by the time it was approved the war had

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[209] Somewhere between 100,000 and 150,000 Basques of all ideologies, including 20,000 children, went into exile. Most of the adults went to France, whereas the children went to Great Britain and the Soviet Union. According to the Basque government the exact number of exiles was 115,115 (Anasagasti & San Sebastián 1985: 36). The numbers are quite considerable if compared to the overall population: in 1937, Araba, Gipuzkoa and Biscay had 1,300,000 inhabitants and Biscay and Gipuzkoa, the most affected provinces, had 850,000 inhabitants (Gurrutxaga 1996: 102). That means that 11.5% of the population of the three provinces fled to safer areas, mainly Europe and America. Their destinations included France, Britain, the US and some Latin American countries like Mexico, Venezuela and Argentina, where they developed a considerable Basque diaspora. A comprehensive survey of the Basque diaspora can be found in Totoricagüena (2004).
[210] Granja (1990: 185).

already started and only Biscay was under Republican jurisdiction and, therefore, could implement it.

The Basque population who did not flee their homes had a first taste of Francoist repression. Two months after the Francoist forces entered Bilbao on 19 June 1937, almost 1,000 men had been killed and 16,000 suspected Basque nationalists arrested.[211] In the words of the British consul, Henderson: 'Estimates of the total shootings effected at Bilbao since its capture by General Franco vary between a minimum of 300 and a maximum of 1,000. Many prisoners, however, still await trial'.[212] For the Basque soldiers who surrendered in Santoña (Santander) a similar fate was waiting. Although the terms of the capitulation had been agreed with Italian forces, the Basque prisoners of war were finally handed over to Franco and, after complete surrender, 'hundreds of death sentences were passed' (Preston 1994: 285). The purge continued in all Basque Provinces but was particularly strong in Gipuzkoa and Biscay, the strongholds of Basque nationalism. [213] In 1937, Franco declared both Biscay and Gipuzkoa 'traitor provinces' and maintained this definition for more than thirty years.[214] On the other hand, the provinces of Araba and Navarre were rewarded for having supported the *alzamiento* in 1936 and maintained the Economic Concerts, a special tax regime of autonomous character. Franco also banned the use of Euskara from the educational system and the church. Basque cultural expressions, such as theatre, literature, folklore and the use of Basque names for baptising, were also forbidden by Franco's *Nuevo Estado*.[215] For example, according to Llera, Mata & Irvin,

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[211] Iturralde (1978: 295), Preston (1994: 280) and Kurlansky (1999: 210).

[212] Payne (1975: 224, footnote 58).

[213] However, it needs to be pointed out that in the post-war era the Basque Provinces were not the most heavily punished areas by Franco, as has often been argued by Basque nationalists. According to Paloma Aguilar, the average number of deaths for the whole of Spain due to repression in the post-war period was 2.45 per 1000 inhabitants. In Araba this number decreases to 1.45 as it also does in Gipuzkoa (1.10) and Biscay (0.70). Only in Navarre (2.74) is the number of deaths superior to the Spanish average (Aguilar 1998: 15). For more information on the loss of life as a result of the war see Salas Larrazábal (1977).

[214] The Decree-Law of 23 June 1937 was modified in 1968 when the most offensive sections were removed. However, the decree was only revoked in 1976 by the first Suárez Government.

[215] The 'New State' was based on the conservative sectors of Spanish society: the Army, the Catholic Church, the Spanish industrial and financial bourgeoisie, big landowners and various right-wing organisations. The *Nuevo Estado* was also a personal instrument of Franco, who liked to think of Spain as a military garrison. He was head of the government and of the state and, at the same time, supreme head of the armed forces, generalísimo of the army, navy and air forces, national head of the one-party, the Falange Española Tradicionalista de las JONS, and 'Caudillo of Spain by God's Grace, responsible for his actions to God and history' (Molinero and Ysàs 1994: 12). Franco's regime was based on the ideological and political control of the Spanish population through the state. The political parties and the trade unions were banned and were replaced by a one-party system and a single trade union. The party was Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las JONS (FET y de las JONS) and was also known as the Movement (or *Movimiento Nacional*). The state

Francoism imposed on the Basque Provinces up to 12 'states of exception', a much higher number than any other region in Spain (Llera, Mata & Irvin 1993: 107).

The repression of the 1940s and 1950s was so fierce that there was no political opposition to challenge Francoism. The only events of significance during these years were the strikes of 1947, 1951 and 1956. As a result of the Civil War, salaries had receded to 19th century levels while inflation rose incessantly. It is in this context that the Basque general strike of 1947 took place. Called on 1 May 1947, the strike started in Biscay and extended to the Western part of Gipuzkoa. Although it was planned as a one-day strike, the harsh reaction of the authorities (mass dismissal of those on strike) angered the workers and the strike lasted nine more days until 10 May. Around 30% of the Biscayan workforce, 20,000 people, went on strike and at least 396 companies were affected. In the end, more than 27,000 workers lost their jobs.[216] The strike was sympathetically reported by the international press and received messages of support from the British Trade Unions and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), but none from the governments of the UK, US or France.[217] The organisers of the strike were the representatives of the Basque Government in the interior, the Council of Resistance, and three trade unions: Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT), Sociedad de Trabajadores Vascos (STV) and Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT).[218] Lehendakari Agirre took over the organisation, assumed responsibility for the strike and capitalised on its gains. As he saw it, Basque people responded to his calls and the 1947 strike was one of many actions he had organised against the Francoist regime.[219]

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trade union was the *Central Nacional Sindicalista* (CNS). The mass media were also controlled by the State, which used them to propagate the state ideology: national-catholicism. According to the historian, Juan Pablo Fusi, national-catholicism was based on (1) the army as the symbol and backbone of national unity; (2) Catholicism as the essence of nationhood; and (3) a centralist and authoritarian state as the instrument for national regeneration (Fusi 2000: 256). The ideology of the regime was summarised in the nationalist motto 'Spain one, great and free' which appeared in all the official symbols of the State.

[216] Gonzalez Portilla & Garmendia (1988: 194-198).

[217] See Beltza (1977: 41) and Jáuregui (1981: 54). The Foreign Office, for example, refused to take any action against Franco and argued that it was 'a matter for the Spanish people to decide which kind of State they want[ed]'. See FO 371/60420 (1946).

[218] Lorenzo Espinosa (1988: 11).

[219] After the General Strike of 1947, the Basque Government organised a boycott of the referendum on the Law of Succession in 1947 and the Aberri Eguna of 1949. However, none of these managed to attract the support of the 1947 strike.

The class conflict continued due to the difficult post-war situation and two more general strikes occurred in the 1950s. The first one, in 1951, was widely supported in Biscay and Gipuzkoa and the Basque Government claimed to have mobilised up to 250,000 workers.[220] In 1956, Pedro Ibarra estimated that up to 30,000 Basque workers could have participated in the general strike.[221] These strikes illustrate the changing Spanish social and economic structure of the 1950s, the difficult position of the popular classes and the birth of an incipient resistance to Franco. However, they also showed the Basque Government that any attempt to overthrow Franco would need the solidarity of the rest of Spain. Although the strikes were important in terms of internal mobilisation of Basque workers and nationalists, it was very unlikely that they could have precipitated the fall of Franco.

Indeed, the early years of Francoism have been rightly described by Michael Richards as a 'Time of Silence'. Political dissent was ferociously persecuted and punished, and acts of protest were non-existent. Within this context Basque nationalists decided to use 'safe channels' to express their dissatisfaction. One of these channels was football. In 1943, for example, the Athletic de Bilbao won the Cup of the *Generalísimo* and the team was welcomed by the fans in the San Mamés Stadium. The public did not follow the lead of the speakers who shouted 'Franco, Franco, Franco' and shouted instead 'Zarra, Zarra, Zarra', in reference to Telmo Zarra, the well-known striker in the team.[222] Other minor acts of resistance were the placing of *ikurriñas* and some minor acts of sabotage. The only place where nationalism was safe was the private sphere. The Basque home became a sanctuary where the family could speak Euskara, talk about politics and freely express their cultural distinctiveness. However, for a significant part of society the Basque home would not be enough shelter. In a society characterised by mistrust and fear of repression, many Basques opted to abandon completely their nationalist ideology and Basque cultural expressions. Parents who had traditionally spoken Euskara started teaching Spanish to their children and avoided talking about the war, which acted as a powerful reminder of their defeat. Silence and guilt became the rule for nationalists who thought that political action would only be possible with the death of the dictator.

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[220] Molinero and Ysas (1994: 79).
[221] Molinero and Ysas (1994: 80).
[222] De Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez (2001: 198).

5.1.2. The Diplomatic Bet

The end of World War II brought new hopes. With the disappearance of both Hitler and Mussolini, Basque nationalists believed the allies would turn their heads to Franco. Thus, in Lehendakari Agirre's 1945 Christmas message broadcast to the Basques, he affirmed that 'This year we will come back to our homeland'.[223] Aguirre argued that borders had historically changed as a result of wars: 'many small nations came out free from the Great War. It will be the same now'.[224] It is important to point out that Lehendakari Agirre was not politically naïve. On the contrary, he had good reasons to believe the time for Basques to regain their freedom was close. The Basque Government had actively helped the British and the Americans with intelligence throughout the war. This had been done through the organisation directed by Pepe Mitxelena, the Basque Service of Information and Propaganda, also known as Servicios. From Spain, the Servicios had established an information network in Bilbao and Madrid. Abroad, it helped the FBI and the predecessor of the CIA, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), to establish a spy network throughout South America.[225] The network was made up of the delegations of the Basque Government and had as its main goals spying and working against German interests in America and detecting communist activities. In return, the FBI financed the Servicios, the Basque delegations and the activities of Lehendakari's office.

In contrast, Franco had made available intelligence reports to the Germans, had provided them with wolfram, an essential compound for the German war industry, and had approved the sending of volunteers to fight against the Soviet Union.[226] This attitude of Spain towards the war had been defended by Spanish diplomats to the Western powers with the theory of the two wars. In their eyes, World War II could be seen as two wars. The first was that of the Axis against the Western democracies, in which Spain was neutral. The second was that against communism, in which she was belligerent. Franco's calm ambivalence and detached diplomacy changed with the death of Mussolini. Franco had, then, felt the

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[223] Beltza (1977: 21).

[224] Garmendia (2000: 80).

[225] Prominent members of the Basque Services were: José María Lasarte, Primitivo Abad, Sabin Barrena, Pallo Mari Irujo, Koldo Mitxelena, Juan José Mitxelena, Pepe Mitxelena, Pablo Baldarrain, Iñaki Aspiazu, Jesús Galíndez, Jon Bilbao and Patxi Abrisketa. Herrera & Durán (2002: 544), Portilla & Garmendia (1988: 160-171) and De Pablo, Mees & Rodríguez Ranz (2001: 131-2).

[226] In June 1941, Franco blessed the departure of the Blue Division (*Division Azul*), a group of 20,000 volunteers that joined the Wehrmacht in the Eastern Front until 1944.

pressure and told his brother, 'if things go badly I will end up like Mussolini because I will resist until I have shed my last drop of blood'.[227] The pressure mounted during the period 1945 to 1950, when Franco was convinced that 'he and Spain were under deadly siege'.[228]

Everything was looking good for the Basques and the Republican exiles, who were carrying out a successful campaign to stop Franco's regime from being internationally recognised. At the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945 Spain had been denied entry; in 1946 the United Nations approved a resolution that condemned Franco's regime and the General Assembly recommended the withdrawal of all accredited ambassadors from Madrid. Finally, in 1947, at the Paris Conference on the Needs of Europe, Spain was not even considered, just as it was not considered for the Marshall Plan.[229] In view of the opposition to Franco, the end of the dictator was closer than ever before.

But an international event, the Conference of Potsdam (1945), confirmed Spain's geo-strategic importance in the Cold War that was now unfolding. At Potsdam, the map of Europe was divided into two areas of influence and Spain became a potential ally of the West in its fight against the USSR. Franco had clearly expressed his deepest antipathy to communism (and freemasonry), which he thought had brought great tragedies to Spain. Hence, the first years of the Cold War brought a swift *rapprochement* between the US and Spain and by 1950 diplomatic relations had been 'normalised'. Spain then joined the World Health Organisation (1951), Unesco (1952) and, finally, the United Nations (1955). To the dismay of Republicans and Basque nationalists, the West was practising a non-interventionist policy, which was about to escalate into full collaboration in 1953. In that crucial year the signing of the Pacts of Madrid allowed the USA to have bases in Spanish territory in exchange for $226 million in military and technological assistance for the Franco regime.[230] As the former foreign minister of Israel and historian, Shlomo Ben Ami, has pointed out, 'thanks to Eisenhower, Franco entered the international system and

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[227] Preston (1994: 535).
[228] Preston (1994 535).
[229] The event was humorously commemorated in *Bienvenido Mister Marshall*, a film directed by José Luis Berlanga in 1953.
[230] The agreement allowed the US to have five air bases: Torrejón, near Madrid, Seville, Zaragoza, Morón de la Frontera and a small base at Rota in Cádiz. Preston (1994: 624).

managed to portray himself as the 'sentinel of the west' against the Bolshevik menace' (Ben Ami 1983: 179).

To many Basques the pacts of the so-called 'free world' with the dictator were something beyond belief and they were 'stunned by the betrayal' (Kurlansky 1999: 231-232). The frustration of Basque nationalists was epitomised by the words of the always optimistic and pro-American Lehendakari Aguirre, who bitterly admitted that the West had forgotten the Basques for 'strategic reasons'.[231] The consequences for Basque nationalism were disastrous.[232] The strategy of the Basque Government had been, since its birth on 7 October 1936, one that pursued the development of a network of international contacts to support the Basque cause. After the signing of the Defence Pacts between the US and Spain in 1953 not even the most ardent pro-American could make sense of the nationalists' policy. Despair set in. And when it seemed that the situation could not get worse, the Vatican signed the 1953 Concordat with Franco which gave his regime a legitimacy boost and allowed him to intervene in the process by which bishops were designated. In parallel to the strengthening of the dictatorship, the PNV in exile started to lose touch with Basque reality. Basque nationalism entered a period of crisis and, unable to make sense of the world around it, could not provide a political project for new generations of nationalists. As Julen Madariaga, a founding member of ETA, recalled it:

> It needs to be pointed out that at that time there were no commandos left, the PNV, if it still existed, had no significant activity, there was no propaganda and the allies card had evaporated.[233]

The biographers of the PNV describe a similar situation and talk about Basque nationalism as 'a universe torn apart, with the brain in the French Basque Country, the heart in Paris,

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[231] Jose Antonio Aguirre in the Christmas Message of 1952. Reproduced as an appendix in Beltza (1977: 132-133).

[232] And not just metaphorically. American foreign policy had shifted from having Nazism as its ultimate nemesis to opposing communism. This was most acutely seen in Central and South America, where the US would support anti-communist dictatorships in the years to come. In the Dominican Republic, for example, the FBI and the CIA killed one of its own Basque agents and member of the *Servicios*, Jesús Galíndez, in order to preserve a good relationship with the dictator Leónidas Trujillo. Agent Galíndez, a delegate of the Basque Government in the US, was kidnapped in New York in March 1956 and was flown to the Dominican Republic where he was tortured and executed. The Columbia University professor had been previously warned by the FBI that if he continued to criticise Trujillo's regime 'they could not longer protect him'. See José Luis Barbería, 'Las últimas verdades sobre el agente Galíndez' in *El País*, 22 September 2002. For a fictional account of the disappearance of the Basque agent see Vazquez Montalbán's novel, *Galíndez*.

[233] Julen Madariaga in *Documentos Y* (1979-1981: 11).

the lungs in America and the body and soul in [Franco's Spain]'.[234] Things were going to change soon, but for the PNV, the dark night of nationalism had begun.

5.1.3. The Reaction of the Nationalist Youth

For a new generation of nationalists the situation was clear: the PNV was a 'passive collaborationist' organisation of Francoism and was 'limiting itself to forms of action that ignored the contemporary situation in *Euskadi*'.[235] The failure of the PNV's strategy for Western intervention and the growing strength of the dictatorship, epitomised by the 1953 Defence Pacts, both contributed to revive more radical aspirations. In the words of Txillardegi, a future leader of ETA:

> From the Basque point of view, the situation was really sad. People had lost all hope. After 1953 no one believed the Americans would help restore democracy. Thus, we thought we needed to do something without relying on anyone, and we started to work.[236]

And that 'work' was done by eight students divided into two cells, one in Bilbao and another in San Sebastian.[237] They first created a discussion group in 1952 with a name that symbolised their aim of regenerating Basque nationalism: Ekin (To Act).[238] Most of them were in their early twenties and came from middle class families of nationalist ideology. They wanted to know more about the Basque past and passed discussion papers from member to member, some of them finally appearing in their internal bulletin, Ekin. The articles of Ekin were about Basque history, philosophy and contemporary affairs and signalled the importance of learning for the present generation of nationalists. During the

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[234] See Rodríguez Ranz, José Antonio (2001: 137). Nevertheless, in a desperate attempt to remain relevant, the PNV of the 1950s continued to organise international events. The PNV celebrated two Congresses of Basque Studies and the Basque World Congress of 1956 was celebrated in Paris, to show its strength. However, this apparent strength was seriously flawed. For example, in a sign of goodwill, the French authorities confiscated the headquarters of the Basque Government in the Avenue Marceau in 1951 and handed it to Franco, who used the premises as the Spanish Embassy.

[235] Jáuregui (1981: 59) and Wieviorka (1993: 150).

[236] José Luis Emparanza, aka Txillardegi, in *Documentos Y* (1979-1981: 9).

[237] In Bilbao they were José María Benito del Valle, Julen Madariaga, Iñaki Gainzarain, Alfonso Irigoyen, José Manuel Aguirre and Gurutz Ansola. In San Sebastián, Rafael Albisu, José Álvarez Emparanza (Txillardegi) and Iñaki Larramendi. Herrera & Durán (2002: 546).

[238] Ekin was born in 1952. Four of the eight members had already participated in an ephemeral student movement called *Eusko Ikasle Alkartasuna* (E.I.A.). The organisation had been put out of action by the police two years earlier, in 1950, and had showed the Ekin members what being a clandestine organisation was and what security measures were needed to preserve it that way. Jose Luis Alvarez Emparanza (Txillardegi) in Ibarzabal (1978: 362-365).

1950s, Ekin came closer to the PNV's youth organisation, Euzko Gaztedi (EGI), and this contact ended in the merger of the two organisations in 1957. But the Ekin members were a clearly distinct group within EGI, and for three years they became frustrated with the subordination of EGI to the PNV. They complained the party was too controlling and paternalistic and that EGI needed more autonomy and resources.[239] The dissent between Ekin and the PNV cadres grew to the point where an Ekin leader - Benito del Valle - was expelled from EGI (Clark 1984: 25). The confrontation resulted in a split, and Ekin leaders founded ETA in 1959 and took hundreds of EGI members with them. Interestingly, they decided to found ETA on the day of St. Ignatius (31 July), the day chosen by Sabino Arana to officially launch the PNV.

ETA stood for *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (Basque Homeland and Liberty) and became an outstanding branding choice.[240] In Euskara, the conjunction 'and' is 'eta' and, when reading Basque, as Mark Kurlansky correctly points out, any text 'appears to be peppered with [these] initials' (Kurlansky 1999: 234).[241] The first violent action of ETA was the attempt, in 1961, to derail a train of Francoist ex-combatants traveling to San Sebastián to celebrate the regime's '25 years of peace'. The derailment had a symbolic element, since it aimed at dishonouring the regime by ruining the day of the *alzamiento nacional*, 18 July. However, the explosives were carefully placed so as not to cause any casualties. Such a careful and strategic use of violence would gradually be abandoned by ETA throughout Francoism, as they increasingly favoured more indiscriminate acts. ETA was, however, at a very early stage and did not present any real danger to the regime. In a matter of weeks, the police disbanded ETA. The leaders of the organisation were imprisoned and the state exerted a disproportionate level of repression on the Basque population. According to Jáuregui (2000: 205), it was at this point that ETA debated what were the best means to fight a dictatorship, and seriously considered violence. These internal debates occurred during the period 1959-68 and mainly in the pages of the clandestine publication *Zutik!*. In this publication, born in 1961, the ideological debates grew and developed into schisms. It was

[239] Jáuregui (1981: 78) and Ajuriaguerra (1978: 339-345).

[240] The name ETA was proposed by José Luis Álvarez Enparanza, aka Txillardegi. However, as he recalls, the first suggestion was ATA, an acronym for Aberri Ta Askatasuna (Homeland and Liberty), but it was soon dropped as in the Biscaian dialect 'ata' meant 'duck'. Txillardegi (1978: 370).

[241] In 1979-81, the largest compilation of ETA documents was published in an eighteen-volume set called *Documentos Y*. The compilers decided to translate 'eta' as a conjuction, therefore remaining 'y'. (Aita Agirre (Lazkao), personal observation).

also the arena in which tactical discussions would take place. It may be argued that at that time, to be in control of *Zutik!* was to be in control of ETA.

The debates also materialised in the form of Assemblies, at the end of which ETA approved a set of ideological or tactical contributions. As can be seen in Table 4, during the 1960s five of these gatherings established the pillars on which ETA stands today. In the First Assembly, celebrated in 1962, ETA approved the Ideological Principles and defined itself as a Basque Revolutionary Movement. It also argued that 'the most appropriate tactics should be used in each historical circumstance'.[242] Hence, in the Second Assembly, ETA adopted the Revolutionary War as the strategy that would bring about the independence of the homeland. The building of a theoretical and ideological body continued with the publication of the official journal of the organisation, *Zutik!*, and the *Cuadernos de ETA*. In 1964, ETA celebrated its Third Assembly in which the spiral of action-repression was approved. The tactic would start a cycle in which every action was followed by state repression, which, in turn, would encourage a larger revolutionary action, starting the cycle all over again. In the Fourth Assembly held in 1965 Marxism was apoted. Finally, in its Fifth Assembly, held in the mid-sixties, ETA defined itself as a Marxist-Leninist movement, adopted a Vietnamese-style strategy and decided to work on different fronts: cultural, political, workers and military.

Table 4: ETA's Assemblies, 1962-1967

Assembly	Date	Outcome
First Assembly	1962	Ideological Principles & Vasconia
Second Assembly	1963	Revolutionary War adopted
Third Assembly	1964	Insurrection & spiral repression-action-repression
Fourth Assembly	1965	Marxism adopted
Fifth Assembly	1966 -1967	The term 'Pueblo Trabajador Vasco' is coined and four fronts are created: cultural, political, workers and military

To summarise, ETA was the result of a failed strategy of EKIN 'to act' within the PNV. At the root of the problem, there was the clash of two generations of nationalists over organisational issues, but also, more importantly, over which were the priorities of Basque

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[242] *Zutik!*, April 1962, reproduced in *Documentos Y* (1979-1981: 418).

nationalism. According to one of the founding-fathers of ETA, Txillardegi, the young nationalists had not witnessed the Civil War and they did not accept the PNV's attempt to monopolise Basque nationalism (Txillardegi 1978: 368).

5.2. The Ideology of ETA

ETA is an organisation that combined a pre-existing radical trend within Basque nationalism with brand-new elements. The following section aims to explore the continuities and discontinuities of ETA, starting with ETA's nationalism and followed by its Marxism and use of violence.

5.2.1. ETA's Nationalism

ETA's ideas of the nation were taken directly from traditional Basque nationalism. For the first *etarras* (ETA members) finding books on nationalism or patriotism was an extremely arduous and dangerous task. The Francoist Nuevo Estado was very active in promoting national-catholicism and the censors tightly controlled the contents of books, magazines, papers and news bulletins, making sure nothing that was published contradicted State ideology. Hence, the first ETA members only had the family libraries to teach themselves. Their first readings were the works of pre-war Basque nationalists such as Father Estella, Engracio de Arantzadi, Lehendakari Agirre and, of course, Sabino Arana (Letamendia 1994: 250). Not surprisingly, the first ETA members saw their activities as continuing a regenerative task started by nationalists well before them. For example, with regards to the need to re-discover the national past, ETA shared the same concerns of Arana. As ETA's *White Book* (1960) explained:

> A people that do not know their different characteristics can hardly create a nation because they are not aware of the benefit of forming one. Once this is accomplished, a collective appreciation of these values, of these differences and peculiarities must follow, which determines the desire to realize and perpetuate a nation.[243]

The need to know the past had also been the obsession of Sabino Arana. In the first text he wrote, *Bizkaya por su Independencia* (1892), Arana emphasised the glories of the Basques

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[243] Documentos Y (1979-1981: 191).

as well as the military defeat they had suffered. Although he wrote about topical questions of his time, most of his work was of a general character and was designed to awaken the Basque people. For that reason he wrote historical pieces about the Basque Golden Age while putting forward the need for an articulated and organised Basque nationalism. He emphasised the need to mobilise a people that was depoliticised and alienated. For ETA members, the words of the Master resonated effectively as the problems and obstacles he had faced were the same ones they had. In the light of Francoism, the writings of Arana acquired a new pertinent meaning. ETA, as Arana before them, also wanted the Basque people to awaken and break their chains with Spain. For ETA, Arana was not merely a Basque nationalist; he was a prophet.[244]

ETA also adopted the myths of the Basque Golden Age from Arana. According to Gurutz Jáuregui there are three ideas that were uncritically adopted by ETA:

1) That in the remote past all Basques were equal and noble (universal nobility);
2) That Basques had eternally been independent (and that the *fueros* were an expression of that political independence);
3) That the Basque nation had been occupied by two different states, the Spanish and the French (Jáuregui 1981: 93; 2000: 191).

The first ETA members could not prove the historical accuracy of the first two points but accepted them. In this regard ETA followed Arana and the Basque romantics in having a clearly nationalist reinterpretation of history. For example, they agreed with Joseph-Agustin Chaho in seeing the Carlist Wars of the 19th century as national liberation wars, not as dynastic disputes. As for the third point, the occupation of the Basque homeland, they did not need any academic or historian to tell them it was true. They were living under the dictatorship and there could be no further proof that the Basque nation was being abused by Spain: Franco had made the myth of oppression very real.

Nevertheless, ETA's nationalism also presented new traits. First, ETA broke with the PNV's religious tradition and declared itself non-confessional. Contrary to what most

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[244] The influence of Arana on ETA can be spotted right from the very beginning. ETA was founded on 31 July 1959, the day of San Ignatius, when Sabino Arana had his 'revelation' and turned, in 1882, to nationalism. Thirteen years later and on the same day, he founded the Basque Nationalist Party. Both organisations - ETA and the PNV - adopted the Society of Jesus as an organisational model. See Garmendia (2000: 77).

Basques thought, ETA argued that there should be a strict division between Church and state. Second, ETA gradually incorporated clearly leftist ideas in to its political corpus in clear contradiction with the Maestro's writings (who had described socialist ideas as foreign). Third, ETA radically broke with previous tradition when emphasising the Basque language as the essential element of the Basque nation. For Arana it was 'race' that mattered and distinguished a Basque from a *maketo* or outsider. Arana's concept of Basqueness was biological (*ius sanguinis*) whereas ETA's Basqueness was voluntaristic (*ius solis*).[245] It was the 'will' to be Basque that mattered, not genetic characteristics, and the expression of that will was the Basque language. As one of the first ETA documents stated, 'Euskera must be the vehicle of expression of the Basque nation' (*Documentos Y* 1979-1981: 105). Whereas for Arana the decline of the 'race' meant the decline of the 'nation', ETA members followed Fichte in saying that the decline of the language doomed the nation. As an EKIN member argued:

> Useful languages coincide with so-called 'national' languages, meaning languages with their own governmental apparatus. Languages of free peoples are useful and vigorous; languages of politically oppressed peoples are useless and then they die.[246]

This Herderian view of language as indicator of the nation already proposed a course of action. Having defined Euskara as an essential element of Basqueness and judging that languages only survive when they take a national form, there follows a logical course of action. In order for Euskara to be free, the Basque nation also needed to be free.

An important question that still needs to be answered is, what were the reasons for ETA's change of the essential tenets of Basque nationalism? The reason is two-fold. First, Nazism and the Holocaust had made problematic the use of 'race' as the basis for the right to self-determination. Whereas in the 19th century Arana and many other nationalists in Europe could get away with using the term 'race', often used as a synonym of 'people' or 'nation', that could not be done after World War II. Secondly, as a consequence of the economic modernisation of the 1960s, a new wave of immigration had arrived in the Basque lands, radically changing its social structure. As can be seen in Figure 3, the population of the

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[245] For the distinction between *ius solis* and *ius sanguinis* see Hastings (1997: 34).
[246] Documentos Y (1979-1981).

Basque Country grew exponentially from 1,370,000 inhabitants in 1960 to just over two million in 1975.

Figure 3: Population of the Basque Country, 1857-2001
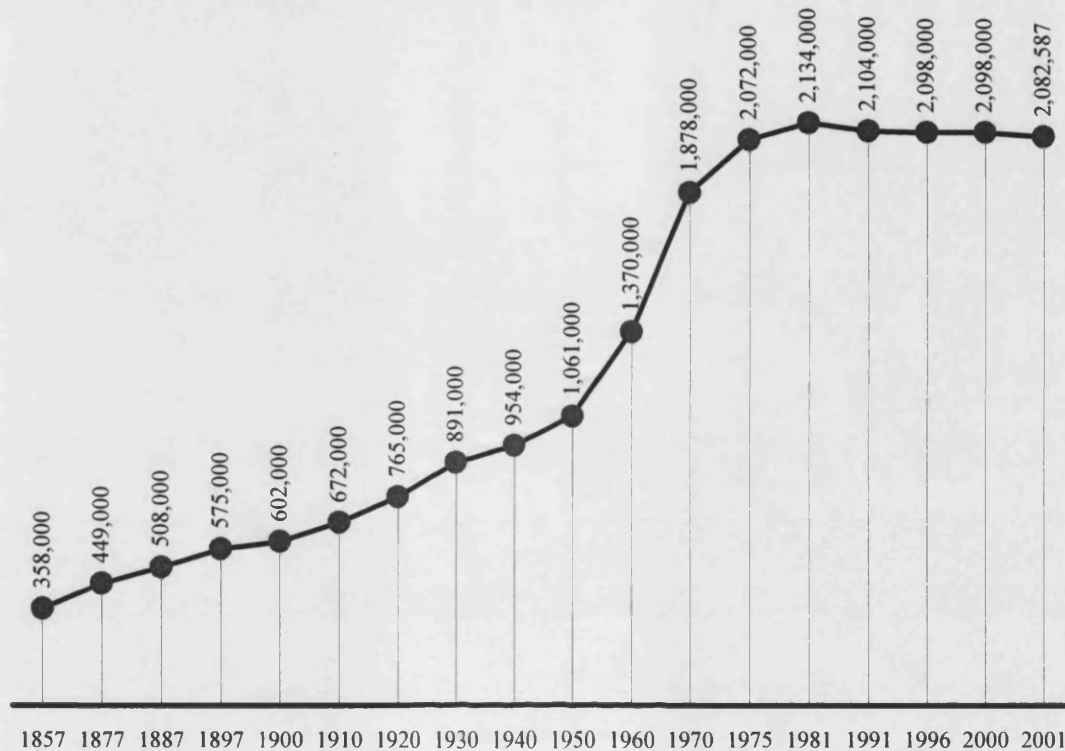
Source: Barberia and Unzueta (2003: 289)

This new wave of immigration to the Basque areas replicated the wave that Arana witnessed but was radically different in its reception by Basque nationalists. Those who we might call 'new Basques', the children of the immigrants, would not support Basque nationalism unless they could relate to it and there was no way they were going to participate in a political project that accused them of being 'inferior', as Arana had done in the past. Furthermore, as Gurutz Jáuregui has pointed out, some of the first ETA members - Txillardegi, Krutwig or Benito del Valle - could not have become its leaders if the criteria of race was used (Jáuregui 1981: 135). This new phase of industrial change affected both newcomers and ethnic Basques and 'proletarianised' large sections of the population. To include these new sections in Basque society, ETA shifted to socialist positions.

