

# HISTORY POPULARISED AND *TWEETED*: EMOTIONS AND SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS AROUND THE CONQUEST OF NAVARRRE IN 1512

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Date of receipt: 12<sup>th</sup> of January, 2018  
Final date of acceptance: 28<sup>th</sup> of June, 2018

## ABSTRACT

This study analyses the social representations and uses of the Conquest of Navarre in 1512 by the troops of Castile. Starting from an analysis of the feelings that David Lowenthal thinks history arouses, the interpretations of it by non-university authors linked to the Basque nationalist groups, *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik* will be analysed. The repercussions of these interpretations in the society of Navarre will also be evaluated through a series of cultural manifestations. Some of the most important are those on social networks such as Twitter, where the theories of some of these authors have achieved a large following.<sup>1</sup>

## KEYWORDS

Social Representacions, Conquest of Navarre, Kingdom of Navarre, Social Networks, Historiography.

## CAPITALIA VERBA

Representationes Societatis, Occupatio Navarrae, Regnum Navarrae, Nexus Societatis, Historiographicalis Productio.

## 1. Introduction

In this study we set out to analyse the different debates currently taking place about the conquest of Navarre. We will compare the historiographical controversy against the material generated around the event in different cultural areas: press, novels, essays and internet, without excluding the ‘popular’ debates found in chats, forums or social networks such as Twitter or Facebook. Therefore, our primary sources come from historiographical controversy, but they are situated in the worlds of communication, popular belief and the academic sphere. Our analysis of these social representations of Navarre’s past have an almost psychological intention, as we will go into detail on the reasons that led different people to take one attitude or another towards certain historical events.

We should clarify that, at present, the most productive and dynamic historicist movement —quantitatively speaking— is the one from the political sphere of Basque nationalism, which is why the most visible social representations we will study usually emerge from this political-social domain, although from time to time we will analyse other alternative or antagonistic formulations that nevertheless have less social impact.

## 2. The state of the question: between historical memory and social representations

The study of the social representations of history constitutes one of the most fruitful lines of work at present, because focusing the analysis on the present allows us to understand the ever-greater distance between academic history and popular history.<sup>2</sup> Recently, the social networks and the so-called ‘transmedia universe’ (cinema, television, comics, novels...) have been conceived as new genres for history<sup>3</sup> and historians are increasingly studying them. In these new spheres or

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1. This study has been carried out within the framework of a History and Videogames project (II): knowledge, learning and projection of the past in the digital society (HAR2016-78147-P). An initial vision of the project was presented in the Lacarra Seminar at the Universidad de Zaragoza, on the initiative of professors Mario Lafuente, Concepcion Villanueva and Carlos Laliena, whom I would like to thank for the invitation. This study is the direct result of that presentation. The same day as the conference, my dear mediaevalist colleague and friend Pascual Tamburri died suddenly; just a few days earlier he expressed his interest about my involvement to me. I hope the lines below serve as a modest tribute to him.

2. Mugueta, Íñigo. “Las representaciones sociales de la Historia al servicio de la didáctica en Educación Superior”, *Contextos Educativos*, 1 (2016): 9-30; Mugueta, Íñigo; Tobalina, Eva. “Medievo digital o medievo popular: representaciones sociales of the Edad Media en las comunidades de gamers on-line”, *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana*, 38 (2014): 161-179. For more information on the concept, see Moscovici, Serge. “Des représentations collectives aux représentations sociales: éléments pour une histoire”, *Les représentations sociales*, Denise Jodelet, ed. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1989: 62-86; and Jodelet, Denise. “Représentations sociales: un domaine en expansion”, Denise Jodelet, dir. París: Presses Universitaires de France, 1989: 31-61.

3. Aurell, Jaume, ed. *Rethinking Historical Genres in the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Routledge, 2017.



genres we would highlight the onset of the ‘phantom of simplification’ in social uses of history, with their inevitable acolytes, the stereotypes<sup>4</sup> who basically set about disseminating concepts and images.<sup>5</sup> In the same direction, César Fornis has even spoken of a complete *sendero de tópicos y falacias* in his study of social representations of ancient Sparta.<sup>6</sup>

The idea is not new; Paul Ricoeur himself spoke of the construction of the historical narrative as one of representations that have consequences. They therefore become a subject worthy of study for the historian, who can (and should) be interested in them as well as the effects they create. Roger Chartier converted this question into one of the lines for the future of historical science towards the end of the 1980s.<sup>7</sup>

Researchers deal with this reality in a variety of ways and denominations. As we have seen, from the sociological perspective reference is made to ‘social’ or ‘collective representations’ that are not only linked to the historical element itself. In the common ground of historians and sociologists the concept of “collective memory” coined by Halbwachs<sup>8</sup> (2004) is regularly used. It refers to processes—normally directed by State powers—of the collective construction of a common identity. A concept half-way between the above is that of ‘historical consciousness’,<sup>9</sup> recently defended by Jörn Rüsen as a mediation between the past and the present that goes beyond memory because it rationalises it, makes it intelligible and gives it meaning. Historical consciousness, understood in this way, guides decision-making in the present because it makes it comprehensible.<sup>10</sup>

With regard to memory, we agree with David Lowenthal when he says that it is individual, not collective. For the author of this study, the function of memory is not to conserve the past, rather to adapt it, enrich it and mould it to the present, given that memory’s essential task is to select what should be remembered.<sup>11</sup> There is no collective memory, therefore, only individual memory that can be shared, and even then not completely. In the same way as memory can give validity to personal identity, history would allow it to perpetuate collective self-consciousness. As Lowenthal says:

4. Liceras Ruiz, Ángel. “Tópicos, estereotipos y prejuicios, componentes de un aprendizaje informal que deforma”. *Iber: Didáctica de las ciencias sociales, Geografía e Historia*, 36 (2003): 89-101.

5. Ferrés, Joan. *Educación en una cultura del espectáculo*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2000.

6. “trail of clichés and fallacies”. Fornis, César. “Un sendero de tópicos y falacias: Esparta en la ficción y en la Historia popular”, *SPAL*, 20 (2011): 43-51.

7. Chartier, Roger. *El Mundo como Representación. Historia Cultural: entre práctica y Representación*. Barcelona: Gedisa, 1992: 45-62; <[http://rodolfogiunta.com.ar/Historia%20urbana/El%20mundo%20como%20representacion%20\(Chartier\).pdf](http://rodolfogiunta.com.ar/Historia%20urbana/El%20mundo%20como%20representacion%20(Chartier).pdf)>. (Consulted 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017). The original article was published in Chartier, Roger. “Le monde comme représentation”, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 44/6 (1989): 1505-1520 <[https://perso.univ-lyon2.fr/~jkempf/articles\\_m2/chartier\\_representation.pdf](https://perso.univ-lyon2.fr/~jkempf/articles_m2/chartier_representation.pdf)> (Consulted 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017).

8. Halbachs, Maurice. *La memoria colectiva*. Saragossa: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2004.

9. Rüsen, Jörn. *Narration, interpretation, orientation*. New York-Oxford: Bergham Books, 2005; Cataño Balseiro, Carmen Lucía. “Jörn Rüsen y la conciencia histórica”, *Historia y Sociedad*, 21 (2011): 221-243.

10. “The simple answer is that historical consciousness functions as a specific orientational mode in actual situations of life in the present: it functions to aid us in comprehending past actualy in order to grasp present actualy”. Rüsen, Jörn. *Narration, interpretation...: 24*.

11. Lowenthal, David. *El pasado es un país extraño*. Madrid: Akal, 1998: 306.



los grupos se definen a sí mismos a través de la Historia de la misma manera que un individuo lo hace a través de la memoria.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, we believe that memory is fallacious in itself, as many authors have suggested.<sup>13</sup> Another reference work for us is that of Fentress and Wickham, who use the term ‘social memory’, considering that while memory is individual it is also conditioned by social interaction, on one hand, and by its social exposure in the form of a narrative discourse on the other.<sup>14</sup> Although sociology has also used the term ‘social memory’, we can share this when the memory of an event experienced is indeed analysed collectively, but not when it refers to the evocation of something that is impossible to remember due to the distance in time.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, as Jerome De Groot points out, to a certain extent modern-day society understands the historian’s work as the search for the truth (the only truth), and sometimes represents that search in a heroic manner, as in *Indiana Jones, Tomb Raider* or *The Da Vinci Code*,<sup>16</sup> whose protagonists—at least in theory—are expert historians. Certainly, this idea has widespread support nowadays, with a public that applauds and “buys” it.

As a reference cultural study we can take the one directed by Fernando Molina and José A. Pérez on the myths and rites of Basque history,<sup>17</sup> although we are aware that all the contributing authors are part of a fertile line of research in the field of contemporary history that we cannot go into detail on here.<sup>18</sup> In any event, it is worth pointing out that the points made by Fernando Molina are completely relevant to our study, both in terms of the construction of the nationalist discourse on the ‘Basque conflict’ and the stance that the historian should take vis-à-vis this type of narrative.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, in the specific case of Navarre, we should mention the numerous studies by Juan María Sánchez Prieto on the political thought of

12. "groups define themselves through history as an individual does through memory". Lowenthal, David, *El pasado es un país extraño...:* 311.

13. Castells Arteché, Luis. "Las víctimas del terrorismo. La cuestión del relato", *Huarte de San Juan. Geografía e Historia*, 21 (2014): 335.

14. Fentress, James; Wickham, Chris. *Memoria social*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2003.

15. Laurens, Stéphane; Roussiau, Nicolas, eds. *La mémoire sociale. Identités et représentations sociales*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes: 2002. In the different studies in this book we assume that the notion of collective or social memory implies both memory and evocation. As we see it, it is difficult to distinguish between history and collective memory. Furthermore, in several chapters the relationship between collective memory/history and social representations is explored, although without describing these social representations, as the term is sometimes used generally, without specifying if they are social representations of history, of memory, of the past itself or some of the events that occurred in it.

16. De Groot, Jerome. *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*. Abingdon, Routledge, 2009.

17. Molina, Fernando; Pérez, José. Antonio, eds. *El peso de la identidad. Mitos y ritos de la historia vasca*. Madrid: Instituto de Historia Social Valentín Foronda, 2015.

18. On these subjects, see Carreras Ares, Juan José; Forcadell Álvarez, Carlos, eds. *Usos públicos de la Historia*. Saragossa: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2003; and Peiró, Ignacio. *Historiadores en España. Historia de la Historia y memoria de la profesión*. Saragossa: Universidad de Zaragoza, 2013: 262-288.

19. Molina, Fernando. "El conflicto vasco". *Relatos de historia, memoria y nación*, *El peso de la identidad. Mitos y ritos de la historia vasca*. Fernando Molina; José. A., Pérez, eds. Madrid: Instituto de Historia Social Valentín Foronda, 2015: 181-223.



modern and contemporary Navarrese historians, from Padre Moret to Arturo Campi3n, and even Tom3s Urzainqui.<sup>20</sup>

### 3. A very ‘current’ moment in Navarrese history: the conquest of the kingdom of Navarre

To study the social representations of the conquest of Navarre we will not make a differentiated analysis by sources (history, literature, press, music, social networks....), but, following Lowenthal, we will group the sources based on the feelings perceived after reading the most substantive interpretations.

The high point of the history of Navarre curiously coincides with the kingdom’s decline, marked by a long period of internecine confrontation that finally led to its conquest by Castile. In recent years, an extensive bibliography has emerged that reviews, praises, makes a claim for or even condemns the conquest. From a historiographical perspective, the celebration of the fifth centenary of the conquest of Navarre has contributed some positive aspects, such as better knowledge of the military actions and an understanding of it as a long period that only ended in 1529 or 1530, as pointed out by Peio Monteano, Doctor in History and senior archivist.<sup>21</sup> Other authors have also provided interesting visions from the point of view of international relations, such as 3lvaro Adot,<sup>22</sup> Doctor in History and Researcher at the Universit3 de Pau, Elo3sa Ram3rez,<sup>23</sup> Professor of Mediaeval History at the Universidad P3blica de Navarra, or Alfredo Florist3n,<sup>24</sup> Professor of Modern History at the Universidad de Alcal3, although the theories of these authors do not coincide. In general, some of the studies published in the collective book coordinated by Alfredo Florist3n in 2012 are a great novelty within the extensive bibliography published on the conquest of Navarre: for example, those by Luis Javier Fort3n, Doctor in History and Head of the Archive of the Parliament of Navarre, who made an interesting approach from the economic history perspective; one by Mercedes Gal3n, Professor of History of Law, in her field, and another by Isabel Ostolaza, Professor of Palaeography and Archive Science; and based on the nobility,<sup>25</sup> with a study that complemented the classic monograph by Elo3sa Ram3rez on the conflicts

20. As a main reference for the author of this study, we would quote the following study: S3nchez Prieto, Juan Mari; Nieva Zardoya, Jos3 Luis. *Navarra: memoria, pol3tica e identidad*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2004.

21. Monteano, Peio. *La guerra de Navarra (1415-1529)*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2010.

22. Adot, 3lvaro. *John III of Navarre y Catherine of Navarre o la defensa del Estado Navarro (1483-1517)*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2005.

23. Ram3rez Vaquero, Elo3sa. “Catherine of Navarre y John III of Navarre: los 3ltimos reyes de un engranaje feudal”, *En los umbrales de Espa3a. La incorporaci3n del Reino de Navarra a la Monarqu3a Hispana*. Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 2012: 95-126.

24. Florist3n, Alfredo, ed. *1512. Conquista e incorporaci3n de Navarra. Historiograf3a, derecho y otros procesos de integraci3n en la Europa Renacentista*. Madrid: Ariel, 2012.

