

Völkerpsychologie as a field science: José Miguel de Barandiarán and Basque ethnology

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Abstract

José Miguel de Barandiarán considered the central figure of Basque anthropology, played a prominent role in the Basque people's cultural rescue (material and spiritual). His dual status as an ethnologist and priest prepared him to study collective mentalities and rural societies. However, the scientific approach of the *Völkerpsychologie* (roughly translated as ethnic psychology), as proposed by Wilhelm Wundt, greatly influenced him and aroused broad interests of ethnological and sociological-religious concerns. This essay examines the scope and depth of Wundt's influence on Barandiarán, and suggests that, by combining the techniques of folklore with those of ethnography, Barandiarán stamped Basque anthropology with a unique defining quality in Europe.

KEYWORDS

Basque Country, ethnology, José Miguel de Barandiarán, *Völkerpsychologie*, Wilhelm Wundt

1 | INTRODUCTION

[Wilhelm] Wundt [1832–1920] offered me an action program...: “The best way to scientifically study the behavior of human groups is that you dedicate yourself to studying the human group to which you belong. You have a People in your Country with its own language and culture; you should study

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the culture of this human group... If you focus on the study of the culture of your people, you will be in a position to collect data with the original meaning that corresponds to them in their context... You have that context, because you have lived it." He convinced me. This event was a revelation for me: a cultural change...I then changed. I began to study the Basque People.¹

With these words, the anthropologist and priest José Miguel de Barandiarán (1889–1991), considered the patriarch of Basque culture, recalled the revelation that marked the course of his research at the end of an 80-year-long career dedicated to ethnography, folklore, prehistory, and archeology, and which counts as its legacy a monumental 22-volume work, the founding of several journals and the Etniker research groups, and other important projects, such as the ethnographic atlas of Vasconia. In this brief passage is summarized Barandiarán's action program, including his appreciation of the Basque people and their culture and Wundt's influence on his aims and methodology, which would be directed to the study of Basque rural societies and mentalities.²

In certain key respects, such as Darwinian and Morganian evolutionism, Barandiarán's affection for theoretical and evolutionary anthropology was small, and his approach to ethnographic study, fundamentally ethnicist.³ Yet, the experience of attending Wundt's course and seminars in 1913 and becoming imbued with his *Völkerpsychologie* theory had a decisive influence both on Barandiarán as well as on the Basque ethnology in the making. Unsurprisingly, some scholars have explored the dissemination of Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* in the social and human sciences. The British psychologist Robert Farr long ago identified personalities who visited Leipzig or were Wundt's pupils in Leipzig. Farr argued that the founder of British social anthropology Bronislaw Malinowski, the founder of modern linguistics Ferdinand de Saussure, and the philosopher George Herbert Mead, a proponent of the interactionist symbolic tradition of social psychology, were "strongly influenced" by Wundt (Farr, 1983a, pp. 296–300). The story of Wundtian influence also involved, according to Farr, one of the fathers of sociology, Emile Durkheim, whose concept of collective representation would have been inspired by Wundt's historical social psychology (Farr, 1983b).⁴ Other scholars have analyzed the conceptual link between Wundt's social science and French traditions of collective and historical mentalities (e.g., Huidobro, 2021). All of them pursued culturally broad aims. However, none have investigated the conceptual and methodological influence of Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* on the ethnography focused on Europe, and in particular, its impact on religious ethnology, ethnography, and the folklore of Europe's peoples.

Although Barandiarán's disciples have dealt with various aspects of Wundt's influence, studies on the adoption of Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* by the Basque anthropologist are still very scarce. Furthermore, the critical current, according to which Barandiarán's main concern was to historically reconstruct the "authentic and original Basque culture and the racially pure Basque man" (Azcona, 1987, p. 22), has not only ignored this influence, but still dominates the field in Spain's broad intellectual sectors.⁵ In this essay, I will challenge the standard critical historiography on several points and examine the appropriation of Wundt's ideas in a Basque context of social secularization and decline of the Basque language and culture. Inasmuch as Barandiarán combined the techniques of ethnography (applied to the study of primitive peoples) with those of folklore (applied to the study of European peoples), to investigate one people in Europe (the Basque), Basque anthropology took a truly unique path. Critical historiography has linked this singularity to Barandiarán's adhesion to the Vienna diffusionist school and the theory of survivals, in his attempt to reconstruct the Basque cultural and racial past (Azcona, 1982, pp. 762–763). This essay argues that this was not the case, partly because Barandiarán drew only on the general criteria of the Vienna school's cultural-historical method to improve his questionnaires and data recording. More explicitly, Basque anthropology was singular due to Wundt's influence on Barandiarán's thought, insofar as it pushed him to the study of Basque rural societies and mentalities and to the systematic investigation of beliefs, legends, myths, and customs, adding not only a temporal dimension and a field nature to folklore, but also a contextual dimension of the rationality of practices. His main concern was not to reconstruct, but to rescue the material and spiritual culture of the Basque people. Wundt's influence on Barandiarán was twofold: the first focused on the culture of the Basque

people, especially its traditional aspects that were being lost, while the second was directed to religious sociology and ethnology, representative of seminarians and priests' response to the interwar social challenges.

