Ethnic Protest and Social Planning

Jacqueline Urla

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/anthro_res_rpt28

Part of the Anthropology Commons


This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Anthropology Department Research Reports series at ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Report 28: Ela’ qua : essays in honor of Richard B. Woodbury by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.
In the last 25 years the cultural landscape of Europe has been undergoing radical reconstruction. At the same time that the possibility of a federated Europe seems closer than ever, the mobilization of ethnic minorities has brought about an increasing visibility and acknowledgment of internal cultural diversity. At issue for regional minorities is not simply political and economic autonomy. They, as much as anyone else, perceive the illusory nature of autonomy in today's world of global politics and multinational corporations. What is perhaps all too often underexamined is the battle that minorities are waging for cultural sovereignty—control over the mechanisms of cultural reproduction. In many instances, though not all, language has been at the center of these battles for cultural rights.

This is especially true in the Spanish Basque Country where the sense of urgency accompanying language revival is very pronounced. In 1963, shortly before they began their campaign of armed struggle against the state, the radical Basque nationalist organization, E.T.A. (Euskadi ta Askatasuna, "Basqueland and Freedom"), declared that "the day that Basque ceases to be a spoken language, the Basque nation will have died, and in a few years, the descendants of today's Basques will be simply Spanish or French" (Jauregui 1981:160).

In somewhat less dramatic terms, the first official political program of the newly formed, autonomous Basque government proclaimed in 1980 that the recuperation of Basque was necessary to avoid cultural extinction, and therefore of primary importance to the Basque political agenda. While Basques remain bitterly divided over most political issues, there is an overwhelming consensus that the preservation of their language, spoken by about 30 percent of the population, is absolutely essential for the continuity of their identity as Basques.

Linguistic minorities in Spain, and in many other parts of Europe, have made substantial gains in their attempts to protect their languages.
After the death of Franco in 1975, the national languages of Galicians, Basques, and Catalans were declared co-official with Spanish. Nevertheless, activists have continued to protest, arguing that official recognition is not enough: they demand language planning, by which they mean the deliberate regulation and promotion of minority language use through legislation, educational programs, and media campaigns. Ethnographic research and recent opinion surveys show overwhelming support among Basque and most non-Basque speakers for bilingual education and government intervention into the domain of public language use. In short, though Basques of differing political persuasions disagree as to how far planning should be taken and which language should be given preference, they regard the inevitability and necessity of language regulation of some sort as a matter of common sense.

What does it mean that planning, social scientific discourse and expertise, should become a tool of resistance for ethnic minorities? When did this arise, and what consequences does it have for our understanding of cultural identity and political discourse in modern complex societies? To begin to answer these questions, it is necessary to recognize language planning as a historically specific response to cultural conflict. Thus, in what follows I want to sketch out briefly the historical conditions in which Basques came to regard language planning as a necessary and logical way of resisting cultural assimilation. Secondly, I want to discuss what some of the effects have been. The effects I wish to discuss are not those that typically concern sociolinguists or political activists. That is, I will not address whether or not planning efforts have been successful at reversing the decline of Basque use, or what new socioeconomic advantages have resulted from these measures. These are obviously important questions to explore. However, here I wish to examine how, in the course of the language revival movement, Basques have acquired a new understanding of the meaning of their linguistic behavior. Specifically, I argue that the use of social scientific theories and methods in the political discourse of the language movement has served to recast the relationships between language and identity, and language and social power. These shifts in meaning, in turn, are linked to new practices—new ways of using language and strategies to regulate its use. My concern is thus not just with describing "ideological" changes, but with the link between new forms of knowledge and practices. Finally, I wish to conclude with a few general comments on the relevance of this case study to the study of power and political discourse in contemporary societies.

