

tas que han venido utilizando a don Miguel como martillo antivasco de herejes, todavía numerosos en algunos sitios de Bilbao.

Y, ya que hemos citado a Unamuno, desearía añadir una breve anécdota. Hace ya algunos años, un amigo me dejó leer un cuento que había escrito en euskara sobre el ilustre bilbaíno. Aunque algo simple, no estaba mal del todo y podría resumirse así: un artista alsaciano, excelente esteta y pintor de desnudos, encontraba gran oposición a su arte en su pudibunda sociedad local. Ello le impulsó a exponer en París, donde fue muy aplaudido y colmado de felicitaciones. El pintor no se percató de que los parisinos, más que admirar su genio y su técnica pictórica, observaban sus cuadros de forma morbosa, contemplando con ojos libidinosos aquellas carnes germanas tan apetecibles, que al mismo tiempo les servían para ridiculizar el naturalismo obsceno de los incultos provincianos y justificar su represión. Aquel pintor gozó de fama en la metrópoli durante algún tiempo. Sin embargo, eso le alejó para siempre de su gente, del pueblo que había tratado de retratar fielmente porque, como bien sabían sus amigos, en el fondo lo amaba apasionadamente.

Resumiendo, no me parece muy objetiva la manera que el autor tiene de enjuiciar el vasquismo, más empeñado en trabajar por la construcción de un presente y futuro esperanzadores para toda nuestra sociedad que en estériles ensismamientos melancólicos. También creo que este libro, a pesar del rechazo que puede generar por su forma en exceso provocativa, aporta igualmente motivos serios de reflexión y puede ser un buen revulsivo para sacar a los líderes e intelectuales de los partidos nacionalistas de su modorra ideológica.

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Jon Juaristi: Compulsive Archaeology and The Basque Nationalist Primal Scene¹

I usually do not write about individual authors, unless they stand at the crossroads of a broader political or cultural junction than the one merely defined by their own individual or private circumstances. Indeed, this is the case of Jon Juaristi (1951-). His latest work, *El bucle melancólico: historias de nacionalistas vascos* (1997) has created an atmosphere of debate and discussion that could be best described as “political excitement:” “everybody” in Spain is talking about the book. In his book, the *enfant* and *critic terrible* of Basque nationalism has shown a more emotional and irrational side, which begins to resemble in some uncanny or negative way nationalist zeal. At the same time, nationalist readers, both Basque and Spanish, have rushed to read what could be tentatively termed as “the public denunciation of a long history of domestic abuse and violence at the heart of the Basque nationalist family.” I would venture to say that the book has been read more as the exposé of some unspeakable perversion than as a political essay *sensu stricto*. But then the question remains: what is the nature of the political excitement generated by Juaristi’s book? Are we developing a taste for political perversion? How to analyze “excitement” in political terms so that we can make sense of our times and, if not perversions, at least our political libidos?

¹ I would like to thank Michael Ugarte for the insightful suggestions he made on an earlier draft of this article.

Before rushing into some ready-made answers, it is worthwhile revisiting Jon Juaristi's work in detail so that its complexity and breath are not overlooked. Over the last twenty years, Juaristi, besides an extemporaneous poetic production, has written more than half a dozen books in which he has single-handedly redefined and brought into focus Basque nationalism in a way that has no parallels at least since Juan Aranzadi's and Javier Corcuera's work in the late 70s and early 80s. Nowadays, Juaristi has become Basque nationalism's most passionate critic, and yet he has also turned out to be its best chronicler. His work, unlike that of most critics of Basque nationalism, does not simply focus on its historical inception at the end of the nineteenth century but reaches back to its archaeological formation on the eve of European modernity in the Renaissance. Consequently Juaristi's work allows us to contemplate the relation between modernity and nationalism in the Basque Country in a privileged and unprecedented way.

Moreover, his approach, which he characterizes as "history of ideas *more philologico*" (*Chimbo* 14, my translation) captures in an unparalleled way the *discursive* articulation of Basque nationalism. As a result, his work ironically is one of the few, if not the only one, to surpass the modern epistemological framework of the historiographic and sociological analysis prevalent to this day in the analysis of Basque nationalism. Although he owes a great deal to Juan Aranzadi's previous work (*Milenarismo vasco*), his is the only one aware of the epistemological and discursive revolution brought about by poststructuralism (Barthes, Derrida, Foucault), (post) Marxism (B. Anderson, Gellner), and psychoanalysis (Freud, Agamben). Furthermore, as I will affirm in this article, if Juaristi's work is brought to its ultimate consequences, Spanish nationalism and the cultural and political reality of the Spanish state will no longer remain intact. Although his work is filled with tangential references to Spanish nationalism, which he does not then elaborate (*Vestigios de Babel: Para una arqueología de los nacionalismos españoles*, my emphasis), nevertheless it represents one of the most interesting standpoints from which to explore the complex nationalist system of the Spanish state. This multilayered aspect of his work is precisely the one that brings about the contradiction and excessiveness that makes Jon Juaristi's work so interesting, so compelling, beyond the traditional work of any honest historian or philologist circumscribed to his or her discipline. From his early political and philological work (*Euskararen ideologiak*), to his later academic analysis (*Linaje de Aitor*), or to the more recent informal and essayist style (*El chimbo*), Juaristi has walked down different critical and discursive paths, which have led him to his latest work: *El bucle melancólico*. This book represents a very interesting discursive experiment in the mixing of different genres: psychoanalysis, biography, autobiography, denunciation, and tabloid journalism. *El bucle* is the recipient of several awards (the 1997 Espasa Calpe Award and the 1998 National Award of Essay). As a result, this book has catapulted Juaristi to the international academic elite; in 1998 he became the first King Juan Carlos I of Spain Chair at New York University. But most importantly, and as I mentioned above, *El bucle*, actually in its 13th print, has been bought and read in the Basque Country, Spain, and abroad with an excitement, ranging from envy to loath, that has no precedents in recent history. Only in literature, Juaristi's generational colleague Bernardo Atxaga accomplished the same level of excitement, although of a very different kind, with his novel *Obabakoak* back in 1988. In other words, Juaristi's *El bucle melancólico* has become an intellectual best seller. His denunciation of Basque nationalism and its melancholic strategy has excited both Basque and Spanish readers in ways that are symptomatic of our political times. More than anything else, Juaristi's work is a sign of our political times: so excited and yet so confused, so open to confession and criticism and yet so limited by its curly locks (*bucles*).