5.2.2. ETA's Marxism

Before ETA, the difficult marriage between nationalism and Marxism had only been tried twice in the Basque lands. The political party Acción Nacionalista Vasca (ANV) established a delicate balance between the two elements in the 1930s. Born under the auspices of the Second Republic, the ANV never attracted enough votes to become an electorally relevant party. The second precedent in combining Marxism and nationalism was set by the radicals of the PNV, the *aberrianos*. Their leader, Eli Gallastegi, did not see any apparent contradiction between nationalism and socialism and developed in his own work a coherent understanding of Basque society based on these two ideologies. Both the ANV and Gallastegi's *aberrianos* had an important impact on ETA. As the work of José Luis de la Granja has shown, the ANV was taken up as a useful example by ETA (Granja 1986). Beltza has also demonstrated that Gallastegi became a model of 'progressist and separatist nationalism' for ETA members.[247] He even argues that ETA continued the 'patriotic intransigence' of Aberri, the group Gallastegi commanded, because it emphasised the need to fight for independence and not political dialogue with Madrid (Beltza 1977: 92).

The question to answer is why did the ANV and Gallastegi fail and why was ETA successful in combining Marxism and nationalism? Again, the answer is two-fold. First, we need to consider the above mentioned socio-economic transformations Spain went through during the 1960s and early 1970s, particularily its impact on the Basque social structure.[248] Secondly, we must look at the importance of the international situation and the appeal of revolutionary struggles. During the 1960s, the African nations led a decolonisation process with the backing of the UN that led to the creation of many new nations. The first ETA members learnt from the cases of India, Congo, Indochina, Algeria, Cuba, Israel, Cyprus and, most importantly, Ireland. They also learnt from a series of revolutionary authors who explained how the world was divided between oppressed nations, territories, colonies and colonisers and empires. In this view, the Western powers exploited the primary resources of

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[247] Beltza (1977: 91) and Unzueta (1988: 62).

[248] Spain as a whole changed enormously as a result of the 1959 Stabilisation Plan, which abandoned the post-war autarky in favour of a more open economy with a liberalised foreign trade. The growth of the economy was later stimulated by successive Social and Economic Development Plans (in 1964-67, 1968-71, and 1972-75).

these nations and were draining their resources, jeopardising their future development. Hence, the first ETA members read the writings of the Che, Fidel Castro, Mao Zedong and Frantz Fanon. Of all these, the most important were Mao's *Red Book* and Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*.[249] Moreover, they defended the need to fight against these Western powers, if necessary by violent means.

5.2.3. ETA's Violence

ETA's adoption of violence as a legitimate tool was completely unprecedented in the history of Basque nationalism. Although several authors and even organisations considered the option, ETA was the first one to actually use it. Cameron Watson has consistently argued in his doctoral dissertation that a culture of symbolic warfare within Basque nationalist discourse paved the way for ETA's violence (Watson 1996). Although his argument is persuasive, it is unclear what the exact process was by which violence came to be included in ETA's ideology. For example, no reference to violence can be found in ETA documents until 1961, when ETA adopted the 'Ideological Principles'.[250] Although Watson is right in pointing to the nature of Basque nationalism, the adoption of violence by ETA also needs to be linked to the nature of Francoism. In a system that did not allow ETA members to express their grievances through institutional channels, violence synthesised their regeneration programme (based on the revolutionary war) and radical Basque nationalism. ETA gradually adopted a discourse which justified violence during the first half of the 1960s. Two texts were extremely important in this respect: the first, *Vasconia* (1963), was written by Federico Krutwig whereas the second, *La Insurrección en Euskadi* (1964), was written by Julen Madariaga.

Vasconia was written, under the pseudonym Fernando Sarrailh de Ilhartza, by a Basque philologist of Italian and German descent, Federico Krutwig. In the pages of *Vasconia*, Krutwig attempted to adapt traditional Basque nationalism to the contemporary needs of the Basque lands. Hence, he introduced the concept of 'guerrilla warfare', which was inspired by Third World revolutionary struggles. For Krutwig, the Basques were a nation and, like

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[249] One of the ETA leaders, José Manuel Pagoaga (Peixoto) explained that when he joined ETA aged 19, the first book he was given was Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. Unzueta (1988: 65).

[250] The 'Ideological Principles' are reprinted in Beltza (1977: 96-99) and in Jáuregui (1981: 137).

any other nation, had the natural right to self-determination. In the current political situation, however, Basques were oppressed by the system of nation-states. In his own words:

> Achieving political independence by a people is internationally considered something *illegal* (according to the concept of legality of already existing states). That is why an oppressed people has no other means of achieving national independence and sovereignty but by illegal means [...] Sooner or later, the oppressed people [...] will have to use the force of arms, in other words violence, in order for its natural right [to self-determination] to be recognised.[251]

Krutwig proposed that the Algerian model of guerrilla warfare be adopted. If the Algerian FLN had succeded in expelling a powerful country like France, why could Basques not do the same with Spain? Thus, the theory of action-repression-action was adopted. This doctrine, developed in the writings of Frantz Fanon, suggested that a cycle could be set in motion in which every action would generate a repressive reaction, which would in turn give rise to an even more revolutionary course of action, itself followed by even greater repression, and so on and so forth (Wieviorka 1993: 152). After creating such a spiral of violence and counter-violence, it could be claimed that the measures taken by the security forces were 'repressive', that the Basque Country was 'occupied' by foreign troops.

The second text that influenced ETA's decision on the use of violence was Julen Madariaga's *La Insurrección en Euskadi*, published in 1964.[252] The pamphlet built on Krutwig's proposals and developed some of his tactics in detail: how to attack the enemy, at which time of the day, etc. It also argued that ETA should adopt the kind of 'revolutionary war' that had been successful in Algeria, Cuba or Vietnam. But most importantly, the pamphlet glorified the guerrilla fighter as a sort of modern crusader. For Madariaga, death had a purpose beyond the elimination of human life. Good reasons could be found to justify destruction. In the Basque case, the warrior's self-sacrifice would bring the regeneration and happiness of the Basque nation. Following the work of Elie Kedourie, it may be argued that *Insurrección en Euskadi* was the most millenarian text ETA ever wrote. As with the millenarian sects Kedourie talks about, ETA found that destruction and death was the way to create a nationalist paradise on earth.

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[251] Krutwig (1973: 328).

[252] For more details in Jáuregui (2000: 234) and Sullivan (1986: 54-6).

Madariaga's *Insurreccion en Euskadi* had a tremendous impact and it was adopted by ETA in its Third Assembly (1964). Its influence would be enormous in ETA. According to Gurutz Jáuregui, the detailed account of tactics was soon forgotten but the mystic language of the struggle and the glorification of the revolution would stay with ETA for decades (Jáuregui 2000: 228). In another of ETA's crucial texts, the *White Book*, the messianic and nationalist elements were also mixed. One of the sections described how ETA had a 'Responsibility to God and the Fatherland'. In a language that emphasised the need for action in order to regenerate the 'nationalist faith', ETA argued that:

> Our conduct [must be] consequent with the Ideal and the profession of nationalist faith. We have to understand that, as the apostle taught in regard to the Christian faith, our patriotic faith, without action, is a dead faith.[253]

The mystical language ETA was using was passionate, inspiring, other-worldly. But more importantly, it powerfully resonated in young Basque nationalists as the next section will show.

5.3. ETA and the Revolutionary War, 1969-1975

On 7 June 1968 two ETA members - Txabi Etxebarrieta and Iñaki Sarasketa - were driving in Villabona (Gipuzkoa) when they were stopped by a Civil Guard patrol. One of the agents, José Pardines Azcay, asked Etxebarrieta for his documents who replied by opening fire on the agent. Pardines fell to the floor instantly becoming the first victim of ETA. A few hours later, the two ETA members were stopped at a control point near Tolosa, where Sarasketa was arrested and the 23-year-old Etxebarrieta was killed. The reaction of the Basque population to the death of Etxebarrieta was moving: demonstrations and masses in his honour were organised in small hamlets and in major cities like Bilbao, San Sebastián, Eibar and Pamplona.[254] The cycle of action-repression-action had started.

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[253] Documentos Y (1979-1981: 165).
[254] Moreover, Etxebarrieta became the first ETA martyr and inspired many generations of nationalists. A young Yoyes, who was to become the only female leader of ETA in the late 1970s, analysed in 1971 whether the independence of the Basque nation was worth the death of Etxebarrieta. She concluded: 'is the problem so serious? It must be, when there are so many people... who are prepared to die for it'. Yoyes (1987: 28-9).

5.3.1. ETA's Activities

Two months later, on 2 August 1968, ETA responded to Etxebarrieta's execution by killing the chief of the political police in the Basque province of Gipuzkoa, Melitón Manzanas González. He was a much-hated figure in the Basque Country and was, according to a Foreign and Commonwealth Office report, 'an unrelentingly sadistic persecutor of the Basques'.[255] The reaction of the Franco government to Manzana's death was to declare a state of exception (a suspension of 'constitutional' guarantees) in Guipuzkoa, which was later extended to all of Spain. Within a month, the police arrested and imprisoned more than a hundred people, of whom 42 were deported to other parts of Spain. In the following months, the number of arrests rose to 400 and those who had to face justice would do so in front of a military tribunal (Vilar 1984: 405).

Two years later, in December 1970, the next great moment of ETA arrived: the Burgos Trial. Sixteen militants of ETA were accused of various acts of terrorism and banditry and six of them were accused of having murdered officer Manzanas.[256] The regime wanted to use the trial as a deterrent and decided to set up a military tribunal. The trial was held in the headquarters of the 6th military region in Burgos, because the Basque Provinces fell under its jurisdiction.[257] The prosecutors asked for six death sentences and 754 years' imprisonment for the accused. The trial lasted only twenty-five days and on 28 December 1970, the military court granted the six death sentences and gave three of the accused double death-sentences, thus increasing the penalty the prosecutor had asked for. The rest of the members were sentenced to between 12 and 30 years. However, under domestic pressure and demands from the international community (the Vatican included) Franco commuted all death sentences to thirty years in prison two days later, on 30 December. The Burgos Trial became an international *cause célèbre* 'of such proportions that Spain was

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[255] FCO 9/1450.
[256] The prosecutor accused the following ETA members: Josu Abrisketa Korta, Itziar Aizpurúa Egaña, Víctor Arana Bilbao, Julen Kalzada Ugalde, Antón Carrera Aguirrebarrena, José María Dorronsoro Ceberio, Jone Dorronsoro Ceberio, Juan Etxave Garitacelaya, Jokin Gorostidi Artola, Enrique Venancio Guesalaga Larreta, Javier Izko de la Iglesia, Francisco Javier Larena Martínez, Gregorio Vicente López Irasuegui, Mario Onaindía Nachiondo, Eduardo Uriarte Romero and María Asunción Arruti. The Tribunal was set up in accordance with the Penal Code and the Decree on Military Rebellion, Banditry and Terrorism of 21-9-1960. On the history of the 1960 Decree and for a detailed account of the Burgos Trial (Indictment number 31/69) see Salaberri 1971. For a brief historical account see Vilar (1984: 406-410).
[257] FCO 9/1450.

confronted with perhaps her most serious political crisis since the Civil War'.[258] Indeed, ETA militants were taken as a reference point by both the Spanish opposition and the international public opinion (like Jean-Paul Sartre) and the trial triggered internal acts of protest such as the mobilization of 300 intellectuals in Catalonia who locked themselves up in the monastery of Montserrat for three days. These intellectuals later constituted the Permanent Assembly of Intellectuals, which drafted a manifesto against the regime that hand international echoes. For the regime, the Burgos trial had become a political disaster as it magnified the importance of an almost unknown extreme-left group. Renewed support for ETA came from the cadres of the PNV, the church and elements of the Spanish left, particularly the Communist Party (PCE). It also damaged the regime, which saw how the most progressive Francoists (known as *aperturistas*) began to abandon 'what they saw as a sinking ship'.[259]

The action-repression-action doctrine worked better than ETA could have ever imagined. The cycle Etxebarrieta had started had generated a repressive reaction, which in turn had given rise to an even more revolutionary course of action, itself followed by even greater repression. After creating such a spiral of violence and counter-violence, it was not difficult for ETA to proclaim that the security forces were 'repressive' and that the Basque Country was 'occupied'. Furthermore, the Burgos Trial could not have come at a better time for ETA. In 1969, one year before the trial, ETA structures had been seriously weakened by police actions (Gurruchaga 2001: 67). After the trial ETA's message reached places that it had not reached before and many Basque youngsters queued to join ETA.

In 1973, ETA carried out its most spectacular action to date: the killing of Franco's Prime Minister and political heir, Admiral Carrero Blanco.[260] ETA activists dug a T-shaped tunnel under a street Carrero Blanco used every day to attend Mass and filled it with 65 kilos of explosives. At 9:25 am, on 20 December 1973, the Prime Minister's car drove over the secret tunnel. The explosives were detonated by ETA members posing as electricians in the street. The car blew over a five storey building, killing Carrero Blanco and the rest of the occupants of the vehicle. With Carrero Blanco out of the way, the regime was left with no

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[258] FCO 9/1450.
[259] Preston (1993: 754).
[260] The action was called Operation Ogre and was later recounted in detail in a book (Forest 1974) and in the film directed by Gillo Pontecorvo in 1979 (Ogro).

successor. It could be argued that Carrero Blanco was the most important part of the regime because he assured its continuity. After 1973, the Prince Juan Carlos remained the only option for the regime to continue resisting change. ETA had heavily endangered Franco's legacy and touched his feelings as no other group had done before. During the funeral on 22 December, Franco told one of his aides, Captain Antonio Urcelay, about the death of his alter ego: 'They have cut my last link with the world' (*Me han cortado el ultimo hilo que me unía con la vida*).[261]

Comparatively speaking, the number of ETA actions (*ekintzas*) during the 1968-1975 period was relatively small. Although ETA was born in 1959 it only committed its first killing in 1968. As can be seen in Figure 4, over the next four years the number of assassinations stayed very low and it was only after 1972 that it rose spectacularly. ETA's increasing dependence on violence is analysed in the next section.

Figure 4: Victims of ETA, 1968-1975

Year	ETA Victims
1968	2
1969	1
1970	0
1971	0
1972	1
1973	6
1974	18
1975	17
TOTAL	**45**
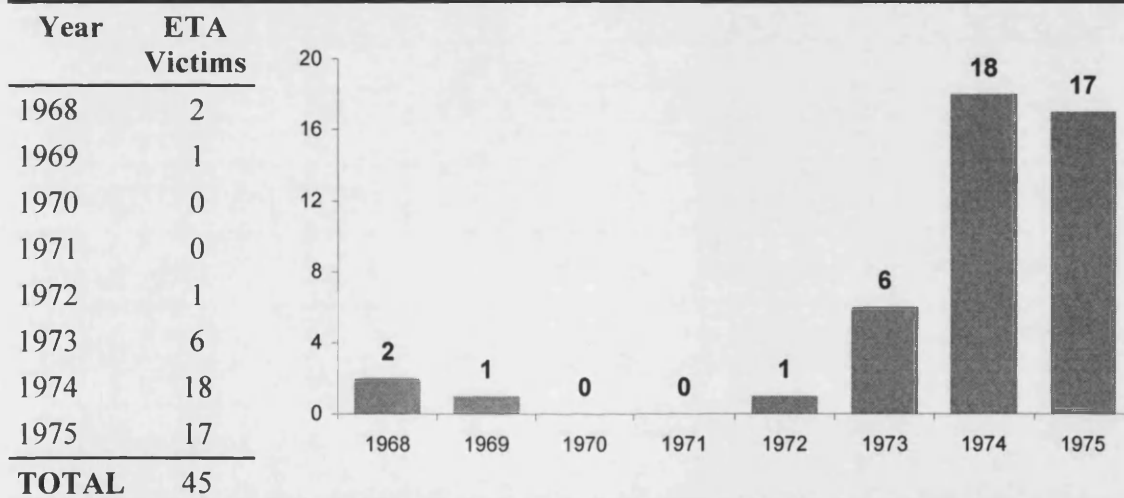
Source: Asociación de Víctimas del Terrorismo (AVT): www.avt.org

5.3.2. Nationalism and Violence as Cohesive Factors.

There can be no doubt that the Burgos Trial was one of the biggest political errors of Francoism. The court-martial turned into a magnifying glass through which international public opinion could see the nature of the regime and its brutality towards Basque

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[261] TVE (1993) *La Transición Española*, video 1.

nationalists. The Trial was of crucial importance to ETA, helping it to unite the different competing trends within it. The repression had a centripetal effect on ETA, which learned of the importance of 'action' in order to minimise internal splits.

As already mentioned, ETA's ideology rested on two pillars: nationalism and socialism. The two elements had not always been easy to reconcile and had, in fact, been the source of three splits, as can be seen in Figure 5. Already in 1966 ETA had been through a split, caused by the importance given to socialist elements. The first split gave birth to ETA-Berri (or New ETA), later renamed Komunistak and incorporated into the Communist Movement and ETA-Zarra (Old ETA), which later inherited the name ETA. The confrontation between nationalism and socialism was recreated and produced another split during the Fifth Assembly in 1970. That year, ETA split, for the second time, into two factions: ETA-V and ETA-VI. ETA-V emphasised elements of ethnicity and was formed by the original members of ETA (*etnolingüistas*), whereas ETA-VI was formed by the new and more radical members who wanted a class-based struggle (*tercermundistas*). The members of ETA-VI made the other socialist movements their allies and considered the Spanish *and* Basque 'oligarchy' as the enemy. Having defined their enemy in terms of class, ETA-VI had common interests, for example, with the working class of Andalucia. This allowed the nationalists of ETA-V to accuse them of being pro-Spanish and to argue for the emancipation of the working class, but only in the Basque lands. Finally, a third split between Marxists and Nationalists occurred in 1974. The internal ideological conflict first related to the potential value and risks associated with increasing the armed struggle and making it autonomous. The second point concerned the relative merits of participating in a national or class front. This debate would culminate in 1974 with the division of ETA into ETA-Militar (ETA-M) and ETA-Politico Militar (ETA-PM). ETA-M continued with the use of violence and adopted the original name: ETA. On the other hand, ETA-PM followed a different evolution that ended in dissolution.

Figure 5: ETA Splits During Francoism
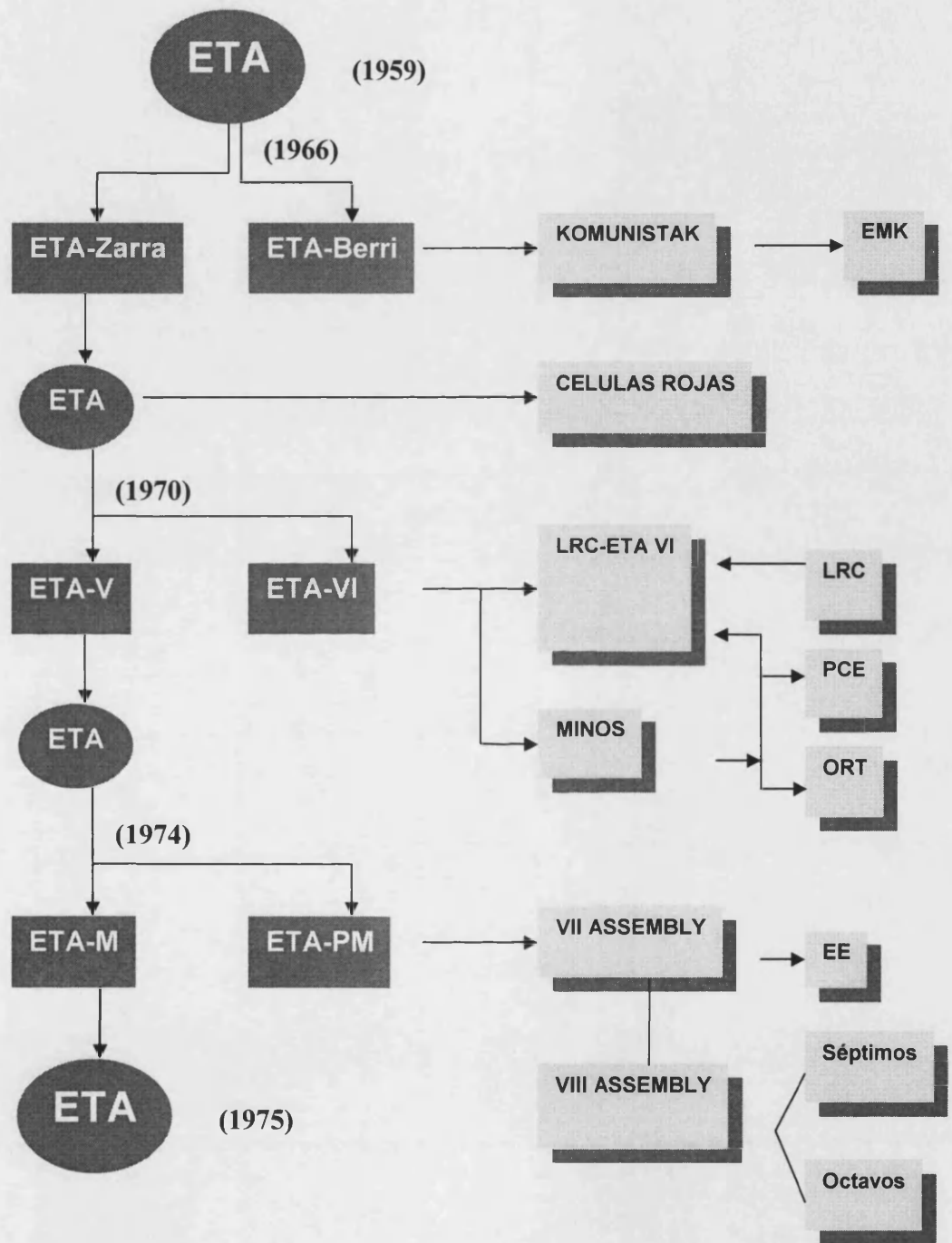
The history of ETA splits during Francoism shows us that nationalism and violence have acted as powerful unifying factors. The 'socialist' splits of ETA resulted in ETA-Berria, ETA-VI and ETA-PM. On the other hand, the use of violence and nationalist discourse kept a trend within ETA together. Scholars have gone as far as to say that this dependency on these unifying factors have made successive generations of ETA more nationalistic and more violent (Elorza 2000). The socialist element in ETA's ideology has been gradually marginalised as has been the traditional source of splits. Nowadays, it may be argued that the socialist element in ETA's discourse is merely decorative. Violence remains the most important element of ETA and, even, the main reason for its existence. It is the most visible factor and a source of cohesion. As the theory of action-repression-action predicted, there is no better way to nationalise than by raising an external fear.[262] Or as one of the leaders of ETA, Peixoto, phrased it, 'blood and time are needed to make a nation'.[263]

5.3.3. The Support for ETA

Scholars of political violence and terrorism point out that an armed group cannot carry out a long-term campaign of violence without some social support. Ted Robert Gurr, for example, has argued that violent groups 'almost invariably emerge out of larger conflicts, and that they reflect, in however distorted a form, the political beliefs and aspirations of a larger segment of society' (Gurr 1990: 86). When acts of violence are completely detached from group concerns, they tend to be perceived as criminal acts. In the Basque case the Spanish state consistently tried to depict ETA as a gang of distressed personalities. However, this was not the view of a significant section of the Basque population during Francoism. We have already mentioned the support ETA received from the international community during the Burgos Trial. In this section I will deal with the resonance of ETA's actions among Basque and Spanish society. Measuring the social support of ETA during Francoism has obvious empirical problems. In an authoritarian society where the Caudillo was worshipped and people knew they had to vote 'Yes' when voting in a Referendum, public opinion did not matter. Franco did not rule for Spaniards but for Spain, God and history. Hence, we do not have reliable data on public opinion for this period. But this is

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[262] The importance of violence as a unifying factor is not peculiar to the Basque case and can be found in a long list of case-studies from pre-modern times to the modern European nation-states. See the work of Giddens (1985), Mann (1995), Tilly (1975) and Smith (1981).
[263] Unzueta (1988: 57).

not to say that scholars do not know where ETA's support came from. Three groups can be clearly distinguished: the nationalist community, the Spanish opposition (mainly leftist organisations) and the Basque clergy.

The support from Basque nationalists is not difficult to explain if we bear in mind that the differences between the PNV and ETA were merely tactical. Basque nationalists strongly opposed the new centralist structure of the state, the abolition of the economic privileges of Biscay and Gipuzkoa and the progressive loss of Basque identity. In the absence of democratic political institutions, ETA was the champion of their grievances. This tacit support should not be confused with active collaboration of the PNV with ETA. Xabier Arzalluz, president of the PNV during the 1980s and 1990s, pointed out that during Francoism there were three kinds of Basque nationalists. The first group read books (referring to the retreat into culture), the second set bombs (referring to ETA), and the third group, in which he included himself, did not read books or set bombs, but helped those who set bombs to escape the police.[264] The first group, of those who retreated into culture, was the largest. During the 1960s-1970s, for example, a new generation of writers started using Euskara as their preferred language and a musical revival politicised the youth of the Basque Country (matched by the Catalan *Nova Cançó*). Others took refuge in sport, as they had previously done during Primo de Rivera's dictatorship. In the football stadium, the Athletic de Bilbao provided Basques with an opportunity to wave the *ikurriña* and express their Basqueness. The shift from political to cultural nationalism is often found in nationalist movements. As Anthony D. Smith has pointed out, 'we often find the two kinds of nationalism alternating in strength and influence; as political nationalism falters and ebbs, cultural nationalists, as it were, pick up the torch and seek to rejuvenate a frustrated and oppressed community.'[265]

Secondly, ETA's support came from the Spanish opposition, mainly from the left. During Francoism, ETA consistently used a Marxist language very similar to that of the socialist and communist parties (PSOE and PCE). In the left's eyes, ETA was a group of heroic young Basques who was fighting a brutal dictatorship. According to Sergio Vilar, between 1960 and 1973 the Spanish opposition, particularly the left, sympathised with the actions of

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[264] Xabier Arzallluz quoted by Juaristi (2002: 146).
[265] Smith (1998: 177).

ETA because they were fighting Francoism (Vilar 1984: 354). Patxo Unzueta, a journalist and former member of ETA, agrees with this latter point and adds that the support intensified after the Burgos Trial in 1970 (Unzueta 1988: 80). The Burgos Trial provided the Spanish opposition with a symbolic story of the struggle between young Basque nationalists and the authoritarian regime. During the trial, Mario Onaindía defined himself as a 'prisoner of war' and denounced the 'struggle of the Basque nation' while he started cheering, and was then joined by the rest of the accused, for the freedom of Euskadi (Gora Euskadi Askatuta). Two members of the military tribunal responded by unsheathing their sabres and the security in the court drew their guns from the holsters. That aura of heroism increased even more after the elimination of Admiral Carrero Blanco, the official successor of General Franco. The feeling was that, regardless of their ultimate objectives, the actions of ETA benefited the whole Spanish opposition.

Finally, the last group to give significant support to ETA was the Basque clergy. But first, a distinction needs to be made here. When referring to the Basque clergy I am referring to the lowest clergy, mostly at the local level. The high echelons of the Basque church – bishops, for example - were directly nominated by Franco in accordance with the Vatican and therefore supported the regime. The Basque clergy provided ETA with spaces in which to celebrate their assemblies and hide their weaponry. They also provided ETA with some of its members and theoretical influences such as the Liberation Theology.[266] There were two reasons for their support. First, the clergy had traditionally protected the Basque language and culture and heavily influenced Basque nationalism (which was a continuation of their work in the political arena). Second, many ETA members were educated in the nationalist faith by priests who were *Euskaldún* (Euskara speakers). The sections of the Basque clergy who were nationalists also carried out their own campaigns throughout the period of Francoism. The attitude of the Basque clergy to the 'Basque problem' is often divided into two phases.[267] From 1940 to 1960, the Basque clergy expressed their dissent through collective letters (one of them sent to the Vatican) and the clandestine publication of the journal *Egiz* (Truly) and preaching. The second phase lasted a decade and began in 1960,

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[266] For an account of actions where the clergy worked closely with ETA see Herrera & Durán (2002: 299-336). The links between the church and the nationalists are also mentioned in Unzueta (1988: 237) and Jáuregui (2000: 201).

[267] Division first made by Paulo Iztueta in *Sociología del fenómeno contestatario del clero vasco: 1940-1975* (1981). The same division is used by Mikel Barreda (1995: 15), Perez-Agote (1984: 103) and Unzueta (1988: 237).

when 339 priests wrote a complaint about the prosecution of Basque signs of identity (Euskara included), and continued up until 1968 when a group of 60 priests called *Gogor* (Firmness) locked themselves up in the Seminary of Derio (Bilbao).[268] They demanded the resignation of their own Bishop, Pablo Gurpide, and protested against the Francoist repression by sending letters to the United Nations. The Bishop died during the protest and five of the priests were sentenced to 10 or 12 years in jail.[269] The rest of the group also served sentences in the specially created jail for priests in Zamora (Unzueta 1988: 238-9). It was also in 1968 that the pulpits would be used to launch political messages. In the Mass for Txabi Etxebarrieta, the first ETA member killed, Father Arrupe, referred to violence, saying that 'it is a condemnable thing, but it is not so much when there is a long and despotic tyranny that denies, in principle and in action, the rights of men'.[270] Their support for ETA also came at a price for the clergy. Among the 16 accused in the Burgos Trial of 1970 one was a priest and two had been educated in seminaries.[271] Furthermore, during the Trial a group of exiles gave a press conference in Paris denouncing the fact that of the 130 people imprisoned in Burgos, 40 were priests (Vilar 1984: 405).