**LANGUAGE, NATION, AND CLASS**

Language revival movements were very widespread in nineteenth century Western Europe, yet they have received relatively little historical analysis. It has generally been assumed that the interest in preserving local languages emerged as a result of the historical intersection of rising nationalism and the declining use of the vernacular that accompanied the processes of industrialization and urbanization. This is of course not an explanation, but a description. For the most part, explanations for the rise of language planning have been embedded within debates surrounding the rise of ethnic politics, and tend to range between "primordial" and "instrumental" views of language politics. Primordial arguments assume that all people value and seek to preserve their language either for sentimental or political reasons. Most nationalist texts employ this naturalist model that depicts language planning as simply the latest tactic in centuries of Basque attempts to resist assimilation. Planning is cast as a severe measure that has been necessitated by the rapidly declining proportion of Basque speakers. Though nationalist rhetoric is the clearest example of primordialism, echoes of it are also found in social scientific texts which assert that language differences always constitute a potential source of political conflict. According to Robert Le Page (1964), this is because whenever a people's language is different from that of the state, they will tend to feel disenfranchised or marginalized and hence, prone to political agitation. Here, political science shares with nationalists the assumption that language differences are a natural object of political conflict.

Instrumentalist views describe language revitalization movements primarily as vehicles for bolstering nationalist political interests. It is argued that political elites utilize language as a symbol of national identity in order to reinforce a sense of group solidarity and legitimize the ethnic group's claim to political sovereignty. Marxist analyses can be seen as falling within this instrumentalist view of language as well. However, these tend to examine how language revival operates as an ideological tool that serves the interests of a particular class, for example, the urban petite bourgeoisie, not the ethnic group as a whole. Finally, we may also place in this instrumentalist category views that cast language planning as a logical extension of state building.
arguing that modern bureaucratic states require a single, common language in order to conduct their affairs in a rational and efficient manner.

Primordial and instrumental models are not mutually exclusive. We often find strains of both in much of the writing on language movements. All of the factors raised by these models—the number of speakers, the rise of nationalist ideology, class interests, and the rationality of bureaucratic states—constitute necessary elements in the historical field in which language planning emerges. Variations in these features shape the direction that language reform takes in any particular country. For example, in the Spanish Basque Country, class analysis has helped to reveal how the nationalist emphasis on ethnicity, including language, served to polarize Basque and Spanish workers at a time when a strong syndicalist movement was threatening to undermine Basque capitalist interests (Beltza 1976; Clark 1979). In addition, the fact that the majority of support for Basque nationalism came from the urban middle class, which was primarily Spanish-speaking by the nineteenth century, has been indirectly suggested as an explanation for the failure of the Basque Nationalist Party to move beyond symbolic support for language revival (Corcuera 1979). Attention to class interests can thus provide specific and useful insights into how the language movement interacts with other political and economic struggles, but it does not tell the whole story.

Primordial and instrumentalist arguments, whether separate or combined, are dissatisfying for a number of reasons. Clearly, primordial arguments by themselves are ahistorical and cannot explain why language becomes a source of political conflict in some instances and not in others. However, my major concern is with instrumentalist explanations, largely because they are the most persuasive and widespread. The problem with portraying language planning exclusively as an ideological apparatus for fortifying national identity or pursuing class interests is that language reform is reduced to a tool of ulterior political or economic interests. Such an approach relies on a classic division between superstructure and infrastructure, in which language reform, like cultural factors in general, is relegated to the realm of ideology, while political effects are explored primarily in terms of economic interests. In neither model do we find a political analysis of the rationale of language planning, its targets and its strategies. How is it that language differences came to be seen as a problem that needed to be regulated? It is all too often assumed that the methods, indeed the choice to plan, are self-evident and that all we need to explain is whose economic interests are being served, or whose claim to institutional power is being furthered.

Language planning movements, I believe, are fruitfully analyzed not simply as ideology, but as governmental strategies, a set of techniques or practices aimed at regulating social behavior. These practices have their origin not only in the context of class struggle and nationalism, but also in the birth of sociological thought and the growth of multiple forms of social planning that have become commonplace in modern industrial societies. Indeed, the discourse and strategies of language planning (rather than simply revival or language purification) need to be situated within the larger context of the development of the modern concept of the population, understood as an entity whose health and welfare depend upon careful scientific analysis and intervention. The history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is the history of the growing deployment of techniques of intervention into the social body (Ewald 1986; Foucault 1979a). Intervention in the name of social welfare is central to the way in which modern social life is experienced and, not surprisingly, it has become part of the vocabulary and methods in which some current resistance struggles are articulated.