Finally, understanding the context of this political and libidinal upheaval unleashed by *El bucle* is also as important. *El bucle* comes out at a time when most Spanish nationalisms

(Basque, Spanish, Catalanian, Galician, etc.) are experiencing a resurgence fostered by political parties such as PP, PNV, or CIU. It is also important to emphasize the historical irony that marks this nationalist upheaval: this nationalist escalation is taking place precisely at a moment when the Spanish state is set in a course of Europeanization and globalization, which renders the crisis of state-sovereignty more than a theoretical hypothesis. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that Juaristi's work comes after canonical writers such as Bernardo Atxaga and Ramon Saizarbitoria have told their own histories of nationalism and violence in *The Lone Man* and *Los Pasos Incontables* respectively (as well as Andu Lertxundi to a certain extent in his *Las últimas sombras*). Considering that Juaristi subtitles his book "Stories of Basque Nationalists," it is important to bear in mind the fact that other authors have recently told their own stories as well.

Archaeology and Denunciation of Basque Nationalism

In retrospect, Juaristi's work strikes the reader because of its unaltered and resolutely unidirectional objective. His work has always had the same aim: to denounce the fabricated nature or constructedness of Basque nationalism. Hence, it is important first to analyze this continuity in order to then isolate and understand the nature of the unprecedented, political excitement brought about by *El bucle melancólico*.

In his first major work, *El linaje de Aitor* (1987), Juaristi studies the *fuerrista* movement of the prenationalist era of the Spanish Restoration and its discursive production (1876-1893). Here Juaristi denounces this movement for resorting to literature in order to create a lost past as a way to justify and mask the fabricated nature of its political ideology: "Incapaces de forjar una historia nacional vasca que confiriera legitimidad a sus presupuestos ideológicos... los defensores de los privilegios vascos recurrieron a la literatura para inventarse una tradición" (16).

Juaristi's denunciation of the *fuerrista* movement already announces the concept of melancholia, although it is not phrased in technical psychoanalytical terms:

Tomando prestada una expresión de José Luis Varela, definiríamos el presente estudio como la "crónica de un ensimismamiento", del repliegue de una sociedad en crisis sobre su propia intrahistoria, de una mirada narcisista que atraviesa con desasosiego un pasado fantasmático en busca de improbables raíces o, si se me permite seguir incurriendo en tópicos, de unas "señas de identidad". (16)

Furthermore, Juaristi emphasizes the literarily constructed nature of the loss represented by *fuerrista* discourse when he denounces the fiction behind *fuerrismo's* claim to a past sovereign reality:

¿Qué representaron los fueros en la sociedad tradicional? Según los fueristas y sus herederos, los nacionalistas, suponían la plasmación jurídica de un pacto entre dos entes soberanos: las provincias vascas y la Corona de Castilla... Para los defensores de esta doctrina, los fueros, lejos de ser unos privilegios concedidos por los soberanos, representan las auténticas constituciones "naturales" de los pueblos, límite y freno de la voluntad de los príncipes. Difundida en la época romántica por la escuela alemana del Derecho Histórico, esta interpretación de los privilegios como "constituciones privativas" y expresión jurídica del *Völkgeist* se convirtió en un tópico de la propaganda antiliberal.

Ahora bien, la condición necesaria para la existencia de un régimen foral es, precisamente, la inexistencia de una soberanía nacional. (27-8)

Eleven years later, when he publishes *El bucle* (1997), Juaristi's denunciation remains the same. This time Juaristi's analysis moves from the nineteenth century and *fuerrista* literature to contemporary nationalism and terrorism. But in order to arrive to this moment he revisits the nineteenth-century and goes back to the figure of Joseph-Augustin Chaho—in Juaristi's analysis this Frenchman stands as the foundational figure upon whose discourse contemporary nationalism is constructed. Once again Juaristi opens his discourse on nationalist melancholia with the same denunciation: "La melancolía nacionalista, como la melancolía imperial, es una variante de la melancolía derivada de la pérdida de la patria, pero hay una importante diferencia entre ambas. Al contrario que en el caso de los afligidos por la pérdida del imperio, los nacionalistas no lloran una pérdida *real*. La nación no preexiste al nacionalismo" (31). This time and with the help of psychoanalysis, Juaristi reestablishes the constructed nature of loss, which he claims is characteristic of nationalist melancholia:

Sabino Arana Goiri, antiguo tradicionalista que guardaba el rencor de una derrota bélica y de una ruina familiar derivada de aquella, fue el primer vasco en soñar el sueño melancólico de la resurrección de Euskadi (fue, de hecho, el inventor de Euskadi y de su muerte) y acaso también el primero en intuir confusamente que sólo habiendo perdido una patria que nunca existió le sería posible curarse de sus humillaciones reales. Perder para ganar: estrategia revanchista de los que han sido heridos no en la patria, sino en el patrimonio. (33-4)

Thus in the last ten years, Juaristi's work has revolved around the same denunciation: the fabricated or constructed nature of Basque nationalism. Therefore this repeated denunciation, although pointing to a continuity and constancy in his work, does not explain the political response generated by *El bucle*. The latter lies elsewhere beyond denunciation itself.

However, before we proceed to locate the political excitement of *El bucle*, it is important to complete the anatomy of Juaristi's denunciation. In his denunciative engagement with Basque nationalism, Juaristi has expanded his historical analysis. As a result, his work has become the most comprehensive archaeology of Basque nationalism. His *Vestigios de Babel* (1992) revisits the Spanish Renaissance and thus allows us to contemplate Basque nationalism in its specific melancholia as well as its historical modernity because, according to Juaristi, the specific historical conditions of Basque nationalism are formed precisely in this period. Thus the Spanish Renaissance becomes the touchstone of Juaristi's criticism of Basque nationalism, one from which Basque nationalism can be retrospectively contemplated and analyzed in its modern specificity. Taking advantage of his philological training, Juaristi scrutinizes the modern "origins" of Basque nationalism: the rise of a new class of Basques among the bureaucratic ranks of the Spanish empire. In this respect *Vestigios* does not alter the denunciatory format of Juaristi's discourse; it only adds a modern depth to it. History becomes archaeology.