25. The studies in this collective book by the three researchers were titled, respectively, “Derrumbe de la monarqu3a y supervivencia del reino Navarra en torno a 1512” (201-298), “Los t3tulos jur3dicos en la



and pacts among the nobility that led to the Navarrese civil war.<sup>26</sup> We should also mention the great effort made in his recent doctoral thesis by José Miguel Escribano, who analyses the cost of the war for Castile through an analysis of the documentation of the royal paymaster Juan Rena.<sup>27</sup> For a more comprehensive assessment of the historiography, see the studies by Alfredo Floristán and Juan Mari Sánchez Prieto, Professor of Contemporary History at the Universidad Pública de Navarra, and by the aforementioned Peio Monteano.<sup>28</sup>

The greatest number of publications have emerged from the cultural area of Basque nationalism, represented by the associations *Nabarralde*, *Nafarroa Bizirik*, Xabier Mina de Estudios Históricos and the publishing house Pamiela.<sup>29</sup> The nature of the *Nabarralde*<sup>30</sup> foundation could be described as pro-Navarrese nationalist or 'pan-Navarrese', which gave rise to a rather unsuccessful political party called *Navarra Libertad/Nafarroa libertate*. In contrast, the successful *Nafarroa Bizirik!* (Navarra lives!) emerged directly from the *abertzale* (pro-independence) Left with the aim of recovering the history and symbols of Basque nationalism.

Although the pioneering book that set off the series of historical studies on the conquest of Navarre from an anti-Spanish vision was that of the writer and lawyer Tomás Urzainqui —*La Navarra marítima*,<sup>31</sup> which had major historical-political repercussions—,<sup>32</sup> in our opinion the study that finally established a consolidated and formulated stance vis-à-vis the primary documentation is the one by Álvaro Adot that emerged from his doctoral thesis, defended in the Universidad del País

adquisición de territorios: la conquista de Navarra" (127-166), and "Sociedad y cultura política. Nación, bando, familia" (335-360).

26. Ramírez Vaquero, Eloísa. *Solidaridades nobiliarias y conflictos políticos en Navarra, 1387-1464*. Pamplona: Government of Navarre, 1990.

27. Escribano Pérez, José Miguel. *El coste de la defensa. Administración y financiación militar en Navarra durante la primera mitad del siglo XVI*. Pamplona: Government of Navarre, 2015.

28. Floristán, Alfredo. "Los debates sobre la conquista y la reconfiguración de la identidad Navarra (1512-1720)", 1512. *Conquista e incorporación de Navarra. Historiografía, derecho y otros procesos de integración en la Europa Renacentista*, Alfredo Floristán, ed. Madrid: Ariel, 2012: 31-62; Sánchez Prieto, Juan Mari. "Prácticas discursivas y construcción política. Debates en torno a la conquista e integración de Navarra en España durante los siglos XIX y XX", 1512. *Conquista e incorporación de Navarra. Historiografía, derecho y otros procesos de integración en la Europa Renacentista*, Alfredo Floristán, ed. Madrid: Ariel, 2012: 63-87; and Monteano, Peio. "La conquista de Navarra. Un balance historiográfico reciente (2010-2013)", *Gerónimo de Ustariz*, 28 (2012): 157-156.

29. Other associations that work with the aforementioned ones or have similar aims are, for example, *Fundación Orreaga*, the *Noaingo Bataila Gogoan Taldea* group dedicated to historical recovery, and outside Navarre, the association *Navarrate*, which organised a demonstration on the streets of Vitoria in 2012 to stake its pro-Navarre claims.

30. In the light of the stated aims of this association, Josu Santamarina considers *Nabarralde* as *una agrupación abiertamente política que entiende la historia del Reino de Navarra como referente simbólico de cara a la construcción nacional vasca* ("an openly political group that considers the history of the Kingdom of Navarre as a symbolic reference point for the construction of the Basque nation"). Santamarina Otaola, Josu. "Más acá de la frontera: Arqueología y nacionalismo(s) en la 'Nabarra' del siglo XXI", *Arqueoweb*, 17 (2016): 239-267.

31. Urzainqui, Tomás; Olaizola, Juan María. *La Navarra Marítima*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 1998.

32. Arrieta Alberdi, Jon. "¿Entre Agramonteses y Beaumonteses? El debate historiográfico en torno a la conquista e incorporación de Navarra: un balance y varias propuestas", *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, 83 (2013): 831-863.



Vasco (2003) and published in 2005 by Pamiela.<sup>33</sup> Adot's thesis defends the existence of a perfectly structured 'Modern State' in Navarre in the years leading up to 1512 that was destroyed in one fell swoop in the invasion by Castile.

Precisely, this thesis is the one that has been enthusiastically embraced by the authors of the collective books *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik* around that same date, 2012, turning the idea into an aggravating circumstance of the conquest, making the 'Modern State' a kind of mythical Navarrese 'happy Arcadia'. In defence of this idea, the existence of a prior period of war has been denied, or at least to reduce the importance of the civil war in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and its calamitous consequences.

For example, Pedro Esarte, a non-university author, says that *simplificar el conflicto a disputas civiles es tergiversar la realidad, pues se obvia la procedencia de los reyes y ejércitos extranjeros asentados en el reino*. Esarte denies the existence of the Battle of Aibar between supporters of Juan II and Prince Carlos in 1451 and claims that *los partícipes navarros fueron muy escasos y Juan II y el príncipe Carlos contaron con muy pocos e insuficientes adeptos*, so it would have been foreign troops who fought each other *que nada tiene que ver con la guerra civil que se pregona*.<sup>34</sup> Esarte also flies the flag for this stance in a controversy he upheld in the newspaper *Diario de Noticias de Navarra* in 2012 on the issue of whether there were Navarrese troops or not among those who assaulted the castle of Amaiur (Maya) in 1522. Peio Monteano's answers in the same newspaper leave little room for doubt. He quotes a letter from the notary Agerre from 1522, in which he describes the pro-Castile contingent as follows: *Y tienen gran fama de gente, pero es lo cierto que no hay sino bien pocos castellanos, sino lo que en Navarra los beaumonteses han podido coger*.<sup>35</sup> In an interview in the same newspaper on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2015, Esarte said that *oficial* historians *mantienen unívocamente que hubo una guerra de unos cien años, que existían beaumonteses y agramonteses organizados [...] Lo que queda desmontado con este nuevo libro*.<sup>36</sup>

From the old reticence about using the word 'conquest' that some of these authors have reported —real in early-19th-century and early 20th-century authors—,<sup>37</sup> we

33. Adot, Álvaro. *Juan de Albret y Catalina de Foix o la defensa del Estado Navarro (1483-1517)*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2005.

34. "simplifying the conflict by saying they were civil disturbances is twisting the truth, because this ignores the foreign origins of the monarchs and armies based in the kingdom"; "the participation of the Navarrese was very low and Juan II and Prince Carlos had very few, and insufficient, supporters"; "who had nothing to do with the civil war that is touted". Esarte, Pedro. *Fernando el falsario. Imposturas sobre la conquista de Navarra*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2012: 17-19.

35. Esarte, Pedro, "Las tropas de Castilla que tomaron Amaiur", *Diario de Noticias*, 22/08/2012, p. 22; Monteano, Peio, "Navarros Contra Amaiur", *Diario de Noticias*, 26 August 2012: 24; Esarte, Pedro, "¿Existieron tropas navarras en la toma de Amaiur?", *Diario de Noticias*, 29 August 2012: 26; Monteano, Peio, "Amaiur, 1522", *Diario de Noticias*, 4 September 2012: 24 and 9 September 2012.

36. "They have great fame as a people, but it is true that there are only a few Castilians, the ones that the Beaumonts may have picked up in Navarre"; "official"; "unambiguously maintain that there was a war that lasted around 100 years, that there were organised Beaumonts and Agramonts [...]. This is refuted in this new book". *Diario de Noticias*, "Mirarte. Cultura, ocio y comunicación (entrevista a Pedro Esarte)", *Diario de Noticias*, 2 August 2015: 66-67; The interview was conducted following the publication of Esarte, Pedro. *Juan Rena II. Destrucción de Navarra al servicio de España*, Pamplona: Pamiela, 2015.

37. Previously, Yanguas and Miranda, without denying the military intervention of 1512, considered that the most important part of the process occurred in the political negotiation sphere, and he tried



have moved on to the denial of any civil wars in Navarre. The excellent thesis by Eloísa Ramírez Vaquero, a prosopography of the uprising of the higher nobles of Navarre between 1387 and 1464 that demonstrates the deeply-rooted partisanship in the society of Navarre, seems to have been forgotten. Indeed, after innumerable publications to celebrate the fifth centenary of the conquest, we still do not know the details of the chronology and cartography of the war that ravished Navarre between 1451 and 1494.

Fortunately, Álvaro Adot's thesis clarifies what happened in Navarre following the coronation in January 1494 in Pamplona, a process he calls the *neutralización del sector beaumontés*<sup>38</sup> or later, *normalización de un reino*.<sup>39</sup> His thesis affirms that, during the 18 years from 1494 to 1512 the monarchs John III of Navarre (Juan de Albret) and Catherine of Navarre (Catalina de Foix) would have been capable of 'normalising' the kingdom to the extent of constructing an authentic *Estado moderno* ("Modern State") through a political project for a *Estado pirenaico* ("Pyrenean State") of discontinuous borders based on the merging of Navarre and Béarn under the Albret-Foix dynasty, and through the sovereign legitimacy of the territories of Navarre and Béarn.

However, based on his work and data, we would express a major conceptual discrepancy: where he sees 'normalisation', we consider that there is a process of repression, persecution and confiscation of properties of the rebel side. The last Beaumont rebellion features the Count of Lerín between 1506 and 1507, when he refused to surrender the town of Viana to the monarchs. Nevertheless, by June 1507 all the rebel towns had been captured by the royal army: Andosilla, Cárcar, Lerín, Mendavia and Sesma, i.e. the traditional fiefdoms of the Count of Lerín, together with the odd other town.<sup>40</sup> Álvaro Adot also considers that all these military actions are also considered part of the process of 'neutralisation' of the Beaumonts, and he talks of *plena paz social* from 1507 onwards.<sup>41</sup> In a later study he emphasises this idea even more, one of a *territorio en paz y estabilidad política y social*. Another argument in favour of this "comprehensive social peace" is the suppression of the *Hermanidad* ("a Brotherhood") of the kingdom in 1510, as at the time the *Cortes or Parliament* did not consider it necessary because *la justicia ordinaria estaba bien asentada*. In this context,

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to present an almost pain-free version of the Conquest, in which *no había vencidos* ("there were no losers"). Sánchez Prieto, Juan Mari. "Prácticas discursivas y construcción política: debates en torno a la conquista e integración de Navarra en España durante los siglos XIX y XX", *1512, conquista e incorporación de Navarra: historiografía, derecho y otros procesos de integración en la Europa renacentista*, Alfredo Floristán, ed. Barcelona-Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra-Ariel, 2012: 68-69. Nevertheless, the clearest denial of the conquest emerged in later debates in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, in which authors such as Ramón Nocedal took part —*ni fue guerra, ni conquista, pues no hubo resistencia* ("it was not a war, not a conquest, as there was no resistance")—, and Víctor Pradera, who argued that the conquest was impossible because the opposing sides *estaban animados por el mismo espíritu* ("were inspired by the same spirit"). Caspistegui, Patxi. "Salvador o réprobo: Fernando el Católico y la identidad de Navarra", *Revista de Historia Jerónimo Zurita*, forthcoming.

38. "neutralisation of the Beaumont sector". Adot, Álvaro. *Juan de Albret y Catalina de Foix...*: 124 and ss.

39. "normalisation of a kingdom". Adot, Álvaro. "Navarra en los años previos a la conquista. Proceso de normalización de un reino (1483-1512)", *Actas. La conquista de Navarra (1512)*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2013.

40. Adot, Álvaro. *Juan de Albret y Catalina de Foix...*: 200-204.

41. "complete social peace". Adot, Álvaro. "Navarra en los años previos a la conquista...": 30-31.



*el único peligro de inestabilidad era el que podía venir del exterior, es decir, de la invasión armada de ejércitos de reinos vecinos.*<sup>42</sup>

This idea was picked up enthusiastically by other authors, quoting Adot, for example, Aitor Pescador, who stresses the idea that the kingdom of John III of Navarre and Catherine of Navarre was a *periodo de tranquilidad como no se había conocido en Navarra desde hacía mucho tiempo*;<sup>43</sup> Mikel Sorauren, who, in an audiovisual by Nabarralde supports the thesis that in Navarre *no había guerra civil alguna, ni el Estado estaba en descomposición*, says that *estaba en una situación totalmente pacífica*;<sup>44</sup> a similar opinion to that of Iñaki Sagredo, who studied the castles of Navarre, and stated in a debate on the TV channel Kontra (July 1512) that *en 1507 Navarra estaba estabilizada*;<sup>45</sup> the pro-independence politician Floren Aoiz also said —on the same TV station— that *la guerra civil había terminado en 1507*; then there is the Mayor of Pamplona, Joseba Asirón, who considers that the conquest occurred precisely because the civil war had ended. True, at least Aoiz recognised that the war had ended with the *aplastamiento de los beaumonteses*.<sup>46</sup> In general, we agree with the diagnosis that the pacification of the kingdom had been achieved, although we should point out that this success only occurred after the heavy defeat of the Beaumonts and the banishment of the Count of Lerín. However, one thing was ‘pacifying’ the kingdom —always through repression and forcing the rebel side into exile— and another, very different, achieving institutional and social stability similar to that of the Evreux period. Clearly, the wounds of such a long conflict take much longer to heal, hence our disagreement with the pace at which this period of peace and tranquillity was supposedly established. It is used by all these authors as another aggravating circumstance to condemn the conquest and accentuate its dramatic nature and illegitimacy.

This is the basis that later arguments have used regarding the conquest of Navarre, adopting a generally ‘single-cause’ approach: Ferdinand II of Aragon decided on the conquest of Navarre at his discretion, and moreover did it —as Joseba Asirón suggests— by belittling the kingdom, which would have been just another piece on the chessboard of international relations for him at the time.<sup>47</sup> Later studies

42. “territory at peace with political and social stability”; “ordinary justice was well established”; “the only risk of instability was the one that could come from outside, in other words, an armed invasion by armies of neighbouring kingdoms”. Adot, Álvaro. *Navarra, julio de 1512. Una conquista injustificada*. Pamplona: Pamlela, 2012: 36-37.

