

Unpacking Western anticolonialism: Jagi-Jagi and the Second Spanish Republic, 1931–6

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Unpacking Western Anticolonialism: *Jagi-Jagi* and the Second Spanish Republic, 1931–6

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journals.sagepub.com/home/jch**Maria Reyes Baztán** 

School of Literature and Languages, University of Reading, UK

Abstract

This article explores the appropriation of anticolonial language by the Basque radical newsletter and organization *Jagi-Jagi* (Arise-Arise). Although *Jagi-Jagi* initially emerged under the doctrine of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) in 1932, the newsletter and organization offered a more radical form of nationalism than the official party, which during the Second Spanish Republic sought the approval of a Basque Statue of Autonomy. One of the most visible features of *Jagi-Jagi*'s radicalism was its anticolonialism, a facet that scholars have previously failed to explore. *Jagi-Jagi* constantly equated the situation of the Basque Country to that of other colonies and condemned both internal and international colonialism. This article explores both the national and international dimensions of *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism and considers the motives behind such anticolonial claims. It also analyses the set of complex and often-contradictory ideas that existed within *Jagi-Jagi*'s discourses on race and claims that they responded to the different uses of Basque anticolonialism. The case study of *Jagi-Jagi* and its racial discourse serve to elucidate the complexities of western anticolonialism.

Keywords

anticolonialism, Basque nationalism, internationalism, *Jagi-Jagi*, Second Spanish Republic

Corresponding author:

Maria Reyes Baztán, School of Literature and Languages, University of Reading, Reading RG6 6EE, UK.

Email: marebazhist@gmail.com

The Second Spanish Republic (1931–6) opened a new world of possibilities for Spain's peripheral nationalist movements. A few hours after the Spanish Republic had been proclaimed, Catalan nationalist leader Francesc Macià announced the creation of a Catalan Republic and after months of negotiations, Catalonia was granted its first Statute of Autonomy in 1932. The same day the Spanish Republic was declared, the council of the Biscayan town of Getxo, presided over by the young Basque nationalist leader José Antonio Aguirre, imitated Macià and proclaimed the 'Basque Republic linked in federation with the Spanish Republic'.¹ Achieving autonomy, however, was not as smooth for the Basques as the Catalan example and took until October 1936. Although the Basque city of Eibar was the first to proclaim the Republic in Spain, the strong Catholic and conservative ideas of the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (Basque Nationalist Party; henceforth PNV) initially clashed with the new secular and progressive Republican regime. Furthermore, not all sectors of Basque nationalism agreed with the pro-autonomy programme of the PNV. Instead, the Basque radical newsletter and organization *Jagi-Jagi* (Arise-Arise) believed that collaboration with the 'enemy' was not feasible and that independence was the only way to go forward. *Jagi-Jagi* reinforced this belief by drawing parallels between the situation of the Basque Country (or Euskadi) and other colonized nations, positing that Euskadi was in fact a colony within Spain.

Various scholars have studied *Jagi-Jagi*'s ideology and its long-term influence within the Basque liberation movement.² Nevertheless, scholars have failed to acknowledge and analyse *Jagi-Jagi*'s explicit anticolonial ideas, which were an essential part of its ideological core. For instance, Eduardo Renobales – whose monograph *Jagi-Jagi: Historia del independentismo radical* is one of the few academic studies that analyse *Jagi-Jagi* in depth – has argued that *Jagi-Jagi*'s doctrine can be summarized as follows: strong independentism, opposition to any kind of agreement with the Spanish state, and anti-fascist and anti-capitalist traits.³ Although Renobales' summary is a good representation of *Jagi-Jagi*'s radicalism, the blatant and aggressive anticolonial language of the newsletter should be added to this list. Anticolonialism is one of the most important aspects of *Jagi-Jagi*'s radical thought. *Jagi-Jagi* proclaimed itself an anti-imperial newsletter that advocated the freedom of the oppressed nations and positioned the Basque Country as part of a global anticolonial struggle.⁴

1 Translated from the original: 'la república vasca vinculada en federación con la república española' in S. De Pablo and L. Mees, *El péndulo patriótico: Historia del Partido Nacionalista Vasco, 1895–2005* (Barcelona 2005), 121. Note: all translations in this article are mine unless specified.

2 See among others A. Elorza, *Ideologías del nacionalismo vasco 1876–1937 (De los 'euskaros' a Jagi-Jagi)* (San Sebastián 1978); J. M. Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari. Una pasión útil. Eli Gallastegi (1892–1974)* (Tafalla 1992); C. J. Watson, *Basque Nationalism and Political Violence: The Ideological and Intellectual Origins of ETA* (Reno 2007); E. Renobales, *Jagi-Jagi: Historia del independentismo radical* (Bilbao 2010); G. Fernández Soldevilla, 'De Aberri a ETA, pasando por Venezuela. Rupturas y continuidades en el nacionalismo vasco radical (1921–1977)', *Bulletin d'histoire contemporaine de l'Esgapne*, 51 (2015), 219–64.

3 Renobales, *Jagi-Jagi*, 96.

4 Note: in the corpus analysed, Basque radical nationalists never established the difference between 'colonialism' and 'imperialism' and these were used interchangeably. However, a close reading of their texts suggests that Basque nationalists understood imperialism as the wider phenomenon and colonialism as the particular imperial practice to which they were subjected. In this article, I use the term 'anticolonialism' to refer to both colonial and imperial opposition. I have chosen this word over anti-imperialism to emphasize the Basque nationalist belief that Euskadi was a colony.

This article examines in detail *Jagi-Jagi*'s appropriation of anticolonial language. By exploring both the national and international dimensions of *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism, the article considers the motives behind such anticolonial claims and argues that they responded to two main objectives. On the one hand, *Jagi-Jagi* painted Euskadi as a colony within Spain suffering multi-faceted economic, cultural and political domination. This was used to reject the PNV's pro-autonomy strategy and to present Basque independence as the next logical and necessary step. The belief that Euskadi was a colony and that collaboration with Spain was unfeasible, also prompted *Jagi-Jagi* to consider different extra-parliamentary strategies used in colonial settings to achieve independence. On the other hand, *Jagi-Jagi* also used its anticolonial discourse to internationalize and to make visible the Basque cause. In a period in which *Jagi-Jagi* was unable to establish significant international connections and direct links with other nations, the newsletter proclaimed its solidarity with colonized nations and decried global colonialism. In sum, *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism had two clear aims in the service of the movement: to stress the need for independence and to internationalize the Basque cause. This suggests that despite *Jagi-Jagi*'s constant anticolonial claims, the newsletter and organization were not necessarily driven by a genuine hatred for colonialism. Rather, we need to observe *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism as a rhetorical strategy that was adapted to the needs of the movement.

As the article demonstrates, *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism entailed two contradictory visions of race in the newsletter. When condemning Spain's rule and advocating independence, *Jagi-Jagi* used the classic racial arguments against the Spanish that had characterized Basque nationalism since its emergence. Contrarily, when decrying global colonialism, *Jagi-Jagi* directly attacked the structures of colonial rule, including racism. In other words, discourses of race responded to the two main objectives of Basque anticolonialism. By unpacking the set of complex and often-contradictory ideas that existed in the Basque anticolonial corpus through the case study of *Jagi-Jagi*, this article elucidates the complexities of western anticolonialism.

In November of 1930, after nine years of internal divisions, the PNV reunified in the Basque town of Bergara. The party had been divided into two different political organizations since 1921, when growing tensions between two opposing sectors of Basque nationalism (known as moderates and radicals) reached its peak. These two sectors had been accusing each other of misinterpreting the words of the founder of Basque nationalism, Sabino Arana, since he died in 1903 without having clarified what was the real goal of the movement: independence or autonomy.⁵ As a result, two opposing groups were formed within the Basque nationalist movement: the radicals,

5 During Arana's political life, his thought experienced abrupt changes. Whilst up until 1898, Arana advocated for the necessary independence of the Basque Country, at the end of his life his thought experienced a moderate turn which made him welcome autonomy. This sparked confusion within his followers for years. See D. Muro, 'Ethnicity and Violence: The Case of Radical Basque Nationalism', PhD thesis, The London School of Economics and Political Science (2004), 106.

who rejected any form of collaboration with the Spanish state to achieve Basque nationalist goals and defended the complete separation of Spain and Euskadi, and the moderates, who advocated for a more gradual path to self-determination and welcomed autonomy.

Although these sectors finally put their differences aside and merged together in the same party in 1930, the union was not to last as the Republican period exacerbated the differences between Basque radicals and moderates. Indeed, with the arrival of the Republic, the PNV's main goal became the achievement of autonomy.⁶ This time the opposition to the PNV's pro-autonomy programme came from a new radical group formed around the newsletter *Jagi-Jagi*, which during the first years of the Second Spanish Republic was part of the PNV. Although for the PNV achieving autonomy did not imply abandoning independence as a main objective but a first step towards national liberation, *Jagi-Jagi* believed that collaboration with Spain was unfeasible. Thus, between December 1933 and January 1934, a second division in the party took place when a group of radical dissidents left the PNV and *Jagi-Jagi* separated from the main party.

