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Antonio de Oquendo, Basque Seafaring Traditions and National Mythologies: A Historical-Ethical Essay

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Like anybody who has ever gone to sea, the maritime historian is on dangerous ground. I offer this observation as a deliberate piece of Irish paradox. There is an English saying «to worship the ground that someone walks upon», often used with reference to a charismatic personality or role-model. An Irish writer noted for his wit was recently asked his opinion of a rather more famous compatriot who is not noted for his modesty. He gave this saying a twist which was typically Irish, almost as typically blasphemous, and which neatly deflated the ego of the person concerned: «All I would say about him is that I worship the water he walks on».

Water is difficult to walk on, and historians who approach it would be wise to avoid immodesty or complacency. Unforeseen dangers threaten on every side, but in the present era of intellectual agnosticism, the main challenge facing the 'seagoing' historian is navigating a safe passage between the Scylla of sentimentality and the Charybdis of myth. In these straits lie many submerged stones and seductive sirens, and it is precisely here that the existing charts are least reliable. Just when the skipper thinks he has emulated Odysseus by steering his vessel safely through the danger into the calm Tyrrhenian sea, a sudden squall blows him back onto the rocks, and all is shipwreck and disaster.

One such danger lies in our assessment of celebrated sailors of the past. In the romantic pages of mythical glory which nations treasure so jealously –at times even aggressively– Great Naval Heroes are often seen as having a transcendental quality of self-sacrifice. They become martyrs as well as heroes, martyrs for the nation as well as for the faith. Their martyrdoms help to build and strengthen both nation and religion by becoming part of its scripture. Their biographies (or perhaps better, hagiographies) are full of miraculous deeds, unlikely triumphs against overwhelming odds – sometimes defying fate in a way which resembles «walking on water». They often end up by dying in battle on their own quarter-decks. They utter some deathless testament to the eternal qualities of their nation. The complementary images of Horatio Nelson and Cosme Damián de Churrua at the battle of Trafalgar spring to mind. «England expects that every man will do his duty» on the one hand:

«El deber es lo más honroso tanto más sean los sacrificios que se lleva» on the other. Don Antonio de Oquendo is one such hero, perhaps the most celebrated ever produced by his native shores of the Basque Country. The story goes that when the hero lay dying of a broken heart after the defeat of 1639, he had a ghostly vision of the fight: «Enemigos! Enemigos! Déjenme ir a la Capitana para defender la Armada y morir en ella ... Su confesor móstrole, entonces, un crucifijo ...»¹.

This paper does not seek to concentrate effusively on Oquendo hijo, or on any other single personality: my title indicates little more than a feeling that he may nonetheless be taken as a paradigmatic hero.

The Basque relationship with the sea has been for a millenium a story of daily danger, of hard and miserable labour for scanty rewards, of determination, skill, courage and sacrifice. The Basque seaman is the ethnic-historic epitome of his nation. The sea has produced an existential attitude among the communities of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, a compound of determination and resignation. It was not an accident that the philosopher of Spain's «tragic sense of life» should have been born in Bilbao². The history of the sea, in the Basque context, is inherently understood as a tragic one. It is difficult for the historian to contemplate without empathy. How can the historian fail to emote to the vision of the families of the fishermen waiting on the quayside after a week of storms in Atlantic

1. ARZAMENDI, I. de: *El Almirante Don Antonio de Oquendo*, 1953, nueva ed. de J. I. Tellechea, San Sebastián, 1981, p. 363.

2. See below, note 50.

Biscay? How can we remain unmoved by the evocation of Antonio de Oquendo's resistance to the overwhelming onslaught of Tromp at the battle of the Kentish Downs (1639)? This rich tradition has produced a pride in past endeavours which, though ethically justifiable, too easily imparts a petrified mythical structure to history. To accept narrative traditions uncritically is not merely self-indulgent, but potentially dangerous. It is not the pride (essential to any culture) nor the myth (often aesthetically beautiful and rewarding) but the rigid mind-set which stems from the sanctification of sacrifice, which frequently disturbs our quest for peace and tolerant understanding in the present. An ethical message, obligatory for history teachers even where already obvious to most students is that we cannot legitimately base our own political attitudes in the present on sacrifices made by our distant forebears. Above all, blood, even when spilt in sacrifice, begets more blood.

My natural point of comparison at this point would be that between the País Vasco and my own nation, Wales. We Welsh also tend to live in and for an imagined past, a tradition dominated by mythical constructs which are in turn associated with struggle, resilience and consistent –often, of course, glorious– defeat. Like many other small nations which find themselves inextricably fixed by geography and history within the wider parameters of a nation-state of imponderable dimensions, Cymru and Euskadi are fated to live eternally with a frustrated, even crippled culture. Partly for this reason, I want in this paper to call upon the truly universal dimension which my dialectic demands, that is to say an imperial dimension. For Great Britain as a whole nurtures a precious maritime tradition³. Indeed, this culture remains essential to its self-image - we recall for example the part it played in the propaganda of the Thatcher years and the Falklands 'Conflict' in particular. But whereas the British tradition is recognised in Spain, we British do not reciprocate this sense of equality. On the contrary, such recognition is logically impossible, for a key component of the British tradition, essential to its function as cultural formation and discourse, is the denial that Spain has any serious maritime tradition at all - especially not a naval tradition. This discourse acknowledges that Britain shares its unique maritime-naval supremacy, in a closely monogamous relationship, with only one rival –in fact, a competitor-turned-partner– that is, the Dutch. The Anglo-Dutch co-dominion represents to the popular imagination much more than the hegemonic orthodoxy of maritime and naval history. It has a meaning and a resonance not restricted to maritime affairs, but central to the whole history of the West, since it contributes significantly to one of the core concepts of global historiography - that of «modernization». It is virtually unquestioned that modern international capitalism was developed jointly by England and Holland, along with the whole culture of bourgeois democracy. This is not just a matter of popular perception. In 1979, the greatest historian then living, Fernand Braudel –himself operating from outside this culture– placed his seal of approval on its global-historical significance, in the final volume of his most ambitious attempt at «l'histoire totale»⁴.

