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Julieta Gaztañaga

University of Buenos Aires

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Basque Identity in the 21st Century: Up Close No One is Normal

Julieta Gaztañaga

Introduction

In this article I will defend a transdisciplinary vision of dynamic and living Basque identity that arises from interaction with multiple places and contexts. The analysis pivots around a case study. It examines the wanderings concerning a family of five, who emigrated to Argentina in 1973 and returned to the Basque Country 30 years later. From an anthropological point of view, the use of this methodological approach represents a broad qualitative research tool that allows us to understand the intricate experiences of people --as collectives and individuals--over space and time within their social, cultural, and historical contexts by focusing both on personal narratives and the materiality of biographies. The essay belongs to a wider anthropological project about the everyday production of national values and contemporary forms of Basqueness beyond ethnicity that I have been developing for the last five years both in Argentina and Hegoalde, or the Southern-Spanish Basque Country, drawing from ethnographic fieldwork based on participant-observation, in-depth interviews, and the analysis of secondary sources. The case material presented here is the result of a couple of years of systematic data collection and at least five of informal daily exchanges and mutual sharing of life experiences.¹

¹ I made four in-depth interviews and a dozen informal interviews with them, both in Buenos Aires and Andoain --half of them recorded on videotape on the initiative of the youngest son. I also spent three summers and one winter sharing everyday life moments, including meals at home, taverns, restaurants, and a local elkarte, and many afternoons of just doing nothing but walking, watching tv and going to the

In what follows I present and discuss the case of a Basque family of six: father and mother currently in their mid-70s, and two sons and two daughters, between 45 and 35 years old. A single case might seem weak considering my aim of contributing to Basque Studies and addressing the complex challenges posed by the question of Basque identity in the 21st century. However, I trust the anthropological value of their life story and of people—kin, neighbors, friends, etc.—related to them. These stories don't have value intrinsically nor do they function as "microcosmic" examples of Basque identity but are case-study opportunities that allow us to read the various layers of meaning of larger processes to generalize within cases instead of across them (Geertz 1973, p. 26). To organize the analysis, I suggest three main lines that emphasize the ways this case belongs to, and at the same time move away from, the typical Basque immigration to Argentina:

- for how it echoes the experiences of Basque migrants to the Americas while at the same time it moves away from stereotypes;
- for it sets apart from most travelogues and histories about Basque migrants' entrepreneurial spirit;
- for it breaks apart with the dichotomy homeland/ diaspora when applied to identity preservation/ transformation.

While overall shared themes prevail in the story of Basque immigration, this case study as is usually the case, we have an opportunity to see the distinctive elements of each experience and up close, no one case is normal.

Basque identity under the "Homeland/Diaspora" model

Scholarly literature about migrations usually assumes the value of differentiating between 'homeland' and 'diaspora'. By presenting migrations and diasporic formations to something intrinsic, both homeland and diasporas are hardly seen as dynamic spaces and flows of people, relationships, and ideas but rather as made upon fixed features and static regions. The analysis of Basque migration in Argentina is no exception to this. Between the Carlists wars and the First World War, the country received the largest Basque emigration in the world. The "Homeland/Diaspora" model guided the main historical examinations of the Basque cultural presence, institutional organization, and forms of relatedness throughout the national and societal process of formation (Álvarez Gila and Irianni 2005; Auza 2013; Azcona Pastor, Urrutia and Lezamiz 2018; Caviglia and Villar, 1994; Cruset 2018; Irianni 2000; Legarreta and Mignaburu 2016). With a predominance of historiographic research related to migratory processes, there is a vacancy of anthropological and sociological works on the Basque-Argentine collectivity dedicated to the analysis of subjectivity and current identity representations (Alustiza 2018; Gaztañaga 2022; Páez and Velasco 2004).

beach. We shared short trips between villages in Gipuzkoa, traveled together to Iparralde, the Northern or French Basque Country, and shared touristic journeys within Western Europe and within Buenos Aires province in Argentina. Likewise, we attended local and regional festivities in villages and cities of both countries, and I was invited to participate in special family events such as birthday and anniversary parties. For many reasons, I consider this people as my Basque family since I lost track of my own ancestors. I would like to make explicit this to keep myself up with consistent reflexivity (Hastrup 1987).