Jagi-Jagi published its first issue in September 1932, a year and a half after the proclamation of the Second Spanish Republic. Although *Jagi-Jagi* had a strong and well-established competitor, the PNV's official newspaper *Euzkadi*, the radical newsletter had significant success during the Second Republic, becoming the most widely read Basque periodical by young nationalists during the pre-war period.⁷ In fact, in its strongest periods, *Jagi-Jagi* was able to print more than 22,000 copies per issue. Whilst between September 1932 and January 1934 *Jagi-Jagi* published an issue every Saturday, from 1934 to 1936 it published fewer and fewer issues, mostly due to problems relating to printing access once the newsletter was separated from the PNV. On 18 July 1936, a day after the coup d'état that marked the start of the Spanish Civil War, *Jagi-Jagi* published its 110th issue, which would be its last.

Jagi-Jagi did not have an easy life and was the object of constant repression and censorship. On occasions, the Republic suspended the publication of nationalist periodicals and accused them of rebellion against the regime. In addition, many of *Jagi-Jagi* members were harshly fined or imprisoned due to direct violent confrontations between nationalists and republicans.⁸ Indeed, the pronounced differences between the Basque nationalist movement (strongly Catholic, conservative and fearful of possible social revolution) and the Republic (which had imposed restrictions on religious practice such as the suspension of confessional education) caused considerable friction, tension and direct confrontation between the two in the early years. However, whilst the aim of achieving autonomy implied a process of moderation in the PNV's discourse and doctrine, *Jagi-Jagi* continued experiencing a process of radicalization during the Republican

6 De Pablo and Mees, *El péndulo patriótico*, 120.

7 Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari*, 160.

8 De Pablo and Mees, *El péndulo patriótico*, 126.

years. As result, the differences between the Republic and *Jagi-Jagi* became increasingly prominent.

Jagi-Jagi promoted a more extreme version of Basque nationalism than the official party. Unlike the PNV, *Jagi-Jagi* advocated the use of extra-parliamentary methods (from civil disobedience to political violence) to achieve independence. In fact, as Gaizka Fernández Soldevilla suggests, the *mendigoxales*, who were heavily involved in *Jagi-Jagi*, were armed, practised shooting and received military training.⁹ As *Jagi-Jagi* claimed on many occasions, the *mendigoxales*, were ‘soldiers of the motherland’.¹⁰ In its second issue, *Jagi-Jagi* stated:

Let me tell you this in secret, *mendigoxale*, you are not a sportsman. Listen properly: you are a soldier of the motherland.... Yes, you are a soldier ... a soldier of a state that does not exist, but whose future existence depends largely on you.¹¹

Furthermore, whilst the PNV fought vigorously to achieve autonomy and participated in Spain’s political life, *Jagi-Jagi* advocated complete independence of Euskadi, criticized the Republican government daily and rejected any collaboration with Spanish forces.¹² *Jagi-Jagi* defended its fervent separatism by constantly quoting the radical thought of Sabino Arana, who they considered as an unquestionable and almost messianic authority. The newsletter considered itself the real defender of Arana’s ideology: as *Jagi-Jagi* claimed, ‘Sabino Arana y Goiri is a dead man who is still alive’.¹³

One of the most important elements that *Jagi-Jagi* inherited from Arana was his anticolonialism, which he had already used to justify Basque self-determination. In the 1890s, whilst Spain was fighting for the control of its colonies overseas, Arana equated the situation of Euskadi to that of Cuba and the Philippines and gave a colonial reading to the Basque situation. He also presented the Spanish as a racially mixed and tainted race, inferior to the Basques, who were racially pure. In order to present independence from Spain as something necessary, Arana reversed the common distinction usually established by imperial powers to stress the differences between the colonizer (the West) and the colonized (the ‘other’): it was the colonizer (Spain) and not the colonized (the Basque) who was racially inferior, uncivilized and barbaric. As the following sections of the article demonstrate, during the Second Republic *Jagi-Jagi* inherited and adapted Arana’s anticolonialism to the needs of Basque radicalism.

9 See Fernández Soldevilla, ‘Ecos de la Guerra Civil. La glorificación del *gudari* en la génesis de la violencia de ETA (1936–1968)’, *Bulletin d’histoire contemporaine de l’Espagne*, 49 (2014), 247–61 (250).

10 Translated from the original, ‘los mendigoxales, soldados de la Patria’ in Urduri, ‘La labor de los mendigoxales’, *Jagi-Jagi* (24 September 1932).

11 Translated and adapted from the original: ‘Te lo voy a decir en secreto, mendigoxale: tú no eres un deportista. Óyelo bien: tú eres un soldado de la Patria ... Sí, eres soldado ... soldado de un Estado que no existe, pero cuya futura existencia depende en gran parte de ti’ in M. S., ‘¡Quietas las makilas!’, *Jagi-Jagi* (24 September 1932).

12 In fact, *Jagi-Jagi* advocated the establishment of a Frente Nacional Vasco (Basque National Front) which, inspired by the Irish example, united the most prominent Basque nationalist forces, including the PNV and the recently founded Acción Nacionalista Vasca (Basque Nationalist Action).

13 Translated from the original: ‘Sabino Arana es un muerto que vive’ quoted in Fernández Soldevilla, ‘De Aberri a ETA’, 224.

Jagi-Jagi interpreted the Basque problem in the same way as Sabino Arana; Euskadi had been a free and independent nation until the nineteenth century, when it was forcefully colonized. According to *Jagi-Jagi*, 'Spanish monarchical imperialism' – inherited by the Republic – had established a formal dominion in the Basque Country in the previous century and since then, Basques had been forcibly subjugated and enslaved.¹⁴ As this section demonstrates, anticolonialism became a recurrent strategy to legitimize *Jagi-Jagi*'s separatist and anti-collaborationist claims.

Jagi-Jagi devoted many articles to analysing and critiquing Euskadi's alleged colonial situation from every angle. The economic consequences of colonial rule were analysed from a profoundly anti-capitalist perspective. For *Jagi-Jagi*, capitalism was the most substantial consequence of colonialism.¹⁵ In 1934, Basque radical nationalist Trifón Etxebarria (also known as *Etarte*), who was in charge of writing about Euskadi's social problem in *Jagi-Jagi*, summarized the anti-capitalist doctrine of Basque radicalism: 'we hate capitalism, because similarly to imperialism, it enslaves nations – the latter enslaved men and the former enslaves workers'.¹⁶ Another article claimed: 'imperialism aims to have in its claws small nationalities, and its ally, capitalism, aspires to do the same with humble [in the sense of 'lowly'] men'.¹⁷ Basques were doubly exploited and oppressed by imperialism and capitalism. Therefore, it was necessary to eradicate these 'ills' from Euskadi.¹⁸

Although *Jagi-Jagi*'s claims sometimes resembled those made by Lenin in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917), its anti-capitalist conceptions did not emanate from socialism. In fact, although it is true that some radicals were deeply influenced by the ideas of Irish socialist James Connolly, *Jagi-Jagi*'s anti-capitalism came from the social doctrine of the Church.¹⁹ Therefore, such anti-capitalist claims did not translate into a rapprochement between the left and Basque radical nationalists. In fact, Basque radical nationalists believed that socialism had deep contradictions: *Etarte*, for instance, could not comprehend how socialism – which was allegedly an

14 See original: 'la situación de esclavitud en que nuestra patria se encuentra a causa del imperialismo monárquico español que decretó la inicua ley del 39, destruyendo la soberanía de un pueblo' in EMB (signed by different nationalist women), 'Carta abierta a don José María de Amilibia', *Jagi-Jagi* (21 January 1933).

15 Sabino Arana had already denounced the effects of industrialization during his lifetime, when criticizing the consequences of the industrial revolution in the Basque region of Biscay, seen as a direct result of the Spanish invasion. *Jagi-Jagi* also attributed the practices of capitalism to Spaniards, who were accused of bringing it to Euskadi. However, unlike Arana, *Jagi-Jagi* denounced the consequences that capitalism brought for both the Spanish and Basque working classes settled in Bilbao. This issue had already been raised in the 1920s by Basque radical Eli Gallastegi, who became one of the most charismatic leaders of *Jagi-Jagi*. In the 1920s, Gallastegi had already advocated the solidarity of the working classes – and even collaboration with Spanish workers – and disassociated these from any 'racial' criteria. See L. Mees, *Nacionalismo vasco, movimiento obrero y cuestión social (1903–1923)* (Bilbao 1992), 335.

16 Translated from the original: 'Odiamos al capitalismo, porque al igual que el Imperialismo, esclaviza a los pueblos, aquel esclavizó a los hombres, éste a los obreros' in *Etarte*, 'Capitalismo y orden social', *Jagi-Jagi* (14 July 1934).

17 Translated from the original: 'El imperialismo ansia tener bajo sus garras a los pueblos pequeños, y su aliado el capitalismo a los hombres humildes' in *Jagi-Jagi* (14 March 1936).

18 See original: 'luchemos por desterrar estos males de nuestro pueblo' in *Jagi-Jagi* (14 March 1936), 2.

19 Fernández Soldevilla, 'De Aberri a ETA', 225; Watson, *Basque Nationalism and Political Violence*, 132.

internationalist and anti-imperialist movement – denied rights to the oldest nation of Europe, Euskadi.²⁰

Colonial rule also had many cultural and social dimensions. According to *Jagi-Jagi*, a foreign power had invaded Euskadi and had imposed its ‘exotic’ laws and its imperialist traditions, with the intention of suppressing Basque identity, language and race. *Jagi-Jagi* believed that the Spanish tried to ‘kill the traditional soul of our race’ by imposing their educational system, which it considered ‘the most powerful weapon that Hispanic imperialism has had in Euskadi’.²¹ Through their invasion, Spaniards had imposed their violent practices and their ‘militarist imperialism’, corrupting the peaceful nature of the Basques.²² This imperialism had ‘taught [Basques] how to use weapons in order to usurp free nations’ and ‘had covered American and Moorish lands with young Basque blood, which Euskadi needed to cultivate a new life’.²³ As seen in these texts, *Jagi-Jagi* justified the Basque involvement in past colonial activities by blaming Spanish influence on Euskadi.