Vestigios also begins with Juaristi's classical denunciation of nationalism's constructed nature, although this time reference is made to both Spanish and Basque nationalisms: "Este es un ensayo sobre la invención de un pasado, de una identidad colectiva y de unos orígenes que son a la vez los de España y los de los vascos" (ix). However, it is important to analyze Juaristi's denunciation of the origins of collective Basque identity, because only from the archaeological and modern depths of this denunciation, can the true novelty of *El bucle*'s effect be understood in its complexity—precisely this enthusiastic effect that lies somewhere beyond denunciation.

In *Vestigios*, Juaristi defends, in a very concise but well articulated way, that in the Renaissance a new class formed mainly by Basques takes over the bureaucratic machinery of the Spanish empire as they displace its original occupants, Jewish converts: “A finales del siglo XV, una nutrida fracción de la elite vizcaína se preparaba para lanzarse al copo de despachos y contadurías. En esta empresa iba a enfrentarse con la clase escriba ya instalada en la administración palaciega: una clase compuesta en su mayor parte por judeoconversos” (12). Historically Basques take over the Jews in the Spanish imperial bureaucracy but, as Juaristi masterfully analyzes, they do so by reappropriating certain elements of the Jews’ own self-legitimizing discourse:

La influencia vascongada en el Imperio se incrementaba a medida que descendía la de los conversos. En realidad, la clase escriba vizcaína no logró constituirse como tal hasta arrebatar a los cristianos nuevos el control de las oficinas de la Corona. Paradójicamente, la teoría a que los vizcaínos recurrieron para sustentar su particularismo se construyó sobre tradiciones legendarias de los judíos españoles que todavía los conversos de la época de los Reyes Católicos consideraban como propias, si bien se vieron compelidos a abandonarlas, bajo los monarcas posteriores, al tiempo que trataban de confundirse en lo posible con los cristianos viejos. (19-20)

In this way the Basques become, allow me the coinage, the “internal Jews” of Spain. Although Juaristi does not use this turn of phrase, he does explain nevertheless its outcome in the double sense conveyed by “internal Jews.” He even refers to contemporary perceptions of Basques as Jews: “no faltó quien los [Basques] tachase de criptojudíos, insinuación reforzada por el hecho de dedicarse los vizcaínos a menesteres propios de escribas” (20).

In *Vestigios*, Juaristi also isolates the legitimating tool used by Basques. In order to legitimize their claim to the ranks of the Spanish imperialist apparatus, the Basques of the Renaissance turn to the only Basque reality at hand to prove that Basques are the true original inhabitants of the Peninsula: Basque language. The so-called Basque apologists or defenders of Basque language (Garibay, Poza, Echave, etc.) resort to the antiquity and universality of Basque, by way of tracing its origins to the Biblical account of Tubal’s journey and his supposed landing in Spain, as Noah’s progeny scatters throughout the face of the earth after the episode of Babel. Apologetic writers such as Andrés Poza claim that Basques are Christians descending in direct line from Tubal. Once the Basques’ status of “old Christians” is proven, they also become the first Spaniards and Christians of the Peninsula, and thus they are entitled to nobility as a birthright. In other words, the universal nobility claimed by Basques makes them automatically eligible, without prerequisites, to the different posts of the Spanish imperialist bureaucracy. Juaristi summarizes this discursive maneuver, which he denominates “la gnosis banderiza,” by claiming that:

El tratado de Poza tiene, por tanto, un alcance distinto del de otras apologías de las lenguas peninsulares escritas a lo largo del siglo XVI... representa la usurpación de la mitografía judeoespañola y de la Cábala por la clase escriba vizcaína. Del libro de Poza se desprende que Dios eligió revelar su propia naturaleza al linaje de Túbal [the Basques], y que tal revelación fue superior a la primera o edénica, contenida en el hebreo. Al infundir esta lengua en Adán, Dios le hizo partícipe de algunos de sus misterios, pero el grado de tal revelación fue inferior al de la revelación babélica contenida y plasmada en el vasco. Esta última lengua vendría a ser una especie de protoevangelio en que se despliega una teodicea trinitaria. El vasco—afirma tácitamente Poza—es más perfecto que el hebreo como lengua y filosofía teológica. La religión de Babel es ya más cumplida y verdadera que la del Sinaí, y los vascos, *el auténtico pueblo elegido*. (86, my emphasis)

Juaristi notes clearly the lasting effect of the apologists' epistemological and philological maneuver, which spans beyond the Renaissance, the apologists themselves, and eventually becomes the foundational basis or substratum of contemporary Basque nationalism: "Poza fue además semilla de una *gnosis* del vascuence que maduraría en los años finales del siglo XVIII y a lo largo del siglo XIX, y de la que extraería el nacionalismo vasco sus argumentos fundamentales" (87). This final sentence summarizes Juaristi's archaeology of Basque nationalism and modernity. This is the contribution of Juaristi's archaeology in a nutshell, and that is its genius and breath. Juaristi has isolated the melancholic nature of Basque nationalism as well as its specificity: the apologists' claim to the Spanish universality and antiquity of Basques as derived from the antiquity of Basque language. At this moment, once we understand the complexity of Juaristi's denunciatory archaeology we are ready to begin to grasp the political upheaval created by *El bucle*.

