

## **BASQUE LANGUAGE LOYALISM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY: STRENGTHS AND FAILINGS**

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Over the last few years we Basque language loyalists, particularly the young and recently young among us, have been told on more than one occasion that we do not sufficiently value the words and acts of our predecessors (1); and that, as a result, when it comes to pro-Basque activity we tend all too often to wander down the same well-trodden paths, starting from square one yet again.

One can hardly say that this criticism is completely unjustified (2), even if it only offers part of the full story. At any rate, those Basques who more than feeling shame at being a 'people without a history' seem to revel in it do have a need (and an urgent need at that) to try and strengthen links with their predecessors through learning about them. The Basque people will hardly create and bring to the world a valid home-grown outlook on its own past whilst it acts according to instructions and on premisses established by others who in the main are ignorant of its ethnocultural nature. For those of us Basques who are by now only too aware that history can be put to work for diverse objectives there is one thing I think we ought to ask of our own history: perspective. And it is quite clear that we will hardly succeed in gaining that as long as we remain attached, all too comfortably attached, to ideological axioms of one or another sort as simple as they are blinding. I would even go so far as to suggest that the restlessness, dislocations and angers that our people have experienced over the last few years have to some extent occurred as a consequence of that very lack of perspective; and that, as a result, though confession and repentance as such are hardly necessary, there are things in that respect that we should revise and correct.

In this effort to gain perspective, even if only because of links of the sort that closeness in time tends to generate, events in the first part of this century can in no way be ignored: let us say, for the sake of setting boundary years, the forty year period from about 1896-8 till 1937 (3). In comparison to what had been said and done up until then Basque language activism in that period underwent a phase of thorough renewal. That is of course quite well known both at home and abroad. And, furthermore, it is also common knowledge that the features of that renewal have to date been insufficiently studied: even though serious steps are beginning to be taken to remedy that deficiency (4), one cannot forget that even the sources for that period have until very recently gone uncollected and unpublished. The following sketchy notes are thus but a first attempt at emphasizing the need for profound research and more cautious reflection.

The nineteenth century had brought substantial changes to the organisation of the Basque Country: through political-operational transformations (the loss of charter rights being their source), through the changes wrought in the econo-technical foundations of traditional social organization and through the remarkable ethnocultural alterations in that society. In the last quarter of the century, econo-technical bases and procedures in Biscay in particular (but not only there) had undergone a virulent transformation,

speeding up the process of dislocation or rupture in Basque society: the profound changes caused a number of new and serious problems, but also offered considerable hopes and opportunities.

It is widely known that the Basque Country had ceased to be absolutely monolingual a long time ago. There can be no doubt that even in the most Basque speaking areas north of the watershed running into the Bay of Biscay there were many who, in addition to the native language, used another and that frequently more often than Basque itself: seamen and traders, clergy and authorities, teachers, doctors and lawyers, in a word all those Basques who as a result of their training or professional activity had an on-going relationship of whatever kind with people from outside the Basque Country or with non-Basque speakers within, in general and, when it came to writing, almost invariably, dealt in those other languages, usually French or Spanish. It seems that many of these people could be described as diglossic bilinguals (5). One special case, moreover, is worthy of note: in the larger urban areas and provincial capitals especially, over and above the individuals already mentioned, there was a fair number of de-ethnicized inhabitants not integrated in the Basque ethnoculture.

Despite all these limitations and preconditions, boundaries, exceptions and attacks against it, Basque and Basque speakers, had, in good measure, managed to hold out against the wave of foreign languages (6). Now, however, they could no longer do so. What for a long time had been a gradual loss of strength on the part of the Basque-speaking population became a serious haemorrhage almost in one fell swoop (7). The new forms of interaction between the two ethnolinguistic groups considerably accelerated the language shift. Basque speakers who moved from their farms and hamlets in search of jobs in the bustling provincial capitals and industrial centres had to leave an unchanging and more closed sort of society and learn to swim in the waters of more 'modern' life-styles, value-systems, behaviours, opinions and beliefs that were dominant in developed Western Europe, out of a *Gemeinschaft* setting into a *Gesellschaft* kind of societal structure, moving into areas where non-Basque speaking neighbours, whether local or immigrants, were masters both in terms of numbers and authority (8).

With regard to the alterations in the sociocultural make-up of the Basque Country, the generation of Basques who came down from the farms to urban areas were not the only source of population movement, perhaps not even the main one. From 1877 onwards (especially until 1900) population growth in Biscay (and, to a lesser extent, in the province of Gipuzkoa) was extremely rapid, principally on account of non-Basque speaking immigrants looking for work. Neither the areas that they went to live in (around Bilbao, the left bank of the Ibaizabal estuary), nor the social status of Basque at that time (i.e. the degree of esteem in which Basques held their own language), nor the limited level of control that those Basques exercised over the economy and centres of power in their society were conducive to those non-Basque speaking immigrant workers feeling the need to learn Basque. The outcome, in most cases, was a foregone conclusion.

Thus, non-speakers of Basque in general and their establishment in particular had, as the new situation took root, the means to spread their language among Basque speakers. Not only did Basque speakers who wished to get ahead in various sectors of society now need to know Spanish; they also had to live and deal with non-speakers of Basque

on a daily basis. Similarly, the grass-root Basques who for the time being carried on in their outlying farm-house world or their seaside fishing hamlet would have seen clearly that to be a Basque of any standing one of the most decisive new conditions was being not merely a stumbling speaker of the new language, but a competent one. From then on Spanish had to be mastered not only for Spanish speaking environments but also Basque speaking ones, if one was to achieve a certain respect, a certain standing, a certain status in society (9). To put it in the words of one who had good reason to know, 'you'll often hear these expressions: where's Basque any good? What's Basque good for?' (Bustintza, 1981: 104). So Basque speakers displayed a certain eagerness to learn Spanish; or, if they didn't consider themselves capable of doing so, they would at least try to ensure that their sons and daughters were unburdened of that disability and mark of lowliness (10). The phenomenon of language spread known to Basques down over the centuries, apparently conducive to a stable diglossic situation (11), was developing just then into language shift (Fishman et al., 1985). To use the words of A. Campion (1907: 176), who paid more attention than most to the topic of language change, 'the seriousness of the present crisis is due to the fact that the abandonment of Basque is in the throes of passing from the category of a subconscious, involuntary event to that of a voluntary, conscious one, deliberately perpetrated in pursuit of ignominious applause'. And thus, in the end, married couples who had learnt only Basque in childhood, having later become Spanish speakers, started directly and without giving much forethought to the matter to speak to their offspring at home in Spanish (12). Neighbourhood, small town life and friendship-groups which, at the same time as hearth and home, had been the repository and breeding-ground of Basque and Basque-ness were also becoming castilianized: fewer and fewer were the roles and relations of Basque with Basque necessarily enacted in the Basque language; more and more numerous were those of Basque with Spanish speaker necessarily enacted in Spanish.

In this way those nineteenth century political-operational, econo-technical and demographic changes broke up and wiped out the centuries-old isolation of Basque society. And with the destruction of the isolating boundaries Spanish and Basque were to confront each other and struggle fiercely together: Basque and Spanish were becoming enemies battling for the control of the same domains, situations and role-relations in society, which up until then had been the prerogative of one *or* the other language, rarely of one *and* the other. Leaving certain functions aside as exceptions, it is, however, well-known that 'linguistic functional redundancy cannot be maintained intergenerationally' (Fishman, 1985: 45). And that, as a result, the language offering the most potent societal satisfactions, 'rewards and sanctions associated with it wins out' (Fishman, *idem*). And the Basque speech community was not proving to be an exception to this rule.

What is more, the wave of Spanish-speaking immigration flowing into many Basque towns and villages in just a few short years, the schooling -increasingly widespread- of the new generations in Spanish and the migration of many young Basques from the hill-farms to urban industrial environments, frequently bringing cross-language mixed marriages in its wake, had a second sort of effect: the Basque that was being spoken less and less was from day to day was being increasingly influenced by the Spanish language. It thus comes as no surprise that, as this language contact took such an unbalanced form, language interference should appear on an unprecedented scale and that the transference should take place from powerful Spanish in the direction of weak Basque. Though it is not very difficult to find traces and remains of Basque in the

Spanish of Bilbao and thereabouts (3), of Navarre (J. M. Iribarren) or the province of Araba (G. López Guereñu, F. Baraibar), those signs and their like were next to nothing compared with the change being wrought in the heart of Basque by Spanish (and, it seems, to a lesser degree by French).