Jagi-Jagi also criticized the political consequences of imperial rule which, in its view, had led to the loss of Basque political sovereignty. ‘WE BASQUES ARE NOT SPANISH – *Jagi-Jagi* stated in capital letters – TO FORCE A FOREIGN NATION ON US IS TO EXERCISE AN IMPERIALIST ACT’.²⁴ Basque radicals gave this direct form of control an explicit name: colonialism. *Jagi-Jagi* criticized ‘the methods of colonization of Spaniards in Euskadi’ and wrote about the racial conflict between ‘an imperialist race which has not resigned itself to cease ruling ... over a traditionally unconquerable race that does not wish to be ruled by anyone with colonial pretensions’.²⁵ *Jagi-Jagi* argued that the ‘violent domination’ that Basques experienced was justified by the excuse of ‘civilizing’ the Basques.²⁶ According to the newsletter, however, it was the colonizer and not the colonized who needed to be civilized. The newsletter justified this idea by stressing the barbaric customs of Spaniards, including bullfighting, alcoholism

20 See Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari*, 173.

21 Translated and adapted from the original: ‘asesinar el alma tradicional de nuestra raza’ and ‘ha sido el arma más potente con que ha contado en Euzkadi el imperialismo hispano’ in M. De la Sota, ‘Escuelas del pueblo’, *Jagi-Jagi* (1 April 1933).

22 Translated and adapted from the original: ‘todos víctimas iguales del imperialismo militarista’ in Anon., ‘Del libro de *Gudari*. Por la libertad vasca. Fragmentos’, *Jagi-Jagi* (2 January 1934).

23 Translated and adapted from the original: ‘el imperialismo español ... enseña[n] a manejar las armas para destinarnos a usurpar pueblos libres’ in E. de Umaran, ‘Meditando. Servicio militar’, *Jagi-Jagi* (2 January 1934) and ‘Y no al militarismo imperialista que ha cubierto tierras americanas y moras de sangre joven vasca, que Euzkadi necesita para resurgir a la nueva vida’ in ‘21-Julio-1876’, *Jagi-Jagi* (21 July 1934).

24 Translated from the original: ‘LOS VASCOS NO SOMOS ESPAÑOLES, IMPONERNOS POR LA FUERZA QUE UN PUEBLO EXTRAÑO NOS GOBIERNE ES EJERCER UN ACTO DE IMPERIALISMO [in capital letters in original]’ in *Jagi-Jagi* (8 April 1933). Note: ‘Los vascos no somos españoles’ and ‘imperialismo’ are in bold in the original.

25 Translated from the original: ‘los métodos de “colonización” de los españoles en Euzkadi’ in Anon., ‘Naskaldija’, *Jagi-Jagi* (1 April 1933) and ‘una raza imperialista que no se resigna a no mandar ... frente a una raza tradicionalmente indómita que no se aviene a ser mandada por nadie que venga con ínfulas colonizadoras’ in M. S., ‘Epistolario de la semana’, *Jagi-Jagi* (20 May 1933).

26 See original: ‘pretendiendo justificar la dominación violenta de que nos hace objeto con miras altruistas (¡je, je!) de civilizarnos’ in Azke, ‘España independentista’.

and their innate impulse to invade free nations, impose their culture and language and persecute indigenous peoples.²⁷

Basque nationalists were, however, optimistic about the end of colonial rule. Since Latin America was an important point of analogy to reinforce the idea of Euskadi as a colony, *Jagi-Jagi* thought that the independence of the Basque Country would also arrive soon.²⁸ For example, *Jagi-Jagi* noted referring to the past independence of Cuba and the future of the Basques: 'history repeats itself'.²⁹ Another article published in the same issue stated: 'Spain lost its American colonies because it cruelly persecuted [Latin] American nationalism. But Spanish governors have not learnt their lesson. Do they intend that within fifty years Spain is confined to the Castilian plain?'³⁰ The solution to this situation was simple: to fight for 'the recognition of our nation free of colonisers'.³¹ 'Nationalism' – *Jagi-Jagi* stated – 'fights against those who impose their colonising desires in this Basque land'.³² The struggle for national liberation and for the end of colonial rule were two compatible and complementary struggles.

This anticolonial rhetoric which constantly condemned the colonial situation of Euskadi and stressed its consequences turned independence from the 'metropole' into something logical. Thus, the collaboration between colonizer and colonized (autonomy) seemed unbearable and the only plausible solution was independence. As *Jagi-Jagi* stated in capital letters:

[WE] BASQUES ARE NOT SPANISH AND WE AIM TO RECOVER THE
INDEPENDENCE THAT THE SPANISH MONARCHY TOOK AWAY FROM US

27 For a general criticism of Spanish culture and bullfighting see Gaztelumendi'tar L, 'Eg', *Jagi-Jagi*, 2 June 1934. For a criticism of the 'barbaric customs' that Spaniards brought to the Basque Country, including alcoholism, see Doctor Lazpita, 'Por la raza vasca. El alcohol no es alimento, es un veneno', *Jagi-Jagi* (24 September 1932) or Beti Aldage, '¿Civilización o barbarie?', *Jagi-Jagi* (30 June 1934).

28 For texts that make explicit comparisons between Euskadi and the former Latin American countries see for instance: Gogo-Ituna, 'De corazón a corazón. ¡Escucha, enemigo! Y quizás mañana me llames hermano', *Jagi-Jagi* (9 June 1934); Azke, 'España independentista', *Jagi-Jagi* (19 August 1933). Many other nations were used as a 'colonial' mirror to stress Euskadi's situation. For instance, when talking about Ireland and India, *Jagi-Jagi* argued that they were 'sisters of slavery'. Translated from the original: 'hermana en esclavitud' in Gudari, 'A ti, mendigoxale. ¿Y nosotros, los vascos...?', *Jagi-Jagi* (24 September 1932).

29 Translated from the original: 'la historia se repite' in words preceding the article Anon., 'Los grandes libertadores. La República española ante la revolución cubana de José Martí', *Jagi-Jagi* (5 November 1932). This text is reproduced prior to an original text by José Martí written in 1873. According to *Jagi-Jagi*, Martí's text could have been written in Euskadi in 1932.

30 Translated from the original: 'España perdió sus colonias de América por perseguir cruelmente al Nacionalismo americano. Más los gobernantes españoles no han aprendido esta lección. ¿Qué pretende éstos, que dentro de 50 años España quede reducida al páramo castellano?' in Anon., 'Consideraciones', *Jagi-Jagi* (5 November 1932). See also, Txanka, 'Epistolario de la semana', *Jagi-Jagi* (15 July 1933), which says that Spain has virtually lost already its Basque colonies, the same way it lost its American colonies in the past (see original: 'virtualmente, España ya ha perdido sus colonias vascas, como antaño perdió las colonias americanas').

31 Translated and adapted from the original: 'Nos interesa hoy como siempre el reconocimiento de nuestra patria libre de colonizadores' in *Jagi-Jagi* (30 June 1934).

32 Translated from the original: 'El Nacionalismo lucha contra los que en esta tierra vasca imponen su afán colonizador' in Errotari, 'Cuartilla suelta. Nacionalismo', *Jagi-Jagi* (5 May 1934).

AND THAT THE REPUBLIC DENIES US ... THEREFORE, [WE] BASQUE NATIONALISTS ARE INDEPENDENTISTS AND SEPARATISTS.³³

Another text that adapted Connolly's thought to the Basque cause argued: 'the conquest of Euskadi has entailed the social and political slavery of the Basque nation. Therefore, the liberation of Euskadi needs to entail the social and political independence of the Basques'.³⁴

Indeed, whilst the PNV saw great possibilities to achieve self-determination within the new political framework, *Jagi-Jagi* believed that the Republic would never grant independence to Euskadi since Spain was 'the imperialist country par excellence'.³⁵ According to Basque radicals, the Republic had inherited the imperialist nature of monarchical and Catholic Spain, morphing into a type of 'imperialist modernism'.³⁶ The fact that the situation of the Basques had not changed since the arrival of the Republic served as proof of this. Furthermore, the colonial operation that the Republican government conducted in Morocco in 1934 strengthened *Jagi-Jagi's* conviction regarding the imperialist nature of the new regime. During that year, the Republican government completed the occupation of the Moroccan territory of Ifni, attempting to finish a long colonial endeavour that began under the monarchical system of the Restoration in the nineteenth century and was continued by dictator Primo de Rivera. *Jagi-Jagi* did not take long to comment on the operation and use it for political gain.³⁷ As *Jagi-Jagi* claimed, 'those who rule Spain are as imperialist and as much enemies of the freedom of nations as the ones who ruled before, as the recent occupation of Ifni demonstrates'.³⁸

33 Translated from the original: 'LOS VASCOS NO SOMOS ESPAÑOLES Y ASPIRAMOS A RECUPERAR LA INDEPENDENCIA QUE LA MONARQUÍA ESPAÑOLA NOS USURPÓ Y QUE LA REPÚBLICA NOS NIEGA ... POR CONSIGUIENTE, LOS NACIONALISTAS VASCOS SOMOS INDEPENDENTISTAS SEPARATISTAS [in capital letters in original]' in *Jagi-Jagi* (29 April 1933).