Informed by a tendency to search for primordial traits and essences, the “Homeland/Diaspora” model risks to produce a disciplinary, homeland-centered, Eurocentric, diffusionist, concerned with values of ethno-linguistic unit and geographical regions. Such perspective is no longer justified to understand Basque identity. On the one hand, because from an ethnic point of view, diasporas are self-aware and capable of reproducing themselves not confined to space and time.² On the other hand, because of the intensity of current global-glocal mobility of ideas and flows (not just migrations) of people. The limitations not only refer to producing precisely the opposite of a dynamic and living Basque identity but also narrow down the possibilities of addressing and conceptualizing ‘Basque identity’ in the 21st century. By adopting a dynamic conception of Basque identity not attached to the Homeland/ Diaspora opposition -- or content / subjectification for this matter--, we can dynamize this critic and catalyze it to the social future all identities entail.³

Lag migration

In their own way, the married couple Martina Caperochipi and Jesus Aguirre are lag emigrants of the late 20th century and returnees of the 21st and a sort of working-class non-heroic entrepreneurs. Their story sets apart from most cases addressed by scholarly literature about Basque migrants’ entrepreneurial spirit and their abilities to succeed in various local settings and businesses. It is characteristic of the “epic genre” of nationalism (Alonso 1994: 338) to dispense attention to members of the metropolitan elites (ecclesiastic, political, military, intellectual, and economic) or famous diasporic characters (often male) who became elite members thanks to emigration. This genre entails an unequivocal affective relation between migration and identity: there is no room for hesitation nor ambiguities. Instead, Jesus and Martina have a love-hate relationship with Argentina, and they often reflect on that for reasons I will be developing further.

While I am writing these lines, Martina and Jesus are 76 years old. Both have Euskara as their mother tongue and were born in the Basque countryside in baserriak or

² Authors concerned with Basque nationalism and national identity tend to rely on Fredrik Barth and the so-called ‘subjectivist approach’ (Conversi 1999). The principle of defining ethnic groups by self-ascription and ascription by others was used before by American sociologists of the 1940s. Currently, most anthropological works on identity consider futile the dichotomy of subjectivist versus objectivist since both are entangled in actual social processes. It would be impossible to cite all the works in this vein because it is almost all social and cultural anthropology since the 1960s. However, allow me to mention a few significant references that, respectively, pay critical tribute to Fredrik Barth’s works and his leading role in the history of ethnicity studies (Eriksen and Jakoubek 2019) and a Barthian take onto diverse aspects of Basque nationalism).

³ Current critiques to the concept of diaspora focus on its analytical shortness for examining personal and interpersonal dynamics and that speaking of collective identities in terms of diaspora essentializes the complex lives it hopes to capture (Farah 2021). However, one must notice the heuristic value of this perspective, such as John Ysursa’s ABC Basque Cultural Identity Marketplace (2013): “Automatic”, those born in the Old-World society, “Betweeners” forced to accommodate to two cultures, and “Choosers” at liberty to consume the Basque product. Douglass (2023:12) adds “the future of Basque identity outside the homeland resided with future generations of diasporic young people. They would be the C-generation, as in “(C)hoosers,” those who would retain some degree of Basque awareness and cultural involvement by choice more than birth”.

farmhouses of Gipuzkoa province. Jesus was born in the Tolosan neighborhood of Bedaio, at the foot of Balerdi mount, near the border with Nafarroa from where you can see the Txindoki. Martina is from Elkano, one of the eleven neighborhoods of Aia and the most distant from the urban area looming like a watchtower over Getaria and Zarautz on the coast.