In the course of their somewhat divergent paths of specialization and professionalization, ethnography and anthropology have drifted quite far apart. However, if "epistemological approach" is taken as an important category for the historical analysis of these fields, the question of their relationship should be necessarily exposed, even if only concisely. Early 20th-century ethnography shifted from being a literary genre—based on the writings of missionaries, travelers, and colonists—that aimed at apprehending the peoples' cultural practices and beliefs, to also include qualitative fieldwork that collected sociocultural data from face-to-face encounters. In this genesis of modern ethnography, that is, away from folklore and evolutionary speculative ethnology, and closer to systematic fieldwork and participatory observation, the role of the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski was instrumental. It was Malinowski (1918/1922) who transformed and most systematized, from a methodological rather than the theoretical point of view, British social anthropology, moving it away from an ethnocentric view concerned with historical origins and gearing it toward a positivist view focused on fieldwork and grasping the native's point of view. However, the claim of objective, participatory, and detached observation that embodied the *modus operandi* of social anthropology and modern ethnography, lost weight during the Cold War and the decolonization movement. Interpretive cultural anthropology, developed by Clifford Geertz (1973), was to provide a new approach to ethnographic practice and writing actively incorporating the anthropologist into the ethnographic accounts (Barth et al., 2005).

In what follows, I outline the formulation of Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* theory during the years before 1913, in which Barandiarán studied in Leipzig. I explore how the conversations and correspondence with Wundt were a revelation for Barandiarán, and caused a shift of interest from the history of religions to ethnography and prehistory. I then examine how he turned ethnographic and folkloric work into field science, and what influences the Vienna diffusionist school and the survival theory had on his early work. After this, I analyze his achievements in promoting religious sociology and ethnology at the Vitoria Seminary. Finally, I revise the standard critical historiography in two of its trends, the "evolutionist" and the "nationalist." I hope to apply Wundt's maxim of placing the object of inquiry in its social and intellectual context.

2 | WILHELM WUNDT'S VÖLKERPSYCHOLOGIE

Völkerpsychologie (VPs for short) or the study of the behavior of groups in relation to their ethnic identity began to take shape in the mid-19th century. Influenced by romanticism and partly as a reaction to Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, some scholars saw the need to bring into the scientific arena terms such as Volk and Volksgeist, which were being politically and culturally appropriated by forces of German nationalism. Among these, two social philosophers of Jewish descent stood out, Moritz Lazarus and Heymann Steinthal, who in 1860 founded a journal devoted to linguistics and the new field coined as VPs, *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft*.⁶ In their pages, Lazarus and Steinthal sought to dialectically relate the psychological activity of the individual and the cultural outcomes created by that activity. Moreover, they believed that, from the laws that explained individual processes, the laws that explained culture could be extracted. The importance of their ideas lay not so much in their accomplishments as in the opening of a new series of questions derived from their confidence that culture and history implied psychological processes explainable through systematic observation and analysis (Danziger, 1983, p. 306).

This line of argument was taken up and refined by Wilhelm Wundt, whom the historiography of science has always preferred to pigeonhole as the founder of experimental psychology—he founded the first psychology laboratory in Leipzig in 1879.⁷ Indeed, it is to Wundt that we owe the most complete and systematic formulation of VPs, based on the historical and collective analysis of mental products. He must have become acquainted with the ideas of Lazarus and Steinthal very early, for in his first book of 1862, *Beiträge zur Theorie der Sinneswahrnehmung*,

he referred to programs on experimental psychology and VPs. By then, he had well realized that the experimental psychology of the individual was not sufficient for a comprehensive conception of psychological science, and had to be complemented by a social psychology of the mental life of people. Experimental research of individual processes had to be supplemented by the materials supplied by historical and ethnographic research.

According to Wundt, while experimental and physiological psychology aimed at analyzing *immediate experience*—that is, the most elementary individual processes, such as emotions, sensations, and perceptions—social psychology sought to analyze *higher processes*—that is, capacities that were collective (rather than individual) products, such as language, thought, and culture. However, these two Wundtian forms of psychology were not separate but interrelated: both were necessarily complementary (Farr, 1983a, p. 294). Despite this, due to their different purpose and nature, the two enjoyed a different disciplinary status. The former was deemed as a natural science insofar as it shared the method of experimentation; social psychology, in contrast, was viewed as a branch of philosophy (by Wundt) or, often, as a social science.⁸

Where Lazarus and Steinthal had sought the recognition and classification of differential features of different peoples, Wundt was interested only in general principles of the human mind. Wundt's conception of VPs was much less ethnocentric. The question of the original psychic unity of the human species greatly marked their differences. While all agreed that the action of the natural and cultural environment explained the variations in the human being's basic mental structure, the contrast between the tenor of Wundt's thought and that of Lazarus and Steinthal was striking. Wundt sought to empirically analyze the process by which an individual's behavior remained so similar to that of his/her historical and cultural community as a whole. But his predecessors were concerned with the differential psychological study of national character and the culture of different peoples.

