

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS OR BECOMING THE DATUM

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This article examines the influence of the Basque Studies Program of the University of Nevada upon the Basque community of the United States. It is argued that current Basque-American cultural reality was in part shaped by the Program and its initiatives. Particular attention is given to the effects of the Basque Book Series of the University of Nevada Press, the study-abroad opportunities that permitted Basque-American students to experience the Basque Country and the Program's research on the Basque legacy in the New World.

Artikulu honetan Nevadako Unibertsitateko Euskal Mintegiak (Basque Studies Program) Estatu Batuetako euskal komunitatearen gainean duen eragina aztertzen da. Bertan erakusten da egungo euskal amerikarren kultur errealitatea Mintegiak partzialki moldatua izan dela. Arreta berezia eskaintzen zaie hiru gaii: Nevadako Unibertsitateko Prentsuaren euskal liburu sailaren ondorioak, euskal ammerikar ikasleek Euskal Herrian ikasteko eta esperientziak bizitzeko izan dituzten aukerak, bai eta euskaldunek Mundu Berrira eginiko ekarpenaren inguruan Mintegiak burutu dituen ikerketak.

Este artículo estudia la influencia del Programa de Estudios Vascos de la Universidad de Nevada sobre la comunidad Vasca de Estados Unidos. En él se demuestra que la realidad cultural Vasco-Americana actual ha sido parcialmente moldeada por el Programa y sus iniciativas. Se presta una atención especial a los efectos de la serie de libros vascos de la Prensa de la Universidad de Nevada, a las oportunidades que han tenido los estudiantes Vasco-Americanos de estudiar y vivir sus experiencias en el País Vasco, así como a las investigaciones que el Programa ha llevado a cabo sobre el legado vasco en el Nuevo Mundo.

In my first lecture I considered some of the factors that shaped the Basque Studies Program in its early years. I particularly focussed upon the synergism between myself, Robert Laxalt and Jon Bilbao. At times we seemed like the three musketeers on some impossible mission while at others we more resembled Larry, Moe and Curly enmeshed in some improbable misalliance. To our efforts were added the critical leavening and contributions of the many individuals who placed their imprint upon the BSP and were in turn affected by it. In this fashion a Program was launched which became a factor, indeed a force, within the Basque-American community. Today I wish to pass through the looking glass and attempt to view the Basque Studies Program from a Basque-American perspective.

An immediate caveat is in order since it is simplistic to speak of the Basque-American or the Basque-American community. Rather, one might better posit a continuum of Basqueness upon which one could situate individual persons who happen to reside in the United States and who were either born here or in the Basque region of Europe. Indeed, the picture is even more complicated since some persons residing here who lay claim to Basqueness came from places like Latin America, Australia and the Philippines.

Clearly, to have been affected by the Basque Studies Program a person had to possess more than certain genealogical credentials, rather he or she had to be predisposed. That is, one had to "feel Basque in order to be Basque". The individual who cared little about ethnic heritage or, as happens, self-consciously rejected an ethnic persona as part of self-identity was an unlikely consumer of our products. We are, then, dealing with the believers rather than the apostates. If we liken the resulting public to a Catholic Church congregation we find that it is internally discriminated in terms of both intensity of faith and level of participation. That is, there are the daily communicants, the weekly church-goers, the once-a-year Easter Sunday pew-warmers and the deathbed penitents. Translated back into our terms the Basque Studies Program has impacted the lives of the individual members of its public in widely varying degree.

If, for heuristic purposes, we regard the Basque-American experience as a viable and undifferentiated category it is possible to discern, if not actually measure, the influence upon it of the Basque Studies Program. When the Program was launched in the late 1960s Basque-American reality was, like any other cultural heritage, a precipitate of its own history as well as of developments beyond its control within the wider social and cultural settings. The settlement pattern of Basque-Americans was characterized by the pronounced dispersal of a relatively small population over an extraordinary expanse. This was the result of the groups shepherding and sheep ranching legacies, a complex which by its nature was inimical to family formation and town residence. To the extent that there was an urban dimension it was focussed in small towns within open range sheep raising districts and expressed largely through

the presence of Basque hotels-themselves tied closely to the economics of the sheep industry. There was also a discernible Basque-American presence in regional urban centers such as Reno, Boise, Stockton, Fresno and Bakersfield, as well as in the greater San Francisco and Los Angeles metropolitan areas. While no longer directly involved in sheep husbandry these colonies were populated in the main by exherders and their descendants. The majority of their members engaged in manual occupations such as gardening, milking in commercial dairies, or construction labor. There was also a discernible entrepreneurial strain as some Basque-Americans established small businesses while others played off the fame of Basque cuisine to launch bakeries or restaurants.