LANGUAGE PLANNING AND THE SOCIAL BODY

The close link between the logic of language planning and social planning is made clear in the history of the Basque Country. Here, the first signs of a systematic attempt at language reform coincide with the close of the First World War. After the tremendous upheaval of the war, European nations were anxious to begin physical reconstruction and to restore social, economic, and political order to their war-torn societies. A strong belief in the possibility of reordering and controlling the social body was found throughout Europe and the United States during the decade following the war. In Spain, this spirit of social engineering and modernization was very alive in the developing northern periphery. The Spanish Basque provinces of Bizkaya and Gipuzkoa were important sites of shipping, arms manufacturing, and iron ore industries which expanded dramatically thanks to Spain's neutrality in the war. It was, thus, at the height of industrial growth and rapid social transformation that a group of scholars, professionals, Catholic social reformers, and
business leaders formed the Basque Studies Society, *Eusko Ikaskuntza* in 1918. This scientific society's basic premise was that growth could no longer be left to take its own haphazard course. The time had come, said members of the Society at its first historic conference, "for this people to study its grandiose past and brilliant present in the light of science with the purpose of improving the future" (Sociedad de Estudios Vascos 1918:20). Such scientific regulation was deemed necessary to ensure continued economic prosperity, social stability, and also cultural particularity.

One of the first actions of the Society was to create a Language Academy charged with the task of developing a rational plan for the "restoration" of Basque. Julio Urquijo, a philologist and leading figure of the Society, began his opening speech to the Congress of 1918 with a firm reproach for "the absolute lack of method and the patriotic enthusiasm which led our forefathers...to propose extravagant etymologies and to sustain the most grotesque hypotheses" (Urquijo 1918:413). The patriotic love for Basque, while commendable in Urquijo's view, had to be reined in; authority over language reform had to be wrested away from zealous nationalists and handed over to language experts who would guide it according to the rigors of modern linguistic methods.

The term "language planning" was not yet used, but I think it is fair to say that this is when the concept first emerged. It is clear that what these reformers had in mind was something quite new and different from their predecessors. The latter had been obsessed with eliminating Spanish loan words and normalizing the grammatical system. From this new perspective, the fate of Basque was seen to depend primarily on the nature of its social distribution—who speaks Basque, when, and where—and not, as was popularly believed, on the complexities of its non-Indo-European grammar. The strategies proposed for language revival consequently began to give greater importance to improving the social status of Basque than to the corpus per se. What became problematic now was whether Basque was used in the schools, spoken by the upper classes, and necessary for social and economic mobility, not its peculiar grammatical structure. Lexical, orthographic, and grammatical reforms of the corpus, which date back at least to the eighteenth century, continued, but their aim became redirected to the stimulation of new social habits of language use.

The interest of the Society in developing methods for regulating language practices was not isolated or unique. It arose in conjunction with a host of new social concerns—public health, improving the race, better schools, safety in the workplace, social insurance, and urban planning—problems that were emerging in the context of deep social and economic transformation. The debates over these ambitious projects for social reform reveal a profound belief in the possibility of intervening and shaping not only language, but a wide spectrum of social practices toward what were seen to be more productive and harmonious patterns. For this, members of the Society availed themselves of the latest advances in social scientific research and experiments in social planning that they were able to gather at international congresses and foreign universities and research institutes. Speaking Basque, even being Basque, came to be situated alongside these other questions of social welfare as problems that could and should be scientifically described and managed. Without such intervention, it was strongly felt that the language and the culture, like the social body, could not be guaranteed.

Within the trajectory of Basque cultural resistance, the activities of this small scientific society are important for two reasons. First, the scientific and modernist orientation of the Basque Studies Society represents a significant break from the nostalgic and traditionalist rhetoric one associates with Basque nationalism. From the perspective of Society members—many of whom, it should be stressed, were strongly nationalist—Basque society, in order to survive, did not so much have to be *sheltered* from contact as it had to be properly *managed*. Second, even though traditional nationalist rhetoric and symbols continue to thrive today, it is the scientific and sociological orientation, first articulated in a systematic fashion by the Society, that characterizes the discourse and strategies of the language movement today.