Martina and Jesus got married when they were both 24 years old. A year later they left the Basque Country. They quit their jobs as a factory worker and a maid, respectively, packed all their belongings --wedding gifts, clothes, and dishes included--in two big wardrobe-style trunks, and sailed south across the Atlantic to Argentina. Why Argentina? Like so many Basques, they left their homeland encouraged by relatives who preceded them in their emigration. Jesus and Martina were neither starving nor escaping from political or religious conflicts; both had jobs and a "normal life" as they described it. However, they were also young and adventurous, and after listening to Jesus' brothers they were ready to take a chance in search of a better future. Jesus now recognizes that his brothers might have exaggerated and felt a bit deceived by one of them who became his employer.

Granted that speaking of 'a' Basque emigration and 'a' Basque diaspora would be an oversimplification, William Douglass (2013) offers the heuristic imperative of organizing the half-a-millennium globalized Basque mobility into three ideal types: colonial, modern, and postmodern. Considering this triple framework, Jesus and Martina's case belong to the third type in terms of the temporal regime --ranging from around the Second World War to open-ended present times-- contrasting with the traditional "modern" pattern that applies to Argentina --as mentioned, the country received most Basques between the middle of 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th. Nevertheless, their case pivots between both ideal types in terms of social experiences and everyday life. They share some elements with the modern type-- marked by suffering deep separation because journeys were long and expensive-- and postmodern --emigrants who have fluid communications, keep in tune with their relatives, and by the time of returning they had not become anachronisms.

Indeed, Martina and Jesus had frequent contact with family and friends and kept fully abreast of day-to-day affairs in their homeland. One could make a case for whether difficulties of visiting homeland disappeared in postmodern times. This aspect has to do with the social-class background and makes some people's experience closer to that of modern migrants who left home in the pursuit of a better life, escaping from wars and for religious reasons. They are also "modern" in what concerns to emigrating for mainly economic reasons, social background from the rural milieux, the dynamics of migration by chain and kinship, traveling single or newly married, having little formal education and little knowledge of the Spanish language, etc.

In the next section, I shall ask myself what makes the case of Jesus and Martina an insightful combination of modern and postmodern by examining how they arrived in Argentina and their labor or employment insertion in the country.

Up close no one is normal.

While the migratory destination of Jesus and Martina was perfectly habitual, their timing and modality were not. It was April 1973. At that time, flights between Europe and Argentina were increasingly common. However, flying was too expensive, and this *bikote* (couple) couldn't afford to spend so much of their savings on plane tickets. Instead, they made the trip by sea like Jesus' relatives. Jesus describes the experience as follows⁴:

“Yes, we had a pretty good trip, very bumpy! We had four beds, opposite each other. We had to go with another family, and (so) we said: we pay 10,000 pesetas, almost double the trip, for the two of us alone. I grabbed mattresses and put them on the floor. You know how that (ship) danced! If I knew that I would have gone by plane.”

While Jesus is very talkative and brings forward categorical conclusions, Martina is quieter, a born observer, and usually remains silent with mischief sparks in her eyes. In many ways they conform to the stereotypical image of traditional Catholic marriage, the religion they profess and raised their children within. She does not give an opinion unless asked and finds it hard to talk about memories from the past. She is proud of being able to adapt and learn quickly --actually, she is the expert of the couple on the use of smartphones.

They settled in Carapachay, a Guaraní name to designate the ranger who lived on the islands of the Parana River delta. This Argentinian town located in the northern metropolitan area is one of the 135 districts of what is popularly known as Greater Buenos Aires. After some years, with two young children and savings from an austere life, they stopped being Jesus' brothers' employees to have their own business. Jesus built the building himself with a few contract bricklayers. A three-story pension-hotel in the same neighborhood with the Guaraní name and an hour's drive from the Argentine capital. They named it “Spain” because they were afraid that anything in Euskara would have been confusing. However, in the house, built on the upper floor of the hotel, Euskara and confusion were all the rage and they were experienced with joy. “Oh no, no, that's not my father; he is a famous stone lifter,” the children learned to respond to the incredulous questions of visitors about the photos that still adorn the walls of the living room.