To further complicate the picture the more than a century of Basque immigration into the American West was far from uniform in terms of Old World regional origins. Thus, French Basques were the first to come and targeted California by the midnineteenth century whereas Vizcayans were tardy and focussed upon eastern Oregon, Southern Idaho and northern Nevada. The immigrants from Les Aldudes tended to go to Buffalo, Wyoming. In short, chain migration from the Basque Country to the American West was, in reality, between particular districts and even communities of the Basque Country and others in the western United States. The magnitude and timing of migration corresponded to developments in both the sending and receiving areas. The upshot was that there was a mosaic of Basque-American realities created in the American West segregated from one another by both time and space.

If we put the foregoing elements in motion in order to characterize the status of Basque-Americans in the late 1960s or the period when the Basque Studies Program was launched, we find that the Vizcayan Basques of Boise were but dimly aware of the Navarrese and French Basques of Bakersfield. Celebration of the festival in Sparks, Nevada, a few years earlier represented the first pan-Basque event in the more than a century of the group's presence in the American West. In the aftermath of it a handful of communities (notably in Elko, Reno and Ely, Nevada, and two or three Central Valley towns of California) were emboldened to form clubs and found annual festivals of their own. A few created dance groups. Thus, there were the beginnings of a Basque-American associational life that energized the Basques of a particular locality. However, from the broader regional perspective it remained fragmented and compartmentalized.

By the mid-1960s the Elko festival was billed as the National Basque Festival and was attracting media attention as well as the increasing participation of Basque-Americans drawn from an ever-widening geographical range. Thus, there were the beginnings of both the public projection of a Basque-American heritage and internalization by persons of Basque descent of what might be defined as a new Basque-American ethnic identity. The latter was made possible by a series of developments, some internal and some external to the group. These included:

1. a demographic crisis precipitated by the curtailment of Basque immigration in the American West beginning with changes in U. S. immigration policy in the 1920s. As Old World Basques died or returned to Europe there was awareness of a growing disjuncture among Basque-Americans regarding the Basque part of their hyphenated selves. Stated differently, the identity was becoming contentless; it required conscious effort if it were not to be abandoned altogether.
2. The curtailment of immigration and an attendant decline in open range sheep raising through creation of the national forest system and grazing districts ameliorated the

controversy that had surrounded the figure of the itinerant or tramp Basque sheepherder prior to the 1930s. Indeed, by 1950 there was special legislation facilitating the entry of a handful of Basques to assuage a growing labor crisis in Americas sheep industry. This had resulted in favorable publicity for Basques. At the same time several hundred of the post-World War II ex-herder had acquired U. S. residency and settled mainly in the communities of earlier Basque settlement. They thus provided a cohort of Old World ethnic influence capable of energizing the ethnic curiosity of local second-and third-generation Basque-Americans. Much of the organizational thrust for the Basque clubs and festivals of the 1960s and 1970s derived from the marriage of interests and efforts of the ex-herders and their American-born ethnic cousins. Indeed, "marriage" is the operative term in a literal sense as well since there was a new wave of Basque-American family formation as many ex-herdsmen married Basque-American spouses. At the same time, this ethnic effervescence was played out against the backdrop of keen awareness that the post-World War II immigration of Basque sheepherders was episodic and terminal since the open range sheep industry was visibly contracting and, in any event, Basques were being displaced in the ranks of the remaining herders by Mexicans, Peruvians and Chileans.

3. The third facilitator of Basque ethnic expression was certain developments in the wider society. Americans had grown tired of constant geographic mobility, urban ills and a sense of rootlessness. The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s challenged the melting pot philosophy that had dominated American domestic policy regarding immigrants and minorities. Legitimation of hyphenated ethnicity demanded its expression. A passive orientation towards one's heritage became suspect as indifference. In a more benign sense ethnicity was celebrated, indeed to the point where it seemed that the only culturally impoverished and causeless American was the white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant male (since the WASP female had the feminist alternative to ethnic activism).

Similarly, the interest of urban Americans in alternate, often rural, lifestyles, most epitomized but not limited to the counter cultural Hippie movement, created an aura of fascination around figures like cowboys, farmers and sheepherders. Thus, the Basque herder became the object of magazine and newspaper articles as well as film documentaries.