In the 1920's, the Basque Studies Society faced a society in which the social sciences were still relatively new and had a shaky legitimacy and weak institutional basis (since there was no university). This is precisely what makes the documents of the Society so fascinating. Since particular attention is paid to explicating the necessity of social planning in a wide number of areas, the parallel between language revival and social engineering is quite clear, often explicit. The triumph of Franco's repressive forces and rabid *castellanismo* brought an abrupt end to these projects. By the 1950's, when the Basque cultural movement was beginning to revive, Spain was in the midst of a shift from an authoritarian to a technocratic approach to government in which rational development was the
watchword. Franco's national project for building "poles of development" was only the most obvious of these changes. In this climate, the social sciences were established as the dominant paradigm with which to think about and act upon social and cultural problems. Minority political activists calling for language planning in the Basque Country, as in the newly independent Third World nations with whom they sometimes compared themselves, were simply applying this same rationale, so familiar to us all, to another sphere of social practices—language.

Of course, the idea that language planning was necessary may have been apparent to the intellectual elite, but this notion did not just "take off" by itself; as we will see below, it was consciously propagated through an energetic grassroots cultural movement. The point is that the commonsensical status of language planning today, the relative ease with which planning has been accepted as necessary (even if it has not been so easily implemented), is not just an outgrowth of nationalism. It rests upon the legitimacy and commonsensical status accorded to sociological thought and social planning in general. Today, it is completely natural for us to approach problems in the economy, the city, crime, or health, by appealing to scientific expertise and better planning. This kind of discourse, typically associated with the institutions and interests of the welfare state, has been appropriated by Basque oppositional discourse and is a pervasive tool of other minority cultural movements in Europe as well (Bourdieu 1980; Touraine 1981).

In the remainder of this article, I will turn to analyze some of the effects of this discursive shift (involving both new forms of knowledge and practices), by examining two of the most salient domains in which social scientific theories have been actively propagated by the Basque language movement of the last 20 years.8 The first has to do with theories about the relationship between language and identity. The second concerns the relationship between language and social power. In each case we will see how these ideas have served to constitute new interpretations of the meaning of linguistic behavior and how they are linked to political strategies aimed at regulating social behavior.

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

One of the striking aspects of the Basque movement since its inception is the endless discussion in popular newspapers, magazines, and books on the subject of who and what is a Basque. The constituent features of Basque difference have varied according to different historical periods (Greenwood 1977). In the late nineteenth century, race or ancestry was considered to be the principal distinguishing characteristic of Basqueness. Since the 1950s however, an important sector of radical Basque activists has argued strenuously and with effect against a racial or biological definition of Basqueness, insisting that language is far more important in reproducing Basque identity. Language recuperation therefore had to be a top priority in the struggle for national liberation. These activists supported their arguments by drawing on concepts from structuralist theory (de Saussure, Levi-Strauss, Lacan), and particularly the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis regarding the interrelationship between language and worldview.9 Although bearing a family resemblance, these ideas were not simply reincarnations of nineteenth century romantic notions of language as the geist or spirit of the nation. The link that was drawn between language and identity was no longer a spiritual one, but a scientific one. Grammar and lexicon were scrutinized as windows into the cognitive structures of the brain. Structuralist theory was seen to prove that losing the Basque language was tantamount to losing something quite fundamental about Basque cognition and worldview, even if no one could be very precise as to exactly what that was. Such theories were seen as laying the scientific basis for viewing language as an intimate and constitutive aspect of cultural identity, and formed the basis on which language planning arguments were constructed.

Activists looked not only to structuralism and linguistics, but also to the findings of developmental psychology to argue further that the mother tongue plays a determining role in shaping the individual's personality. Hence, many argued, it was absolutely essential that Basque be learned as a child in order to develop a truly Basque identity. This assumption explains why children have been, without a doubt, the principal targets of the language teaching campaign. According to one of the leading theorists of the cultural movement, every good nationalist "should study and be on top of what science has taught us regarding the intrinsic value of language" (Krutwig 1979:26). A substantial number of radicals, some of whom already had professional degrees, took this to heart and have gone on to pursue advanced degrees in various branches of linguistics. In fact one might say that a career in linguistics, originally transformational grammar, and increasingly sociolinguistics, is
regarded as a political career in the public interest by the members of the cultural movement.