The dominant Anglo-Dutch partnership rests on the massive mythical pillars of two elemental dates set exactly one hundred years apart –1588 and 1688– and the events they encapsulate; «The Defeat of the Spanish Armada» and «The Glorious Revolution», complementary and perfect symbols which encompass the forging of a Protestant, capitalist-constitutional culture and its triumph over its Catholic, allegedly feudal-absolutist enemy. In 1588, the Anglo-Dutch alliance providentially defied Philip II's navy, God handed the future to England and the Netherlands, and Spain –with a perfect sense of deference and timing– began to decline. In 1639 (or so it was believed in Spain), England connived with the Dutch to bring about the betrayal and destruction of Antonio de Oquendo's great empresa in English waters⁵. In 1688, Catholic absolutism was overthrown, England definitively became a Protestant and (partly) a Parliamentary State⁶. It was only logical that in the subsequent generation, England should embrace a Dutch alliance, a Dutch King, and a Dutch way of life. London became the new Amsterdam and New Amsterdam became New York. The final attempt of Mediterranean feudal-baroque classicism to dominate Europe, led by the half-Spanish Louis XIV, was definitively frustrated in the early eighteenth century. England's rise to commercial and industrial supremacy was inspired by the Dutch example and subsidised by Dutch capital. It was the joint Anglo-Dutch experience which produced the modern movement, the progressive ideal of a bourgeois-democratic capitalist society; a society which is not only material but also emphatically

3. BEHRMAN, C. F.: *Victorian Myths of the Sea*, Athens, Ohio, 1977.

4. BRAUDEL, F.: *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, Vol. 3, *The Perspective of the World*, New York, 1984, esp. pp. 260-62.

5. ARZAMENDI, I. de: *op. cit.*, pp. 344-5; MARTÍNEZ DE CAMPOS, C.: *España Bética: El siglo XVII*, Madrid, 1968, p. 112 – to cite only two examples.

6. ISRAEL, J. I.: *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and its world impact*, Cambridge, 1991.

moral –both might and right– whose heirs, in the 1980s finally triumphed over its last important enemies with victory over the evil empire of the Soviet Union. Nearly two centuries ago, Friedrich Hegel, prophet par excellence of the modern state, and himself no more part of a maritime culture than Braudel, considered that no self-respecting nation could subsist without a productive relationship with the sea, a relationship which (moreover) was intrinsic to Europe's contribution to the inevitable spiritual and moral progress of man⁷. Civilization itself thus became inconceivable without this crux cultural component. Nowadays, it seems (to quote Mrs Thatcher) «there is no alternative». Britain defeated Argentina –a modern country by most material standards of reckoning– by superior sea-power alone. My evolving awareness of this monological future has helped to shape the argument of this paper.

In the dominant narrative inscribed by successive generations, the engine of modernization has always derived its fuel from the twin sources of Protestantism and the Sea. From the interaction of these sources, time, tide and the chronicler's pen have woven a set of normative standards by which the history and culture of almost every existing community are judged. Speaking historiographically, Spain is not part of this world, it does not «belong». It follows that in the Protestant traditions of the Dutch-British-American axis, Spain has an abnormal, flawed, alien civilization. It is no wonder that in his pioneering survey, Admiral Thayer Mahan virtually passed over the contribution of Spain to the rise of modern maritime-imperial strategies. Spain, as 1898 emphatically demonstrated, had missed the boat in terms of modernization. It followed logically that the Spanish Empire –like the Soviet Empire, whose pretensions to challenge the Capitalist West on an oceanic basis sank without trace a century later– could never have enjoyed a genuine (that is to say, «natural») maritime culture⁸.

Indeed, attitudes betrayed worse than mere ignorance, for the Hispanic World has always provided the essential negative pole for the normative-positive Anglo-Dutch experience. So that the New Order could be defined properly against it, the Old Order had to be perceived as the historical-cultural «other» - a polity in which a feudalism which was socio-economically sterile was partnered by a Catholicism which was intellectually exhausted. In Britain, the Netherlands and the USA, an enormous corpus of canonic literature was produced during the nineteenth century, having this message at its core. Spain's naval might was a mirage, her galleons were grandiose castles on the water – how much worse than the houses foolishly built on sand which Christ warned against in the Sermon on the Mount!⁹. Spanish ships were Lead Zeppelins, burdened with the ponderous names of pagan deities, and destined only to sink without trace. The Iberian-American world, by extension, could not be a truly maritime-conscious one. Even as I speak the whole media world continues to replicate this message - journalism, fiction, TV and feature films. The current filmic success «Pirates of the Caribbean» represents yet another revival of a popular species –second only to Westerns in the generic stables of Hollywood– in which the legend of Hispanic maritime incompetence is a perennial component. Professional historians are still heard to make approving noises. A recent survey, allegedly conducted on rigorous scientific-statistical lines, concluded (like Mahan) that Spain was –at best– never more than a second-rate naval power¹⁰. Others persist in attributing this failure to the (alleged) fact that Spain was simply not a «modern» state.

In the chapter dedicated to «Ciencias de Navegar» in the third volume of his great study of *La Decadencia de España*, mostly written in the 1930s, before Foucault and even Braudel, the young Basque scientist-historian Ignacio de Olagüe perceived the basic elements of the problem.

«Se desarrollan en ciertas épocas unas ideas con preferencia a otras, las cuales alcanzarán, si cabe, mayor esplendor. Y por consiguiente, ejercerán adecuada tiranía en los dominios del pensamiento dedicado al conocimiento y luego por su presión sobre los elementos sociales acuñarán con sello especial sus demás actividades intelectuales, su estilo, gráfico, literario, artístico, por larga y difícil concatenación, cuyas raíces remontan a esta situación geográfica y a la herencia cultural heredada»¹¹.

Olagüe was writing, of course, about two depressingly familiar constructs which have distorted the world's understanding of Spain; «The Black Legend», a transparent propaganda gallery, and its more sophisticated and subtle offspring, «The Decline of Spain». These were the literary and emblematic tropes which the Anglo-Dutch world used, first to define the Hispanic world as its pre-

7. See ALVAREZ-ARENAS, E.: *El Español ante el mar: Ensayo de una incompreensión histórica*, Madrid, 1969, pp. 27-8.

8. MAHAN, A. T.: *The Influence of Sea-Power upon History*, Boston, 1890.

9. MATTHEW, Chapter 7, verse 26-7.

10. MODELSKI, G. & THOMPSON, W. R.: *Seapower in Global Politics, 1494-1993*, London, 1988, esp. pp. 267-73.

11. OLAGÜE, I. de: *La Decadencia Española*, Madrid, 1950, III, 67.

cise opposite in order to exclude it, and later to marginalise it in a colonial status little different from that of Surinam or Ceylon. However, in neither of these tropes –and despite the oceans of ink spilt over the Invincible Armada of 1588– has the role of maritime cultures ever been properly (that is to say, critically) investigated. To give two outstanding examples, Julián Juderías failed to isolate the topic in his original diagnostic essay of 1912, whilst Ricardo García Cárcel and Lourdes Mateo Bretos make no reference to it in their recent general survey of the «Black Legend» trope¹².