Hardly anyone would be surprised that Jesus and Martina have emigrated to Argentina. What remains striking, though, is their timing. In the 1970s Argentina was not a good place to start a better life. Jesus and Martina noticed it right away, but they had left everything behind. Since the mid-1950s, Argentina had been experiencing political turmoil and an increasing loss of economic stability. In 1955 a coup d'état had overthrown the government of Juan Perón; and a second coup would occur shortly, in 1966, when J. C. Onganía overthrew Arturo Illia's democratic government. The violence and oppression of the regime provoked strong reactions, especially in the Peronist

⁴ I'm translating and adapting all these quotes from Castilian Spanish into English. Please note the effort to respect Jesus' Castilian-Basque style, for he usually doesn't use connectors nor articles, builds short sentences, overuses the interrogation mark as in Basque “*ezta?*” and sometimes apply infinitives instead of conjugated tenses.

Resistance. The radicalization of the labor movement generated numerous strikes, actions to sabotage production, and occupation of factories. The party was banned for 18 years until Perón returned from exile; he died shortly after, and a new military coup d'état took place in 1976 ending what was called the *Third Peronismo*. Argentina was no longer a desirable destination. While in Spain Francoism was coming to an end and the democratic transition began after the dictator's death, in Argentina a violent and repressive atmosphere and economic crisis were getting everything along and state terrorism did the rest. Those years were also of extreme liberalization and deregulation that literally destroyed the economy: unemployment, deindustrialization, indebtedness, inflation, and lots of anguish. Ultimately, Martina and Jesus experienced all Argentine crises of the last quarter of a century: coup d'état (1976), military dictatorship (1976-83), Malvinas War (1982), hyperinflation (1989), the great depression (1998–2002) and the socioeconomic outbreak (2001). Despite the hardships of life, they say they had a prosperous and happy lifetime.

Without any economic resources to return right away to the Basque Country, Martina and Jesus did what they both knew: work, work, and work, with discipline and a good temper. She worked as a maid, cleaning lady, and waitress. He worked as *parrillero* (grill man), waiter, bricklayer, and mechanic. Four children: a girl and a boy in the late '70s, another girl and another boy in the '80s. Martina and Jesus spoke Euskara to the eldest and second children, but the authorities of the nearby Catholic school told them with concern that they presented “communication issues”. After that, the youngest did not even get the trial. Rarely anyone learns from normative harshness, let alone when that happens twice in different continents. Therefore, Spanish was the everyday language spoken in the house, even between the parents when they talked to each other --they would only use Euskara by phone when speaking to the family in the Basque Country. Friends and relatives were disappointed about the children not speaking Euskara when they returned to the Basque Country.

They built a full life more than 10 thousand kilometers away from the Basque Country and successfully adapted to it. They also acquired extensive knowledge and experience of dwelling in various and changing worlds. However, they never stopped longing for their homeland. At the beginning of the new century, Argentina was facing a huge recession. This fact convinced them to come back. The father was the first one: in 2002 he returned in search of a job. The mother stayed a few years more travelling back and forth. She returned to definitively in 2004 --she proudly states that she “surpassed the mark of three decades” in the South.

Since 2004, Jesus and Martina travel back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean every year or twice a year. They kept the house and the pension-hotel in Carapachay thanks to reliable management by people who worked with them for decades and more recently because the youngest son goes back to Argentina every six months. Until 2016 the couple would travel and stay in Argentina for a month or so to be with their children and to take care of the hotel. By the end of that same year, Maite and Iñaki also moved to the Basque Country --before then, they use to travel for Christmas and vacations. They settled in the Basque Country by the end of 2016, after a strange journey that brought them almost directly from the hot Buenos Aires summer to the winter festivity of Saint Thomas on December 21st --which commemorates when the peasants went to the city down from the mountains to pay their rent. Iñaki and Maite did not have the mandatory

blue and white scarf around the neck nor enough coat to tolerate the cold, but a lot of jet lag and an inspiring taste for corn *talos* with *txistorra*. Eight years ago, the parents, Amaia and Javier, had left Usurbil. Amaia and Joseba settled in Aiete, where they live with their son, who does primary school at the Basque language ikastola. The rest moved to Andoain to a new and comfortable apartment thanks to have been benefited from a public housing lottery mortgage in 2008.