43. “period of tranquillity that Navarre had not known for a very long time”. Pescador, Aitor. *Navarra. 1510-1512. Diario de una conquista*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2012: 55.

44. “there was no civil war, neither was the State in decomposition”; “it was in a situation of total peace”. Marcilla, Rubén. *La Conquista de Navarra*. Pamplona: Nabarralde, 2012; An audiovisual made with the collaboration, among others, of Oyartzun Town Council (Guipúzcoa), Udalbiltza and Udalbide, with a script by Floren Aoiz and Ángel Recalde. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIrN4sLDW18>> (Consulted 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017).

45. “in 1507 Navarre was stable”. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1ss8JvhNPo> (Consulted 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017).

46. “the civil war had ended in 1507”; “crushing of the Beaumonts”. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFDdBv3Aa1A>> (Consulted 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017).

47. In the debate referred to above, Joseba Asirón pointed out that the problem in 1512 was not the Agramonts and the Beaumonts —whose confrontation continued during the 16<sup>th</sup> century— but



and texts argued that the conquest was illicit, something that Mercedes Galán has clearly explained from the point of view of law history.<sup>48</sup> The fact that the conquest was contrary to international law at the time is something that nobody doubts in academic circles, nor that Ferdinand only worried about the legal justification for it later, after the *fait accompli* had been consumed. The clarity of the arguments of legal historians make the self-serving repetition and hackneyed arguments that appear in several publications on the subject in recent years even less comprehensible.

This is why the study by Luis Javier Fortún en 2012 —which simply used the standard accounting documentation of the Kingdom of Navarre, and which spoke of *fracaso en la formación de un Estado moderno*— is so innovative.<sup>49</sup> Even a quick look at the tax documentation of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century allows us to make a statement that is contrary to the theory of the ‘Modern State of Navarre’: the monarchs of Navarre could not collect taxes normally in a large part of the territory throughout almost their entire reign, and the accounts of the *Merindad*<sup>50</sup> of Pamplona from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century are practically non-existent, given that they under the control of the Beaumonts, effectively constituting an alternative State. Under these conditions, even though some traditional institutions were restored by John III of Navarre and Catherine of Navarre, such as the *Consejo Real* (Royal Council)<sup>51</sup> or the diplomatic service,<sup>52</sup> and however much it is thought that the social peace could have driven economic growth in the short term —a causal relationship put forward by Adot but one that needs to be argued with greater precision to make it convincing—,<sup>53</sup> thinking that a State can be rebuilt in a period of 18 (or even 5) years after a war and internal division lasting 40 years is naïve, to say the least. John III of Navarre and Catherine of Navarre experienced clear financial and fiscal difficulties, particularly in the problems they encountered in getting the Parliament of Navarre to approve a tax to fund an army capable of standing up to the evident and imminent attack by Ferdinand II of Aragon in 1512.<sup>54</sup> Luis Javier Fortún shows how the Navarrese monarchy had been weakened throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The king’s

Ferdinand II of Aragon. In other words, the only reason for the conquest was Ferdinand’s ambition.

48. Galán, Mercedes. “Los títulos jurídicos de la adquisición de territorios: la conquista de Navarra 1512”, *Conquista e incorporación de Navarra. Historiografía, derecho y otros procesos de integración en la Europa Renacentista*, Alfredo Floristán, ed. Madrid: Ariel, 2012: 127-166. In the same line, we can include the study by Monreal, Gregorio; Jimeno, Roldán. *Conquista e incorporación del reino de Navarra a Castilla*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2012.

49. Fortún, Luis Javier. “Derrumbe de la monarquía y supervivencia del reino: Navarra en torno a 1512”. 1512. Conquista e incorporación de Navarra. Historiografía, derecho y otros procesos de integración en la Europa Renacentista, Alfredo Floristán, ed., Madrid: Ariel, 2012: 201-298.

50. An administrative división; a rough equivalent could be a county.

51. Adot, Álvaro. “Navarra en los años previos a la conquista...”: 26-28; The reference work on the Royal Council in this period is, however: Fortún, Luis Javier. “El Consejo de Navarra entre 1494 y 1525”, *Príncipe de Viana*, 6/2-3 (1986): 165-180.

52. Adot, Álvaro. *Embajadores navarros en Europa*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2012.

53. Adot, Álvaro. “Navarra en los años previos a la conquista...”: 28-29.

54. Fortún, Luis Javier. “Derrumbe de la monarquía ...”: 201-298.



assets—previously studied by Eloísa Ramírez—<sup>55</sup> had decreased considerably, and the enacting of special taxes was increasingly less profitable for the Crown.

## 4. Needing the past: feelings

From now on we will follow some of the propositions made by David Lowenthal, although not the structure of his work overall, because in a study of this size we cannot envisage such a wide-ranging scope. What we will do is explore some of the ideas he puts forward for history in general, applying them to the conquest of Navarre. We will ask ourselves how some of these authors—and their readers—need the past, and what feelings emerge in their narratives when they approach the past: nostalgia, terror, hope, indignation, a desire to recover what has been lost, to imagine what was not, to project desires for the future onto the past...

### 4.1 Nostalgia

David Lowenthal said that *si el pasado es un país extraño, la nostalgia lo ha hecho el país con el mercado turístico más saneado de cuantos existen*.<sup>56</sup> This implies that there are better chances of doing business around history in the most nostalgic societies, and perhaps this is the case of Navarre, where the romantic heritage tends towards a narrative of a nostalgic nature.<sup>57</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Reliving the past: dreams

The new historical literature promoted by the groups *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik* often refers to a kind of dreaminess. For Joseba Asirón, the current Mayor of Pamplona and a Doctor in Art History, the history of Navarre is one of a ‘broken dream’, a metaphor that serves as a title for two of his publications, a comic and book with didactic aims, both of which he worked on with the graphic artist Matxin Altzueta.<sup>58</sup> The book leaves

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55. Ramírez Vaquero, Eloísa. “La hacienda real in the S. XV. El procurador patrimonial de Navarra”, *Actas XV Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*. Saragossa: Gobierno de Aragón, 1995: 1-17; Ramírez Vaquero, Eloísa. “Patrimonio de la corona e ingresos fiscales en Navarra en el S. XV”, *Huarte de San Juan. Geografía e Historia*, 2 (1995): 73-98.

56. “if the past is a foreign country, nostalgia has made it the foreign country with the healthiest tourist trade of all”. Lowenthal, D. “El pasado es un país extraño...”: 29.

57. Correspondingly, the glorification of the Basque rural world is analysed in: Berriochoa Azcárate, Pedro. “De la vida rural vasca. Caseríos, caseros y cuentos”, *El peso de la identidad. Mitos y ritos de la Basque history*, Fernando Molina, José Antonio Pérez, eds. Madrid: Instituto de Historia Social Valentín Foronda, 2015: 109-132.

58. Asirón, Joseba; Altzueta, Matxin. *1512. Navarra. El sueño roto*. Pamplona: Ikaselkar, 2011; and Asirón, Joseba. *Historia ilustrada de EuskalHerria. 2. Reino de Navarra, of the sueño a la conquista*. Pamplona: Txalaparta, 2015.



no room for doubt, and its title is *Del sueño a la conquista* (“From a dream to a conquest”). This is tantamount to saying that the conquest of Navarre curtailed a dream. The dream is not explained, but when you get inside the book you get the sense that the dream is the constitution of a ‘State’ that would have been created in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, which Urzainqui called *La Navarra marítima*, later called *El Estado vasco* by Mikel Sorauren.<sup>59</sup> Based on this, Urzainqui adopted the ‘State’ discourse in his book *Navarra, el Estado europeo*,<sup>60</sup> and Álvaro Adot spoke of the ‘defence of the Navarrese State’, daring to speak—as we have already said—of the constitution of an authentic ‘Modern State’ on the eve of the conquest of Navarre. It is *la Navarra que no nos dejaron ser*, says Floren Aoiz, *esto es, la Euskal Herria convertida en Estado*.<sup>61</sup> In *La Navarra marítima*, Urzainqui affirmed that *El Estado navarro es el sistema jurídico de Euskal Herria* and that *Navarra entera es un Estado Europeo*.<sup>62</sup> As far as he is concerned, the seven *herrialdes* that make up *Euskal Herria* would never have been *de por sí independientes* except when they were part of Navarre. Thus, the term ‘western Navarre’ has struck a rich chord as a reference to the territories of the current Basque Country, and the authors of *Nafarroa Bizirik* and *Nabarralde* have opted for a change in the denomination, as is the case of Eneko Del Castillo, a member of the ‘Xabier Mina’ association’.<sup>63</sup>

Some other authors—such as Pedro Esarte—go further, by claiming that in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century a *existencia del sentimiento de nación y patria se aprecia con una constancia que ha llegado hasta nuestros días*.<sup>64</sup> The phrase is mistaken but leads one to think that the author is equating the concepts of nation and homeland used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with those used nowadays, without taking into account the major and decisive nuances that many specialists have indicated on the subject. The history graduate Aitor Pescador—who explicitly recognises the differences between the current and mediaeval uses of the terms ‘homeland’ and ‘nation’—adds that *aquellos individuos sabían que al sacrificar sus haciendas o sus vidas lo estaban haciendo por un interés muy superior al de un mero juramento de vasallaje*. He then asks, acknowledging that he does not know the answer: *¿Qué vínculos de vasallaje podían unir a Enrique II de Navarra con todos los hombres, pueblos, villas y ciudades que se sublevaron en 1521? ¿No sería más bien un sentimiento de identidad nacional?*<sup>65</sup> This means theoretically recognising the differences that the specialists identify in the political vocabulary of the time, but finally opting for an anachronistic interpretation

59. Sorauren, Mikel. *Historia de Navarra: el Estado vasco*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2008.

60. Urzainqui, Tomás. *Navarra Estado Europeo*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2004.

61. “the Navarre that they did not let us be”; “that is, Euskal Herria converted into a State”. Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida. De la conquista española al mejoramiento foral*. Pamplona: Txalaparta, 2001: 437.

62. “The State of Navarre is the legal system of Euskal Herria”; “the whole of Navarre is a European State”. Urzainqui, Tomás; Olaizola, Juan María. *La Navarra marítima*...:22-23.

63. “independent on their own account”. Del Castillo, Eneko. *Atlas histórico de Navarra*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2016: 66-67.

64. “the existence of a sentiment of nation and homeland is seen with a constancy that has lasted until the present day”. Esarte, Pedro. *El mariscal Pedro de Navarra*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2012: 8-11.

65. “those people knew that by sacrificing their homes or lives they were doing it for an interest that was much higher than a mere oath of allegiance”; “What bonds of allegiance could link Henry II of Navarre with all the men, towns, villages and cities that rose up in 1521? Would it not be more a case of a feeling of national identity?”. Pescador, Aitor. *Navarra, 1510-1513*...: 287.



of them, and furthermore putting forward a reductionist and self-interested argument because the same question —although in reverse— could be asked about the places that did not rebel in 1521.

The idea transcends books and has made an incursion into society as a cultural element. as can be seen in the musical theatre play *Amairu 2012, haien ametsa gurea da*,<sup>66</sup> or in social networks and digital forums, where we can find manifestations of the same kind, for example, that by the alias ‘Uno más’ on 25 September 2013 in a digital forum in *Diario de Noticias de Navarra: A nosotros se nos robó la posibilidad de evolucionar por nosotros mismos, como han hecho otros países. Se nos privó del poder de decidir nuestro propio camino*.<sup>67</sup>

It is clear that the curtailed dream is that of a Navarrese State that is basically a late Middle Ages/pro-independence *Euskal Herria* version of a political project aborted by the conquest but which, according to them, would have received majority support from the people. As the founding manifesto of *Nafarroa Bizirik* states, the conquest represents the removal of ‘the sovereignty of an entire people’. In other words, *Nafarroa Bizirik* postulates the existence of the concept of national sovereignty in 15<sup>th</sup>-century Navarre.<sup>68</sup> That dream, also shared by the Navarrese of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is the one that Floren Aoiz aims to recover: *Recuperando el conocimiento de lo que fueron, vivieron y sintieron nuestros antepasados, podremos [...] hacer nuestras sus ilusiones y sueños, que fueron muchos, más de los que nos han permitido conocer*.<sup>69</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Reliving the past: nightmares

It is here that the past becomes more of a nightmare than a dream, an *vieja herida*, as Floren Aoiz<sup>70</sup> describes it, a term picked up on by Aitor Pescador.<sup>71</sup> The main character in the comic of the pro-independence politician Joseba Asirón, Juan de Jaso y Azpilicueta (the brother of St Francis Xavier), tells how he simply has to close his eyes to recall images of ravaged villages and friends killed, companions lynched, the yells of torturers and women accused of witchcraft. This nightmare undoubtedly

66. “your dream is ours”. YouTube has several videos of the performances of this show.

67. “The possibility of evolving by our own means was stolen from us, as has happened in other countries. We were deprived of the power to decide our own path”. “Uno más” (Alias). 25 September 2013. In answer to “Nafarroa Osoa” (Alias). “La Conquista de Navarra-Nafarroa-Nabarra”, *Diario de noticias Navarra*. 23 September 2013. 19 September 2017. <<http://foros.noticiasdenavarra.com/viewtopic.php?f=2&t=60380>>.

68. The manifesto of *Nafarroa Bizirik* was presented and read in a number of town halls: on 28 March 2012 in Huarte, on 24 April in Sangüesa, on 31 May in Ordizia (Guipuzcoa), and in San Millán (Alava), on 13 June, among other places, as is reflected in the minutes of the different councils, which can be consulted online. The manifesto is also available at “Presentacion: ‘DOCUMENTO 1512-2012’”, *archive today*, 6 May 2013. 25 March 2017 <<http://archive.is/7dJoG>> and “A la derecha navarra no le gusta 1512-2012 Nafarroa Bizirik”, *Garesko Auzalan*, 25 March 2017 <[http://www.gareskoauzalan.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1504%3Aa-la-derecha-navarra-no-le-gusta-1512-2012-nafarroa-bizirik&catid=33%3Abeste&Itemid=1](http://www.gareskoauzalan.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1504%3Aa-la-derecha-navarra-no-le-gusta-1512-2012-nafarroa-bizirik&catid=33%3Abeste&Itemid=1)>.