In line with this view, neither the individual mind nor the social mind in the abstract was the object of Wundt's inquiry, but rather a kind of collective mental configuration—which Wundt called *Volkseele*, distancing himself from Lazarus and Steinthal's *Volksgeist*.⁹ *Volkseele* was the objective product resulting from the interaction of many minds. The process by which this spiritual product could be objectively analyzed was as follows: The mind of an individual, according to Wundt, was part of a transindividual psychological system that was constituted by interactions formed as a result of gestural communication. Given that this communication was carried out in individuals endowed with memory, its results lasted over time, becoming a practically permanent pattern of interaction. This pattern was not only shared by all the individuals of a people, but also systematically transmitted to subsequent generations (Danziger, 1983, pp. 308–309). Like Lazarus and Steinthal, Wundt considered language, art, myths, and customs as the main spiritual products. These elements, understood as cultural products of *Volkseele*—not of intentional decisions—constituted the essential parts of collective mental development. VPs' aim was to analyze the regularities of these cultural products throughout history and space and, by doing so, ascertain the underlying psychological processes in individuals (Jahoda, 1992, p. 179). Hence, Wundt opted for the comparative and historical method for social psychology.

Although Wundt addressed the relationship between individual and social psychology from 1860s on, it was not until 1900s that he fully devoted himself to the study of VPs. The result of this dedication was his colossal 10-volume work entitled *Völkerpsychologie*, as well as his annex *Elements of the Psychology of Peoples* (1912), which was indeed the one that popularized his ideas. The details of his volumes on language, myths, and customs are of little interest for our purposes; instead, what is of considerable interest is the expectations that his conception of a field of VPs opens up, attractive in principle to the field of Basque ethnography that was beginning to be the object of academic inquiry. These expectations were twofold, concerning issues of both individual and collective subjects. On the one hand, as psychologist Kurt Danziger (1983, p. 307) asserts, “Wundt's interest was not primarily one of superimposing a psychological interpretation on anthropology and history, as Lazarus and Steinthal's had been, but of using linguistic and ethnographic data to illuminate psychological processes in the individual.” This view paved the way in terms of exploring the individual's mind from ethnographic materials. On the other hand, Wundt offered a model through which social psychological processes could be analyzed as attributes of a collective subject

resulting from the interaction and unintentional action of individuals. This approach opened the door to the analysis of the historical records of peoples (as collective subjects) and the interpretation of the products of their mental life.

In what follows, I will trace the influence of Wundt on the development of ethnology in the Basque Country with special reference to his influence on José Miguel de Barandiarán and the nature of the relationship between Wundt's VPs and Barandiarán's ethnology and social phenomenology.

3 | WUNDT'S INFLUENCE ON JOSÉ MIGUEL DE BARANDIARÁN: FROM THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS TO ETHNOGRAPHY AND PREHISTORY

One of the most interesting influences—from our point of view—of Wundt's VPs can be found in the life and work of José Miguel de Barandiarán, whom historians have not hesitated to consider as the patriarch of Basque culture. However, his active interest in ethnology actually began as a result of a spiritual crisis shortly after he started his theological studies at the Seminario Conciliar in Vitoria, that is, around 1913, and which Wundt helped him to overcome, as he tells us in his autobiographical notes. At that time, the young seminarian's concerns were focused on two worlds: one was the mental universe of his hometown (Ataun, a small town in the Basque province of Gipuzkoa), whose legends and myths made up a Basque rural cultural reality that was almost on the path to disappearance; and the other was the world of Christian faith and humanism, whose bases and values he saw as threatened by currents of thought and modern social transformations. Both worlds were questioned, not only by atheism as a form of liberation, but also by scientific positivism and blind faith in technological progress. Traditional humanism, he recalled, “was objected to by broad sectors of the intellectual class, saying that such ideas and values [...] alienated man, dehumanized man” (Barandiarán, [1979], quoted by Manterola, 1984, p. 32). At first, Barandiarán sought answers to this crisis by reading books on religious ethnology and the history of religions. “I needed to have,” he confessed to his nephew Luis, ‘inner security to counteract the rejection of the environment to the presence and figure of the priest’ (whose ordination he was to receive in 1914).¹⁰

It is not inaccurate to regard this existentialist spiritual crisis as the main reason why Barandiarán joined the Leipzig Psychologie Institut where he studied a course by Wundt in 1913. “What Wundt explained,” Barandiarán later recalled, “was not psychology, [...] but rather a psychology of the peoples [...] that came to be an ethnology” (Gondra, 1992, p. 63). With this course and with Wundt's advice (given in seminars and in the many letters that they later exchanged), Barandiarán's approach to cultural study changed radically. In Barandiarán's words, “they served me well and also changed me completely,” since:

I was interested in the studies of general Ethnology. I was interested especially in religious Ethnology and had read many comparative studies on Religions. However, what I had been reading did not bring me more than bookish science. But then I changed. It was from my meeting with Prof. Wundt who told me cogently and repeatedly the following: “The method you are using for the study of religious Ethnology is not good at all. You are drawing upon books, on books by ethnographers who have carried out studies in this or that town, generally in distant towns [...] Well, in the best of cases, those ethnographers who have written the books that you read have dedicated themselves to investigate, but their investigation, in most cases, has been mediated by a lack of knowledge of the language of the people whose culture they analyze, having to resort to the help of an interpreter. In such a case, as you will understand, the ethnographer asks questions to the interpreter, who in turn translates them to the indigenous, who answers the interpreter, and the latter translates for the ethnographer [...] In this long path of mediations there is the danger of losing a lot of substantive matter in the investigation.”¹¹