Receiving input from other languages was not in itself a harmful novelty for Basque: whilst the interferences stayed within limits and did not violently destabilize the very foundations of language structure and as long as those occasional imports from other languages gave sufficient time for their integration into the overall framework of the language, they had been acceptable and even beneficial to Basque over the centuries (Urquijo, 1920: 13). But in this new phase of language contact Basque became an outright loser rather than a simple importer. For now Spanish was making deep inroads, destroying all sense of balance and restraint, of timing and measure, particularly in the ears and on the lips of the Basques enmeshed in that modern econo-technical life-style. Thus, modern Basque speakers sensed more and more internal difficulties when it came to talking as fluently and skilfully as needed in their mother tongue in an ever increasing number of spheres of life, professional and other activities. Those townsfolk were gradually losing control, creativity and depth in their way of speaking Basque; and at the same time were blunting beyond repair the easy flowing lively bitter-sweet ‘gift of the gab’ that people find so necessary in everyday social intercourse. Unamuno (Ugalde, 1979: 17, 18) was therefore by no means off the mark when he said the following: ‘Basque is weakening (...) in two ways: in breadth and in intensity (...). It is weakening in intensity insofar as Basque spoken nowadays has as admixture of words of Spanish origin which is increasing from day to day; it is also from day to day becoming more simplified and losing more of its character’.

This phenomenon, which, in the rapid passage towards Spanish monolingualism, was occurring especially among modernized Basques in urban industrial environments, was not however limited only to such situations. Basque speakers in the farthest-flung villages and hamlets were also increasingly in contact with Spanish speaking or bilingual town-dwellers with a poor command of Basque. And all those contacts, even if to a lesser degree, were basically pulling in the same direction: towards a falling-off in Basque language skills. Those Spanish-language-liking young women who moved into town as maids, waitresses or childminders, for example, wouldn’t have been, if we are to believe what Azkue and Urruzuno wrote in *Euskaltzale* or *Ibaizabal*, the most inappropriate representatives of those ordinary people who, frequently in attempts to ‘improve’ themselves, spoke in a rusty Basque undergoing corrosion in the brine of Spanish. It seems that an ever-broadening mass of people was unwittingly becoming Spanish both in language used and style of Basque, as the skilful storyteller of Elgoibar was to say (*Euskaltzale*, 1898: 56).

All this language loss at both the individual and societal level was nevertheless not occurring without suffering; as J. A. Fishman (1985: 66) has put it, when referring to language loss phenomena of this type: ‘What we must conclude from B --> A = B is *extremely great dislocation*’. And it seems that to a great extent things happened just that way in this case too: with ‘excruciatingly painful and disruptive dislocation’ (Fishman, *idem*). Indeed, one must not forget that those nineteenth century econo-technical, migratory and political-operational changes encountered and produced fierce enemies and opponents as well as eager disciples among Basques: particularly among leading figures, well-versed townspeople or (ex-)office-holders, though not only

amongst these. The following three groups of citizens at least should be taken into account:

- traditionalists who felt that the new pattern of society arising from the loss of charter rights and from the modernization process was against their interests and desired objectives;
- supporters of progress who, having staked their future on those changes, had come to realize that the outcomes with regard to both the reward system (upward social mobility) and the loss of their own group's identity were considerably scunter than they had believed when laying their stakes,
- prenationalist élites which had always existed in an indeterminate number among local pundits, people who knew that societal progress does not inevitably have to be obtained through the loss of one's own people-ness and who were not ready to countenance the loss of theirs.

It appears, moreover, that the numbers involved under these headings can not have been negligible (14). And they were decidedly not negligible or inappreciable from 1876 onwards in particular when charter rights were finally lost after the second Carlist War.

These were the people who created the revival movement in defence of Basque and the Basque people's identity: they were the ones who by bringing language and ethnicity together strove to stand up to that painful dislocation and rupture and, as far as was possible, to bring the ethnolinguistic components of popular life back to their rightful place. There, it would seem, arose the nineteenth century Basque proto-élite, accustomed as much to praise (G. Mujika; Estornés-Lasa) as to blame (Unamuno; Juaristi, 1987). 'Punished' by the loss of charter rights, conscious that the powers of the restored monarchy were gradually doing away with all hope of being somebody in their own home, of influencing their fellow citizens, that proto-élite set out in search of roots, having joined what had up till then been scattered forces, by updating aims and objectives in favour of the Basque-speaking community and by creating a sort of revival and rebirth movement (Fishman, 1985: 67): in this way the first wave of the Basque Renaissance was set in motion. The overt formulation and symbolic elaboration of the Basque ethnocultural identity now in force is largely the work of this proto-élite: it seems that the *Asociación Euskara* of Navarre (Estornés Zubizarreta, 1983) was the leading voice in a movement towards a broader Basque unity above and beyond one's own local area and province, from the time it summed up that desire for broader unity around 1876 in the sentence-symbol *Zazpiak Bat*: 'The Seven [traditional provinces of the Basque Country form] One [entity]'. Manterola in particular gave that attempt at renaissance a unity and a publicity unknown until then in his practical *belles lettres* language work at first through his *Cancionero Vasco* and later through *Euskal-erria*.

Besides unity, antiquity and authenticity were the other main topics of interest of these proto-élites: the forgers of the renaissance had embarked on a new cultural enterprise, by affirming that Basques were the descendants of common forebears in ancient times, proclaiming that *Euskeria* (term invented by that proto-élite to refer to the Basque Country as a political entity, now replaced by *Euskadi*) had 'always' constituted a people separate from all others and announcing that it was an authentic autonomous sociocultural human grouping which preserved an unexpectedly rich heritage in the heart of its hidden history. This proto-élite, like many others, attempted at least to collect those elements of tradition on the point of disappearing or which had already been lost, anointing them with the oil of authenticity and creating or re-creating what

might already have disappeared – via historical research, literary invention and the forging of myth (Fishman, 1972; 1985; Juaristi, 1987).

Charter rights enthusiasts of all hues suffering under attack from that brutal nineteenth century dislocation or rupture thus found, in the herculean search for satisfying roots, origins and authenticity, a source of contentment which political activity would not have provided them with (15). The fact that a special place was given to invention in that identity-planning endeavour does not in the least devalue the objective basis and direction of that thirst for emotion and authenticity that had arisen in the midst of those dislocated, broken proto-élites (Sarria, 1918; Fusi, 1984: 159; Fishman, 1985: 67).

The plaintive songs and dirges of Arrese-Beitia, the ambience of despair that Campion illustrated in connection with the last drummer in Erraondo or his phrase that '[Basque] is withdrawing back to the mountain-tops so as to die closer to heaven' or the work of Txomin Agirre slightly later, adorned with Basque language tales and examples which have touched the hearts of many generations, were not the whims of a handful of nostalgics, but rather the expression of a heart-rending event which had occurred in the proto-élites where a generalised loss of ethnic identity and translanguification or language-shift had engraved a Basque consciousness on their minds.

Was it not perhaps too late, on the other hand, to provide a cure which would ensure the survival of the sick Basque language? As the man from Abando (Arana, 1965: 226) was to lament, 'Was I born to be present at the hour of your death?' Others, and not only M. Unamuno, considered that the question had already received a full answer. For example, when the *Biltzar Nagusiak* (Provincial Parliament) of Gipuzkoa decided in 1885 to publish Lardizabal's grammar and distribute it in all the villages 'in order to ensure that the Basque language was taught throughout', Ramón Guereca's words in the preface are worthy of note: 'The Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa resolved to have this grammar written and published so that future generations may know by means of this monumental work what this language which is approaching its end was like' (Villasante, 1961: 261-2). The opinion given by Unamuno in the Flower Games, - popular cultural events for the promotion of Basque offering prizes for certain sorts of literary activity-, of Bilbao, was not thus really that original: 'And what of Basque? A monument worthy of study! A venerable relic! Noble pedigree! Let us give it an honourable funeral and holy burial, embalmed in science; let us bequeath such an interesting relic to study'. Nor was that given a year later: 'The only thing left to do, as I said in Bilbao, is to embalm it in science, gather its remains with filial piety before they fall into oblivion and to erect a funeral monument to it' (Ensayos, I, 397-8). That awareness of being present at its demise also fired here and there the impulse to resist. As R. M. Azkue (Charitton, 1986: 95) was to say, 'the sick sometimes find in sleep a way to health, but in our case I think it would be the way to death'.

As is well known, such was the atmosphere in which Sabino Arana made public his formulation of a broad-based Basque nationalism. Leaving the religious aspect aside for the time being, that formulation had two main pillars: on the one hand, the political-operational configuration of the Basque speech community (16); and, on the other, that based on its sociocultural integration. To the impulse given to the first pillar we owe, among other things, the definition of self-rule based on the ancient charter rights, the Basque flag and the political concept of Basqueness: *The land of the Basques* and, above all, *Euzkadi is the home land of the Basques*.

The words and deeds of charter-right loyalists of the earlier Basque Renaissance seemed to S. Arana too weak, lukewarm and half-hearted (17) to supply the sort of drive towards the political-operational configuration that he felt was needed, too incompetent to save Basque and the Basque speech community from its undoing, even though he found them on many counts useful for the formulation of the past and the symbolic elaboration of ethnocultural authenticity. Without patriotism it was, in his opinion, pointless working in favour of the language. As he was to say in *Euzkeltzale bateri* (To a language loyalist) 'Being a Basque speaker is nothing except to be a nationalist. Nationalism is everything, even when you don't know Basque. Basque won't redeem our mother country; nationalism alone can. Ensure the spread of nationalism and the Basque language will also spread with it' (Arana, 1980: 1296). Nationalism was thus for him a necessary and sufficient condition to set the Basque language on the road to victory. For that reason, political-operational objectives had priority in his opinion: the salvation of the Basque speech community, with its native language, customs and beliefs, lay in the liberation of *Euzkadi*, the Basque homeland. Independence was thus the keystone of the whole plan.