69. “Recovering the knowledge of who our ancestors were, how they lived and felt, we can [...] make our dreams our own; there were many of them, more than they let us know”. Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida*...: 437.

70. “old wound”. Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida*...: 434.

71. Pescador, Aitor. *Navarra, 1510-1513*...: 7.



started in 1512, with *aterradora represión* that opened up the possibility of *convertir a Navarra en un desierto*, with the kingdom suffering *desmanes de los soldados durante siglos*.<sup>72</sup> This apocalyptic vision contrasts with the data provided by Luis Javier Fortún or Alfredo Floristán,<sup>73</sup> indicating serious negotiations and the granting of partial and complete pardons, which allowed a good number of the Agramonts to return to the social and political life of the kingdom. A minority of pro-Navarrese went into exile and a few others, usually from a humble social background, ended up as the scapegoats of the process, for example, Captain Juan de Arberoa.<sup>74</sup>

A symbol of this feeling of hurt and dreaminess about the past of Navarre are the melancholy verses of the French Basque singer-songwriter Eneko Labergerie:

*Nafarra oi Nafarra, Euzkadi lehena, ederra zen ametsa zure erregena" (...) "Azkarrena zu zinen zazpi anaitetan, zure katetan preso nork zaitu ba eman?"<sup>75</sup>*

Or the words of the popular song *Navarra tiene cadenas* (Navarre has chains) by Fermín Balentzia, which conveys the same anguish:

*En el 1512 el duque de Alba entró  
Con su ejército en Pamplona  
partiendo Navarra en dos.  
Desde entonces en Navarra  
el rey de Castilla mandó.  
Se rieron los monarcas  
pero Navarra lloró.*<sup>76</sup>

All these manifestations on the conquest of Navarre are part of a tragic narrative of the past that these authors share with many others who have chronicled different moments of Basque history from a nationalist point of view. Fernando Molina

72. "terrifying repression"; "converting Navarre into a desert"; "brutality by soldiers for centuries". Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida...*: 23.

73. Fortún, Luis Javier. "Derrumbe de la monarquía...": 277-290. It is explained how some Agramonts were paid off with *acostamientos* (royal monies paid for military services instead of land), and even before the conquest some of them received allocations from Castile. As for the pardons granted so as to get the defeated side involved in the new political project, see Floristán, Alfredo. *El reino de Navarra y la conformación política de España (1512-1841)*. Madrid: Akal, 2014: 89-93.

74. Peio Monteano. *La Guerra de Navarra...*: 258-259 and 295-303.

75. "Navarre, ah Navarre, primaeval Euskadi, how beautiful was the dream of your monarchs" (...) "You were the strongest of the seven siblings. Who has put you in chains?". The song can be heard on Youtube: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCUu-oebvU8>>. (Consulted 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017).

76. "In 1512 the Duke of Alba entered / with his army in Pamplona / splitting Navarre in two. / Since then in Navarre / the King of Castile has reigned. / The monarchs laughed / but Navarre cried". The song can be heard in Youtube: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD2\\_5W2IbXM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD2_5W2IbXM)>. (Consulted 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017).



discovers the explicitly cathartic aim of these constructions, which seek to trigger feelings of piety and fear.<sup>77</sup>

#### 4.1.3 Getting angry with the past

Those nightmares and suffering have an impact on the present, causing indignation as a direct effect of nostalgia. It was the same indignation that led Arturo Campión and other authors to call Ferdinand II of Aragon *el Falsario*<sup>78</sup> (puppet or impostor) and Aitor Pescador to compare the conquest of Navarre with the ‘war in Iraq’: *Muy al estilo de lo ocurrido en 2003, cuando Bush seguía afirmando la existencia de armas de destrucción masiva en Iraq pese a que los comisarios de la ONU no habían encontrado nada, Fernando buscaba mantener a los reyes de Navarra bajo una sospecha constante para así excusar la violenta invasión del reino.*<sup>79</sup> Then there is the indignation of Jon Oria, who sets out to prove the existence of a *conspiración hispano francesa para la extinción del reino Pirenaico y su absorción territorial*. He considers it ridiculous to *pretender ignorar el expansionismo colonialista de España y Francia y su determinación por hacernos desaparecer como entidad histórica*,<sup>80</sup> or that of Pedro Esarte in any of his texts, accusing Ferdinand of hypocrisy, falsehood, threats and extortion...<sup>81</sup>

Perhaps one of the most spontaneous examples of the high feelings aroused in some readers by the conquest of Navarre is the document by Mikel Burgui, an expert on the history of Ujué, when he analyses some of the historical readings he made when he was a young boy at school:

*Me sulfuró leer que Aragón y Castilla quisieron repartirse nuestro reino desde antiguo.... Y me enojé al ver cómo Castilla nos quitó las Vascongadas<sup>82</sup>... Y me sentí disgustado cuando leí que Fernando el Católico y el Duque de Alba nos invadieron en 1512 y me escandalicé cuando leí que el Conde de Lerín les ayudó... ¡Entonces comprendí el porqué de aquel dicho de “ser más malo o más traidor que el Conde de Lerín!”<sup>83</sup>*

77. Molina, Fernando, “‘El conflicto vasco’. Relatos de historia...”: 218-219.

78. This negative view of the Aragonese monarch was shared by authors such as Yanguas y Miranda, Olóriz or Campión, as shows Caspistegui, Patxi. “Salvador o réprobo: Fernando el Católico y la identidad de Navarra”, *Revista de Historia Jerónimo Zurita*, forthcoming.

79. “Very much in line with what happened in 2003, when Bush continued to insist on the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq despite the UN commissioners not having found any, Ferdinand sought to keep the monarchs of Navarre under constant suspicion to excuse his violent invasion of the kingdom”. Pescador, Aitor. *1512. El año de la guerra...*, 33. The argument is repeated in Pescador, Aitor. *Navarra, 1510-1513...*

80. “Franco-Spanish conspiracy to eliminate the Pyrenean kingdom and absorb its territory”; “try and ignore the colonialist expansion of Spain and France and their determination to make us disappear as a historical entity”. Oria, Jon. *Últimos reyes de Navarra. De Gastón IV a Margarita de Valois*. Pamplona: Mintzoa, 1986: 35, 37.

81. Esarte, Pedro. *Fernando el Falsario...*: 47-54.

82. Alava, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, the three Basque territories in Spain.

83. “It infuriated me to read that Aragon and Castile had wanted to divide up our kingdom from ancient times... I got angry when I saw how Castile took the Vascongadas from us and I was really upset when I



#### 4.1.4 Recovering the past

In the light of the dreams and longings of the currently prevailing historical-political literature, it seems clear that the people's need to evoke the past is not only manifested in terms of dreaminess or nostalgia created in people's imagination, it also transcends the oneiric and aims, in a way, to recover the longed-for and lost past.<sup>84</sup> If the political objective is to reverse the historical process, this involves trying to recover parts of what has been lost. Tomás Urzainqui stated this in *La Navarra marítima*, the objective of the book being to *redescubrir los firmes vestigios de la existencia de un Estado nacional de los vascos y, en definitiva [...] lograr un cambio en la dirección del timón*.<sup>85</sup>

Indeed, the worst thing about the nightmares described by Asirón or Urzainqui is their duration, as a kind of Dante's inferno of the Spanish occupation that has lasted for 500 years. This is supported by such a major figure in the pro-independence left as Floren Aoiz, who urges the Basques to see themselves *como un pueblo conquistado*, as only through that recognition will it be possible to *lograr la paz*.<sup>86</sup> In other words, the influence of the conquest of Navarre is still considerable and definitive, so political action involves returning to the conquest of 1512.

Following a recent article in *Diario de Noticias de Guipúzcoa* (24/02/2017) by Jon Iñaki Odriozola,<sup>87</sup> a controversy arose in which Tomás Urzainqui also took part. Odriozola calls the new political current initiated by Urzainqui in *La Navarra marítima* 'pan-navarrism', and says that this idea *ha acabado calando en ciertos sectores abertzales*. So far, he says, *el nabarrismo (sic), era algo propio de la derecha facha, unionista y anti-vasca*.<sup>88</sup> For Odriozola, Urzainqui's book *rompe esos clichés y propugna un nuevo nabarrismo, de corte vasquista, que consagra la hegemonía política de Navarra sobre el*

read that Ferdinand II of Aragon and the Duke of Alba invaded us in 1512, and I was scandalised when I read that the Count of Lerín helped them... That is when I understood the term 'be more evil or more treacherous than the Count of Lerín!'. Mikel Burgui, "La Historia que no nos enseñaron. Reflexiones en el 500 aniversario de la conquista de Navarra", *Web de Nabarralde*. 20 June 2012. 1 July 2017 <<http://nabarralde.com/es/txokoa/8601-la-historia-que-no-nos-ensenaron-reflexiones-en-el-500-aniversario-de-la-conquista-de-navarra>>.

84. Explains the importance of this "recovery" of the past for the new navarrismo of the past, Santamaria Otaola, Josu. "Más acá de la frontera...": 256.

85. "rediscover the firm remains of the existence of a national State of the Basques and, basically, [...] manage to turn the rudder around". Urzainqui, Tomás; Olaizola, Juan María. *La Navarra marítima*...: 26.

86. "as a conquered people"; "achieve peace". Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida*...: 438.

87. Odriozola Etxabe, Jon Iñaki. "Las debilidades del pan-nabarrismo", *Noticias de Guipuzcoa*. 27 February 2017. 17 July 2017 <<http://www.noticiasdegipuzkoa.com/2017/02/27/opinion/tribuna-abierta/las-debilidades-del-pan-nabarrismo>>.

88. "has ended up taking root in some pro-independence sectors"; "nabarrismo (sic), was something commonly found in fascists, unionists and the anti-Basque brigade". On this question, there is an essential study by García-Sanz Marcotegui, Ángel. "Navarra. Entre madre de Euskalherria y nuestro Ulster", *El peso de la identidad. Mitos y ritos de la Basque history*, Fernando Molina, José A. Pérez, eds., Madrid: Instituto de Historia Social Valentín Foronda, 2015, 29-55. Professor García Sanz-Marcotegui shows how, in its origins, Basque nationalism in Navarre tried to be 'navarrista' (pro-Navarre) and fought to lead the Navarrese identity or specificity, which —after a century— is ever more present in the political debate, between the hegemonic *navarristas* (the regionalists) of recent years and the Basque nationalists.



*resto de territorios de Euskal Herria*. For him, this claim does not have a scientific basis, because the kingdom of Navarre never had frontiers comparable to those of modern-day *Euskal Herria*. For him, pan-navarrism does not have a sound historical basis either, and he calls this theory absurd, anachronistic and nonsensical, pointing out that the construction of the Basque State should look to the future, not to the past: *la república a la que aspiramos los independentistas no puede sustentarse en un reino medieval en el que reyes y jauntxos (señores) deciden y delimitan sus límites geográficos, sino en un proyecto que prime los aspectos culturales y lingüísticos de la nación vasca, Euskal Herria, y la voluntad democrática de los habitantes de sus siete territorios históricos*.<sup>89</sup>

Tomás Urzainqui's response did not take long to appear in the newspaper *Gara* (3/3/2017), claiming that he did not aspire to a pan-nationalist identity but a *desconquista*.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, in reference to the title of one of his latest books, *Continúa la irracional conquista*<sup>91</sup>, and the constitutive ideology of his own political party, *Libertad Nabarra/Libertate Nafarra*, he puts forward the argument for undoing a continued process of conquest that has lasted 500 years.

As a Twitter user called Joxe (@Joxe000) said on 1 September 2015, showing how these ideas are gradually taking root in society: *Vivo bajo ocupación y no reconozco ninguna de sus instituciones. Veo que tú vives en democracia, niegas la conquista*. Another example is a tweet by Jokin (@jokin\_EH) on 28 April 2015 saying: *Con la tontería, ya llevamos 503 años de ocupación española*.<sup>92</sup> In this sense, Urzainqui does not aim at a return to the past, rather the deconstruction of the pernicious effect produced by the past itself, understanding the past to be anything that has happened since 1512. This is interesting because it means the fateful date somehow becomes a foundational date and a reference which, as we will see, has to be remembered, protected, reviewed or emulated...

We would draw attention to the importance that this historiographical stance is gaining from the political point of view nowadays.<sup>93</sup> The arguments in favour of the existence of a 'maritime Navarre' since the 9<sup>th</sup> century are helping the historicist interpretation of Basque nationalism to triumph, in favour of a State that should not be called *Euskal Herria* but *Nabarra*, because the first term refers

89. "breaks those clichés and advocates a new navarrism of a pro-Basque type that consecrates the political hegemony of Navarre over the rest of the territory of Euskal Herria"; "the Republic we pro-independence supporters aspire to cannot be based on a mediaeval kingdom in which monarchs and jauntxos (lords) decide and mark out their geographical borders, but on a project that gives priority to the cultural and linguistic aspects of the Basque nation, Euskal Herria, and the democratic will of the inhabitants of its seven historical territories". Odriozola Etxabe, Jon Iñaki. "Las debilidades del pan-nabarrismo..."

90. Urzainqui, Tomás. "Deconquista sí, no pan-nacionalismo" *Gara*. 3 March 2017. 17 July 2017. <[http://www.naiz.eus/es/hemeroteca/gara/editions/2017-03-03/hemeroteca\\_articulos/desconquista-si-no-pan-nacionalismo](http://www.naiz.eus/es/hemeroteca/gara/editions/2017-03-03/hemeroteca_articulos/desconquista-si-no-pan-nacionalismo)>.

91. Urzainqui, Tomás. *Continúa la irracional conquista*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2013.

92. I live under occupation and I do not recognise any of its institutions. I see that you live under democracy; you deny the conquest"; "We have had the absurdity of Spanish occupation for 503 years").