When it was necessary to analyze human action and the social aspects of mental processes, Wundt provided Barandiarán with the following maxim, which he was to follow *au pied de la lettre*: “the best way to scientifically study the behavior of human groups is that you dedicate yourself to studying the human group to which you belong.” Wundt argued this thought in a more or less dialectical fashion. Thus, the data that the ethnographer usually gathers through interpreters has little to do with the original reality, and bookish research does not guarantee access to sources. “You have a people in your country with its own language and culture; you should study the culture of that human group.” Cultural forms and human actions are analyzable insofar as they can be recorded and compared, but they are only adequately intelligible if they are lived in their context. It follows that gathering the data with their original meaning in their context is vital to their intelligibility. “This context can only be offered by a person who has grown up in the cultural milieu that this person tries to analyze. You have that context, because you have lived it.” Wundt’s argument fully convinced Barandiarán. “This event was a revelation for me: a cultural change.”¹²

Although Barandiarán received throughout his long life influences from various anthropological orientations, such as the diffusionist (or historical-cultural) method of F. Graebner and W. Schmidt, the archaeoethnological one of H. Obermaier and H. Breuil, and the evolutionist one, as is shown later, he never wavered on this core of fundamental ideas transmitted by Wundt: First, “nothing human is adequately comprehensible if it has not been previously lived” (Barandiarán, quoted by Arregi, 1999, p. 347); second, human facts and cultures are not “adequately intelligible if they are not lived in their context” (Barandiarán, 1939/1984, p. 152); and third, to understand behaviors, they have to be considered in their social context as a whole, which can only be achieved “through systematic research that encompasses the entire system of elements that make up their cultural environment” (Barandiarán, 1987).

Barandiarán’s staunch espousal of these principles implied several breaks with the hitherto dominant scholarship. The first break affected ethnography and began with the establishment of the Sociedad de Eusko-Folklore in 1921 and the yearbook *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore*, which began with a statement of intent and instructions that were to set the tone for his work and that of his disciples (for the statement of intent, see Barandiarán, 1921). Traditionally, the study of Basque folklore, promoted by foreign and Basque scholars such as Wentworth Webster, Julien Vinson, and Juan Iturralde y Suit, had tended to recreate the gathered traditions and myths in a literary sense, which led them to idealize and isolate facts from their context. On the contrary, Barandiarán and his disciples recorded these popular narrations with no mediation, with great fidelity in transcription and in a connatural environment, all of which allowed them to situate data in thematic parameters and areas of distribution. Barandiarán did not consider that the scientific status of ethnography was inferior to that of anthropology. In fact, he came to implement a program of systematic field investigations. He was always sensitive to the cultural and social context in which facts were forged, and he never confused idealization and objectivity. As the anthropologist Telesforo de Aranzadi stated, the *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* meant “a break with romantic folklore, and the beginning of a planned, systematic ethnography adjusted to a method” (Aranzadi, 1923—quoted by Arregi, 1994, p. 98).

For Barandiarán, as for Wundt, living the cultures was *a sine qua non* for their proper understanding. In working out the relationship between context and the interpretation of data, Barandiarán tried to distinguish his method from that of anthropologists and romantic folklorists. In some of his prefaces to the *Anuario*, he objected to the static and practically morphological descriptions of facts published by them. Those authors took “materials or facts from the cultural complex” and presented them “as *pure data*, imitating in this the naturalist who isolates and describes the facts of his specialty” (Barandiarán, 1987). But while natural facts have a meaning per se, cultural facts are signs that denote different mentalities from that of the observer. For Barandiarán, it is a mistake, therefore, to disintegrate, substantiate and manipulate cultural facts as the naturalist does it with his own: “by isolating them from their human context and objectifying them, we deprive them of their authentic reality” (Barandiarán, 1987). The important practical aspect of this distinction is that Barandiarán’s interest was not the morphological

description of traditions, myths, and customs, as romantic folklorists and many anthropologists were, but in using these data and materials to elucidate popular and collective mentalities.

In analyzing in more detail the relationship between context and data interpretation, Barandiarán also tried to distance himself from archeologists and prehistorians. Barandiarán participated in archeological excavations from a young age, but he often did so for ethnographic purposes.¹³ Prehistoric archeology soon became a complementary field to his ethnological vocation. What he mainly objected to in the archeological investigations of his time was their unscientific basis. These investigations produced merely morphological studies, that is, a "pure description of the form" so that it was "not possible to know the cultural reality of the data being analyzed" (interview with Barandiarán, in Manterola, 1984, p. 278). On the contrary, he argued, human facts could not be reduced to mere forms that could be described independently, or outside, of their function and meaning. Rather, they always responded to an intention and in a decisive way, which was their reason for being and their existence. This reason led Barandiarán to consider not only the morphological aspect, but also the functional, cultural, and intentional ones. His main concern was not to seek a morphological interpretation from archeological investigations, as his contemporaries did, but to use archeological and prehistoric data to illuminate the function and meaning of the objects of study.