Juaristi is the first one exerting this archaeological analysis of Basque nationalism in its discursive complexity. Juaristi clearly states that the Basques' ethnic and linguistic difference is formulated by the apologists as an identity that predates any historical account of Spain. The origin of Basque language is unknown and thus can always be presented as predating any historical account of any other Spanish population—including the Jewish converts. During the Renaissance, history was written according to the Christian canon of the Bible, and thus the Basque apologists formulated the origin of Basque language in biblical terms. But, as a result of this first foundational moment, Basque identity will continue to be universal throughout modernity since it can rewrite itself so as to challenge the origins of any historical discourse about Spain. In short, no history can challenge Basque identity and location. There could be no better historical origin than a mobile one that keeps shifting so that it always ends up predating and thus constituting history itself—in our case Spanish history. Following Derrida, this ever-shifting historical origin could be named "prehistoric *différance*." Basque language becomes the pre-historical *différand* of any historical discourse, in such way that Basque complements and disseminates any historical account backward into pre-History: the only location History cannot access and control. Although Juaristi does not refer to deconstruction, he is the first one understanding and explaining the epistemological and discursive dimension of Basque universalism and antiquity as well as the ways in which this ideology will become the basis of modern Basque nationalism. It is in this sense that I want to underscore the fact that Juaristi effects the archaeology, not history, of Basque nationalism.

After this masterful archaeology of the origins of Basque nationalism, Juaristi continues to denounce its constructed and artificial nature in a rather repetitive way. In retrospect, what is most interesting about his denunciation is the stark contrast between the richness of his analysis and the single-minded and repetitive nature of the resulting denunciation. Thus, our attention must turn from the denunciation itself to the location from which it originates. From where does Juaristi speak? What position compels him to continuously repeat his denunciation? He claims to speak from a universal position: the Spanish state and its putative democratic, rational, and modern tradition, which ultimately reverts to European modernity and its ongoing project. In this respect Juaristi follows Jürgen Habermas and his exposition of modernity's postnational project. In this landscape of civilization, nationalism has no place; it must be denounced and expelled as a barbarism, for it threatens to turn Europe into a nationalist Europe, "la Europa de los pueblos:"

La Europa de los Estados no es sólo una alternativa concebible, sino una obra en marcha. Por el contrario, la Europa de los Pueblos, idea romántica y prehegemonista, desintegraría a la sociedad europea haciéndola retroceder a la situación anterior al nacimiento de los nacionalismos, sólo que esta vez sin los elementos de cohesión y

equilibrio que representaban las monarquías absolutas. La Europa de los Estados apunta hacia un postnacionalismo civilizado; la de los Pueblos, al postnacionalismo de la barbarie. (Aranzadi, *Auto* 110)

First of all one must marvel to the apparent epistemological backwardness of Juaristi's sophisticated denunciation because, at least since the seminal work of Hayden White (*Metahistory*, 1973), most historical discourses have abandoned the horizon of a rational, civilized, modern History—opposite history—in order to retell the past and future of Europe or any other place for that matter. Moreover, critics of nationalism have conceded the clear nationalist nature of European modernity. At the same time, and since the late work of Ernest Gellner, and specially after Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, most analysts agree that nationalism is a reality that will not go away as modernity enters a new phase (Lyotard, Jameson) or renews its historical potential (Habermas). In other words, nationalism and thus the European “pueblos/nations” are to stay, in a way that defies the modern divide between civilization and barbarism. Ultimately Walter Benjamin's dictum about the barbarism of civilization resounds as a warning against any clear-cut distinction between both historical categories: “There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism” (256). However, Juaristi's seemingly epistemological lag is not such. It points to a different location where the divide civilized/barbarian, rational/irrational, is necessary. This is the location that lies beyond denunciation and gives rise to political excitement.

Denunciative Compulsion and National Primal Scene

There is another way to approach this apparent theoretical inconsistency in Juaristi's work. I would be inclined to believe Juaristi when he claims to speak from the civilized and rational position granted by the (Spanish, European) state, except for an *irrational excess* that defines his discourse. One would assume that one archaeological account of Basque nationalism would suffice, in its rational and enlightened argumentation, to unveil and denounce the fallacy of Basque nationalism, and thus fulfill its mission. But Juaristi has written so far over half a dozen different accounts of the same nationalist fallacy and, although his analytical and historiographic research has grown and flourished, the repetitive insistence on the underlying nationalist fallacy remains the same. In this respect his work is either politically deficient or theoretically inflationary. There is a tendency in Juaristi's intellectual career to repeat compulsively the same denunciation of the constructed origins of Basque nationalism as a way to compensate for its lack of variation. In short, as Juaristi's work grows and expands, it always reaches the same epistemological or political impasse. His denunciatory compulsion seems to fail to meet his object. The object of denunciation seems to lie elsewhere, in a place that his discourse cannot reach. Somehow the final irony of Juaristi's compulsive archaeology is that his object is always able to move elsewhere, as to ironically corroborate and sanction his analysis of Basque nationalism as a shifting discourse of origins. In other words, Basque nationalism does not simply escape Spanish History, but also Juaristi's own compulsive archaeology. However by escaping Juaristi's archaeology, Basque nationalism confirms it. *Basque nationalism is beyond Juaristi's modern archaeology and precisely because of its ability to move beyond also proves his denunciation right.*

As Freud already stated, most clearly in “Beyond the Pleasure Principle” and “The Uncanny,” compulsion to repeat is the first symptom of trauma. Furthermore, repetition itself points to the resisting location: the unconscious. As Freud states “it is possible to recognize the dominance in the unconscious mind of a ‘compulsion to repeat’ proceeding from the instinctual impulses and probably inherent in the very nature of the instincts” (“Uncanny”

238). After all, the Other only speaks through repetition. Repetition is the language of the Other. Thus Juaristi's repetition of the same denunciation gives us the specific location of his discourse: Basque nationalism itself as the Other. There is an irreducible kernel in Basque nationalism that Juaristi cannot grasp, take apart, criticize, symbolize, put a name on, and that is why Juaristi is compelled to repeat compulsively his denunciation. By the time Juaristi arrives to the "scene of the crime" where Basque nationalism is constructed, it is too late. Juaristi is always too late.