The idea that language was essential to identity was debated in the Basque press by intellectual leaders, reproduced in political pamphlets for militants (E.T.A. 1979), and propagated among the general population through an impressive language teaching network of adult night schools (gau eskolak) located throughout the rural Basque provinces. Teachers in these night schools, originally local residents with no formal pedagogical background, were the main vehicles through which a linguistic "consciousness-raising" project was carried out. I was often surprised to find at classes that I attended for adult working-class students more or less sophisticated renditions of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, and other socio-linguistic concepts I had encountered in my graduate training. One teacher used the following syllogism to neatly summarize and explain the profound social and cultural ramifications of language differences between Basques (A) and Others (B):

If Language A = Idea B; "Way of Thinking" (pentsakera) A = "Way of Thinking" B; Personality A = Personality B; Society A = Society B.

Another strategy of local activists was to periodically organize a free public lecture series at the town hall in which Basque historians and linguists came to discuss their work on the language, its history, and causes of its decline. An example of the heightened sensitivity and introspection regarding language and identity that resulted from this consciousness-raising was the comment of one Basque woman in her mid-forties who confessed her fear to a local pro-language group that although she spoke Basque, she was not sure whether she might not be actually translating "in her head" from Spanish. Perplexed, she wondered aloud, "We may speak Basque, but how do we know if we really think in Basque?"

Of course, not all Basques are tortured about their identity and many continue to consider themselves Basque even though they do not speak it, but the notion that a deep tie exists between the Basque language and "authentic" Basque identity has been actively propagated and, I believe, has received widespread currency and acceptability as a scientific fact. This, in turn, has grounded the demand for language planning as indispensable for the very survival of Basque culture.

DIGLOSSIA: LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL POWER

In addition to appropriating linguistic and psychological theory to establish the importance of language for cultural identity, activists have used sociolinguistics to identify the factors that account for the disappearance of Basque language use. The sociological explanation for the decline of Basque, first articulated in the pre-Civil War era, has been developed with even greater conviction and specificity. Activists found a useful tool in the term diglossia, developed by Charles Ferguson (1964).

Diglossia is generally used to describe situations where two languages or varieties coexist in a single community, where one of these, the "high" variety, is used mainly in public and formal domains, while the other, or "low" variety, is usually employed in private or informal conversation. It is easy to see why this term appealed to activists since, unlike the more neutral term "bilingualism," diglossia helped bring into focus the socially subordinate status of Basque as the "low" variety vis-à-vis Spanish.

The example of diglossia is interesting because it reveals that activists did not blindly accept all aspects of sociolinguistic theories without question. They rejected, for example, the idea proposed by some theorists that diglossia could be a stable form of bilingualism (Eckert 1980; SIADECO 1979).

From the Basque experience of rapid language decline, diglossia was both a sign and a cause of language shift. Pointing to numerous case studies, activists claimed that history proved that those languages excluded from usage in the domains of social and political power inevitably decline in prestige and use. The theories about diglossia were of interest to activists not just to describe their situation, but to identify precisely the targets of their campaigns: in this case, bringing Basque into the public domain.

The term diglossia has become commonplace in the vocabulary of cultural politics and signals a new understanding of the linkage between language and social power. Even more pervasive than the term itself is the logic that it represents: the survival of Basque rests on whether or not Basque will be able to transcend the sphere of family, friends, and the confessional. The self-proclaimed aim of the language planning movement today is to overcome diglossia through what is commonly called language "normalization." The strategies for normalization—lexical modernization, standardization, bilingual education—are all focused on facilitating the introduction of Basque into formal social spheres previously reserved for Spanish, for example, the mass media, education, and public administration.10

In addition to introducing new theories and terminology to describe language use, the language movement has made extensive use of social scientific techniques of gathering knowledge on
language, namely the statistical survey. As in the prewar years, language advocacy groups have stressed the critical importance of gathering statistics in order to acquire a complete knowledge of the geographic distribution of Basque speakers, their socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, age, sex, and religious practices (Euskaltzaindia 1977; SIADECO 1979). Since 1982, the government has facilitated this endeavor by requiring that the census include basic data on linguistic capacity. All individuals are asked to characterize their knowledge of Basque as good, fair, or none at all. This accumulation of data has enabled Basques to provide uncontested proof of the decline of their language and has been used as leverage in pushing for protective language legislation.