As a Welshman I have often taken cowardly refuge in the use of the term «English». The fact that I have no English blood has allowed me to disassociate myself from the excesses of my fellow-Britons, just as it encourages me to be more critical of our imperial myths. But on this occasion the usual escape route is not open. For the Welsh fully share the attitudes about which I write. The commercial and cultural relationship between the Basques and the Welsh is a distinct theme in the history of both countries. Bilbao with Cardiff, San Sebastian with Swansea, these were once powerful and meaningful associations, and provided a major element in the commercial history of both nations. Yet even a famous representative of this relationship, a man once as well-known in Cardiff and San Sebastián as John Toshack became fifty years later, a man who had many reasons to admire the Basque maritime tradition, was a prisoner of the myth. I speak of Captain David John Jones –«Potato Jones» - «El Patatero». In the spring of 1937 Jones became –accidentally and (in fact) for wholly mistaken reasons– the most celebrated of a group of Welsh skippers who defied the blockade the Francoist warships had imposed upon Bilbao. A newspaperman asked whether he had been frightened by the threats of the Spanish navy

«Spanish Navy? [he replied] Never heard of it since the Armada. It makes me sick thinking about these Spanish Dons strutting about the quarter decks of their miserable ships, intimidating the British Navy and interfering with shipping»¹³.

Similar examples of disdain can be found in the pages of many British writers who regarded themselves as friends of Spain and as positive mediators of Hispanic culture to the Anglophone world. From George Borrow to Gerald Brenan, British contempt for Spanish seamanship leaks into the poorly-caulked bottom of British-Spanish relations. In 1684, Samuel Pepys, sometimes called the «father of the modern English Navy», expressed one aspect of the belief:

«Men of the Toga who have never been in the world do govern all in Spain, and men of the Spada are put into most employments at sea without knowing anything of their business, and so their state is governed and will be lost. In a word, never were a people so overrun with fools in all states as they are»¹⁴.

This picture of Spain as the ship of fools was perhaps the result of Pepys's disappointment over the fact that his holiday on the Costa del Sol had been ruined by rain - but his words also convey the English conviction that the Royal Navy was a professional meritocracy, whilst that of Spain was managed by a hereditary landowning class. This idea produced much ignorant contempt, a treatment which Spanish experts have often objected to, aimed at the scapegoat figure of the duke of Medina Sidonia. Yet it is not merely the nobles who are useless at the helm. According to Laurie Lee, four hundred years later, even the ordinary fishermen of Andalusia were hopelessly incompetent, farcically unable to exploit the resources of their own waters:

«It must be said that the men of Castillo were poor fishermen and even worse sailors. Their methods were antique, arduous and ineffective. They would only fish in the calmest waters. They often set out in a flurry of hysteria, swamped their boats, fouled their nets, fell overboard and were the most uncertain judges of weather»¹⁵.

The sense of effortless superiority on the sea, endowed by generation upon generation of unquestioned assumptions, encouraged Englishmen to make such absurd and ignorant observations. During the so-called «Cod Wars», the bitter disputes of the mid-1990s between British and Spanish fishing interests in the Atlantic approaches, I compiled a considerable archive of media comments which richly illustrated these prejudices by the (often unconscious) use of loaded vocabulary and mythic references. It is hardly necessary to quote from this collection, in order for readers in both countries to appreciate my point.

12. JUDERÍAS, J.: *La Leyenda Negra: Estudios acerca del concepto de España en el extranjero*, Barcelona, 1914; GARCÍA CÁRCCEL, R. & MATEO BRETOS, L.: *La Leyenda Negra*, Madrid, 1990.

13. Quoted in HEATON, P. M.: *Welsh Blockade Runners in the Spanish Civil War*, Newport, 1985, p. 39.

14. Quoted in BRYANT, A.: *Samuel Pepys: The Saviour of the Navy*, London, 1984, p. 50.

15. LEE, L.: *A Rose for Winter*, Harmondsworth, 1971, p. 97.

But what is more remarkable is that the cultural-maritime project of western civilization, which so privileges the Anglo-Dutch nexus, has always been very influential inside Spain too. Over the centuries Spanish writers ceased to challenge the main lines of the myth, then began to show deference towards it, and eventually even exaggerated some of its characteristics. Let me say at once that the general context here, what José Castillejo once called «la guerra de ideas», is very familiar¹⁶. It seems to me that already during the 1930s Spanish intellectuals could see no reasonable alternative to the northern European myth. It is true that José Antonio Primo de Rivera and Ramiro Ledesma Ramos put special emphasis on the glories of Spain's maritime heritage, but the whole tone of their speeches and writings in this respect was based on the assumption of Spanish decline and the need to reverse it by competing on the High Seas of Imperialism. We should remember that Franco was himself a frustrated admiral, and it is significant that in the 1960s he planned to hand over his political heritage to the custodianship of a real admiral who was also a naval historian. It is thus not surprising that in the 1940s several books were published on the history of the armada marítima, whose authors were evidently inspired by a certain ideological interest which the Caudillo shared with the so-called «Movimiento»¹⁷. These were robust and assertive works. They challenged at many points the concept of an inherent and inevitable northern European superiority. But as early as the 1950s, as Spain emerged from isolation and autarky, this tendency was again succeeded by an alleged realism which accepted Spain's past failures. If Spain wanted to be part of the international community, it seemed she had to accept one of its preconditions, the alleged logic of 1588, 1639, 1719, 1805, 1898 - and all that went with it. The obligation brought a kind of agony, almost a fear of treason. One patriotic writer, Eliseo Álvarez Arenas, began a book intended to draw attention to the problem with a penetrating question which was not entirely rhetorical:

«Es lícito al hombre adoptar con decisión la actitud cuyo ademán fundamental persigue señalar a sus compatriotas lo que, en su opinión, son deficiencias o imperfecciones de su propia patria?»¹⁸

In one sense I am saying nothing which was not said by Julián Juderías nearly a century ago; one aspect of my present dialectic is even anticipated, at least by implication, in the work of Juderías's teacher, Menéndez Pelayo. But again I wish to insist upon the importance of avoiding the pernicious political conclusions drawn by writers like Menéndez, Juderías and Maeztú. We must beware the distorting characteristics of binary opposition, the Manichean *odium theologicum*. Once we begin to think of all writers with a 'European' profile as representing una quinta columna de antiespañolistas, then all is lost in the maelstrom of ethnocentric prejudice. The need is –rather– to demonstrate that just as the sea is our common, collective usufruct, it is equally our common heritage and historical culture. Like democracy itself; like the bourgeois sense of progress and independence; like commercial enterprise and the industrial impetus to civilization; neither spirit nor the institutions involved in these things were ever the exclusive property of British or Dutch. Modernization also came from Spain, and in the field of maritime enterprise perhaps above all; and this is where I come back to Oquendo and the Basque tradition.