The basis of the divergence between Barandiarán's ethnographic methodology and the usual practice of prehistoric archeology of his time now emerges more clearly. Barandiarán made a distinction between levels of human facts—one that involves external manifestations and their functions, or the *visible* aspect, and another that involves the intentional motive of facts, the *invisible* aspect. The adequate interpretation of human facts implies, in turn, two levels of empirical knowledge. On the first level, it is necessary to know the external motives that appear in the archeological elements that are the object of study; on the second level, the conditions that led to its existence and the intentions that made its conservation possible. The latter is the invisible aspect and is "what has primacy as a criterion in ethnographic research" (Barandiarán, quoted by Arregi, 1999, p. 347). This aspect cannot be manipulated as a naturalist manipulates objects in laboratory. This is precisely one of the principles that guided Barandiarán's research method: "that the invisible one is the most important aspect to know a human fact and the invisible is the intention" (interview with Barandiarán, in Manterola, 1984, p. 279).

4 | FIELD SCIENCE AND THE INFLUENCE OF DIFFUSIONISM AND TYLORIAN EVOLUTIONISM

After the First World War, Basque anthropologists were quick to respond to the institutional needs of their discipline in the Basque Country. When the Sociedad de Estudios Vascos (SEV) was established in 1918, partly under the influence of its Catalan homonym, one of its new sections was on Anthropology and Ethnography, which was to be led by Aranzadi and later by Barandiarán (from 1922 to 1936).¹⁴ The SEV organized methodology courses in which the anthropologist Eugeniusz Frankowski participated, with eight lectures on ethnology and anthropology.¹⁵ The SEV also prepared four questionnaires on rural, agricultural, and livestock issues through the newly established Junta de Costumbres Populares; by 1919, Aranzadi and Barandiarán, among others, published the first questionnaire (on marriage), and they did so using the questionnaires of the Arxiu d'Etnografia i Folklore de Catalunya and Aranzadi and Luis de Hoyos Sainz's work *Etnografía*. Yet despite the interest aroused by novelties such as these, these early ethnographic courses and questionnaires rarely went beyond sporadic efforts in an unexplored research area that required a fieldwork program of systematic data collection and recording.

Barandiarán's ethnographic work marks a turning point in this regard. Barandiarán occupies a secure place in the history of 20th-century ethnology due to his elaboration of a conception of VPs as a science amenable to systematic fieldwork, and the enormous influence of his method in the formation of a "school of ethnographic research" in the Basque Country.¹⁶ What is often forgotten is that Barandiarán conceived of his method in response to a *religious* problem of a social nature. Advised by Frankowski and especially by Aranzadi, who in 1920 took

possession of the newly created Chair of Physical Anthropology at the University of Barcelona, Barandiarán established the Sociedad de Eusko-Folklore at the Vitoria Seminary in 1921.¹⁷ According to him, “its aim was to investigate Basque popular culture, especially in its religious aspect,” so that seminarians would observe the “environment” in which they exercised their ministries and become aware of “the social phenomena and agents” that affected their pastoral work—a very important aspect, “highly useful for those who have to profess an eminently social career, such as that of priests” (Barandiarán, 1939/1984, pp. 149–150). In reality, as he himself confessed, these studies “responded to the movement that, a few years before,” had been promoted by the missionary and anthropologist “Wilhelm Schmidt and his collaborators in the field of religious ethnology and the comparative history of religions” (Barandiarán, 1939/1984, p. 150). Schmidt was the Viennese cultural-historical school's *alma mater* and, together with Fritz Graebner, the most outstanding exponent of the German diffusionist school—from the two Barandiarán drew inspiration.¹⁸ Partly following Graebner's theory of the *Kulturkreis*, Schmidt proposed a classification of culture circles based on four cycles. However, the social nature of the Basque religious problem made Barandiarán focus on ethnographic methodology. Rather than by theory, Barandiarán was inspired by Schmidt and Graebner's methodological criteria to enrich his questionnaires.¹⁹

One of the main means of dissemination for the Sociedad de Eusko-Folklore was the monthly journal *Eusko-Folklore. Materiales y Cuestionarios*, popularly known as Eusko-Folklore sheets. Barandiarán espoused a method of data collection that was very different from that used by contemporary folklorists such as Paul Sebillot, the founder of the Société des Traditions Populaires who had published the reference work in the field, *Le Folklore de France* (1904–1906). Where the latter opted for erudition and its application to the entire French territory, Barandiarán preferred direct fieldwork in a specific culture and relegated erudition to a secondary and incidental level. The systematic gathering of facts, in his view, had to precede “scientific generalizations and the comparative study of materials” (Barandiarán, 1921, p. 5). In fact, in this first stage of his work, these sheets illuminated what was to be his line of action: following Wundt's ideas on context and VPs, and Schmidt's cultural-historical methodological criteria, the objective of these questionnaires was focused on studying popular mentality by collecting legends, tales, and beliefs, as well as the rites and practices associated with them.²⁰ Conducting investigations under these premises meant that studies were empirically oriented: intense fieldwork was carried out, often from sources in danger of disappearing, and generalizations and comparative studies were sought a decade later.

