

Zuliaka, Joseba. *Basque Violence: Metaphor and Sacrament*. Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1988.

Basque Violence: Metaphor and Sacrament is an ethnographic study of Basque life — its historical, linguistic, cultural, institutional, ideological and ritual dimensions. Comprehensively examining each of these variables, Joseba Zulaika provides a living picture of how Basque traditions are formulated and practised. From this work specialists and non-specialists alike can gain a unique insight into the affairs of the Basques. In pursuit of his academic training in the United States, the author, Basque himself, conducted a two-year research project in his native village of Itziar during the period 1979-81. The setting for this study thus is a microcosmic one: a small village in which many aspects of Basque life are graphically illustrated.

The author tells us that he chose to employ the term "sacrament" in his analysis, "for Itziar is a Catholic village whose religious experience hinges fundamentally on sacramental symbolism." (p. xxv) By examining the profound meaning of the myths and metaphors in the political history of Basque life, Zulaika hopes to present us with a more accurate framework of analysis for understanding the meaning and significance of these myths and metaphors than has heretofore been provided. In offering a better understanding of the dynamics behind and the meaning of myths in Basque life, particularly those associated with violence, Zulaika insists that "writers who miss the cultural basis in which Basque violence is grounded fail to understand the actual experience of the actors and spectators of the violence." (p. xxvi) In this regard, Zulaika differs from other scholars interested in analyzing Basque violence, in that he considers killings and other forms of violent practices in Basque society "normal" occurrences, given the circumstances in which they are found. This study, in essence, "is a reconstruction of the basic cultural structure in which that violence is situated and the ideational and emotional attitudes of the paradoxical experience of Basque political violence in Itziar." (p. xxix)

The ethnography at hand is the product of eyewitness observations by the author himself during his stay in Itziar as much as it is the reconstitution of narrations made to the author by Itziar villagers since 1975. "The historical, sociological, and cultural locus of the events narrated here . . . constitutes the substantive part of this ethnographic analysis." (p. xxix) The author's goal is "to picture a pattern of experiential totality." (pp. xxix - xxx)

Part One provides the reader with a historical representation of the myths and metaphors that have been present in Basque culture for many centuries. Through conversations with various subjects, the author succeeds in establishing a link between beliefs deep-rooted in the past and behavior pursued in the present. Here, myths associated with the origins of the Basque language, Euskera, are discussed. Various legends and fairy tales and the impact they have had on the imagination and mental configuration of subsequent Basque generations are analyzed and put in perspective. Furthermore, the author touches on the significant role archaeological

findings play in the formation of Basque perceptions of their identity, religion and of their non-Indo-European language, Euskera. (pp. 7-8, 16)

While the author reveals the cognitive link between the past and the present in Basque society, he simultaneously indicates points of contention between old beliefs and new practices, between the earlier generations and the new ones. (pp. 14, 36, 52-53) Particularly, the implications of the new "crisis of faith" are highlighted. Throughout numerous pages of the book, the author devotes considerable discussion to an analysis of the impact that ETA has had in reconfiguring many Basque traditions, customs and beliefs.

In addition, the author explores the psychological effects of the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War on the Basque people. (p. 16) As to the Basques' view and understanding of the nature of violence, the author attributes a relatively high degree of influence to this war. (pp. 34-35) The social, economic and political forces behind the intensification of Basque nationalism are reviewed here to assist us in understanding the meaning and associations of violence in Basque culture. (pp. 16-20)

Consistent with his four-dimensional conceptual framework of the history of Itziar — its mythical and legendary components, its violence, its heroic as well as its tragic sides — the author sketches the record of the escalation of tension, particularly in the 1970s, to introduce the reader to the inner structure of Basque thinking and behavior. The author informs us that the radicalization of Basque thinking, as it is represented in Itziar, was accompanied by the revitalization of new ideas concerning the harsh conditions in which the Basques live. Generating new methods to bring about social change, the author tells us, was paralleled by the deepening of ideological commitment and the strengthening of organizational effectiveness. (p. 57) The powerful role played by ETA in uncovering the contradictions within Basque society is highlighted. (pp. 58, 60-61) One outcome of the vigorous debates within ETA was that armed struggle was determined to be the most effective tool to alter the status quo. Itziar youth joined the movement in large numbers and it was at this juncture that a new phase in the tension between the Basques and the Spanish authorities erupted, particularly in the 1970s. The prevalence of the characteristic of self-negation, or self-denial, in Basque society greatly contributed to the sharpening of the determination among ETA's members to advance the cause of the Basques in Spain. (p. 84)