As early as the fourteenth century the Castilian armada, built and sailed mostly by Basques, dominated Biscay and the English Channel, and was able to raid the coasts of southern England almost at will. This was generations before the English navy had won its first «recognised» victory at Sluys over the French. On one occasion the Basques anticipated the Dutch achievement of three centuries later by sailing up the Thames to burn and plunder ships and towns¹⁹. It is well known that fishing is a typical proto-industrial matrix, and the Basque example was surely the most intensive, widespread and (above all) varied in Europe. Braudel tells us that the Dutch learned the art of harpooning whales from the Basques²⁰. The fishing/whaling industry produced a rash of local shipbuilding yards based along the estuaries of the Nervión, Orío etc., which for many decades kept pace with the sixteenth-century expansion of Spain into Europe and the Atlantic²¹. The Newfoundland fisheries

16. CASTILLEJO DUARTE, J.: *Guerra de ideas en España*, Madrid, 1976; see MADARIAGA, S. De: *Spain*, London, 1930, esp. pp. 69-70.

17. E.g. FERNÁNDEZ-ALMAGRO, M.: *Política naval de la España moderna y contemporánea*, Madrid, 1945; IBAÑEZ DE IBERO, J.: *Historia de la Marina*, Sevilla, 1943.

18. ALVAREZ-ARENAS, E.: *op. cit.*, p. 17.

19. MACKAY, A.: *Spain in the Middle Ages: from frontier to empire, 1000-1500*, London, 1977, pp. 124-26.

20. BRAUDEL, F.: *op. cit.*, p. 189.

21. GUIARD Y LARRAURI, T.: *La industria naval vizcaina. Anotaciones históricas y estadísticas desde sus orígenes hasta 1917* (Bilbao, 1968), p. 63ff.; ACEDO, J. A.: *La construcción naval en Vizcaya*, Bilbao, 1975, pp. 7-11; VVAA: *Los Barcos del Orío: Astilleros y actividad portuaria*, San Sebastián, 1994, pp. 25-34.

demanded a type of vessel which familiarised the Basque designers and shipwrights with the requirements of the seagoing fighting galleon, and by 1588, the majority of the Invincible's ships was built in the Basque shipyards²².

The name of Oquendo runs like a seam-ropes through the history of Spanish naval enterprise in the early-modern era. Don Antonio's father, Don Miguel was the commander of the «Cantabrian squadron» during the Empresa de Inglaterra (1588). He was an experienced naval campaigner, administrator, navigator and pilot. Don Antonio's own son (also named Miguel) was captain, corsair and shipbuilder, and extended the family tradition into the last years of the Habsburg period²³. Don Antonio himself stands at the crossroads of 1638-40, «la última ofensiva europea de los Austrias madrileños» as it has been called²⁴, and certainly the last campaign which, if the result had been different, may have changed the whole nature of the myth-formation dealt with in this paper.

The expedition of 1639 was much less of a failure than that of 1588, actually achieving several of its most important objectives –although admittedly at a terrible cost²⁵. Despite the fact that even a decade later, the naval resources at Philip IV's disposal were still much more considerable than most historians have realised, there can be no doubt that 1639 marks the effective end of the Spanish Monarchy's struggle to compete culturally and ideologically in northern Europe. Although Spain had never quite attained this goal in any case, it now became no longer feasible even to aim at the comparative unit ratios which alone could underpin survival as a naval power in global terms. Oquendo's desperate attempt to avoid battle with the Dutch, and his equally desperate achievement in bringing his own battered capitana into Dunkirk after his fleet had been overwhelmed by Tromp, are equally significant in this respect. His comportment here, and equally in the hugely impressive logistical voyage to and from Flanders in 1640, rarely noticed in the textbooks, do not confirm the clichés, but actually expose their falsity. They demonstrate the absurdity of platitudes and clichés such as «el espíritu numantino», «clavar la bandera», above all, «más vale el honor sin barcos que barcos sin honor». If Oquendo had succeeded in avoiding the Dutch fleet, and carrying out his instructions to the letter, this would have represented unequivocal triumph for the Monarchy. The aim of the Philip IV-Olivares government was convoy of men and supplies, *and specifically not to seek any grand naval triumph*. This, after all, equals victory without battle, and thus without loss - surely the most satisfying kind of victory imaginable. Triumphs of this sort bring with them true reputation as well as God's approval. Yet this kind of victory - if not on the scale attempted in 1639 - was gained again and again by the admirals of the Spanish Monarchy over the whole period of the wars in the Low Countries. Can even the most myopic patriot, his one eye full of smoke and blood, regard the repeated logistical empresas, tremendous feats of navigation of Admirals Ribera, Fuentes, Hoces and Miguel de Horna (I mention only those which took place in the 1630s without serious loss of ships and men) as victories without honour? The answer seems to be «yes», if we take account of the perversities of logic inherent in popular patriotic versions of naval history²⁶. For in this absurd martyrology it is better to die horribly amongst the bloody entrails of defeat than to avoid battle *even when in so doing the precise aim of voyage and campaign have been encompassed!*

I do not suggest that we ignore or forget acts of heroism in battle, nor deny that the causes which inspire them are often noble. The monument to Oquendo in his native city of San Sebastián is dedicated:

«Al gran almirante ... experto marino, heroico soldado, cristiano piadoso, que al declinar el poderío de España, supo mantener en cien combates el honor de la Patria. Dedicó este tributo de amor la ciudad de San Sebastian, orgullosa de tan preclaro hijo».