34 Translated from the original: 'La conquista de Euzkadi ha significado la esclavitud social y política del pueblo vasco. Por consiguiente la liberación de Euzkadi debe significar la independencia social tanto política de los vascos' in *Jagi-Jagi* (15 February 1936).

35 Translated the original: 'pueblo imperialista por excelencia' in Gudari, 'Anti-imperialismo socialista', *Jagi-Jagi* (7 January 1933).

36 See Gudari, 'Ante la situación. Aún es hora... ¿para qué?', *Jagi-Jagi* (15 April 1933), which defines the Republic as 'modernismo imperialista' (modernist imperialism).

37 *Jagi-Jagi* launched an anticolonial campaign against the occupation of Ifni. This included multiple texts comparing the situation of Basques and Moroccans and others condemning the occupation and the Republican regime. For instance, an article written by *Jagi-Jagi's* ideologue and leader Eli Gallastegi (also known for his pseudonym *Gudari*) devoted some sarcastic lines to the Republic while stressing its colonial nature: 'Ifni is now part of the empire of the new Spanish Republic, which was born to the cry of justice, democracy and freedom! In order to bury, so they said, the old imperialist politics of the Monarchy'. Translated from the original: 'Queda Ifni bajo el imperio de la nueva república española, que nació al grito de justicia, democracia y libertad! Para enterrar, según decían, la vieja política imperialista del monarquismo' in Gudari, 'Pacifismo y desarme'. The newsletter also criticized the fact that only one Spanish MP had denounced the invasion while the rest of the Parliament, including the PNV, remained silent. *Jagi-Jagi* could not understand the silence of the PNV since they believed the Ifni and Euskadi shared the same oppression and the same enemy.

38 Translated from the original: 'los que ahora gobiernan a España son tan imperialistas y enemigos de la libertad de los pueblos como los de antes, lo prueba la reciente ocupación de Ifni' in Mentxaka eta Basare tar Iñaki, 'En el crisol del Patriotismo', *Jagi-Jagi* (10 May 1934).

For *Jagi-Jagi* Spain's imperialist essence was grounded in its blood and race, and was therefore unchangeable. As an article published in 1933 maintained, the racial characteristics of Spain had not changed despite its changing form of government: 'the Spanish people are used to ruling with the sword throughout history and they will keep ruling that way, whether their government is a republic, a monarchy or a socialist regime'.³⁹ As another article stated, it was a characteristic of the Spanish race to 'persecute other people and races'.⁴⁰ Therefore, it is hardly surprising that *Jagi-Jagi* refused to establish dialogue with the Republic. As one issue stated, 'we don't want to hear anything else about the Statute. We refuse to talk with the oppressor'.⁴¹

Since collaboration with the Republic was not a possibility, sacrifice and martyrdom were unanimously praised as the way forward. *Jagi-Jagi*'s belief that the oppression of Euskadi was akin to that of other colonies around the world, made Basque radicals consider anticolonial forms of resistance in the Basque Country. These included extra-parliamentary methods, both violent and non-violent, which were directly copied and adapted from the struggle of other nations.

On the one hand, civil disobedience methods such as those put in practice in former British territories such as Ireland and colonies such as India were regarded by Basque radicals with enthusiasm. As an article in *Jagi-Jagi* stated, an agreement with Madrid was not going to grant Basques their freedom.⁴² Instead, Basques should walk 'steadily towards the path that the Irish marked for us, where the mayor of Cork [Terence MacSwiney] with his sixty days of agony was admired globally; admiration which will hopefully become imitation'; Basques had to go 'to where Gandhi is today ... challenging powerful England'; Basques had to 'walk, to imitate our Master Sabino, an example who must endure in our minds'.⁴³ The fact that Basque nationalists believed themselves to be involved in a struggle against colonialism, like India was and Ireland had been, facilitated these comparisons. As another article claimed, quoting *Jagi-Jagi*'s ideologue Manuel De la Sota (who usually wrote under the pseudonym *Txanka*),

39 Translated from the original: 'Los hispanos están acostumbrados a gobernar con la espada en todas las épocas y así seguirán gobernando, aunque su forma sea república, monárquica o socialista' in Ramón de Madariaga, 'La forma de gobierno', *Jagi-Jagi* (11 March 1933).

40 Translated and adapted from the original: '[es característica de la raza española] ... perseguidora de pueblos y razas' in Gudari, 'Del momento. Comentarios', *Jagi-Jagi* (25 February 1933).

41 Translated from the original: 'Que no se nos hable ni una palabra de Estatuto. Nos negamos a parlamentar con el opresor' in *Jagi-Jagi* (26 August 1933).

42 Goi, 'Desespañolización y patriotismo', *Jagi-Jagi* (27 January 1934).

43 Translated from the original: 'con paso firme hacia la ruta que nos marcaron los irlandeses, donde un alcalde de Cork con sus sesenta días de agonía fue la admiración del mundo; admiración que ojalá se convierta en imitación ... hay que caminar e ir hasta donde hoy en día llega un Gandhi, con su ejército de seguidores, poniendo en jaque a la potente Inglaterra ... hay que caminar, para imitar a nuestro Maestro Sabino, ejemplo que debe perdurar en nuestras mentes' in Goi, 'Desespañolización y patriotismo'. Terence MacSwiney had died in 1920 in Brixton Prison after 74 days fasting. His death turned him into one of the main referents of self-sacrifice and he was admired internationally, including by the Basque nationalists.

there are two kinds of freedom: ‘one which can be achieved through a few votes and one which costs blood’. Those who are settled, who don’t want to suffer, should follow the first option; we [Basques] should be like Gandhi.⁴⁴

The desire to imitate both MacSwiney and Gandhi’s struggles had material consequences. In September 1931, even before *Jagi-Jagi* issued its first number, a group of Basque nationalists led by Basque radical ideologue Eli Gallastegi (also known as *Gudari*) went on hunger strike in prison. The strike took place after 14 nationalists were arrested following a pro-nationalist demonstration in Bilbao, which was severely repressed by the Spanish authorities and left one person dead. The strike lasted only two days since as soon as the strike began, the civil governor ordered the release of the prisoners. As Lorenzo Espinosa points out, ‘a new rebellion and another strategy – with prison as a reference – began to take theoretical shape in Gallastegi’s mind. A year after the strike, this found a suitable vehicle of expression: the weekly newsletter *Jagi-Jagi*’.⁴⁵ The first issue of *Jagi-Jagi*, published exactly a year after the hunger strike began, reproduced the original document calling for the strike of 1931 and praised the sacrifice of the Basque martyrs who had been prepared to give their lives for the Basque cause.⁴⁶

Furthermore, influenced directly by Gandhi, *Jagi-Jagi* activists developed a new civil disobedience method which was based on reversing the effects of repression by benefiting from them. For Basque nationalists prison was not something to fear but instead a positive experience. As Gandhi himself stressed and *Jagi-Jagi* restated:

the imprisonment of innocent people under an unfair government must be considered a consequence as natural as getting ill when living in an unhealthy atmosphere. Government will stop imprisoning us when we stop fearing imprisonments.⁴⁷

Jagi-Jagi stated confidently that the biggest achievement of the PNV after the proclamation of the Republic was to defeat prison.⁴⁸

On the other hand, some of the nationalists writing in *Jagi-Jagi* went further and believed that sacrifice implied violence. When Ireland achieved independence following the Irish War of Independence, many Basque radical nationalists considered this an example to follow. As *Jagi-Jagi* stated in 1933, ‘all nationalism is revolutionary. Rare

44 Translated from the original: ‘Hay dos clases de libertades: “la que cuesta unos pocos votos y la que cuesta sangre”. Los comodones, los que no quieren sufrir, que regateen la primera; nosotros seamos revolucionarios como Gandhi’ in De Mandaluniz, ‘Soy revolucionaria’. Note: Only the quote within two quotation marks was a direct quote from De la Sota.

45 Translated from the original: ‘una nueva rebeldía y otra estrategia de lucha, con la cárcel como referencia, empezarán a tomar cuerpo teórico en Gallastegi. Un año después todo ello encontrará un adecuado vehículo: el semanario *Jagi-Jagi*’ in Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari*, 193.

46 See Juventud Vasca, ‘El Juramento de la cárcel de Larinaga’, *Jagi-Jagi* (17 September 1932).

47 Translated from the original: ‘bajo un gobierno injusto la prisión de gente inocente debe considerarse como una consecuencia tan natural como lo es la enfermedad cuando se vive en un ambiente insalubre. El gobierno cesará de encarcelarnos cuando cesemos de temer los encarcelamientos’ in Mahatma Gandhi (in Spanish in original), *Jagi-Jagi* (25 March 1933).

