PART TWO

Case Studies

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Chapter Three

Ethnoradicalism as a Mirror Image of State Centralisation: the Basque Paradigm in Franco's Spain

Daniele Conversi

Few cases are better suited to explore the central topic of this book than the instance of Spain. My aim is to address the relationship between state centralisation and the rise of ethnoradicalism through the prism of the Basque experience.[1] I will show the close relationship between the two, arguing that the choice of radical violence was both an *ultima ratio*, that is, a form of anguish and despair, and, at the same time, a carefully pondered decision. The latter resulted from prolonged discussions, rather than being merely a form of broadly defined 'rational choice'. A long-lasting ideological debate predated the decision to embark on the path of political violence.[2]

To understand where and why *Euskadi ta Azkatasuna* (ETA, meaning 'Basque Land and Freedom') was born, we have to consider the situation in which its founders were then living: it was in the 1950s, well into over a decade of state-sanctioned silence and suppression of all political manifestations of Basque identity. The shifting tide of assimilation into mainstream Spanish culture had brought practically the totality of the Basque population to be socialised into a Spanish homogeneous 'high culture', while *Euskara* (the Basque language) was still spoken by barely 24 percent of the overall inhabitants of *Euskadi* (the Basque Country) – including Navarre, mostly in small towns and in the countryside. The urban/rural divide was slowly being supplemented by a new immigrants/natives divide. As many Basques had given up all hopes of

1 For a more detailed version of the events which led to the radicalisation of the conflict, see Conversi (1997). One of the central themes of the book is indeed the relationship between state centralisation and ethnopolitical violence.

2 Evidence of these long debates can be found in several documents, most of which are now collected in the eighteen volume *Documentos Y,* a collection of original ETA sources from its foundation to the early 1980s.

maintaining their culture, the fear of extinction was overwhelming – most of all among the nationalists. This apprehension has been identified by Gurutz Jaúregui Bereciartu as *sentimiento agonico* (feeling of anguish or agony).[3] The predicament was a direct consequence of the Civil War (1936–9), which had ended with the Francoist victory against the Republic, to which the Basque nationalists had been allied.

Obviously, not all aspects of Basque culture were proscribed, nor was the state interested in suppressing those areas of public culture which did not pose a reasonable threat to the regime or did not seem to lend themselves too easily to political action. As a token of 'goodwill', marginal aspects of Basque heritage, such as food, folklore and even traditional sports were pontifically tolerated (Watson 1996: 17–34). Sporting events, though, knew some occasional interdictions, being routinely visited by the *Guardia Civil* and other security forces – if only because they represented occasions of popular encounter and thus potential avenues for expressing political malaise.

Overall, people had a bleak vision of their future, but were too concerned with economic dire straits and the reconstruction of their postwar livelihood to be interested in cultural matters and identity problems. Thus, all that was left of Basqueness was tradition, and it was slowly dying out.

The first underground secret meetings were precisely inspired by a desire to reverse this situation of despair. At the beginning, it was quite a timid venture; there was neither aim nor hope, to engage in any significant political action. Tired of the general impasse but also frustrated by the 'obsolete' ideology of the old nationalists, a group of students in the Jesuit University of Deusto (Bilbao) started to hold weekly meetings to study and discuss Basque history and culture. In the beginning, in 1952, there were probably fewer than ten of them, all in their early twenties. This clandestine activity 'uncovered for them an unknown world which [state] terrorism under Franco had relegated to the category of a nonexistent reality (Jaúregui Bereciartu 1981: 571).'[4] Their underground organ was an irregular bulletin, Ekin ('To do'), from which the group borrowed its name. What united them was 'a lively awareness of national oppression, a keen interest in the Basque language – which the majority of them initially ignored, learning it [in the process] […] – and an ethnic vision of Euskadi (Ortzi 1977: 279).'