22. CASADO SOTO, J. L.: *Los barcos españoles del siglo XVI y la Gran Armada de 1588*, Madrid, 1988. In the last third of Philip III's reign, one contractor alone built at least six warships totalling over 3,000 toneladas for the crown in the astilleros de San Sebastián y alrededores; «Memoria de los naos que ha fabricado Antonio de Lajust desde el año de 1614 hasta el de 1621», Museo Naval (Madrid) Col. Vargas II, f. 98. A further eight were ordered from Vizcaya in 1617, *ibid.*, f. 107.

23. According to Arzamendi, Don Miguel el menor was «religioso en extremo, devoto de la Santísima Virgén del Consuelo, cuya imagen llevó siempre consigo», *op. cit.*, p. 379. He was Don Antonio's illegitimate son, but wrote a life of his father –'El héroe Cántabro'– in 1666. For Don Miguel's construction of four galleons for the crown in San Sebastian see Junta de Armadas, 28 January 1663, AGS, Guerra Antigua, leg. 3366.

24. ALCALÁ-ZAMORA Y QUEIPO DE LLANO, J.: *España, Flandes y el mar del norte (1618-1639): La última ofensiva europea de los Austrias madrileños*, Barcelona, 1975.

25. STRADLING, R.A.: «Catastrophe and Recovery: The Defeat of Spain, 1639-43», in *Idem, Spain's Struggle for Europe, 1598-1668*, London, 1994, pp. 197-212.

26. For context and material in this paragraph, see STRADLING, R. A.: *La Armada de Flandes: Política naval española y guerra europea, 1568-1668*, Madrid, 1992.

The hero is displayed here on the poop-deck of his ship, as if mounted like a medieval paladin –some Cid of the Sea– on a great war-horse²⁷. This comparison is probably intended, since his biographers place great stress on his belief in personal combat: «Tenía Don Antonio la obsesión del combate entre jefes; no veía mejor táctica que la del abordaje violento entre capitanas»²⁸. Pride in Oquendo's achievement is a fine and justifiable feeling for Basques²⁹. But let us not forget a different kind of exemplar. I am thinking of José Mazarredo, whose more modest monument in his native city of Bilbao was at one time defaced by «patriots», *even though the plaque was obscurely and rebarbatively placed high on the wall of a busy street*. Mazarredo too was a brave sailor and pious Christian, but his sense of honour led him not to desert the king to whom he had sworn allegiance, and to continue fighting to reverse the verdict of Trafalgar. In addition to such anomalies, the «star system» –produced by uncritical obedience to patriotic myth– elevates some heroes and martyrs to a level at which they obscure the achievements of others perhaps equally deserving: in this case, of men like Martín de Recalde, Pedro de Zubiaur, Martín de Bertondona, Tomás de Larraspuru, Alonso de Idiáquez, and Antonio de Isasi³⁰. The Romantic myths of the sea are so seductive that the young Xanti Andía («El Capitán Tximista») was driven almost to distraction by them –like a Basque version of Don Quixote– enchanted by the sonorous litany of heroes and committing to memory the famous quatrain about Elcano:

«Por tierra y por mar profundo
Con imán y derrotero,
Un vascongado el primero
Dio la vuelta a todo el mundo»³¹

But as Jose Ignacio Tellechea rightly insists, it is pejorative and culturally anachronistic to use the vocabulary of «greatness» to describe a selected few of those who contributed to the rich warehouse of Basque maritime development. Tellechea himself selects only twelve sailors from the pre-industrial period (1500-1800), men he prefers to describe as «famous» rather than «great»³². Of course, they should be regarded with positive respect, but as men whom history has arbitrarily, even accidentally, preserved in our memory rather than as the «Twelve Apostles» of the Basque Navy!

These master mariners –most of them also (variously) shipbuilders and shipowners, technicians and theoreticians– represent the human infrastructure of a society which was hardly in any respect less modern than that (say) of Wales or Scotland, whether in 1400 or in 1900. Nearly all of them, at some stage in their careers, were engaged in privateering, above all in the new, highly-organised phase of war-privateering inaugurated early in the reign of Philip IV. Despite the evocative promptings of Braudel, historians in general have been reluctant to recognise the tremendous role that privateering played in maritime history. In Spain only recently have experts begun to consider its place in the socio-economic development of various communities in the peninsula and its Balearic archipelago. British historiography has always had difficulty with the contribution made by English privateering to naval campaigns and economic progress. These embarrassments arise because violent commercial plunder is seen to infringe the established ethic of modernisation and the sacred code of capitalism. Dutch history tends to ignore the fact that the state –and thus the initial impetus to the whole epic of «modernization»– was actually founded by as brutal a bunch of privateers as ever sailed. It has almost been forgotten that the great Dutch overseas trading empire was built up not by peaceful trade, but by a campaign of applied tactical violence which was hardly distinguishable from outright privateering. Spanish (and Basque) historians have traditionally adopted a similar attitude, fastidiously washing the nation's hands of any stain of piracy³³. We could go further, in the spirit of the pirate taken for sentence before Alexander the Great who (in the anecdote told by Aristotle) challenged his captor to explain by what right –other than mere superiority of force– had

27. «Marcial de Aguirre, Fecit, 1894». The statue can be compared with that of Jean Bart in Dunkirk as a typical product of the Romantic imagination.

28. ESTRADA, R.: *El Almirante Antonio de Oquendo*, Madrid, 1943, esp. pp. 155-56; ARZAMENDI, I. de: *op. cit.*, esp. pp. 295-302.

29. However, this can also lead to absurdities, such as the tendency of his biographers to bend over backwards to disguise or excuse Oquendo's sexual promiscuity: e.g. ESTRADA, R.: *op. cit.*, pp. 102-03 and cf. ARZAMENDI, I. de: *op. cit.*, p. 295.

30. J. Pardo San Gil has compiled vignettes («potted biographies») of no fewer than 70 such captains from Basque lands in both France and Spain: «Diccionario breve de gente de mar de Euskal Herria», VVAA: *El País Vasco y el mar a través de la historia*, San Sebastián, 1995, pp. 195-216. See also, CLAVERÍA ARZA, C.: *Los vascos en el mar*, Pamplona, 1966, pp. 149-81.

31. BAROJA, Pío: *Las inquietudes de Shanti Andia*, Madrid, 1941, esp. pp. 26-28.

32. TELLECHEA IDIGORAS, J. I.: «Vascos y Mar. Los de la fama», in VVAA: *El País Vasco y el mar a través de la historia*, pp. 144-93.