93. Arrieta Alberdi, Jon. "¿Entre Agramonteses y Beaumonteses?...": 831-863. Jon Arrieta's study allows us to get close to the content of the critique of Urzainqui by Larrea, Juan José. "La Navarra Marítima edo historiagintza zer ez den", *Hika*, 165 (2005): 42-45.



to a cultural reality and the second to its historical political form.<sup>94</sup> To verify this, Twitter is particularly interesting. On 25/01/2015, for example, Arturo Rojillo (@ArturoRojillo) maintained that it is *es curioso cómo salta la gente cuando se defiende que nuestro Estado es Nabarra, no Euskalherria* and adds in another tweet, *Soy un Navarro que quiere recuperar el Estado de Nabarra. Yo defendiendo lo que tuvimos, Nabarra*.<sup>95</sup> Another user called 'Zaldiko' (@Zaldiko) supports the thesis of Arturo Rojillo, pointing out that the name of the State, i.e. Nabarra, is important, while Arturo Rojillo reaffirms the importance of maintaining the traditional name, Nabarra, not Euskalherria, which would be an invented neologism. Strangely enough, these Twitter debaters refer to some of Urainzqui's historiographical approach and also to some of the feelings and needs that his thesis arouses: 'recover', 'defend what we had' or 'maintain' are some of the terms spontaneously used, almost as slogans.

The success of these formulations —to a certain extent, simplistic, or the 'nursery school story'—<sup>96</sup> lies in a construction of Basque history that shares the same logic as the traditional historical Basque nationalist narrative. Fernando Molina points out that much of the nationalist narrative has tried to justify the current reality of the 'Basque conflict' by tracing it back to more remote eras. The insistence on the 'de-conquest' effectively means maintaining the theory of a sustained and permanent conflict between Navarre and Spain since 1512 to the present day.

#### 4.2 Correcting a mistaken past

Tying in with the above, perhaps the clearest example of the intentions of some authors when it comes to recovering the past of Navarre is the one given by Floren Aoiz in the pages of his book *La vieja herida*, where he claims that *la intervención armada de las tropas de Fernando el Católico truncó las expectativas y supuso no sólo el fin de la independencia, sino también la distorsión de la Historia de Navarra, que se reescribió [...]*.<sup>97</sup> The phrase certainly allows us a glimpse of the psychological field of political desires projected onto the past. The role of Ferdinand II of Aragon is practically eschatological: his power lies in his ability to change the fate and history of a

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94. Xabier Zabaltza says the following in this regard: "We can conclude that ANV (Acción Nacionalista Vasca), through Estornes Lasa, Federico Krutwig and Nabarralde, has imposed its Navarre-centric vision on the whole of Basque nationalism, including ETA. Naturally, the replacement of the original *bizkaitarrismo* with the new *nabarrismo* has been seen to be compatible with the ambiguity around the organisational model of the future Basque State". Zabaltza Pérez-Nievas, Xabier. "De la *lingua navarrorum* al Estado vasco". *Contemporary History*, 47 (2013): 471-492.

95. "curious how people get angry when we defend the idea that our State is Nabarra, not Euskalherria"; "I am a Navarrese who wants to recover the State of Nabarra. I defend what we once had Nabarra").

96. Molina, Fernando; Pérez, José Antonio. "Introducción. La insoportable levedad de la nación en la historia vasca", *El peso de la identidad. Mitos y ritos de la Historia vasca*, Fernando Molina, José Antonio Pérez, eds. Madrid: Instituto de Historia Social Valentín Foronda, 2015: 28.

97. "the armed intervention of the troops of Ferdinand II of Aragon truncated [people's] hopes and represented not only the end of independence but also the distortion of the history of Navarre, which was re-written [...]". Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida...*: 18.



national that was destined for a different one, with a future as an independent nation. Ferdinand changed that destiny through force. Obviously, Aoiz's opinion is not acceptable from an academic point of view because it means one has to think in the opposite direction from a professional historian: the cause is in the future and the effect in the past. The same applies when he says that the chief of the Agramonts, Marshal Pedro of Navarre, was *el primer navarro víctima del alejamiento*, a man who remained a prisoner until his death *sin jamás jurar lealtad a los españoles*.<sup>98</sup> This effectively represents a comparison between Pedro of Navarre and the present-day ETA prisoners and the policy of dispersion applied to them. As a literary device it could be understood, but as a historiographical argument it is simply perverse.

## 5. Knowing the past

Having an impact on the narrative evoked by a whole people means manipulating that same people, because the narrative transcends the past and is projected towards the future, as Paul Ricoeur<sup>99</sup> had previously suggested. Intellectuals of different political leanings have worked on this task throughout history in a long and hard struggle, one which also occurs in Navarre nowadays but does not always seek to improve knowledge of history.<sup>100</sup>

### 5.1 Looking for the hidden truth

A recent series of conferences organised by the Government of Navarre encouraged the participants to 'recover' the history of Navarre, which leads one to think that it had been either lost or gone astray. The argument is not new: the victimism behind the twisting of the historical narrative can be seen in the case of the conquest of Navarre from French authors who, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, worked for the Bourbons to defend the unjust occupation of Navarre and the need for its reconquest, as shown by Alfredo Floristán.<sup>101</sup> Although this interpretation has always been present, it is after Franco's rule and in full democracy when the integrity of history professionals (i.e. academics) is challenged by pro-Basque authors. For Tomás Urzainqui or Pedro

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98. "the first Navarrese victim of separation"; "without ever swearing loyalty to the Spanish". Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida...*: 23. In reality, the claim is inaccurate, because Pedro of Navarre did swear loyalty to Ferdinand II of Aragon in 1512 (surely obliged by circumstances), although he did maintain a rebellious stance later [Fortún, Luis Javier. "Derrumbe de la monarquía...": 264-265; and Monteano, Peio. *La guerra de Navarra...*: 50-52]. Differs on the validity of the document Esarte, Pedro. *El mariscal Pedro de Navarra*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2012: 24-31.

99. Ricoeur, Paul. *Temps et récit*. Paris: Seuil, 1984: II, 28-29.

100. Sánchez Prieto, Juan Mari. "Prácticas discursivas...": 64.

101. Floristán, Alfredo. "Los debates sobre la conquista...": 50.



Esarte there seems to be an academic conspiracy aimed at concealing the real history of Navarre.

This *catilinaria historiográfica*<sup>102</sup> has particularly been denounced by Pedro Esarte in *Quién es cada quién. Nor, nori, nork* (“Who’s who”), in which he disparages all academic historians. He has viciously insulted Isabel Ostolaza, Alfredo Floristán, Eloísa Ramírez, Ángel Martín Duque, Mercedes Galán and Juan Mari Sánchez Prieto, or the archivists Luis Javier Fortún and Peio Monteano, among others. Some of his usual comments consist of making lists, with derision, or the *curriculum vitae*'s of all these people to question their authority and the way in which they obtained their tenures. Accusations of cynicism, hypocrisy, falseness or shamelessness are the usual tone on this blog, which the publishing house Pamiela still maintains partially active.<sup>103</sup>

An embarrassing scene that shows the virulence of this kind of attack took place in July 2012 on the TV channel Kontra,<sup>104</sup> in which a debate took place on the conquest of Alava and Guipuzcoa in 1200, with Eloísa Ramírez and Fermín Miranda as university professors or ‘official’ historians, and Tomás Urzainqui and Iñaki Sagredo as representatives of their corresponding stances. The accusation of historical manipulation against the first two by Urzainqui and Sagredo (and against all academic historiography) was present throughout the debate, while Eloísa Ramírez and Fermín Miranda tried to argue based on the complex context of lords and vassals of 1200. Urzainqui added that the ‘lies’ —of Ramírez and Miranda, one imagines— were because they wanted to conceal the conquest of the two parts of Navarre: the one lost in 1200 and the one conquered in 1512.

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102. “historiographical conspiracy”. Arrieta Alberdi, Jon. “¿Entre Agramonteses y Beaumonteses?...”: 845; analysing Urzainqui’s reply to Juan José Larrea, he points out that *los historiadores que tratan sobre Navarra en general, y sobre la conquista e incorporación en particular, se dividen entre los que admiten que existe una historiografía navarra ‘propia’ y la que los navarros, o parte de ellos, consideran ajena, por española. No se trata de entrar en el debate que esta dicotomía plantea, sino de confirmar la contundencia del argumento que funciona como premisa anuladora de cualquier planteamiento crítico* (“historians that work on Navarre in general, and on the conquest and incorporation (into Castile) in particular, are divided between those who admit the existence of an ‘own’ historiography of Navarre that the Navarrese, or a part of them, consider alien because it is Spanish. It is not a question of entering into the debate on this dichotomy, rather they confirm the categoric nature of the argument that works as a premise that rules out any critical approach”).

103. The article of 22 June 2012 about Alfredo Floristán: Esarte, Pedro. “Quién es quién, cada quien (VI): Alfredo Floristán”, Pamiela Etxea. 22 June 2012. 1 June 2017. <<http://www.pamiela.com/bloga/?p=2558>>, about Peio Monteano: Esarte, Pedro. “El análisis a un libro desde la óptica de la crítica”, Nabarralde. 21 October 2010. 1 June 2017. <<http://nabarralde.com/es/component/content/article/5611>> or the one addressed to Professor Sánchez Prieto: Esarte, Pedro. “Quién es quién, cada quien NOR, NORI, NORK (IV). Del juicio del profesor José M<sup>a</sup> Sánchez Prieto a la Guerra entre navarros”, Nabarra possible. 1 June 2017. <<http://nabarraposible.blogspot.com.es/2012/06/quien-es-quien-cada-quien-nor-nori-nork.html>>. Some of these articles can not longer be seen online because they disappeared from the Nabarralde website at the time of writing this article, so it is difficult to quote them completely, especially the most aggressive ones.

104. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1ss8JvhNPO>> (Consulted 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017).



The idea seems to be explicitly put forward in the questions of the interview held in 2015 with Pedro Esarte in *Diario de Noticias*,<sup>105</sup> implicitly admitted by such a serious historian as Peio Monteano<sup>106</sup> and expressed categorically and insultingly by Jose Mari Esparza (Txalaparta), claiming that *los departamentos de Historia de nuestras universidades rebosan, mucho más que en otras disciplinas, de maleantes, de cronistas oficiales, de vagos que no han desatado un legajo en su vida, y de guardaespaldas [...] del orden establecido*.<sup>107</sup>

It is illustrative that the cartoonist César Oroz —of the conservative newspaper *Diario de Navarra*— also embraced the historicist cause led by Urzainqui and Esarte, including their conspiracy theory. His comic on the Conquest of Navarre seeks to create a humorous turn in its title, referring to the hiding of the history of Navarre: *¿Por qué lo llaman anexión cuando quieren decir conquista?*<sup>108</sup> Given his success, there is no point now in explaining the complementary nature of the processes of military conquest and legal incorporation, and the absence of the concept of ‘annexation’ in the historiographical debate.

References to the concealment of the word ‘conquest’ (attributed to professional historians) have been systematically made, to the extent that one of the spokespersons of *Nafarroa Bizirik* boasted: *Fue una batalla ideológica que ganamos por KO [...], puesto que la historiografía oficial tuvo que reconocer que en 1512 Nafarroa sufrió una conquista y una ocupación militar y no una amistosa adhesión a Castilla*,<sup>109</sup> as did Floren Aoiz in 2012 on the TV station Kontra: *las posiciones de negación de que fuera una conquista son insostenibles*.<sup>110</sup>

This is another of the points that we feel it is necessary to refute, because if we review the academic historiography —from José María Lacarra onwards— we

105. *Diario de Noticias*. “Mirarte. Cultura, ocio y comunicación (entrevista a Pedro Esarte)”, *Diario de Noticias*, 2 August 2015: 66-67. Esarte is presented as “part of the group of historians who have challenged the official discourse on the Conquest”.

106. Monteano, Peio. “1522. Navarros contra Amaiur”, *Diario de Noticias*, 26 August 2012: 24. Monteano claims that, “on one hand, there is reticence to admit that the union with Spain was imposed by arms. On the other, that a fracture among the Navarrese themselves was created”.

107. “the history departments of our universities are full, and much more than in other disciplines, of crooks, official chroniclers and lazy people who have not done a decent day’s work in their lives, as bodyguards [...] of the established order”. Esparza Zabalegi, José Mari. “La lucrativa industria de la Historia”, *Diario de Noticias*, 27 August 2014: 18. The letter is part of a debate that started with a footnote quote in a book by Fernando Molina, begun by Víctor Moreno, “Historiadores Buenos y malos”, *Diario de Noticias*, 21 July 2014: 24 and answered by Fernando Molina “Historia y nación: subordinación equívoca”, *Diario de Noticias*, 16 August 2014, 16; followed by others from Víctor Moreno, “¿Verdades sagradas?, ni de coña?”, *Diario de Noticias*, 20 August 2014: 18 and 28 August 2014, and the aforementioned José Mari Esparza.

108. “Why do they call it annexation when they mean conquest?”. Oroz, César. *¿Por qué lo llaman anexión cuando quieren decir conquista?* Pamplona: Grupo AN, 2012.

109. “It was an ideological battle that we won by a knock-out [...], because official historiography was forced to recognise that in 1512 Nafarroa suffered a conquest and a military occupation, not an amicable adhesion to Castile”. Díaz, Martxelo. “Nafarroa Bizirik volverá a colocar los monolitos atacados” *Naiz*. 23 December 2015. 12 June 2015 <<http://www.naiz.eus/eu/actualidad/noticia/20151223/nafarroa-bizirik-volvera-a-colocar-los-monolitos-atacados>>.

110. “the positions that deny that it was a conquest are unsustainable”.



have not located any historian of those called ‘official’ by the authors of *Nabarralde* that does not use the word ‘conquest’ in an explicit manner. As we understand it, this is the biggest manipulation of the history of Navarre that exists at present: the appearance of a conspiracy theory created —*ex profeso*— against the leading experts in the field of history in Navarre.