But if the location of Juaristi's denunciation is Basque nationalism as his Other, it is important to analyze the specific formulation of Juaristi's denunciative act. Juaristi specifically denounces the moment of *inception* of Basque nationalism. He repeatedly condemns *the primal scene* of Basque nationalism for this scene is as irreducible as it is traumatic. As Freud discusses in his analysis of the Wolf Man ("From the History of an Infantile Neurosis"), the primal scene is the origin of fatherly violence and enjoyment at the same time. Referring to his patient's perception of the primal scene, Freud explains how fatherly violence and enjoyment are condensed in the perception of the castration complex (the male patient also observes his mother's enjoyment, although he perceives her a castrated subject, that is, as a subject who has suffered fatherly violence and yet enjoys it):

He assumed to begin with, he said, that the event of which he was a witness was an act of *violence*, but the expression of *enjoyment* which he saw on his mother's face did not fit in with this; he was obliged to recognize that the experience was one of gratification. What was essentially new for him in his observation of his parents' intercourse was the conviction of the reality of castration... (45, my emphasis)

In the Basque nationalist primal scene too, there is an epistemic and political violence effected by the nationalist father (Poza, Unamuno, Arana Goiri, Mirande, Arzallus, etc.) which is his source of political enjoyment. The nationalist father both distorts violently Basque history and reality, and derives pleasure from this epistemic and political violence. Furthermore, as Freud already noted in the case of the Wolf Man, the recollection of the primal scene itself is already partly fictional, since it is always reconstructed retrospectively as a story, or in his words, a "deferred action" (45). Thus, this retrospective formulation already sets the scene for the denunciation of its violence and constructedness. Now, if we rephrase Juaristi's denunciation as his retelling of the trauma of a semi-fantasmatic Basque nationalist primal scene, then we begin to understand the exhilaration created by his latest work—one in which the reader himself or herself becomes witness to Juaristi's condemnation of the Basque nationalist primal scene.

Until *El bucle melancólico*, Juaristi carried out his denunciations from the rational and enlightened location of modern, intellectual discourse. Thus he excluded himself from the nationalist primal scene. But in *El bucle*, Juaristi begins by acknowledging that the rational, archaeological denunciation of the Basque nationalist primal scene has no effect in its reality: "La historia académica, erudita y documentada, podrá satisfacer a un público universitario... pero no hace mella en las convicciones de la mayoría de los votantes *abertzales*" (27). He even personalizes this dilemma:

Y, sin embargo, nada de eso me daría una explicación satisfactoria de por qué esas mismas imágenes se instalaron en el doloroso centro de nuestros ensueños melancólicos. Ideología burguesa. De acuerdo, camarada. Yo también pensaba así. Y ahora, dime por qué, después de treinta años de marxismo, de estructuralismo, de psicoanálisis, de deconstrucción, dime por qué no se han callado las voces ancestrales. (347)

Interestingly, at this point, Juaristi breaches the difference between rational denunciation and nationalist fabrication, abandoning the enlightened and rational discursive position from which he has denounced nationalism so far. In *El bucle* Juaristi joins the fabricational act of narrating stories, as the only place left from which the denunciation of nationalism can be carried out:

Creo que hay que empezar a tomarse en serio tanto las historias de los nacionalistas, por muy estúpidas que se nos antojen, como sus exigencias de *inteligibilidad autoexplicativa*, porque tales son las formas en que el nacionalismo se perpetúa y crece.... ¿Por qué nunca hemos intentado contar historias alternativas, autoexplicarnos también nosotros, los disidentes del nacionalismo vasco? (27)

However, at this point Juaristi's discourse suffers an epistemological crisis, a hole he rushes to mend by proclaiming that "En resumen, soy un historiador que sigue creyendo en la superioridad de la historia sobre las historias. Sin embargo, lo de *Histoire et pas d'histoires!* no acaba de convencerme. Quizá ha llegado la hora de dar cabida en la historia a ciertas historias o mejor aún, de *contar historias desde la historia*" (29, my emphasis).

However, by telling stories from or within History, Juaristi abandons the only epistemological difference that sets his discourse apart from any nationalist discourse: truth, rationality, evidence. At this point, Juaristi joins the nationalists by fabricating stories that will denounce nationalist fabrication itself. In other words, Juaristi enters the primal scene of Basque nationalism as yet another subject. Consequently he also proceeds both to exert his own epistemic violence on the primal scene and to derive his own political enjoyment from the resulting narrative violence. At that moment, Juaristi participates in the nationalist libidinal economy and thus opens the gate for the reader to follow. Moreover, the reader can also participate in the primal scene of Basque nationalism from the safe distance created by the book.

Juaristi's unwilling and yet compulsive resolution to tell stories (within History) has serious repercussions in his discourse. Once he enters the primal scene, his discourse also becomes primal, irrational, and libidinal. On the one hand, biography and autobiography take center stage in the book and, consequently, they relegate History, with all its political agents and structures (class, ideology, etc.) to the background. In other words, the not-so-rational genres begin to regulate Juaristi's discourse. Consequently and given the denunciative nature of Juaristi's analysis, his discourse also begins to sound like a tabloid exposé where gossip, opinionated statements, innuendoes, name-calling, and personal revelations begin to cloud History and its rational discourse. As a token of this new discursive melange of non-historical and not-so-rational genres, allow me to cite Juaristi's account of an incident he had with Basque poet Gabriel Aresti:

Para mí, eran ya todos ídolos caídos: íntimamente, los aborrecía. Mi devoción del momento era Gabriel Aresti, cuyos poemas había leído en *Egan* y en los ejemplares de sus dos primeros libros que me habían prestado mi primo Iñaki y Julio Araluce. Fue acaso dos años después, hacia el 69 o 70, cuando tuve un pequeño roce con Aresti a causa de Arana Goiri. El poeta me dijo: "Deberíamos hacer una nueva edición de pensamientos de Sabino; algo así como el libro rojo de Mao. Otro *De su alma y de su pluma*, pero con sus fragmentos más progresistas." Yo observé que nos resultaría difícil encontrar en Arana Goiri algo que se pareciera de lejos al progresismo. "Más reaccionario era Martí—replicó Gabriel—, y Castro lo ha convertido en un leninista." *Corté la conversación, enfurecido. Martí tenía y tiene en mi pecho un altar, guajira guantanamera, y no le iba a consentir, ni al mismo Aresti, que me lo comparase con Tartarín de Abando [Sabino Arana]. (El bucle 358-59, my emphasis)*

It is interesting that Spanish nationalism is not exempt from Juaristi's irrational discourse: "Riestra ["gobernador civil" of Vizcaya] fue un enfermo patético, un paranoico que veía conspiraciones rojo-separatistas en cada cuadrilla de *chiquiteros*. Macián, no: Macián era sólo un imbécil patético. Todavía hoy me pregunto de dónde sacó el régimen a semejante acémila" (346).