There is one final point to be made regarding the nature of the late 1960s Basque-American world beyond our looking glass, Stated succinctly, we were engaged in creating an academic program based at an institution of higher education whose main reference was a group which lacked a well-developed appreciation of formal education. There are several reasons why this was the case. We have already noted the close identification of most Basque-Americans with manual occupations, This aspect of the Basque-American community was both a cause and effect of its attitudes towards formal schooling. It should, however, be noted that there were several other discernible elements informing a more comprehensive understanding of this aspect of Basque-American reality.

First, there was the nature of the recruitment and self-selection of potential emigrants for the American West in the Basque Country. They were drawn largely from rural and small town backgrounds, or contexts in which formal education was scarcely valued unless leading to a religious vocation. The farming population had a history of valuing the help provided by children in the household economy and begrudged the time lost to schooling. In many instances the children travelled considerable distances over poor country roads only to experience the

frustration of being monolingual Basque speakers in a system dominated by French or Spanish. In short, the school experience was often humiliating rather than challenging. Nor were the potential rewards particularly attractive. Schooling was identified with the professions which were, in turn, largely suspect in the view of the farmers. Professionals were people who lived by guile rather than honest hard labor. They were the denigrated *kaletarrak* or street people rather than the esteemed and honorable *baseritarrak*, the noble caretakers of stable farming households which had persisted for centuries.

So the majority of emigrants leaving for America from the rural segment of Basque society were semiliterate and essentially anti-intellectual. Then, too, they settled in locales in the American West, its ranching districts and small towns, which had their own underdeveloped educational system and anti-intellectual bias. The Basque rancher in Nevada shared the same problems of the Basque farmer in Europe when it came to educating his children. The isolation of ranches made the logistics costly and time-consuming, and could even translate into painful family separations as children were boarded in town during the school year or the family maintained a town residence for the purpose. The ultimate benefits of formal education were difficult to discern for many Basque ranching families, particularly since they barely translated into advantage in local terms and could well suppose that the educated person would have to move away in search of employment in his or her profession.

Emigration from the Basque Country was not limited to its rural populace. Indeed, since the discovery of the New World and the sea route to the Philippines an educated Basque professional elite has been in the vanguard of both the Spanish colonial enterprise and its aftermath. For a trained administrator, clergyman, journalist, lawyer or doctor intending to emigrate Latin America and the Philippines held out the prospect of smooth transition and retention of professional credentials. A doctor from Bilbao was educated in Spanish and possessed a university degree recognized in Buenos Aires. Were he to select Boise his lack of English and American medical certification all but precluded his ever utilizing his professional skills. Thus, within the extensive history of Basque emigration worldwide the movement to the American West was highly circumscribed and limited almost exclusively to the rural dwellers and a few members of the urban proletariat.

Within the panorama of American immigration history this is somewhat unique. While the mass immigration of other southern and central Europeans consisted in the main of peasants and workers it also tended to include a significant minority of professionals fleeing from some disaster or attracted by the prospect of making a living by ministering to the needs of a particular immigrant community. Thus, the Italians, Jews, Slovaks, Poles, Hungarians, Greeks, etc. all developed their ethnic institutions, their own churches, their own press, and sometimes even their own schools. Virtually none of these are discernible among the Basque-Americans.

The reasons include the fact that Basque immigration never assumed the numerical proportions or the geographic concentration providing the critical mass that might sustain ethnic neighborhoods and institutions. No single local Basque colony was sufficiently large and focussed to constitute a viable clientele for Basque professionals. Nor were there cataclysmic events in the Basque Country such as a holocaust or a revolution that produced a serious influx of Basque refugees into the United States. The two major conflagrations prompting the emigration of Basque intellectuals in the last century were the First and Second Carlist wars. The former transpired prior to the entry of Basques into California during the gold rush which meant that in the aftermath of the First Carlist War the United States was simply not on their mental map as an emigration destination. At the time of the Second Carlist War the southern cone of South America, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines were, as we have seen, its

preferred destinations, The independent South American nations of Argentina and Uruguay were, by the 1870s, pursuing a policy that “to govern is to populate” as they sought to people the vast pampas, whereas Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines remained within the disintegrating Spanish colonial empire.