In the light of the above, it should be clear this case deviates from a stereotypical pattern of Basque immigration to Argentina in what concerns the migration period. Likewise, considering the purported social mobility experiences of migrants. These are working-class people who remained as such in the present, instead of becoming elite or seen as members of a prestigious ethnic group.⁵ Of course, one could make a case on what are the odds that stereotypical remains the same for one or two centuries, and whether typical, normal, and majority were to be the same. Notwithstanding the historical importance of such questions, in the face of the problem of Basque identity in the 21st century, new perspectives are required. To what extent ethnic distinctions are being maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories? People change affiliations maintaining identity or is it the other way around?

Sometimes confused with nationhood, patriotism, political loyalty, tribal allegiance, etc. to whom is ethnic identity a dilemma? It doesn't seem to be much for people who treasure various cultural memberships in their lives. In this regard, cultural diacritics, social participation, and mutual recognition are crucial aspects of stable traditions (Douglass and Zulaika, 2007). Borders are still key technologies in the constitution of the individual and collective selves (Leizaola 2006). But the capacity of being in the move, of being mobile, seems to be crucial as well, especially when it comes to social futures. Jesus and Martina are cosmopolitan peasants and *baserritar* cosmopolites. Put aside, this dynamic blend also casts away the simplifying image of poor economic migrants only driven by needs and without desires, projects, wills of risk, dreams, and imaginations of their own.

What about homeland/diaspora?

There is a tendency in Migration and Diaspora Studies to problematize displacement as the production of mirrors of "original" repositories of identity markers. Thus, the Basque diasporic identity seems a deferred, filtered by displaced memories and references from previous generations (Arranz 2023). This conceptual approach seems to enforce the reproduction of cultural traits designed for traditional settings and the tendency to romanticize the Diaspora and to ascribe conservative values to it. Diaspora and migration are both descriptive and analytical tools that should not be universalized in their scope for addressing collective positioning and identities. Basque studies have described the fluidity and complexity of Basque identity as individuals move into different conditions over places and times. However, the prevalence of a

⁵ Douglass (1979) noticed that while this is how Basques tend to be seeing in Argentina in the American West Basques have remained closely linked to cattle raising and little qualified skills.

Homeland/Diaspora model has tended to produce a fixed rather than a dynamic approach to identity. Nowadays, considering the increasing transnational connections a dynamic conception of identity could be useful for a better understanding of the diverse trajectories and experiences of people and societies

At the beginning of this paper, I pointed out that the case under examination breaks apart with the dichotomy homeland/ diaspora when applied to the duality between identity preservation or transformation. In this vein, it is also worth mentioning that in the present days being Basque is not only self-defined by ethnical awareness or by the ability to speak Euskara (Allmendinger, 2023). For many Basques and Euskara lovers, other identity markers are crucial as well, such as sports and music. These privileged contemporary instances of the cultural production of new modern Basqueness both express and shape the production of locality inside and outside Euskal Herria (Arostegui, 2019; Kasmir 2002). In this section, I would like to show how various elements are nested with everyday production of identities to the point that Jesus and Martina family have entangled identity markers from both Argentina and the Basque Country.

Another area of Basque culture where this case casts interesting light is the entanglement of internal and external perspectives on the membership to the Argentine Basque community and the institutionalized diaspora. In Argentina, Basque immigrants formed dozens of voluntary mutual aid associations to provide health, recreation, care for the elderly, and political, religious, and friendship ties. When Jesus and Martina arrived in the 1970s, there were dozens of Basque clubs already established. However, they did not feel the need to affiliate or integrate into any Euskaltextea.⁶ When I asked why, they simply stated “we dedicated ourselves to work and raise a family”.