At this point it is important to summarise the religious character of Basque nationalism in order to make sense of the support of the Basque clergy for ETA. Starting with the founder of the PNV, it can be observed how Arana took great care in reconciling nationalism and religion in his motto 'Jaun-Goikua eta Legi Zarra' (God and Old Laws), which was an updated version of the Carlist 'God, *Fueros* and King'. Sabino Arana combined both elements in some of his writings. In *Efectos de la invasion,* for example, he argued that if Basques were 'dependent on Spain', they could not be 'Catholic' and that his project was not political, it was 'about saving souls'.[272] The subordination of the political to the religious could also be seen in Arana's design of the Basque flag (ikurriña). For Arana, the white cross, a religious symbol, had to be placed 'on top of the green cross and the red

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[268] In the collective letter, the priests asked the bishops of Vitoria, San Sebastian, Bilbao and Pamplona to intervene in order to restore the Basques' 'lost peace'. They denounced the extended practice of torture by the police and the civil guards and briefly mentioned the 'rights of the Basque people'. The letter was also submitted on 30 May 1960 to all the Spanish Bishops and the Vatican. Reproduced in *Documentos Y* (1979-1981: 127-135).
[269] Salaberri (1971: 87).
[270] Aulestia (1998: 34) and Herrera & Durán (2002: 304).
[271] Waldmann (1997: 64).
[272] 'Efectos de la Invasión' in Arana (1980: 1331-1333).

background to symbolise the supremacy of God over the laws and the nation'.[273] But not only was the discourse deeply religious, so too was its membership. Some of the most valuable members of the PNV came from the clergy: Engracio de Aranzadi (Kizkitza), Alberto Onaindía and Policarpo de Larrañaga among others. Given these close links, the Basque clergy supported Basque nationalism during the Civil War. In turn, when the nationalists gained autonomous power on 7 October 1936 they protected the Basque church and stopped the anti-clerical repression that characterised much of the Republican side during the war.[274] It cannot be denied that Basque priests were killed and that some churches were destroyed, looted and desecrated, but the level of violence in the Basque Autonomous Community was much lower than in the rest of Republican Spain (Ruiz Rico 1977: 30). In the other half of Spain, that dominated by Franco's troops, the Catholic Church actively supported Franco and legitimised his claims of fighting a religious crusade 'For God and Spain' (*Por Dios y por España*).[275] Nevertheless, it was under Francoism that the differences between the Basque Church and the rest of the Spanish Church became even more striking. While the Spanish Catholic Church, particularly its high ranks, became a close ally of the dictatorship, significant sections of the Basque clergy became the refuge of the Basque language and culture (Iturralde 1978). According to the sociologist, Ander Gurruchaga, the role of the church in the development of the Basque language and literature is crucial (Gurruchaga 1985: 338-243). From Bernard Dechepare, author of *Linguae Vasconum Primitiae*,[276] to Father Larramendi in the 18th century, 90% of the works in Euskara had been written by priests.[277]

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[273] See Unzueta (1987: 237) and Merry del Val (1939: 24).

[274] According to Mikel Barreda (1995: 15) the post-war repression affected around 750 Basque clergyman. In Spain, more than 6,300 priests and members of various religious orders were killed during the war. On the Basque government's defence of religious freedom during the Civil War see Raguer (2001: 321-325)

[275] That is the way Franco (and the State) liked to remember the Spanish Civil War. Hence, the official version of the conflict was titled 'Historia de la Cruzada Española'. The eight volume work was written between 1939 and 1944 by Joaquín Arrarás, Ciriaco Pérez Bustamante and the State Delegate Carlos Sáenz de Tejada. A bibliography of titles on 'the crusade' can be found in Perrino (1954), Southworth (1963) and Raguer (2001).

[276] *Linguae Vasconum primitiae* (1545) was the first book written in Euskara. The only remaining copy can be found at the National Library in Paris.

[277] There is an important contrast between the social origin of Basque and French authors during the 16th, 16th and 18th centuries. During that time, the production of works by religious people outweighed that of non-religious authors. See Gurruchaga (1985: 338) and Perez-Agote (1984: 101).

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has argued that ETA shared much the same ideology as Sabino Arana and the radicals of the PNV: they wanted the Basque homeland to be politically independent. This is due to the fact that the first ETA members came from families that supported the PNV and adopted Arana's nationalism. From home, they learnt how Arana had yearned for the lost *fueros* and how he had used the Basque Golden Age to mobilise his generation. They also learnt how Arana and the other Basque nationalists had complained that Basques were alienated and did not fight Spanish oppression. During the dark night of Basque nationalism, the message powerfully resonated in the minds of young nationalists. Arana had written about Spanish occupation, and Francoism had made that occupation very real.[278]

True, the ideological differences between the PNV and ETA were minimal. On the other hand, the strategic differences were substantial. ETA members argued that the PNV's diplomatic bet had been a failure and was, now, a paralysed party. Hence, it was necessary for a new generation to take the lead in the 'Basque struggle' by fighting the dictatorship with more radical tactics. However, moderate Basque nationalism had not imagined a situation like Francoism and ETA had to look for inspiration elsewhere. They found it in the radicals of the PNV who believed in the millenarian conflict between Basques and Spaniards. They also found inspiration in the Marxist doctrines prevalent in the 1960s and in the decolonisation struggles, from which they took the concept of 'war of national liberation'.

ETA was, then, as much the by-product of Arana's nationalism as it was of Francoism. ETA's survival beyond the demise of Francoism depended on its ability to update the radical message. With the political transition to democracy in the late 1970s, ETA found it difficult to mobilise its supporters and entered a period of decline. Interestingly, it managed to secure the support of a significant section of the population by resorting to the myth of the Golden Age.

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[278] In fact, many scholars on terrorism consider the precipitants or causes of terrorism to include, 'the existence of concrete grievances among an identifiable group of a larger population', 'the lack of opportunity for political participation', and 'the use of repressive force by governments' (Newman & Piroth 1996: 388).

Chapter Six

RADICAL NATION-BUILDING (1975-1989)

Finally, it is necessary for the people to be determined to preserve the national life and oppose any internal or external enemy that may aim to destroy the nation.

ETA's White Book[279]

6.1. The Spanish Transition, 1975-1982

General Franco's death was received with much expectation. Many feared the new Head of state, Prince Juan Carlos, would continue the political work of the Caudillo by runing an authoritarian regime. Indeed, he had been chosen by Franco himself to impose a 'revolutionary' and 'totalitarian' monarchy inspired by the uprising of 18 July 1936.[280] No sudden changes of regime were to be feared because, as Franco had told the Spanish nation in December 1969, everything had been 'tied up and well tied down' (*atado y bien atado*).[281] However, with the corpse of Franco still warm there was hope that Juan Carlos I could become the 'pilot of change' and several Western leaders, such as the Duke of Edinburgh, President Giscard d'Estaing and US Vice-President Rockefeller, attended the coronation ceremony. This was in sharp contrast with the complete absence of any democratic Head of state at Franco's funeral.

Most observers and politicians saw Prince Juan Carlos as a puppet who represented the continuity of Francoism. This view was mostly held by the Francoist elites but also by the monarchists themselves, who continued to support the prince's father, Don Juan de Borbón, as the rightful heir to the throne. The anti-Francoist opposition also rejected the appointment of the prince as successor and the communist leader Santiago Carrillo speculated about his future reign by jokingly calling him 'Juan Carlos the Brief' (Powell 1996: 46). Hence, when General Franco died in his bed on 20 November 1975 very few

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[279] ETA's White Book, *Documentos Y* (1979-1981: 191).

[280] Gilmour (1985: 133).

[281] Moreover, in his political testament, Franco had explicitly asked Spaniards to give 'the future King of Spain, Don Juan Carlos de Borbón, the same support and collaboration' they had given him. Franco's political testament is reproduced in Cotarelo (1992: 463).

expected the King would have such a prominent role in facilitating the Spanish transition to democracy.[282]

6.1.1. Politics of Consensus: Between Reform and Rupture

The King and his close circle were about to embark on a trip between 'two shores', a constant search for compromise that would become one of the distinct features of the Spanish transition.[283] On the one hand, the democratic opposition, mainly the socialist party (PSOE) and the communist party (PCE), wanted a 'democratic break' (*ruptura democrática*) with the previous regime. On the other, the Francoists did not have a unified position and were divided between the reformists who wanted Spain to become a liberal democracy (*ruptura pactada*) and the more intransigent Francoists who wanted Franco's legacy to continue. The King's responsibility was to initiate a political transition and reconcile the process with the pressure of society. In short, the transition had to be based on 'consensus' (*el consenso*).

The transition opened the door for the 'two Spains' who had fought the Civil War to reconcile with each other in the new democracy. Conscious of the historical memory of the Civil War, all leaders of political forces and interest groups participated in the climate of 'consensus' and made important concessions that allowed the process to prosper. This disposition to compromise made the replacement of the authoritarian structures by the democratic ones not only possible but orderly and legal. In the words of Fernández Miranda, 'everything depends on the answer one gives to the question: was the transition undertaken by means of a *reforma* or a *ruptura*? As far as I am concerned, the transition to democracy must be carried out within the law, by means of the law'.[284]

The first two measures the King took after the disappearance of the *Generalísimo* were to (1) reinstate Carlos Arias Navarro as Prime Minister; and (2) nominate a moderate

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[282] Many accounts of the Spanish transition to democracy have been written by both historians and political scientists. This chapter relies on the following historical accounts: Carr & Fusi (1981), Gilmour (1985), Powell (2001), and Preston (1996). It also relies on books written by Spanish political scientists and sociologists such as Cotarelo (1992), Maravall (1982), and Tezanos, Cotarelo & de Blas (1989).

[283] Linz argues that the role of the King in the transition has no equivalent in other transitions. See Linz (1992: 432).

[284] El País, 2 November 1977 cited in Powell (1996: 144).

Francoist and former mentor of his, Torcuato Fernández Miranda, as president of both the Parliament (*Cortes*) and the Council of Realm. These two decisions clearly illustrate the complex, even contradictory, nature of a process of political transition. Although there were already domestic and international pressures to democratise, the King had to balance carefully any future changes against the internal sensitivities of the regime. The re-appointment of Arias was mainly aimed at reassuring the Francoist elites. Arias was part of the group of Franco loyalists known as the 'Bunker' and had been appointed by Franco, which meant that not even the King could unseat him. However, the following year, in 1976, the relationship with Arias Navarro deteriorated as 'the 67-year old Prime Minister answered 'Yes, your Majesty' and did nothing, 'or even the reverse'.[285] The second decision the King took, to nominate his professor of Constitutional Law to the presidency of the Council of Realm and the Parliament, allowed Fernández Miranda to favour a 'legal' transition and speed up political reform. The first assignment for Fernández Miranda was to work behind the scenes and facilitate the appointment of a new head of government. The Council of Realm he chaired selected three names (*terna*) from which the King had to choose the new Prime Minister. In the final *terna* there were two former Franco ministers, Silva Muñoz and López Bravo, and an almost unknown 43 year-old politician, Adolfo Suárez. The first two were the candidates preferred by the democratic opposition and were strongly opposed by the more radical Francoists. The third candidate, Adolfo Suárez, did not have much support but had already been chosen by the King. After the meeting of the Council of Realm, Torcuato Fernández Miranda met journalists and enigmatically told them, 'I am in a position to offer the King what he has asked me for' (*Estoy en condiciones de ofrecer al Rey lo que me ha pedido*). The political significance of his words was understood later in the day when the King nominated Suárez as head of government. Adolfo Suárez was a charismatic and charming political figure with a natural gift for negotiation and compromise, a necessary skill for the future Prime Minister. The King was surrounding himself with men he trusted.[286]

What Suárez achieved in the coming months surprised everyone. His agenda was to dismantle the so-called *Nuevo Estado* piece by piece. And the political tool to do exactly that was the Law of Political Reform, which was going to open the door to democratic

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[285] Newsweek, 'Juan Carlos Looks Ahead', 26 April 1976, p. 14.
[286] Vilallonga (1994: 69-70 & 99).

elections. However, the law first needed the support of the Francoist *procuradores* and, later, of a positive outcome in a national referendum. If the law was approved, the resulting Parliament would have the duty to write a Constitution and submit it to the Spanish people for a second referendum. However, in order for the law to be approved, the Francoist *procuradores* would have to commit political suicide as many of them would not have any role to play in the new democratic scenario. After long negotiations behind the scenes the government managed to convince 425 of the 497 *procuradores* to vote 'yes' and on 18 November 1976 the Law of Political Reform was passed.[287] The results of the referendum on the bill were a success for the Suárez government. Almost eighty percent of the electorate voted (76.4 %), and of these 94.2% voted 'yes'; 2.6% voted 'no'. David Gilmour has succintly summarised the achievements of the bill,

> The law accepted the principle of popular sovereignty, brought in universal suffrage, and recognized the need for political pluralism. It implied the abolition of the chief franquista institutions, the 'organic' Cortes, the Movimiento and the National Council (the Council of Realm was retained), and opened the way for elections to a bicameral legislature. The new Cortes would consist of a Congreso de los Diputados, with 350 members, and a Senado, with 207 elected senators.[288]

The Law of Political Reform was the most important legal measure approved during the Spanish transition because it opened the door to an entirely new situation without breaking with the immediate past. After it was approved by referendum the government called for elections and, on 15 June 1977, eighteen million Spaniards - 79.24% of the electorate - voted in the first democratic elections since February 1936. More than 200 parties registered, giving birth to the expression 'taxi parties', as they were ironically described, since all the members of the party could cram into a single taxi (Carr & Fusi 1981: 214). The communist party (PCE) was unexpectedly legalised, to the outrage of the more intransigent sections of the regime and the armed forces, and was able to participate in the elections.

As it can be seen in Figure 6, the party Suárez had created months earlier, the Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD), won the election with 34.7% of the total vote and was closely

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[287] Only 59 voted 'no' and 13 abstained. Adolfo Suárez called them 'procuradores de hara-kiri' because of the way they had committed collective political suicide. See Carr and Fusi (1979: 221).
[288] Gilmour (1985: 158).

followed by Gonzalez's socialist party, the PSOE, with 29.2% of the vote. The unashamedly Francoist party, Alianza Popular (AP),[289] obtained only 8.2% of the vote and the largest anti-Francoist group, the Partido Comunista de España (PCE) less than 10% of the votes.

Figure 6: Results of 1977 Elections (15 June)
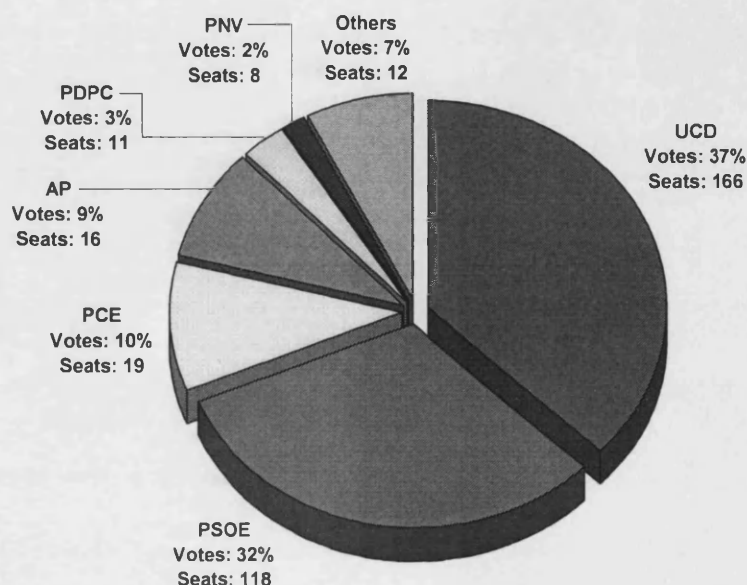
Others: PSP-US (6), UDC/IDCC (2), EC/FED (1), EE (1), CAIC (1), and INDEP (1).

Source: Ministerio del Interior www.mir.es

The elections also set the tone for the following years of the transition, which would be characterised as a politics of consensus among the main political forces. First, the elections rewarded Suárez for his reforms and penalised the extremes that could endanger the transition. Second, it showed the moderation of the Spanish people in general and the working class in particular and established the centre as the defining characteristic of the Spanish electorate.

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[289] The leader of AP, Manuel Fraga Iribarne, proudly asserted his party represented 'Sociological Francoism', meaning that most of the population was right-wing. His campaign was based on anti-Communism and issues of 'law and order'. Carr & Fusi (1979: 228).

With a stable system in place, the Spanish political elite faced two main challenges ahead of them: to stabilise the economic and social situation and draft and approve a Constitution.

The Pacts of the Moncloa, an all-party agreement to solve the serious economic situation, were signed in 1977. In these it was agreed that the parties should cooperate with the Government in passing Bills that would bring about political, economic and social reforms. Following the 1973 oil crisis, Spain had almost a million unemployed (7.3% of the labour force), an inflation rate of 44% (compared to the 10% of other OECD countries) and a highly indebted state. Knowing that the economic crisis would only be solved by an austerity programme, Suárez asked all the political parties with parliamentary representation to support his measures. They all agreed and the Pacts of the Moncloa, designed by the economist Enrique Fuentes Quintana, were put in place to solve some of the short-term problems of the Spanish economy.[290]

On 25 July 1977, the Congress approved the creation of a Constitutional Committee, which, in turn, appointed a drafting sub-commission. The sub-committee was made up of eight deputies: four members of UCD, one from the PSOE, one communist, one AP and one representing the Basque and Catalan nationalists.[291] The sub-committee had the task of providing all Spaniards with a Magna Carta. In this respect, the 'fathers of the Constitution' had to reconcile in the text two of Spain's biggest historical problems: the left-right polarisation which had produced the Civil War and the multi-national character of Spain. The constituent process took eighteen months and the Constitution was finally approved in the Congress on 31 October 1978. The content of the text and its reception in the Basque Country are analysed in the following section.

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[290] The Pactos de la Moncloa (1977) were signed by the leaders of all political forces: Adolfo Suárez González, Felipe Gonzále Márquez, Joan Reventós Carner, Joseph María Triginer Fernández, Manuel Fraga Iribarne, Enrique Tierno Galván, Juan Ajuriaguerra Ochandiano, Miquel Roca i Junyent, Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo y Bustelo and Santiago Carrillo Solares. The text of the Pact is reproduced in Cotarelo (1992: 473-487) and a personal account is provided by Fuentes Quintana (1990).
[291] The 'fathers' of the Constitution were Miguel Herrero de Miñón (UCD), Landelino Lavilla (UCD), José Pedro Pérez-Llorca (UCD), Gabriel Cisneros (UCD), Gregorio Peces-Barba (PSOE), Jordi Solé Tura (PCE), Manuel Fraga (AP) and Miguel Roca Junyent (Basque-Catalan representative).

6.1.2. The Transition in the Basque Country

From the Basque Country and Navarre, as from much of Spain, the transition to democracy was seen with hopeful eyes. However, in the Basque lands the process would have three distinctive characteristics. The first characteristic was the lower support for the process of transition in general, and for the Constitution in particular. According to Basque nationalists this was due to the reluctance of the Spanish state to recognise the 'historical rights' of the Basque nation, which responded with higher levels of abstention in the Constitutional Referendum. Secondly, the debate over the status of the Basque lands was another of the distinctive elements of the Basque transition (although Catalonia went through a similar process). The overall agreement among Basque political forces was that a Statute of Autonomy, mirroring the one that had been adopted during the Second Republic, should be granted to the Basques. Finally, the whole process was threatened by extremely high levels of violence by groups, such as ETA, that opposed the democratisation process.

The first distinctive element of the transition in Basque lands, the lower level of support, was due to a variety of reasons. First of all, there was the issue of the legalisation of the Basque flag, the *ikurriña*, and an amnesty for political prisoners. In Catalonia, the national flag (*senyera*) had been publicly displayed since 1975. In the Basque Country, however, the *ikurriña* was first publicly displayed in San Sebastián two years later on 19 January 1977 after 40 years of being banned. The reluctance of the government to legalise the Basque flag was summarised by the words of the then Minister of Interior (*Ministro de Gobernación*), Manuel Fraga, who argued that in order to fly the Basque flag on public buildings 'they'll have to trample on my dead body'.[292] The second issue at stake was the status of Basque political prisoners, most of them ETA members. The pardons the government granted, in November 1975, July 1976 and March and October 1977, reduced the number of political prisoners in Spanish prisons by over 75%.[293] However, most Basque political prisoners did not benefit from the amnesty as they were directly responsible for 'crimes of blood' (*delitos de sangre*). It was in the Basque Country where demonstrations for the freeing of prisoners (*presoak kalera*) were strongest and where frustration would

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[292] Cited in Carr & Fusi (1979: 219).
[293] The first pardon was granted shortly after the death of Franco in 1975. The second on 30 July 1976, the third on 9 December 1977, and the fourth in October 1977. See Amnesty International Report (1977: 269 & 272; 1978: 230).

also be very high. In the first years of transition, the issue of the Basque flag and political prisoners were matters of great importance in the Basque lands and the government was slow to react to this. The flag could have been legalised much earlier at a low political cost and more flexible arrangements (based on repentance) could have been applied to ETA members. According to David Gilmour, the policy of Suárez regarding the Basque Country 'was that of an opportunist, acting only in reaction to pressures and events. His decisions, made usually in response to disorders and demonstrations, appeared always to be dictated by tactical considerations, not by conviction or by principle' (Gilmour 1985: 219).

The event in which lower support was mostly felt was the 1978 Constitutional Referendum. But, before analysing the results of the referendum, it is necessary to understand the position of each of the political parties involved prior to the referendum. In the sub-committee the Parliament had appointed to draft a constitution, only one of the seven deputies elected represented 'the Basque and Catalan minority'. The Basque and Catalans decided that it would be a member of the Catalan nationalist party *Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya*, Miquel Roca Junyent, who would represent both nations in the constitutional debate. According to the PNV, this is a decision that they later regretted because Miquel Roca did not defend their interests appropriately.[294] The PNV proposed constitutional amendments regarding three issues: (1) the competences of each of the future autonomous communities; (2) the procedure to approve the statute of autonomy; and (3) the level of cooperation between the different autonomous communities and the potential federation (PNV 1978: 20). The third point was important for the PNV as it could open the door for a reunification between the Basque Country and the province of Navarre. However, the PNV's main objection to the constitution was that it did not recognise the *fueros* as a base for the autonomous government. By grounding a future Basque government on the *fueros*, 19th century laws and institutions of self-government, the PNV was demanding that Spain recognise the distinctiveness of Basques and their right to self-determination. The government refused to accept such a view as it threatened the unity of

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[294] The official position of the PNV in the Constitutional debate is provided by a book published in 1978 titled *El Partido Nacionalista Vasco ante la Constitución*. For an opposing view see the personal account of Gregorio Peces-Barba, one of the 'fathers' of the Constitution. Peces-Barba accused the PNV of being 'a sniper on the outside' without 'any commitment to the common goal' (Peces-Barba 2000: 65).

Spain.[295] Since the PNV was not pleased with the outcome, it recommended that its sympathisers abstain in the Constitutional referendum.

As can be seen in Table 5, the results of the referendum show the differences between Spain, the Basque Country, and Navarre. Most Spaniards participated in the referendum (67%) and of all those 88% voted 'yes'. In the Basque Country, however, only 45% of the electorate voted and of these, 70 % approved the Constitutional text. Within the Basque Country, the most nationalist provinces (Gipuzkoa and Bizcaia) showed higher levels of abstention (43% and 42%) than Araba (60%). The electoral behaviour of Navarre was much closer to the Spanish average, with 67% participation. For the Basque nationalists, the results showed the rejection of the institutional arrangement by a majority of the Basque people. This view is not entirely accurate. It needs to be recognised that the process had less legitimacy in the Basque Country than in the rest of the state; however, abstention should not be equated with opposition. By recommending abstention, the PNV managed to secure the 'natural abstention' of the Basque Country (Benegas 1984: 88). The only way to know how much opposition there was in the Basque Country would have been through the results for a 'no' vote when accompanied by high participation levels.[296] The radical nationalists interpreted the results as a refusal on the part of the Basque nation to be integrated within Spanish structures.[297]

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[295] In the end, the Constitution tried to reconcile the conflicting views of the different nations within Spain in the following way. Article 2 advocated 'the indissoluble unity of the Spanish nation', while it recognised and guaranteed 'the right to autonomy of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed'. Regarding language, Article 3 stated that Castilian was the 'official language of the state', but that 'other Spanish languages' were also 'official within the respective Autonomous Communities'. The word 'nation' was, however, reserved for the Spanish as a whole, while Catalonia, Basque Country, Galicia - and to a lesser extent Andalusia and Valencia - were considered 'nationalities' or 'regions'. The Constitution thus replaced the centralised structured of the state with what Miquel Roca Junyent has described as 'a quasi-federal State of Autonomous Communities' (*Estado de las Autonomías*). See Roca Junyent (2000: 81).

[296] For a detailed statistical analysis on the referendum see Linz (1986: 226-257).

[297] *Hausnartzen III*, p. 12. 'Hausnartzen' was the name of an internal bulletin from Herri Batasuna that was published during 1986 and 1987. In 1988, 'Hausnartzen' became the title of the training books for HB militants.

Table 5: Constitutional Referendum, 6 December 1978						
	Electorate	Participation (%)	Abstention (%)	'Yes' Vote (%)	'No' Vote (%)	Blank Votes (%)
All Spain	**26.632.180**	**67.1**	**32.8**	**88.5**	**7.8**	**3.5**
Navarre	361.243	66.6	33.3	76.4	17.1	6.4
Basque Country:	1.552.737	44.6	55.3	70.2	23.9	5.8
- Araba	173.412	59.2	40.7	72.4	19.4	8.0
- Bizkaia	874.936	42.4	57.5	73.0	21.4	5.5
- Gipuzkoa	504.389	43.4	56.5	64.5	30.2	5.2

Source: Ministerio del Interior www.mir.es

The second distinctive element of the transition in the Basque Country was the process towards gaining a Basque Statute of Autonomy, which was finally approved in November 1979. On 31 December 1977 the Spanish government established the Basque General Council, a pre-autonomous government created to manage the transition of the region to autonomous status.[298] The Council's main task was to draft a statute of autonomy that did not include Navarre. The Council was made up of the political parties that had been represented in the elections of 15 June 1977. A draft statute was approved in December 1978 at the historic town of Gernika, and the Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country was finally approved in Parliament in December 1979.[299] In the referendum on the statute, the PNV and all the Basque political forces recommended that their supporters vote in favour of it. Alianza Popular asked its supporters to decide for themselves, whereas Herri Batasuna, the radical Basque party which was created a year earlier, recommended a 'no' vote. Their main objection to the project was that the statute, like the one drafted during the Second Republic, was only for the Basque Country and excluded Navarre. The PNV did not oppose the non-inclusion of Navarre because, historically, the PNV had always been electorally weak in that area.[300] Furthermore, in a referendum the population of Navarre had expressed their view that they did not want the statute to apply to their province, but

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[298] The basis for that effort, argues Robert P. Clark, was the promulgation of the Pre-Autonomy Decree for the Basque and Catalan regions of 31 December 1977. See Clark (1984: 104).

[299] The statute had been drafted by a Basque Commission made of 19 members: PNV (5), PSOE (3), UCD (3), EE (2), AP (1) and ESEI (1). Parties had been assigned numbers proportional to the results of the elections of June 1977.

[300] Irvin (1999: 107) and Montero (1988: 111).

instead wanted to have their own statute.[301] Hence 58.8% of the Basque population voted in the referendum and, of those, 94.6% voted 'yes' and only 5.4% opposed the project.[302] The Basque Statute of Autonomy, also known as the Statute of Gernika, devolved to Basques many powers such as education, health care, the right to own radio and television stations, their own autonomous police (*Ertzaintza*), and extensive responsibilities in the fields of public works, culture, agriculture, industry and social welfare. It also recognised Euskara as one of the official languages of the Basque Country (together with Spanish) and established generous autonomy in financial matters. Nowadays, the Basque Government collects and spends taxation money and has one of the most advanced statutes of autonomy in western Europe.

Finally, the third element that makes the political transition in the Basque Country is the issue of violence. This will be analysed in the following section.

6.1.3. ETA's Violence During the Transition

It is no exaggeration to say that ETA's political violence was one of the most important threats to the Spanish transition. The democratic process undoubtedly had other major challengers, the most important being the conspiracies of the *golpistas*. These Francoist army officers believed that both the security situation and the devolution process had reached intolerable levels and that a government of national salvation was needed to 'restore' order. The ultra press regularly voiced the rumours of a coup d'etat which reached a climax in 1981, when the golpistas staged a failed coup d'etat. Another 'internal' threat to the process of democratisation was the harsh repression of demonstrations and crowds by the police and security forces, who continued to arrest, maltreat and then release individuals without being charged.[303] The worst event happened in Vitoria on 3 March 1976 when the police shot and killed five Basque workers who were demonstrating, along with 5,000 others, near a church. In the following days, and all throughout the Basque Country, workers went on strike and clashed with the police. But none of these acts threatened the

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[301] The referendum on the statute was held in 1977 when there were negotiations between the Spanish government and the Basque parties. The outcome of the referendum meant that Navarre was not part of the Basque General Council which later discussed the Statute of Autonomy. See Carr and Fusi (1979: 235).

[302] Results of the Referendum for the Statute of Autonomy (1979). Electorate: 1,464,541. Participation: 921,436. Abstention: 644,105. 'Yes' Vote: 94.6% 'No' Vote: 5.4%. See www.euskadi.net.

[303] Amnesty International Report (1977: 270).

process in the way ETA did. The reason for this being that ETA could not be appeased by political compromise and concessions. For example, at a time when the Basque flag (*ikurriña*) was legalised, ETA prisoners were given a political amnesty and Statute of Autonomy was approved, ETA acted with increasing violence. The virulence and intensity of ETA during these years was unprecedented and contributed to an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty within both the state and civil society, neither of which were sure how to deal with ETA.[304]

Other armed groups were also responsible for the sense of instability during these years. The most important left-wing group was the communist GRAPO (*Grupo Revolucionario Antifasista Primero de Octubre*), which targetted members of the security forces, businessmen and representatives of what they called 'the oligarchy'. On the other hand, extreme right-wing groups targetted bookshops, individuals and organisations considered to be leftists (*rojos*). As can be seen in the following table, the actions of ETA were most prominent, followed by those of GRAPO and the extreme right. In the years from 1975 to 1982, when the Spanish democracy was finally consolidated, 372 people died, representing 43.5% of those killed by ETA between 1968 and 2003. That is an average of 53 deaths per year and almost one per week for seven years. In 1978 there were 68 deaths and in 1979 there were 76. The year 1980 was the bloodiest, with 96 deaths, half of them civilians. In sharp contrast, in the years from 1960 to 1975, only 29 people died as a result of ETA's actions.

Table 6: Killings by ETA, GRAPO and the Extreme Right during 1975-1980

Year	ETA	GRAPO	Extreme Right
1975	16	5	0
1976	17	1	3
1977	12	7	8
1978	65	6	1
1979	78	31	6
1980	96	6	20
TOTAL	284	56	38

Source: Laurenzano (2000: 122).

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[304] An excellent account of ETA's actions during the period 1976-1980 is provided by Clark (1984: 87-119).

Although the ETA killings are all aggregated, they have to be attributed to the two groups that existed at the time: ETA-M and ETA-PM. During Francoism, when ETA had a clearly defined enemy and the room for strategic change was very small, splits occurred. At a time when new possibilities for political participation were being opened up, the debate would be more ferocious than ever before. Hence ETA would be divided between those who held that 'revolutionary war' should be the only means of action and those who believed the political aspect should also be explored. The two positions evolved and produced a split in 1974 between ETA politico-militar (ETA-PM), which advocated a combination of armed struggle and political action, and ETA-Militar (ETA-M), which advocated direct war with Spain. After the 1977 elections, a section within ETA-PM obtained a government pardon, abandoned the armed struggle, and created a left-wing nationalist party called Euskadiko Ezkerra (EE).[305] As during Francoism, those organisations that split from ETA were accused of being pro-Spanish (españolistas) and, as in the case of Pertur, the leader of ETA-PM, they paid with their lives if they tried to influence the military front.[306] The rest of ETA-PM continued its activities until 1982 when it finally disbanded.[307] ETA-M continued its activities and established a hierarchical organisational form that would be maintained for the next two decades.[308] It also appropriated the name ETA and created a political party in 1978. The party was named Herri Batasuna (Popular Unity) and would be the political arm of the group for the next two decades. Hence, there was one stream that continued the violent struggle while others re-integrated into society through the opportunities the government provided. Or as the Basque journalist Luciano Rincón once argued, 'ETA does not change; etarras do'. (Rincón 1985: 13).