The main questions addressed by Ekin's members were 'who are we?' or 'what does it mean to be Basque?' The first participants of these self-articulated informal meetings, and later courses, were sons and daughters of middle-class professionals and small bourgeoisie. Ekin expanded

3 Otherwise translatable as 'sentiment of despair', of impending collective threat, of living on the threshold of oblivion (Jaúregui Bereciartu 1981).

4 Their first reading included mostly earlier Basque nationalist textbooks, all of which were outlawed and very difficult to obtain.

through personal contacts with friends and trustworthy acquaintances, especially in the rural heartland where the preservation of Basque culture was regarded as a guarantee of loyalty and anti-regime feelings. Since the beginning, the group had considered the possibility of armed actions as the means both to defeat Francoism and to revitalise a nation on the verge of losing its cultural identity. This second aspect, the idea of violence as a redeeming and regenerating force, was to take root slowly, almost imperceptibly and steadily. The use of violence had been sporadically advocated as early as the 1940s by fringe militant nationalists (Garmendia and Elordi 1982: 174ff.). However, the leadership of Ekin was more prone to foster some form of passive resistance at a time in which the echoes of Gandhism still rebounded. Only a few years later, ETA reversed these assumptions, holding that 'non violent methods do not seem to yield results except under relatively honest regimes. Gandhi achieved [Indian] independence from the British socialists, not from a Franco or a Stalin.'[5]

Disenchanted with the older generation's appeasing attitude, the younger one considered the erstwhile course to be ineffective – indeed steering the country towards disaster. This schism was a significant cause in the final 'formalisation' of Ekin as a full-fledged movement, leading in 1959 to the foundation of ETA.[6] With the birth of ETA, a whole new chapter of Basque history opened up. The feeling of despair had spread after the USA had decided to embrace Franco as an anti-communist ally in the new Cold War politics. This was then perceived as the American 'betrayal' of a small nation in favour of a centralist dictatorship, becoming a key ingredient in the organisation's subsequent drift towards leftist – and eventually Trotskyite – positions. The other two crucial elements of the *Marxisante* turn were *immigration* (whereby most of the non-Basque immigrants belonged to the working class) (Conversi 1997: 187–221), and *ideological diffusion* (with the leftist vogue spreading throughout Europe in the 1960s) (Conversi 1993: 245–70). Mass immigration began in 1959 (the very same year of ETA's birth), peaking around 1974, when immigrants made up over 30 percent of the population (excluding their offspring, born in Euskadi).

The first acts of political violence occurred in 1961, when a few explosions shattered government buildings in different cities, although responsibility for them was not claimed. On 18 July, ETA placed an

5 See *Zutik -Tercera Serie*/N.S., no. 6, 1963, p. 9 (reprinted in *Documentos Y,* vol. 2, p. 283).

6 José Mari Garmendia quotes four reasons for the birth and expansion of ETA: 1. The persistence of Basque nationalism; 2. A crisis in Basque traditional values as an after-effect of the economic development of the 1950s; 3. The more general failure and perceived inadequacy of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) – especially identified in its 'naive' pro-Americanism; and 4. The attraction exerted by Third World national liberation movements (Cuba, Algeria and Israel) (Garmendia 1979: vol. 1).

explosive package on a railway track, attempting to derail a train carrying Francoist veterans from the Civil War (Clark 1984: 35). Once the plot was preemptively discovered, a wave of arrests occurred amongst Basque activists and their sympathisers: 110 ETA members were imprisoned, many of them tortured, and another hundred or more were forced into exile (Ibarz 1980: 95). These numbers testify to the impressive growth of the organisation. In 1953, *Ekin* was made up of five militants in Bilbao, and as many in Donostia. By 1960, more than 300 militants had passed through its *cursillos de formación* (training courses).[7] Despite this blow, ETA continued its underground activity, inaugurating a long period of reflection. Although deeply imbued with nineteenth-century nationalist principles, ETA's intellectuals were quite knowledgeable about European progressive thought, Third World struggles and Marxist analysis. In the early 1960s, ETA's leaders started to bring to light the results of years of study and discussion. The first issue of the journal *Zutik* ('Standing up!')[8] and the circular '*Cuadernos de ETA*' (also called '*Cuadernos de Formación*' – 'Training Notes') began to appear respectively in 1961 and 1962.[9]