But, being in a part of Western Europe, to wit in a place where the concept of the state-nationality was based firmly on a centuries-old praxis, Arana had noticeable difficulty, as much or even more so than proto-nationalists of most communities in Central and Eastern Europe, in defending his criterion of the primacy of nationality: that is, in affirming the precedence of the nationality-state in the face of and instead of state-nationality. The established states of France, England, Holland, Portugal or Spain entertained not a shadow of a doubt on the matter: nationalities and even nations were the products of States and Kingdoms. What, in the face of that, was this desire to create their own autonomous states on the part of lowly little communities only recently come to considering themselves as nationalities, upsetting the wise and benevolent state's four or five century long community-building endeavour?

As in the case of various other lands 'without a history' (18), the wish to set up an independent monoethnic state(-community) in this corner of Europe based on the ideals of Fichte and Herder (19) seemed perverse to many, and not just to local non-speakers of Basque and rulers, but to thinkers, well-known figures and common people outside Euskadi (20). Arana's initial formulation itself, with its main emphasis on political-operational integration via securing its own state, with the importance granted to race, Basque surnames and other such boundary markers, did nothing but worsen the distaste for and even hatred towards Basque nationalism (21): as Joshua A. Fishman (1972: 25-6; 1985: 6-7) has mentioned in connection with other nationalities in a similar situation, those Basque plans were regarded as something of an aberration, left and right seeing something backward-looking and close, tribal, troublesome and destructive in them (Acton 1907: 298; Arantzadi, 1935; Azurmendi, 1979; Chamberlain, 1899; RIEV, XVII, 644-6).

Aware of the strength of the state structure and of its power to endure, having taken into account that many citizens (as well as recent immigrants, many local figures, cultured townspeople and the well-off) firmly enrolled in Spanish nationalism were noticeably against that project of his and convinced as he was that the survival of the Basque people as such was at stake, Arana made a second attempt at formulating his nationalism, as is well known, in the years 1901-1902. Thus, first in his letter to

Engrazio Arantzadi 'Kizkitza' and thereafter in public, Arana stressed in his second formulation the importance of more easily achievable goals, objectives and procedures to ensure the sociocultural configuration of the Basque speech community and in particular the future of the Basque language rather than promoting the creation of a new state for political-operational integration. Here is what Sabino Arana said in that letter (5/1/1901): 'When I stop to reflect about this and about our race, I see clearly that this is coming to an end: it will end before the end of the century that has just begun. The only solution is money and there's no sign of that. Peasants know perfectly well that Basque is no good to their children. The solution lies in founding industries, establishing sailing companies, organizing societies of arts and trades, charitable fraternities and societies for mutual benefit, for fishing and farming and livestock-breeding, gaining control of or opening up new means of communication, nationalizing all these spheres of life in such a way that Basque is useful for something, because one needs to take part in them (...) Basque must come to be self-sufficient; but the fact is that it is only useful to talk of farming activities' (Arantzadi, 1935: 104; 129).

Following on from this outlook attempts were made to relegate political independence to second place. To put it in the words of E. Arantzadi 'Kiskitza' himself: 'The political aspect is not the only or even the primary one in nationalist activity, nor as a result, is independence the only or principal end of nationalism. It is a grave error indeed (...) to consider that its end lies in independence. [We have to] work for the social and ethnic identity of the nationality'. Or as he says further on, confirming what Sabino himself had said shortly before his death: '[We have to obtain] the most radical autonomy possible within the unity of the Spanish state, suited at one and the same time to the Basque character and to modern needs' (Arantzadi, 1935).

Whether promoting independence or setting off along the path towards autonomy, S. Arana created a movement to reestablish the group identity of Basque people which rapid societal change had substantially weakened and fractured and, in general, to cope with and reply adequately to the new risks, problems, hopes and opportunities that their needs and self-interest (and not, as in the case of the pretender Carlos, those of others) dictated in the face of such fundamental change: an ideology to draw Basque people together, an ideology which would, by means of mutual assistance, within the framework of the pursuit of a broader ethnocultural identity, help in the cultivation of the most appropriate specific beliefs, values and behaviours and in implementing them in the various spheres of societal activity. Unlike the previous proto-élites, Arana achieved success in partially or completely drawing those beliefs, viewpoints and behaviours out of the closed circles of what had passed for a Basque intelligentsia, in communicating them to common townspeople (and, later on, to country people) and in setting people to work on shaping Basque nationality: that achievement, more than the novelty of his main proposals, is the source of the recognition given to Arana as the father of Basque nationalism. At a time when the political problem of finding a way to harmonize state sovereignty with the autonomy of ethnic groups was being hotly discussed (Znaniiecki, 1952: XIV), Arana turned the Basque speech community into a fully-fledged member of the category of conscious nationalities. From then on the Basque Renaissance itself was to enter a second phase inexplicable as a mere continuation or natural development of the previous one.

The sociocultural version of the nationality concept (22), wrought out of authenticity and modernity at one and the same time, was, by all accounts, from the beginning of the



century until 1937 the primary common goal of most individuals and groups at work in the defence of Basque (23). Many Basque speakers who were struggling for very different forms and degrees of integration within the state found common ground in work favouring the ethnolinguistic component of Basque society. Even among those who considered nationalism the cornerstone of the whole nationality-building project, voices were not lacking to propose granting specific protagonism to Basque language activism, on seeing that the most enthusiastic political-operational formulation of independence could bring in its wake not the Basque language but rather a Spanish speaking “Basquism”. Ebaristo Bustintza ‘Kirikiño’ expressed that point of view with his habitual terseness: ‘We make a lot of noise about patriotism, Basqueness, nationalist party membership, freedom and so on. But if we lose Basque, what is the point of all that noise? An Euskadi without Basque? A soulless body! Rotten!’ (Bustintza, 1984: 203). In that way, over and above political nationalism, a *language loyalty* (Weinreich, 1953: 133) type of ethnocultural nationalism (or, in short, Basque language activism) (Larronde, 1979: 220; Etxaide, 1986; Hiriart-Urruty, 1909; Urquijo, 1918) used to draw together important patrons and helpers of its own. Basque language loyalism in other words won for itself an attractiveness and reputation that a tough but closed party language policy could never have done: both until around 1920, along the lines expressed by Kirikiño himself; and also in the period from 1927 to 1937 along the path quite clearly proposed and urged by Jose Ariztimuño ‘Aitzol’ (1987, I, 201-5) or Jose-Mari Agirre ‘Lizardi’ (1986: 267-9). In this connection, the criterion of unification of the Basque speech community and the strengthening of the values of its authentic sociocultural and ethnolinguistic features met with a success unknown till then.

In fact, even those who were nationalism’s fiercest foes in numerous other spheres agreed on the following two points:

- a) Nineteenth century economic and technical-industrial transformations, the loss of charter rights after armed conflicts, sudden widespread immigration, ideology promoting the participation of ordinary people in the defence of their own pursuits and interests via the free-for-all of politics and various other events had by now made many of the traditional life-styles and ethnocultural bonds of the Basque speech community antiquated and powerless: in fact, these developments had dislocated and broken those sociocultural bases to a considerable extent.
- b) Since there was no possibility of completely undoing or reversing that weakening and dislocation and of returning the Basque speech community once again to its pristine state, if one wanted the latter to continue as a living community then updated ethnocultural bases and bonds properly suited to the new age would have to be invented and implemented.

Giving a modern and authentic solution to that dislocation, accepting new advances and life-styles but maintaining, in the words of the much-quoted line of the poet Lizardi, ‘the eternal essence under the swallowed skin’: such was the main goal of most Basque language loyalists at the beginning of the century. G. Mujika (1907: 547) gave this version of that objective on the occasion of the *Basque language festival of Elgoibar*: ‘If anybody tells you that what we want is to bring back worthless junk, answer them back that what we want is to set the Basque Country *on a new path* (italics mine) and get her going endlessly forward; that we want to leave some of our old things behind forever,

fix others so that they respond to today's needs and bring back two things, the language and the Old Laws, as they were in the past'. Starting off from a more cosmopolitan vision and basing himself on an example from Japan, M. de Aznar Zubigaray (1917: 43-4) expressed as follows that thirst for balance that one part of the commercial and industrial élite of Bilbao so strongly felt, caught as it was in the struggle between modernity and authenticity: 'I want my city to be itself; but on one side of the port let us open up an imaginary route to all the cities of Europe, which will cross the waters of England on the way out and back'.