The question any student of ETA during the transition needs to ask is why did ETA increase their activities during the democratisation process? Why was it that, at a time when

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[305] ETA-PM had previously created the party EIA which became the core of Euskadiko Ezkerra (EE).

[306] Pertur was killed by ETA on 23 June 1976. The last two people who saw him alive were Miguel Ángel Apalategi, 'Apala', and Francisco Mujika Garmendia, 'Pakito' members of the radical wing of ETA-PM or Bereziak. When ETA-PM finally abandoned the armed struggle the Bereziak joined ETA-M in 1977. See Gurruchaga (2001: 105), Rincón (1985: 83) and Clark (1984: 92-93).

[307] ETA-PM decided to disband after the VIII Assembly in September 1982. The main ideologue for ETA-PM was Eduardo Moderno Bergareche 'Pertur', who wanted to turn ETA into a Basque nationalist workers' party. In July 1976, Pertur was kidnapped and executed, most probably by fellow ETA members. See Clark (1984: 92) and Wieviorka (1993: 161).

[308] Furthermore, Florencio Domínguez argues that the leaders of ETA who were elected in 1977 would continue to control the organisation until 1992, when the Spanish police arrested most of the ETA leaders in Bidart (France). The list includes renowned etarras such as Argala, Txomin, Josu Ternera, Pakito, Txikierdi or Antxon. For a complete list of leaders of ETA see Dominguez (2000: 283).

politics was becoming democratic, ETA stubbornly stuck to its methods? Why did it fight the new regime even more ferociously than it had fought Francoism? The reason for the increase in violence is found in the need of ETA to remain relevant. During Francoism, ETA was the main reference group for Basque nationalism, but during the transition a multiplicity of groups could more accurately represent the different opinions in Basque society. By using violence, ETA was making its presence visible and was forcing everyone around it to talk about it. Every party had to have a position and take a stand in regard ETA. In order to justify its existence, ETA argued that nothing had changed since Francoism. The Spanish democracy was a mere façade for authoritarian rule. In order to show this, they engaged in a bloody campaign that targetted military personnel, hoping to provoke a reaction from the army and the security forces during the transition.[309] As Linz and Stepan have pointed out:

> This armed violence created the very real potential of military opposition to the democratic transition and consolidation because, while not one army officer was killed during the Basque insurgency in 1968-75 under Franco, or in the 1975-77 transition period, in the post-electoral period of democratic rule between 1978 and 1983, thirty-seven army officers died due to Basque nationalist violence.[310]

The pressure from ETA did not remain unnoticed and in 1981 there was an attempted *coup d'etat*. Organised by two generals, Armada and Milans del Bosch, the *coup d'etat* wanted to create a military junta that could solve problems such as the 'unity of Spain', and that would be under the authority of the King. Thus, at 6:20 pm on 23 February, several Civil Guards armed with sub-machine guns stormed the *Cortes*, which was holding a plenary session.[311] Led by Lieutenant-Colonel Antonio Tejero, pistol in hand, the civil guards detained the members of parliaments for ten hours. The attempted coup, to be known as 23F or *Tejerazo*, counted on the support of top officials such as General Armada, but only one of eleven captain-generals in charge of the military regions, General Milans del Bosch, took the tanks onto the streets of Valencia 'to save the monarchy'.[312] There was a long day and night for Spaniards who were unaware of the many telephone calls the King was

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[309] This interpretation of ETA's violence during the transition is widely shared by Gilmour (1985: 225); Linz & Steppan (1996: 99); Gregorio Peces-Barba (2000: 66); Charles Powell (1996: 157-164) and Aranzadi, Juaristi & Unzueta (1994: 247).

[310] Linz & Stepan (1996: 99).

[311] After his resignation, Suarez was about to transfer his powers to Calvo Sotelo when the Civil Guards stormed the chamber.

[312] Vilallonga (1994:118).

making to the rest of the captain-generals to confirm their loyalty to the Constitution and the Monarchy. With the whole government being held hostage in Parliament, the only individual who could cut the Gordian knot was the monarch and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, King Juan Carlos. Later that night and dressed in uniform, the King appeared on TV at 1.23am and reassured the public that he had personally ordered the civil and military authorities to defend the democracy. Knowing of the failure of their attempt, Milans del Bosch returned the tanks to the garrisons and Tejero and his followers gave themselves up. The event confirmed the King's leadership capabilities and the resistance of most of Spanish civil society and military to the 'rattle of swords' (*ruido de sables*). However, it also forced the government to appease the ultras with the infamous LOAPA (*Ley Orgánica de Armonización del Proceso Autonómico*). The 1982 law halted the devolution process and played a significant role in the construction of a radical nationalist discourse based on the understanding that the transition had been directed by the powers that be (*poderes fácticos*).

As has already been noted, radical nationalists encouraged their supporters to vote 'no' in the referendums for the 1978 Constitution, the Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country and that of Navarre, the *Ley de Amejoramiento Foral de Navarra*, by which the region was to have its own Parliament and autonomous institutions.[313] The main objections were that the system was derived from the Spanish constitutional system where the Basques have had no option to participate in equal terms. The movement would thus be anti-system and would ask for the inclusion of Navarre in the solution of the 'Basque problem'. However, for the radical nationalists the transition had not ended. In fact, some would argue that it had never started in the Basque Country. This was the position of the radical Basque nationalists, also known as the nationalist left (*izquierda abertzale*), who argued that: (1) the right to self-determination was still not recognised; (2) that ETA's violence was the symptom of a 'political problem'; and (3) that Spanish democracy was a cosmetic change to Francoism. Under the democratic façade of Spain, it retained the same authoritarian practices, and it was necessary for ETA to carry out its revolutionary war to unfold the true nature of the new democracy. Hence, one could say that the radical discourse did not

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[313] See *Hausnarzten* III, pp. 13 and 32. The Ley Orgánica de Reintegración y Amejoramiento del régimen foral de Navarra 13/1982 of 10 August 1982 was negotiated between the *Diputación de Navarra* and the Spanish government. On the institutional arrangement of Navarre see www.navarra.com.

experience any evolution. However, the tactical evolution evolved and adapted to the political circumstances of the new democracy.

6.2. From Armed Group to Social Movement

During Francoism, radical Basque nationalism had only operated through ETA's armed struggle. With the arrival of democracy, the strategy of 'revolutionary war' that had been approved by the Fifth Assembly (1966-1967) showed its shortcomings and radical Basque nationalism opened up to new forms of action. Indeed, ETA discussed the abandonment of the 'revolutionary war' during 1977 and officially abandoned it as the only means to fight Spain in 1978.[314] ETA realised that the Spanish state could not be defeated by military force and decided to promote the creation of new political organisations in order to increase their pressure on Spain. Hence, in 1974 ETA created a network of organisations grouped in the Basque Movement of National Liberation (*MLNV; Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional Vasco*). The network strategy was based on the ideas of the historic ETA-M leader, José Miguel Beñaran Ordeñana (Argala), who designed the strategy of splitting (*desdoblamiento*) in 1974. The kind of questions the *desdoblamiento* wanted to answer were how many organisations should there be to fight the armed front and the political front? If more than one, how should they be organised? Should there be an organisation that organised each of the fronts and coordinated them? In short, the strategy of *desdoblamiento* was based on two premises: (1) ETA is constituted as a political and military nucleus for the realisation of a Basque Socialist state, independent, reunified and Basque-speaking through armed struggle; and (2) For the rest of the fighting fronts our nation develops, it is necessary to create our own organisations within the MLNV and in strict organic separation from ETA.[315]

The MLNV has been described by the Basque political scientist Jose Manuel Mata Lopez as the group of 'platforms, assemblies, parties and other organisations of what we call radical Basque nationalism' (Mata Lopez 1993: 105). The strategic goal behind this network was to unite and mobilise all the forces that had independence as their primary goal:

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[314] See Ibarra (1989: 99) and Domínguez (2000: 292).
[315] Hausnartzen II, pp. 36-37.

In general, we could describe the MLNV as the way(s) of expression for a wide sector of the Basque Working People which aims, as a final goal, to realise the full national sovereignty for the whole of Euskal-Herria.

This Movement of Liberation, has its historical expression in this group of organizations that, each one of them in their own way (in terms of the intervention camps), contribute to the advance of the process (...)

Hence, at a given moment, the Commitees anti-Lemóniz appeared and later evolved and consolidated into the Antinuclear Committees; the Pro-Amnesty Committee, AEK; the Committees of International Solidarity, LAB, ANV or EGIN...we could continue naming a whole group of organizations which, as a whole, constitute KAS (LAB-HASI-ASK-Jarrai-EGIZAN-...) and HB, which we have come to known as the Basque Movement of National Liberation..[316]

The configuration of the MLNV was the most significant organisational and tactical development of radical Basque nationalism during the 20th century. According to Llera, Mata and Irvin, the strategy was a combination of 'armed struggle and popular mobilization through the social and political organizations which comprise the broader MLNV'.[317] As laid down in the Hausnartzen notebooks, the Basque Movement of National Liberation (MLNV) 'has as a strategic goal the creation of a state for the Basque nation. As a tactical goal, it wants to secure all the contents of the KAS Alternative'.[318] The basis for the MLNV was the 'politics of aggregation of sectoral interests' (política de acumulación de fuerzas) by which a huge variety of political and social forces group together with a common goal: the independence of the Basque nation.[319] However, each organisation and/or individual contributed differently to the MLNV. Members showed different levels of involvement in the movement. For example, direct involvement in ETA brought about higher risks than being involved in the electoral campaign of Herri Batasuna. People involved in ETA were the most devoted as they usually took higher risks (a clandestine life, imprisonment, and even death).

The structure of the levels of involvement in Radical Basque Nationalism can be separated into five concentric circles. As can be seen in Figure 7, the five circles or levels are theoretically neat but organisations can change their involvement and move from one circle to another. This was even more so the case for individuals whose tactical considerations

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[316] Hausnartzen III, p. 30.
[317] Llera, Mata & Irvin (1993: 111).
[318] See Hausnartzen III: 29.
[319] Hausnartzen. Caracterización y Organización de Herri Batasuna, p. 8.

changed much more rapidly than organisations and, consequently, their location in the circles. The inner circle represents ETA, the 'vanguard' of the whole movement, and the reference point for all the organisations. ETA was the most powerful organisation in the series of circles but it was also the organisation where individuals took the highest risks. The further away one moves from the centre the lower the risks and the lesser the involvement. The second circle represents KAS and the organisations that are part of it (ETA, ASK, HASI, LAB, Jarrai and Egizan). KAS decided the strategy of the whole MLNV and although a variety of organisations formed KAS, there is no doubt ETA was the undisputed leader. The third circle represents the political party Herri Batasuna. The fourth circle is for those organisations of the MLNV which have not been mentioned to date. They were the ones that sympathised with ETA but were not involved in its activities (AEK, Egin, IA, etc.). Finally, the fifth circle represents the wider nationalist family. This includes individuals who might be occasional voters, might attend a demonstration or might give their financial support or time through any of the organisations of the network.[320]

Figure 7: Levels of Involvement in Radical Basque Nationalism

1. Killings

2. Street Violence

3. Support Tasks
4. Political Activity

5. Wider Nationalist Community

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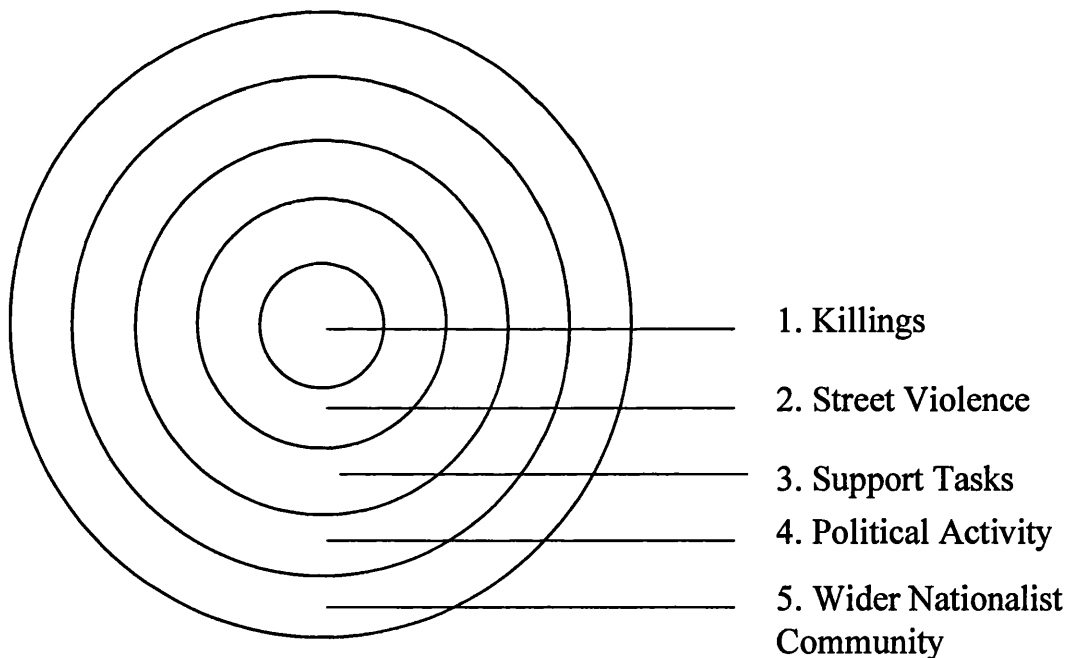
[320] See Mata (1993: 335-337) and Dominguez (200: 278).

Thus, MLNV was a complex array of organisations dependent on ETA's activity. ETA was the organisation that dedicated most effort and resources to the armed struggle.[321] It was also the main force behind the radical nation-building that gave birth to the MLNV. The MLNV was the embryo of a new nationalist community that would develop into a state. In the same way that war helped shape European nation-states, ETA expected to create a new society and a state of which it was the vanguard. By waging warfare, ETA increased the internal cohesiveness of the collective and constantly defined the enemy: Spain. The rest of the organisations were there to amplify the voice of ETA. ETA was the centre of the network and its activities were the driving force within the movement. The five circles graphically describe the level of involvement and how as it increases the closer one is to ETA. As a summary, we could say that levels 1 and 2 are characterised by high involvement (action); 3 and 4 could be described as moderate or occasional involvement (infrastructure, funding, etc); and finally, level 5 can be described as low involvement (or occasional sympathy). The associated risks also increase: being arrested, having one's home searched and, ultimately, death. Paradoxically, all these organisations were all too dependent on ETA because without ETA's violence it would be very difficult for radical Basque nationalism to put together such a vast number of organisations. In the following pages, we will analyse some of the organisations in more detail. This organisational analysis will be a detour from our general argument but necessary to understand the complexities of the discourse of Basque radical nationalism.

6.2.1. ETA and KAS

Between 1977 and 1978 ETA acknowledged that military victory over Spain was impossible. The spiral of action-repression-action had allowed ETA to create a significant level of support in Basque society by partially de-legitimising the state. However, it also carried the military aspect to a stalemate. Victims on both sides were replaced by new security forces and new *etarras* who came to replace the fallen. Hence, in 1978 ETA adopted a strategy based on political negotiation. In this new stage, ETA believed that the continuing violence could push the state to the negotiation table (which would be

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[321] Although it is difficult to know how many ETA members there are, we could assume there is a hard-core nucleus of between 50 and 100. An estimate was given by Benegas (1984: 158) who argued ETA has somewhere between 50 and 60 people organised in commando groups.

accompanied by a truce). However, the kind of violence had to be slightly different. Whereas during the previous period a high number of violent actions were necessary to eliminate the enemy, in the negotiation phase selective symbolic violence was essential. Hence, after 1980 when the Statute of Autonomy and the first Basque elections had been held, a decline in the level of violence can be observed (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 ETA Killings (1968-2003)
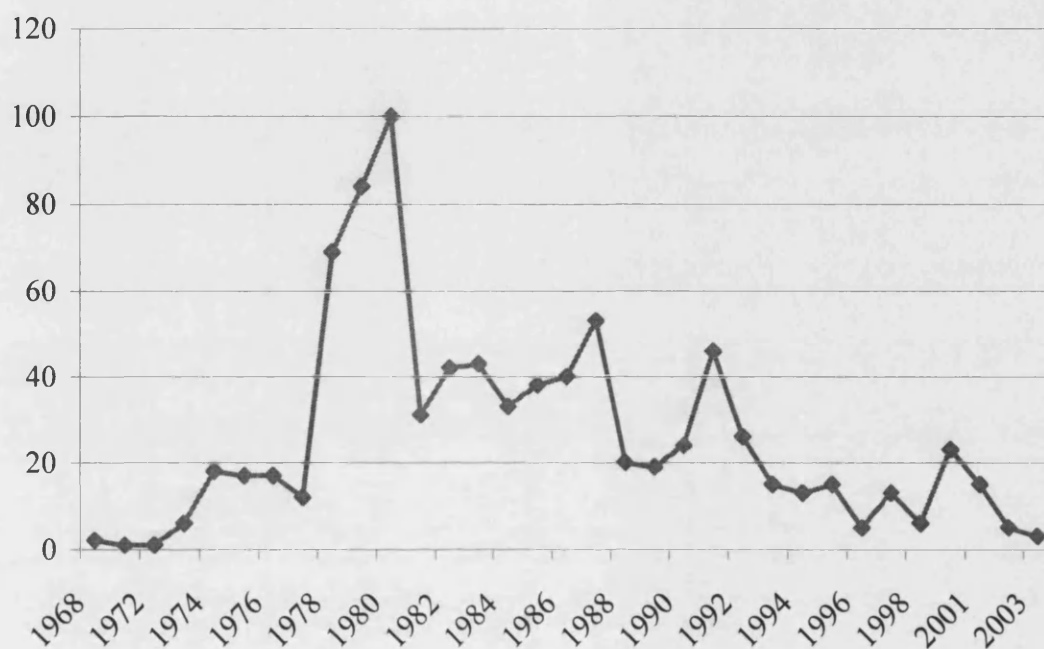
Source: A.V.M. (1999)

In the new ETA strategy, the Socialist Patriotic Coordinating Committee, KAS (*Koordinadora Abertzale Sozialista*) was to be of crucial importance. KAS coordinated the areas of culture, the masses and politics and left military strategy to ETA. Established in September 1975 to co-ordinate nationalist activities against the court martial of two ETA members (Txiki and Otaegi), who were to be executed, the organisation evolved a year later to become the top decision-making organisation of the MLNV. The main goal of KAS was 'to secure a Basque socialist state, independent, reunified and Basque-speaking (*euskaldún*)'.[322] In 1975, KAS coordinated the activities of ETA-PM, ETA-M, the political parties EHAS (Basque Popular Socialist Party) and LAIA (Patriotic Revolutionary Workers

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[322] Jarrai (1984: 19).

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Party), and the trade unions LAK (Patriotic Workers Committee) and LAB (Patriotic Workers Council). From 1976 to 1980, the composition of KAS changed slightly.[323] Its final composition was to be of the armed group ETA, the popular collective ASK, LAIA and HASI (formerly EHAS), LAB and the youth group (Jarrai). One more addition, the women's organisation Egizan, joined KAS in 1988. KAS was to be an especially relevant organisation between 1977 and 1998, when it was finally declared illegal by Spanish courts for its links to ETA.[324] During these twenty years, KAS was an organisation of political and military character.

KAS laid down the necessary conditions for ETA to stop its actions in July 1976 in what came to be known as *Alternativa KAS*.[325] According to one of its leaders, Argala:

> The KAS alternative constitutes the essential base to discuss the normalization of the situation in Euskadi and to think of a less violent way to continue the political process towards the constitution of an independent Euskadi, socialist, reunified and Basque-speaking. Until the goals of the KAS alternative are fulfilled, the Basque people will be tied up, the institutional routes will be of no use for them, and the armed struggle will be pursued.[326]

In the changing political situation of the transition, some of the demands that were being made in 1976 became irrelevant and the *Alternativa KAS* was brought up to date on 30 January 1978. Hence, the *Alternativa KAS* was left with only five points:

1. Amnesty for all Basque political prisoners.
2. Legalisation of all political parties.
3. Withdrawal from the Basque Country of the Spanish Security Forces.
4. Improvement of social conditions of the workers and masses.
5. Approval of a Statute of Autonomy that recognises the right to self-determination, establishes Euskara as the main language, gives the Basque government control of the Army, and allows the Basque people to decide its own future.

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[323] In 1977 ETA-PM abandoned KAS. The political party EIA also joined KAS but left to found the party Euzkadiko Ezkerra (EE). LAB also left the organisation in 1977 but came back in 1980. Finally, LAK and LAIA disappeared as organisations in 1980. See Ibarra (1989: 111).

[324] KAS was declared illegal by Judge Baltasar Garzón on 20 November 1998 for being an integral part of ETA.

[325] Originally, the Alternativa KAS had seven points. These were: (1) Establishment of Democratic Freedoms; (2) Total Amnesty; (3) Improvement of Workers' Living Conditions; (4) Substitution of Spanish security forces by a Basque Police; (5) Recognition of the right to self-determination of the Basque Country; (6) Approval of a Basque Statute of Autonomy for Araba, Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia and Nafarroa; (7) Approval of a Basque Constitution. See Herri Batasuna (1999: 28).

[326] Egaña (1996: 37).

The goals of KAS, renamed the *KAS Bloque Dirigente* in 1983, were the goals of ETA as they laid down the conditions to stop the armed struggle.[327] Hence, the only solution to the so-called 'Basque problem' was the adoption of the KAS Alternative, which would end in a political negotiation between ETA and the Spanish government.[328] The resulting situation, and the only one ETA would accept, would be one in which Spain withdrew all its security forces from Basque lands and guaranteed the right to self-determination, hence opening the door to a secessionist process. For the Spanish state, this meant acknowledging its incomplete legitimacy and sovereignty over the Basque lands and accepting the representative nature of ETA. For ETA, being recognised as a representative political force with which one had to negotiate was a pre-requisite to obtaining its goals. As Pedro Ibarra has pointed out,

> at the time when the state enters a dialogue with ETA over political issues, it would acknowledge the sharing [with ETA] of what characterizes a state: the legal use of violence which, until that point in time, it had in exclusivity. Hence, ETA, whether it believes or acts as a state, would become, to a certain extent, a state.[329]

Since both parties claim exclusive sovereignty to the same piece of land, it is no exaggeration to say that both positions were maximalist and consequently irreconcilable. However, radical Basque nationalists saw the negotiated political settlement to the Basque conflict as inevitable.

6.2.2. Herri Batasuna

Although not an integral part of KAS, the political coalition Herri Batasuna (Popular Unity) also believed the KAS Alternative was the best and only means to settle the problem of violence in the Basque Country. The tactical goal of Herri Batasuna was to establish a political agreement between the Spanish Basque Country (*Hego Euskal Herria*) and Spain to ground the political sovereignty of the Basques. Needless to say, from Herri Batasuna's perspective, the Basque problem was the 'political conflict' between the Basques and

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[327] The 1983 *Ponencia de KAS* was first published in Zutabe 1983, no. 35, pp. 2-14.
[328] Hausnartzen II, p. 33.
[329] Ibarra (1989: 103).

Spain. Violence or terrorism was seen as an expression of the political conflict but certainly not as the conflict itself. As one of the internal documents of Herri Batasuna stated:

> Euskal Herria was deprived of all its political rights by force, and being confronted by such dispossession, our nation has defended its rights and organised its self-defense, combining different forms of struggle, for the last 150 years.
> This constant clash with the Spanish state has generated a movement of resistance which has had a progressive evolution in terms of political consciousness and other internal and external factors. Hence, the methods of this struggle, its contents and its formulations have evolved.
> And it is precisely in this last phase of the liberation process that ETA has become an essential reference.[330]

Hence, the activity of Herri Batasuna was already subordinated to the armed struggle from the very beginning, since Herri Batasuna's main priority was to 'add new forces around the MLNV in order to facilitate the Agreement between ETA and the real powers'.[331] Herri Batasuna was not born with concrete aims, other than to carry out the national liberation through political means. Established in the late 1970s, Herri Batasuna quickly became one of the fundamental organisations of the MLNV, as it advocated independence and revolutionary change in the Basque lands. However, the more revolutionary or socialist elements of its programme remained largely unexplored (Rincon 1985: 98). The level of support for Herri Batasuna was interpreted by the press, opinion-makers and academics as support and/or sympathy for ETA.[332] Several of the candidates of Herri Batasuna came from ETA and, on some occasions, there was a dual membership of the two organisations.[333] Hence, Herri Batasuna was widely regarded as the 'political arm' of ETA. In December 1997, the political coalition was accused by judge Baltasar Garzón of 'collaboration with an armed group' and the 23 members of its National Board (*Mesa Nacional*) were imprisoned. In its ruling, the Court stated that Herri Batasuna had been showing an ETA-made video in its rallies featuring three hooded men, sitting at a table on

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[330] Herri Batasuna (1991) *Urrats Berri. 2° Documento Base. Batasunean gorantz. Hacia un proyecto común de los abertzales y de izquierda*, p. 25.
[331] Hausnartzen. *Caracterización y Organización de Herri Batasuna*, p. 7.
[332] See for example Llera, Mata & Irvin (1993).
[333] Herri Batasuna chose candidates who were still in prison. In the 1979, 1982, 1986 and 1989 *Cortes* elections, HB included ETA members in its list. In the 1980 Basque elections, it included another two ETA members who were in prison and in 1986 the HB candidate to the Basque presidency (*lehendakaritza*) was the ETA member Juan Carlos Yoldi, at the time imprisoned in the prison of Herrera de la Mancha. See Sumario 35/02 Y 26-8-2002.

which they had placed their guns, as they set out ETA's conditions for peace negotiations and a cease-fire.[334]

The history of Herri Batasuna during the 1980s can be divided into three stages. The first covers its establishment as an electoral coalition in the years 1978-1980, the second its consolidation as a movement of 'popular unity' from 1982 to 1987 and, finally, the third the restructuring the party underwent from 1988 to 1994 when it established a tactical alliance with the other popular organisations to create the KAS Alternative.[335] The first stage began with the founding of Herri Batasuna on 27 April 1978 in the Navarrese town of Alsasua. The political party was a coalition of political parties (ANV, ESB, HASI and LAIA)[336] that had been meeting in Alsasua for the previous six months, discussing how to approach collectively the first municipal elections and how to oppose 'the establishment in Euskadi South of a transitory regime that supposes *a priori* the segregation of Navarre'.[337] Among the parties that formed Herri Batasuna it is worth emphasising *Acción Nacionalista Vasca* (ANV), which had been active during the 1930s and was a pioneer organisation in fusing nationalism and socialism. The coalition also had the support of a series of charismatic individuals of the 'abertzale left' such as Jon Idígoras, Francisco Letamendía, Patxi Zabaleta and Telésforo Monzón, former minister of the Basque Autonomous Government in 1937.[338] From this very first stage in the history of Herri Batasuna it is worth remembering the hostility of the so-called *abertzales* to the King in 1981.[339] The monarch attended the Casa de Juntas de Gernika on 4 February 1981 and the 19 members of Herri Batasuna interrupted the speech Juan Carlos I was giving by singing the nationalist hymn of the 1930s, *Eusko Gudariak*, after which they were expelled from the chamber. The protest outraged both Basque and Spanish public opinion and showed the anti-system

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[334] Amnesty International Annual Report 1998.

[335] Hausnartzen III, p. 28 and Herri Batasuna 1999: 6-7

[336] The parties were Herriko Alderdi Socialista Iraultzailea (HASI), Langile Abertzale Iraultzaileen Alderdia (LAIA), Euskal Sozialista Biltzarrea (ESB), Acción Nacionalista Vasca (ANV) and Euskal Iraultzarako Alderdia (EIA). Their leaders were Txomin Ziluaga (HASI), (LAIA), Iñaki Aldekoa (ESB) and (EIA).

[337] Hausnartzen III, p. 4.

[338] The Junta de Apoyo was made of twelve individuals who represented each of the Basque Provinces under Spanish sovereignty. Their names were Xabier Añua, Xabier Palacios, Xabier Sanchez Erauskin (Araba); Jon Idigoras, Jose Anjel Iribar and Francisco Letamendía 'Ortzi' (Biscay); José Luis Elkoro, Jokin Gorostidi and Telesforo Monzón (Gipuzkoa) and José María Aguado, Josu Goya and Patxi Zabaleta (Navarre). HB, 20 años de lucha: 64. Information on Telesforo Monzón in Herri Batasuna (1999: 129-132).

[339] See Powell (1996: 166).

character of Herri Batasuna. The parliamentarians also showed their tactical intransigence by refusing to occupy their seats in the Spanish and Basque Parliament.

In a second phase (1982-1987), Herri Batasuna became the main political party of the 'patriotic left' (*izquierda abertzale*). This period started with an evolution from electoral coalition to 'popular unity' that reflected 'the alliance between the working class and the popular sectors'.[340] Its ideology was clearly radical nationalist, since it understood ETA as the expression of Spanish and French oppression and not the root of the Basque problem itself. Clearly separatist, Herri Batasuna also had strong socialist components. The socialist element was also present both in its discourse and iconography but it remains largely unexplored. Hence, its main characteristic was its hostility to the political system. Herri Batasuna rejected Spanish institutions and advocated the creation of a Basque state. Juan Linz has defined Herri Batasuna as 'the most revolutionary political party of the Spanish political spectrum'.[341] During these years, Herri Batasuna consolidated its image with the approval of a logo that was to represent the character of the party. Hence, Herri Batasuna adopted a logo based on the Basque flag, the *ikurriña*, using the colours of the rainbow, each colour representing the different struggles in the Basque lands: red for the workers, purple for women, yellow for the antimilitarists, green for the environmentalists, white for peace, etc.[342] Herri Batasuna also began opening its own bars, Herriko Tabernas, in the 1980s; nowadays they have proliferated into the hundreds.[343]

It is also during the second period of Herri Batasuna that some of its biggest successes came about. After a long debate on whether to participate in or reject the Spanish political system,[344] Herri Batasuna first participated in the General Elections of 1979. Herri Batasuna obtained 149,685 votes and elected three deputies to the lower chamber (or Congress) of the Spanish Parliament. It was the fourth largest Basque political force, with 15% of the electorate. In the following years it obtained similar results, eventually becoming the third largest Basque political force during the 1980s. In general, Herri Batasuna got an average of between 15 and 20% of the vote of the Basque electorate,

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[340] Hausnartzen. Caracterización y Organización de Herri Batasuna, p. 5.
[341] Linz (1986: 598).
[342] Herri Batasuna (1999: 18).
[343] Herri Batasuna (1999: 68).
[344] See an account of the debate see Irvin (1999: 106-120).

depending on the election.[345] Its biggest success came in the 1989 European elections when it received 225,000 votes (20% of the electorate), making it the largest political force in the Basque Country. Herri Batasuna's main successes came in the elections that were traditionally considered by the electorate as unimportant: the European elections and the elections to the provincial Parliament (*Juntas Generales*). In the Basque municipal elections support for Herri Batasuna grew with each election and in 1987 it became the second political force in the Basque Country with 206,000 votes.