Jesus and Martina kept their “Basque life” in the private sphere, with relatives and friends. For instance, Jesus loves *herri kirolak* or Basque rural sports. He speaks with pride about his brother Ramón, the first one to go to Argentina, who was a *harrijasotzailea*, stone lifter. He tenderly recognizes that his brother was very good but not as much in the betting department: “they cheated on him”, states when he remembers the competitions his brother starred in the Goierri area. Since Jesus retired, he watches *pilota* tournaments on TV, and grasps every opportunity of attending live competitions –also of stone lifting, wood chopping, dragging games, and so on– in nearby villages, usually in the company of Martina. He keeps records and names as Americans do with baseball and Argentines with football; he wears t-shirts with the image of champions, and he argues about matches’ results; in sum, he acts like a true fan.

But Jesus does not only love *herri kirolak*; he is a sports enthusiast in general, like Javier, the second child. Iñaki and Maite, the youngest, once said to me that “La padre has three idols: God, the Pope, and Messi. He fulfilled the dream of meeting one of them”. I asked who --not without saying I imagined it could be either God at the church or Pope Francis because he was the Archbishop of Buenos Aires when Jesus and Martina lived in

⁶ Since most Basque Clubs are seen as nationalists and conservative spaces, this prevented sometimes migrants with different religious, gender or political background to get in contact. But these were not the reasons for Jesus and Martina have not participate in the world of the local diasporic collectivity. They consider themselves practicing Catholics and are not at all interested in politics.

Argentina. The siblings laughed. “It was 2019, just before the pandemics. You are going to love the story!” I did: Jesus not only met Messi but got to see him playing in a match between Barça and Real Sociedad at the Donostiarra arena. Basque Identity of 21st century works in mysterious ways.

I have already mentioned that the two youngest children stayed longer in Argentina to finish secondary school and pursue higher education. With the family on another continent and lots of homesickness, at some point they decided to study Euskara, the language of their parents. This is how I came to know them, but even that was funny. Although we all took Euskara classes in the same place --Euskaltzaleak, the euskaltegi of Buenos Aires-- we never shared venues. They also engaged with the choir and dance group. I met them by the end of 2014 literally in a bus. We were all heading to Necochea, the designated place to celebrate the National Basque Week, the annual event that reunites almost all Argentine Basque Clubs. It was impossible not to notice the three siblings right away. Maite, Iñaki, and Javier --the latter was in Argentina on a visit. Loud laughs and witty humor. They seemed loved by everyone, particularly by Teresa, one of the *irakasleak* (teachers) and at that time lehendakari or president of the euskaltegi.

Teresa, like many of us, lives in Buenos Aires, but her hometown is elsewhere. Mine is 700 kilometers south; hers, 180 kilometers northwest. Five years after that Basque week, in 2019, Jesús and Martina had managed to reunite the whole family in Euskal Herria. Everyone was there. At that time a young writer from Teresa’s town in the Pampas was travelling to Euskal Herria to recover his roots. Teresa contacted them automatically. Jesus and Martina invited him over for lunch and to tour around with great hospitality. What would come next is the work of a totally crazy genie of the lamp. Due to life serendipities, the young writer turned out to be good friends with a football player who at that time was playing for West Ham United F.C and for the Argentine national team with Messi. This defender and midfielder, also with a Basque surname, pulled the strings in the high leagues and got special tickets for the game. Magic came true, including the *azulgranas* demanding a penalty from Piqué in the last minute, and the *txuriurdin* fans setting a record of attendance in their own stadium.