33. «El Corsario y La Piratería – Los Diablos del Mar»; Chapter VII of CLAVERÍA, C.: *op. cit.*, pp. 182-248, on the Basques esp. pp. 182-5 & 204ff.

the judge himself not to be called a pirate. In the context of the fifteenth-century Caribbean, what else was Columbus but a privateer?

I use the English word «privateer», which was actually invented by a Welsh judge in the late 17th century precisely in order to provide a legal rationale for the Welsh pirate, Henry Morgan, born in Cardiff, destroyer of Portobello (1671). Leoline Jenkins, who came from Cowbridge, Glamorgan (like Cardiff, only a few miles from where I am writing) used a dialectical stratagem worthy of the French Jesuits who were his contemporaries. The ploy also enabled the sentimental myth of the «Elizabethan sea-dogs», like Drake, Frobisher and Hawkins (who are called «pirates» in Spain and «Great Naval Heroes» in Britain) to be recuperated into official history. Suitably sanitised stories about their exploits have done as much to form the national myth-complex as those of Nelson. Challenging the traditions of Spanish maritime history –which has also elided the role of privateering– a new school of scholars, like Otero Lana and López Nadal, have brought this sunken phenomenon back to the surface. It has been shown how important privateering was to naval policy and to the structure of the navy itself³⁴. Equally these works shew that *the privateering industry* acted as both conduit and bond between the people as a whole and the naval enterprise of the state. At the grass roots, or rather on quayside and deck, Basques –like Gallegos, Mallorquinos and other seafaring communities– were practically implicated in the wider project of defence of the Monarchy through their daily involvement in privateering. And almost every harbour and fishing village in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa was likewise involved: in building, fitting-out and repairing ships, in providing armament and victuals, in crewing the finished vessels; and at the other end of the cycle too, in buying and selling the final product, the goods and ships captured as prizes. In the mid-1630s, for example, despite the prevailing peace between Spain and England, dozens of coastal trading vessels were captured by «corsairs» operating from Guipúzcoa and taken as prize into San Sebastián. Ships from Tenby and Haverfordwest in Wales, traders from Bristol, and masted barges supplying London with coal from north-east England were among the victims demanding protection from King Charles I. The pleito for restitution entered in Madrid stated that English prizes were taken

«con pretexto y color de comision de buscar y tomar turcos ... y siendo examinado mas adelante que otros navios salieron de dicho lugar de San Sebastian para estos costas como navios de guerra ...»³⁵

Similar activities, stretching over best part of two centuries, made Bilbao-Santurce and San Sebastián-Pasajés into vibrant maritime entrepôts where foreign merchants –English, Welsh, Irish, French, German and Scandinavian– rubbed shoulders with their Basque counterparts. Modern economic historians condemn organised privateering, partly because they cannot escape the moral imperatives of their guild, but also as an inherently non-economic enterprise, because it discouraged the rise of peaceful seaborne trade and acted as a brake on the modernization process. But this hypothesis seems unconvincing in the Basque case, as it also does in the comparative case of Flanders. Indeed, hay un argumento contundente y todo al contrario. Privateering was a highly-capitalised industry which both exploited and encouraged the proto-industrial potential of the geographic hinterland. The industrial complex celebrated in Teófilo Guíard's celebrated work was stimulated not only by fishing, by trade, and by official naval commissions, but by privateering. This dynamic aspect of the Eighty Years War with the Dutch was the main vehicle by which the Basques kept alive their vital contacts with the Low Countries, contacts which produced dynasties of merchants, sailors –and also, let us not forget, administrators– who became almost as much Flemish as Basque³⁶. Basque academics, lawyers and hombres de asunto provided the administrative backbone, not only of the maritime sub-departments of the Spanish Habsburg Monarchy, but even of its powerful conciliar superstructure. Such men often shared with their Flemish colleagues of the Counter-Reformation a passionate desire to honour and defend the Catholic faith – in the European as much as the local context. In their home environments, many of them were also private armadores de corso – investors in privateering. They named their vessels for a favourite patron, virgin or saint; they made contributions to the adornment of the churches, hung up their ex-voto model vessels around

34. OTERO LANA, E.: *Los corsarios españoles durante la decadencia de los Austrias: El corso español del Atlántico peninsular en el siglo XVII (1621-1697)*, Madrid, 1992; LÓPEZ NADAL, J. (ed.): *El comerç alternatiu: corsarisme i contraban ss. XV-XVIII*, Palma de Mallorca, 1990.

35. British Library, Additional Mss. 36448, ff. 3-7.

36. See the books by Alcalá-Zamora, Otero Lana and Stradling already cited, *passim*. In a unique document from 1623, «Libro de Oficios de la Corte» (British Library, Egerton Mss. 335), the occurrence of Basque names is ubiquitous. Basques also dominated the key office of Secrétaire d'Etat et de la Guerre in Brussels: see ECHEVARRÍA BACIGALUPE, M. A.: *Flandes y la monarquía española, 1500-1713*, Madrid, 1998, p. 396.

the altars, founded *cofradías* and *ferias* in honour of the glorious association of the Virgin Mary with the sea³⁷. They contributed voluminously to the maintenance of Basques recruited into the Royal Armadas. Far from being something shameful or criminal, privateering against Dutch, English and even French, had the character of crusade³⁸.