To spread the idea that thanks to that more flexible behaviour the obstacles until then placed in the way of strengthening the identity of the Basque speech community disappeared overnight and that from then on a peaceful, fraternal ambience was the order of the day would however be mistaken. For it is one thing to agree more or less on the desirability of maintaining *the eternal essence under the swallowed skin*; and quite another to arrive at a unanimously agreed definition of the precise minimum necessary set of components and elements of that eternal essence. It is true that positive intentions and attitudes vis-à-vis Basque and the Basque speech community were on the up; but in the implementation of those intentions and attitudes in the nitty-gritty of everyday life the *other* problem recently mentioned by Jernudd and Neustupný (1987: 77) immediately came to the fore in all its crudeness and bitterness: 'Linguistic interests (...) normally also coincide with some economic, social, political or cultural interests of speakers'. The belief and criticism that even the discreetest pro-Basque activities were the offspring of 'viscainismo' ('Biscayanism': one of the (frequently derogatory) terms in the Spanish of the time to refer to Basque nationalism) and merely for its benefit never disappeared from the minds or even the lips and pens of many personalities on left and right. Even so, a period of remarkable social legitimation, whatever its limits, followed on from the face to face confrontation typical of the period up to 1910-1913 (24).

That new phase reached its zenith in 1918 at the *Eusko Ikaskuntza* (Basque Studies Society) Congress in the town of Oñati. The degree of agreement of differing forces achieved there (25) was not to be bettered in the whole period up to the Spanish Civil War, setting in motion a profound and fruitful work of reflection on the ethnocultural configuration of the Basque speech community. With regard to the matter in hand, the path staked out by L. de Eleizalde in particular has had profound consequences from then on in the goals that Basque speakers have set themselves. The concepts of corpus planning and status planning, though expressed in other words, were clearly distinguished in his address (26) and, what is even more important, Eleizalde signalled influential starting-points for them both.

I shall not dwell on matters pertaining to corpus planning or, to use his words, 'the literary restoration of the language' in the belief that they are sufficiently well-known to most Basque language loyalists and researchers active in this field: though, so that the most basic point should not pass unmentioned, suffice it to recall that *Euskaltzaindia* (the Royal Academy of the Basque Language) had its most immediate and closest antecedents in that atmosphere. With regard to status planning or the so-called 'social restoration of the language', however, it is worth making some more lengthy remarks. Here is what Eleizalde (1918a: 431) had to say in his famous report to the founding meeting of the Basque Studies Society, on the basic framework of what would

nowadays be the equivalent of code selection or allocation of norms (Haugen, 1983: 275):

- a) 'Basque speakers of elementary or medium culture will not need anything but their own tongue for most of life's circumstances'.
- b) 'Basque speakers of higher culture will need one or more foreign languages, in exactly the same degree and manner that a Frenchman, an Englishman or a German of similar cultural background needs them. But when that time arrives, it is evident that the ordinary, habitual, everyday language of Basque speakers of higher culture will be Basque, doubtless a more literary, flowing and richer Basque than present Basque. The foundation and crown of the social restoration of the language is the need to make Basque the vehicle of all the degrees of culture that the Basque 'gens' needs for its full collective life'.

Thus Eleizalde paved the way for a configuration in which the one and only basic language would be Basque, granting a status of additional languages for relations with foreigners to French and Spanish (and, perhaps, English). From his declarations, however, it is not as clear as it should be whether he was proposing the implementation of this monolingual formula throughout the Basque Country or whether it was to be restricted to Basque speaking areas.

These proposals on language were not ivory tower academic declarations, the isolated product of some lonely thinker or dreamer; rather, these declared goals were part of a whole community-building strategy implemented by Basque loyalist proto-élites of yesteryear –by this time, in some spheres, élites – over at least the previous twenty years. As already mentioned, pursuit of basic unity in the Basque speech community was one goal of that endeavour; stressing the authenticity of that common base, another; and dedication to the search for or creation of boundary markers which could help in distinguishing, differentiating and setting apart that unity and authenticity from the world of other languages, the third and last.

What was being attempted by this integrated effort was the laying of the new foundations of sociocultural integration in Basque society. To that end, one of the most urgent main tasks was the collection and refurbishing of all the authentic ethnocultural elements which might turn out to be useful for the new Basque speech community to be rebuilt out of the ruins of the old Basque speech community which was collapsing in turmoil. And another, the next step, the creation according to 'Basque norms' of the new elements required for that modern society and their combination in due measure with those authentic old elements saved in time. Thus, Eleizalde's language policy proposal was a subsection of a whole cultural policy endeavour. He too was of course well aware of that, when he said the following in the same report: 'Basques are at present exerting themselves, with a zeal worthy of praise, in the discovery and exposition of all the characteristics of the personality of our people, and there is no field or sphere of human activity which is not being painstakingly explored to discover what is due to Basque genius in political and social institutions, in history, in the plastic arts, in music, in literature and in the sciences'.

In this regard the explorations carried out in the following spheres of activity with the hope of finding and proclaiming the ethnocultural authenticity which nationalists sought to implant as the flesh and bones of societal life are worthy of mention:

- a) Undeniable advances were made in prehistory and anthropology, at about that time, in the pursuit of the primitive Basque community and early Basque man. The investigations of T. Aranzadi, I. Eguren and J. M. Barandiaran in particular offered scientifically based knowledge and argumentation on the bygone unity or on the long-ago identity of the Basque community by, on the one hand, examining caves, cromlechs, dolmens and stone circles and by, on the other, establishing the measures, types of skulls and other distinguishing elements of Basque people. These substantial pieces of research opened the doors to that satisfying great tradition which Basque language loyalist intellectuals first, and common Basque speakers later, took as a source of legitimation for their wildest dreams and hopes and as a model for their future (27).
- b) Specific attempts were made, after collecting with special care the dance-types, musical instruments, the treasures of oral literature and popular songs of yesteryear which might be of value in giving a powerful cultural authenticity to the new Basque society, after sometimes ‘elaborating’ them and ‘dressing them up’, to make them known and reintroduce them with renewed vigour to Basque speakers and all who lived in the Basque Country. In this respect the following are to be borne in mind:
- the new lease of life given to the *txistu* (Basque fife), supposedly on the point of disappearance (28), and, in general the impulse that some tried to give to the *danbolin* and the *ttuntun* (types of drum), the *xirula* and the *alboka* (types of flute), the *txalaparta* (wooden percussion instrument) and other instruments;
  - similarly the world of dancing was affected by mobilizing objectives through being implemented in more modern circumstances: from then on the *aurreku*, *arin-arin*, *fandango*, *biribilketa* (dances) and *poxpolin* spinner-girls (dancers) (29) would not be simply a young people’s pastime;
  - furthermore, the collections of traditional popular songs, particularly those of R. M. Azkue and Fr. Donostia, became an inexhaustible source for new contemporary high-brow music and for choirs (30);
  - the new impulse given to *bertsolaritza* (spontaneous sung verse), by adding new contexts of performance and new topics to the repertoire, is also a fruit of the beginning of the century.
- c) Traditional popular sports were also infused with new values. Besides jai-alai players and competitive rowers, wood-choppers and stone-lifters, Basque-style javelin-throwers and stone-borers, tug-of-war enthusiasts and oxen-keepers found themselves valued anew, as they were brought down from the hill-farms to the villages and towns (even to the bull-rings).
- d) Considerable effort was also dispensed in collecting and structuring folk-tales, customs and traditional lore on the point of disappearance. In that regard both J.M. Barandiaran’s seminar in the town of Gasteiz with its *Anuario de eusko-folklore* and R.M. Azkue with his *Euskaleriaren Yakintza* acted on clear criteria.
- e) A number of features worthy of being taken as models were discovered in the life-style of shepherds and farming-folk too, just when their traditional nature

was declining rapidly (Thalamas-Labandibar, 1935; Arantzadi, 1932). Somehow, that was where what were clearly antecedents of authentic Basque juridical institutions lay hidden (31).

- f) Authenticity-building also reaped a fair harvest from the search for folk-art. Starting from the simplest elements (candle-holders, mountain walking-sticks, old wooden chests) up to the most complex forms (farm-house architecture), there was no shortage of things to collect and elaborate on. And the discoidal tomb-stones and their inscriptions, so numerous in the grave-yards of Lapurdi (and thereabouts), offered rich pastures to those who, following M. Collas, hungered after authenticity.
- g) The study of surnames and heraldry, along the lines of J.C. Guerra and others, also had considerable influence in the task of clarifying and beautifying Basque origins.

The far-gone past and the farm-house atmosphere of distant mountain-side retreats, together with the Basque language itself, was the unending treasure-store of that intelligentsia, wandering from nook to cranny and bursting with poeticizing passion (32), looking for Basque unity and authenticity, as it searched for the full genotypic beauty to be found alive under the everyday phenotypic misery.