In the twentieth century Spain was neutral in both world wars and even profited mightily from the first. While the Spanish Civil War produced many refugees several Latin American countries again stood ready to receive them. Indeed, in the United States there was even a lobby against admitting Spanish Republicans as “rojos” or communists. This structure extended even to the children sent out by the Basque Government during the siege of Bilbao. While Mexico, France, Belgium, England and the Soviet Union all received some of the child refugees, the United States denied them access. Nor were voices raised on their behalf in the Basque-American community, itself testimony to its lack of a galvanizing intelligentsia, formal leadership and institutions.

In sum, as we launched our program there was little reason to suspect that it would influence the future direction of Basque-American culture in the United States. Nor did I, as Coordinator, feel that Basque-Americans had a particular obligation to support it. In part that is what made me an ambivalent fund-raiser. My main concern, as when I lived in Echalar and Murelaga, was to establish sufficient rapport with enough Basque-Americans to make an anthropological study of their cultural reality feasible.

I believe that the first Basque Studies Program development that had significant if unintended consequences within the Basque-American community was our newsletter. Since Basque-Americans lacked any kind of ethnic publication -whether in the form of a newspaper or a periodical- our newsletter assumed the quasi-status of both. We began with a mailing list of about 4500 names and the way it was generated was itself an indication of the fragmented nature of Basque-American reality as well as the lack of communication among its parts. I sat down with the telephone directories from places as disparate as Boise, Reno, Buffalo, Bakersfield, Chino, Elko, etc., in short, anywhere that I thought there might be Basques. That first year when I travelled throughout the American West I would spend my evenings in motels scouring the local telephone books for names. In the case of San Francisco and Los Angeles I used the opposite tact. That is, I looked up a short list of typical Basque last names, restricting myself to French Basque ones since the huge Chicano populations of both cities made names like Aguirre or Echeverria with a *ch* almost worthless.

In this fashion we created the core of a mailing list that proved to be reasonably effective and which has doubled over the past two decades. When we launched the newsletter it quickly became apparent that it ought to contain more than just news about us but could scarcely serve as a forum for news about them. That is, we were swamped with news from the local Basque communities and it became immediately clear that if we published club news, obituaries, etc. we might become the organ for Basque-Americans. In short, we were in danger of becoming an ethnic newspaper. Our compromise was to institute a free subscription and no advertising policy while including in each issue a feature article which addressed a Basque topic in layman's terms. However, despite our never quite becoming an ethnic newspaper the newsletter undoubtedly expanded both the breadth and depth of Basque-American reality. Through its pages Basques in one part of the American West expanded their awareness of those in other parts, and all Basque-Americans were brought a bit closer to Old World Basque culture. The newsletter also helped Basque-Americans to deepen their knowledge of their own ethnic identity and thereby provided it with greater content.

One of the inadvertent consequences of the newsletter was to convert the Program into an object of modest tourism as Basques increasingly came to make the University and its Basque Studies Program one of their stops when visiting western Nevada.

The newsletter was conceived mainly as a vehicle for publicizing another early initiative of the Basque Studies Program—the Basque Book Series of the University of Nevada Press. In the late 1960s, with the exception of *Sweet Promised Land*, there were no books available in English regarding the Basques. We decided to remedy the situation by reissuing Rodney Gallop's *A Book of the Basques*, first published in England in 1930 but long since out of print. The project languished for two years for want of funds since the Press had limited resources and other commitments. In fact, the decision to go forward was made only after we agreed to take all of our private donations, or about \$ 3500, to underwrite the publication. In return we entered into a partnership with the Press regarding any future profits from the Series. The Gallop book was a phenomenal success. The first edition of 2,000 copies sold out within a matter of weeks. It is now in its fifth or sixth printing and has sold over ten thousand copies,

Thus, the Book Series was established and with a text that provided an overview of Old World Basque culture to a large audience. *A Book of the Basques* became the bible regarding the Old World heritage for many a Basque-American. We envisioned translating and publishing Philippe Veyrin's *Les Basques* and Julio Caro Baroja's *Los Vascos*, both overviews similar to the Gallop work, but were never able to. Rather, the Series began to attract original manuscript submissions. In the process it became one of the most successful specialized publishing endeavors in the annals of university press publishing. At the same time we can say that about eighty percent of the titles regarding Old World Basques or Basque-Americans published in English over the past two decades appeared in the Series. Furthermore, the Basque Series constitutes the single most important source of information for New World-born Basques regarding both their Old World ethnic heritage and the Basque-American experience.