The establishment of the Laboratorio de Etnología y Eusko-Folklore in 1925 brought with it a conceptual change.²¹ Barandiarán had assumed the Wundtian challenge of rescuing mental culture, but later redefined it, expanding it to include the rescuing of material culture. This represented a conceptual broadening of the folklorists' notion of spiritual culture. Like Tomás Carreras, director of the Catalan Arxiu and follower of Wundt's theories, Barandiarán strove to rescue all aspects of popular culture, both spiritual (beliefs, rites, religion) and material (human settlements). The two field research campaigns from 1925 to 1929, one on “the rural house” and the other on “the human settlements,” pursued this objective. In these campaigns, Barandiarán followed the Swiss Folklore Society's guidelines—adapting the models of data table and organization in studies on human settlements published by H. Hassinger in 1922—while abjuring the folklorists' tendency to represent popular culture as some kind of substantial entity that could only have a spiritual manifestation (Hassinger, 1922/1923).

A decade later, Barandiarán was to take another step in his research strategy and to publish his new “Cuestionario para una investigación etnográfica de la vida popular.” To this end, he drew upon questionnaires used in ethnographic societies in Switzerland and France. What he had in mind was to prepare ethnographic monographs on a specific locality—placing cultural facts in the natural context where they took place—and not so much on a specific cultural theme, an approach which he achieved, to all intents and purposes, in his general ethnographic questionnaires (Arregi, 1999, pp. 343–348; Manterola, 1984, pp. 59–98). In fact, this questionnaire model was the one that Barandiarán reissued and improved intermittently for decades and which was to become a reference in Basque ethnography. The *Guide d'initiation aux recherches ethnographiques* that he published during his exile in Sara was actually a readaptation of the 1934 questionnaire, which was reformulated and edited by the Aranzadi Science Society in 1963, and which in turn was reissued as a *Guía para una encuesta etnográfica* in 1974. The historical

significance of Barandiarán's monographs lay in his posing of ethnography as the study of the *totality* of aspects that shape the popular culture of local communities—rather than as only the study of mental or spiritual aspects of a people or a country (Arregi, 1999, pp. 344–348).

This perspective, according to Barandiarán, did not deprive popular psychology of a domain of its own. Although folklorists' studies on popular mentality often tended to be romantic and one-sided, the mental was *observable*, and hence *investigable* by ethnographic methods, because of what Barandiarán considered as the complementarity between immaterial culture and material culture.²² Culture involved the set of mental values that a people possessed at a given time. According to him, folklorists had “generally limited themselves to studying the spiritual manifestations contained in customs and oral tradition.” However, in his view, material objects, the product of industries and popular arts, should be part of the field of folklore: artistic and industrial productions, like immaterial manifestations, “bear vestiges of previous cultures and are often a faithful expression of the psychology of the peoples” (Barandiarán, 1954, p. 16).

While the influence of the Viennese diffusionist doctrine on Barandiarán's thought is generally recognized, scholars have often forgotten his strong interest in the evolutionist concept of survivals. Yet it was Barandiarán who, more than anyone, took the issue of survival away from the context of the reconstruction of religious origins and applied it to the context of multimillennial Basque culture. In his work on the Basque Country's primitive man (1934), the result of the fieldwork done in the previous decade, Barandiarán proposed the hypothesis that the current and prehistoric Basque populations share certain cultural elements.²³ For Barandiarán, the archeological discoveries and ethnographic materials “allow us to recognize different cultural strata in the Basque people,” some of which “developed in the Western Pyrenees in times before Christianity” (Barandiarán, 1934/1979, p. 342). In defending this hypothesis, he made use of the evolutionist concept of survivals of Andrew Lang, a disciple of Edward B. Tylor, who used it in his reconstruction of religious origins in terms of individual psychology.²⁴ Thus, while Basque folklorists and many others had, in general, addressed popular psychology issues related to specific cultures and their contemporary immaterial manifestations, Barandiarán introduced the temporal dimension in the analysis of folklore (Apalategi, 1987, p. 159). According to him, everything indicated that in the current Basque culture, there were remains of previous cultures.

Barandiarán's hypothesis entailed a reinterpretation of some theoretical issues in palethnology, and this promised a broadening of the scope of prehistoric archeology—inasmuch as it is a science that studies the culture of prehistoric civilizations by analyzing material findings. This reinterpretation was more explicit in the work of Hugo Obermaier, *El hombre fósil*. The work of this German presbyter and prehistorian was published in 1916 and reissued in 1925. His theoretical orientation toward palethnology, as well as his great influence in the Spanish academic world—to which Barandiarán himself confessed to being indebted—give his work a referential significance comparable to other influences such as those of Lang and the Vienna school. Other archeologists who did not belong to the cultural–historical school, such as Pedro Bosch-Gimpera and André Leroi-Gourhan, contributed to the dissemination of theories of international prehistory, but Obermaier held a prominent place as an introducer and initiator in Spain of modern methodologies in this field from his chair at the Complutense University in Madrid.²⁵ In fact, his work had come to offer, 9 years before Barandiarán's, a conception of the primitive history of man that harmonized with Catholic doctrine. Thus, he admitted that “there is a marked psychological parallelism” between primitive peoples and Upper Paleolithic Man, to such an extent that products of some peoples today “reminisce in some way the products of Upper Paleolithic European civilization and art” (Obermaier, 1916, p. 134).²⁶

5 | GYMNASIUM LABORATORIES AND COLLECTIVE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS PHENOMENA

In the decade that preceded the Spanish Civil War, Barandiarán, along with three other clergymen, promoted a series of pedagogical innovations then unparalleled in the Spanish Church, which meant a challenge in the task of self-understanding and introspection of this religious institution. In 1926, he founded the Gymnasium Laboratories

at the Vitoria Seminary. Conceived as research seminars, these laboratories included sections on Philosophy, Sociology, Ethnology, and Collective Psychology. Moreover, they edited two journals, *Gymnasium* (1927–1932) and *Idearium* (1932–1934): while the former was aimed at seminarians, the latter was geared toward the diocesan clergy, whom it intended to guide. All this leads us to underscore a very interesting aspect: the Wundtian influence on Barandiarán seems to have largely shaped the nature of the Seminary innovations, favoring the fieldwork approach and the search for solutions from collective psychology and sociology.