The idea of a conspiracy by official or ‘pro-regime’ historians has led to great indignation on the part of the authors on the other side: Aoiz, Pescador, Urzainqui, Sorauren, Asirón and Esarte... They all coincide by starting their narrative saying something that is not true: the false theories put forward over the centuries to conceal the ‘real history’ of Navarre. *Nos han mentido* is the phrase that the document of *Nabarralde* on the conquest of Navarre uses to denounce their particular historiographical vision.<sup>111</sup> In fact, in almost all the cases the narrative of these authors is playing the victim card and is elaborated ‘in opposition’, rejecting the claims of the disparaged authors. Floren Aoiz says that the issue of the conquest of Navarre *ha sido objeto de manipulaciones y mentiras [...] ya que los conquistadores han tenido casi 500 años para justificar su presencia aquí.*<sup>112</sup> For Aitor Pescador, *Navarra careció de una memoria histórica que nos permitiese conocer la visión de los navarros sobre todo lo acontecido*, thus attributing to all the people in Navarre a standard *memoria histórica*.<sup>113</sup> Pedro Esarte criticises the *manipuladores de la pluma y tergiversadores en el ámbito de la enseñanza*,<sup>114</sup> and claims that *el relato histórico se halla controlado todavía hoy por los gobernantes a través de la política de subvenciones.*<sup>115</sup>

*Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik* thus present themselves as advocates of historical truth in a heroic struggle to give a people its history back. This fits in nicely with our contemporary, popular and Twitter-type way of doing things, of understanding history, as Jerome de Groot<sup>116</sup> demonstrated by commenting on the work of historians in Hollywood productions,<sup>117</sup> where the heroic historian takes on those who wish to conceal history and relics from the people.

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111. “They have lied to us”. Marcilla, Rubén. *La Conquista de Navarra...*

112. “has been the subject of manipulations and lies [...] as the conquerors have had almost 500 years to justify their presence here”. Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida...*: 432.

113. “Navarre lacked a historical memory that would have enabled us to learn about the vision of the Navarrese on everything that happened”; “historical memory”. Pescador, Aitor. *1512. El año de la guerra...*: 10.

114. “manipulators with pens and the twisters of the truth in the field of education”. Esarte, Pedro. *El mariscal Pedro de Navarra...*: 9.

115. “the historical narrative is still controlled today by the ruling class through subsidies”. Esarte, Pedro. *Fernando el Falsario...*: 15.

116. De Groot, Jerome. *Consuming history...*: 49-58.

117. This was one of the criticisms put forward by Juan José Larrea of *La Navarra marítima*, in which the authors presented themselves as authentic discoverers of a historical truth that had been concealed for centuries. Professor Larrea exposed the ideas of *La Navarra marítima*, showing that they were not new, (quite the contrary) and antiquated. Arrieta Alberdi, Jon. “¿Entre Agramonteses and Beaumonteses?...”: 844-845.



Pedro Esarte specifically refers to *la verdad sobre las llamadas guerras civiles del siglo XV*, pointing out that *simplificar el conflicto a disputas civiles, es tergiversar la realidad*,<sup>118</sup> which eliminates the possibility of debate. In other words, if one speaks about civil wars in the 15<sup>th</sup> century—including one of the like-minded authors like Aitor Pescador—it is not accepted that the author is wrong, has a different point of view or simply expresses disagreement: whoever talks about civil wars between Agramonts and Beaumonts twists the truth and deliberately lies with a political purpose in mind. Floren Aoiz shares this approach when he claims that *cualquier otra visión diferente de la idea de conquista obedece a criterios políticos interesados*.<sup>119</sup> Likewise, Mikel Burgui refers to *Historia que no nos enseñaron*<sup>120</sup> on the *Nabarralde* website. This idea, found in the writings by disseminators of history that also impregnates the social representation of the history of Navarre, is also reflected in the verses of the previously mentioned popular song by Fermín Balentzia:

*La Historia la hace el pueblo  
Y la cuentan contrabandistas  
Cuentan lo que les conviene  
Y lo adornan de mentiras.*<sup>121</sup>

As a result, the task of these authors would be to recover the ‘memory of Navarra’, as if the Navarrese suffered from an amnesia that they can cure because the evil has been perpetrated, precisely, by professional historians. Indeed, the claim they stake has more to do with memory than history. Therefore, these authors assume the task of fostering that memory, that selection, and will intervene to make the past more present.

### 5.1.1 Remembering

Given these “omissions” by academic historiography, the first thing many of them did was to ‘recall’. This is interesting, because when speaking of memory and reminiscence, the collective past becomes part of the identity of an individual who, obviously, never lived the events (those of 1512).

118. “the truth about the so-called civil wars of the 15<sup>th</sup> century”; “simplifying the conflict in terms of civil disputes is a distortion of reality”. Esarte, Pedro. *Fernando el Falsario...*: 17.

119. “any other vision that differs from the idea of conquest is down to self-interested political criteria”. Aoiz, Floren. *La vieja herida...*: 434.

120. “the history they did not teach us”. Burgui, Mikel. “La historia que no nos enseñaron. Reflexiones en el 500 aniversario de la conquista de Navarra”, *Nabarralde*. 20 June 2012. 1 June 2017. <<http://nabarralde.com/es/txokoa/8601-la-historia-que-no-nos-ensenaron-reflexiones-en-el-500-aniversario-de-la-conquista-de-navarra>>.

121. The song can be heard in Youtube: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD2\\_5W2IbXM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD2_5W2IbXM)>. (Consulted 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017).



The success of these propositions by *Nabarralde* is seen in the great achievements of the publishing houses Pamiela, Txalaparta and Txertoa, and in the political support for these publications by pro-independence formations. The success can also be seen in the bibliography of this very study, in which many works published by Pamiela/Txertoa/Txalaparta can be found, particularly between 2011 and 2013. According to data provided to us by Pamiela,<sup>122</sup> the print runs for each edition are between 500 and 2,500 copies, depending on sales forecasts and the author's capacity for communication or dissemination. The company publishes both scientific studies and works for a more general public, with publications by academics and history enthusiasts, sometimes in the same collection.

Among these publications, *La Navarra Marítima* by Tomás Urzainqui has had 11 editions, and the book *Navarra, 1512-1530* by Pedro Esarte—with no less than 911 pages—has been reprinted twice. The collective book by various authors of *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik*, titled *1512. 500 años de conquista*, has been reprinted (2,000 copies) after an initial run of 7,000 in 2009, according to data provided by the publishing house, although we are speaking of a collective monograph. These figures contrast with the 350 copies printed of Isabel Ostolaza's book on Ferdinand II of Aragon in 2011, the 600 copies of the Mediaeval Studies Week of Estella dedicated to the conquest of Navarre, or the 1,500 copies that were exceptionally printed of the concise work of Alfredo Floristán and Mercedes Galán, published in 2012 by *Diario de Navarra* and distributed together with the newspaper.<sup>123</sup> The last two were published by the institutions or with their participation, with contributions by various authors from the academic world.

Just the difference in the number of monographs generated in the academic world on one hand (5 between 2011 and 2013), and by the authors under the aegis of Pamiela on the other (32 between 2011 and 2013), shows the difference in interest on the subject. As does the political affiliation of some of these authors: Floren Aoiz, a former parliamentarian and leader of *Herri Batasuna*, Joseba Asirón, Mayor of Pamplona for *Euskal Herria Bildu*, Tomás Urzainqui, founder of the party *Libertad Navarra*, or Aitor Pescador, a member of the *Geroa Bai* coalition. This is not the case in reverse for the academic historians. This led Fernando Molina to speak of a *lucrative industria de la identidad que fabrica productos de memoria para consumo exclusivo de lectores abertzales*.<sup>124</sup>

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122. We would like to thank Pamiela for the figures on print runs and editions.

123. I would also like to thank the Government of Navarre for the figures provided in its publications.

124. "lucrative industry around identity that manufactures memory products for the exclusive consumption of pro-independence readers". Molina, Fernando. "Historia y nación: subordinación equívoca", *Diario de Noticias*, 16 August 2014: 16; This received a furious reply from Jose Mari Esparza Zabalegui, "La lucrative industria de la Historia", *Diario de Noticias*, 27 August 2014: 18.



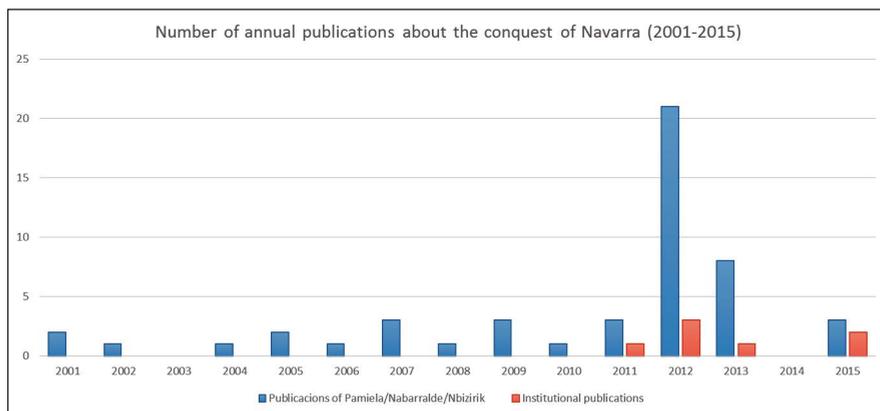


FIGURE 1. NO. OF PUBLICATIONS PER YEAR ON THE CONQUEST OF NAVARRE (2001-2015)

### 5.1.2 Forgetting

In the same way that it is of interest to remember some episodes of the past, the same applies to forgetting others. Thus, the civil conflict of the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century has disappeared from some digests, as is the case Mikel Sorauren's —and many others— in which a giant leap is made between the death of the Prince of Viana (1461) and the years prior to the conquest. Mikel Sorauren says that *la crisis que representa la guerra civil es innegable que guarda relación directa con el debilitamiento del Estado en cuanto tal. No obstante, resulta exagerado deducir de ello la inexorable pérdida de la independencia como solución al conflicto* as a result.<sup>125</sup> In other words, the conquest of Navarre is not an effect produced by the civil war between the Navarrese, it is rather an external aggression that does away with the “independence” of the kingdom. We will not come back to this question, as we have dealt with it above.

As happens with the events prior to the conquest, which are forgotten, something similar occurs with everything that transpires later in Navarre. The reality is that the tensions between Agramonts and Beaumonts gradually disappeared during the 16<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>126</sup> perhaps largely due to the knowledge that Ferdinand II of Aragon had of Navarrese politics and the traditional contacts between the Crown of Castile and the nobles on both sides. It is also forgotten that the Navarrese nobles and merchants took advantage of their status as subjects of the Spanish Crown, sometimes with great economic and social success. Basically, the authors of *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik* start

125. “the crisis represented by the civil war is undeniably directly related to the weakening of the State as such. Nevertheless, it would be an exaggeration to deduce that the inexorable loss of independence was a solution to the conflict”. Sorauren, Mikel. *Historia de Navarra, el Estado Vasco*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 1999: 151.

126. Floristán, Alfredo. “Honor estamental y merced real. La configuración del brazo militar en las Cortes de Navarra, 1512-1828”, *Príncipe de Viana*, 66/234 (2005): 135-196.



from a preconceived—and unproven—idea that considers the conquest as something negative in political, economic and social terms. As this is a prior assumption, these authors do not try to prove it, and their studies do not usually go further than 1522.<sup>127</sup>

## 6. Changing the past

The ultimate intention of the studies of *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik* is to change society's perception of Navarre's past and construct social representations of history that are favourable to Basque nationalist thinking. There are also some attempts to present a "pro-Spanish" version of the history of Navarre, although these are much less important nowadays from the quantitative point of view<sup>128</sup> in terms of publications, sales, presence in the media, social networks, internet or educational media.<sup>129</sup> The only monograph of this kind has a title that is questionable in itself:

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127. Orduna Portús, Pablo. "Participación de las elites en las instituciones del Reino de Navarra (ss. XVI-XVIII)", *Tiempos Modernos. Revista electrónica de Historia Moderna*, 18 (2009) <<http://www.tiemposmodernos.org/tm3/index.php/tm/article/view/144/195>> (Consulted 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017); Vázquez de Prada, Valentín. *Mercaderes navarros en Europa. Siglo XVI*. Pamplona: Government of Navarre, 2015.

128. In this regard, Jon Arrieta Alberdi says: *si hay una tendencia 'navarrista', la producción que lo caracteriza se centra actualmente bastante en la obra de carácter ensayístico desplegada por Jaime Ignacio del Burgo. En la posición opuesta la producción de los últimos años es muy numerosa, y presenta claros caracteres definitorios* ("if there is a 'pro-Navarre' tendency, it is mainly based on the essays of Jaime Ignacio del Burgo. Publications in recent years expressing the opposite opinion are very numerous, with clearly defining features"). Arrieta Alberdi, Jon. "¿Entre Agramonteses y Beaumonteses?...": 859. We should point out that while these theories are not very well-represented in cultural media, the social networks have picked up on some of these pro-Navarre arguments by 'democratising' the possibility of disseminating personal historiographical interpretations and removing the author's responsibility through the anonymity allowed by the internet. Although we have not monitored these interpretations closely, we could possibly speak of a residual 'navarrism' that is perhaps 'clandestine'. This happens, for example, when referring to the participation of troops from Gipuzcoa and Álava in the conquest of Navarre, which is historically proven. However, it is put forward with a clear present-day aim that highlights the division between the Navarrese and the Basques and the 'collaborationism' of the latter in the conquest. On Twitter @stalingradoFC said on 16 December 2015 that *A Quipuzcoa (sic) le fue bien en la conquista (sic) de Navarra* ("It went well for Quipuzcoa (sic) in the conquest (sic) of Navarre"); @zaldizoro wrote on Twitter on 7 November 2016 that *les salió bien a los vascongados la jugada de la conquista de Navarra. 5 siglos después a recoger los frutos* ("the manoeuvre of the conquest of Navarre went well for the Basque provinces. Five centuries later, reap the rewards"); in *Forotafalla* in 19 March 2007, where Andawa (Alias) said *Todo hay que decirlo, las tropas guipuzcoanas se ofrecieron voluntarias para ir a la cabeza de la conquista de Pamplona* ("It has to be said, the Guipuzcoan troops offered themselves as volunteers to head the conquest of Pamplona") <<http://www.forotafalla.com/viewtopic.php?f=8&t=1221&sid=5fb1053bec6961fd6d8da9985bf7f9d>> (Consulted 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017).