The first full political programme to be adopted by ETA materialised in the book *Vasconia* (1963) by Federico Krutwig, the son of a German industrialist living in Bilbao, who took on the pseudonym F. Sarrailh de Ihartza (Krutwig 1963). *Vasconia*'s framework was a stress on action. This was partly derived from Ernest Renan's voluntarist view of the nation as an 'everyday plebiscite' (Renan 1994). The concept of voluntary participation is central to the evolution of postwar Basque nationalism. However, *Vasconia*'s most relevant contribution was strategic, in that guerrilla warfare was seen as the only means to liberate Euskadi. In this choice, Krutwig was directly inspired by the Algerian and Cuban experiences. A further impulse in this direction was received via Franz Fanon's (1925–61) premises, which justified anticolonial violence as a liberating and purifying principle, essential to the psychological well-being of the 'oppressed' (Fanon 1990). This 'third world' approach was opposed to the preexistent pro-European and ethnofederalist tradition. Somehow, an underlying opposition between the two trends has continued right up to the present.

7 Interview with Txillardegi (José Luís Alvarez Emparanza), reported in *Garaia* 1:1, 1976, pp. 24–25.

8 The early 1960s were still a period of reflection and debate. *Zutik* warmly solicited its readers to submit any kind of criticism on its contents. It also issued calls for papers, projects, ideas, various information, data, etc. (*Documentos Y,* vol. 2, p. 317).

9 Every issue of the *Cuadernos de ETA* was dedicated to a single theme. As in Ekin's days, each leading member of the organisation was charged with investigating a specific topic and preparing an ensuing *cuaderno* (notebook). Each issue had an essential bibliography, on the basis of which it is possible to establish the international ideological influences exerted on the militants (see Conversi 1993).

José Luís Zalbide's *Insurrección en Euskadi* also appeared in 1963, synthesising those parts of Krutwig's programme dealing with armed struggle.[10] Conceived as a guerrilla manual, it became the cornerstone of the strategy of ETA's military branch. The shadows of Mao-Tse-Tung and Ho-Chi-Minh permeated the spirit of the pamphlet.[11] ETA's Second Assembly (1963) approved the theses of Krutwig and Zalbide, with violence figuring prominently as a means of 'empowering the powerless'. Still, in 1962, there was no agreement on the use of violence. For instance, *Zutik* that year reported that 'between Gandhi's nonviolence and a civil war there are intermediate methods of struggle [...] which we want to put in practice.'[12] ETA participated then in its first working class strikes. Despite their low-key profile and tributary organisational role, the nationalists had to bear the brunt of the repression. While the state barely permitted the venting of economic protests, it could never tolerate any form of mobilisation couched in ethnic terms. This was because the very legitimisation of the state rested on an implacable commitment to defend its territorial integrity. Since any bland form of ethnic consciousness was seen as an attack against that order, it had to be ruthlessly repressed. As we shall see, such a strategy proved to be not only futile, but counterproductive in the long run for the state itself.

State centralism bred not only ethnic consciousness, but also radical activism. In Krutwig's footsteps, the Third Assembly (1964) defined ETA as an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist organisation working simultaneously for national liberation and working-class emancipation. In 1963, Zalbide wrote *Carta a los intellectuales* ('Letter to the intellectuals'), which postulated the basic principles to be adopted by ETA. At the same time, the founding fathers of *Ekin*/ETA were expelled from France and confined to exile in Belgium. Henceforth, the physical distance considerably hampered the flow of communication between the old and experienced leadership and the later generations at the 'base' who began to act single-handedly. Establishing a long-lasting pattern, ETA came under the control of young advocates' revolutionary war.