During the monarchical Restoration, which extended from 1874 to 1931, and in subsequent decades, the Catholic Church in Spain displayed features that can be described eponymously as “archaic.” Nostalgic for the confessional uniformity of yesteryear and eager for a Catholic reconquest that would purge Spain of all heterodoxy and peripheral nationalism, the ecclesiastical authorities tended to identify Catholicism with patriotism. Often adopting inflexible and defensive positions in the face of social transformations, their ideology was characterized by an ecclesiology, in many respects, obsolete, and by a static and anachronistic conception of modern society.²⁷ The emphasis on a theology based on one type of philosophy (predominantly Neo-Thomism), to the point of identifying Catholic theology with scholastic philosophy, gilded with the patina of true doctrine, rendered any effort at dialog with liberal intellectual circles and even non-Catholics virtually fruitless. As the historian Frances Lannon stated in her study of the Vitoria Seminary, “the Spanish Church, more than perhaps any other in Europe, retained the narrowly intransigent attitudes and anachronistic aspirations of the Syllabus” of 1864—the document in which Pope Pius IX condemned what he considered “errors,” such as progress, liberalism, and modern civilization—“to the 1930s and then beyond” (Lannon, 1979, p. 30).

In the Basque Country, the ideas of the Spanish Church traversed the walls of the Vitoria Seminary's majestic new building and, in many regard, echoed its precepts. This seminary was where the priests who would practice in the Basque provinces of Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, and Alava were trained. Vocations from rural regions predominated by far over those from urban regions, where the population was paradoxically concentrated.²⁸ By the mid-1920s, moved by the growing secularization of Basque society (radiating from cities), part of the teaching staff began adapting to the new time.²⁹ Given the rise of liberal thought and the advance of labor unions, urban de-Christianization and rural illiteracy, there arose the urgent need to respond with a strategic vision of seminary education and training—cultivating, promoting, and doing, *motu proprio* and *de visu*, an introversion of the Diocese's problems to overcome them (Rivera & De la Fuente, 2000, pp. 9–83).

It was around these deep concerns that Barandiarán, backed by three more professors, organized the *Gymnasium* laboratories by merging science and philosophy.³⁰ The purpose was to familiarize seminarians with “contemporary philosophical and theological thought,” as well as with “the ideological motives, the new social fermentations and the problems of religious and social order” that affected the Basque people (Barandiarán, 1930, p. iii), whether these were “favorable or adverse to Faith and Christian life” (*Gymnasium*, 1[1927], 4—quoted by Lannon, 1979, p. 38). The initiative found widespread endorsement among seminarians. In part, its originality rested on the fact that it was the seminarians themselves who, with the help of appropriate questionnaires (of religious sociology but also of geology and ethnography and folklore), did fieldwork and wrote reports and even articles that were subsequently published in the journal *Gymnasium*. The singularity of *Gymnasium* was not in publishing the journal per se (other Diocesan seminars also published journals) but in the laboratories and the field methodology they incorporated with them. It was also in part original as regard to the study program, as evinced by the 1933 Seminary regulation: its syllabus included disciplines as innovative as Basque grammar and literature, or novel ones such as experimental psychology, paleontology, and ethnography, while theology comprised courses on Catholic social action.³¹ Two years before the Diocese closed the laboratories and their journal, officially for “disciplinary reasons” yet unofficially for ideological reasons, Barandiarán frankly admitted that with the *Gymnasium* foundation, they aspired to “have an exact vision of current ideological currents.”³² The end was to know these currents “in their being and in their rhythm” so that seminarians were able to overcome them, not to be unconsciously, gregariously, swept by them.³³ Barandiarán's message resonated through the Spanish ecclesiastical hierarchy.

There, as in Vitoria, always pressured by the Bishop's authority, Gymnasium's empirical methods offered a fresh look to an anachronistic Church.

All of this may have been in the aid of adapting seminarians to the sociopolitical reality that awaited them after their ordination, but it was also collective psychology by another name. Perhaps the most eloquent and illustrative exponent of socioreligious research in Spain during a good part of the 20th century was the journal *Idearium*, founded and directed by Barandiarán and written by and for the Basque Diocese's priests.³⁴ The most important section of the journal was "Nuestras encuestas" (our surveys), which gathered the responses of priests and parish priests to the "Collective psychology questionnaire of the religious phenomenon" sent by Barandiarán. These questions and answers were significant because of what was said and had been to date left unsaid. Tensions in believing communities were taken into account; this was a time for heated ideological combat, over both religious teaching and the question of enforcing social justice. Hand in hand with the resigned acceptance of the rise of laicism went the interesting proposal, nowhere clearer than in the Barandiarán groups' article "El sacerdote social" (The social priest), that it was necessary to train a new type of priest that would be able to adapt to all kind of environment.³⁵ At an age that drove parishioners away from the Church, its causes were identified; there were reflections on the influence of religion on the Basque citizenry's thought; the maxim *sapere aude* was defended *à outrance*, no matter how much the truth weighed; and the Popes' doctrines in social matters lay over the horizon. For all intents and purposes, it would be these novel studies on collective psychology that would be deemed as the first field research on religious sociology in the Iberian Peninsula (Unzueta, 1973, p. 173), and their questionnaires what would be defined as "a cutting-edge method of European social Catholicism of that time" (Rivera & De la Fuente, 2000, p. 31).