I would single out two of its titles as particularly significant both for the Basque-Americans and the mission of the Basque Studies Program. They are *Amerikanuak: Basques in the New World* and the Basque-English, English-Basque dictionary. Both were assumed as Program activities and goals and each required several years to complete.

Amerikanuak was conceived one snowy day as Jon Bilbao and I were driving to Elko. I was teaching a course there on Old World Basque Culture through University Extension. I would travel to Elko every other Friday, lecture three hours Friday night, three hours Saturday morning and be back in Reno Saturday night. This particular trip Jon was to be my guest lecturer for part of the time. The weather was dreadful and it took us ten hours to drive the normal five. As we crept along I discussed with Jon my frustration as I attempted to study Basque ethnic identity in the American West. I had a \$ 30,000 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health but was having considerable trouble grounding the study given the paucity of secondary sources on Basque-Americans. Finally, I asked if he would be interested in collaborating on a broad historical/social structural overview of the Basque presence in the American West?

The resulting collaboration between an anthropologist and an historian was quite unique at the time (the year was 1969 I believe). Nor did Jon and I have any idea of what we were getting into. Six years later we produced a hybrid work that sprawled fearlessly, some might say naively, over three continents and five centuries. For along the way we had decided that to really understand how a Basque ended up herding sheep in Nevada in 1950 it was necessary to review the broader picture of Basque emigration since the discovery of the New World with particular attention upon the alternative destinations during the last century. For each of us the

project represented a personal odyssey that took us from sheep camps, to county archives, to a summer's residence in a Basque hotel, to visits to Basque Centers throughout Latin America, etc.

Given its scope we regarded the book as a preliminary statement which would hopefully lead to immediate and profound revision as others were stimulated to pursue its many points in greater depth. In retrospect it seems fair to say that the book's analysis has stood the test of time better than we had anticipated. It has also become a kind of baseline for the study of Basque-American cultural reality as well as a compendium of their history for Basque-Americans.

The dictionary project required an even longer period to complete. Conceived originally, and again naively, as a one to two year project in actuality it took ten. It began with our success in getting about \$ 50,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to bring Luis Mitxelena to Reno where he was to adapt his updating of the classic Azkue dictionary into a Basque/English version. For reasons that remain unclear Mitxelena backed out and we had to resign the grant. Gorka Aulestia began tinkering with the idea of producing an original, modest dictionary and continued to work on it while residing in Pullman, Washington, where his wife, Mertxe, was completing her doctorate in biochemistry. When she received a postdoctoral appointment here Gorka began his dictionary work in earnest. Again one could detail an odyssey that entailed expansion of the scope of the project, involved several collaborators culminating in the co-authorship of Linda White, and a financial juggling act to keep the project alive that in my administrative capacity transformed me from a virile, dashing young man into the gray-haired shadow that you see before you.

Seriously, though, I believe that *Amerikanuak* and the Basque/English dictionary represent the highwater marks to date of the Basque Studies Program's lasting legacy. It is a legacy that has profound implications for the survival of Basque culture in the American West since the one provided it with its history while the other returned to American-born Basques access to their language.

I mentioned that by the late 1960s Basque-Americans were forming social clubs in a few locales and there was an emerging summer festival cycle. At the same time there were no formal links between the clubs so the efforts remained sporadic and insular. When Jon Bilbao and I were in Argentina researching *Amerikanuak* we visited several Basque clubs there. Jon was struck by the fact that most belonged to an overarching organization called FEVA or the *Federación de Entidades Vasco-Argentinas*. Back in Reno he urged me to call a meeting of representatives of Basque clubs in the American West to explore forming a similar organization here. I resisted the idea as being inappropriate as a Basque Studies Program activity, but agreed that we might serve as a catalyst. Janet Inda was a frequent volunteer with the Program at the time and was an officer in the Reno Basque Club. Jon won her over to the idea and she contacted key people in San Francisco. We had our own connections in Boise. An organizational meeting was held here at the university in a room at Jot Travis Student Union. It was clear that for the idea to be viable it would have to appeal to Boise, Reno and San Francisco Basques at minimum.

At the meeting we made it clear that we stood ready to help, but that the real leadership had to come from the community. A full history of NABO is beyond our scope today. Suffice it to say that after much effort and no small amount of frustration the idea prevailed. Jon was a sort of spiritual father to the true believers and a constant source of encouragement through their tough times. The initial name for NABO was the Basque Federation, an obvious reflection

of the Argentine example. It was later amended when an attorney, Bob Goicoechea of Elko, drew up the by-laws and sought incorporation. Nevada law defined "federation" in such a fashion that it was inapplicable.