48 Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari*, 196.

is the nation that has obtained its freedom without fighting, without the spilling of blood. We cannot be an exception'.⁴⁹ After *Jagi-Jagi* became an organization independent from the PNV, references to violence became even more substantial than before. An article published in 1934 by one of the most important ideologists of *Jagi-Jagi*, Trifón Etxebarria, seemed convinced of the advantages of the use of violence: 'before dying, kill! We can help more the Homeland by killing our enemies than by letting us be killed by them ... let's not be – we can't be, anyway – the first to kill but the last to die'.⁵⁰

With their embrace of anticolonial forms of resistance (either civil resistance or violence), *Jagi-Jagi* had found a practical way to defend its non-collaborationist strategy. An article argued that right now political solutions did not solve any national question.⁵¹ In 1934, De la Sota had stated that 'real freedom cannot be achieved by talking with the oppressor, but by confronting him'.⁵² In 1936, another article in *Jagi-Jagi* reiterated De la Sota's point: 'Basque patriots: the oppressed nations that have freedom have never achieved this by negotiating with the enemy, but by fighting incessantly against him'.⁵³ Following this line, an extremely aggressive article published in one of the last issues of *Jagi-Jagi*, declared the end of peace with Spain:

it is time! ... our patience has been abused and once more events of history need to be repeated ... our patience is exhausted, our spirit has awakened, disenchanted by fake promises, revived in our souls, the souls of our grandparents. WE DO NOT ACCEPT PEACE! [capitals in the original]⁵⁴

As the previous section has shown, *Jagi-Jagi* sustained a strong pro-separatist programme and an anti-collaborationist posture, which was reinforced by projecting Euskadi within a colonial framework. This also led *Jagi-Jagi* to consider extra-parliamentary methods, including civil resistance means and explicitly violent techniques. Apart from using a strong anticolonial language to legitimize independence and

49 Translated from the original: 'todo nacionalismo es revolucionario. Raro es el pueblo que ha obtenido su libertad sin lucha, sin sangre. Nosotros no hemos de ser una excepción' in Iñaki, 'Buscando la libertad', *Jagi-Jagi* (25 March 1933). Note: despite explicit allusions to violence, the article then says that the Basques should begin a commercial war against Spain.

50 Translated and adapted from the original: 'Y antes de morir ¡matar! ... más servicio podemos prestar a la Patria, matando a los enemigos, que dejándonos matar por ellos ... No seamos – no podemos serlo ya – los primeros en matar pero hemos de ser los últimos en morir' in Etarte, 'Odio de pueblos. ¡Bastante!', *Jagi-Jagi* (4 August 1934).

51 M. B., 'Canalización nacional. Coordinación de actuaciones', *Jagi-Jagi* (18 August 1934).

52 Translated from the original: 'la verdadera libertad no se alcanza parlamentando con el opresor, sino enfrentándose con él' in M. De la Sota, 'Rumbo y designio de las huellas sabinianas', *Jagi-Jagi* (6 January 1934).

53 Translated from the original: 'Patriotas vascos: los pueblos oprimidos que hoy gozan de libertad, jamás la conquistaron pactando con el enemigo, sino luchando sin cesar contra él' in Begitasuna, 'Luchemos sin claudicar', *Jagi-Jagi* (6 June 1936). Similar points were made in the penultimate issue of *Jagi-Jagi*. See Anon., 'Tomemos nota' (11 July 1936).

54 Translated and adapted from the original: '¡Ha sonado la hora! ... se ha abusado de nuestra paciencia y una vez más deben repetirse hechos de la historia ... agotada nuestra paciencia, sublevado nuestro espíritu, desengañado de falsas promesas, renacidas en nuestras almas las almas de nuestros abuelos. ¡NO ADMITIMOS PAZ!' in Keamti, '¡En pie raza vasca!', *Jagi-Jagi* (13 June 1936).

promote a non-collaborationist strategy, this section shows how *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism also had a clear internationalizing goal. Since the merging of the two branches of Basque nationalism in 1930, internationalizing the Basque cause had become the main objective of the movement's external activity. Moderates and radicals publicized and internationalized the Basques' right of self-determination to gain international visibility and forge alliances with other movements. Whilst the PNV fought for the Basque Country to be recognized internationally as a nation and to be placed within the same struggle as other western 'minorities', *Jagi-Jagi*'s sought to establish direct links, alliances and solidarity networks with other colonized nations. Although in the previous decade Basque radicals had unsuccessfully tried to attract the attention of Wilsonian institutions such as the League of Nations (henceforth the LN), *Jagi-Jagi* firmly believed that they would ignore, once again, the Basque question. *Jagi-Jagi*'s belief that Euskadi was a colony reinforced its scepticism towards the LN, as the claims of colonized nations had been ignored by Wilsonian institutions after the First World War.⁵⁵

Jagi-Jagi was not immune to the period of internationalization and anticolonial upheaval which characterized the decade in which it operated. In the 1930s, anticolonial organizations such as the League Against Imperialism (henceforth LAI) continued operating and holding congresses in major European cities.⁵⁶ In the meantime, anticolonial forms of resistance such as those that emerged in India or Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia), became leading examples in fighting colonial rule. In India, nationalist leader Mahatma Gandhi developed new forms of anticolonial resistance and defied British rule with the so-called Salt March in 1930.

This period of general anticolonial upheaval and international solidarity convinced *Jagi-Jagi* not only that collaboration with the 'enemy' would not go anywhere but that the only way to defeat colonialism was through the union of oppressed nations. *Jagi-Jagi* altered the internationalist motto of 'workers of the world, unite!' to 'enslaved countries of the world, unite!'.⁵⁷ According to *Jagi-Jagi*, both non-western and western movements had to unite in a transcontinental struggle against imperialism: 'this ray of justice ... will cast a threatening glow across the sinister skies of the globe ... uniting every man from East to West, a rainbow of harmony between redeemed countries'.⁵⁸ Similarly to the LAI, the union of the oppressed countries transcended any difference of race, religion or culture. As Gallastegi wrote in 1933 when talking about the previous contacts and alliances forged between Basques, Catalans and Galicians in the last decade,

55 For a comprehensive study of the birth of anticolonial nationalism in the post-Versailles world see E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford and New York 2007).

56 D. Brückenhau, *Policing Transnational Protest: Liberal Imperialism and the Surveillance of Anticolonialists in Europe, 1905–1945* (New York 2017).

57 Translated from the original: '¡Pueblos esclavos del mundo, uníos!' in Gudari, 'Ante la situación. Aún es hora... ¿para qué?', *Jagi-Jagi* (15 April 1933).

58 Translated from the original: 'El rayo de justicia seguirá iluminando amenazadoramente en el firmamento tenebroso del globo ... uniendo a todos los hombres de Oriente a Occidente, el Arco Iris de la concordia de los pueblos redimidos' in M.S. 'Sabino denunciado', *Jagi-Jagi* (8 October 1932).

it is enough if they [Catalans and Galicians] call themselves nationalists, if they recognise themselves as sons of a slave nation, if they manifest their desire for freedom. And we feel the same or more sympathy and attachment when we talk about the Irish or Macedonian movement; Syrian or Nicaraguan, Egyptian or Philippine, African or Hindu, regardless of the differences in lifestyle, religion or other pillars of our movements.⁵⁹

Despite these claims of union, *Jagi-Jagi* had little success when establishing direct contacts with other nations.⁶⁰ However, anticolonial and solidarity statements symbolically united the Basque struggle with others. As *Jagi-Jagi* stated: 'we should show solidarity with those who suffer and die for independence, because this way we can demonstrate to the world and to ourselves our rights'.⁶¹ Another article read: 'we are enemies of every war of conquest, every despotism, every oppression. We are enemies of this selfish imperialism which subjects other nations to its despotic power'.⁶²

The most remarkable example of Basque radical transnational solidarity is that of Abyssinia. Between 1935 and 1936, *Jagi-Jagi* united its voice with those who condemned the unprecedented occupation of Abyssinia. This had begun in October 1935 when Benito Mussolini invaded the free nation of Abyssinia without any previous declaration of war. Mussolini justified this occupation by claiming that this would guarantee the security of eastern Africa and would provide land for the growing Italian population. The occupation of Abyssinia confirmed both the LAI and Basque radicals' suspicions about the lack of interest that the LN had in protecting extra-European nations from

59 Translated and adapted from the original: 'Ha bastado que se llamen nacionalistas; que se reconozcan hijos de un pueblo esclavo; que manifiesten un deseo de libertad. Y con igual o mayor simpatía y adhesión, nos manifestamos cuando hablamos del movimiento irlandés o macedonio, sirio o nicaragüense, egipcio o filipino, africano o hindú, sin reparar en el abismo que de esos pueblos nos separa la concepción de la vida, de la religión, y de otros problemas que constituyen el fundamento dogmático de nuestras organizaciones' in Gudari, 'Canalización nacional. El primer eslabón a forjar', *Jagi-Jagi* (5 April 1933). Note: Gallastegi himself had been one of the ideologues of the so-called Triple Alianza (Triple Alliance), a pro-independence alliance which was established in 1923 and which had united Basque, Catalan and Galician nationalists.