Neither language, culture, and political organization nor the boundaries of society and culture can be treated as coincident with each other. However, people feel there is a living correlation between those elements. This feeling is a cultural praxis rather than an effect that makes their bearers profess some specific identity. In other words, such purported popular isomorphy that shapes identities, does not connect the dots of discrete cultural traits but builds bridges amongst lived experiences. These experiences can include learning other languages, dealing with deceit, focusing on the present, apprehending new customs, loving new landscapes, and feeling proud of a football player or a Pope seen as national fellows although sons of a different country. This is a 21st-century identity.

Production of identities

In the light of life stories ethnographically presented in this paper, at least two aspects are to be reconsidered as a way of contributing with the examination of Basque identity

in the 21st century. On the one hand, while the use of classificatory genealogical patterns allows us to break with the extensive or even ubiquitous historical and Eurocentric approach in the study of Basque Identity and the Basque Diaspora, the question of generations is not sufficient to organize the puzzling issues of the 21st-century identity. As Jesus and Martina's case shows, no one seems to be sure that the question of self --of being, self-description-- could be easier to answer for a first-generation migrant rather than for the third or fourth. To what extent can be argued that the identity of first-generation migrants is predetermined by a transcendental entity, such as tradition, history, and religion?

On the other hand, the complexity of contemporary identification processes entails not just fluidity and hybridization as in the multicultural approach but the kind of expectations that open up both past experiences and imaginations towards the future. This future speaks more of active technologies of the self rather than passive subject-vessel in the makings of Basque subjects. Foucault (1988) differentiated between four main types of technologies: of production, to produce, transform, or manipulate things; of sign systems, about the use of signification; of power, concerning the submission of individuals; and technologies of the self. The latter allow people to effect operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being. Besides its religious connotation, technologies of the self enable people to transform themselves. This transformation is in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. A disposition that does not seem to fall too far from the complexities that motivate migrants. A technology that speaks of the future as a temporal and space organizer frame for identities and for the dynamic adoption of identity markers without precise or normative determination. Martina and Jesus are economic migrants but also adventurers who rolled the dice *erronka moduaz*, as a challenge (Gaztañaga 2023).

The study of migrations, displacements, and peoples' movements constitutes a privileged scenario to observe the everyday production of identities that take on their own nuances in local dynamics. It also allows us to examine the formation of transcultural and intercultural spaces in which the production and (re)configuration of identities become relevant. The 21st-century Basque identity is permeated by the experience of mobility as a continuous or at least potentially continuous movement that differs from the promise and even the utopia of losing or gaining roots that shaped traditionally the modern forms of identifications. These experiences are at the same time economic reasoning, temporal calculations, and affective and ludic practices; are experiences of social futures.

Conclusion

Humans are future-makers and futures are cultural facts (Appadurai 2013). Future is more than the contemporary terrifying economic uncertainty (e.g., "will I be able to raise money to return sometime?") but a profound reconfiguration of subjective and collective identification in future emplacements --in forms such as anticipation, expectation, speculation, potentiality, hope, and destiny (Bryant and Knight 2019). A dynamic conception of identity is fundamental to grasp the complexities of

transnational practices and dynamics that dialogue with the local-global experiences and people's strategies to build, negotiate, dispute, and appropriate positions within local hierarchies. This dynamic approach allows us to speak broadly of Basque identity within various settings in and through which social life is reproduced.

Thanks to Jesus, Martina, and their children, I could make a case-analysis to address some of the challenges involved in the analysis of Basque identity, or better: Basque identities, in the 21st century. The complexities of contemporary personal and collective subjectification require decentering the migration and Homeland/Diaspora paradigm of identity in favor of identification processes and their contextual reconfigurations. The case of Jesús and Martina shows features of the formation of a translocal identity that transcends the geographical limits of their native Basque Country and their adopted Argentina, which negotiate their sense of belonging in different degrees and places. The construction of identity was formed through the negotiation of multiple cultural, social and geographical contexts, and senses of belonging. Basque identity in the 21st century is dynamic and multifaceted, reflecting the translocal nature of contemporary migratory collectivities.

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