The link between social and national struggle was firmly established during the Fourth Assembly (1965). Class struggle and national liberation

10 Published anonymously as a special issue of *Cuaderno de ETA,* 20 (1964), Bayonne: Goitziri. Reproduced in *Documentos Y,* 3, pp. 20–71. The bibliography includes the main works of Che Guevara, Mao-Tse-Tung, Krutwig and, especially, *La Guerre Révolutionnaire* by Claude Delmas, entire sections of which are reproduced. It may also be possible that *Insurrección en Euskadi* was written by Madariaga, ETA's first proponent of armed struggle.

11 Especially appreciated in radical milieux was the famous Maoist aphorism of the guerrilla fighter who moves among his people as a 'fish in the water', a natural element which he needs in order to survive (Krutwig 1963: 330). One of ETA's features was indeed its symbiosis with the human environment of the Basque hinterland.

12 *Zutik* 19, reprinted in *Documentos Y,* vol. 2, p. 229.

became the two faces of the same coin. Zalbide's *Insurrección en Euskadi* was adopted by ETA as the guidelines for its actions. Its central tenet was Krutwig's theory of the 'cycle of action/repression/ action' which held that 'where popular protest against injustices met with oppression, the revolutionary forces should act to punish the oppressor. The occupying forces would then retaliate with indiscriminate violence, since they would not know who the revolutionaries were, causing the population to respond with increased protest and support for the resistance in an upward spiral of resistance to the dictatorship (Sullivan 1988: 42–43).' This theory was to provide the overall framework of ETA's strategy throughout its long evolution since the publication of *Vasconia*. ETA started to assume a paramilitary form.

Armed attacks began in 1965 in the form of bank robberies. During one of these (on 7 June 1968), a *Guardia Civil* (civil guard, the major state paramilitary corps) was shot, becoming the first victim of ETA.[13] However, one member of the commando, Txabi Etxebarrieta, was subsequently assassinated in what seemed to be an act of retaliation. This was the triggering event which the theorists of armed struggle were eagerly waiting for. Popular indignation over the killing of Etxebarrieta prompted mass demonstrations in every major city, town and village of Euskadi. Priests held masses in his memory for weeks, Etxebarrieta was now a hero and ETA's popularity dramatically increased (Clark 1984: 49).

The first premeditated political murder was carried out less than two months later, on 2 August, against the police commissioner Melitón Manzanas, commonly abhorred as a rampant practitioner of torture. Already, six years before the assassination, an article in *Zutik* (1962) had claimed that persons like Manzanas 'will pay dearly for their crimes.'[14] These accusations were frequently reiterated in ETA's proclamations and pronouncements throughout the years.[15] Hence, Manzanas was a highly selected target, a symbol of state oppression and centralism, whose killing was likely to bring new recruits and more support for ETA's violent strategists.[16]

The government response was swift and ruthless. A 'state of exception' was proclaimed, during which legions of suspected ETA sympathisers were clustered, illegally arrested, battered and terrorised. Yet, people defiantly filled the streets in mass demonstrations. This was hailed by the terrorists as the first stage of the 'action/repression/action' cycle. However, the structure of ETA was severely disrupted by a further wave of arrests in 1969. Most of the leaders were forced into exile, where

13 *7 de junio de 1968: ETA aprieta el gatillo por primera vez*, '*La Vanguardia,*' 5 junio 1988, pp. 6–7 (Report published on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the beginning of armed struggle).

14 Reprinted in *Documentos Y,* vol. 3, p. 301.

15 Such as *Zutik* 2, December 1961, in *Documentos Y,* vol. 1, p. 406.

16 On these internal dynamics, see Irvin (1999).

they rejoined the other main factions. The Sixth Assembly, held in 1970, represented ETA's last serious theoretical controversy. After that date, the group became increasingly impermeable to internal debate, defiantly indifferent to 'divisive' ideological diatribes and increasingly committed to action.