60 *Jagi-Jagi* established direct links with the Catalan radical organization Nosaltes Sols (whose name was a Catalan translation of the Sinn Féin: 'Ourselves Only'). These two groups met during the Catalan *Diada* of 1934, where some *mendigoxales* were sent as representatives of *Jagi-Jagi*. See, amongst others, M. B., 'Las "Diades Nacionals" de Catalunya. Onze de setembre', *Jagi-Jagi* (8 September 1934); Anon., 'Diputados Nacionalistas Vascos a Madrid', *Jagi-Jagi* (30 May 1936); Anon., 'Opresión común. Catalunya por su independencia', *Jagi-Jagi* (4 August 1934). Another nationalist movement with whom *Jagi-Jagi* established solidarity links was the Irish nationalist movement, considered as an example to follow by Basque radicals. In fact, a few months before *Jagi-Jagi* was established some direct links took place between Basque radicals and Irish nationalists. For instance, in June 1932, Irish radical nationalist Martin O'Daily was invited to Bilbao ten years after his first visit to Euskadi which had inspired the formation of the first organization of Basque nationalist women, the Emakume Abertzale Batza (Association of Nationalist Women). In *Jagi-Jagi* the Irish struggle for independence was regarded as the main example to follow. For more detail on Basque-Irish contacts see K. McCreanor, 'Ireland and the Basque Country: Nationalisms in Contact, 1895–1939', Master's thesis, Concordia University (2019).

61 Translated from the original: 'Debemos solidarizarnos con los que sufren y mueren por la independencia, porque de esa manera fortaleceremos nuestro derecho ante el mundo y ante nosotros mismos' in Beti Aldage, '¡Gora Etiopia Azkatuta!', *Jagi-Jagi* (18 April 1936).

62 Translated from the original: 'Somos enemigos de toda guerra de conquista, de todo despotismo, de toda opresión. Enemigos de ese imperialismo egoísta que somete a otros pueblos a su despótico poder' in *Jagi-Jagi* (4 April 1936).

colonial rule. Indeed, although Abyssinia was a member of the LN, this had not been enough to stop Mussolini's invasion. As José María Tápip suggests, this dispute tested the LN's capacity for action and diminished its authority.⁶³ Consequently, *Jagi-Jagi* seized this opportunity to strengthen its anticolonial and anti-LN claims.

Jagi-Jagi was neither the only nor the first organization to protest against the occupation of Abyssinia. The invasion of one of the only territories in Africa that had remained free from colonial rule saw a moment of convergence in which many anticolonial nationalist voices around the world emerged and united against the occupation. Black people across the Americas including the United States, parts of the Caribbean and Uruguay protested forcefully against the war.⁶⁴ Europe also saw the formation of different alliances and anticolonial organizations. For instance, prior to the invasion, the threat of the occupation prompted an alliance between Black radicals, left-wing French intellectuals and Italian anti-fascists in Paris. This led to the formation of the International Committee for the Defence of the Ethiopian People in 1935, which sent petitions against the invasion to the LN and united about 250 political groups from around the globe.⁶⁵

The Black community in London also raised its voice against the occupation by establishing ties with their Parisian counterparts through Pan-African leader George Padmore and forming organizations such as the International African Friends of Ethiopia (IAFE), founded in 1935. As Minkah Makalani points out, 'London-based black radicals agreed on the importance of Ethiopia to their liberation and the future of the British empire'.⁶⁶ Other British subjects felt similarly, as proved by Jawaharlal Nehru's ties to London-based Pan-African leaders such as Padmore and by his energetic anticolonial claims against both Italy and the LN. For Nehru Abyssinia became the main focus of his anti-imperial campaign. He united both the Indian and the Abyssinian struggle by claiming that both of them shared a 'common bond' as 'victims of imperialist greed and exploitation'.⁶⁷ *Jagi-Jagi* developed a very similar rhetoric.

This considerable confluence of anticolonial thinkers and groups against the occupation of Abyssinia should not go unremarked. As Michael Goebel has pointed out, 'the convergence around singular moments [in this case, the invasion of Abyssinia] entrenched the perception that anticolonialism in any one place was part of a more global struggle against imperialism, which also affected other regions and countries'.⁶⁸

63 J. M. Tápip, 'El Partido Nacionalista Vasco ante la guerra de Abisinia (1935–1936)', *Journal of Inquiry and Research*, 79 (2004), 95–110 (95).

64 M. Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third-World Nationalism* (Cambridge 2015), 166.

65 Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*, 167.

66 M. Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917–1939* (Chapel Hill 2011), 163.

67 M. L. Loure, *Comrades Against Imperialism: Nehru, India, and Interwar Internationalism* (Cambridge 2018), 204. When the Spanish Civil War broke out in July 1936, both the Indian Nationalist Congress and Nehru showed solidarity with the Spanish republicans. Nehru even went to Spain in 1938, where he witnessed the war for himself. See Loure, *Comrades Against Imperialism*, 214–255. See also M. P. Ortiz, 'Spain! Why? Jawaharlal Nehru, Non-Intervention, and the Spanish Civil War', *European History Quarterly*, 49 (2019), 445–466.

68 Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*, 174.

This was the perfect opportunity for Euskadi to be integrated in this anticolonial global struggle.

Jagi-Jagi did not take long to join the transcontinental anticolonial campaign that followed the occupation of Abyssinia. The PNV and its newsletter *Euzkadi* also added themselves to the voices that condemned the war and defended the Abyssinian's right to independence. Both *Euzkadi* and *Jagi-Jagi* used the Abyssinian example strategically to defend their own principles and goals. Through the colonial analogy of Euskadi and Abyssinia, the PNV and *Euzkadi* used the occupation to promote Basque autonomy claims: if the Abyssinians could regain control of their own destiny, so too could the Basques who were fighting for the approval of their Statue of Autonomy.⁶⁹ In contrast, *Jagi-Jagi* used the war to endorse the independence of Euskadi. Ultimately, both branches of Basque nationalism had shared a similar goal through multiple generations: to internationalize the Basque cause. However, for *Jagi-Jagi* this was another opportunity to stress the evil and selfish character of both imperial powers and imperial organizations such as the LN and to underscore the rationale behind its anti-collaborationist posture.

Jagi-Jagi began to publish about Abyssinia as soon as it was able to publish again, having been unable to print any issues between September 1934 and November 1935. On the first page of the first issue published after this hiatus, *Jagi-Jagi* informed readers of the re-emergence of the newsletter. This was followed by a brief but clear line on the Abyssinian struggle: 'Abyssinia fights bravely for its independence. Let's admire this nation and let's follow the example of its great heroism'.⁷⁰ From that moment until the last issue of *Jagi-Jagi* on 18 July 1936, the newsletter wrote about Abyssinia in most of its issues and supported the Abyssinians in their struggle 'against this new barbaric act'.⁷¹

Jagi-Jagi also used this opportunity to denounce the colonial nature of western powers such as France and Britain that had remained 'passive' in this situation. They were labelled as opportunist, selfish and imperialist nations that did not stop the invasion because they were more concerned with their own interests.⁷² An article in *Jagi-Jagi* argued that the situation of all the oppressed nations of the world would improve considerably if Britain was defenceless [lit. naked].⁷³ The passive and imperialistic attitude of

69 S. De Pablo, '¡Grita Libertad! El nacionalismo vasco y la lucha por la independencia de las naciones africanas', *Memoria y civilización*, 15 (2012), 267–84 (272).

70 Translated from the original: 'Abisinia lucha heroicamente por su independencia. Admiremos a este pueblo y tomemos ejemplo de su alto heroísmo' in *Jagi-Jagi* (30 November 1935). The same issue included more references to the Abyssinian conflict.

71 Translated from the original: 'contra este nuevo acto de barbarie' in *Jagi-Jagi* (11 January 1936). In another article, *Jagi-Jagi* spoke about the 'brutal imperialism' of Italian fascists. See original: 'los fascistas italianos, fieles a sus designios de brutal imperialismo' in E., 'Los invasores', *Jagi-Jagi* (25 January 1936).

72 For criticism against international passivity see A., 'Dos medidas', *Jagi-Jagi* (14 March 1936); Uarlia, 'El Carnaval Internacional', *Jagi-Jagi* (21 March 1936) and Gudari, 'Ante el caso de Etiopía. Indiferencia criminal', *Jagi-Jagi* (11 April 1936).

73 See original: 'Los pueblos oprimidos, todos de la tierra, ganarían mucho si de una vez quedara Inglaterra en paños menores' in Uarlia, 'El Carnaval Internacional'.

the LN, which had already been the object of critique by Basque radicals during the 1920s, was also criticized.⁷⁴

Jagi-Jagi also used the occupation of Abyssinia as a point of comparison for the oppression to which the Basques were subjected. The war in Abyssinia was seen as ‘a war of conquest ... in which thousands and thousands of men are paying the price for their love for freedom, against the imperialism of one man’.⁷⁵ The situation of Abyssinia was described in the same way as that of Euskadi: like the Basques, Abyssinia nourished a heroic love for independence; Abyssinia had seen, like the Basques, how its land and home was invaded and robbed; Abyssinia was, like Euskadi, a victim of imperialism and therefore, both nations had legitimate right to defend themselves against usurpation. In addition, both nations suffered the economic and political consequences imperialism. As an announcement about a *Jagi-Jagi* rally read, ‘Abyssinia dies under Italian imperialism, whereas global capitalism applauds and waits to share the treasure of the poor Abyssinian’.⁷⁶ The fight against oppression united both nations:

as if the sacred echoes of our ancestors, noble and generous warriors who spilt blood to defend the rights of our Euskadi, had been awakened in our very being, we have felt united in a close and fraternal embrace with these humble, beings of colour who, with a noble simplicity, defied cannons and bombs with [no more than] their naked chests.⁷⁷

When in May 1936 Mussolini’s forces entered the capital of Abyssinia and won the war, *Jagi-Jagi* reported the end of freedom for the Abyssinians and concluded by advocating the union of the oppressed nations: ‘Freedom for Ethiopia! Enslaved peoples of the world unite!’.⁷⁸ Two months later, in July 1936, the start of the Spanish Civil War and then the occupation of Bilbao in 1937 by Francoist troops reinforced even more the parallels between Euskadi and Abyssinia. Unsurprisingly, following the Abyssinian example, *Jagi-Jagi* reinterpreted the civil conflict as a veritable war for independence.