In this crusade –as might be expected– many took the cross voluntarily, others were pressed into service. Some contributed money and services for the sake of religion and honour, others were content with material profits. Time and again the Basque country was scoured for sailors and soldiers, levies which reached their greatest intensity in the reign of Philip IV. The records in the archives at Tolosa and other repositories graphically illustrate, for example, how all the major *empresas* commanded by the *Oquendos*, grandfather, son and grandson, from the 1560s to the 1690s were made possible by the levying of men from the *anteiglesias*. At least 20,000 mariners from Guipúzcoa alone served in the Royal Armadas over the period 1572-1695 – not including those enlisted in the marine corps. In the years 1625-67, nearly 8,000 more were incorporated into infantry regiments. In Alava, during the period which represented the greatest crisis of the Spanish Monarchy (1636-42), over 3,700 men were raised to fight in Flanders and France – an astonishing figure for such a tiny, poor, and underpopulated region which was already making enormous contributions to the war-effort. These repeated *gotas de sangre* caused decades of suffering to dozens, even hundreds, of local communities – both emotional and material³⁹. Fishing villages were left without fishermen, rural villages without farmers, mothers without sons, wives without husbands. «I see no ships except hardships» – to quote a popular English perversion of a heroic statement by Admiral Nelson. Perhaps I may be allowed to relate one moving story retrieved from the bottomless depths of the Simancas archives. In 1655, Madrid wished to reinforce the army of Flanders for a new offensive: 600 Basque levies were collected in San Sebastian by early February. Philip IV ordered that they should be embarked on a royal *urca* the *San Carlos*, in order to save money on hiring a private vessel. But the king was later told that his old tub needed careening and other maintenance work, so instead a Flemish carrier was contracted. Almost a full year later the *San Carlos* finally left for Flanders carrying a further levy of Vizcayan soldiers. It being November, it is hardly surprising that the voyage was hit by violent storms in mid-Biscay. The ancient *urca*, probably in the event repaired only minimally (if at all) was driven south around Finisterre and finally wrecked on the coast of Portugal with the loss of nearly 250 lives⁴⁰. One can only attempt to imagine the misery imposed upon families and communities by events of this nature, by which their already miserable lives were irregularly punctuated. Yet on the whole, these sacrifices were endured with a stoicism which reflected in popular macrocosm the dominant ideology of the ruling elite. Of course, the local politicians sometimes protested infringement of *fueros*, and often resorted to delaying tactics or obscure legal stratagems which might diminish the impact of the voracious Madrid war-machine. There were occasional confrontations between *corregidores* and *alcaldes*, angry scenes, even tumults. In Durango a bitter struggle ensued in 1640 when the town was ordered to provide fifty-six men for the garrison of Portugalete. Community funds had been exhausted by the demands of previous years. One citizen, Antonio Ochoa de Urida,

«con mucha colera tenojo y a grandes voces ... empuno la mano a la daga y espada y quiso traiga resistencia, diciendo muchas palabras injuriosas contra su mrcd, y que el hera caballero y no carbonero ni mercador y assi no podia ser presso»⁴¹.

Don Antonio threatened that unless the recruiting officer –who was also the *alcalde*!– abandoned the town immediately, he would inspire «un revuelto y amotinado» by the whole populace. But much more frequently the researcher is amazed by the honest obedience and commitment by which autho-

37. Oquendo himself dedicated his career and victories to the *Virgén de Aránzazu*. After his victory in Brazil (1631) he visited her sanctuary to offer gifts of plunder – just as did Jean Bart and other Flemish captains at the shrine of Our Lady of the Dunes in Dunkirk; ARZAMENDI, I. de: *op. cit.*, pp. 259-61.

38. For an interpretation of Flemish privateering in the above sense, see STRADLING, R.A.: «Capitalism, Citizenship, Crusade: The Cultural Context of Privateering in seventeenth-century Flanders», *Bulletin de L'Institut Historique Belge de Rome*, LXV, 1995, pp. 69-87. This paragraph is also indebted to an illuminating lecture given by Miguel Artola in San Sebastian in July 1995.

39. Data based upon the following sources: Archivo Provincial de Guipúzcoa (Tolosa), 2a Sección, Neg. 11 (marineros) & 3a Sección, Negs. 3 & 4 (infantería); ITURRATE, J.: «El servicio militar en la villa de Arceniega en 1642», *Boletín Sancho el Sabio*, XXII, 1978, pp. 117-88; URDAÍN MARTÍNEZ, M. C. (ed.): *Catálogo del Archivo Provincial de Alava* (Vitoria, 1984), pp. 284-85. The present author's research on «The recruitment and deployment of its armed forces by the Spanish Monarchy, 1618-68» was suspended in 1995, before he was able to locate consistent series data for Vizcaya.

40. Junta de Armadas, 5 February & 3 December 1655, AGS, Guerra Antigua, leg. 3366.

41. Relación del Corregidor de Vizcaya (Gerónimo Quesada Solorzano), Archivo de la Diputación Foral de Vizcaya, leg. 1032, no. 13.

rities and people alike strove to meet the royal demands. One Bilbao soldier, enlisted to serve in a projected incursion into the Basque region of Laborza in France, agreed that receipt of advance pay

«obligo mi persona y bienes y doy poder a los justicias de su magd. del qualesquiera parte que sean, a cuya jurisdiccion me someto renunciando mi propio fuero...»⁴²

Of course, this may just have been a case of «yo prefiero la guerra que luchando con la suegra!»

By mid-century the villages, on the coast and in the mountains, were exhausted. In 1660, Philip IV came to San Sebastián (where a street still carries his name) to make the peace with France which at last brought the crusade to an end. An ageing monarch in whom the spirit was still willing even if the flesh was weak, he was delighted by the sight of the barcaleras busy on board their trawlers in the harbour. It is doubtful if the king realised that this particular evidence of Basque «modernization» was the indirect result of his own policies – with no men available, girls and women, mothers and daughters, had to venture forth to face the hazards of Biscay. In which other European nation or region could we find such dramatic evidence of total war before the twentieth century?

In a radically suggestive essay published in the inaugural issue of this journal, José Luis Casado Soto suggested that attention to maritime history in Spain generally has been obfuscated by the writings of an apostolic succession of historians dedicated to a religious interpretation of the past, and implies that this is particularly applicable to the Basque lands.

«Es sorprendente el poder de ocultación y enmascaramiento que logró la tradición historiográfica religiosa y jesuítica, en su pertinaz esfuerzo por ‘inventar la tradición’, a lo largo de las tres últimas centurias. Aquellos interesados ‘intelectuales’ centraron todo su interés en la fidelidad a una lengua, unos valores y unas costumbres a las que había que defender a toda costa de las influencias exteriores, y cuyas esencias radicaban en el mundo rural ...»⁴³

But it seems to me that the endorsement by the Jesuit historians Juan de Mariana and Gabriel de Henao, along with some other priestly experts, of views elaborated by the essentially secular Basque chroniclers of previous generations hardly justifies this sweeping indictment. A mere glance at a modern bibliography of Iberian maritime history will surely convince any observer that the Basque contribution has never been threatened by inundation, even in the era of Sabino Arana and Augustin Chaho, with its privileging of the organic rural community⁴⁴. And even if Aitor is presented in national ethnic-linguistic myth as a peasant-farmer rather than a sailor, the very fact that he has survived the Flood suggests he must have possessed some maritime aptitude!⁴⁵