Shortly after the 1979 general elections, Irvin states says that 'Herri Batasuna announced that its delegates would refuse to occupy their seats in the Spanish parliament. It was now certain that Herri Batasuna would use the electoral process primarily as a mechanism for demonstrating a high level of voter discontent in the Basque Provinces and to denounce the existing political system'.[346] Herri Batasuna's problem had been its dependency on ETA. In a way, ETA was its best friend but also its worst enemy. Herri Batasuna got the votes of all those who supported ETA. However, when ETA committed an error, it was Herri Batasuna that would pay at the ballot box. This happened in July 1987 when ETA bombed a supermarket in a poor district in Barcelona. The bomb was set off in the car park, killing 21 people, two of them children, and injuring 42.

According to Irvin, the Herri Batasuna voters were 'predominantly under forty-five, male, and working class'.[347] Among them though we find a high percentage of the self-employed, workers, pensioners, housewives and the unemployed (Núñez 1980: 114-117). On the other hand, the PNV voter was much older, predominantly female, and with a higher socio-economic status. In terms of education, the voters of Herri Batasuna also had a lower level of qualifications. As Table 7 below shows, the Herri Batasuna voters are predominantly male, in clear contrast to the PNV voters (60%). Regarding age, the differences between the two parties are considerable. The radical party attracted a much younger electorate. Of those aged between 18-24, up to 28% supported Herri Batasuna whereas the PNV only managed to attract 5% of this age group. Finally, the self-identification of social class also showed interesting differences between Herri Batasuna and the PNV. Whereas up to 59%

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[345] All the electorate data used has been provided by the Basque Government (www.euskadi.net).
[346] Irvin (1999: 120).
[347] Irvin (1999: 125).

of PNV voters defined themselves as working class, for Herri Batasuna that number rose to 73%.

Political Parties Characteristics	HB (N=197)	PNV (N= 455)
Table 7: Social Background of Basque Nationalist Voters: HB and PNV		
Gender		
Female	41%	60%
Male	59%	40%
Age		
18-24	28%	5%
25-34	27%	14%
35-44	17%	23%
45-54	14%	23%
55+	14%	35%
Social Class		
Upper, Upper Middle Class	6	9
Middle Class-Low Middle Class	20	27
Working Class	73	59
Don't know	1	1

Source: Linz (1986: 575-576)

6.2.3. LAB, HASI and Jarrai

In order to fully understand ETA's radical nation-building during the 1980s we need to look briefly at three more organisations: the trade union LAB, the political party HASI, and the youth organisation Jarrai. Each of these organisations fulfilled a function, representing particular social clusters of society. LAB provided the MLVN with the necessary working class support. ETA often uses the term Basque Working People (*Pueblo Trabajador Vasco*) but the Marxist and/or Leninist character of ETA is underdeveloped. In a similar way, the incorporation of the younger sectors of society added legitimacy to its claims of representativeness and provided the movement with new recruits.

The Patriotic Workers Committee (*Langile Abertaleen Batzordea* - LAB) is the radical nationalist trade union. Initially it was defined as a 'mass organisation' because traditional

trade unions are directly linked to political parties. LAB does not want to link itself to Herri Batasuna, for example, but to the national movement for national liberation. Hence, its ideology is clearly separatist, anti-bourgeoisie and anti-Spanish. Its main aim is to reconcile the worker's struggle with the national one.[348] For LAB, the socio-economic problems of the Basque working class cannot be separated from the political reality outside the factory and 'integral work' is necessary (Mojuelo 2000: 61).

LAB has traditionally supported the worker's assembly as an organisational mode for the workers' struggle and the building of a Basque unitary trade union that represents the Basque working people. Due to its involvement in the MLNV it kept its distance from other trade unions. Hence, it accused the trade unions CCOO and UGT, which are present all over Spain, of being accomplices of the Spanish repression and the Basque nationalist ELA of having close ties with the Basque bourgeoisie through its historical links with the PNV.[349] Another difference between ELA and LAB, is their opposing views on ETA's violence. Although ELA is clearly a Basque nationalist trade union, it rejects violence, whereas LAB clearly agrees with the separatist goals and violent means of ETA.

In order to understand LAB we need to frame it in the network of organisations of the MLNV. In fact, the origin of the organisation was ETA's Workers Front, created in 1963.[350] Officially born in 1974, the trade union debated during its first and second congress whether or not to remain in KAS. Finally, the organisation decided to remain within KAS:

> As part of the Bloque KAS, the trade union LAB assumes and defends the tactical and strategic goals outlined in the five points of the Tactical Alternative and the strategy that pursues an Euskadi, Basque-speaking, reunified, independent and socialist. As an organisation, LAB also belongs to the Bloque KAS, and so assumes all forms of struggle of which the nation has provided itself, completely legitimate against the violent and repressive apparatus the state has organised against the MVLN (...) LAB is, then, an independent organisation in the organisational sense, but linked to the decisions of the Bloque KAS.[351]

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[348] See the Principios Fundamentales of LAB in Mojuelo (2000: 48).
[349] ELA had been founded by the PNV in 1911.
[350] Majuelo (2000: 13).
[351] Introducción LAB, no page provided.

For most of the 1970s, LAB remained a minor trade union. However, LAB's great moment arrived in the late 1970s and early 1980s when the full impact of the Pacts of the Moncloa and the government's rationalisation of Spanish industry (*reconversión industrial*) was felt. The confrontational tactics LAB defended could be applied at a time when heavy industry, the motor of the Basque economy, was in danger. The restructuring affected the main Spanish industrial sectors (shipbuilding, iron and steel, automobile manufacture, mining and textiles) in order to introduce increasing competitiveness in industrial sectors and prepare them for the European single market. In the Basque Country, the *reconversión industrial* mainly affected the province of Biscay. Since the late 1970s, many companies had filed statements of financial difficulties, hoping to cut down on the workforce and fixed costs. Hence, in 1977, 648 Basque companies filed statements, a number which rose to 1353 in 1978, 2195 in 1979 and 2175 in 1980. In 1981 the number of statements started to decline (1823) but it was that year that two of the most emblematic Basque companies, Altos Hornos de Vizcaya and the shipyard Astilleros Euskalduna, presented their statements, finally disappearing in 1984 (Mojuelo 2000: 100-105). Emilio Mojuelo generously estimates that between 1973 and 1985 up to 170,000 jobs were lost in the Basque industrial sector. During the 1980s there was high social conflict and the income per capita declined as unemployment rose. These measures favoured LAB, which remained the fourth largest trade union in the Basque lands for most of the 1980s. [352] Nowadays, LAB is the third largest Basque trade union with 27,000 members, 15% of the Basque workforce (Majuelo 2000: 8). Most of its affiliates come from the province of Gipuzkoa and, to a lesser extent, from Bizkaia, Araba and Navarre.

The Popular Revolutionary Party (HASI) was a political party established in July 1977. It was part of KAS and an integral part of Herri Batasuna. It was finally dissolved in 1992 when its members were integrated into either KAS or HB. HASI was the political core of Herri Batasuna. The objectives of HASI were identical to those of ETA:

> HASI has the firm will to be a political party for the working class of both Euskadi North and South, and we are conscious of the difficulties of such a project. For that reason our organisational strategy, our ideology, strategy and tactics seek a total

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[352] The three main trade unions were Euzko Langilleen Alkartasuna-Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos ELA-STV, the nationalist trade union founded by the PNV in 1911; the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT); and Comisiones Obreras (CCOO). See Unanue (2002: 84).

identification of the goals of class and party. If we achieve it, we will have consolidated the revolutionary process, capable of building a new society. HASI has been born growing hopes and continues uniting groups, because we know that real force results from unity. [353]

HASI was the core of Herri Batasuna but lost its power during the 1980s. The dispute between HASI and ETA over the control of KAS, and the defeat of HASI in this respect, clearly showed the pre-eminence of the military aspect over the political. In 1987, HASI was celebrating its annual congress which was supposed to re-elect the then secretary general Txomin Ziluaga when a individual, most probably Josu Muguruza, came into the Congress on the last day to communicate ETA's disagreement over the re-election. Ziluage was not elected secretary general and in the following year, 1988, many members of HASI were expelled and those who remained re-integrated into KAS. HASI finally disappeared after its fourth and final congress in 1992.

Finally, Jarrai is the youth organisation of KAS and the MLNV. It is a crucial organisation to an understanding of the reproduction of radical Basque nationalism, since it is often the entry point for many future leaders of the movement. Its importance increased in the 1990s when Jarrai was the main actor in what came to be known as the street fight (*kale borroka*). Jarrai was established in 1979 in Leioa (Biscay) and defined itself as,

> a youth political organisation which considers that the Basque youth, on top of the problems it already has as such, belong to an oppressed and occupied nation, Euskal Herria; and we are also part of the popular sections of society which, lead by the Basque working class, are called to change the current situation until we eliminate this oppression.[354]

During the early 1980s the group debated central issues for Basque youth such as the refusal to do military service (*insumisión*), youth unemployment and drugs. Jarrai was also instrumental in mobilising the Basque youth around the squatter movement (*okupa*) and what came to be known as Basque radical rock (*Rock Radical Vasco*).[355] As elsewhere in Europe, during the 1980s single issues such as ecology or anti-militarism became very important. In the Basque lands there were two events that generated much interest. These

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[353] Rincón (1985: 62).
[354] Jarrai (1986: 5).
[355] See Blasco (1987).

were opposition against Spain joining NATO and compulsory military service. In one of the most polemical referenda ever held in Spain, in 1986 the Socialist party PSOE won the referendum on NATO membership. Herri Batasuna had opposed it. Regarding military service, as has already been mentioned, the organisation that became most active was Jarrai. Another issue in which Jarrai was very active was environmentalism. [356] It shared many interests with other organisations of the MLNV, such as the environmentalist group Eguzki, which were very active against the plans to build a nuclear power station in Lemoniz (Bizkaia). The plant was being built by the energy company Iberduero with the consent of the government's Ministry of Energy and Industry. The acts of protest against Lemoniz in the early 1980s included both popular demonstrations, rallies and refusals to pay electricity bills. ETA sabotaged the building works in 246 separate actions, killing five people. In February 1981, ETA kidnapped and killed the head-engineer of the Lemoniz plant José María Ryan, and the following year, it killed Angel Pascual, the Lemoniz project leader.[357] Given the high financial costs of the sabotage (almost 12.5 million euros) and the intimidation by ETA of all the workers, the government decided to drop the project in 1982, so 'reaffirming the sovereignty of Euskadi against the nuclear and centralist Spanish state'.[358] Another environmentalist campaign in which the MLNV and Jarrai were very active was the construction of the Leizaran highway. The acts of sabotage numbered 158 but the human costs were not so dramatic. The project was redrawn in order to minimise the environmental impact under pressure of the MLNV.[359] Both Lemoniz and Leizaran became two of the great victories of the MLNV during the1980s. The positive results from the use of force legitimised both ETA and the organisations of the MLVN.

6.3. A Discourse Analysis of the Radical Nationalist Community

The following section will analyse the way in which ETA and the whole MLNV has justified the use of violence. According to the historical leader of HB, Telesforo Monzon, the logic of violence was simple: 'It is not ETA that has bred violence. It is violence that

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[356] Barcena, Ibarra & Zubiaga (1997).

[357] Zutabe 1982, no. 31, p. 12-13.

[358] Domínguez (2000: 307-308). Barcena, Ibarra & Zubiaga (1997: 306) also point out that the convergence of the anti-nuclear question with the nationalist discourse could be read into the slogan chosen by the Basque ecology movement: 'Euskadi ala Lemoiz' (Euskadi or Lemoiz).

[359] Herri Batasuna (1999: 237).

has bred ETA'.[360] Hence, it was the occupation and oppression of the Basque nation by foreign Spanish armed forces which triggered the movement of defence led by ETA.[361] This discourse is now analysed in detail.

6.3.1. The Nationalist Triad

Given the variety of organisations, it is difficult to identify a clear and continuing MLNV discourse. However, a few key elements of the MLVN's discourse and strategy have already been identified by the Basque political scientist, José Manuel Mata López. First of all, Mata Lopez points out that the nationalist element within the MLNV is predominant, since it is also its political programme for independence, a necessary condition for the freedom of the Basque people. Secondly, the socialist elements are secondary since they periodically change and are used to support the nationalist demands. Finally, he emphasises the anti-system character of the movement and the emphasis on collective political action (Mata López 1993: 332-335)

However, Mata López cannot explain why people continue to support ETA. The argument that needs to be put forward is that ETA is an organisation which presents itself as a continuation of a long tradition of Basque patriots who gave their lives for the independence of the Basque Country. In an interpretation of history that can be described, with no exaggeration, as extreme perennialism, ETA is the latest organisation in the long fight, primarily against Spain but also against France. Political scientists and historians often ignore the fact that the discourse and the strategy of a particular group is shaped by nationalist mythology.

The discourse of radical Basque nationalism can be described into three sections. First of all, there is its more mythical aspect: its nostalgic approach to the Basque Golden Age. All the elements that make the Basque lands somewhat 'different' are re-invented and remembered in order to give legitimacy to the cause. It is only by invasion that the Spaniards destroyed the idyllic past of the Basques. Secondly, the same kind of argument is used to analyse the present state of Basques. At this point, Spanish democracy is not

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[360] Telesforo Monzón (1995: 56).
[361] Zutabe 1981, no. 32, p. 4.

defined as such but as an authoritarian regime with a democratic façade. Finally, this nationalism proposes a political programme for the future that is supposed to redeem the nationalist community. Those who are not nationalists, and therefore not truly Basques, have no place in the new Basque socialist state, reunified and Basque-speaking. This discourse and the way it mobilises people is not a characteristic exclusive to Basque nationalism. As Levinger and Franklin Lytle (2001) have consistently argued, elements of 'the triadic structure of nationalist rhetoric' can be found in several nationalisms such as the Italian, Bulgarian, Algerian, French, Croatian and German. In their own words, virtually all rhetoric of national mobilisation contains three juxtaposed elements:

1. The glorious past. The original nation once existed as a pure, unified and harmonious community.
2. The degraded present. The shattering of this corporate unity through some agency or traumatic series of events undermined the integrity of the national community. A key dimension of this rhetoric is the identification of the sources of the nation's decay.
3. The utopian future. Through collective action, the nation will reverse the conditions that have caused its present degradation and recover its original harmonious essence (Levinger & Franklin Lytle 2001: 178).

These three elements are framed within a series of binary oppositions, contrasting the vision of an ideal past or future with the degraded present. The project of national rebirth represents an inversion of the existing disordered condition and a reconstitution of the ideal community. Radical Basque nationalism also follows a similar structure.

6.3.1.1. The Basque Golden Age

The use of the past by nationalist movements is of interest to most scholars of nationalism. The dispute lies in whether that past has been 'invented' or whether it is based on pre-existing myths and memories. Nevertheless, there is an overall agreement in the field that nationalism can be described as a 'Janus-faced' phenomenon; meaning that, like the Roman god, it looks both at the past and to the future (Nairn 1977). In the Basque Country, the myth of the Golden Age remains one of the most powerful mobilised by nationalists. As

described in chapter 2, the Basque Golden Age was a period in time when Basques were an independent nation with their own political, religious and social characteristics and proudly defended their boundaries from any invader. This defensive attitude of the ancestor and the historical images of Basque warfare were glorified by Sabino Arana. Radical Basque nationalism takes the Aranist interpretation of the Basque Golden Age and makes a further twist. For the supporters of ETA, the fighting character of the Basques is an integral part of the Golden Age. As Telesforo Monzón, one of the ideologues of Herri Batasuna, pointed out:

> The war has arrived. A long war which has not ended and that I call the war of the 150 years: the time of Zumalakarregi and the first war; of Santa Cruz and the second [war]; the time of Agirre and the Basque Government. And the time of ETA with Txikia and Argala.[362]

Hence, for radical Basque nationalists, the Golden Age has two components, which are intrinsically linked. For them, in the Golden Age the Basque nation was: (1) eternally independent because; (2) Basques fought to defend it. Basque radical nationalists go as far back as pre-history to argue that Basques have genetically distinct characteristics and that Euskara is the sign of that pre-Indo-European culture.

A few examples can be mentioned here in order to illustrate the importance of the Basque Golden Age. In the 1984 Training Notebook from Jarrai, the organisation explains how the Basque Country was an independent entity in the Middle Ages.[363] Two years later, in 1986, Jarrai argued that the 'Basques are also an ancient people who have fought since the sixth century'.[364] This emphasis on the national past and the importance of constantly remembering it in order to build the nation also found its expression in events with massive attendances. In 1976 the *abertzale* city council of Bergara (Gipuzkoa) organised an act to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the approval of the *Ley de abolición de los Fueros* of 21 July 1876 by which the Basque *fueros* were abolished. The act was attended by 69 representatives of other city councils and representatives of the more moderate

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[362] Monzón, Telesforo, Interview in *Punto y Hora de Euskal Herria*, 14-6-1979. Quoted in Herri Batasuna (1999: 426). The original says: Y viene la Guerra. Una larga guerra que no se ha terminado y que yo llamo la guerra de los 150 años: la época de Zumalakarregi; y la primera guerra: la de Sta. Cruz y la segunda: la de Agirre y del Gobierno Vasco. La de ETA y Txikia y Argala.
[363] Jarrai (1984: 18).
[364] Jarrai (1986: 8).

nationalism such as the future lehendakari, Carlos Garaikoetxea, the leader of the PNV, Xabier Arzalluz, and the widow of the lehendakari Jose Antonio Agirre, Mari Zabala.[365] Two years later, on 15 August of 1978 the *Arbasoen Eguna* (Day of the Ancestors) was held in Orreaga to commemorate the 1200th anniversary of the Battle of Roncesvalles in which the Basques had beaten the forces of Charlemagne. According to an observer, the rally was mainly attended by young people and the act had been organised by the *abertzale* left.[366] Finally, after the elections to the Basque parliament in 1980, the members of Herri Batasuna who won electoral representation swore on the unity of the Basque nation (Euskal Herria), in Leire (Navarre), where the 'Basque Kings' (*Reyes de Vasconia*) were buried.[367] The importance of the Kingdom of Navarre for nationalist purposes has been large. For nationalists, it is the first Basque state and they constantly refer to it. For example, the clubs of Herri Batasuna, the Herriko Tabernas, have as their logo the Black Eagle (*Arrano Beltza*), symbol of this 'Basque Kingdom'.[368]

Given the capacity of radical nationalists to remember, or should we say imagine, in the Andersonian way, the national past, it does not come as a surprise that Jarrai also interprets the dynastic disputes of the 19th century, the Carlist Wars, as wars of national liberation, thus following the trend initiated by Joseph Agustin Chaho. What is more surprising is that the Spanish Civil War is not understood as such but rather as the Third Carlist War.[369] The Basque autonomous government during the Civil War is also remembered as another example of the Basque's will to be independent. As the Herri Batasuna leader, Telesforo Monzón put it, 'in 1936 there was a Basque sovereign state that lasted nine months'.[370]

Of all the 'historical truths' the patriotic left uses, the most important is the Basque resistance of ETA against Francoism. As has already been mentioned, during Francoism ETA had a lot of symbolic legitimacy as many sections of Basque and even Spanish society supported its actions against the dictatorship. It was the anti-fascist and anti-authoritatian character of ETA that attracted much support. In the period of democracy ETA has made sure that this character is emphasised over and over again in order to gain support for the

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[365] Herri Batasuna (1999: 26-27).
[366] Zubillaga (1978: 81).
[367] Herri Batasuna (1999: 104).
[368] Herri Batasuna (1999: 59).
[369] Jarrai (1986: 12).
[370] Herri Batasuna (1999: 426).

organisation's goals. Luciano Rincón argued that ETA's memory of Francoism was profoundly nostalgic (Rincón 1985: 189). During the dictatorship, ETA was the voice of all Basques. After that time, it never gained the same levels of support and legitimacy. The most important part of Basque radical nationalism discourse the 1980s emphasised the most authoritarian and reactionary elements of Spain in order to justify the existence of an armed group in a parliamentarian democracy.

6.3.1.2. Myth of Decline

ETA built a discourse based on revealing the 'true character' of Spain and condemning the treatment of their radical nationalist community. However, this community was not described as such, but rather as 'Basque', thus trying to revive the Aranist dichotomy between Spain and the Basque Country. Hence, the most important point was to denounce the Spain as not a proper democracy but as a continuation of Francoism. A series of elements could be identified here:

(1) *The Parliamentarian Monarchy is not democratic.* The argument put forward here is that the monarch is not equal to other citizens and that Juan Carlos I is the heir of Francoism. The nomination of the King by Franco and the fact that the transition was made by consensus, highlights the dialogue and the tactical pact with the previous regime. The political system that resulted from the Constitution is also non-democratic because it was rejected by Basques.

(2) *Democracy as a continuation of Francoism.* Since the Basques were not free under Francoism and do not have their own state under the democracy, there is nothing to distinguish between the two regimes. As an ETA member declared in an interview with *Le Monde*, the Spanish regime has changed after Franco in its 'form' but not in its 'real nature'.[371] Political changes should not confuse Basque nationalists, who should focus on the core of the problem: the state of the Basque nation. Since both systems would be ready to defend the unity of Spain by military

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[371] In Zutabe 1983, no. 33, p. 58.

force, radical nationalists often use inverted commas to refer to Spain as a 'democracy' or a 'parliamentarian democracy'.[372]

(3) *Anti-Basque character of Spain.* Here, two elements are worth emphasising. The first is the idea that there are individuals and groups who are not interested in the recognition of the rights of Basques. The first group comprises what are described as 'real powers', among them the Church, the Army and the more reactionary sections of the Spanish state.[373] The second group is the mass media. The media is not to be trusted as it constantly manipulates the Basque reality.[374] Hence, journalists become legitimate targets as they torture 'psychologically' and 'politically' the Basque people.[375]

6.3.1.3. Political Project for the Future

The political analysis of ETA continues to be highly influenced by the writings of Sabino Arana and, in consequence, the remedies do not differ from those of the 'Master'. The Basque lands continue to be invaded by foreign forces and the Basques need to free themselves. The state of Autonomies and the statute given to the Basques is clearly insufficient and a new political arrangement is required. The first concern here is the fact that the Basque Country and Navarre should be reunited. In a second stage, the reunification of the Basques would have to incorporate the French Basque Country, also known as Iparralde.

And what is needed to realise that political project? Now, as always, the Basques need to fight for their rights, if necessary using violent means. As one of Herri Batasuna's campaigns during the 1980s described it, Euskadi needs to be cheerful and combative (*Euskadi Alegre y Combativa*). ETA's historical mission is to redeem the Basques from their present decline by all necessary means. Since democracy is nothing more than a façade for an authoritarian regime, there is no reason why ETA should change its tactical use of violence.

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[372] Hausnartzen III: 6; LAB. Resoluciones del III Congreso. p. 11.
[373] Zutabe no. 22, p. 5; LAB. Resoluciones del III Congreso. p. 10.
[374] LAB. Resoluciones del III Congreso. pp. 11 & 15.
[375] ETA, Zuzen, 1980, no. 2, p. 8.

6.3.2. The Issue of Resonance

Any analysis of a nationalist discourse needs to take account of the issue of resonance. Uncovering the historical accuracy of a particular narrative is important for politicians, opinion-makers and those who have a political agenda, but it does not take scholars of nationalism any closer to understanding why nationalists believe in, and die for, the nation. In the Basque case, there is a long list of authors, including people like Aranzadi, Corcuera, Elorza, or Juaristi, who have analysed the 'historical myths' of Basque nationalism. Radical Basque nationalism has undoubtedly re-invented history but so do other nationalist movements. What is of particular interest to us is why a significant section of the population continues to believe in that discourse. Here we take the view that ETA members and supporters are not demented people with a thirst for blood. This is not to say there are not people like that, particularly among those who pull the trigger, but we cannot pretend that 15% of the Basque population is mentally unstable. As has already been mentioned, the central element of Basque radical nationalism is the description of Spanish democracy as an authoritarian system which lacks legitimacy. Although this position is clearly untrue, we will argue that there are two elements that have helped radical nationalists in arguing this. The first one is the accusations of torture; the second is the dirty war against ETA by the paramilitaries of GAL.

Under Franco, torture was standard practice in police stations. During the transition period suspects and political demonstrators were only occasionally maltreated by the police and by 1978 Amnesty International recognised that torture was not used systematically.[376] This picture could not be more different for radical Basque nationalists. In 1978 and 1979 the Spanish government introduced anti-terrorist legislation by which a detainee could be held in a police station, completely incommunicado and without access to family or to a lawyer, for a period of 72 hours.[377] Under the order of a magistrate of the National Court (*Audiencia Nacional*), the period could be extended by a further seven days. Most torture and ill-treatment of Basque detainees in police stations happened during this 10-day period. According to Amnesty International, several ETA members and supporters were tortured, and a few died whilst in custody. The first measure the Spanish government took to avoid

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[376] Amnesty International Report (1978: 232).
[377] Jaime (2002: 237-238).

these allegations was the incorporation in 1984 of *habeas corpus*, or the right to object before a judge on the legality of one's imprisonment, in the anti-terrorist legislation. The legislation was substantially modified in 1988 when the maximum period of detention was again reduced to 72 hours.[378] The measure however did not stop continuing allegations of ill-treatment for people held under anti-terrorist laws during the 1980s. Many of these cases of torture were denied or simply ignored by the Spanish authorities, which often argued that ETA members injured themselves while in custody. Although this might have been true in a few cases, the lack of transparency and investigations into serious allegations of torture showed the disinterest of the state in confronting the issue. One of the best-known cases was that of Mikel Zabalza Gárate, a 32-year-old Basque accused of being an *etarra*. The case of Zabalza exemplified both the lack of determination of Spanish authorities in tackling the problem of torture and the difficulty in ascertaining the truth in cases of torture. Zabalza was arrested on 26 November 1985 and 'his handcuffed body was found on 15 December, floating face-downwards in the Bidasoa river'.[379] The Civil Guards reported he had escaped on the same day of the arrest and the autopsies concluded that the cause of death was asphyxiation by immersion and there were no signs of ill-treatment. Even in 2001, eleven national police officers and three civil guards who had been convicted of torture were included in a mass award of pardons to mark the millennium.[380]

Another well-known case of 'disappearance' was that of ETA members José Antonio Lasa and José Ignacio Zabala. Although they had disappeared in Bayonne in 1983, their bodies were found in Alicante two years later and were finally identified in March 1995. The corpses showed signs of extensive beatings and torture, including loss of finger and toenails, and each skull had bullet holes in the back.[381] These two cases helped to reveal something much more serious than the practice of torture in police stations. The cases of Lasa and Zabala helped uncover the direct involvement of the government in the kidnapping, torture and execution of ETA members. After investigations at the highest judicial level, it came to be known that the Spanish state had funded the organisation called GAL (*Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación* - Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups), which had

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[378] Powell (2001: 493).
[379] International Amnesty Report (1986: 301).
[380] International Amnesty Report (2001).
[381] Amnesty (1996: 279).

killed several ETA members.[382] The clandestine organisation was composed of security officers and contract gunmen and had links with senior government officials, including the former Minister of Interior, José Barrionuevo, and the former Secretary of state Security, Rafael Vera. As a result of the Lasa/Zabala Trial, the former General Enrique Rodríguez Galindo and the former civil governor of Biscay, Julen Elgorriaga, were sentenced to 71 years' imprisonment. The 'dirty war' against ETA claimed 27 deaths between 1983 and 1987, including those of ten people whose connections to ETA were not clear. Most of the incidents occurred in the cities of the French Pays Basque such as Bayonne, Biarritz, Hendaye and St-Jean-de-Luz. However, the GAL also acted in Spain. In 1984, for example, the GAL killed an important Herri Batasuna leader and president of HASI, the pediatrician Santiago Brouard.[383]

The involvement of the government in the activities of GAL one of the darkest pages of Spanish and Basque history. It is also the aspect that has been most easily used by radical Basque nationalists in arguing the authoritarian character of Spain. As Le Monde once pointed out, '*le charisme ne s'hérite pas, les methodes autoritaires, si*'.[384] The 'dirty war' was not only morally wrong but it backfired as it made ETA much stronger, both politically and militarily.[385]

6.4. Conclusion

The chapter started by giving a historical overview of the complex process of the political transition and consolidation of democracy in Spain. It showed how, at the elite level, the process of democratisation was characterised by consensus. It also showed how the perception of the process was very different between the centre and the periphery. In the Basque Provinces, the evolution towards a liberal democracy had a much lower degree of legitimacy and it was seen as a missed opportunity to get things straight, particularly with regard to some sort of recognition of the Basques right to self-determination. According to radical Basque nationalists, the political transition was nothing more than a cosmetic change and ETA remained as relevant as ever.

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[382] Morán (1997: 179-188).
[383] Woodworth (2001: 124) and Herri Batasuna (1999: 157).
[384] Cited in Amodia (1977:233).
[385] Woodworth (2001: 10).

The reason why ETA continued killing after the estaablishment of democracy is two-fold. First, ETA was never anti-Francoist but anti-Spanish. With the end of the authoritarian regime, the political nemesis of radical nationalists, Spain, continued to exist. Second, ETA's dependency on the 'myth of invasion' made it necessary for it not to accept the on-going political evolution. Hence, it prefered to re-invent Spain and see it as an authoritarian regime with a democratic façade. However, it must be pointed out that radical Basque nationalism managed to articulate that discourse because the Spanish democracy still had some authoritarian traces in its security and armed forces; the issues of torture and the activities of GAL being the two most important.

The chapter also stated that, in the absence of ideological evolution, radical Basque nationalism expanded from a secret organisation (ETA) to a social movement that touched upon many spheres of life. Some of these organisations were analysed in detail. The greatest achievement of the MLNV was the creation of a clearly distinct 'nationalist community' with its own symbols, narratives and spaces of socialisation where members could carry out their ordinary life surrounded by radical nationalist messages.

Finally, the chapter presented an analysis of radical Basque nationalist discourse. It was argued that radical nationalists continued to operate with the myth of the lost Golden Age. However, to the latter they also added a degraded present and a promise of a utopian future dependent on the acceptance of the goals and tactics of radical Basque nationalism.

Chapter Seven

PROMOTING ETHNICITY AND VIOLENCE (1989-2003)

If we lose, the martyrs of ETA will be terrorists, but if we win... they will be heroes.

Telesforo Monzón[386]

Since its birth, radical Basque nationalism has tried three different strategies to accomplish its secessionist project. During Francoism, it was believed that a spiral of action-repression-action would bring about a revolutionary war in which the Basque people would win over Spain. After Franco's death in 1975, ETA changed its strategy but remained convinced that the state might grant independence to the Basque nation (if enough pressure was exercised). And that pressure did not take the form of indiscriminate revolutionary war but, rather, of a urban mode of warfare based on a selective use of violence. ETA believed that a campaign of selective killings would push the Spanish state into a withdrawal from the Basque Country. Finally, the failure of both these strategies led them, in 1998, to implement a third based on the idea of the nationalist front.