This attempt to return to the sources, however, was not reactionary traditionalism, even though it has frequently been said otherwise. What is more, that effort was in the better part of its conduct neither traditionalist nor reactionary: it did not want to take societal life back to that authentic initial situation and keep it there; on the contrary, it sought to be a modernizing force which would bring the lifestyle which Basque society would need 'naturally' and 'according to authentic norms' both at the present time and in the near and distant future, if an external dislocating force had not upset (was not to upset) that previous way of life. And so:

- Cultured musical production at the beginning of the century was basically located in the innermost part of the new urban culture, more than anywhere else; and that is true both of original production and that based on the newly-collected popular songs. Usandizaga's *Mendi-mendiyan* (1910), Azkue's *Ortzuri* (1911) and Guridi's *Amaya* (1920) were all light operas written for 'modern' urban dwellers, frequently after the authors had carefully studied European trends. Similarly, it was in urban areas like Donostia and Tolosa, which were the central core and concern and main source of strength of the modern Basque activists' fighting arena, not in outlying villages and hamlets, that attempts were first made to establish Christmas carol singing and *Olentzaro* (charcoal-burner figure reputed to have brought news of Christ's birth to the Basques) celebrations; and even then they were established by adding new goals that could only have been introduced in the new urban culture (Ariztimuño, 1987: 379-81; 393-4) even while traditional forms were maintained.
- New spheres and types of use were found in town life for gravestone ornaments and inscriptions too, as also for the *lauburu* (literally: four-heads; similar to a swastika; the round-armed version has rounded edges instead of right-angled arms) that appeared here and there. Thus, Basque font was created on the basis of letter types derived from the old inscriptions and used, more than on new gravestones or farm-house entrances, in periodicals and in public building signing; and when, through the influence of the Polish ethnographer

Frankowski, attempts were also made to give meaning as a Basque emblem to the round-armed lauburu (and, in 1901, under the aegis of S. Arana himself, to the straight-armed one), it was the modernized town-dwellers of course, rather than 'backward' farm-dwellers, that were intended to be mobilized around that emblem.

- It was moreover in urban areas more than anywhere else that farm-house or Basque style buildings and architecture were on the increase: as mansions for the newly rich, homes, 'garden-city' houses or bungalows for urban liberal professionals; as train stations, post-offices or hospitals... Few 'typical' buildings of this kind were built in smaller villages and hamlets; and even when they were, as for example in the case of the Biscay 'Hamlet Schools', it was mainly the work of Provincial Government 'townies' (in good measure, in the present case, that of Eleizalde and Landeta).

If the name given an object should reflect its nature, then there is something in the accusation of reactionary traditionalism that needs changing. Under the impulse of societal renewal, Basque loyalist activity kept fairly close to the heart of the maelstrom of modernization. As has occasionally been said of other similar situations, it seems that it would be licit to say again of the nationalism that was the base and bellows of this endeavour that: 'the ideology of nationalism is anti-urban only in that it locates the origin of broader unity and authenticity in the pre-urban past' (Fishman, 1972: 20). The Basque authenticity-loving movement has been tradition-loving and fond of the past to the degree in which that tradition could provide the leavening for the movement's daily bread. For that reason, Basque people have tried to keep and rekindle only some of the totality of ethnocultural elements, whether these enjoyed good health or poor, whether they were on the verge of disappearance or even completely dead. On the other hand, elements which seemed unsuitable or destructive for the ethnocultural unity, modernity or specificity of the Basque community were pushed aside or wiped out without much ado. In this fashion:

- In the matter of personal names, apart from reorganizing Basque forenames and surnames around the use of the ethnic suffix *-tar* (Tovar, 1980: 169), one remarkable novelty was set in motion: the revolution in baptismal names which turned out to be fairly successful as the years went by (cf S. Arana's 1898 *Lenengo egutegi bizkattaía* and L. Eleizalde's 1910 *Izendegi Euzkottaía*). A noticeable symbolic boundary line was thus 'manufactured' even for non-speakers of Basque to distinguish themselves (or, much more often, their sons and daughters) from non-speakers of Basque of foreign origin completely destroying the authentic known tradition of Romance Christian names (an authentic tradition which did not match well with the model of authenticity aimed at for the new Basque community).
- There were even more radical attempts at reversing a really authentic tradition: some wanted to substitute the authentic twenty-base counting system (20 = *hogeí*; 40 = *berrogeí*; 60 = *hirurogeí*...) which strongly marked Basque out from Spanish and most of Europe's major languages (though not so much from French), with a newly invented ten-base system (10 = *hamar*; 20 = *berramar*; 30 = *hiruramar*...).

In this sort of case, if anywhere, one can see clearly how far the goals and objectives of the (new) Basque Renaissance differed from those of conservative tradition-loving: the most organised and mobilised section of the Basque loyalist movement at the beginning

of the century was to demolish not only authenticity itself but even the boundary separating it from Spanish. But in the name of what or in exchange for what were those people prepared to demolish authenticity-markers and distinctive boundaries? As Arana himself openly admitted, it was in the name of being able to respond in the most satisfactory manner to the *new* societal needs. The new world of modernity: this was the second goal which, together with that of authenticity, turn of the century Basque activism was never to lose sight of.

Authenticity *and* (not *or*) modernity was thus one of the main leitmotifs of the whole of *Eusko Ikaskuntza* (Basque Studies Society) (and particularly of its Oñati Congress), as it was for many others. And not only in the field of language, but in most declarations and initiatives treating the sociocultural configuration of the Basque community. The language planning project brought into the public purview by Eleizalde and others at the Oñati Congress or immediately thereafter (Broussain, 1918; Urquijo, 1920) was one of the principal sections of a whole identity planning designed collectively, for the first time in known history, by a substantial part of the local élites.

It was hardly surprising, moreover, that Basque élites should at that time be interested in such a collective search for identity: President Wilson's fourteen points were on the agenda by now in most European Governments, establishing the nationality principle amongst the primary criteria for putting an end to the First World War. As a result the issue of state-less or less widely spread nationalities was everywhere on the boil. Furthermore, the solid results achieved by *Komunio-Batza* party nationalists in the 1917 and 1918 elections only served to augment the expectations of some and the fears and worries of others (Fusi, 1984: 130). At the level of public declarations at least some state-wide parties (33) had seriously started moving from discussing the 'problem' of the reactionary Catalan and Basque bourgeoisie to a nationality-based political stance.

That was thus the ambience in which Eleizalde and various others formulated their detailed language planning goals and objectives. But how far did Basque loyalists succeed in practice in channelling the waters of Basque society along the course of their rosy dreams, down through the activity of almost the next twenty years? How far were they really successful in strengthening Basque and Basqueness?

The answer cannot be over-optimistic, if due attention is to be paid to various facts, worries and fears expressed by Basque language loyalists themselves before the Civil War. For example:

- a) Not only did they not succeed in reversing the direction of language shift, but that change went on unabated (Altube; 1933: 89; 90; 317; 396; Belaustegigoitia, 1922: 113; Lizardi, 1986: 167; Ariztimuño, 1987: I: 33; II: 87; Ibar; 1935: 8; Charritton, 1984: 88). That language shift was created by given mechanisms. And, insofar as the collectivity of Basque speakers was unable to obtain and manipulate sufficient power in society to control and change the direction of those phenomena, the waters of society carried on down the course of language shift.
- b) The language competence of many Basques also receded overall as a consequence of the attack of foreign language interference. The hispanicisms and gallicisms of ordinary Basques (Altube, 1930) were no longer simply of the sort mentioned half-jokingly by Azkue and Urruzuno at the turn of the century.

Amongst Basque writers too another sort of echo of the attack of the other languages was becoming increasingly visible (34). I am of the opinion that a substantial part of the blame attributed to purism by Altube (1933; 1936) and Mokoroa 'Ibar' (1935) can be better explained as a consequence of this source: the lack of language competence of many Basque writers (and non-writers) was underneath it all a more serious failing than the barren artificiality resulting from purist excess (35).

- c) They were unable to introduce the Basque language into the town and urban context, which tend to be the centre and vortex of societal change: even though a fair portion of town-dwellers kept on their parents' Basque to a greater or lesser degree at home and among close friends, no success was achieved in establishing a broad Basque speaking base capable of using Basque both orally and in writing in urban industrial work contexts and residential areas (Ariztimuño, 1987: I: 533; II: 115).

And what is more, plans, propaganda efforts and activities themselves in favour of Basque identity were also usually carried out in Spanish, to a degree that today is difficult to comprehend (Arantzadi, 1935; Agirre, 1986). As Kirikiño would have said, many Basque loyalists of the period were in that respect people in glass-houses throwing stones.

But the plans forged in Oñati did not altogether fail:

- a) As regards corpus planing and after the failure of the Hendaia and Hondarribia meetings, more sensible solutions were gradually being found for the route to language unity: from 1920 on a considerable degree of stability was achieved in the area of graphization; and, similarly, as regards the updating of the lexicon and language unification, criteria which have proved quite fruitful more recently were elaborated, true though it is that no miraculous overnight cure was found.
- b) It is equally true that Basque letters took a noticeable upward turn both quantitatively and qualitatively: writings on other than religious topics were not, as up till then, restricted to the realm of poetry; and as a consequence commendable results were achieved in prose writing, short stories, journalism and drama, as well as a substantial increase in the number of pseudonymous Basque writers who were in many ways to be the foot-soldiers of the new writing (Agirre, 1986: 108; 122; 204; 306). And in poetry, moreover, there was the high-point reached by Lizardi, as well as the new paths trodden by Lauaxeta or Orixe's *Euskaldunak* poem, decisively enhanced by its folk spirit. And it is true, finally, that research, philological investigation and systematic information on the Basque language made advances as never before.
- c) In the educational sphere too, in spite of having to work in face of restriction upon restriction and in the most unfriendly of contexts, it is true that in the definition of bilingual teaching models, in broad academic renewal (36), in the production of learning materials (37) and in the founding and management of schools (38) considerable advances were made, which have in the long term borne fruit, as has been noticeable from 1960 onwards.