The famous Burgos Trial (1970) was a historical watershed for the whole Basque movement as well as for the Spanish opposition. In Burgos, sixteen *etarras* (ETA members) charged with the murder of Manzanas were brought before a military court. For weeks, international media focused on the Basques' struggle. In a display of generosity which today would be inconceivable, mass demonstrations and solidarity committees sprang up all over Europe in support of the condemned.[17] The solidarity movement was particularly forceful and effective in post-1968 France, where Jean-Paul Sartre and the existentialist milieux became personally involved in the support campaign for the amnesty of political prisoners. In an emblematic spectacle of leftish internationalism, Sartre saw Euskadi as 'a colony exploited by a fascist state allied with American imperialism (Ortzi 1977: 380–1).' In comparison with other *maîtres-à-penser*, Sartre evinced considerable understanding of the problems of European national minorities. Therefore, he accused the mainstream left of uncritically assuming the French bourgeoisie's cultural Jacobinism: 'I wish to oppose the abstract universality of bourgeois humanism to the singular universality of the Basques … A heroic people, led by a revolutionary party, has shown us another [face of] socialism, tangible and decentralising: this is the universality of the Basques … .'[18] But Marxists, internationalists and existentialists were not the only ones mobilised in support of the prisoners. Catholics and liberals also let their voices be heard. The regime, which at least since 1959 had vowed to open up to Europe and to transform its economic practices and human rights record, felt itself under serious international pressure. In the end, all the death sentences were commuted.

As society polarised, mass mobilisations spread at the local level, beginning to attract the immigrants' offspring. Their participation in these public events encouraged the latter to share the natives' common myths and symbols. The immigrants were certainly not concerned with purely ethnic issues: what was at stake was their social peace and very existence, since all public mobilisations carried with them the risk of massive retaliation by the state. Simultaneously, left-wing nationalism conveyed a progressive message to the immigrants, while ETA's daring

17 See Jean-Paul Sartre's introduction to the radical feminist existentialist version of the event in Gisèle Halimi, *Le procès de Burgos*, Paris: Gallimard, 1971 [Span. transl.: *El Proceso de Burgos*, Caracas: Monte Avila].

18 Jean-Paul Sartre, in Halimi (1971: XXIX-XXX). Obviously, Sartre was referring to the ETA of the Burgos Trial, which surged as an international champion of resistance against oppression.

violence exercised an irresistible lure among juvenile sectors. The more ETA's *ekintzak* (armed actions) involved a direct confrontation with the state, the more ETA's star would rise among the nonnative proletariat. The great paradox is that, in these conditions, violence became a vehicle of immigrants' integration into the nationalist struggle.

The peak of ETA's legitimacy was reached with the assassination of Carrero Blanco (1973), the proposed successor of Franco. This *magnicidio* (killing of a top political leader) provoked a vacuum of power from which the regime was never to recover. Now Franco had no heir through which to perpetuate his model of authoritarian 'stability'.[19]

Situating the Nation

What has emerged in the previous section is the dawning of new forms of mass mobilisation catalysed by state centralism, authoritarianism and political repression. Governmental attacks on Basque nationalism and identity politics implied a further centralisation of the state's machinery – illustrated by the use of the notorious 'states of exception'. This quandary led to newer and more sophisticated forms of mobilisation. The result was a re-invention of Basque identity and a burgeoning propagation of nationalist politics. To put it more bluntly, extreme state centralisation led to *ethnogenesis*: a new Basque nation was being forged by the increasing interaction of social change and inadequate governmental responses. Yet, centralisation had to interact with a particular ideological and cultural *humus* in order to generate different grassroots responses (indeed, opposing ones, as in Catalonia and Euskadi). Given Basque nationalism's attempt to involve the immigrants, the nation could no longer be based on blood, descent or 'ethnicity' in its pristine sense. It had to be based on active participation, and this could only take place in an underground network of deepening mobilisation. In this section, I will argue that the essence of this idea can be located in Ernest Renan's 'voluntarist' notion. I will also contrast Renan's weight in Euskadi with the 'rival' Herderian influence in nearby Catalonia.