This chapter describes the events that led radical Basque nationalism to adopt the strategy of the 'nationalist front'. Divided into three sections, the chapter aims to provide a historical overview of the 1990s up to 2003. First, the chapter describes the Spanish state's policies for dealing with ETA during the years 1989 and 1992. Those policies are best understood as a mixture of police action and peace negotiations. For example, at the same time as the state was increasingly cooperating with France on the exchange of intelligence on ETA and promoting anti-ETA pacts among political forces, it also aimed at establishing peace negotiations in Algiers. In the second part, the chapter introduces the counter-offensive to these policies by radical nationalism. After 1992, radical Basque nationalism tried to regain the street as a space of social struggle and developed the 'socialisation of suffering', which aimed at making the whole Basque population experience the Basque conflict. Unexpectedly, this strategy produced the rebirth of Basque civil society which increasingly opposed ETA. In the third section, the strategy of the nationalist front which argued that only the union of all Basque nationalists would bring about the independence of

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[386] Telesforo Monzón cited in Herri Batasuna (1999: 426).

the Basque nation is analysed.[387] Among the many factors that produced the change of strategy, one can count the Spanish state's increasing effectiveness against ETA. But the main reason for the increasing cooperation between radical and moderate Basque nationalists was increasing opposition in Basque society to ETA's violence and to Basque nationalism as a whole.

7.1. The Spanish State's Policies to Isolate ETA

Managing a nationalist conflict is always an intricate task. Since the transition to democracy in 1975-1978, the Spanish authorities had tried to solve the Basque problem through different means which are explained in the following section.

7.1.1. The Anti-ETA Pacts

By the mid 1980s, the Spanish authorities understood that in order to win over ETA they had to fight its support network. Thus, three pacts were signed to unify the democratically elected forces and ostracise ETA and its political wing, Herri Batasuna. The first pact affected the whole of Spain, the second the Basque Autonomous Community, and the third the Autonomous Community of Navarre.

The first one, the Madrid Agreement on Terrorism also known as Pact of Madrid, was signed on 5 November 1987 by the Spanish Parliament. The five-point Agreement was supported by all political parties with seats in Parliament except Eusko Alkartasuna and Herri Batasuna.[388] The first point of the agreement denounced 'the lack of legitimacy of ETA to express the will of the Basque people' and rejected ETA's 'pretension to negotiate the political problems of the Basque people, which must only be done between the political parties with parliamentary representation, the Basque government and the Spanish government'. The rest of the points were about issues such as the rehabilitation of ETA members if they abandoned the armed struggle, the abolition of the antiterrorist law which allowed the authorities to retain a suspected ETA member up to 10 days incommunicado,

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[387] The strategy of the nationalist front was first identified by Florencio Dominguez Iribarren (2000).
[388] The political parties which signed the Pact of Madrid were the PSOE, AP, CDS, CiU, PNV, PDP, PL, PCE y EE.

the increasing cooperation with France and the rest of the EEC and the establishment of information exchange mechanisms between the different institutions and parties involved. The pact was a success for the socialist government, which had managed to put together support for the first pact ever against terrorism. It also started an era, which survives until today, in which the parliament is a back-cloth for any governmental policies on terrorism.

Two months later, on 12 January 1988, a second anti-ETA pact, the Pact for Normalisation and Pacification of Euskadi, was signed by all the Basque political forces. The result of 50 intense hours of negotiation, the pact came to be known as the Pact of Ajuria Enea, since it had been signed in the residence of the Basque president, the Palace of Ajuria Enea.[389] The Pact was a longer document than the Pact of Madrid which aimed at denouncing ETA's interference with Basque politics and emphasised the role of the Basque government in finding a solution to the problem of violence. It was made up of 17 points, and most of the Basque political forces agreed on the importance of reinforcing the legitimacy of politics in finding solutions to political problems and only one, Eusko Alkartasuna, had reservations on a minor point regarding police competency. After a lengthy preamble, point 1 of the text rejected 'the use of violence' while insisting that 'those who practice such violence are not legitimated to express the will of the Basque people' and emphasised that only political parties, the 'legitimate representatives of the people's will', could discuss 'political problems'. The text also recognised the aspiration of large sectors of Basque society to strengthen the links with Navarre but declared that 'the citizens of Navarre alone have the right to decide their own future'. The other points made reference to other issues such as the role of the Basque government and the lehendakari in the 'eradication of terrorism', the importance of international collaboration and the role of the 'rule of law' in helping the victims of terrorism, favouring the terrorists' reinsertion in society, etc. Although the agreement saw a combination of the rule of law and police actions as a means to eliminate ETA, it also opened the door to negotiations with ETA. The text also called for the support of other social and political institutions for the agreement in order to fight ETA. The text made references to Basque civil society and its political institutions but also the Spanish, Navarrese and European parliaments and the Council of Europe. By bringing on board all

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[389] The following Basque leaders signed the agreement: Xabier Arzalluz (PNV), Txiki Benegas (PSE-PSOE), Inaxio Oliveri (EA), Kepa Aulestia (EE), A.Marco Tabar (CDS), Julen Guimón (AP) and the lehendakari José Antonio Ardanza.

these parties, the pact aimed to isolate ETA and its political wing, Herri Batasuna, and redefine the 'Basque conflict'. The Basque problem was not the misunderstanding between the Basques and Spaniards, but ETA itself. As the lehendakari Ardanza commented, up until that point the conflict had been seen in 'nationalist terms'; from that moment onwards it had to be seen in 'democratic terms'.[390] The Pact Ajuria Enea placed those in favour of party politics and democracy on one side and, on the other, those who were ready to use all available means, including violence, in order to achieve their political objectives.

Finally, a third Agreement for Peace and Tolerance was signed in Pamplona (Navarre) in October 1988.[391] The text was much shorter than that of Ajuria Enea and used a similar language. The two 'Basque agreements', that of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country and that of Navarre, emphasised democracy and parliamentary politics and rejected ETA's violence. They both agreed that ETA had no right to speak for the Basque or Navarrese people and repeated that the establishment of closer links between the CAV and Navarre was a decision for the population of Navarre. The Navarrese pact had, however, two main differences: first, it emphasised that the existing institutions, defined by the Constitution and the Statutes of the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre, were the legitimate and democratic means of making political changes happen in the Basque Country and Navarre; and second, its language was less nationalist than that of Ajuria Enea. Whereas the Basque pact talked about the 'Spanish state', not just the state, and the role of the lehendakari and its government in leading the fight against terrorism, the Navarrese pact relied on 'police action' and 'international collaboration among governments' in order to prevent new attacks. Navarre, a traditionally less nationalist province, heavily relied on Spain to solve the problem of violence.

The three anti-ETA pacts became a high point for democratic politics regarding ETA's violence. They reinforced the majority view that political problems should be solved through political means, and added pressure on ETA to enter a process of negotiation that could bring an end to violence.

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[390] Rivera (1998: 91).
[391] The Pact of Navarre was signed on 7 October 1988 by the Navarrese President, Gabriel Urralburu Tanta and the following political parties: EE, AP, PL, DC, CDS, UPN, and PSN-PSOE.

7.1.2. The Negotiations of Algiers

Contact between the state and ETA had taken place during the democratic period at different times. One of the first meetings held between the governing party, the UCD, and ETA resulted in the disbandment of ETA-Político Militar, or ETA-PM, in 1982. On the majority of occasions, however, contact and negotiations were kept secret and were not very successful.[392] This contact were usually used by both the government and ETA to 'take the temperature' of the adversary.[393] However, in the later 1980s a new round of negotiations between the state and ETA, the negotiations of Algiers, were held.[394] The reasons for the timing concern the PSOE government's need to appraise ETA. On the one hand, the government needed a stable security situation for the festivities of 1992. It had to secure a high level of security when the world would watch Spain in four major international events: the World Fair in Seville, Madrid as cultural capital of Europe, the Olympic Games of Barcelona and the 500th anniversary of Columbus's voyage to America. At the same time, the need to establish negotiations with ETA had been one of the central issues of the 1986 Basque regional election. In this debate, the PNV, which had previously split between PNV and Eusko Alkartasuna, clearly stated that ETA could not discuss political problems but understood that dialogue was, possibly, the only means to end violence. In 1986 the Basque Government had also published the Rose Report in which a commission of experts recommended policies that would contribute to the elimination of violence.[395] One of the recommendations of the report was the establishment of negotiations with ETA.[396] In the following weeks, contact between the new lehendakari, José Antonio Ardanza, and the Prime Minster, Felipe González, prepared the ground for the negotiations of Algiers.

From ETA's perspective, the goal since the death of General Franco had been to enter into political negotiations with Spain in order to solve what they saw as a political problem. The

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[392] Clark (1999: 225) and Sánchez-Cuenca (2001: 122-123).

[393] Javier (2002: 207).

[394] For a complete account of the Algiers Negotiations see Clark (1999), Fonseca (1996), Pozas (1992) and Egaña & Giacopuzzi (1992).

[395] The full name of the report was *Informe de la Comisión Internacional sobre la Violencia en el País Vasco*, and was presented by the Basque government in 1986. The report had been written by five experts on terrorism and had taken the name of the head of the working group, Clive Rose. The other authors were Franco Ferracuti, Hans Horchem, Peter Janke and Jacques Leaute.

[396] Pozas (1992: 21).

state was seen as a powerful entity that would not be defeated by military means but that could be cornered into political negotiations. This strategy intensified in 1985 when ETA increased the use of ar-bombs, which had a much more destructive effect and aimed to apply pressure on the government.[397] The strength of the two competing parties made some ETA leaders realise that a negotiated settlement with the state was inevitable. According to Robert P. Clark, by 1986 Iturbe asserted that, 'If we don't negotiate now, within a year the French will have dismantled everything, they will have decimated us, seized our weapons and money, and we will not have anything to negotiate'.[398] Moreover, in clear contrast to Francoism, internal discrepancies between the leaders of ETA and the res of the organisation were not exceptional. One of the most dramatic examples of ETA's need for discipline was that of María Dolores González Catarain, also known as Yoyes. Yoyes had been in prison in the 1970s and was exiled in Mexico when she decided to publicly repent and benefit from the rehabilitation measures of the state. After she was freed, she returned to her home-town Villafranca de Orditzia, in Gipuzkoa, where she was killed by a fellow ETA member in retaliation for her 'treason'. The case of Yoyes was important because she had been one of the few women to hold a position of responsibility within the armed group but also because it showed the practical difficulties of ETA members 'retiring' from ETA.[399]

The Algiers negotiations had three rounds.[400] A first round of secret negotiations took place during 1986-1987, a second public round during 1987-1988 and, finally, a third one in 1989. For the 1986 round, the government managed to secretly transfer the ETA spokesperson, Txomin Iturbe, from France, through Gabon and Angola to Algiers, where he met the rest of the ETA leaders. Contact between the two parts happened from November 1986 until February 1987 when they were suddenly interrupted by the death of

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[397] Powell (2001: 492).

[398] Clark (1990: 168).

[399] Yoyes resigned from ETA in 1979 and went into her Mexican exile a year later where she unwillingly remained a reference point for radical nationalists. Up until that point, ETA members who retired were often ostracised but Yoyes was a charismatic former member and her example could have seriously damaged the organisation. Among the many papers found after her death, Yoyes wrote, referring to the obstacles she had faced to abandon the armed struggle, that it was: 'unacceptable for a an organisation that calls itself revolutionary to use fascist or Stalinist tactics (whatever one prefers) with former members'. Yoyes (1987: 185).

[400] Sánchez-Cuenca points out that before these three rounds there was a preliminary and almost unknown stage of contacts between representatives of the State and ETA during July 1984 and November 1985. See Sánchez-Cuenca (2001: 123).

Iturbe. On 27 February, the Algerian who was driving Iturbe and two more ETA members lost control of the car and hit a tree; both he and Iturbe died immediately. The death of ETA's main representative was widely reported in the Spanish press and, since the public was therefore made aware of the negotiations, they were immediately suspended.

The incident that triggered renewed interest in a second round of political negotiations was the explosion in June 1987 of a bomb in Hipercor, a supermarket in a workers' district of Barcelona. The bomb had been placed in the underground car park and killed 21 people and wounded 45. The attack outraged Catalonia, where Herri Batasuna obtained its best results after the Basque Country, and criticisms were made of ETA from all sides. Both Herri Batasuna and ETA recognised the error it had made in Barcelona.[401] After the bombing of Hipercor, a new ETA leader, Eugenio Etxebeste, also known as Antxon, was transferred from Ecuador to Algiers in July 1987 for the second stage of negotiations. In August the Spanish government acknowledged for the first time that it was having contact with ETA. It was Javier Solana, at the time official spokesman of the PSOE government, who announced that 'there have been, there are and there will be' contacts with ETA.[402] His words were highly significant because they radically contradicted a similar statement made by Felipe Gonzalez a year earlier. During the following year there was an exchange of offers between ETA and the PSOE Government for truces but none of them were successful.[403] The main obstacle was that ETA wanted to discuss political questions such as the right to self-determination and the status of Navarre. The government, on the other side, wanted to stop violence and believed that political questions should be discussed by political parties in the relevant Parliament. The solution was the establishment of a 'two-track approach'. The approach suggested that only a party that represented a part of the electorate (referring to HB) could discuss political matters. The potential for success of the two-track approach lay in the separation of the negotiations into two venues, two agendas and two negotiating bodies. Such a division made it possible for parties in conflict to negotiate with one another without actually appearing to do so. Although the theory was good, the two-track formula

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[401] Interview with ETA leaders in the Catalan newspaper L'Avui, 25-5-1988. See also Alcedo (1996: 129-130).
[402] Clark (1990: 192).
[403] The first one was offered by ETA in January 1988, the second by the government in February and the Third by ETA in October. See 'Trick or truce?' in The Economist, 6 February 1988, p. 46.

was never applied as a bomb was detonated in a Civil Guards living quarters killing eleven people, including five children. The Government immediately broke off negotiations.

The third round of negotiations took place between January and April 1989. In January that year ETA declared a two-week ceasefire to coincide with the beginning of the Algiers Negotiations. On 23 January the cease fire was extended by two more months to allow negotiators to proceed. The third round of negotiations in Algiers was carried out by two representatives of the Spanish Government: Rafael Vera, secretary for state for security, and Juan Manuel Eguiagaray, Government delegate in Murcia. On the other side of the table, they faced the ETA members Eugenio Etxebeste, known as 'Antxon', Belén González and Iñaki Arakama. The main leader of the ETA representatives was Antxon, who had to report back on the state of the negotiations with the ETA leadership in France. At the same time, he had the support of a political committee of advisors made up of members of the trade union LAB, Herri Batasuna and lawyers.[404] The negotiations collapsed on 4 April 1989 as a result of the secrecy, leaks to the press, and mutual distrust of the two delegations.[405]

Interestingly, a month after the negotiations collapsed, the government put in place the 'dispersion policy' by which the imprisoned ETA members were scattered in prisons around Spain. Up until May 1989, *etarras* had been concentrated in the maximum security prisons of Carabanchel, Alcalá-Meco (both in Madrid) and in the Andalusian Herrera de la Mancha, almost 1000 km from the Basque Country. The controversial measure was implemented by two Basque ministers, those of the Interior, Javier Corcuera, and Justice, Enrique Múgica, in order to break the internal unity of the prisoners. ETA members tended to stick together in prisons and exercised powerful control mechanisms over each other, hence making it more difficult for individuals to repent and take up the benefits of rehabilitation the authorities were offering.

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[404] These were the lawyer Iñigo Iruin, the leader of LAB Rafa Díez, the journalist and sociologist Luís Nuñez, and the leaders of Herri Batasuna Iñaki Aldekoa, Txema Montero and Tasio Erkizia. See Herri Batasuna (1999: 200) and Egaña & Giacopucci (1992: 167).

[405] For a more detailed account of the negotiations see Domínguez (2000: 335-381) or Egaña & Giacopucci (1992: 153-195).

So, why did the negotiations fail? The answer is two-fold. Since there were no neutral observers in the negotiations there are two contending views on how the negotiations failed: one from the government and the other from radical Basque nationalism.[406] According to Herri Batasuna (1999: 204) the leadership of ETA was contemptuous of the fact that it had been recognised as a valid speaker on the Basque conflict and that the Spanish government had acknowledged that ETA could not be dealt with exclusively by police means. Herri Batasuna's view was shared by other organisations of the MLNV, such as ASK, which proudly asserted in an editorial of JoTaKe the 'political character of the official negotiators, ETA representing the Basque side and the PSOE representing the state'.[407] The editorial also stated the 'political nature' of the negotiations and how it showed there were two kinds of violence. On the one hand, there was the one that denied 'the rights of the Basque people, therefore offensive' and the 'other, a defensive response which defended those rights'.[408] At this point, holding negotiations was already a success for ETA. On the other hand, the American scholar, Robert Clark, has blamed the collapse of the Algerian negotiations on the unwillingness of the Spanish government 'to accept in principle the Basques' right of self-determination'.[409] This point is probably correct and it is not difficult to understand why the government was reluctant to accept the terms of a formal political negotiation with ETA beyond disarmament. That would undermine the whole political game and the anti-ETA pacts as the electoral representation the Basques had accepted would have been completely bypassed. Basque politics would be usurped by ETA from the Basque political parties and this would also allow the armed group to justify its hundreds of killings.[410] Moreover, the Prime Minister Felipe González indicated that talks would remain a possibility until ETA carried out its next attack.[411] Every time this happened negotiations were broken off. Hence, it would not be too risky to conclude that neither the Spanish government nor ETA was ready to make enough concessions to each other.

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[406] Using rational choice theory, Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca provides an explanation of what ETA and the State gained from the 'political negotiations'. See Sánchez-Cuenca (2001: 109-142). The ETA perspective is well represented in Egaña & Giacopuzzi (1992) and the Minister of Interior view in Pozas (1992).
[407] Jotake, 1989 Martxoa, 14 Zenbakia.
[408] Jotake, 1989 Martxoa, 14 Zenbakia.
[409] Robert P. Clark, 'Basque Terrorism', *The Economist* 1988.
[410] 'Talking Basque', *The Economist*, 25 February 1989, p. 53.
[411] 'Back to bombs?', *The Economist*, 8 April 1989, pp. 57-58.

7.1.3. The End of the French Haven

The failure of the Algiers Negotiations ended the aura of 'freedom fighters' ETA members had had, both in France and Algeria. The Algerian authorities had hosted the negotiations and had involved personnel and resources in supporting the negotiations. After the collapse of the contacts, Algiers expelled all ETA members from its territory. In France too, the sympathy with which the authorities saw ETA suddenly ended and a new collaboration was established between the French and Spanish police. That closer collaboration was the result of years of diplomatic effort by the Spanish authorities to convince France of the lawless activities of ETA on French territory. Since Francoism, the French Pays Basque had been a safe haven for ETA members. France provided ETA with a 'sanctuary', a base where ETA cells returned after making an action (*ekintza*). Furthermore, France had long prided itself in being a *terre d'asile* and granted ETA members the status of political refugees.[412] In the Basque case, this traditional beneficence towards political refugees was reinforced by two other considerations: (1) ETA's struggle was regarded by many in France as being akin to the fight of the French Resistance in World War II; and (2) the Burgos Trial was still a recent event in the minds of the average French man and woman.[413]

During the transition and consolidation of democracy in Spain (1975-1982), French authorities continued to deny that the Pays Basque was being used as a refuge for ETA members and argued that Basque political violence was a purely Spanish problem.[414] ETA was conscious of the importance of keeping in good terms with the French authorities and kept a low profile on its claims of the French Basque territories. First, ETA needed France as a base for its actions. Second, radical Basque nationalists needed the international solidarity of the French people. Third, ETA was conscious that it could not wage a low-intensity war against two states. Although the Pays Basque was, in ETA's view, an integral part of the Basque nation, it never fought against French objectives. As a 1983 *Zutabe* explained,

> Our struggle and our political goals are limited to what constitutes the Spanish state, more specifically, the Basque Country within the Spanish state. This is the reason

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[412] The measure was maintained until January 1979. See Jaime (2002:275).
[413] Dominguez (2000: 290).
[414] See Pozas (1992: 218) and Morán (1997: 113).

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why ETA is not active, and will never be, beyond the borders of the Spanish state.[415]

Despite ETA's efforts to maintain France as its haven, some events during the early 1980s allowed closer cooperation between the French and Spanish authorities regarding ETA. First of all, since 1982 both countries had socialist governments and their leaders, François Mitterrand and Felipe Gonzalez, liked and understood each other, which led to important steps in terms of collaboration. With the victory of Jacques Chirac, collaboration with France did not decline but it was reinforced. In fact, one of the first measures taken by the right-wing government of Chirac was to extradite ETA residents to Spain through an expedited administrative procedure. The Chirac Government, faced with its own problems of terrorism, and instinctively a 'law and order' administration, had responded willingly to Spanish requests for extraditions. Secondly, for most of the 1980s southern France would be the setting for most of the killings perpetrated by the GAL against ETA members. The relatively distant 'Basque problem' was impossible to ignore since people were being killed in the streets and bars of Bayonne, Biarritz, and so on. Thirdly, Spain had joined the EEC in 1986 and was deeply committed to the creation of an 'ever closer union', particularly in the are of justice and home affairs and any areas that might help her terminate the Basque problem.

The high point of Franco-Spanish collaboration happened on 29 March 1992 when French police burst into a house in Bidart and arrested three ETA commanders.[416] The action of the French National Police epitomised a radical change in the French attitude towards ETA. The French police seized large numbers of documents and several ETA members immediately fled to Central America, mainly Mexico and Cuba. The documentation found in Bidart, together with that found in Sokoa in 1986, helped the Spanish authorities understand the complex network of organisations that surrounded ETA.[417] According to Sagrario Morán, the action was highly significant because it weakened ETA one month

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[415] Zutabe 33, 1983. p. 57.

[416] The leaders were Francisco Mugica Garmendia (Pakito), Jose Luis Alvarez Sancristina (Txelis) and Jose Arregui Erostarbe (Fiti). See 'Decapitated', The Economist, 4 April 1992, p. 60.

[417] The Sokoa operation was a joint effort of the Spanish security and intelligence services, the French police and the CIA. Using a tracking device in two Sam 7 missiles, the Spanish authorities discovered, on 18 November 1986, a secret chamber (zulo) in a furniture company called Cooperativa Sokoa where ETA kept important documentation. With the documents gathered, the police understood the funding system of ETA. See Moran (1997: 246); Pozas (1992: 49-53).

before the opening ceremony of the Sevilla Expo and four months before the Olympic games of Barcelona (Moran 1997: 342). The action severely weakened ETA and on 11 July 1992, four months after the arrests, the Basque organisation proposed a two-month ceasefire. The offer was not taken up by the Spanish authorities, who distrusted ETA's good will and understood the truce as a sign of weakness and a desperate attempt to gain time to reorganise.

7.2. New Spaces of Struggle and the Return of Basque Civil Society

After 1992, ETA entered an epoch of military decline. The three anti-ETA pacts, the failed meetings at Algiers, and the increasing cooperation of France were the causes of such decline. The crisis further intensified in 1992 when the leaders of ETA were arrested in the French town of Bidart. Their imprisonment weakened the organisation and produced a crisis within the MLNV. The dependency of the radical network of organisations on the leadership of ETA negatively affected the nationalist left when ETA's military survival was at stake.

Up until 1992, ETA's strategy had been to attack the representatives of the Spanish state and the powers that be in order to force negotiation with them. After the arrests in Bidart, the MLNV understood its dependency on ETA to be a negative feature.[418] The liberation of the Basque nation was not going to be achieved solely by the actions of the military vanguard, it would only come to being if the whole of society was involved. It was necessary for Basque society to take sides in favour of or against the nationalist project and not just remain an observer of the clashes between the security forces and ETA. Hence, the MLNV's strategy was to make Basque society a participant in the Basque conflict. The 'socialisation of suffering' would be particularly targetted against those who did not support the nationalist project, and was to be done through 'new spaces of struggle' such as street violence (*kale borroka*) and a new selection of targets.

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[418] Herri Batasuna (1992) Urrats Berri II (Documento Definitivo).

7.2.1. The 'Socialisation of Suffering'

After the arrest of ETA leaders in Bidart, Herri Batasuna reacted by inviting its membership into a process of debate known as Urrats Berri (New Step), in 1993. The final document that was approved did not bring substantial changes to the overall strategy of the political party. One of the few changes made was the self-definition of Herri Batasuna, which had traditionally called itself 'an alliance of workers and popular sectors'. After Urrats Berri, Herri Batasuna referred to the movement it led as a 'union of patriots (*abertzales*) and leftists'.[419] The final document showed a clear lack of ideas and epitomised the crisis in which the nationalist left was immersed. The strategic goal of the nationalist left continued to be: 'the search of a political agreement between Hego Euskal Herria [Spanish Basque Country] and the Spanish state which can establish the basis for our political sovereignty'.[420]

The 'basis' for Basque sovereignty was the recognition of the already claimed 'right to self-determination'.[421] The only new aspect in the document was the self-criticism of Herri Batasuna on its 'internal dynamic of work' and the party's dependency on ETA:

> This dependency has become more noticeable, especially regarding the attitude of expecting what ETA could do next: be it the declaration of a truce or the carrying out of another armed action. In either case there is the same attitude of expectancy towards the actions of ETA.[422]

In criticising Herri Batasuna's dependency on ETA, the party membership was claiming the right to be part of a political debate, regardless of ETA's activities. Unless this was done, the MLNV or nationalist left would only be active if ETA was active and vice-versa. At the same time, a tactical error by ETA, such as that of Hipercor, could seriously damage the whole of the nationalist left. The Urrats Berri debate did not solve the organisational and tactical problems of the nationalist left, which was to regain the initiative only three years later.

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[419] Herri Batasuna (1992) Urrats Berri II (Documento Definitivo) p. 16.
[420] Herri Batasuna (1992) Urrats Berri II (Documento Definitivo) pp. 16-18.
[421] Herri Batasuna (1992) Urrats Berri II (Documento Definitivo) pp. 16-18.
[422] Oldartzen. 1er documento (definitivo) (1995) pp. 36-37.

The real strategic contribution came two years later, in April 1995, when the 'Democratic Alternative', which substituted the historical KAS Alternative, was approved. [423] The old KAS Alternative laid out the five objectives the state had to grant in order for ETA to enter political negotiations and disband and had been voiced by the nationalist left since the Spanish transition. The new Democratic Alternative also talked about the negotiation between ETA and the 'Spanish state' but introduced the need to make nation-building a day-to-day task. For example, ETA asked members of KAS to be involved in a 'real movement', such as Jarrai or Herri Batasuna, while continuing to be in the organ of direction.[424] That way, they would work towards establishing political negotiations but would also work on the consolidation of the Basque nation. The construction process had an essential goal, which was the recognition of the right to self-determination. The language also underwent a minor change. Whereas the main goal of ETA, independence, had been and continued to be the driving force of the organisation, the other pillar, socialism, was abandoned and only one mention was made in the document of the need for 'social justice':

> ETA will adapt to any new situation in the conflict but will not abandon its ultimate political goals: the independence of Euskal Herria and its fight for a society based on social justice.[425]

The second and most important document approved in 1995 was the debate called Oldartzen (tackling) held during 1995. Oldartzen was another of the periodical debates held by Herri Batasuna every four years. The previous one had been Urrats Berri but due to the minor contributions of the process Oldartzen came after just three years because important reforms were needed. According to Oldartzen's final document, up until 1995 Herri Batasuna had been too focused on a strategy of 'resistance' (*resisitir es vencer*) and it was time to replace this with a pro-active strategy of 'nation building'.[426] In Oldartzen, the radical nationalists argued that their network of organisations had to gain 'new social spaces' where it could develop an 'offensive phase, giving priority to the practical

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[423] Seen in perspective, the 'Democratic Alternative' was the by-product of a process of debate which had lasted from 1991 to 1994. This debate aimed at transforming KAS from an organ of coordination to one of political direction or backbone. The main documents during these four years were Spine (*Bizkar Hezurra*) which was, at the same time, divided in two documents: Ant (*Txinaurri*) and Crab (*Karramarro*).
[424] Sumario 35/02 Y.
[425] *Alternativa Democratica* (1995).
[426] Oldartzen, 2° Documento Definitivo, p. 6.

realisation of objectives'.[427] This construction of nationhood was going to be done from below and, literally, from the street. The agents were going to be the social movements, which were seen to have real social support and legitimacy. As it could be read in Oldartzen,

> The street must be our main space of struggle, but the street understood as a range of different agents: the factories, the neighbourhood, the association or society, the study centre, the shop, the health clinic, the *cuadrilla*, the family, the cooperative, the *fiestas*, ...[428]

Hence, Oldartzen followed the line established in the Democratic Alternative that radical nation-building was needed. However, while the new strategy incorporated new elements, such as nation-building, it was not going to be based 'within the limits of conventional politics.'[429] The MLNV strategy was to 'accumulate forces around the nation-building and social transformation programme (...) create social tension and pressure through mobilisations to show, on a daily basis, the imposition and limits of the current political framework'.[430] As the political violence had done during Francoism, the street violence aimed at uncovering the structural violence and oppression of the Spanish state over the Basques. As Joseba Álvarez, a leader of Herri Batasuna and son of an ETA-founder, pointed out,

> in the last few years, the problem of prisoners and many others were seen as problems of the nationalist left. What is the solution? Socialise the consequences of the struggle.[431]

Although the style of the document made it almost incomprehensible, the consequences of the 'socialisation of suffering' would have a very real impact on the streets of many Basque cities. One of the first consequences was the intensification of the street violence (*kale borroka*), through which a new generation of Basque youth was involved in the continuation of the Basque problem. Carried out by young radical nationalists, often members of the youth organisation Jarrai, the *kale borroka* involved acts of violence such

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[427] Oldartzen, 1er Documento Definitivo, p. 50.
[428] Oldartzen, 2° Documento Definitivo, p. 7
[429] Oldartzen, 1er Documento Definitivo, p. 50.
[430] Cited in Oiarzabal (2002: 40).
[431] Joseba Álvarez's father is Jose Luis Álvarez 'Txillardegi'. The quote from Joseba Álvarez was cited in Rekondo (1998: 55).

as confrontations with the police, the burning of buses, rubbish skips and phone boxes, and even public beatings and was prominent during the years 1994-2001.[432] The organisers and perpetrators of the *kale borroka* were called Groups X, Y or Z and their strategy responded to the overall strategy of the MLNV of the socialisation of suffering. This involved making the population participate in the 'political conflict' the Basque nation was carrying out. By making visible the violent clash between the nationalist youth and the security forces, it also allowed the MLNV to socialise a new generation of youth in the dynamics of struggle. By experiencing the 'Spanish repression' first hand, some of this youth were forced to take sides in the national struggle. By 2001, the street violence had become so disruptive to the lives of ordinary Basque citizens that the state designed special legislation to tackle the problem.[433] In the words of Prime Minister Aznar, 'A terrorist is always a terrorist, even if they are under age' (*Un terrorista es siempre un terrorista, aunque sea un menor*).[434] The analysis of commentators and policy-makers was that the members of the *Grupos Y* were the 'puppies of ETA' (*cachorros de ETA*) and training terrorists.[435] This theory was later proved by the arrest of ETA members who had started their radical activity in street violence.