But even given that all this and considerably more is true, it is nevertheless evident that the real fruits turned out to be far too poor to rekindle the ethnolinguistic flame of the Basque community and to succeed in reaching the goals established in moments of dreaming. In attempting to explain the reasons for the gap between wish and fulfilment, one might on a first approach distinguish between external reasons and internal ones. As regards external reasons one cannot forget, amongst other things, that certain events both on an international plane and at the Spanish state level had a direct influence on the application of the spirit of Oñati:

- a) The rights of nationalities, the rights of each people to decide what to do with itself and other bold declarations, which should have helped to harmonize the political-territorial organisation of Europe with the limits of the ‘old-fashioned’ communities and other ethnocultural aggregates, were in fact applied, insofar as they were applied at all, almost exclusively to certain cases in Central and Eastern Europe which had become the focus of attention in the First World War. That task of redefining borders ended *de facto* with the Treaty of Versailles.
- b) With respect to the possibility of devolving a good measure of power to the nationality-peoples within the Spanish state or of carrying out some similar measure, the prevailing wind changed direction from 1919 onwards, and a harsh frost came on in 1923. Events from 1931 on are also well known: it was not until after the Civil War had started, not before, that the autonomy which had been ‘just around the corner’ for the previous twenty years was finally achieved.

Without bearing the above facts in mind it would be sheer disdain or frivolity to talk, as some amongst us have often done from 1960 on, of the feebleness and inconsistency of Basque activism of that period or of the ‘typical’ failings of those Basque loyalist generations.

There are however various problems at the very heart of the objectives, endeavours and deeds of the Basque identity planning of that time that can hardly be resolved by putting the blame on others (on *the* others, as always): neither the blame for what happened then, as it is no use closing the stable door after the horse has bolted; nor the blame that we Basque loyalists of today and tomorrow may deserve, if we neglect this opportunity for a shrewd apprenticeship. I believe the following two, amongst others, belong to this group:

- a) In their enthusiastic struggle to preserve ethnocultural features already lost or on the point of being lost, their not having known how to distinguish with the required detail and precision the feasibility, importance and priority-levels of the various schemes and activities in favour of Basque. Modernization has in all communities –not just in our own and others like it– proved to be the undoing of local ethnoculturally encumbered procedures and elements. The attention bestowed on reviving or keeping alive certain ethnocultural remains which at the very best would not be able to secure more than marginal value in the new-style society did not, it seems, find a parallel in the effort dedicated to introducing Basque into the modern correlates of those cultural elements. If one may legitimately take the sphere of sport, entertainment and games as an example, it is noticeable how far the world of spectator sports (football, cycling, boxing, athletics) which were to obtain considerable popularity from at least 1920 onwards (Fusi, 1984: 20, 21; Mokoroa, 1935: 35; Agirre, 1986: 314) grew and

developed completely alien to the sphere of action of Basque identity planners (Zinkunegi, 1928). Little could be achieved by activities in favour of authentic but tame Basque popular sports organised not as a complement to the former, but as their substitute. Much the same could be said, with an added note of moral confrontation in this case, of the approach taken with regard to amusements and dancing: if being an authentic Basque required one, in addition to other specific forms of conduct, responsibilities and obligations, to take part only in 'respectable' dances one can hardly be surprised if all or most of the 'cheek-to-cheek' swaying dancing was carried out in Spanish and turned out to be an enemy of Basqueness (Mokoroa, 1935: 59). When the mountain woods are on fire, it is usually necessary to take specific measures to save as many trees as possible (at least the most important parts of the woods), rather than attempt to save absolutely all the trees.

- b) The measures established at the level of language planning were not at all easily implemented. And not only because of language-based obstacles and hindrances. To go further: the most serious drawbacks and restrictions were, it seems, from outside the sphere of language: Basque nationalism (taken even in its broadest and most diluted sense) did not have sufficient strength in society to be able to implement either that language planning or the whole identity planning. As J. A. Fishman (1985: 48) has clearly explained, 'ethnicity maintenance (...) requires strong institutional support, as does language maintenance, rendering the other ethnicity inoperative (consensually unacceptable) in certain functions (...) if two ethnocultural systems are to operate (...) on a stable and widespread basis'. Although participants in the Oñati Congress wanted to take bold steps towards rendering Spanish (and conducts related to Spanish identity) consensually unacceptable in a number of domains, a minimal level of agreement was not achieved at that time (39) nor, more importantly, later on: for one reason or another there were quite a few locals who were not ready to offer that sort of institutional support (Baroja, 1919; Balparda, 1917, 1918, 1932; and T. Meabe mentioned in Azurmendi, 1979: 104). Whether the underlying reason was a 'triangulated political society' (Payne, 1974: 107; Fusi, 1984: 21, 158) or an '*anti-vizcainismo*' shared by left and right, some were afraid of any formula at a political level not grounded purely on Spanish.

But apart from the political storms of the moment, there was another obstacle which Basque language loyalists perhaps too easily assumed that they had overcome: 'nationalism was not only a movement of the masses and for the masses but, rather, also a movement to replace one élite with another, one sociocultural philosophy with another and one political-operational system with another' (Fishman, 1972: 60). Interested parties were obviously not all asleep, and many of them were not ready to take part in that task of replacement (Giles et al., 1977: 319). And this is perhaps not the least of the obstacles and limitations that any initiative in Basque identity building must face. Even when Broussain (1918), Charritton (1986: 317-8), Eleizalde (1918a: 430), Urquijo (1920: 17), Lizardi (Agirre, 1986: 172; 217; 230), Aitzol (Ariztimuño, 1987: I: 45-6) and Etchepare (Charritton, 1984: 58; 131) were well aware of this weakness, it does not seem that in practice they ever succeeded in designing a specific programme with an appropriate time-scheme to overcome that limitation: neither for the task of replacement nor even for a fairly stable coexistence which might have offered real hope of survival to the Basque speaking collectivity, a move which might perhaps have been wiser given the strengths and particularly weaknesses of pro-Basque forces.

It is thus clear that they did not quite succeed in solving the puzzle. It may even be true that in one or two points they made the Basque puzzle a little more complicated than before. But, in the matter of pro-Basque activism, they have bequeathed us, *fin de siècle* Basque loyalists that we are, we who are their heirs more than we are anybody else's, a more valuable heritage than the birthright passed on to them by previous generations: in particular, a forward-looking Basque project, pregnant with the hope of unity and dignified by the patterns of authenticity. One cannot, in short and in my opinion, say as much of other generations.

### NOTES

- (1) Cf. S. Onaindia's *Euskal Literatura* (V), p. 17; cf. too that well-known sentence of Mitxelena's: 'they've considered us not quite up to scratch, and that's that'.
- (2) In J. Azurmendi's opinion (1972: 36) 'for our young people it was as if the world had *de facto* begun with them or their parents: only the world abroad seemed to have an earlier origin'.
- (3) If the reasons for taking 1937 as a finishing point are fairly obvious, those for placing the start of the period round about 1896-98 are not so clear. But there are reasons to stress those dates from the viewpoint of Basque loyalist activity, weak though they may be.
  - a) That was when the teaching of Basque in an urban context and with specific objectives had its first beginnings: the Bilbao *Euskal ikastetsea* (Basque school) was set up in 1896-7. With regard to the production of learning materials, Ormaetxea's *Agakia* was put on sale in 1896, and Arana's text-book by the name of *Umiaren lenengo Aizkidia* published in 1897. Azkue's *Método práctico para aprender el vascuence vizcaíno y guipuzcoano* dates from 1898.
  - b) 1897 was also the year in which Basque-only journalism got under way, in the peninsular part of the Basque Country, both in periodical form (*Euskaltzale*, 1897) and in popularizing form with propagandistic intent (*Egutegi Bizkatara* for 1897 and, in 1898, *Lenengo Egutegi Bizkatta'ra*). The novel also had its origins right then in 1898 with *Auñemendiko Lorea*.
  - c) It was at that time (in the 1897 Basque Festival in Donibane Lohitzune, for example) that the expression of the ethnocultural unity of the Basque community, summed up in the motto *Zazpiak Bat* (The Seven [traditional provinces of the Basque Country form] One [entity]), began to acquire an acceptance and recognition that had not until then been accorded it by the authorities. And it was about that time that relations between promoters of Basque (in 1897, definitely, in the case of Azkue and Broussain) on either side of the border got going, shortly to bear fruit in the form of the meetings of Hendaia and Hondarribia and in *Eskualzaleen Biltzarra* (Basque activists' Congress).
  - d) It was also then (1896) that *Lecciones de ortografía del Euzkera Bizkaino* which had considerable influence at the corpus planning level (both until 1937, as a result of the decisions taken in 1920 by *Euskaltzaindia* (Academy of the Basque Language), and, although partially transformed, even until today) was published. And in 1897 both Azkue and the Provincial Government of Gipuzkoa set about work with renewed vigour on their projects to set up a Basque *Ikasola* or Language Academy.