The maritime life is in the Basque bloodstream, it is a genetic, Jungian reality enriched by its own peculiar character. But it is by no means the only such tradition, not even in Spain. We must evolve a way of continuing to admire the life-enhancing cultural qualities of the past, of relishing its Romantic attractions, without feeling moved to re-live it in a kind of sinister «virtual reality». We must remember that all history is in most respects a luxury, and insofar as it is an anthropological necessity, it is so in the same sense as the children’s game. But life is real, and life is earnest. Especially on board ship, we must be careful to keep everything in its place, not only sentiment and myth, but even history; to set a course and to steer with a clear, pragmatic eye. As I mentioned earlier, Wales and the Euskal Herria have in common a partly inachieved and inachievable history, to the extent that heroic failure is often –more or less subliminally– taken as a substitute for actual triumph. Our writers and historians often resort to an analgesic discourse in which it seems that «failure is our success». In the short and tragic period when the Iberian Basques experienced effective independence (a thing which has not yet, for good or ill, ever been vouchsafed to Wales), the fate of their navy was typical of this «triumph-out-of-disaster» mentality*. The terrible encounters between the armed trawlers of the Basque Republican Navy and the Francoist cruiser *Canarias* in March 1937 –even the brilliant and heroic action of the *Navarra*– were in many ways foolhardy ges-

42. [Juramiento de] Juan de Aurategui, Muxia, 27 May 1637, *ibid* leg. 1095, no. 50.

43. CASADO SOTO, J. L.: «Aproximación al estado de la historia marítima del País Vasco sobre los primeros siglos de la Edad Moderna», *Itsas Memoria. Revista de Estudios Marítimos del País Vasco*, nº 1, Untzi Museoa-Museo Naval, San Sebastián, 1996, pp. 29-47.

44. KURLANSKY, M.: *The Basque History of the World*, London, 1999, esp. pp. 161-72.

45. For his help with these paragraphs I must pay tribute (once again) to the tutorship of my friend Miguel Angel Echevarría.

* Editor’s note: The author related to the Marina de Guerra Auxiliar de Euzkadi (Basque Auxiliary War Army), set up in October 1936 by the Self-Governing Basque Government as an aid to the Spanish Republic Army. See Juan Pardo’s book *Euzkadiko Gudontzidia. La Marina de Guerra Auxiliar de Euzkadi (1936-39)*, Untzi Museoa-Museo Naval, San Sebastian, 1998.

tures which mainly produced human and material losses and much unnecessary suffering⁴⁶. The second battle even added humiliation to this when it was subsequently discovered that the supply-ship that dozens of mariners had died in order to protect was carrying a fraudulent cargo of useless weapons⁴⁷. As a result of these adventures, a considerable proportion of the Basque Fleet was lost at sea or captured by the enemy during the campaign⁴⁸. Of course, patriotic myth demands that *gudaris* should be perceived as fighting to the death in defence of their liberty: but is the loss of so many vessels and crews really a matter for unalloyed celebration? ⁴⁹

Of course there are many disasters in British Naval history too, sometimes produced by heroic stupidity, equally often by sheer incompetence. But rather than select one of these sad and frustrating tales, it seems more fitting to end with a slightly different event. It is well known that the greatest disaster in British maritime history, the sinking of the *Titanic*, happened because of a freak accident. There is a story that it could have been avoided were it not for a contingent accident. The lookout who was on duty that night failed to find the pair of binoculars necessary for his task. By a stupid oversight, doubtless induced by fatigue, the previous duty officer had taken them back to his bunk. Of course, this is only a story from history. But icebergs, nevertheless, are real⁵⁰.

46. It was important for the epic narratology that the three leading boats were named after the Spanish Basque regions.

47. See AGUIRRE, J. A. de *Freedom was Flesh and Blood*, London, 1945, pp. 52-7. The *Lehendakari* observed part of the action from a shore battery site, and his narrative enthusiastically advances the flawed privileges of mythology. Indeed, the English title of his published memoir is taken from a heroic ode written about the incident by the London communist, C. Day-Lewis - «The Nabarra»: see CUNNINGHAM, V. (ed.): *Spanish Civil War Verse*, Harmondsworth, 1980, pp. 236-45. These are almost certainly the only literary laurels ever awarded by an English writer to Spanish seamanship. Aguirre also tells us that two of the Basque vessels were originally named «Virgen del Carmen» and «Mari Begoña». For the story of the false cargo, see HOWSON, G.: *Arms for Spain: The Untold Story of the Spanish Civil War*, London, 1999, p. 195.

48. CORTADA, J. (ed.): *Historical Dictionary of the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, Westport, Connecticut, 1982, p. 360.

49. Enrique Moreno Plaza, master of the *Navarra*, who went down with his ship rather than surrender, is listed among the seventy honoured by J. Pardo San Gil (loc cit, pp. 208-09). It should be noted that some vessels of the Basque Auxiliary Fleet also managed to escape to France at the fall of Bilbao in June 1937.

50. The intellectual orientation of this paper is evidently (though not deliberately) close to the work of the early sociologists. In particular Durkheim presented cultural life in society as taking place on five levels. The last 3 of these are relevant.

A. Symbols (collective rituals and customs) which self-identify a group, (e.g. a nation or class).

B. Collective ideas and values, inspiring action and institutionalisation, expressed in A.

C. The collective consciousness (memory/aspirations) itself.

See THOMPSON, K.: *Beliefs and Ideology*, London 1986, esp. pp. 108-09

This –equally accidentally– relates to Unamuno's identification of «orgullo colectivo», though his reference seems to have been inspired by a desire to criticise facile patriotism. Unamuno declared this phenomenon to be very worthy of study (or what we would today call «deconstruction») writing that «pocas cosas hay más interesantes que estudiar los orgullos colectivos». Unamuno cited Schopenhauer who (anticipating Althusser) asserted that only individuals who had no personal reason for pride (no identity of their own) sought consolation and fulfilment in collective pride (e.g. patriotism). Unamuno may have been thinking here of the negative effects of local pride («patria chica») more than «Hispanidad». He refers to this kind of pride as «la vanidad más barata». M. Unamuno «Orgullo colectivo», an essay in the series *Bilbao por dentro* 1st pub 1896, quoted in ORTIZ ALFAU, A. M. *Bilbao en la obra de Unamuno*, Bilbao, 1986, pp. 26-8.