If the main consequence of Oldartzen at the street level was the development of the *kale borroka*, for ETA the main consequence was the selection of new targets. ETA had traditionally chosen military targets and people who symbolised the state and the powers-that-be. In the new situation, however, they included new people as potential targets. Journalists, members of the judiciary, civil servants, low-profile politicians and academics were increasingly targetted.[436] In most of the cases they would be threatened or kidnapped but in the worst cases they would be killed. In an internal ETA document, *Barne Buletina*,

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[432] However, the 'street violence' did not come out of the blue and had a precedent in the Basque Country. In the late 1980s and early 1990s ETA had attempted to lead the movement of protest against the construction of the Leitzaran highway. The highway was strongly opposed by environmentalists and nationalists and ETA contributed to the acts of protest with 158 acts of sabotage worth six million euros (Gurruchaga 2001: 289-292). In the end, the plan was changed to a much more costly work and allowed ETA to capitalise on the gains of the action. The actions against the Leitzaran highway also helped to mobilise and politicise a high number of radical nationalists hence making ETA stronger. After this short precedent, the street violence really took off after 1992.

[433] The Law of the Under Age (*Ley del Menor*) started to be applied on 13 January 2001 and considered sentences of up to 8 to 10 years of internment for those youths (14-18 years old) who had been involved in acts of 'terrorism'. Also Remirez de Ganuza.

[434] Carmen Remirez de Ganuza (2002) 'El Juzgado Central de Menores celebro solo dos juicios en un ano' in *El Mundo*, 20-1-2002.

[435] Oiarzabal (2002: 45).

[436] Sánchez-Cuenca (2001: 73-107) and Gurruchaga and San Sebastian (2000: 183).

the organisation argued why it was necessary to target politicians from the PSOE or the PP. The state had already accepted the relatively low levels of violence caused by ETA and the loss of life that it produced in the police and security forces. Hence, it was necessary to target those influential groups, such as politicians, who had not been targetted until then and could have a decisive influence on the state.

> When a guy from the PSOE, PP, or PNV goes to the funeral of a txakurra [dog, referring to the police], he has lots of words of condemnation and crocodile tears. That's because he does not see himself in danger ... But if they have to go to a funeral of a party member, by the time they go back home they might start thinking that it is time to find solutions or they might be the next ones (i.e. feet first in a pine coffin).[437]

One of the first victims of this new kind of violence was Gregorio Ordóñez Fenollar. Ordoñez was a member of the Popular Party and deputy mayor of San Sebastian and could be considered anything but an influential politician in state affairs. ETA killed him on 23 January 1995 and justified its action in a Zutabe in the following way:

> The action showed... that the struggle was not between the Civil Guards and ETA. Those who, until that point, had been out of the conflict, the politicians, also had responsibilities for the situation and they would also be affected.[438]

More politicians were killed after Ordóñez[439] but it was the widely reported kidnapping of a prison official, José Antonio Ortega Lara, which captured the imagination of Basque society. Ortega Lara was not a businessman or a politician, but a prison official. Traditionally, ETA had kidnapped people who could pay a ransom and who could serve as an example to all those who did not pay the 'revolutionary tax'. However, in this case, ETA kidnapped a civil servant of minor importance who could have not paid any significant amount of money. Ortega Lara was seized on 17 January 1996 and was held for 532 days. The kidnapping was ended when the Civil Guards stormed a factory and found a hidden chamber (zulo) where Ortega Lara had remained for more than 17 months.

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[437] *Barne Buletina* 1994 cited in Gurruchaga & San Sebastian (2000: 183) and Sanchez Cuenca (2001: 99).
[438] Zutabe No. 72, September 1995.
[439] Another case, for example, was the killing of Fernando Múgica Herzog, a member of the socialist party and brother of a former minister of interior. Múgica was killed on the 6 February 1996 adding to the list of politicians who had become 'military targets'. Others that followed were José Luis Caso Cortines, on 11 December 1997; José Ignacio Iruretagoyena, on 9 January 1998 and Manuel Zamareño on 25 June 1998.

As was usually the case when the Spanish authorities made an advance in the so-called 'fight against terrorism', ETA responded with a 'spectacular' action to show its continuing strength. This time was not going to be different and ETA responded to the liberation of Ortega Lara by killing a 29-year old Basque town councillor called Miguel Angel Blanco Garrido. As with Ortega Lara, Blanco captured the popular imagination of many Basques and Spaniards for his extremely low political significance and status of an ordinary citizen. The town councillor worked in Ermua, a little village in Biscay, and belonged to the right-wing party, Partido Popular (PP). ETA kidnapped him on 10 July 1997 and threatened to kill him in 48 hours if the government did not end its 'dispersion policy' and convicted members of ETA were not transferred to Basque Country prisons immediately. Even if the Spanish Government had wanted to meet the demands (which was not the case) the time-limit was so short it could not have happened. The demands were widely regarded as unreasonable and major demonstrations were held in all major Basque and Spanish cities. In a snowball effect, Miguel Angel Blanco became a symbol of anti-ETA feeling and helped break what we may call 'the spiral of silence'. In Bilbao, Prime Minster Aznar led a demonstration of over half a million people. The pleas were not heard by ETA who executed Miguel Angel Blanco on 12 of July in the outskirts of Lasarte (Gipuzkoa). According to *The Economist*, in the following days almost six million Spaniards demonstrated against ETA – one and a half million in Madrid and a million in Barcelona.[440]

7.2.2. Breaking the 'Spiral of Silence'

One of the most significant sociological developments after the killing of Miguel Angel Blanco was the response Basque society gave ETA. After 1997, a new group of Basque NGOs and intellectuals started leading a movement of protest that would in turn bring about the return of Basque civil society. These individuals and organisations publicly rejected the 'socialisation of suffering' and the targeting of politicians and journalists by ETA. [441] The main consequences of these mobilisations were (1) the legitimation of non-

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[440] 'A murder too far', *The Economist*, 19 July 1997, pp. 38-40. Also 'Millones de Españoles se unen a la rebelion de los vascos contra ETA y HB', *El País*, 15 Julio 1997, p. 1.

[441] These organisations added to other already existing peace organisations such as the Madrid-based Asociación de Víctimas del Terrorismo (AVT), active since 1981 and created to assist those affected by terrorism. In the Basque Country there were others such as Gesto por la Paz or Elkarri. See www.avt.org, www.gesto.org, and www.elkarri.org.

Basque nationalists' opinions and (2) the boosting of existing peace organisations in the Basque Provinces.

A few of these organisations denounced the links between moderate and radical Basque nationalists and the 'ethnic cleansing' ETA was carrying out against those who were not Basque nationalists. They also defended the Constitution and the statute of autonomy as an appropriate framework via which the national aspirations of Basques could be channeled. Among those organisations, it is worth emphasising the pioneering role played by the Foro de Ermua. This organisation had taken the name of the town where Blanco lived and was created a few months after his assassination. The aims of the forum were to denounce 'ETA's fascism' and to oppose any negotiation with ETA.[442] Other groups that followed the example of the Foro Ermua were COVITE, born in November 1998, and Basta Ya! in 1999. In the latter, the philosopher Fernando Savater had a prominent role in denouncing the state of fear radical nationalists were creating in the street and claimed to be Spanish and Basque, not just Basque. At the same time, the social mobilisation of Basque civil society boosted already existing organisations such as Gesto por la Paz (Gesture for peace) and Elkarri (Among all of us).

These organisations were very important in breaking what the German expert on public opinion, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, has called the 'spiral of silence' (Noelle-Neumann 1980). According to Noelle-Neumann, the climate of public opinion first depends on who talks and who keeps quiet, not on what people think. Opinions are publicly expressed when they are perceived as 'acceptable' or, one might say, dominant. People sense the prevailing public opinion, even with no access to polls, and remain silent if they feel their views are not those of the majority. They do so because they believe holding minority views will lead to isolation and/or ridicule. Hence, it is the fear of isolation, says Noelle-Neumann, that 'seems to be the force that sets the spiral of silence in motion'.[443] Participation or non-participation in the 'spiral of violence' is not a single decision, but one redefined over and over again by the members of a community who have identified the opinions and behaviour that make them more likely to be isolated. However, the spiral is not an endless process and can be broken. People will voice their views when their personal opinion spreads and is

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[442] See www.foroermua.cjb.net/
[443] Noelle-Neuman (1980: 6).

taken up by others. It is the disappearance of the fear of isolation and of being ridiculed that sets in motion the change from a minority to a majority view. Applying Noelle-Neumann's model to the Basque case, one can easily see the role that organisations such as Basta Ya or Foro Ermua were fulfilling. They were pioneers in 'breaking the spiral of silence' and allowing those who would describe themselves as Spanish or both Spanish and Basque to speak up. As Edurne Uriarte has pointed out,

> those who went onto the streets were non-nationalists, who started to realise that in the street, the social legitimacy and the force of their claims were as strong as those of the nationalists.[444]

Although the quote makes reference to non-nationalists, it is worth emphasising that Basque politics are simplistically divided between Basque nationalists and non-nationalists. This is not only done in the press and the media but also in academic opinion polls. One of the leading opinion polls in the Basque Country, the Euskobarómetro, only gives its interviewees two options when asking them about national belonging: nationalist and non-nationalist.[445] It is not possible for the respondents to state whether they are Spanish nationalists or Basque nationalists. However, the academics who participate in that research take the nationalist option as meaning Basque nationalism. Hence, when reading the accounts of non-nationalists one should read them as non-Basque nationalists, which does not necessarily mean they are not nationalist (Spanish, for example).

The nationalist left made sure to point out that the ideological corpus and internal rationality of these organisations was flawed. As Herri Batasuna pointed out in 1995, these organisations were the instruments of the 'real powers' which remain, at large, unidentified:

> Gesto por la Paz and similar organisations are instruments that the powers use to socialise the ideological approach towards peace: since peace is the absence of attacks, pressure must be exercised on ETA to disband.' [446]

The main problem for radical nationalists was that these groups were challenging the historical legitimacy of ETA to represent and speak for the Basque nation. However, as the

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[444] Edurne Uriarte (2001: 79).

[445] The Euskobarómetro is carried out at the Department of Political Science of the University of the Basque Country. See http://www.ehu.es/cpvweb/.

[446] Oldartzen. 1er Documento Definitivo, p. 29.

following section shows, ETA was not willing to see a reality that did not correspond to its idealised vision of the Basque nation.

7.2.3. The Basque Support for ETA

The fact that organisations such as Gesto por la Paz and Elkarri managed to increase their support, despite targeting different sectors of society, can only be explained by an overall change of social attitudes towards ETA's violence by Basque society. Years of violence had produced a disenchantment of citizens with Basque politicians, and especially ETA. Although Basque society remained, as a whole, nationalist and aspired to independence, increasingly it saw ETA as an obstacle to a separatist programme.

Figure 9 shows Basque public opinion in relation to ETA. According to the data compiled by the Euskobarómetro team of the University of the Basque Country, there has been a clear evolution of Basque public opinion against ETA. The proportion of those who totally reject ETA has grown from 21% in 1981 to 60% in 2002. At the same time, those who give occasional support to ETA has increased. An interesting point shown in the figures is how Basque civil society has become politicised since the consolidation of democracy. In 1981, almost 50% of Basques did not have an opinion or gave no response to their support to ETA. By 2002, the figure was only 2%. This change can be explained in two ways. Firstly, people now have an opinion on the topic that perhaps they did not have in 1981. Second, Basque people have become less afraid of expressing their views on such a sensitive issue as violence. Another interesting and crucial element of the figure is the declining trend of those who gave total support to ETA. In the early 1980s between 6 and 8% of the respondents were completely committed to ETA's goals and tactics. In the late 1980s the trend started to decline and since the 1990s it has stayed at a minimum of 1 or 2%.

Figure 9: Support to ETA in the Basque Country, 1981-2002
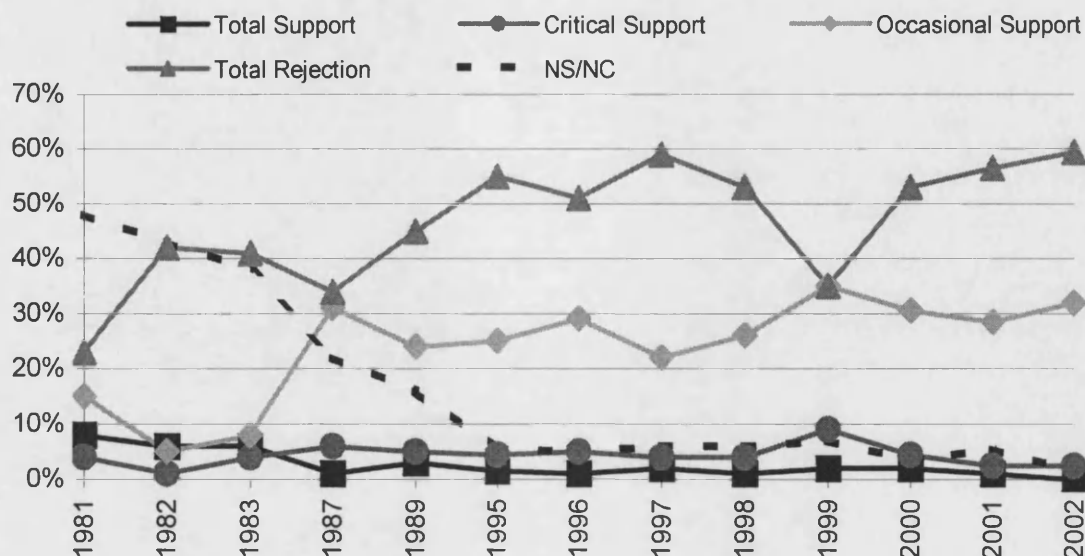
Source: Euskobarómetro UPV (www.ehu.es/cpvweb/)

The Euskobarómetro team also conducted interviews to learn citizens' opinions about Basque activists. The view of Basque public opinion about ETA had evolved since the transition when the first opinion polls were conducted. In 1978 up to 35% of Basques believed the ETA members were idealists, while only 7% described them as criminals or assassins. That had radically changed by 1996, when only 16% of the population considered ETA as composed of idealists and the number of those who saw them as criminals had risen to 32%.[447] In the words of the French sociologist, Michel Wieviorka, the evolution of Basque public opinion towards ETA can be described as an 'inversion process'.[448] For Wieviorka, the opposition to ETA is due to the tactical shift in ETA's history from the selective use of violence to indiscriminate violence, henceforth terrorism. Among the high points of that evolution to terrorism one may highlight the bombing of the Cafeteria Ronaldo[449] in 1974, when ETA killed 13 civilians, or the case of Hipercor in 1987. Moreover, in the late 1990s even Basque nationalists from the PNV were targetted by

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[447] See the section on Series Temporales in www.ehu.es/cpvweb/.

[448] Wieviorka 1993: chapter 5.

[449] The journalist Carmen Gurruchaga also identifies the bombing of the Cafeteria Ronaldo as the first terrorist act of ETA. The café was near a police station and the bomb aimed at killing the largest possible number of policemen. However, the intelligence ETA had used was poor and, at the time, the café was full of civilians. She also points out at the tactical evolution of ETA from using guns to the car-bomb. See Gurruchaga (2001: 91 & 197-210).

ETA, so increasing opposition to ETA. Traditionally, Basque nationalists and those who were not involved in politics were relatively safe, as they knew they would not be targetted by ETA. After the assassination in August 2000 of José María Korta, a well-known Basque nationalist who refused to pay ETA's revolutionary tax, every Basque nationalist who did not support ETA became a potential target of the organisation.

ETA simplistically divided Basque society between those who supported it and those who opposed it. The purpose of violence was to punish those who dared to speak against ETA and to reinforce the divide between the two groups. But the truth is that the ETA campaign has not achieved the full nationalisation of the Basque masses. On the contrary, the Basques' self-identification remains amazingly stable. In the Basque Country, most people have fluid identities and tend to identify with more than one country, including nations. As Figure 10 shows, in the Basque case around 60% of the population feel they are both Spanish and Basque at the same time. The percentage of those who identify themselves as only Basque is around 30% of the population and only a minority, less than 10%, identify themselves as only Spanish.

Figure 10: National Self-identification of Basque Citizens, 1981-2002
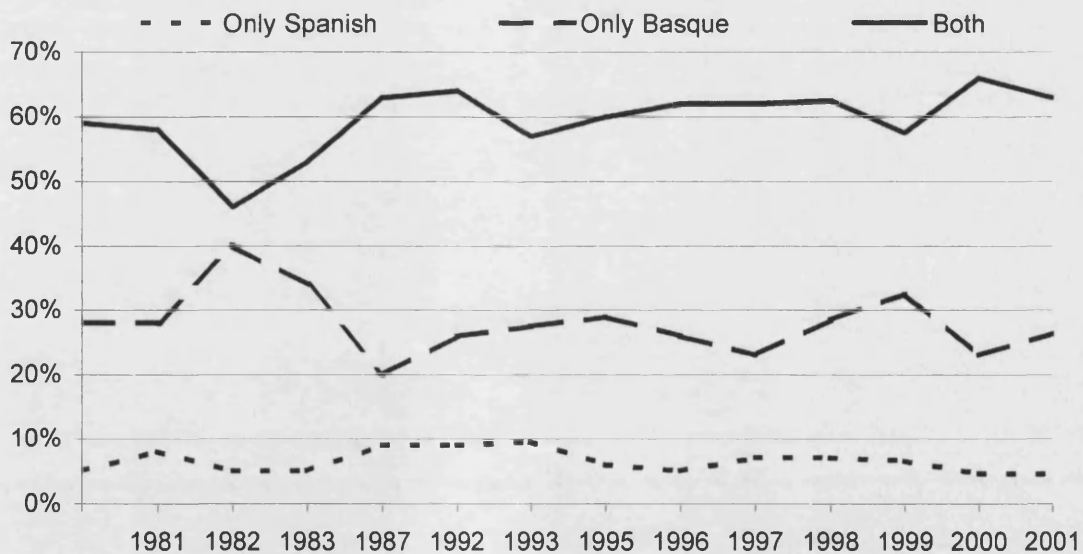
Source: Euskobarómetro UPV (www.ehu.es/cpvweb/)

In a study published by the Madrid based Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, the national consciousness of the Basques seemed to have grown between 1990, when 30% of the population defined the Basque Country as a nation, and 1996, when up to 40% of the population thought they lived in a Basque nation.[450] As a whole, the desire for independence has been relatively stable, as shown in Figure 11. The number of Basques who have some desire to see an independent Basque nation has remained the same: from 63% in 1979 to 61% in 2002.

Figure 11: Support for Independence in the Basque Country, 1979-2002
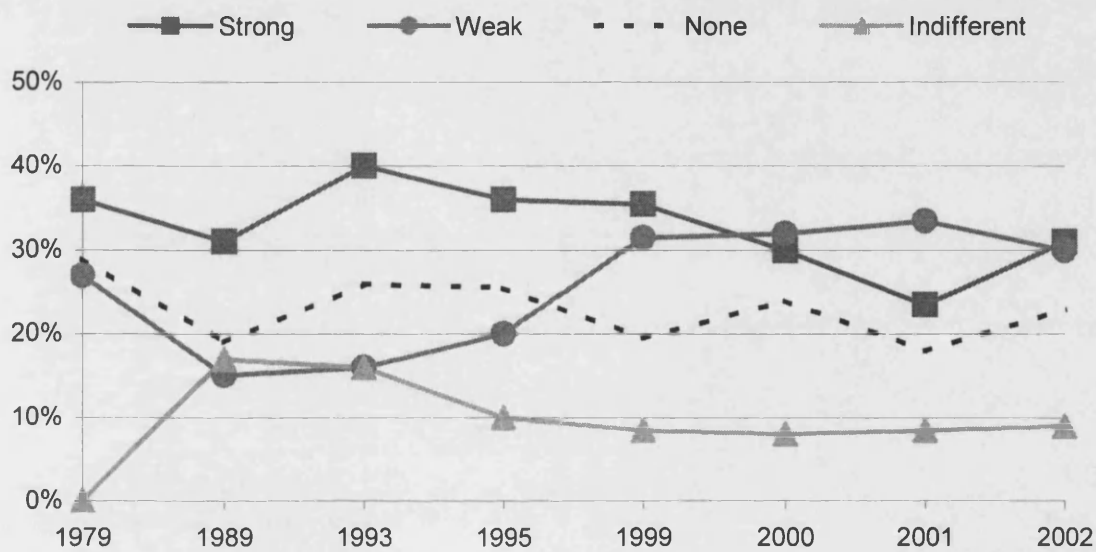
Source: Euskobarómetro UPV (www.ehu.es/cpvweb/)

However, one should be reasonably sceptical when reading these results. In such a sensitive issue as independence, the results change depending on how the question is phrased. For example, when the style of the question is direct, people tend to answer in a much more conservative way. In the already mentioned 1998 opinion poll by Félix del Moral, the question put to Basque citizens was: 'Would you be in favour or against the Basque Country being independent?'. The results showed that 44% of Basques were in favour of an independent Basque Country, while 32% opposed it and 24% had no opinion in the matter. The results differ greatly from the ones presented by the Euskobarómetro and are a good indicator of the internal division among Basques over the issue of independence and of the

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[450] Moral (1998: 25).

lack of information about what the question really means. This latter point is highlighted by Moral himself who states that when talking about independence for the Basque people, the respondents do not know what the geographical extent of the Basque people is (Basque Country only, Basque Country plus Navarre or the seven Basque Provinces?). Also, what is meant by independence: armed forces, own currency, borders? And finally, there is no agreement on how this independence should come into being. With the decision of the Basque people only? If so, how many? And, what about the consent of the Spanish people and institutions? Should they have a say? (Moral 1998: 60).

The final point to be made here is that it is not the national identity of the majority of Basques that has changed, nor their preferences for the political status of their nation. What has radically changed has been their understanding of violence and its justifications.

7.3. The Nationalist Front

In 1998 ETA and the MLNV changed, for the third time in their history, the overall strategy of their nationalist movement. In this new stage, the PNV, as well as ETA and the rest of the MLNV, tried to move to a centre-stage position in order to regain the credibility of Basque nationalism. The death of Miguel Angel Blanco showed how intertwined the fate of the Basque nationalist parties were. The reaction of Basque civil society had severely damaged the governing PNV and the popular view on ETA, while favouring the Spanish parties, also known as constitutionalists (constitucionalistas). The Basque nationalist movement also had to challenge the successful 'law and order' approach of Prime Minister Aznar.

7.3.1. 'Terrorism' as a 'State Problem'

José María Aznar had been in power since 1996, when Spaniards voted the socialist Felipe González out of office. The Popular Party (PP) ended 14 years of socialism and promised a change of policies, including bringing a tougher approach to Basque political violence.[451] During his eight years in power (1996-2004) Aznar's policies differed greatly from those of

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[451] On the electoral campaign see The Economist 24 Feburary 1996 and in the same periodical 'Festering' 14 January 1995, p. 41.

the socialists, who had had a softer approach to the Basque problem.[452] For example, during the governments of Felipe Gonzalez, ETA members would see their sentences cut if they renounced the organisation. Aznar, on the other hand, firmly kept in place the dispersion policy, by which Basque prisoners were scattered around the Spanish territory, and insisted that they served full sentences. Aznar's governments also viewed ETA as a police matter and, in principle, opposed any kind of negotiations with ETA. Another difference between González and Aznar was that, for the latter, the problem was not only ETA, but Basque nationalism as a whole. The PNV had too much of an ambivalent relation with ETA and sometimes benefited from ETA's existence.[453]

There were two reasons for Aznar's antipathy towards Basque nationalism. First of all, as a Spanish nationalist, Aznar believed the 1978 Constitution had solved the historical and institutional problem of Spain and that Basque nationalists, led by ETA, were threatening a constitutional arrangement that had the support of the majority of Spaniards.[454] His beliefs were reaffirmed when ETA tried to kill him in Madrid in April 1996, months before the general elections, when he was the leader of the opposition and had a clear chance of winning.[455] The car-bomb was detonated early in the morning on 19 April on the route Aznar took to work. The explosion destroyed much of Aznar's armour-plated car but he escaped with cuts.[456] Secondly, his animosity towards Basque nationalists was also due to the fact that since the killing of Miguel Angel Blanco in 1997, the PSOE and PP politicians in the Basque Country were increasingly targetted by ETA. Hence, for Aznar 'terrorism' was a state problem. In brief, his argument went as follows: in a democracy, the way to run politics is through elections and parliaments. ETA has not been elected by anyone, not even Basque society, and does not represent anyone. Politics should be organised by democratically elected members of parliament, not by a self-elected armed group that

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[452] Jaime (2002: 34).

[453] In a widely quoted expression from Xabier Arzalluz, the leader of the PNV: 'Some [ETA] shake the tree, without breaking it, so the walnuts fall, and others [the PNV] pick them up to divide them up' (*Unos sacuden el árbol, pero sin romperlo, para que caigan las nueces, y otros las recogen para repartirlas*). San Sebastián & Gurruchaga (2000: 65).

[454] Aznar has personally helped popularise the term 'constitutional patriotism' as a way of boosting Spanish national identity. In his own words: 'Spain's indivisibility is underwritten by the constitution of 1978 endorsed by an overwhelming majority of Spaniards - and that's that.' *The Economist*, Charlemagne José Maria Aznar, 15 September 2001, p. 48. On the Basque problem see Aznar's prologue to Jaime de Burgo's book, *Soñando con la paz* (1994).

[455] *Anuario El País* 1996, p. 179.

[456] *The Economist* , 'Basquet cases' 22 April 1995, pp. 44-45.

claims to speak for the Basque nation. ETA is a terrorist group that needs to be fought exclusively by the police. Dealing with ETA by other means would be accepting its blackmail.

By defining the political violence of ETA as 'terrorism' the state effectively mobilised its supporters but alienated, even more, the members of the MLNV. As Iosu Perales has pointed out:

> The anti-terrorist language has become a real obstacle to achieving peace. [This language] has no rigour and it is inefficient as it transforms people's perception and, worst, government policies.[457]

One of the results of defining 'terrorism' as a state problem is that politicians become statesmen who have as their main goal protecting the integrity of the state. In practical terms, this attitude led the PSOE and the PP to sign the Antiterrorist Pact in December 2000.[458] A further reason why the PSOE and the PP decided to sign the anti-terrorist pact was that their town councillors and those affiliated to them had been particularly targetted by ETA in the 1990s. A second consequence has been the initiatives of the judiciary, particularly from the Audiencia Nacional, that pursued the criminalisation of organisations that maintained links with ETA.[459] Hence, the long list of criminalisations started with the imprisonment of the leadership of the political party Herri Batasuna in 1997.[460] The removal of the Herri Batasuna leadership was followed by the criminalisation of the prisoners' association, Gestoras pro-Amnistia, and the youth organisation Jarrai.[461] Jarrai proved to be highly resistant to the initiatives of the judge Baltasar Garzon because they changed their name immediately and continued working. Garzon had to criminalise the successors of Jarrai in following years: Haika and Segi. The core of the radical nationalist world, KAS, was also criminalised in 1998, only to be refounded a year later with the name

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[457] Perales (1998: 22).

[458] The Anti-terrorist Pact, or *Acuerdo por las libertades y contra el terrorismo*, was signed in Madrid on 8 December 2000 by the general secretaries of the Political Party, Javier Arenas, and PSOE, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

[459] The Audiencia Nacional has jurisdiction over drug-trafficking, corruption and terrorism amongst other areas.

[460] The entire 23-person leadership of Herri Batasuna was imprisoned because the party had been showing a video from ETA during its 1997 electoral campaign. They were accused of 'collaboration with armed group' and were given seven-year sentences by the judge Baltasar Garzón.

[461] Audiencia Nacional, Juzgado Central de Instrucción no. 5, Sumario 33/2001-M Integración en organización terrorista, 29 October 2002.

of EKIN.[462] The press did not escape the legal initiatives and two newspapers were closed down by the police: Egin in 1998 and Egunkaria in 2002. Egin was replaced by Gara in 1998.

7.3.2. The Basque Peace Process

The above mentioned policies were damaging to both radical and moderate Basque nationalists, who saw the need to react by putting forward a new strategy based on the nationalist front.

The first event that signalled the strategy of the nationalist front was the Basque Peace Process of 1998. On 16 September 1998, ETA declared an indefinite truce with no conditions, which started two days later. A month later, the armed group restated in an interview with the BBC the seriousness of the process they had started. But how did the peace process come about? As has been mentioned already, the peace organisations had started to break the 'spiral of silence' in which Basque public opinion had been immersed. At the same time, the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland increased the pressure on ETA to find a negotiated end to violence.[463] ETA had traditionally seen the Irish case as similar to its own. Hence, when the IRA decided to disarm, pleas were made to ETA to follow the Irish example. In terms of chronology, it seemed that it was the 'Irish model' and the popular negotiations that had made ETA change its strategy and declare a truce. According to the Spanish government, ETA's cease-fire was the result of the pressure of Basque civil society. According to Ricardo Marti Fluxá, it was external pressure that had made ETA change.[464] Although this explanation made sense to outsiders, it neglected the character of ETA. ETA had never been accountable to Basque society and had always believed it were speaking for the true Basque nation. True, ETA had made strategic changes according to the political situation but it had never relied on mass popular support.

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[462] Sánchez-Cuenca (2001: 50).

[463] In 1994 the lehendakari of the Basque Country, José Antonio Ardanza, pointed out that: 'They [ETA] have seen what has happened in Ireland...and the impact has been enormous. But they need to reflect further'. In *The Economist*, 'Where is the Basque Gerry Adams?', 29 October 1994, p. 55.

[464] *Anuario El País* (2000: 150).

Contacts between the PNV and ETA materialised in a secret agreement in July 1998 by which the PNV took as its own the final goal of ETA, independence, and committed itself to declaring the Basque Statute of Autonomy as a dead end for the Basque people.[465] In return, ETA was prepared to declare a ceasefire and work for a 'negotiated way out of the conflict' (*salida negociada al conflicto*). In the words of ETA:

> According to this agreement, the signatories assumed the compromise to take decisive steps in favour of a unique sovereign institution which could embrace the whole of Euskal Herria [Basque Provinces] (...) At the same time, the PNV and EA were committed to breaking relations with the pro-Spanish forces which appeared as enemies of Euskal Herria. ETA would announce an indefinite truce of its actions. This agreement was secret and established a period of four months after which there would be an evaluation.[466]

The secret agreement between the two forces was leaked two years later by an unhappy ETA, which believed the PNV was not confrontational enough with the Spanish state.[467] In the meantime, the Basque public did not know about this secret pact but was aware that contacts were being made between Basque nationalist forces. These political contacts resumed with the signing of the Lizarra Agreement in September 1998. The agreement designed a new way of making politics that was to be based on the creation of a Basque nationalist front and presented Basque society with a 'light' version of what had been secretly decided between ETA and the PNV. A few days after the Lizarra declaration was signed, ETA declared the aforementioned truce.