Subsequently, NABO has become a major force in forging links between the more than twenty Basque clubs in the United States as well as with the Basque Government. Indeed, it may be regarded as the highest organizational or institutional expression of Basque ethnicity in the United States. The Basque Studies Program continues to facilitate its activities. Occasionally NABO meetings are held here on campus and we display its trophies and plaques. Would NABO have existed had there not been a Basque Studies Program? It is hard to say since it may have been an idea whose time had come. But the fact remains that NABO was conceived and originally implemented by the Program.

Another of Jon's legacies was the concept of study abroad. It was his dream to provide a vehicle whereby Basque-Americans could visit the Basque Country and come away with more than a tourist experience. Again, I was a Nervous Nellie since, at the time, we were based at the Desert Research Institute. DRI was not particularly interested in seeing its researchers engage in teaching; it survived from the soft money overhead from grants and viewed teaching as a distraction from the main mission. I was also worried about all of the logistics. Neither of us had experience, we didn't even have a secretary and Jon wasn't particularly long on organizational skills. It was therefore against my better judgment that we plunged in. We only ran the program for four or five summers but in the course of doing so we probably exposed more than 100 young Basque-Americans to their heritage. It's real importance and impact were more in the quality than the quantity of the students. They included people like Julio Bilbao, Miren Rementeria, Ray Echeverria, and Pat Bieter from Idaho all of whom later played key roles in fomenting Basque culture there. There was Joe Cenarruza, son of Idaho Secretary of State Peter Cenarruza, who then took his father to the Basque Country, an experience which converted Pete into a strong Basque cultural activist. Linda Gastañaga of Reno was another alumna. She later devoted her graduate career to Basque studies and her family became and remains one of our biggest benefactors. The list goes on, the point is that the original summer program created a cohort of Basque-Americans who returned to their home areas determined to influence the future course of Basque-American culture. Indeed, when NABO was founded in the Boise area its acceptance was due largely to the efforts and influence of summer school alumnae.

Eventually, the summer program led to Boise State University's year-long effort in Oñate and then to the current University Studies Abroad Consortium under the direction of Carmelo Urza, himself an alumnus of the original summer program. Under his aegis several hundred American students, including more than two hundred Basque-Americans, have been exposed to their Old World cultural heritage.

Thus, in its modern form the Basque Studies Program continues to influence Basque-American youth and through them the present and future course of Basque culture in the American West.

There were other ways in which the Basque Studies Program provided content to the Basque-American heritage while heightening awareness of it within the wider American context. The formation here at UNR of a world-class Basque library has served as a magnet for scholars from throughout the nation and abroad. Through interlibrary loan we disseminate critical information regarding Basque culture. At the same time our collection provides Basque-Americans with an extraordinary resource, an ethnic archive as it were. From their perspective

the library may be viewed as a vast and expanding text that bears testimony to Basque cultural uniqueness, This is a particular point of pride for a people which to date lacks a country with a seat in the United Nations.

In a more tangible vein I might mention that our slide shows and photo exhibits have been viewed by literally thousands of people. Our staff has lectured about Basques to thousands more. Hundreds of students have taken our courses here at UNR. One cannot even estimate how many people have read one or more of the approximately thirty titles in the Basque Book and Occasional Papers Series. Our staff through its participation provides academic respectability to the major Basque cultural events held here in the United States. Just to mention a few one could cite our involvement in the Basque cultural exhibit held at Fort Mason in San Francisco, the two Jaialdis in Boise and the Basque Sculpture Exhibit at Navy Pier in Chicago. We have provided consultation to several documentary film projects, to National Geographic, to the Time-Life Book Series. In short, without a doubt we have become America's national resource center and clearinghouse for information regarding both New-World and Old-World Basque culture.

Hopefully without becoming vain, it seems accurate to state that our efforts have not been in vain. At the same time there is a sense in which the question that I posed at the beginning of this lecture is unanswerable. It is impossible to turn the clock back twenty-five years and then relive them without the Basque Studies Program. It is likely that without it Basque-Americans would have still retained their heritage. However, I do believe that whatever that Basque-American reality might have been it would have been different than what it is today. I believe that a big part of the difference is attributable to the efforts of this Program. It is an accomplishment of which we should all be proud. I know that I am.