In other words, although Juaristi sets out to tell stories about nationalists and their own fabricated stories, he himself begins to tell stories of his own, which by any historical standard, cannot be catalogued but as fabricated: they are gossip, name-dropping, innuendoes. However, if Juaristi abandons History and its rationality, he gains protagonism: he is now part of the Basque nationalist primal scene. He can redefine the primal scene, retell it, exert violence in it, and derive enjoyment from it.

The other innovation of *El bucle* is the recourse to psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is the last redoubt from which Juaristi nevertheless retains a rational and exterior position vis-à-vis the Basque primal scene. Psychoanalysis is the only apt discourse to analyze nationalist resistance in its irrationality. Juaristi brings in psychoanalysis in order to mobilize the rational discourse of the unconscious as a last attempt to capture and reduce the kernel of Basque nationalism that resists his criticism. Following Giorgio Agamben's psychoanalytical account of melancholia, Juaristi redefines Basque nationalism as primordially melancholic. However, even at this level, Juaristi does not make a "rational" or "enlightened" use of psychoanalysis. Although Freud remains the authoritative voice that serves as basis and justification for psychoanalytical discourse in general, at no point in Juaristi's book is Freud referenced as a bibliographical source. The introductory quote from Agamben (without reference to the source: *Stanzas* 20) serves as the narrative reference by which melancholia is mobilized, not as an analytical tool, but as another narrative device. Juaristi's psychoanalytical account of melancholia becomes metaphorical in many instances throughout the text, as when he turns melancholia into some marvelous animal ("En este ambiente va poniendo sus huevos letales la melancolía" 55) or a contagious disease ("En realidad, no fueron nacionalistas, sino muchachos aquejados de un sarampión melancólico que hallaba su lenitivo en una imposible mixtura de vascomanía literaria y federalismo" 74).

In this context, Juaristi refers to melancholia as the subject structure by which the lost object of desire is not lost but produced, concocted as lost. In other words, the melancholic simulates loss before loss actually takes place thus preventing its occurrence. In this sense the melancholic is the perfect whiner: he or she complains about a loss before loss actually happens. In this way, he or she gets to whine and keep the object too—even though in the form of loss:

La melancolía está, sin duda, relacionada con la estupidez, pero permite definiciones autónomas. Consiste, como es sabido, en una denegación de la pérdida mediante una identificación del sujeto con el objeto perdido. El melancólico canibaliza al ser amado cuya muerte niega... y retira del mundo exterior su deseo para dirigirlo sobre sí mismo en un bucle inflexible. (31)

However one must note first of all that Juaristi himself deploys a compulsive archaeology that is ultimately melancholic. The moment he is about to capture finally his object of study, the latter escapes him in its irreducibility and becomes the lost object of his discourse. Juaristi keeps losing his object of study and thus must attempt to recapture it in a compulsive fashion that makes his work ultimately melancholic. Juaristi is the ultimate Basque melancholic since he experiences Basque nationalism itself as a loss. But then, if we follow his discourse, we are also entitled to ask the question: is he simulating his loss? Is he whining

about his lost object of denunciation, so that he also gets to whine and keep it too? Is his attempt to enter the Basque nationalist primal scene, while denouncing it from the exterior location provided by psychoanalysis, a melancholic strategy? Yes. But then again, there is an excess of violence and enjoyment in the Basque primal scene in which Juaristi also participates; and at a first glance this excess does not seem to be melancholic, at least if follow Juaristi's definition as borrowed from Agamben.

Melancholia of the Primal Scene: Criticism and Enjoyment

As stated above, Juaristi does not go back to the source of every psychoanalytical account of melancholia: Freud himself. I would like to note that in his foundational study on melancholia, and against Agamben's reading, Freud does not emphasize the generative or simulational dimension of melancholia, but rather a different one, a *critical* one. First of all Freud refers to a loss that is *real*: loss takes place. Moreover he affirms that melancholia is a way to *criticize* a loss in one's own body and self. In order to illustrate this point, allow me to refer to the paradigmatic case of the jilted lover as discussed by Freud. When a lover is jilted (in reality), and consequently he or she enters a melancholic state, self-tormenting and masochistic suffering become a form of displaying and enjoying oneself. Freud points out that the self-inflicted violence of the melancholic is originally directed towards the lost object (the jilting or rejecting lover) and is a form of criticism. However, since the object is lost, gone, or although present is not accessible, then violence and criticism is turned against the melancholic subject's self. Hence the contradictory nature of melancholia: the melancholic subject suffers and enjoys at the same time. In more technical terms Freud argues:

If the love for the object—a love which cannot be given up though the object itself is given up—takes refuge in narcissistic identification, then the hate comes into operation on this substitutive object, abusing it, debasing it, making it suffer and deriving sadistic satisfaction from its suffering. The self-tormenting in melancholia, which is without doubt enjoyable, signifies, just like the corresponding phenomenon in obsessional neurosis, a satisfaction of trends of sadism and hate, which relate to an object, and which have been turned round upon the subject's own self in the ways we have been discussing. In both disorders the patients usually still succeed, by the circuitous path of self-punishment, in taking revenge on the original object and in tormenting their loved one through their illness, having resorted to it in order to avoid the need to express their hostility to him openly. After all, the person who has occasioned the patient's emotional disorder, and on which his illness is centred, is usually to be found in his immediate environment. ("Mourning" 251)

If we reconsider the fact that both Basque nationalism and Juaristi himself are melancholic in this new sense of a *real loss resulting in criticism and denunciation towards the lost object of desire*, finally we can pinpoint the subject structure and location of both Basque nationalism and Juaristi himself.