- e) It was then (1898) that the newly founded Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea (Basque Nationalist Party) took part in elections for the first time: Basque activism would have in the future an infrastructure and institutional point of reference it had not enjoyed until then, with an unbroken presence unlike that of the Navarrese *Asociación Euskara* or Sagarminaga's *Euskalerría*, broadly mobilizing ordinary Basque people.

In short, round about 1896-98 there was in good measure a move from a period of general intentions and ideological declarations of objectives to a time of specific acts.

- (4) The publication of the collected works of Kirikiño, Lizardi and Aitzol, the first by Labayru and the other two thanks to Erein, constitutes a solid advance in that direction. As far as writers and cultural promoters of the mainland Basque Country are concerned, on the other hand, P. Charritton, continuing the line of work previously opened up by P. Laffitte and J. Intxausti with the writings of Hiriart-Urruty, has recently prepared a fairly complete version of the collected works of Dr. J. Etchepare and of the correspondence between Azkue and Broussain. Together with the re-edition of the periodicals *Euskalzale* and *Ibaizabal* and the pre-war *Euskera* (Proceedings of the Academy of the Basque Language), the publication of S. Arana's collected works has also proved to be an invaluable aid. There is moreover the substantial essay that Yon Etxaide has produced on his late father. The research that G. Arrien is carrying out on the teaching of that period is also extremely enlightening.
- (5) It is possible that the explanation that has been given of the so-called 'old families' of Gipuzkoa (Eleizalde 1918a: 430), together with that of the main features of language use, reflects fairly faithfully the pattern of behaviour of these diglossic bilingual villagers. As the explanation itself reminds us 'Basque was of no use except to talk to children of up to the age of ten and girls in service. In short, a social barrier'.
- (6) According to the data that Larramendi, Kardaberaz, Mogel and even Pascual Iturriaga provide us with, it may well be that Gipuzkoa and Bizcay reached the threshold of a new situation with of risk regard to the loss of Basque midway through the second half of the eighteenth century. As Ibar was acutely to observe, the basic features of loss of Basque in Araba and Navarre were rather different: 'Geography is not enough, the social and political events of that century are not enough to give a satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon of Basque language-loss in Araba and Navarre' (Mokoroa, 1935: 135). The explanations given to date to make the evolution of these two cases comprehensible do not, however, seem to me to be adequate by any means.
- (7) Attributing the words to R. M. Azkue, this is how Jean Etchepare (Charritton, 1984: 90) explains that change: 'Basque can (...) lose as much now in five years as in a century previously'.
- (8) In the case of Biscay province, J. L. Hernández Marco (1986: 16) explains that increase in inhabitants of the towns and villages in the following terms: 'the urban context – taking population centres with over 5,000 inhabitants as such–, which in 1860 meant only 17.5% of the population of Biscay, was to include no less than 70.4% in 1930'.
- (9) This is how Txomin Agirre (1899: 250) described that relationship, negative for the status of Basque in society: 'You've only got to listen to the teachers, doctors and other jacket-wearers down in the villages talking: they always talk in Spanish, even if they were all born and bred in Ipazter. You've only got to look at who's trying to learn Basque propoerly; four madmen, or rather a few of us villagers who are looked on as madmen. Most Basques still consider Basque a thing of backward farmers, and that farmer touch is not what proud city men want'.

- (10) When Campion presents ‘three typical cases, fortunately exceptional, of deliberate repudiation of Basque’ (Campion, 1907: 176) in the 1903 Irun Basque Festival, he is not, whatever he says, presenting anything so exceptional, but rather providing quite concrete and precise examples of a widespread phenomenon. In particular, the following wisecrack, reputedly by a worker from Eibar, should be borne in mind: ‘We speak Basque because we can’t speak Spanish. We would much rather speak that language, but where there’s a will there’s not necessarily a way’.
- (11) As regards the language situation of the common people in Basque-speaking districts it seems that the primary feature until then (of the last three or four centuries at least) had been diglossia without bilingualism (Fishman et al., 1985: 43). It may however be that the local commercial, religious, military and civil service élites, apart from being proportionately slightly larger than elsewhere, had already attracted a noteworthy part of the Basque collectivity to its language orbit: besides the presence of Basque speakers from fairly early on in senior political and religious posts under the Crown of Castile, the conquest of the Americas first and their colonization afterwards, together with the political-military presence of the Austrias the length and breadth of Europe, would have ensured an extensive participation of a number of Basque speakers in trade, industry and the military, sources of contact with the Spanish speaking world. That ‘noteworthy part’ had not until the nineteenth century, however, been able to cause fundamental change in the ethnocultural make-up of the Basque speech community. As S. Payne (1975: 27) has put it: ‘For nearly a millennium the Basques had shown a remarkable ability to accept technical improvements from the outside without completely altering the foundations of their own culture’.
- (12) It seems that this language shift (Campion, 1907:154) had been more brutal in Navarre than anywhere else. This is how complete language shift over three generations has been expressed: ‘With cold insensitivity they witness how generations which are absolutely foreign to them by their way of speaking install themselves in their homes; the family, previously linguistically homogeneous, is substituted in the intervening period by other dual arrangements of which there are so many regrettable examples in Navarre: the grandparents speak only Basque, their children Basque and Spanish badly, and their grandchildren only Spanish’.
- Although the societal mechanisms leading to this situation were a good deal different in Gipuzkoa and even more so in Biscay, we find ourselves before the very same three generation language shift. In the case of Biscay the half-despairing, half-angry attitude of trail-blazing Arana (1965: 1296) is well known: ‘You don’t teach your sons the language your parents taught you. Do you want your children and your parents not to understand each other, or what?’.
- (13) Cf. E. Arriaga’s *Léxico bilbaíno* (1896; 1960) or, to take a more recent example, M. Zarate’s investigation of Txorierrri Spanish.
- (14) Examining events of the nineteenth century from a sociocultural perspective there may be reason to take other classes of people into account. It would be difficult otherwise to explain the activity of the smith Ulibarri or the factory worker Xenpelar singing his verse ‘Ours is almost through’.
- (15) The organizations most centred around Basque language loyalism, *Asociación Euskara* and F. Sagarminaga’s *Euskalerría* (from 1880 onwards, *Unión Vasco-navarra*), did not, as is well known, succeed in securing enduring broad-based reverberations at the political level. For the possible causes of this inability see, among others, R. Ciervide (1983: 41-2).

- (16) That formulation was, in the opinion of Arana himself, a question of reaching the ‘ultimate consequences’ of the route staked out by charter-right enthusiasts of varying shade and hue in their writings, particularly from 1876 onwards, on the brilliant, authentic, mobilising past of the Basque community: that praiseworthy, bold, free Basque community of yesteryear deserved the gift of a fitting future to equal that past, that of working over our forefathers’ land with loving care so it should become anew the rich, one-and-only life-giving source of the Basque family.
- (17) This is how Arana saw the *Fiestas euskaras* (Basque festivals) so beloved of the charter-right enthusiasts: ‘Lots of drums...lots of berets. But nothing worthwhile: no doctrine, nothing of patriotic political bases, nothing solid and fundamental. As if with all the inhabitants of the Basque Country, be they foreigner-lovers and anticatholic, (...) getting together (...) to dance an *aurreku*, eat in Txatxarramendi or shout ‘Long live Charter rights! (which everyone interprets as they see fit) ... our fatherland was saved!!!’ (Arana, 1980: 1259).
- (18) The lack of Basque history has been expressed in the following terms, among others, since the beginning of the century: ‘Biscay (...) invokes in vain History’s sanction, because it lacks a History, because its History, like the whole History of the Basque People, keeps its meaning hidden and appears before us shrouded in mystery and indecipherable’ (Arana, 1980: 1297). ‘The Basque speaking people has not sung the odyssey of its wanderings, nor the epic of its battles, not the drama of its history: we know nothing of it that it itself has handed down to us. It is a voiceless people’ (Campion, 1907: 291). Explanations given more recently also adopt roughly the same tack. For example, J. Azurmendi (1977: 44): ‘We have been fettered until now. Mostly because others have enchained us. But also because *we* have stayed in chains. The thousand types of censorship we have carried about with us have, by dint of years and pressure, got inside us. Our past is full of neglect. Our history is our lack of history’.