A centralist regime conceived the Spanish nation in organicist terms, as a holistic entity, a cohesive, complete, integral, indivisible whole. This stress on homogeneity, organicity and purity was cosubstantial to the process of state centralisation. However, this myth inevitably clashed with the rival organic visions of the ethnonations, some of which were based on organic principles as well.

In nationalist politics, Johann Gottfried Herder's (1744–1803) 'organicism' is often opposed to Ernest Renan's (1823–92) 'voluntarism'.

19 For an excellent synthesis on Spanish politics, with particular reference to the national question, see Heywood (1996).

The opposition is between the nation as an objective predestined entity, and the nation as a subjective ongoing process. A few catchwords are chosen, often arbitrarily, to synthesise these two approaches. The Herderian definition is that the nation is a 'distinctive cultural group', while the Renanian (even more famous) one, is that the nation is an 'everyday plebiscite'.[20] Herderianism is often associated with 'Eastern' intolerance and authoritarianism, while Renanianism is identified with Western liberalness and broad-mindedness. Yet, at least in Catalonia, the application of Herderian principles has induced the emergence of more tolerant and pluralist forms of political mobilisation, while Renanian principles have been appropriated by doctrinaire extremism amongst Basque radicals – particularly within ETA.

Theories of nationalism have traditionally failed to contemplate the organic nature of most state nationalisms. Whereas Renan's 'voluntarist' interpretation has been opposed to more 'organicist' ones, this has often been done on the understanding that the former applied to 'civic' and more democratic forms of citizenship, while the latter are representative of minority, stateless and 'ethnic' nationalism. To be fair, Renan's famous address was directed to the recovery of Alsace and Lorraine from Germany's grip. Since the large majority of Alsatians were German-speakers and ethnically Germans (or, at any rate, not ethnically French), cultural, ethnic and other 'organicist' elements, normally regarded as priorities in French discourse, had to be played down and supplanted by a vision in which 'common will' was paramount.[21]

In general, Renan's metaphor has often been used by upholders of state centralisation against autonomist pressures. For instance, the philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955) was a fervent admirer of Ernest Renan the activist, while professing an unconditional rejection of organicist interpretations (Ortega y Gasset 1932). The latter included race and language. Yet, the Spanish (Castilian) language was singularly exempt from accusations of organicism, being a vehicle of nation building and a tool for strengthening the state. For Ortega, the state was the maker of the nation, not vice versa, and language was an instrument for that goal. As students of Spanish fascism generally know, this 'voluntarist' notion was to provide an unanticipated avenue for the legitimation of Francoism and Falangism (Payne 1995). But, as soon as the far right could manipulate it to suit its own agenda, voluntarism was in turn transfigured into an organicist conception. This proves that, rather than a Manichean dichotomy, there is a continuum between organicist and voluntarist conceptions, or between subjectivism and

20 As is known, Ernest Renan claimed that 'the existence of a nation is an *everyday plebiscite*, a perpetual affirmation of life' (Renan 1994: 17).

21 As Hans Kohn observed, Renan himself attached great importance to his patriotic address (Kohn 1945: 581–2, note 13).

objectivism. The Janus-faced vocation of nationalism is perfectly able to turn every metaphor on its head (Nairn 1997).[22] The same double-facedness applies to other dichotomies, such as the 'civic' and 'ethnic' dyad (Kymlicka 1995: 130–7).

Hans Kohn's distinction between Western and Eastern nationalism is based on the observation that the organicist essentialist vision is prevalent in 'Eastern' nationalism, while 'Western' nationalisms are largely exempt from it (Kohn 1945). Hans Kohn's pioneering study has often been misread as a moralistic division between 'bad' nationalisms, amongst which the German and Slavic varieties prevailed (Kohn 1953; 1960), and 'good' nationalisms, of which the USA was the herald (Kohn 1957). Similarly, Ellie Kedourie, while grossly ignoring Kohn's more sophisticated contribution, attacked nationalism as a conspiracy of German Romantic intellectuals (Kedourie 1993). Yet, he was no more sympathetic to voluntarist accounts, since 'a political community which conducts daily plebiscites must soon fall into querulous anarchy, or hypnotic obedience' (Kedourie 1993: 76).