129. We should also point out that some marks of historiographical approaches tinged with Spanish nationalist tones continue to be seen in the educational world (curricula and textbooks), e.g. in the studies by Sáiz Serrano, Jorge. "Pervivencias escolares de narrativa nacional española: Reconquista, Reyes Católicos e Imperio en libros de texto de historia y en relatos de estudiantes", *Historia y Memoria de la Educación*, 6 (2017): 165-201.



*Aspectos militares de la anexión de Navarra*.<sup>130</sup> We understand that the military aspects of a conquest can be considered, but not an ‘annexation’.

In this context of political struggle, historical symbols have acquired crucial importance, and it is no coincidence that one of the most disputed laws in Navarre in recent years—in one or the other direction—has been the Law of Symbols. In the meantime, the relics of the past have been protected, reconstructed, duplicated, emulated and commemorated or celebrated in an attempt to make them symbols or ‘hooks’ through which the past can be changed and a certain vision of it fostered.

### 6.1 Protecting

Following the failed attempt to recover the kingdom in 1516 by King John III of Navarre, Cardinal Cisneros gave one of the orders that has caused most rivers of ink to flow in Navarre: the destruction or dismantling of the kingdom’s castles, at least their main defensive structures.<sup>131</sup> This constituted an affront to the heritage of Navarre, and was something that the current Mayor of Pamplona, Joseba Asirón, considers *iba más allá de lo puramente militar. Los castillos habían conformado durante siglos el paisaje más caracterizado de los pueblos, como símbolo de la autoridad y la legitimidad medieval. Al hacerlos desaparecer, se pretendía invisibilizar al propio estado navarro*. Asirón concludes by saying that *El derribo de las murallas, consecuentemente, hay que entenderlo en clave política y moral: se trataba de quebrar la voluntad de los navarros*.<sup>132</sup> Iñaki Sagredo also wrote in *Diario de Noticias* that a Navarre without castles had become *una Navarra sin orgullo*.<sup>133</sup>

One of the first initiatives coinciding with the closeness of the fifth centenary of the conquest that took place in Navarre was precisely that of Iñaki Sagredo,<sup>134</sup> who began a series of studies on the castles of Navarre with the help of ultralight aircraft flying over the locations of the one-hundred-plus castles he managed to locate. His

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130. Ruiz Vidondo, José M<sup>a</sup>. *1512-1521. Aspectos militares de la anexión de Navarra. Aportación de la Provincia de Guipuzcoa, el Señorío de Vizcaya y las Hermandades of Álava a la conquista de Navarra*. Mutilva Baja: Editorial Evidencia Médica, 2012.

131. The process is explained in detail in Martinena, Juan José. *Castillos reales de Navarra. Siglos XIII-XVI*. Pamplona: Government of Navarre: 97-107.

132. “went beyond purely military considerations. Castles had been the most common feature of towns and villages for centuries, as a symbol of mediaeval authority and legitimacy. By making them disappear, the intention was to make the very State of Navarre invisible”; “The demolishing of the walls should, therefore, be considered in political and moral terms: it was an attempt to bend the will of the Navarrese”. Asirón, Joseba. “Culmina la destrucción de los castillos”, *Nabarralde*. 10 June 2012. 26 March 2017 <<http://www.nabarralde.com/es/1512-cronica/8546-culmina-la-destruccion-de-los-castillos>>.

133. “a Navarre without pride”. Sagredo, Iñaki. “Navarras sin castillos, Navarra sin orgullo”, *Nabarralde*. 8 April 2012. 26 March 2017 <<http://nabarralde.com/es/1512-cronica/8173-navarra-sin-castillos-navarra-sin-orgullo>>.

134. Sagredo, Iñaki. *Castillos que defendieron el reino*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2015: V; Sagredo, Iñaki. *Castillos que defendieron el reino*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2009: IV; Sagredo, Iñaki. *El castillo de Amaiur a través de la Historia de Navarra*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2009; Sagredo, Iñaki. *Castillos que defendieron el reino*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2007: III; Sagredo, Iñaki. *Castillos que defendieron el reino*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2007: II; Sagredo, Iñaki. *Castillos que defendieron el reino*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2006: I.



work conveys the notion that the destruction of these castles by order of Cardinal Cisneros aimed at erasing the memory of the independence of the kingdom. It was therefore an eminently political decision, not just a straightforward military tactic. Like Josu Santamarina, we believe that *el propio hecho de documentar y aglutinar todos estos castillos bajo un mismo discurso, forma parte de un proceso de recuperación nacional*.<sup>135</sup>

Sagredo offered local councils the possibility of making the existence of a mediaeval castle in their municipality known, through talks and acting as a broker between the councils and an archaeology company.<sup>136</sup> As he says, his aim was to *abrir la historia que no se conocía y despertar la historia de Navarra y un sentimiento sobre lo que fuimos*. He adds, *Mi trabajo ahora es estar castillo por castillo y establecer un vínculo con las personas que viven en los pueblos de alrededor, explicarles la Historia de los castillos*. This is very interesting from the perspective of the protection of these relics, as Lowenthal pointed out. The idea was to identify each town or village with its relic, its castle, and to teach the correct interpretation of what happened there. One of the publishers in Pamplona, Txema Aranaz, considers that Sagredo's work *Es el trabajo más importante que se ha hecho en Navarra al respecto, pero este tipo de publicaciones que buscan la verdad y que van contra la línea oficial marcada por las instituciones, la universidad del Opus e incluso la Universidad Pública, no tienen el eco que se merecen*.<sup>137</sup>

In this regard, another very interesting—and indignant—perspective is seen in an article by the pro-independence politician Patxi Zabaleta in the newspaper *Gara* in 2012, saying that *los auténticos y verdaderos navarristas de los siglos XVIII, XIX y XX, sentían un odio al Cardenal Cisneros muy superior a cualquier otro*.<sup>138</sup> Or Mikel Burgui's comment in *Nabarralde*, where he says: *También leí que Cisneros mandó derribar los castillos de Navarra... Vaya, vaya. Cisneros. Así que ese tipo pudo ser el que mandó tirar el castillazo de Ujué. De inmediato le cogí una ojeriza de aúpa al dichoso cardenal*.<sup>139</sup>

135. "the very fact of documenting and grouping all these castles within a single discourse is part of a process of national recovery". Santamarina Otaola, Josu. "Más acá de la frontera...": 257.

136. Ciriza, Nieves. "Iñaki Sagredo, conquista por aire los castillos del Viejo Reyno de Navarra: LA ENTREVISTA", *Pirineo*. 26 February 2007. 26 March 2017. <<http://www.pirineo.com/especial-pirineo/inaki-sagredo-conquista-aire-castillos-viejo-reyno-navarra-entrevista>>.

137. "open up a history that was unknown and revive the history of Navarre and a feeling of what we used to be"; "My work now is to go from castle to castle and establish a link with the people that live in the surrounding villages and towns, explaining the history of the castles"; "is the most important field study done in Navarre, but this kind of publication seeks the truth and goes against the official line marked out by the institutions, the Opus Dei-backed Universidad de Navarra and even the Universidad Pública, and does not enjoy the success it deserves". De Carlos. Idoia.; Cascante, Patxi. "Entrevista a Iñaki Sagredo", *Diario de Noticias*, 26 March 2015: 61. <<http://www.noticiasdenavarra.com/2015/03/26/ocio-y-cultura/cultura/sagredo-quiero-despertar-un-sentimiento-sobre-lo-que-fuimos>>.

138. "the real and authentic navarristas of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries hated Cardinal Cisneros much more than anyone else". Zabaleta, Patxi. "El desmantelamiento de los castillos y los testamentos de los Austrias", *Gara*. 4 May 2012. 19 September 2017 <<http://gara.naiz.eus/paperezkoa/20120504/338539/es/El-desmantelamiento-castillos-testamentos-los-Austrias>>.

139. "I also read that Cisneros ordered the demolition of the castles of Navarre... Well, well, Cisneros. So, he might have been the guy who ordered the destruction of the incredible castle in Ujué. I immediately felt great animosity towards the damned cardinal". Burgui, Mikel. "La historia que no nos enseñaron. Reflexiones en el 500 aniversario de la conquista de Navarra", *Nabarralde*. 20 June 2012. 1 June 2017



In 2012 a second initiative appeared, in this case coinciding with the ceremonies held to commemorate the 5<sup>th</sup> centenary of the conquest of Navarre, for which the *Nafarroa Bizirik* foundation was set up (2010) by the pro-independence Left.<sup>140</sup> Apparently, it was Joseba Asirón himself who proposed the placing of commemorative boundary stones in some castles in Navarre.<sup>141</sup> The first must have been the one placed in January 2012 in Aitzorrotz castle in Eskoriatza (Guipuzcoa). In an initial phase, boundary stones were placed in around twenty castles, followed by a second phase (2013) until forty were installed.<sup>142</sup> In 2013 a trekkers' guide was published to advertise these castles and encourage people to visit them.<sup>143</sup> A small festive ceremony was organised for the laying of each boundary stone, and work was done to improve the paths leading to the castles from the villages or towns. The funding generally came from the local authorities (municipal councils and parish councils), which provided the money and issued the relevant permits. Depending on the political profile of each place, the stones could either be financed or their installation just authorised.<sup>144</sup>

On 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012 Bildu's group in Huarte Town Council invited the remaining members of the council "to the inauguration ceremony of the stele commemorating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conquest of Navarre. This ceremony, to which mayors and councillors of sister towns and neighbouring villages, parliamentarians, etc. will take place on Saturday 9 June next to the ruins of the castle located on top of Mount Ohiana".<sup>145</sup>

The monoliths would have cost between 1,000 and 2,000 euros (including installation), as announced by the *Nafarroa Bizirik* foundation in a press conference on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2015.<sup>146</sup> For example, the figure requested from Huarte Town Council—which was not granted—was 900 euros. If we multiply € 1,500 (the cost

<<http://nabarralde.com/es/txokoa/8601-la-historia-que-no-nos-ensenaron-reflexiones-en-el-500-aniversario-de-la-conquista-de-navarra>>.

140. Explains this process in detail Santamarina Otaola, Josu. "Más acá de la frontera...": 256-258.

141. Guerra, Pello. "Mojones en los castillos para recorder la historia", Nabarralde. 2 April 2013. 26 March 2017 <<http://nabarralde.com/es/component/content/article/10031>>. Joseba Asirón's idea would be related to the placing of the monument in the castle of Maya in 1921, which created a bitter historiographical and political controversy between Arturo Campión and Víctor Pradera as part of the statutory debate. Sánchez Prieto, Juan M<sup>a</sup>. "Prácticas discursivas y construcción política...": 77-82; Olábarri, Ignacio; Sánchez Prieto, Juan M<sup>a</sup>. "Un ejemplo de Richtungskampf en la historiografía navarra contemporánea", *Symbolae Lvdovico Mítxelena Septvagenario oblatae*, José Luis Melena, ed. Vitoria: Universidad del País Vasco, 1985.

142. Sagüés, Manuel, "Castillos del reino. Cien mojones para la verdadera historia", *Diario de Noticias*, 5 June 2013: 40. This information can be found online on the website of *Askatasunaren Bidea* (6 June 2013), Sagüés, Manuel. "Castillos del reino. Cien mojones para la verdadera historia", *Askatasunaren Bidea*. 6 June 2013. 2 June 2017 <[http://askatasunaren-bidea.blogspot.com.es/2013\\_05\\_06\\_archive.html](http://askatasunaren-bidea.blogspot.com.es/2013_05_06_archive.html)>.

143. Feliu, Juan M<sup>a</sup>; Sagredo, Iñaki; Asirón, Joseba; and Guerra, Pello. *Recorridos a los castillos del Reino de Navarra*. San Sebastian: Herritar Berri, 2013.

144. Minutes of Huarte Town Council. 28 March 2012. 2 June 2017 <<http://www.huarte.es/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2016/03/ACTAS-2012-03-28-03-2012.pdf>>.

145. Minutes of Huarte Town Council. 30 May 2012. 2 June 2017 <<http://www.huarte.es/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2016/03/ACTAS-2012-05-30-05-2012.pdf>>.

146. "Los mojones atacados se arreglarán: 'Son lugares de memoria'", *Noticias de Navarra*. 24 December 2015. 2 June 2017 <<http://www.noticiasdenavarra.com/2015/12/24/sociedad/navarra/los-mojones-atacados-se-arreglaran-son-lugares-de-memoria>>.