Juaristi notes his own *criticism* of Basque nationalism through melancholia. He has fashioned himself as the only and lonely critic of Basque nationalism, sometimes even in histrionic ways so characteristic of melancholia, so that we can contemplate his melancholic suffering derived by the burden of single-handedly criticizing Basque nationalism. But at the same time, Juaristi registers the loss of his object of desire: Basque nationalism's primal scene. In case there is doubt about the complementary desire towards Basque nationalism that is present in Juaristi's discourse, allow me to quote the following paragraph from *El bucle*:

Y entonces siento en el pecho la punzada de una dolorosa y conocida melancolía, que llega acompañada del eco de mis voces ancestrales. Y debo atarme al frágil mastelete de sensatez que he podido salvar a través de los años turbulentos, porque esas voces me hablan de un amor nunca olvidado, del brillo de los helechos empapados de lluvia, de bosques que son un incendio de oro hacia la mañana de la libertad: me hablan de toda la belleza y la ternura de la vida... (268)

In order to understand the ultimate meaning of *Juaristi's nationalist melancholia*, allow me to clarify a final point. Juaristi has been accused of being an "españolista." He himself defends the Spanish state and its rational, enlightened, and democratic tradition as the only site from which he can view and embrace Basque reality. And indeed he is the most widely read Basque intellectual in Spain. However, to criticize him as *españolista* is misleading. This accusation collapses two different realities that in the case of Juaristi become a single circle: his melancholic curl or *bucle*.

Freud refers to the fact that the melancholic knows whom he or she has lost, but does not know what he or she has really lost ("Mourning" 245). Agamben takes this remark in order to develop his idea of simulational melancholia. But Freud refers to another reality that is not simulational: the libidinal cathexis or desire invested in the object. The melancholic refuses to give up desire even after the object of desire is gone. This is precisely why the melancholic knows whom he or she has lost but not what. In other words, the melancholic remains faithful to his or her desire and at the same time criticizes the object of desire for disappearing. Rather than losing desire, the melancholic turns it narcissistically upon his or her own self: "the outcome characteristic of melancholia... consists in the threatened libidinal cathexis... abandoning the object, only however, to draw back to the place in the ego from which it had proceeded" (257).

In this respect, Juaristi's melancholic criticism of Basque nationalism is both Basque and nationalist. Furthermore, his criticism is internal to the history of Basque nationalism; it partakes of the primal scene. Thus, his melancholic plaint also represents *the beginning of an internal debate and criticism towards the violence that Basque nationalism has exerted on its own subjects*. Juaristi's is a nationalist criticism towards the nationalist father that monopolizes both violence and enjoyment. The fact that Juaristi has begun to use the autobiographical mode in order to narrate his melancholic criticism is a very healthy sign of the formation of an internal space, within Basque nationalism, from which we all will be able to narrate our own melancholic story, our own nationalist story. Juaristi's is one of the first nationalist stories to be told in its conflictive, violent, and difficult complexity.

At the same time, there is an unstated desire to become the new father of the Basque nationalist primal scene in Juaristi's discourse. Still he does not fully give up deploying rationality, psychoanalysis, and the enlightenment discourse of modernity as a final political maneuver to control and reduce Basque nationalism to his intellectual discourse and might. However, he is not alone in this endeavor. As I have discussed elsewhere the "terrorist" turn taken by Bernardo Atxaga and Ramon Saizarbitoria in their respective historical novels *The Lone Man* and *Los pasos incontables* (translated by Juaristi himself) is part of the same maneuver ("Terrorism as Memory"). Ultimately Juaristi wants to be *the* intellectual of Basque nationalism—this construct that he desires but keeps losing and thus has no choice but to criticize through melancholia. The irreducible structure of Basque nationalism, which he himself has analyzed, does not allow for an intellectual and rationalist reduction and mastery. Ironically, Juaristi himself has explained this point when referring to Unamuno and his attempt to reduce and control Arana Goiri's project:

La irritación que Arana Goiri produce en Unamuno deriva de su proyecto de convertir a la raza vasca en una raza histórica, en una nación, cuando precisamente la misión de aquella, según Unamuno, es servir de soporte intrahistórico a la nación histórica, darle continuidad en el tiempo, ser su venero de eternidad (el de España y el de él mismo) y ponerle así a resguardo de toda pérdida, a salvo de la melancolía. Cada vez que, en lo sucesivo, se acerque de nuevo al pueblo vasco real, este esquema se repetirá irremediablemente. (*El bucle* 100)

Juaristi's own irritation derives from Basque nationalism's resistance to yield to his discourse, one that will guarantee his status as the only Basque nationalist subject safe from history and melancholia. Ultimately he wants to become the new father of the Basque primal scene, one who enjoys it while regulating its violence. Not only in Unamuno's case but also in Juaristi's, melancholic loss "se repetirá irremediablemente," precisely "cada vez que, en lo sucesivo, [Juaristi] se acerque de nuevo al pueblo vasco real." Juaristi does not only tell the nationalist and melancholic story of his own intellectual life, but he also attempts to narrate a more dangerous story: the fatherly meta-narrative of Basque nationalism (his deployment of gender throughout the discourse awaits a feminist criticism, but his continuous uncritical reference to "la vieja que pasó llorando" hurts any non-masculinist sensibility). Ultimately, Juaristi wants to be the Basque "über-nationalist," the nationalist father of all nationalists: the only storyteller of Basque nationalism.