Renan's antecedents can be discerned *ante litteram* in Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), who in his youth was a fanatical admirer of the French Revolution.[23] Renan and Fichte shared an undiluted ethnocentric posture, which was absent in Herder. However, the original Jacobin inspiration was more pronounced in Fichte than in Renan, the *prêtre manqué* (failed priest) who also was an anti-positivist and a monarchic legitimist (defender of the constitutional monarchy). The Jacobin roots of both thinkers are still open to discussion, in view of their shared racist and anti-Semitic statements. If Fichte can be recognised as the progenitor of Germany's aggressive, expansionist nationalism, Renan inspired French nationalists such as Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras, while remaining an admirer of reactionary Germany for a long period.

Indeed, despite their differences, Renan and Fichte were both sharply dissimilar from Herder, whose pluralist vision was characterised by a sincere appreciation for all forms of cultural diversity.[24] It was rather the original Jacobin *Zeitgeist* which was characterised by an explicit, categorical, clean-cut intolerance for ethnic variety and cultural heterogeneity.

22 More than his predecessors, Nairn postulates a distinction between a 'natural' (ethnic) and a 'designed' (civic) definition of the national, the former triumphantly giving way to the latter—which is also more secular. This shift demonstrates, according to Nairn, that today's nationalism is a 'key feature of modernity.'

23 As Kedourie points out, 'national self-determination is, in the final analysis, a determination of the will; and nationalism is, in the first place, a method of teaching the right determination of the will. This indeed is the fundamental subject of Fichte's *Addresses.*' (Kedourie 1993: 76).

24 See Berlin (1976: particularly pp. 165–94) on Herder's doctrine of expression; and Barnard (1965). Herder was the inspiring muse of many secular Zionist thinkers, in particular Eliezer Ben Yehuda and other Hebrew language revivalists. See Fishman (1982: 1–14; 1985; 1997).

If this is so, the course from Jacobinism to fascism can be a promenade, while the ocean allegedly dividing French from German nationalism is not more than a rivulet. The two models – and the two sets of dichotomies attached to them – share a common *Weltanschauung*.

Turning to our case study, it should be noted that, during the postwar formative years, Catalan and Basque nationalism followed two distinct paths. Catalan nationalism concentrated on the recovery of language and other cultural expressions normally attached to language (literature, songs, theatre, etc.) as the epitome of national identity. Not only was language seen as a great unifying tool for the anti-fascist opposition, but it was also singled out as an instrument of nation building for a Catalan society which was just emerging from years of state-led oblivion.

In the Basque context, the predictable nationalist emphasis on language had to be discarded in favour of other elements. This typically occurred when the movement tried to expand in Bilbao and other urban centres where the population was virtually monolingually Spanish, particularly among the working class. This dilemma prompted a search for new inclusive models of Basque identity, away from earlier xenophobic trends. As a consequence of regime centralisation and continuous police crackdowns, participation in the struggle against fascism became a key criterion for inclusion in the Basque 'moral community'. Given the regime's dictatorial character, commitment to the national 'cause' could only be 'measured' by the intensity of personal involvement, as the individual activist put his/her own safety at stake. The most dangerous and daring actions were the most commendable and, hence, represented a distinctively prized evidence of 'Basqueness'. As political violence escalated, involvement in terrorist activities became the crucible of defining membership in the nation. Yet, a parallel culturalist vision of Basque identity emerged around Basque language schools (*ikastolak*), popular sports and other public events, but at that time was less influential in shaping popular perceptions of Basque identity, as well as in determining the regime's responses.

In other words, Catalonia opted for a Herderian-linguistic definition of the nation, while Euskadi adopted a Renanian-voluntarist definition. This choice derived from the interaction between state centralism and patterns of ethnic mobilisation. Contrary to widespread scholarly assumptions, the former resulted in a more moderate and peaceful form of nationalism, while the latter led to a more radical and antagonistic outcome.