The truce began a time of illusion for Basque society which allowed Basque nationalism, particularly the radical wing, to regain space in the political arena. The collaboration between the Basque government, led by Juan José Ibarretxe and Euskal Herritarrok (EH) reached up to the Basque parliament, where EH voted in favour of Ibarretxe's proposals. In the European Parliament elections of 1999, held during the ceasefire, the electorate rewarded Euskal Herritarrok for the truce and the coalition obtained an impressive 20% of the vote. The initiative of creating an assembly of Basque municipalities with representatives of the seven Basque Provinces called Udalbiltza was launched by radical nationalists with the support of other Basque political forces. It was the first time an

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[465] Roca (2002: 25).
[466] Declaración de Euskadi Ta Askatasuna al Pueblo Vasco, 3 December 1999.
[467] The ETA communiqué was published in the newspaper *Gara* on 30 April 2000.

institution covered the geographical area of what Basque nationalists call Euskal Herria, or the Basque nation covering the seven provinces. ETA, however, was not content with the pace of the confrontation with the Spanish state and ended the 14-month ceasefire on 3 December 1999.[468]

The failure of the negotiations between the state and ETA can be attributed to the mutual distrust between the two parties. The Popular Party (PP) believed the truce was only a trick of the nationalist left to regain lost political space and an opportunity for ETA to reorganise. Moreover, ETA's demands were also seen by the state as unacceptable. From Aznar's perspective, the state could not recognise the 'right to self-determination' and could not commit itself to the result of a hypothetical referendum on the future of the Basque Country, presumably one on independence.[469] That would not only mean accepting ETA's authority to discuss politics, while bypassing the Basque parliament, but it would also entail amending the Spanish Constitution. Moreover, ETA's demands for recognition of the Basque right to self-determination were already a gain as they voiced a concern shared by many Basque nationalists. It allowed ETA to find a purpose for their violence, forcing the state to discuss the issue of self-determination, while showing its willingness to negotiate if the appropriate political conditions were in place. Seeing the Basque peace process in retrospect, it seems that both parties did not believe in the possibilities that the cease-fire could open and they therefore broke the negotiations for short-term political and strategic reasons.

This hypothesis is confirmed by the way the Basque political landscape was left. The division between the Basque nationalist and the non-nationalist front, to a large extent made of Spanish nationalists, was reinforced. The Basque nationalist forces had managed to maintain and even increase the electoral representation in the Basque parliament. In the 1998 Basque elections, the ruling party, the PNV, increased by 46,000 the number of votes since the previous autonomous elections and roughly maintained its percentage of the votes. The radical Basque nationalist party, Euskal Herritarrok, obtained an extra 58,000 votes and maintained its position as the third Basque electoral force. Also the conservative Popular Party (PP), which emphasised the 'rule of law' and the 'union of the

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[468] *The Economist*, 'Back to bombs?', 4 December 1999, p. 42.
[469] *The Economist*, 'A period of calm and turbulence', 6 November 1999, p. 59.

constitutionalists' while denouncing the 'barbaric', 'fascist' and 'totalitarian' acts of ETA, increased its number of votes and moved from being the fourth political force to being second. The losers of the elections were the PSOE and IU, which lost voters to the other political parties. Although there was not much change in the composition of the chamber, the high level of participation in the elections could be interpreted as an increased interest of civil society in the peace process. In the previous 1994 elections, 60% of the electorate had voted but in 1998 the turnout rose to 70%. The political parties that had bigger increases were the extremes of the nationalist divide: the Popular Party and Euskal Herritarrok.

7.3.3. The Nationalist Divide

The Basque peace process was a complete failure and postponed any negotiations to end the Basque conflict for years to come. It reinforced both Spanish and Basque nationalists in their antagonistic views and ensured the continuation of the violent conflict. From the radical nationalist's perspective the state's policies, particularly the criminalisation of some of their organisations, were a clear sign of the existence of Spanish nationalism and its unwillingness to recognise the right of the Basque nation to decide its own future. From the state's perspective, the nationalist front was a clear attempt to initiate an 'ethnic cleansing' of non-Basque nationalists by ETA with the help of the PNV. Indeed, when the Basque president, Juan José Ibarretxe, presented a proposal in October 2003 to reform the Basque Statute of Autonomy much of the Spanish press reacted angrily saying the PNV was adopting the goals of ETA.

These views had also led to the banning of the radical nationalist party Batasuna in 2002. The Spanish authorities viewed Batasuna as an integral part of ETA and decided to ban it. The authorities argued that there were good reasons to criminalise a political party. To start with, members of Batasuna did not condemn the killings of ETA because some of their militants had a double membership of the armed group and the party. It was also well documented that on a series of occasions black-hooded men had appeared at the end of Batasuna's political rallies to shout 'Long live ETA!' (*Gora ETA*) on stage.

Two processes were running in parallel. One was in Parliament, where there was overall support for the government on the approval of the Law of Political Parties, which was especially designed to ban Batasuna. The law was approved by 87% of the chamber (304 MPs out of 349) in June 2002 and faced the opposition of only a few parties.[470] The law was especially designed to suspend Batasuna before the municipal elections of May 2003.

The second process was being carried out by judge Baltasar Garzón, who accused Batasuna of close links with ETA, including the funding of the armed group through a complex network of companies called 'Proyecto Udaletxe'.[471] In the end, Garzón suspended the activities of Batasuna for three years. The decision was confirmed by the Supreme Court on 28 March and Batasuna was finally suspended. In a desperate attempt to participate in the municipal elections of May the nationalist left attempted to get a party legalised with the name of AuB (Autodeterminaziorako Bilgunea). This was rejected by the authorities, which believed that the same people were presenting themselves under a different name. The absence of the nationalist left in those elections meant that its votes were lost or transferred to other political options, mainly the nationalists of the PNV and the left-wing Izquierda Unida (IU).

The move to ban Batasuna proved popular among the public. According to an opinion poll from the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) of September 2002, 65.4% of Spaniards supported the criminalisation of Batasuna.[472] Although it was a popular move, it was unlikely to bring ETA's political violence to an end due to the inertia that a state runs into when dealing with a 'terrorist problem'. The discourse that describes ETA as assassins or criminals forgets the fact that the armed group has a support network of a relatively stable number of Basque voters (around 15%).

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[470] The Ley Orgánica 6/2002 de Partidos Políticos was published in the Boletín Oficial de las Cortes Generales on 4 June 2002 and came into effect on 27 June 2002. The parties that opposed the law were Izquierda Unida (IU), the Galician nationalist party, the BNG, and the Basque natoinalist parties PNV and EA.

[471] Juzgado no5, Sumario 35/02Y.

[472] The poll number 2466 from the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas had a sample of 2484 people. Question 9 of the poll was 'Are you in favour, very much in favour, against or very much against the illegalisation of Batasuna?' The results were: very much in favour 28.4%; in favour 37.0%; against 11.6%; very much against 3.1%; indifferent 6.2%; don't know 10.8%; and no answer 2.8%. See: www.cis.es.

During the summer of 2003, several parts of the Basque national liberation movement were criminalised (see Figure 12). However, the gaps left by these organisations will undoubtedly be filled by others in the future.

Figure 12: Basque National Liberation Movement (BNLM) Basic network structure

International		International solidarity
Xaki		*Askapena*

ETA

Terrorist organisation

Finances		Ecology
Udaletxe empresas		Eguzki

Prisoners		Ideological Debate training
Askatasuna Etxerat		IPES-Bilbao UEU

Street violence

GRUPOS Y

Political Party

Autodeterminaziorako Bilgunea AuB

Social club-Bar		Youth groups in towns
Herriko Tabernak		Gazte Asanbladak

Mass co-ord.

KAS - EKIN

Trade Union		Ideological Debate civil disobedience
LAB		*Zumalabe ABK*

Youth

Segi

Student Union
Ikasle Abertzaleak

Media

Feminism
Egizan

Gara
Herria 2000
Eliza
Kale Gorria
Eraiki

High Activity Organisations
Central Organisations of the BNLM
Organisations declared illegal Spanish courts   *Italics*

Source: Kaldor & Muro (2003: 177)

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7.4. Conclusion

Since the death of Franco in 1975, Spanish democracy has gone a long way. On top of the democratisation process, the state has officially engaged in political negotiations with ETA at least three times. None of these negotiations, however, has managed to secure a successful outcome. Spaniards rate 'terrorism' as their second biggest problem after unemployment and there can be no doubt that the issue of violence endangers the social and economic development of the Basque lands. The on-going violence can be seen as a failure of the Basque elites but, more importantly, it is Spain's greatest shortcoming as a democracy.

A violent nationalist movement continues to attract support from its sympathisers because its ideological discourse 'resonates' with people. As explained above, radical Basque nationalism continues to operate with a nostalgic discourse towards the Basque Golden Age and refuses to accept that Spain is a fully-fledged democracy, as it does not recognise the right of the Basque nation to secede. In this last stage, the radical nationalists' Golden Age is based on an understanding that, during the Civil War and Francoism, the ethnic division between Basques and Spaniards was clearly recognisable. In the plurality of the 21st century one of the strategies of radical nationalists has been to enforce that ethnic division through the 'nationalist front'. As some of the opinion polls have suggested, this effort to establish a dichotomy between 'us' and 'them' has proven ineffective and more people within the Basque Provinces realise ETA's violence is not a symptom of a problem but the problem in itself.

At the tactical level, Radical Basque nationalism's dependency on violence is a factor that has facilitated the continuation of the conflict. The long history of sacrificice and suffering makes it difficult for either of the two parties to find a negotiatied end to violence. The spiral of violence has taken many lives and there is always blood that calls for revenge. Hence, a durable settlement will have to establish a reconciliation mechanism that points out who the 'victims' and the 'perpetrators' were during the conflict. In the world of nationalist violence, this will be one of the hardest conundrums to solve.

CONCLUSION

In November 2003 I was giving the final touches to this thesis when the première of Julio Medem's *Basque Ball, The Skin against the Stone* was shown at the London Film Festival. The documentary had come out in Spain a few months earlier and had proved highly controversial. Not only were leaders of Basque political parties being interviewed as well as victims of violence but, for the first time ever, those who supported ETA appeared on screen.[473] Much of the Spanish press was outraged at how the film provided a legitimate platform for radical nationalists to present their views on the Basque conflict. Supporters of ETA appeared in the film outlining why violence was still necessary. However, according to director Julio Medem, the goal of the film was to give an equal chance to all those involved in the conflict to present their views. By putting together all available perspectives in a documentary, Medem attempted to make the viewer aware of the diversity of opinions on ways of defining the Basque conflict.

In the Basque conflict, one should distinguish at least two levels: the first is military and involves the Spanish state and ETA; the second is political and mainly involves the Basque people themselves. Some would argue that there is a third on-going confrontation between Spaniards and Basques, but this is largely a nationalist construct. Among those who argue for the existence of this third conflict, one could count Basque radical nationalists who believe their 'army', ETA, is staging the last epic battle of a millenarian war between the Basque and Spanish nations. The largely mythical component of radical Basque nationalism (as with most nationalisms) has provoked strong reactions from opponents. In the worst scenarios, the critics of radical Basque nationalism have attempted to silence any of their ideological expressions. The showing of *Basque Ball* provides a good example but there are others: the closing down of the newspapers *Egin* (1998) and *Egunkaria* (2003), the banning of youth organisations - *Jarrai (1999), Haika (2001) and Segi (2002)* -, prisoner's associations - *Askatasuna* (2002) and *Gestoras Pro-Amnistia* (2002) - and the

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[473] In Spain, broadcasting ETA members or supporters voicing their views is a crime, *apologia del terrrorismo*, which is punished with heavy sentences and fines. Communications companies are often cautious and impose self-censorship when talking about the Basque conflict. At the same time, the government is quick in banning pieces of journalism which might support ETA. For example, in October 1998 the BBC's programme *Correspondent* broadcasted *Coming in from the cold*, an interview with ETA leaders who explained why had they declared a ceasefire. The programme was only shown on the regional TV station TV3.

controversial banning of the political party *Batasuna* in 2003. Although there are sound legal grounds for most of these actions, it remains to be seen if the criminalisation of nationalist organisations brings the Basque conflict closer to an end. It is not organisations but people that need to change their ideology if the Basque conflict is to end any time soon. And what reality stubbornly shows is that by the Spanish authorities undertaking a siege of radical nationalists, the internal cohesiveness of the collective increases. Police actions and judicial initiatives against ETA's network are perceived by radical nationalists as yet another sign of Spanish repression, injustice and national malice. And the crucial task radical ideologues have to undertake is to convince all Basques of the futility of seeking protection from an undemocratic state such as Spain (and to a certain extent France) but, more importantly, to show their compatriots that their goals and methods are a natural, spontaneous and morally right expression of Basqueness. If law offers no protection, revolt will surely do. Or in the words of Edmund Burke, 'People crushed by law have no hopes but from power. If laws are their enemies, they will be enemies to laws; and those who have much to hope and nothing to lose, will always be dangerous'.[474]

But regardless of whether Spain's public policies work or not, it is clear that more studies on radical Basque nationalism are needed. The more studies there are available on the roots and causes of the Basque problem, the closer policy-makers will be to devising mechanisms to end it. This thesis is a modest contribution to an already vast and fruitful field of Basque studies. Although I wish this thesis might contribute to the end of violence in both Spain and France I am also conscious of the limited impact of academic work. Moreover, I remember the Basque anthropologist Joseba Zulaika once telling me that both academic explanations and academics ourselves are part of the Basque jigsaw. In the following pages, I will summarise my arguments.

I started by discussing the reasons why people sacrifice for the Basque nation. What is it that impels people to sacrifice their lives for something as intangible as the national ideal? A perplexing question for any ethnonationalist conflict, this is even more acute in the Basque case, especially if we bear in mind that the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre are two of the wealthiest regions in Spain. The chapter reviewed the contributions

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[474] Edmund Burke's letter to Charles James Fox on 8 October 1772.

that had approached the issue of ETA's violence from a historical and positivistic perspective, but also those which attempted to identify less obvious elements of Basque nationalism that could be useful in understanding Basque violence. After reviewing some of the major books in the field, I concluded by underlining the limitations of focusing exclusively on ETA. An understanding of ETA's motives, methods and objectives could not be separated from a thorough analysis of radical Basque nationalism. Violence and ethnicity were two sides of the same coin and although they could be separated for analytical purposes, in reality they were intimately linked. Some studies had focused on ETA's ideology in the 1970s and 1980s and revealed it to be a combination of socialism, third world struggles and traditional Basque nationalism. For these authors, it was the combination of Francoism and ETA's ideology that explained its turn to violence. Although crucially important as a precipitant, Francoism was not the independent variable that explained the birth of ETA. If that had been the case, other stateless nations which also suffered under Francoism (e.g. Catalonia and Galicia) would have developed a similar movement to that of ETA.[475] Moreover, if Francoism was the cause for the birth of ETA one could sensibly assume that ETA was anti-Francoist. Why then, did it not disband after the death of the dictator in 1975? Why did it not disband after the prospect of democracy in Spain started to establish itself? As Gurutz Jáuregui has proven elsewhere, ETA was not anti-Francoist but anti-Spanish, as it had its intellectual origins in the more traditional Basque nationalism of Sabino Arana (Jáuregui 1981: 460). From this perspective, ETA should not be seen as an organisation born to overthrow Franco but as a nationalist organisation that wanted the political independence of the Basque nation. This meant that whereas the socialist component could be gradually abandoned, the nationalist ideal remained the backbone of ETA's ideology.

My next argument concerned the idea of the Basque Golden Age (chapter 2). Defined as a myth, the Golden Age was a narrative that contained both factual and imagined events and could be found in numerous Basque poems, legends and novels. The chapter pointed out

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[475] Having said that, in the 1980s both Catalonia and Galicia developed their own terrorist groups. The Catalan *Terra Lliure* was born in 1979 with the goal of establishing an independent Marxist state which would cover both Catalonia and Valencia but finally disbanded in 1991. In Galicia, the *Ejército Guerrilleiro do Pobo Galego Ceibe* was also responsible for small-scale bombing attacks beginning in 1987. Finally, a similar movement was developed in the Canary Islands from 1977 to 1979, the *Movimiento para la Autodeterminación e Independencia del Archipiélago Canario* (MPAIAC). The difference between these three organisations and ETA is that whereas the latter managed to maintain continuing support the others had to disband because of popular opposition. See Laitin (1995: 9).

that one should pay more attention to the function of the myth than to its content. The Golden Age helps reinforcing trans-generational continuity and acts as a powerful reminder of the nation's glorious ethnic past. As a myth it is usually written and imagined once the Golden Age is long gone. However, it has a canonical effect as it determines the actions of nationalist leaders. The Golden Age impels them to initiate political action and regain the historical greatness of the nation. I also argued that the Basque case was not alone in this matter: most national movements have traced the formation and development of the nation throughout history to legitimise their political programme and obtain recognition from other nations. I also pointed out that for the myth to be effective, the narrative had to be faithful to some commonly accepted truth and that pure inventions in the Hobsbawmian sense were ineffective. For example, the idea that in pre-modern times Basques were a chosen people, a pure race and an independent nation that had never been invaded owes much to the historical fact that as an ethnic group the Basques had always been relatively isolated. Whether this was due to the Basques' will to remain independent or the unwillingness of others to invade remains a matter of discussion. But that is not how authors such as Juan Martínez de Zaldivia, Ernesto Garibay y Zamalloa, Andrés de Poza and Father Manuel de Larramendi viewed it, and their works contributed to the creation of a literary tradition that would reproduce the myth of the Basque Golden Age. Although politically irrelevant in pre-modern times, the full impact of the Golden Age was felt in the 19th century.

Chapter three went on to emphasise the centrality of the Golden Age in the origins of Basque nationalism. The Golden Age had come to take centre stage in the nationalist movement founded by Sabino Arana through the influence of both Carlism and the Basque romantic literature known as foralism (*fuerismo*). Both these movements were what we may call 'raw materials' on which Basque nationalism built its political ideology. Following their participation in the Carlist Wars many Basques became politicised and self-defined themselves as Basque, rather than anything else. Foralism was also crucial in the awakening of the Basque historical consciousness, although its impact was limited to the reading public. Arana himself could be seen as a point of intersection between these two movements. In his youth Sabino Arana, and his brother Luis, read the foralist works of romantic authors and were, like their father, deeply committed to Carlism. Central to these movements was the myth of the Golden Age. Both Carlism and foralism idealised the

Basque past prior to industrialisation. For these movements, the deeply religious Basque nation had been chosen by God to live in an harmonious Arcadia, protected from Spaniards and other foreigners by its mountains and its sacred language, the Euskara. However, from a very early age both Sabino and Luis Arana could easily see that the Basque Arcadia they read about in books did not exist anymore. Instead, the heavy industrialisation at the end of the 19th century had poured capital into the Basque lands, bringing thousands of migrants, pollution and what they saw as moral and racial decline. The Basque landscape was rapidly transformed and industrial shanty towns mushroomed to host migrants from other regions, mostly non-Basques. These immigrants were seen by the Aranas as a threat to Basque identity and morals and they reacted by creating Basque nationalism, a movement that could restore the greatness of Basques.

I then considered the development of Basque nationalism as a political movement. Chapter four described how during the period between the death of Arana in 1903 and the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939, the Basque nationalist movement had been divided into moderates and radicals. Here I also laid the conceptual and analytical framework that was the basis of the study of radical Basque nationalism, and put forward a way of looking at the nationalist movement that focused on party organisational strategies and emphasised both internal and external constraints. I also argued that the development of Basque nationalism could fit Miroslav Hroch's periodization: Phase A (the period of scholarly interest), Phase B (the period of patriotic agitation) and Phase C (the rise of a mass national movement) (Hroch 2000: 23). Mainly historical, the chapter established the continuity between Arana and the radicals up to the Civil War (1936-39). Establishing that continuity was very important, because as Gurutz Jáuregui and José Luis de la Granja have pointed out, both Arana and the radicals (Acción Nacionalista Vasca, for example) would heavily influence ETA during Francoism.

There followed an analysis of the birth of the armed group ETA and the development of a cohesive, yet evolving, radical Basque nationalism. With the birth of ETA, a new generation of young nationalists signalled the end of an era marked by the PNV's hegemony in Basque affairs. The ideology of ETA was a combination of Marxism and traditional Basque nationalism. The use of violence was copied from third world struggles. I also explained how Francoism clumsily tried to control ETA by suspending civil liberties,

interrogating large numbers of supporters, etc. The Francoist policy of repression produced the opposite outcomes to those which it sought and provided ETA with more support and potential new recruits. As Mao Tse Tung would put it, Francoism turned the popular masses into water, where the fish, namely ETA, could swim. Chapter five also determined the internal splits ETA went through in the 1970s and showed that whereas Marxism was a bitter source of disagreement, nationalism and violence were cohesive factors. The state of permanent war and the demonisation of the 'other' allowed for internal differences to be smoothed over and increased the cohesiveness of the group. It is also during Francoism that we can see the formal emergence of radical Basque nationalism. Whereas in the early decades of the 20th century there was a group of radicals within the PNV who were clearly separatist, their identity was situational. In other words, they were defined by opposition to the moderates of the PNV (who just wanted autonomy), not because they had a completely different identity. However, during Francoism a completely different blend of nationalism emerges, and that is radical Basque nationalism. For operational purposes I defined radical Basque nationalism as a 'nationalist movement with particular myths and symbols that advocates the independence of the Basque nation through violent means'.

I then turned to ETA and radical Basque nationalism during the political transition to and the consolidation of Spanish democracy. In chapter six I briefly explored the difficulties of the transition period and the different characteristics it had in the Basque lands, as well as the opposition of ETA to the democratisation process and its attempts to derail it. ETA saw parliamentary democracy as nothing more than a cosmetic change to the authoritarian nature of Spain. It did not matter whether Spain was a dictatorship or a democracy, Basques were not allowed to become an independent nation. Another very interesting aspect of ETA during the first years of democracy was emphasised; the transition from a secret insurgent group to a social movement. The organisational growth of ETA ended up as a configuration of a constellation of groups linked by the nationalist struggle and led by an ever-active ETA. The point of ETA was always to prove that nothing had changed after Francoism and that Spain continued to oppress Basques. The question that logically needs to be asked is how ETA managed to enjoy continued support if this was untrue. Unfortunately, up to the late 1980s ETA's strategic assessment of Spain was partially correct. The PSOE governments reacted to ETA's actions with arrests, tortures, and so on. The most important

authoritarian reaction from Spain was the creation of the state-funded paramilitary group, GAL (*Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación*).

The last chapter analysed ETA's actions from 1989 to the present day. The year 1989 was taken as a crucial one as it was the year when the Algiers negotiations failed. As an attempt to find a negotiated agreement to the issue of violence, Algiers was crucially important. It was also important as a demonstration that both the state and ETA were unwilling to find a compromise. By the early 1990s, the support of Basque society for ETA had sharply declined and many demanded the disbanding of the armed group. This movement was strengthened after the death in the summer of 1998 of the town councillor Miguel Angel Blanco, after which many peace movements became very active. The internal division of the Basque people between nationalists and non-nationalists made the leader of Basque nationalism, the PNV, press the panic button and an agreement with ETA was signed to establish a nationalist front. The front failed and the Spanish government, at the time led by the conservative Prime Minister José María Aznar, prepared to counter-attack with a set of police and judicial actions specially designed to isolate ETA.

Implications of the Research

My central concern in this thesis, and its most important contribution, has been to identify the factors that dispose some Basques to a violent solution. In my analysis I have identified five such factors:

1. **Ethnicity**. Radical Basque nationalism relies heavily on ethnicity to define the boundaries of the Basque nation. This means that the core of the nation is formed by an ethnic group which shares a sense of kinship, group solidarity, and common culture. According to Max Weber, members of an ethnic group 'entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration'.[476] An essential requisite for the definition of the ethnic group is the establishment of a boundary with outside groups. Boundaries do not need to be stable. National

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[476] See Economy and Society, particularly the section on Ethnic Groups. Weber (1978: 385-398).

communities may redefine who the outsider is and, following Frederick Barth, what the ethnic boundary is altogether. In the Basque case, that means that the claims made by nationalists to a common ethnic descent have evolved. Whereas at the time of Sabino Arana a great emphasis was put on race and physical characteristics (phrenology, etc.) in order to identify a 'Basque person', after the Holocaust the importance of race declined.[477] Ethnicity is emphasised by radical Basque nationalism as it fulfils a double function: it emphasises a common bond and it creates a boundary with the outsiders. In radical Basque nationalism both elements are present, the second one being more important. For all nationalists, defining the subject that is going to exercise the right to self-determination is crucially important, hence the need to create and maintain a clearly identifiable boundary between Spaniards and Basques. So how will a Basque be defined? For radical nationalists, being Basque does not depend on genes or surnames but on active participation in the national struggle. A 'real Basque' will identify the nation's oppression by foreign forces and will do something to regain the lost freedom. This will be done through participation in nationalist organisations, most importantly in ETA. Although this might not be a verifiable and objective way of deciding whether or not someone belongs to the Basque nation, what is important is that it works. As already pointed out by Weber, the actual content of the ethnic boundary is not as important as whether it is perceived by the designated members to be the truthful representation of a social reality. In the Basque case, the evolution from objective categories such as birth or residence to more flexible criteria has secured continuing support for the nationalist cause.

2. **Tradition of radicalism.** One of the main contributions of the thesis has been to establish the long tradition of radical Basque nationalism from the beginning of the 20th century up to the present day. From this perspective, radical Basque nationalism is not born at the same time as ETA but precedes it by at least 60 years. Basque nationalism as a movement has always been divided between moderates and radicals. There is no doubt that what we can call radical Basque nationalism stood

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[477] However, the Basques continue to fascinate geneticists such as Cavalli-Sforza, who found quite a high level of Rhesus negative gene (RH-) in the Basque Provinces. According to Jeremy MacClancy, studies 'carried out in the French Basque Provinces' have shown the highest figure of RH- recorded anywhere in the world. See MacClancy (1993: 101).

for different things in the early 20th century than it does at the beginning of the 21st century. For example, the idea of violence as a legitimate means hangs around radical nationalists in the 1920s and 1930s, but it is only firmly established with the birth of ETA. However, the similarities and line of continuity had to be reconstructed, particularly when ETA members acknowledged the influence previous radical traditions within Basque nationalism had on their ideology.[478] This thesis has provided a detailed account of how violence is incorporated in the ideology of ETA and how it gradually becomes an end rather than a means. Violence, one may argue, has grown within Basque nationalism to finally become an agent by itself.

3. **Golden Age.** A central argument of this study has been to stress the importance of the myth of the Golden Age for Basque nationalism. It is important to emphasise, however, that this is not an exclusive feature of the Basque nationalist movement. To my knowledge, all nationalisms are able to identify at least one point in time when the nation was an example of virtue and glorious splendour. This epoch can take different forms; from scientific discovery and economic prosperity to religious ascetism, military victories, and political achievements. What is important about the Golden Age is not its textual content but the potential to initiate political action when a mood of decline is prevalent. A glorious period usually transcends time and can become a reference point or guiding light. In other words, the glorious Golden Age can be mobilised by nationalist elites to trigger a political action that restores the Golden Age. For Basque nationalists, the Golden Age was a pre-modern time in which the Basque nation was seen to have distinct characteristics. It could be argued that explaining radical Basque nationalism by linking ethnicity and violence is a test of the explanatory value of ethno-symbolism. So far, one of the core arguments has been the radical Basque nationalists' emphasis on regeneration. Ethno-symbolism has also proven useful in explaining the structure of that nationalist discourse, as well as why the message resonated with the masses. The explanation is simple. There is a line of continuity from the Basque Golden Age, through the Basque romantics and nationalists, up to ETA members. By framing radical discourse

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[478] See Oldartzen, which recognizes that ETA continues the path of ANV (Oldartzen Nuestro Proyecto Politico First document, page 42).

within the history of myths, legends and memories of the Basque homeland, ETA has managed to maintain a significantly stable level of support.

4. **Nostalgia**. An associated consequence of this research has been the resurgence of nostalgia as an analytical concept. Although often mentioned *en passant*, the issue of nostalgia has been neglected since the major works of Armstrong (1982) and Smith (1986). Nostalgia is particularly important when viewed in relation to a glorious past. In the Basque case, the Golden Age acts as a powerful reminder of both the current decline and the distant splendour. Although nostalgia, together with melancholy, is usually associated with images of passivity and depression, this image could not be more misguiding for nationalist movements in which nostalgia can be a powerful triggering event. In fact, this thesis defines Basque nationalism as essentially nostalgic. But as has already been mentioned, most nationalisms have a Golden Age and are not violent. What then accounts for violence? Violence, it is often said, is born out of certain political circumstances. Although I generally agree with this view I think there is an essential element of nationalism that may predate violence and specific political circumstances; namely, nostalgia. I argue that it is the relationship between nationalism and nostalgia (defined as a sentimental yearning for a period of the past) that gives us some clues as to why certain nationalist movements resort to violence. In order to produce that violent outcome, I would argue that both political circumstances and the nostalgic attitude towards the Golden Age are needed. Nostalgia is useful for radical Basque nationalists as it allows them to refer to the past in order to generate political mobilisation in the present. Nostalgia can be seen as a selective and changing feeling. Sabino Arana, for example, was nostalgic about the lost Golden Age. Radical nationalists, on the other hand, feel nostalgia when they remember the unity of the Basque nation during the Civil War but also in the fight against Francoism. However, one should escape easy generalisations as no direct causality can be drawn between the Golden Age, nostalgia and violence. In other words, nostalgia does not have predictive value but is useful in understanding the distinctive 'character' of a nationalist movement. The doctrine of nationalism is unified but there are different kinds of political nationalist movements. As Hannah Arendt pointed out in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 'all

ideologies contain totalitarian elements, but these are fully developed only by totalitarian movements'.[479]

5. **Violence.** Including violence as one of the causes of violence seems to be a self-defeating argument and, at best, a tautology. However, most scholars who study violence agree that it is a self-reproducing phenomenon and that, at a given point, violence needs to be explained by a previous history of violence. Violence seems to take on a life of its own; it becomes both a cause and a consequence of itself. Violence cannot be counted as the only prior factor that causes present violence but it is certainly one that helps in reproducing the conflict. In the Basque case, violence is seen as a legitimate and 'decisive means' to pursue political goals.[480] For radical nationalists violence fulfils a double objective: first, it continues a dignifying and millenarian struggle between Basques and Spaniards; second, violence uncovers the oppressive nature of Spain and brings Basques closer to their destiny: to rebuild the Golden Age.

The five factors identified above - ethnicity, tradition of radicalism, Golden Age, nostalgia and violence - are elements that help us understand the 'character' and disposition of radical Basque nationalism towards violence. However, they cannot fully explain ETA's political violence by themselves: they need to be combined with certain political circumstances to have explanatory value. And these are the political circumstances that allow Basque radical discourse of the Golden Age to 'resonate' among the people. During Francoism, radical nationalists did not have a problem in finding social support since the lack of freedoms was widely felt. After the death of the dictator, a 'partially failed' political transition in the Basque Country allowed radical nationalists to continue to galvanise a significant support. However, since the 1990s support for radical nationalism has been in decline and it is today small yet stable. This is due to the fact that both ETA's discourse and methods are seen as old-fashioned, vile, and even counterproductive for Basque independence.

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[479] Arendt (1966: 470).
[480] According to Max Weber the 'decisive means for politics is violence'. See Politics as a Vocation reprinted in Weber (1991:121).

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