In the process, Basques have also come to understand themselves as a linguistic population in the modern sense of the word: as a scientifically quantifiable entity, with particular sociological characteristics, rates of growth, attrition, and so forth. In an interesting propaganda tactic, pro-Basque groups have actually taken to publicly displaying these language statistics in central plazas, marketplaces, and town halls as a means of spreading this new sociological awareness of the precarious and marginalized status of Basque.

Based on this new knowledge, the enemies of the Basque language have expanded from the State and formal censorship to include social, economic, and demographic trends in the population such as immigration and urbanization. This is why Basque language supporters are not satisfied with official recognition of Basque; they call for altering these social trends through management of the linguistic population. Ever more precise statistical data are being demanded in order to identify which particular sectors of the population (children in specific language "zones," administrative personnel, etc.) should be targeted for intensive monitoring and regulation of their linguistic habits.

From this brief discussion we can see that the Basque battle for cultural sovereignty is one in which the social sciences play a key role as authoritative discourse. In looking at how activists have appropriated social scientific theories and techniques of knowledge, I want to stress that I am not simply arguing that they have utilized social science for political ends. Rather, the examples taken from language planning discourse and practices are intended to bring attention to changes taking place at the level of Basque subjectivity.

I have argued that like most modern Western societies, Basques in the twentieth century have come to understand themselves as a sociological population and to approach their problems of cultural revival utilizing the rationale and many of the techniques of intervention that we associate with the management of social welfare. This is very clearly evidenced in the efforts to preserve Basque, a core aspect of the cultural movement. In the course of this language movement, preexisting notions of the link between language and identity have been reaffirmed and recast in the language of science. In addition, Basques have come to understand their language as embedded in and influenced by social factors (e.g., class, the political and social prestige of its speakers, demographics). They have, as a result, come to interpret language practices and history in a new light. This has led to an unprecedented monitoring and awareness of language use in everyday life and its relationship to social power.

In this new era of language planning, Basques conceive of their individual language behavior and choices as bearing a direct relationship to the historical fate of their language. Through popular media campaigns and language classes, they have been encouraged to think of the social significance of speaking Basque in public as well as in the home. The individual who does not speak Basque is seen as contributing to its demise. As one might expect, this has had profound implications for the way in which linguistic code choices are made and interpreted. Choosing to speak Basque or Spanish is invested with new political meaning; part of that meaning is to signal identity as Basque and/or nationalist, but part also derives from its perceived sociological weight. Teaching Basque to one’s children is regarded as more than just "tradition," it is a cultural responsibility. In the town where I did research one Basque-speaking family was notorious for speaking to their children in Spanish. While rural baserriarrak, farmers, had in the past sometimes done this in hopes of advancing the future of their children, in the current political climate this couple was regarded as cultural traitors. In the public sphere, language choice is similarly laden with symbolic significance. Town council meetings are often now bilingual with official translators present. Basque-speaking council members (all of whom are bilingual) could, of course, simply use Spanish, but they insist upon their political right and the social necessity to speak their language in the public sphere. Similarly, political leaders will generally begin their speeches with at least a few Basque words even if they are incapable of conducting a conversation in Basque. These people are not trying to pretend
they are Basque speakers, nor do they need to use Basque to be comprehended by their audience. Rather, they are demonstrating their support, whether sincere or instrumental, for Basque normalization and the notion that Basque should be spoken in the public sphere of politics as much as in the farmhouse. The effects of the changes in Basque subjectivity produced by new forms of knowledge (statistics, structuralist theory, socio-linguistics, psychology) are thus not confined to the ideological realm; they have deep consequences for everyday interaction (Urla 1987).