As this article has demonstrated, anticolonialism was one of the main facets of *Jagi-Jagi*’s ideological core. *Jagi-Jagi* used a strong anticolonial rhetoric to renounce to the possibility of any collaboration (autonomy) with the ‘enemy’ (Spain) and to

74 See Beti Aldage, ‘¡Gora Etiopía Azkatuta!’; A., ‘Dos medidas’ and Gudari, ‘Ante el caso de Etiopía’.

75 Translated and adapted from the original: ‘guerras de conquista [como la actual de Abisinia] en la que miles y miles de seres están pagando su tributo de amor a la libertad, frente al imperialismo de un hombre’ in Beti Aldage, ‘Inquietud. Siguiendo la ruta’, *Jagi-Jagi* (28 March 1936).

76 Translated from the original: ‘Abisinia, muere bajo el imperialismo de Italia, mientras el capitalismo mundial aplaude y espera repartirse el botín del pobre abisinio’ in *Jagi-Jagi*, ‘Gran Mítin de Afirmación Nacionalista en Sodupe’, *Jagi-Jagi* (25 April 1936).

77 Translated from the original: ‘Cual si despertasen en nuestro ser los ecos sagrados de nuestros antepasados, guerreros nobles y generosos, que derramaban su sangre por los derechos de nuestra Euzkadi, nos hemos sentido unidos en estrecho y fraternal abrazo, a estos seres, humildes, de raza de color, que con esa sencillez tan grande, oponen sus desnudos pechos a los cañones y a las bombas’ in Beti Aldage, ‘Arriba los pueblos oprimidos’, *Jagi-Jagi* (2 May 1936).

78 Translated from the original: ‘Etiopía azkatuta. Pueblos esclavos del mundo, unfos’ in Anon., ‘Solidaridad internacional de los pueblos oprimidos’, *Jagi-Jagi* (9 May 1936).

establish transnational links of solidarity with other colonized nations. This led to two contradictory approaches to race within *Jagi-Jagi*: when talking about Spain, *Jagi-Jagi* stressed the racial inferiority and the inherently evil nature of their alleged colonizers. Conversely, when condemning global colonialism, *Jagi-Jagi* wrote explicitly anti-racist claims and denounced racial hierarchies. I argue that these two contradictory approaches to race within *Jagi-Jagi* respond to the different uses of Basque anticolonialism: racist claims against the Spanish were used to justify the needs of independence whilst anti-racist statements aimed to bring Basques and other colonized nations together and ultimately internationalize the Basque cause.

The extent to which *Jagi-Jagi* was racist or anti-racist has generated disagreement amongst scholars. Whilst some scholars such as Lorenzo Espinosa have argued that *Jagi-Jagi*'s members did not use racial arguments against Spaniards and that racist accusations against Basque nationalism are clichés used by anti-nationalists, others like Fernández Soldevilla have argued that 'race' and hatred towards Spanish immigrants or *maketos* (a term to refer pejoratively to non-Basque immigrants) was still a crucial concept for *Jagi-Jagi*.⁷⁹ I argue that there is some truth in both interpretations.

The reason why Lorenzo Espinosa has argued that *Jagi-Jagi* did not use racist arguments against the Spanish is because some Basque radical ideologues started challenging several well-established dogmas within Basque nationalism, such as the racial hatred for *maketos*. For example, according to the previously mentioned Manuel De la Sota, Basque nationalism should defend itself from Spain, not Spaniards.⁸⁰ *Jagi-Jagi* gave space to De la Sota's arguments in its newsletter. From there, he advocated a form of nationalism which rejected a biological conception of race: 'our nationalism has to be, above all, humanism'.⁸¹ In another article he wrote: 'one man can be superior to another – the same way that generally an Englishman is superior to the Spaniard – but this is due to the stage of culture which its race has reached, and not because of the qualities of the race'.⁸² He concluded the article: 'I would like to repeat endlessly those marvellous words by Mahatma Gandhi so they stay in the hearts of all Basque nationalists: "For me, patriotism and humanity are the same thing. I am a patriot, because I am a man and a human."'⁸³

De la Sota also argued that contrary to what happened a hundred years ago, when racial purity existed (because a Spanish invasion had not happened yet), the *maketos* should not be evicted from Euskadi but should rather be welcomed.⁸⁴ In fact, he believed

79 See Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari*, 181–90; Fernández Soldevilla, 'De Aberri a ETA', 224.

80 Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari*, 184.

81 Translated from the original: 'nuestro nacionalismo habrá de ser ante todo humanismo' quoted from De la Sota in Lorenzo Espinosa, *Gudari*, 185.

82 Translated from the original: 'un hombre podrá ser superior a otro, – como en general el inglés es superior al español – por el estado de cultura a que ha llegado su raza, más no por las cualidades de su raza' in M. De la Sota, 'Corrigiendo errores. Para el extraño inevitable', *Jagi-Jagi* (24 September 1932).

83 Translated from the original: 'Yo desearía repetir una y mil veces aquellas maravillosas palabras de Mahatma Gandhi para que se grabasen en los corazones de todos los nacionalistas vascos: "Para mí, patriotismo y humanidad, son la misma cosa. Soy patriota, porque soy hombre y humano"' in De la Sota, 'corrigiendo errores'.

84 De la Sota, 'Corrigiendo errores'.

that it was necessary to choose Spaniards who had embraced Basque culture ahead of Basques who had embraced 'Spanishness'. For this reason, he even condemned the word *maketo* and argued that this was an 'insulting and anti-Christian' adjective that should no longer be used.⁸⁵

De la Sota was not alone and other articles supported the rejection of anti-*maketismo* (hatred of *maketos*). For instance, an article written by the son of a German man and a Basque woman which commented on the acceptance of non-Basque members of the PNV, downplayed the importance of 'race' in the movement and rejected anti-*maketismo* and Arana's belief that Basqueness and purity were determined by one's last name.⁸⁶ As the article posited, Irish nationalist leader Éamon De Valera had a Spanish last name but was undoubtably Irish.⁸⁷ The article continued: 'to attempt to categorise the Basque nation according to its blood purity ... is, in modern times, a truly ridiculous idea which would be the ruin and discrediting of our ideals'.⁸⁸ These articles evidence the beginning of a process that would eventually place culture and nationality over race and blood as categories for identifying a Basque person.

Fernández Soldevilla has acknowledged De la Sota's challenges to Arana's dogmas.⁸⁹ However, Fernández Soldevilla has downplayed De la Sota's arguments by stating that his arguments were minoritarian and that his view was harshly criticized by *Jagi-Jagi*. There is, as I say above, also logic to his argument. My close analysis of *Jagi-Jagi* reveals that race was still an essential element in the newsletter and that the word 'race' was used in every issue analysed. As a profoundly anti-Spanish article stated, 'race is Euskadi: it is its principle and its basis'.⁹⁰

Following Arana's line of thought, *Jagi-Jagi* also consistently stressed the purity of the Basque race – which contrasted with the mixed or *mestizo* nature of the Spaniard – through both original articles (interestingly, some of them written by De la Sota himself) and fragments of Arana's most radical texts which were reproduced in the newsletter.⁹¹ As a *Jagi-Jagi* article written in 1934 stated, 'preserving racial purity is the preferred principle in those places in Euskadi where the foreign invasion has not managed to

85 Translated from the original: 'insultante y anticristiano' in De la Sota, 'Los "maketos" al servicio de Euskadi', *Jagi-Jagi* (25 February 1933).

86 According to Arana, a person's race could be affirmed by asking their second name. Ever since, last names were an indicator of purity and Basqueness. See J. MacClancy, *Expressing Identities in the Basque Arena* (Suffolk 2007), 106–7. It is worth pointed out that in order to belong to the PNV one needed to be 'of Basque origin'. Nevertheless, in special circumstances, those who were not of Basque origin but had been born in Euskadi or had been living there for over ten years could join. See De Pablo and Mees, *El péndulo patriótico*, 135.

87 Julio Yankee Murua, 'Una opinión', *Jagi-Jagi* (10 December 1932).

88 Translated from the original: 'Pretender organizar la nación vasca a base de puros de sangre ... es, en circunstancias modernas, un verdadero absurdo, cuyo término fatal sería la ruina y el descrédito de nuestros más caros ideales' in Julio Yankee Murua, 'Una opinión'.

89 Fernández Soldevilla, 'De Aberri a ETA', 224.

90 Translated from the original: 'La raza es Euskadi: es su principio y fundamento' in Utarsusi, 'Raza vasca', *Jagi-Jagi* (4 March 1933).