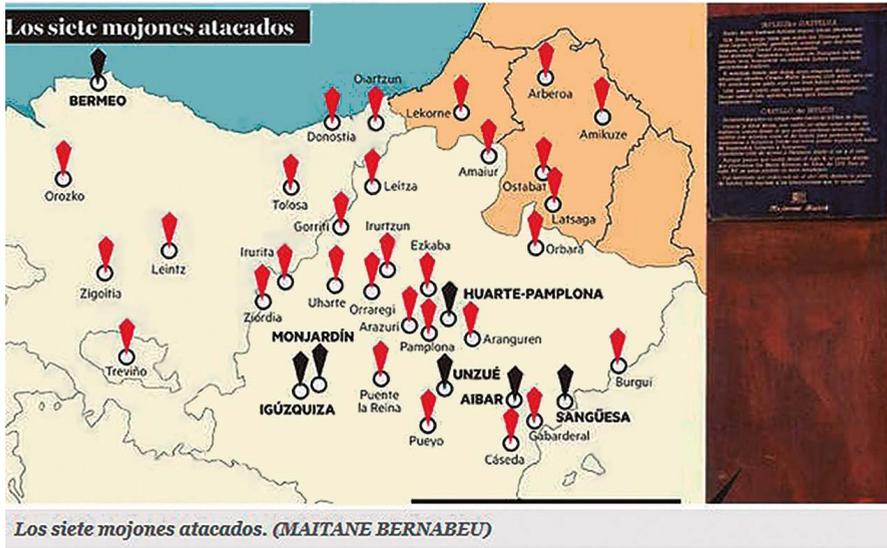


IMAGE 1. MAP OF THE BOUNDARY STONES PLACED BY NAFARROA BIZIRIK. THE SEVEN BOUNDARY STONES ATTACKED (IN BLACK). SOURCE: *DIARIO DE NOTICIAS*. 12/12/2015

of each of these steles, boundary stones, monoliths or *mugaris* [the term in Basque]) by 40—the number placed—we are talking of 60,000 euros. The steles were made from corten steel and are 1.8 metres high (although a part is inserted in the concrete base, so the final height is 1.5 metres above ground level). Each one is decorated with “a plaque with an engraved text telling the history of the castle in question, written by someone from the locality who is an expert on the fortress or by the historians Joseba Asiron and Iñaki Sagredo”, as Sergio Iribarren, the coordinator of the project, explains.<sup>147</sup>

The vicissitudes of the monoliths have not ended there, however, as in 2015 at least seven of them were vandalised by a far-right group that climbed up to the castles with a radial saw to cut the iron. It is the best sign of the importance given to these symbols. For *Nafarroa Bizirik* they were ‘places of memory’;<sup>148</sup> for the far-right groups, objects that needed to be eliminated at all costs. In any case, this strange controversy of steel and concrete has once again unleashed the victimism we mentioned above, to the point of stating, as did the sculptor Peio Iraizoz, that *el Cardenal Cisneros y el Duque de Alba siguen vivos*.<sup>149</sup>

The initiative by *Nafarroa Bizirik* was purely political, because pro-independence territoriality was present in its conception. It took the borders of its ‘maritime Navarre’ or ‘Navarra entera’ to Alava, Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya, wherever there was

147. Guerra, Pello. “Mojones en los castillos...”.

148. Guerra, Pello. “Mojones en los castillos...”.

149. “Cardinal Cisneros and the Duke of Alba are still alive”. Díaz, Martxelo. “Nafarroa Bizirik volverá a colocar los monolitos...”.



someone willing to accept the new pan-navarrist thesis, such as in San Juan de Gaztelugatxe (Bermeo). This was done under the excuse of recovering memory, something that seems impossible to us because nobody remembers the mediaeval period, we can only imagine, recreate and interpret it... Therefore, these actions involve the use of these relics —and even the creation of new commemorative relics— with the specific aim of fostering a biased vision of history. Indeed, the monument in Maya, laid in 1922, is now one of those ‘places of memory’ that is remembered and celebrated, in the absence of other more spectacular ones.<sup>150</sup>

Furthermore, in 1996 a monument sculpted by Joxe Ulibarrena was inaugurated near Noain with funding from the Government of Navarre (3.5 million pesetas)<sup>151</sup> —regionalist at the time— to commemorate the so-called ‘Battle of Noain’ of 1521, another defeat of the army of Henry II of Albret, the son of John III of Navarre.

## 6.2 Reconstructing

The same spirit of recovery of memory is the one that has inspired the reconstruction work of the castles of Navarre, and more specifically the ones at Irulegui and Maya. The first is part of the list of castles that controlled the territory of the region in the Early Middle Ages, as studied previously by Juan José Martinena<sup>152</sup> and later by Iñaki Sagredo. In contrast, the castle of Maya (Amaiur), which some, using a literary twist, have called ‘the Basque Alamo’, has certainly become an authentic emblem of Navarrese resistance and legitimism. It does not seem to matter that there were more Navarrese attacking it than defending it: some authors only refer to the latter. True, the efforts of the defenders were as heroic as they were desperate, and enough to feed the epic dimension of the story and the different narratives. In our opinion, however, they lose sight of the reality: that it was a dispute between two factions of the nobility that managed to destroy the kingdom of Navarre.

The ruins of the castle of Amaiur have been excavated over ten years, then consolidated, museumised and recreated in the form of a model exhibited in a building located at the foot of the hill where the castle stands.<sup>153</sup> In 2012 it was released in jigsaw puzzle format by the pro-independence newspaper *Gara*, and it can still be bought online today. As Josu Santamarina points out, it does not seem right that previous conservative governments in Navarre until 2015 should not have given any support or visited the excavation of the castle of Amaiur. In our opinion, however, neither is it beneficial to convert Amaiur in the symbol of the tragic history of ‘Euskal Herria’, as stated in a report on the Basque TV station ETB

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150. The process is explained, with extensive bibliography, by Santamarina Otaola, Josu. “Más acá de la frontera...”: 246-250.

151. About 21,000 euros.

152. Martinena Ruiz, Juan José. *Castillos reales de Navarra. Siglos XIII-XVI*. Pamplona: Government of Navarre.

153. For more details about the Amaiur site, see Santamarina Otaola, Josu. “Más acá de la frontera...”: 254-255.



in August 2015, reporting a visit by the President of the Government of Navarre, Uxue Barkos, to the excavations;<sup>154</sup> or as the ‘perpetual light of Navarre’, the title of an article that *Diario de Noticias* published on 24 January 2016.<sup>155</sup> Its political importance as a public symbol is unquestionable, however; the pro-independence Left coalition that ran for the general election in 2011 took its name: Amaiur.

### 6.3 Commemorating

Objects found in the dig have been used in the exhibition *Amaiur, el último Castillo* (“Amaiur, the last castle”), organised in 2016 in the Palacio del Condestable by Pamplona City Council. Within the exhibition, on a large canvas painted by Xabier Morrás, Joseba Asirón himself appears immortalised among the Agramonts who resisted in the castle of Maya. The inclusion of a portrait of the Mayor between the resisting legitimists commemorated in the painting was criticised fairly strongly, but it is very interesting from a psychological point of view because the author’s message is a very clear one: if pro-independence Joseba Asirón is one of the Agramonts who resisted in Amaiur against the Spanish army, it is very clear who the Beaumont-supporting traitors of today are.

The work of evoking or commemorating the major milestones in the conquest of Navarre has consolidated associations such as *Noaingo Batailla Gogoan Taldea*, dedicated to the annual recreation and commemoration of the French-Agramont defeat of 1521, together with the evocative monument erected in Salinas de Pamplona,<sup>156</sup> which led to a hike titled ‘gure ondarea, gure memoria’ (our heritage, our memory) in 2017. This is regularly done through hikes, tributes or seminars. Some of the best-attended ones were in 2012, stopping off at different places in the Basque Country and Navarre, especially the so-called ‘National March’ organised by *Nafarroa Bizirikto* claim that “Navarre is still alive, despite the conquest of 1512”.<sup>157</sup> In nearly all these events —as occurred with the laying of the boundary stones—the claim acquires a festive dimension with large crowds attending and featuring elements of Basque folklore (folk dancers, traditional characters of the culture of Navarre, bards, the recording of a lipdub [uploaded onto YouTube], folk and/or modern music, dance music and rural sports, etc.). In this way, the recreation of the

154. Garmendia. Marijo. “Amaiur, reconocimiento oficial 10 años después”, *Eitb*. 22 August 2015. 8 August 2017 <<http://www.eitb.eus/es/noticias/politica/videos/detalle/3426214/la-visita-uxue-barkos-amaiur-es-reconocimiento-al-trabajo/>>.

155. Sagüés Lacasa. María. “Amaiur: luz perpetua de Navarra”, *Noticias de Navarra*. 24 January 2016. 8 August 2017 <<http://www.noticiasdenavarra.com/2016/01/24/vecinos/amaiur-luz-perpetua-de-navarra>>.

156. Unai Beroiz, Amaia Marcos. “Homenaje a la resistencia navarra ante la conquista militar de Castilla”, *Noticias de Navarra*. 9 June 2017. 8 August 2017 <<http://m.noticiasdenavarra.com/2017/06/09/sociedad/navarra/homenaje-a-la-resistencia-navarra-ante-la-conquista-militar-de-castilla>>; “Salinas acoge este domingo un homenaje a la Batalla de Noáin”. *Noticias de Navarra*. 17 June 2017. 8 August 2017. <<http://www.noticiasdenavarra.com/2017/06/17/sociedad/navarra/salinas-acoge-este-domingo-un-homenaje-a-la-batalla-de-noain>>.

157. “Nafarroa Bizirik llama a la ciudadanía a apoyar su marcha”, *Diario de Navarra*. 14 June 2012. 8 August 2017 <[http://www.diariodenavarra.es/noticias/navarra/mas\\_navarra/2012/06/14/nafarroa\\_bizirik\\_llama\\_ciudadania\\_apoyar\\_marcha\\_83639\\_2061.html](http://www.diariodenavarra.es/noticias/navarra/mas_navarra/2012/06/14/nafarroa_bizirik_llama_ciudadania_apoyar_marcha_83639_2061.html)>.



tragic history of Navarre is identified with Basque culture, which aspires to national standardisation and, through the public use of history, takes on a festive, protesting and nostalgic nature all at the same time.

## 7. Conclusions

Although the studies by Sánchez Prieto and others around a decade ago focused on the 'pro-Navarre' message, considering it predominant in the historiographical discourse, the situation has changed since then. On one hand, historiography in general has overcome the long-standing dilemma of the conquest (yes or no) of Navarre, and also there is a fairly wide-ranging consensus in the academic world on the events related to it. On the other, the revisionist discourse of *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik*, with a clear didactic and commercial vocation, has been greatly strengthened thanks to a number of social groups and has generated a 'pan-navarrist' historical explanation for the whole of Euskal Herria, one that does not perfectly fit the traditional pro-independence version. This new discourse has by no means run its course, it is in the process of creation, as new propositions—and contradictions—gradually appear. True, in a way these ideas fit into the traditional tragic nationalist narrative that tries to highlight the 'Basque conflict' and trace its origins back to distant periods in history.<sup>158</sup>

The authors in the realm of *Nabarralde* seem to be motivated by the projection onto the past of positive and negative sentiments such as hope, enthusiasm, indignation, concern... The description of the historical moments as 'dreams' or 'wounds' clearly denotes a strong emotional link of the authors to the events of the past, one that leads them to take a stance—consciously or unconsciously—on the tensions arising from the conquest.

The main argument of these groups is the need to 'recover memory', and an insistence that the history of Navarre has always been written by the winners, who would naturally have concealed the historical truth. In this sense, they denounce a kind of 'conspiracy' to hide history from the people of Navarre by 'regime-friendly' historians. Any disagreement on a historical subject is interpreted in political terms and of a predetermined manipulation of historical reality, but never in terms of a purely historiographical debate. While it is true that, historically, there was a pro-Spanish or pro-Navarre bias in the interpretation of history until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, since the historiographical school emerged with José María Lacarra academic historians have objectified their work to a great extent. This has even been interpreted in some circles as a victory of authors close to Basque nationalism. Nevertheless, none of them has been able to scientifically refute the historical paradigms they challenge, particularly because they often start from previous assumptions and a passion that makes scientific analysis difficult. Caricaturing

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158. As points out Molina, Fernando. "El conflicto vasco". *Relatos de historia...*: 214-223.



the situation, the authors of *Nabarralde* and *Nafarroa Bizirik* present themselves as the new Indiana Jones of Navarre's history: they recover history, discover an academic conspiracy that aims at concealing the truth, combat the lies of regionalist 'officialness' and free the Navarrese people by showing them the historical truth so that it can struggle to bring about the 'deconquest'. The idea has taken root, and it is no coincidence that one of those authors, Joseba Asirón, has achieved political success by becoming Mayor of Pamplona and is the visible face of the pro-independence Left in Navarre. It has also been possible to see —although not quantify— the impact of their propositions on the social networks and digital fora.

Another important point is that the criticisms made of academic historians in Navarre come from people who —as their own *curriculum vitae*'s online reveal— often do not have a university background in history, and in some cases no university studies. Furthermore, they also have strong political interests that have an influence on their narratives. Historians do not usually talk of professional intrusion —and we do not wish to do so now— but at least it is admissible to denounce that such systematic and vicious criticism of Navarrese professional historians has come from people without academic qualifications (this also becomes clear when reading some of their writings).

In historiographical terms, one of the most-commonly used arguments is of considering Navarre as a State since the early 9<sup>th</sup> century with the advent of Íñigo Arista, and as a Modern State just before the conquest of Navarre. The thesis of Álvaro Adot has spread, to indicate that Navarre enjoyed a period of social and political peace that was truncated by the conquest. This historiography opts for the understanding of the conquest as an external aggression caused by the ambition of Ferdinand II of Aragon, which represents a practically mono-causal explanation of the phenomenon.

Finally, in our opinion, what is worrying is that the very conception of history as a science is challenged when the historical narrative is placed at the service of present-day political ideas. History should not aspire to find a single truth, as it is a science under construction, open to debate and subjected to the sudden appearance of new documentary evidence that destroys the construction of any past historian, however good he or she may be. The spreading of the idea of a history that manages to find the truth in a heroic way is a step backwards in the historical education of citizens, if we take into account any of the publications by social sciences experts. The path of history at the service of the construction of national States is very well-known, both by historians<sup>159</sup> and experts in the teaching of history.<sup>160</sup> This is a very undesirable way to proceed, but one that we are being firmly and successfully directed along, both through the publications of *Nafarroa Bizirik* and *Nabarralde* on the conquest of Navarre and the public uses of history that derive from them, in the social networks and the media, and out on the street.

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159. Castillejo Cambra, Emilio. *Mito, legitimación y violencia simbólica en los manuales escolares de Historia del franquismo (1936-1975)*. Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2008.

160. To give a good example, the study Carretero, Mario. *Documentos de Identidad. La construcción e la memoria histórica en un mundo global*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2007, and the recent studies by Sáiz Serrano, Jorge. "Pervivencias escolares...": 165-201; and Sáiz Serrano, Jorge; López Facal, Ramón. "Narrativas históricas de estudiantes and profesorado en formación", *Revista de Education*, 374 (2016): 118-141.