KNOWLEDGE, PLANNING, AND POWER

This analysis of language planning discourse and its effects challenges us to rethink the relationship between social planning techniques and power.

One of the interesting features about methods of social management is that they are ubiquitous and know no political regime. Language planning programs, for instance, have at times been used by states to subjugate minorities and prevent the social mobility of some, while privileging that of others. In other cases, like the Basque, they have been used to subvert a social and cultural regime that has denied cultural difference, even at times openly punished its manifestations. Social planning methods thus cannot be described as inherently linked to the interests of domination or resistance; they may and have served either purpose. Are we to conclude that these practices are politically neutral? If not, how can we understand the relationship between such planning discourses, the scientific knowledge and practices they produce, and power?

There is no doubt that new social controls and access to capital, symbolic and material, are made possible by social planning and the forms of knowledge and intervention which it institutes. However, my point in this article is that political effects must be understood as comprising more than economic or institutional control; they operate also at the level of subjectivity and everyday practices.

This perspective on power has been one of the major insights of the work of French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault. In his works on the disciplinary practices of modern prisons and the Western scientific discourses on sexuality (1979b; 1980; 1982), Foucault has pointed to new ways of understanding how scientific discourses and practices operate as "technologies of power" not by repressing individuality, but by producing new truths about the self—indeed, we might say new types of individuals: the "criminal personality," the "homosexual," the "hysterical woman." Foucault has identified this as a specific form of power, "subjectification," and has traced its various mechanisms, from the rites of the confessional, the therapeutic couch, and the medical gaze, to the various disciplinary techniques of the penitentiary. While subjectification has by no means supplanted the more familiar forms of domination and exploitation, it is, argues Foucault, a central aspect of the expansion of the social sciences and the "arts of government," including social planning, of the modern welfare state in Western Europe.

Recent anthropological work on cultural conflict and resistance to capitalist systems in non-Western societies (Comaroff 1985; Ong 1987; Taussig 1980), some of which has been directly influenced by Foucault, has similarly attempted to include subjectification as a critical dimension along which power is exercised. These authors, in contrast to more traditional approaches in political economy, explore not only the strictly economic, but also the complex cultural impact of capitalist penetration. They show that cash cropping, proletarianization, and high-tech factory discipline carry with them distinctive individualistic conceptions of the self, social relations, gender ideology—elements usually included under the vague term "worldview"—that may themselves be sites of local resistance. Ethnographically rich and complex, these studies point to the unique contribution that anthropology can make to the study of the mechanisms or practices of subjectification in everyday life.

In contrast to Foucault's work, which has centered on the construction of dominant Western discourses, these anthropological studies have focused on the Third World, examining the varied forms of resistance to discourses and practices of subjectification associated with colonialism, capitalist discipline, the Western conception of Homo economicus, and Christianization. One may be tempted to conclude that subjectification is one of the more insidious and overlooked techniques of colonization of the West over the "other." However, a careful reading shows that in no case do the authors find that resistance takes the form of a wholesale rejection of imposed cultural systems. Rather cultural values and practices are reworked, reconstituted, and given new meaning. Although critical, this point is often overlooked: authenticity is not a quality nor a product of oppositional practice.

This is what I hope to have revealed in the study of the Basque language movement just
presented. If nothing else, the Basque case shows that resistance to cultural domination is by no means restricted to Third World peoples. Interestingly, this instance of cultural resistance is one in which Hispanicization is resisted precisely through the appropriation of a dominant Western discourse--science. In studying the discourses of science and reason, Foucault certainly foresaw the possibility of this kind of subversion:

There is not, on the one side a discourse of power, and opposite it, another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations.... We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourses can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy [Foucault 1980:100-101].

This is very much what has happened in the Basque case. Basque activists, like many other cultural minorities, have strategically seized the theories of social science and its techniques of gathering knowledge and put them to use in gaining control over their cultural reproductions. However, we must be careful to avoid assuming that what we have is an opposition between an imposed and a real or authentic identity. The study of these new identity movements must recognize that new subjectivities are as much a product of the strategies of resistance as it is of domination. As this case study has shown, the strategies of the Basque cultural movement are best understood not as protecting a true or essential identity from power, but as forging that identity in the process of resistance.