Years before Juaristi, other theorists of Basque nationalism and terrorism, such as Joseba Zulaika, had approached the problem through storytelling. As Zulaika recalls in his most recent work, *Enemigos, no hay enemigo*, his early ethnography of violence in Itziar published in Spanish in 1990 (*Violencia vasca: metáfora y sacramento*) was a "nationalist story" aware of its narrative status:

De forma parecida al contador de cuentos, también el etnógrafo tiene que crear con sus historias una ilusión de realidad que resulte persuasiva, pero al menos no olvidé recordar al lector el marco más global—el *meta* de la reflexividad, la performatividad y la metáfora—desde el que mis descripciones no eran sino alegorías y cadenas de síntomas *a través* de las cuales el texto etnográfico pretendía desvelar la realidad de la cultura violenta. (51)

Faced with this early story telling, Juaristi reacted violently and denounced Zulaika's work from the pages of *El País*—at the time the most prestigious newspaper in Spain. Juaristi accused Zulaika's work of providing "coartadas estéticas a la más repugnante delincuencia política" ("Héroes"). Interestingly enough, now that the new "über-father" of Basque nationalism seems to be able to exert direct violence in the primal scene, he himself proclaims that "coartadas estéticas" are the only valid method to approach Basque nationalism and violence. But at the same time, he defends, from a fatherly position, that his own "aesthetic alibi" is the only valid one, since it remains "aesthetics within History."

In short, it is paramount to understand that Juaristi represents simultaneously two different moments: one of criticism and another of fatherly violence and control. To condense both moments by accusing Juaristi of "españolismo" is both a disservice to the Basque community and act of political myopia.

At this point, we can finally understand the "political excitement," to which I referred at the beginning, in its full complexity. If Juaristi's new melancholic discourse on Basque nationalism, both critical and controlling, has found such widespread recognition and acceptance throughout Spain, the reason lies in its melancholic structure too. Departing from Juaristi's own work, one could establish that Spanish nationalism also presents a melancholic relationship towards Basque nationalism. As Basque ethnicity and identity have been

historically structured as predating the Spanish ones, the inception of Basque nationalism has also become the primal scene of Spanish nationalism. The historical and epistemic violence exerted by Basque nationalism since its foundational “origins” in the Renaissance predates the violence that defines and justifies the Spanish state as nation. In this respect Spanish nationalism is historically ulterior. Basque nationalism supposes an irreducible state of primordial violence that the Spanish state, in its monopoly of violence, can only contemplate as trauma—as the trauma of its own primal scene. Through Juaristi’s book, Spain can melancholically desire and criticize Basque nationalism and its original violence. Spanish nationalism also experiences a double libidinal relationship in which it criticizes Basque nationalism and attempts to control and reduce it.

What is to be done? Juaristi himself has pointed out, although in oblique ways, that the Spanish state is constituted by a system of nationalisms. There is no position within the Spanish state that is exempt from this “multinationalist” organization. No one can claim a rational, enlightened, modern position that transcends nationalism. In *Linaje*, Juaristi remarks that:

No hay contradicción, no puede haberla, entre fuerismo y régimen moderado por la sencilla razón de que el fuerismo es la expresión vascongada y navarra del moderantismo español.... El País Vasco es la utopía de la España conservadora. En el mismo sentido, bien podría afirmarse que el “problema vasco” es una creación histórica de la derecha española (incluyendo en ella a los fueristas vascongados y navarros). (26)

I believe that the creation is mutual, or to rephrase Anderson’s definition, both nationalisms imagine each other. Thus only when Juaristi’s archaeology of Basque nationalism is extended and rewritten as an archaeology of Spanish nationalisms, then and only then, can the compulsion to melancholically desire and criticize Basque nationalism recede and open up new political venues.

Furthermore, at that point we might be able to think the crisis that globalization brings to all states, including the Spanish. At that point, Basque nationalism might stop preceding Spain and might come after, in an unprecedented way that even Juaristi could not conceive at this point. For the time being, Juaristi has opened up the way to begin a true archaeology of Spanish nationalisms: to tell nationalist stories from within the nationalist scene (primal or otherwise) but without taking refuge in some transcendental position of rational and fatherly mastery. No one knows the final outcome of this complex and challenging storytelling. Perhaps, Benjamin’s warning about history provides the best remedy: “To articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it ‘the way it really was’ (Ranke). It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger.... The danger affects both the content of the tradition and its receivers. The same threat hangs over both: that of becoming a tool of the ruling classes. In every era the attempt must be made anew to wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it” (255).

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KANPANOSTE Goikoa. El depósito prehistórico de Kanpanoste Goikoa (Vírgala, Alava) : memoria de las actuaciones arqueológicas 1992-1993

Alfonso Alday Ruiz ; con la colaboración de: Pedro Castaños...[et al.]

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La serie que publica la Diputación Foral de Alava sobre Memorias de yacimientos alaveses reviste en sí gran interés por lo cuidado de la edición y la rapidez de publicación, aunque no todos los yacimientos elegidos tienen la misma entidad. El que ahora nos ocupa, Kanpanoste Goikoa, es uno de los mejores, no ya por la importancia de su secuencia estratigráfica (es mejor en mi opinión el abrigo de Mendandia, cuya memoria está en vías de preparación gracias a una Beca de la Fundación Barandiarán), sino por el partido que el autor, profesor Titular de la UPV, ha sacado a su estudio.

Se ha rodeado además de un buen cortejo de especialistas de las mal llamadas “ciencias auxiliares”, destacando entre ellos por lo poco habitual de su concurso el estudio de Lydia Zapata sobre los macrorrestos vegetales y del geólogo Andoni Tarrío sobre la procedencia de las materias primas, con una adecuada publicación en color de las láminas delgadas de los sílex, algo que no siempre están dispuestos a pagar las editoriales.

Sin embargo, todos estos estudios complementarios serían un simple añadido o “florero” si el autor de la Memoria, Alfonso Alday, no los hubiera ensamblado en los capítulos finales, aunando algo muy difícil de conseguir en un arqueólogo: realizar una excavación con una técnica de campo correcta, ser un buen analista del material arqueológico en el trabajo de Laboratorio y extraer de estos datos asépticos aquella sustancia que nos permite vislumbrar la vida del hombre prehistórico, al fin y al cabo, el único objetivo de nuestra búsqueda.

Tenemos muchos ejemplos de excavadores que manejan bien la arqueometría pero no saben hacer preguntas ni mucho menos contestarlas y de otros que, por el contrario, cons-