The reasons for that voicelessness in our case too might be connected with those which have been given in others (Fishman, 1972: 26): ‘the so-called peoples without history also initially lacked two of the major forces which are essential for the creation of history in modern days: their own upper classes and their own centres of ethnic culture and communication’. ‘The peoples without history were peoples without town life’ (Kolarz, 1946: 44 cited in Fishman, 1972: 109).

- (19) As K. Mitxelena (1985: 183) has mentioned, ‘for the intellectual movement which had its main focus in Germany from the end of the eighteenth century, *nation* came to be coextensive with speech community’.
- One who was rather more among us than a hawk-eyed visitor and sharp scrutinizer of our lands, Wilhelm von Humboldt himself, went as far as saying: ‘The division of human kind in nations is none other than its division in languages’. (*Gesammelte Schriften*, A. Leitzmann ed., VI, 126).
- (20) To all appearances, S. Arana’s sturdy formulations also turned out to be unacceptable to a large part of ordinary Basque speakers. It seems that what others have mentioned for other cases (Fishman, 1972: 15) was fairly closely enacted here too: ‘they were interpreted as self-serving upper-class, intellectual, or urban fabrications, if they were understood at all’. The atmosphere Evangelista de Ibero (1906: 9) describes in his letter to Angel de Zabala would seem to be along the same lines: ‘I am genuinely frightened by the indifference shown by Navarre with respect to her three sister provinces in these solemn moments’. And if we are to take the words of the Basque delegation (Eleizalde, Eizagirre, López Mendizabal, 1916) at the Third Congress of Nationalities held in Lausanne at face value, that obstacle seemed still to be in force a good few years later: ‘the greatest obstacle encountered by the diffusion of our patriotic ideas is the

indifference and ignorance of the Basques, who call a country which is not theirs their fatherland’.

By about 1930 it seems that that attitude set had evolved considerably in Biscay and Gipuzkoa. But not all over the Basque Country, and nowhere less than in those areas undergoing fierce Spanishization in the presence of feeble modernization. As a passionate Basque-loving nationalist (Ariztimuño, 1986: 40) was to record, ‘an embittered question slipped from his lips: “Am I, are we Ronkalese by any chance Basques?”’

- (21) As far as I know there are few sentences in Arana’s writings as embittered and tart as the following: ‘A hundred *maketos* (pejorative term for immigrant) who don’t know Basque inflict great harm on our Fatherland. But greater is the harm inflicted on it by a single *maketo* who does know Basque’.
- (22) An investigation of the trajectory and evolution of the word and concept ‘nationality’ in the Basque Country from at least senator P. Egaña’s polemic 1864 speech (García de Cortázar, 1980: 120-1) up to 1937 has as yet to be carried out: it would be worthwhile.
- (23) Amongst Basque Nationalist Party members too, although the alternative counter-examples and extreme formulations proceeding from the *Aberri*, *Euzko-Deya* (1921: VI, 49) or *Jagi-Jagi* circles and elsewhere might more than once lead one to think otherwise. See, for example, in the period after the ‘Spanish era’ had passed by, in number six and following of the JEL magazine of 1908, the explanation that F. Belaustegigoitia gives of nationalism under the title of *social nationalism*. One could give dozens of examples to show just what degree of priority that sociocultural formulation of nationalism also achieved among many well-known nationalist party members. To that end it would be quite sufficient to run through the writings of Kizkitza, L. Eleizalde, Kirikiño, E. Landeta, S. Altube, X. Lizardi, Aitzol and in general most party members in the forefront of Basque identity-building.
- (24) See J.P. Fusi (1984: 154-5) on the ‘Conversion to autonomy of the democrats of Bilbao’. As for how nationalists perceived and lived through that change in ambience, on the other hand, see E. Arantzadi (1935).
- (25) Details well documented in Estornés-Zubizarreta (1983: 16; 20). On the recognition of the conjunction of forces on the part of people of differing tendencies, consult Fusi (1984: 145).
- (26) Eleizalde almost certainly took the idea of dividing Basque language activism into those two subdivisions from Sabino Arana. For the latter had made quite a clear and systematic distinction between the two classes of activity in 1901 at the Hendaia meeting (Arana-Goiri, 1908: 180-183; 193-195). Sabino foresaw the necessity in that paper of reestablishing a specific domain or field for Basque in society on the one hand, so that Basque would be necessary for Basque speakers within that sphere; and, as a complement to the former, he saw on the other hand a need to prepare and update Basque (in spelling, word-store and so on) for that sphere of compulsory and undisputed use. To put it in his own words (Arana-Goiri, 1908: 182): ‘for Basque to rise up and live two things are at one and the same time indispensable: making it necessary for life, whether in a broad or restricted circle, within its own territory, and making it suitable to fulfil those very needs’. For the first task, i.e. status planning, he wanted to unite and organize Basque language loyalists (*Bascophiles* in his word); for corpus planning, on the other hand, Basque scholars (*Bascologists*). In his view the Hendaia meeting had to deal with both aspects –and not just with the second: ‘this Congress is Bascophile as well as Bascologist’. And it wasn’t a matter of merely taking that fact

into account: ‘if this Congress is Bascologist, it is so because it is Bascophile; it wants Basque to live, gain strength, develop and spread in its home territory, and because it wants it to live, it is getting ready to study it to deliver it from the causes of its death’ (Arana-Goiri, 1908: 182). See Fishman (1987: 423) on the validity of this criterion of priority even today.

(27) As Aitzol (Ariztimuño, 1987: 78-80) was to write, ‘Aranzadi, Barandiaran and Eguren (are) one of the most significant exponents of our national revival. This self-same mystery of our racial origin is an authentic proof of the nobility of our national stock. Apart from rendering incalculable services to Basque culture through these scientific investigations, Basque nationalist theory comes out strengthened by them, by linking the Basque of today with those who lived over 7,000 years ago’.

(28) See I. Estornés’ (1983: 172) description as a sign of a tendency of growing strength from 1895 onwards: ‘campaign to reintroduce the *txistu* (Basque fife) –an instrument at that time on the point of extinction – decided at the Congress of Oñati’.

Or this other proof: ‘in 1927 *Eusko Ikaskuntza* (Basque Studies Society) relaunches the campaign for the dissemination of the *txistu*, by giving a number of them away free’.

(29) Aitzol (Ariztimuño, 1987: 85-87) is once again our source: ‘If with our decadence the spinner who used to spin disappeared, with our renaissance that magnificent spirit of the spinner is made incarnate once again by our modern ‘*poxpolin*’ dancers. These, the spinners of today, spin the delicate threads which stretch out to the Basque’s heart and work unceasingly to weave the seamless tunic of our united fatherland’.

(30) As Ignacio de Zubialde (Hermes, 1917: 316-9) was to put it: ‘the new current finds its inspiration in another more profound, more human [tradition], adopting a new element unused until then: popular song. [...] The Slav peoples, followed by the Scandinavians, [...] took inspiration in their folk-lore for their compositions in the highest genres and created their national music’. Further, as Arana Martija (1976: 176) reminds us, ‘in 1912 the three Provincial Governments funded a competition to reward the best two collections which, by recording popular songs in pentagrams, would make them stand up to the strange tempest which threatens to wash them away forever’.

(31) To put it in L. Chalbaud’s (1918) words: ‘What is genuinely peculiar to it in its social make-up is that law-based or merely traditional régime of lineage, of communication, of freedom of texts, that we find in the Basque farm-house’.

(32) Perhaps X. Lizardi has expressed for us, in more moving terms than anyone else, the intimate emotion of that collecting activity:

‘From then on here you have me raking up the old dust;  
collecting the tales of all the elderly;  
gathering the treasures of the people to my bosom;  
for our Community is not dead, let us set it to rights!’

(Euskal Pizkundera, VIII)

(33) As J. P. Fusi has recognized (1981: 155): ‘in 1918 the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Worker Party) included in its programme the recognition of the Iberian nationalities, including the Basque one amongst them’. How far the PC (Communist Party) proceeded in that direction (with Astigarrabia and others) in the decade of the thirties is well known.

(34) In that respect the outlooks of the Navarrese P.F. Irigaray ‘Larreko’ (Villasante, 1961: 376) and E. Zubiri ‘Manezaundi’ (Villasante, 1961: 371) are particularly lively.



- (35) On undertaking such a fault-finding task it would be particularly commendable to take the hypothesis put forward in X. Lizardi's 'Gure bideko mugarriak' essay (1986: 401-8) for granted.
- (36) Miguel de Alzo's evolution, in particular, has wielded considerable influence among us.
- (37) Isaac Lopez-Mendizabal, in particular, achieved some very presentable results in this sphere. Recent books would perhaps find something to learn from some of those he edited as regards conciseness and naturalness.
- (38) In the sphere of official initiatives the Biscay Hamlet Schools would without doubt be the most in need of thorough investigation. In the private sphere, on the other hand, the lengthy San Sebastian/Donostia experiment run by Muñoa and in Biscay, from 1932 on, the Euzko-Ikastola-Batza (Basque School Federation).
- (39) There is an extremely interesting discussion of the diverse postures and polemics set in motion by the Oñati Congress in Bustintza (1984: 194-6).

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