NOTES

1. Historically, the Basque Country, or Euskal Herria, includes seven provinces, four of which are located on Spanish national territory, and three on French territory. These two regions, referred to by Basques as the southern and northern Basque Country respectively, have not been united since the Middle Ages and differ substantially from each other economically, socially, and politically. The Basque Statute of Autonomy (1979) created a new semiautonomous political entity, the Comunidad Autónoma Vasca, governed by a regional Basque government. This entity includes only three of the four Spanish Basque provinces and is thus unacceptable to those Basques who wish for a united independent Basque state.
2. Under the Franco regime, a campaign of repression against all expression of minority culture effectively censored all public use and instruction of languages other than Castilian. Article 3 of the Spanish Constitution (1978) continued to make it an obligation to learn and know Castilian, but it acknowledged that in the autonomous regions, the local vernaculars may be recognized as co-official. The Basque Statute of Autonomy, Article 6, similar to the Galician and Catalan Statutes, acknowledges the right (but not obligation) of all citizens to know and use Basque. The details of linguistic rights and obligations are further specified in subsequent legislation, most important of which is the Law for the Normalization of Basque (1983). Navarre, the Basque province outside of the Autonomous Community, has its own separate linguistic legislation. In contrast to the Statute of Autonomy, Article 9 of the Ley Orgánica de Reintegración y Amejoramiento del Régimen Foral de Navarra declares Basque co-official with Spanish only in those zones designated as "Basque speaking."
3. These findings are based on 18 months of fieldwork in a bilingual community in Gipuzkoa (Spain) 1982-83, funded by the Social Science Research Council, with additional support from the MacArthur Foundation and the Basque Studies Program, University of Nevada, Reno.
4. Surveys conducted by the Basque Government in 1982 show that 90% of the population believes it is necessary to teach Basque in the schools; 67% call for complete literacy in Basque by age 14 (Eusko Jaurlaritza 1983:185).
5. Glazer and Moynihan (1975) and Verdery (1985) discuss how these categories apply to the study of ethnicity.
6. See Deutsch (1953), Fishman (1972), and Kohn (1961) for the early and influential examples of this type of analysis that links language revival and nationalism.
7. Status planning (Kloss 1969) refers to regulation aimed at altering the social status of a language. The usual techniques employed consist of promoting usage in literature, formal settings, or public institutions either through media campaigns or legislation. The assumption is that usage in such domains will raise the social prestige accorded to a language and, hence, make knowledge of it appear desirable to residents. Corpus planning refers to the direct alteration of the grammar or lexicon, and may be used to achieve status planning, as, for example, when standardization is...
deemed necessary for introducing a language into the schools or state bureaucracy.
8. I should note that by this I am referring not only to the more recent activities of the official language planning commission of the Basque Government, but more generally to the popular language movement of the last 20 years which first pressured for language planning.
9. See Krutwig (1979) and Txillardegi (1979) for the most well developed examples of this argument.
10. As Kathryn Woolard’s study of the Catalan language movement (1986) aptly shows, a great deal of ambiguity surrounds the meaning of normalization. She suggests that this ambiguity is both a strength and a weakness of the language movement. On the one hand, it has served to gather widespread support from a diversified population. On the other hand, as specific language policies are implemented, it is certain that the differing attitudes toward Catalan revival will become more apparent.
11. See Bourdieu (1982) on these effects resulting from educational and language policies.
12. Less known, perhaps, is Foucault’s political involvement in critiques of systems of social security (cf. Bono and Foucault 1986). Francois Ewald’s recent work (1986), L’Etat Providence, represents one of the most important attempts to provide a global analysis of the welfare state from this perspective.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This article was originally presented in shorter version as part of panel entitled “Governing the Social: Recent Research in European Anthropology” at the American Anthropology Association meeting, Philadelphia, December 3-7, 1986. My thanks to Celso Alvarez, David Horn, Aihwa Ong, and Richard Parker and Paul Rabinow for their useful comments and suggestions.

REFERENCES CITED