Since late Francoism, the ethnoracial character of Basque nationalism was replaced by a vision in which characteristics acquired by individual choice, rather than inherited givens, played a central role. Gurutz Jaúregui rightly identifies this as the 'Renanian phase' of Basque nationalism (Jaúregui Bereciartu 1981: 152). Particularly relevant to the unfolding of post-1959 Basque nationalism were Renan's most activist statements, those which simply emphasised the role of sacrifice and the

importance of collective memories of suffering: in a rather disturbing statement, Renan adduced that 'common suffering is greater than happiness. In fact, national sorrows are more significant than triumphs because they impose obligations and demand a common effort (Jaúregui Bereciartu 1981: 17). Lacking the power of culture as a common bond and submitted to stern oppression by a highly centralised state, the Basque youth and leaders became increasingly attracted by Renanian 'voluntarist' ideas – even though the overwhelming majority of them may have never heard of Renan's name. Finally, a widely quoted dictum among Basque radicals became 'We fight, therefore we are,' taken *verbatim* from the repertoire of the Zionist guerrilla leader Menachem Begin (Begin 1972).

One of the first authors to theorise the need for a continuous struggle to revive Basque nationhood was Krutwig (Krutwig 1963). The stress on the nation as a daily plebiscite implied a radicalisation of the conflict. Given that the Basques themselves were not a cohesive, least of all homogeneous, unit, internal divisions could only be bridged through a radical challenge. In this logic, state violence and mass counter-violence were to be key factors. Krutwig was a major proponent of the idea of a mass military revolt, a guerrilla war to liberate Euskadi from the fetters of 'colonialism'. One of *Vasconia's* chapters was named *Bellica* and was entirely dedicated to exploring military tactics on how to best organise a popular insurrection through the creation of guerrilla bands and cadres. As I have stressed, this became the key source of inspiration for ETA's activists – even though Krutwig was never a member of ETA and was rather considered as a 'free thinker'.

In short, ETA chose a Renanian route to 'nation building': what had hitherto been an 'ethnic' nation defined by race and descent, and where pedigree and surnames mattered more than words and deeds, was consciously reconceived into a voluntarist one, precisely through the use of selective violence.

Dichotomies may help to simplify what appear as confused pictures of events, but they carry limited potentials of veracity and accuracy. Thus, what was an original casticist vision of the nation also included a cultural component (the rediscovery of Euskara, of selected traditions, and so on). This cultural nucleus was, so to say, kept 'at bay', as an accessory tool to the main thrust of Basque nationhood, which was conceived in terms of an extended family (hence, in terms of what I define as 'ethnic nationalism'). In other words, culture was withheld in the background throughout modern Basque history as a legitimising reservoir, first for a primarily racial, subsequently for a political and military, form of nationalism – with culture occasionally looming in the foreground. At the apex of state repression, people were brought into the streets not in the name of defending a caste or a race, but in the name of resistance against a state which was besetting 'them' – the same state which had destroyed traditional Basque autonomies. The relentless response of the state caused continuous blows in the nationalist organisation by imprisoning their leaders and leading

others into exile, but at the same time it catalysed popular resistance. For every battle won, the regime was approaching final defeat in war. Short-term calculations of ruling politicians (in other words, their irresistible eagerness to strike back in order to prove that the state was in charge), led to their long-term sink and fall. While Catalan resistance became a matter of rediscovering a forbidden language, in Euskadi there was no high culture which could agglutinate and 'direct' a popular response to state centralisation.

As a concluding remark, my goal has been to show how, in the Basque case, state centralisation led to ethnopolitical radicalisation. In countries pervaded by ethnic tensions, where the central state lacks legitimacy, centralisation necessarily entails a heightening of the conflict. The spiral mechanism presented herein is a familiar scenario in many highly centralised and delegitimated polities, some of which have been studied in other chapters of this book. To address the cause of centralisation itself, or to propose remedies to it, should be the work of an entirely different investigation.

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