91 Arana's texts were reproduced under the title 'racial purity' (la pureza de la raza). See for instance, S. Arana, 'Páginas del maestro. La pureza de la raza', *Bizkaitarra* (1895), reproduced in *Jagi-Jagi* (6 June 1936) and Arana, 'Páginas del maestro. La pureza de la raza (continuación)', *Bizkaitarra* (1895), reproduced in *Jagi-Jagi* (13 June 1936). See also De la Sota, 'A la victoria por el sacrificio', *Jagi-Jagi* (5 November 1932).

corrupt the vital essence'.⁹² Another article reinforced this view when stating that Basque nationalism should make an effort to 'resurrect the original soul of the race and clean it of the exoticism that deforms it'.⁹³

Therefore, I argue for a middle ground between Lorenzo Espinosa and Fernández Soldevilla's positions. Firstly, I agree with the latter that De la Sota's arguments were minoritarian. As in Arana's period, the struggle between Spaniards and Basques was read and interpreted by many nationalists as a struggle between two antagonistic races: one dominant (violent, savage and imperialist by nature) and one dominated (naturally peaceful, humane and tolerant). The intrinsic and innately imperialist nature of the Spanish race was used to stress the need for independence.

Secondly, more nuance is necessary when talking about race. None of the scholars mentioned recognize that *Jagi-Jagi* used different discourses of race depending on the context and intentions behind each article. When talking about Spain, the majoritarian posture in the article was still to underscore the intrinsically evil and imperialist characteristics of the Spanish race. This heavily racialized and aggressive language was used to stress the need for independence. In contrast, when talking about other extra-European nations, *Jagi-Jagi* directly condemned racial hierarchies and wrote explicitly anti-racist texts. As such, the newsletter was able to highlight the common cause of non-European anticolonial movements and Basque nationalism. Indeed, anticolonial nationalists were mainly people of colour who challenged the racist and paternalistic principles of imperialism. The LAI itself challenged the 'civilizing' rhetoric traditionally used by western countries to justify the colonization of non-western nations and questioned racial hierarchies.⁹⁴ Their fervent desire to be part of this global anticolonial insurrection and movement, prompted *Jagi-Jagi* to write anti-racist texts.

Different Basque radical writings exemplify this anti-racist posture when advocating the union of 'oppressed' peoples against imperialism. For instance, an article titled 'Humanismo' (Humanism) – which was originally published in a Basque radical newsletter edited by Gallastegi titled *Patria Vasca* (published in 1932) and was reproduced in *Jagi-Jagi* in 1934 – advocated the solidarity and brotherhood of different nations and regions across the world. 'This way we become brothers', the article claimed, 'through this great and deep sense of humanism, with people of opposing beliefs, of dissimilar

92 Translated from the original: 'conservar la pureza racial debe ser fundamento preferente en aquellos lugares de Euzkadi donde la invasión extranjera no ha llegado a adular a la esencia vital' in Errotari, 'Aspectos. El nacionalismo y las Encartaciones', *Jagi-Jagi* (9 June 1934).

93 Translated from the original: '[Nuestro nacionalismo] ha de esforzarse por resucitar el alma original de la raza, limpia de exotismos que la desfiguren' in Anon., 'Eskertarak eta Eskumataraz', *Jagi-Jagi* (4 February 1933). It is worth noting that these highly racist and xenophobic articles were developed in a period which coincided with the ascension of Adolf Hitler to power in 1933 and the configuration of the Nazi 'racial state'. An article published in 1933 even compared the Nazi and Basque projects. See Jym, 'Txa txar keriak', *Jagi-Jagi* (11 March 1933). Although in the early years of *Jagi-Jagi*, the newsletter seemed to express a lukewarm sympathy for Hitler (and even on occasion condemned the anti-fascist opposition of Spanish socialists and republicans), from 1934 *Jagi-Jagi* included some articles that indicated direct opposition to him. For instance, an article titled 'Del momento. Dictadura y parlamentarismo' stated that 'the current case of Hitler is sickening' (translated from the original: 'el caso actual de Hitler ... es repugnante'). See Anon., 'Del momento. Dictadura y parlamentarismo', *Jagi-Jagi* (30 June 1934).

94 P. Gopal, *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent* (London and New York 2019), 272–3.

thought, of distant latitudes, skin of different colour...'.⁹⁵ Referencing a text written by Cuban martyr José Martí, *My Race* (1893) the text continued: 'because for Basque nationalists, like Martí, man is more than white, more than mulatto, more than black...'.⁹⁶ After this, the article condemned racist attacks against people of colour in Bilbao, and claimed that the Basque Youth of Bilbao (Juventud Vasca de Bilbao) opened their doors to them as if they were their 'brothers'.⁹⁷

Another *Jagi-Jagi* article directly condemned racial hierarchies when talking about imperial oppression and compared Arana to influential anticolonial leaders:

like Bolivar and Rizal [perhaps they mistook Rizal for Martí] in America, like Pearse in Ireland, like Gandhi in India, Sabino [Arana] is one of those great fighters who will be able to free Humanity from the evil imperialism of the states, helping an era of Peace and Fraternity to emerge from the rotten ruins, making the men from free and equal nations equal and free themselves.⁹⁸

Indeed, *Jagi-Jagi* adopted one posture or the other depending on the tactical intentions of the text. In other words, discourses on race were adapted to the needs of Basque radicalism and were put at the service of *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism. This reinforces the strategic nature of anticolonialism: it is impossible of course, to know whether Basque nationalists truly despised colonialism or if they believed that Euskadi was actually a colony within Spain. Nevertheless, what we do know is that anticolonialism served two important aims for Basque radical nationalists.

This article has explored *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonial discourse and has demonstrated how it used an explicit anticolonial rhetoric both on a national and an international scale. In other

95 Translated from the original: 'así nos hermanamos, por este alto y profundo sentido de humanismo, con gentes de creencias opuestas, de pensamiento dispar, de latitudes distantes, de piel de diverso color' in Gudari, 'Recuerdo. Haití, independiente', *Jagi-Jagi* (25 August 1934). This article was a reproduction of one published in *Patria Vasca* by Gallastegi. See original in Baltzuri (Gallastegi), 'Humanismo', *Patria Vasca* (January 1932), 23–4.

96 Translated from the original: 'Porque para los nacionalistas vascos, como para Martí, hombre es algo más que blanco, más que mulato, más que negro' in Gudari, 'Recuerdo. Haití, independiente'.

97 See original: 'y les ayudamos como hermanos' in Gudari, 'Recuerdo. Haití, independiente'. To exemplify this interracial brotherhood, in the original article in *Patria Vasca*, an anti-racist poem by Afro-American poet Langston Hughes accompanied a picture of two Black people (possibly a mother and her child) smiling at each other.

98 Translated from the original: 'Como Bolívar y Rizal en América, como Perse en Irlanda, como Gandhi en India, es Sabino uno de los grandes luchadores que conseguirán libertar a la Humanidad del maligno imperialismo de los Estados, haciendo surgir de los podridos escombros, una era de Paz y Fraternidad universal, al hacer iguales y libres a los hombres de naciones libres e iguales' in M. S., 'Sabino denunciado', *Jagi-Jagi* (8 October 1932). It is worth noting that despite the constant calls for the international union of oppressed peoples regardless of race, religion and culture, *Jagi-Jagi* displayed some remnants of an imperialist and paternalistic attitude when talking about non-White movements. This was a constant of Basque nationalism since the period of Sabino Arana. For instance, a text which supported the Abyssinians against Italian occupation referred to the former as 'peoples from a black race, almost defenceless, of rudimentary civilization but who possess a clear instinct for the freedom of their territory'. Translated from the original: 'esos seres de raza negra, casi indefensos, de civilización rudimentarias, pero poseedores de un claro instinto de la libertad de su territorio' in Beti Aldage, '¡Gora Etiopía Azkatuta!', *Jagi-Jagi* (18 April 1936).

words, *Jagi-Jagi* denounced not only the effects that Spanish colonialism had on its nation, but also decried the impact of global imperialism in different colonies across the world. *Jagi-Jagi*'s anticolonialism had two important and well-defined aims. Firstly, Basque radicals insisted on the conception of Euskadi as a colony to defend the necessity of independence and reject any collaboration with the Spanish state. As an anti-imperial organization, collaboration with what was presented as an innately evil colonizing country seemed implausible. As result, *Jagi-Jagi* considered extra-parliamentary methods that were being applied in contemporary anticolonial struggles, namely civil disobedience and violence. Secondly, by condemning colonialism on a global level and establishing solidarity claims with other nations, Basque radicals attempted to internationalize their cause and to become part of the global anticolonial context. This strategy was necessary in a period in which direct contacts with other nationalist groups were scarce and Basque radicals were unable to create their own foreign policy.

As this article has demonstrated, these two well-defined aims or uses of anticolonialism entailed two contradictory views on race in the newsletter. Whilst when denouncing Euskadi's internal situation *Jagi-Jagi* adopted an explicitly racist position, when condemning global imperialism, the newsletter adopted a completely different stance. By exploring and unpacking the often-contradictory ideas that existed in the Basque anticolonial corpus, this article aims to provide a novel examination of the complexities of European anticolonialism. It also aims to inspire subsequent studies on the anticolonial ideas that similar western nationalist movements developed, including the Irish nationalist movement and the Catalan and the Galician movements.

ORCID iD

Maria Reyes Baztán  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1145-9231>

Biographical Note

Maria Reyes Baztán is a Lecturer in Latin American Cultural Studies at the University of Reading. She is currently writing her first monograph, *¡Arriba los pueblos oprimidos! Anticolonialism, race and violence in Basque radical nationalism (1892–1936)*, which is under contract with Liverpool University Press. She is also advancing a new research project, which explores the 'Wilsonian moment' and the development of anticolonial nationalism in Cuba during the 1920s.