In Part Two, Zulaika examines elements of continuity and transformation in Basque traditions, specifically with regard to violence. One of the most obvious shifts in traditional Basque life has occurred in the *basseri* farmstead. Transformation in the *basseri* culture has been accompanied by changes in the forms of violence. In this respect, Zulaika establishes a strong tie between the *basseri* and the exercise of violence, for the latter's roots were derived from the social structure of the former. Furthermore, Zulaika indicates the organic connection between the *basseri* and Itziar: the socio-economic and cultural structure of the *basseri* is, in essence, a microcosm of the village as a whole. (p. 105) The economic deterioration in the *basseri* led

to social instability: the energy and time that used to be spent in farming became directed toward involvement in political and military movements, foremost among these, in ETA. On the other hand, Zulaika underscores the fact that while some transformation has taken place in certain areas of Basque society, family ties and closeness to the land continue to be important characteristics of the Basque lifestyle. (pp. 132, 135)

Part Three of this ethnography deals with the psychological and cultural expression of violence in Basque society, manifested in games, hunting and singing. In this part, the reader enters the unique world of the Basques: the conduct of their daily life, their metaphors and other culturo-linguistic associations, similes and analogies. This segment of the book is fascinating in that it involves the reader in uncovering the dynamics behind Basque thinking about, and performance of, violence.

In Part Four, Zulaika identifies different actions of violence, analyzing their metaphoric and sacramental connections.

In Part Five, he explores the relationship of different violent actions to traditional Basque rituals. In this part, the author illuminates the permanency of ritual functions and actions in Basque culture and society. Here Zulaika focuses his analysis on the causal factors which motivate the exercise of violence among the Basques. For illustration, folklore traditions and mythology are employed. This part is not concerned with describing the effects of political violence as much as it is centred on providing an analysis for the setting in which violence takes place.

The author defies the mainstream methodology used to study political violence, which focuses on events and in most situations ignores the processes that stimulate the occurrence of violence in a given environment. Exploring different facets of Basque thinking, Zulaika challenges the stigma of abnormality attached to their performance of violence. He emphatically states: "It is not the content of Basque political violence per se that is so abnormal; rather it is the wider Spanish and European context in which the violence is situated that makes it appear so." (p. 339) From this stems an understanding of the author's goal behind writing this work: "Although this book may appear as an attempt to finesse moral judgement by dissembling the violence into Culture and History, that is not my intention. By insisting on cultural forms and representations and by stripping violence down to its all-too-human faces, this ethnography of Itziar is an attempt to confront the reader with the stark 'normalcy' of ritual killing once it is understood in its own terms." (p. 342)

The book under examination contains elements of a literary epic: the reader learns about the history, geography, socio-economic structure and political life of the Basques by meeting different characters interviewed by or described to the author. The book is also a treatise in sociology and ethnology from which professionals in these fields can immensely benefit. Most enlightening is the author's penetrating discussion of the complex dynamics of the practice of violence within Basque society. His placement of the psycho-historical and cultural causal factors behind the exercise of violence

can be of invaluable significance to psychologists and specialists of cultural studies in the pursuit of their research.

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Sandole, Dennis J.D., and Ingrid Sandole-Staroste, eds. *Conflict Management and Problem Solving: Interpersonal to International Applications*. London: Frances Pinter, 1987.

Patchen, Martin. *Resolving Disputes Between Nations: Coercion or Conciliation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988.

Conflict. The word conjures up images of pain, fear, and destruction. And conflict is a familiar part of our lives. So how do we live with something so common that also seems so devastating? Part of the answer is realizing that conflict *per se* is not inherently destructive. It is the managing of conflict that will influence whether or not the process and outcome are constructive or destructive. These two books reflect the belief that conflict can be managed in such a way that peoples' needs are met.

Conflict Management and Problem Solving is a collection of lectures (and responses) that were delivered at George Mason University under the sponsorship of the Center for Conflict Resolution. The list of authors reads like a "Who's Who" in conflict management and resolution (Ralph White, John Burton, Morton Deutsch, Thomas Colosi, Conrad Hassel and Dean Pruitt to name just a few). Their experiences extend from interpersonal to international, and are offered from the perspectives of practitioners, theorists and researchers and across disciplines. The chapters range from discussions of models and theories of conflict management, to specific examples of research and practice in such areas as prisons, community relations, environmental disputes, terrorism, labor relations and nuclear war. In this sense, the collection offers the reader a picture of the "state of the art" in the theory, research and practice of conflict resolution, and highlights the range of tools needed and available for conflict analysis. Emphasis is given to the exploration and development of innovative cooperative alternatives to the more traditional competitive ways of dealing with conflict and, thus, expands the range of possible solutions beyond the win-lose dimension. Like other volumes that cover a broad range of areas, each section of this book is by necessity an overview and leaves out specific detail. The reader is left wanting to know more. Thus, this collection's strength lies in its ability to provoke interest and discussion in an area that deserves continued and expanded work from all perspectives.