6 | TOWARD A REVISION OF STANDARD CRITICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

In the remainder, I will consider certain historiographical discourses on "Barandiarán and Basque anthropology," what they tell us about his thought and his methodological influences, to illustrate some of the difficulties inherent in these forms of criticism, to offer a framework—in certain respects, an absolutely different one—within which old criticisms may acquire different meaning and even be proven unfounded, and, finally, to reveal some epistemological aspects and limitations of Barandiarán that seek to situate his work in the frame of reference of his contemporaries.

To illustrate the variety of standard critical approaches to Barandiarán's historiography, I will consider two positions. The first, which I shall for convenience call "evolutionist," is embodied in anthropologist Jesús Azcona's *Etnia y nacionalismo vasco*, and some articles of his, as well as in other authors. Azcona's criticism focuses on the Vienna School and the reasons why, according to him, Barandiarán embraced *ab initio* the *stricto sensu* historical-cultural method, and how this school shaped his conception of Basque race and culture. Azcona is concerned with two fundamental influences on Barandiarán: (1) both he and Aranzadi were inspired by, and started from, the fundamental belief of the Vienna theorists (Schmidt and Graebner) to investigate "the original and authentic Basque culture"; a result of this influence was his goal of reconstructing the history of Basque culture and the Basque race³⁶; and (2) the special priority given to the theory of survivals in the sense that civilizations are never created *ex nihilo*, but rather grow from a previous state, with new beliefs and customs bearing their predecessors' traces. Reflecting this Viennese influence, Azcona and others have criticized Barandiarán for embracing a "continuist, fixed and non-evolutionary conception" of culture (Azcona, 1982, p. 762). The influence of the historical-cultural method would not only have been very early—Azcona set it as early as 1918, in Barandiarán's Basque prehistory program—but also, according to the former, it continued to be very much alive in him and his disciples until at least the 1980s, despite the fact that by 1937 there were studies that proved the heuristic ineffectiveness of this method's criteria. What Schmidt and Graebner "perform on a universal scale by establishing

the most important cultural cycles of human culture,” Azcona asserts, Barandiarán does on Basque culture (Azcona, 1981, p. 72).

Azcona and others criticized Barandiarán for his alleged rejection of evolutionism and his persistent *lifelong* adherence to the cultural-historical method, mainly for religious reasons. The accuracy of some of these interpretations, especially those concerning Barandiarán's early stages (the 1920s and 1930s), deserve consideration and have prompted constructive criticism. Yet, neither Azcona nor other scholars have examined Wundt's influence on Barandiarán (which came before that of the Vienna school), or the depth of its incidence or the reasons for its persistence. It is surprising that in his many studies on Barandiarán, Azcona never mentions Wundt or VPs' influence.³⁷ Furthermore, some claims are inaccurate; Barandiarán had no contact with representatives of the Viennese school until 1921, and, as he himself later confessed, “I did not find out enough about this method until 1922 when I attended some lessons by Fr. Graebner in Cologne” (Barandiarán, 1987). Inadvertently, Azcona and others fell into a paradox. They recognized that Barandiarán always put “empirical knowledge” before theoretical or aprioristic thinking, which he “learned from his teacher [Aranzadi]” (Azcona, 1982, p. 764)—in this regard, Barandiarán's “a gram of facts is worth more than a ton of hypotheses” is famous. However, these very statements would seem to go against Azcona's attempt to chain him to the Viennese school and the theory of cultural circles. Responding to this intention in 1987, Barandiarán admitted that he made “slight incursions into the field of general methods,” and even published, “at the request of several of my colleagues, an outline of the cultural-historical method” in 1931.³⁸ But despite this, concluded he, “my investigations were based on the 1913 criteria [given by Wundt]” (Barandiarán, 1987).

According to Azcona, the theory of survivals and the method of cultural circles unite in Barandiarán's reconstruction of “a cultural and racial past... halfway between anthropology and folklore” (Azcona, 1981, p. 71). Although he hardly elaborates on the treatment of survival theory, Azcona does not hesitate to affirm that one of Barandiarán's three main theses on Basque culture—that is, that some cultural strata of today were formed in pre-Christian times—rests upon this theory. However, as I noted above, Barandiarán's proposition in its original version is more a working hypothesis than a thesis, much less a well-formulated theory. In fact, Barandiarán wrote in his *El hombre primitivo en el País Vasco* (1934), just after enunciating his “thesis,” that many are the “problems posed by Basque Prehistory [...] a science that is in its early stages of its formation,” hence “many of [our solutions] of course have a purely provisional and hypothetical value” (Barandiarán, 1934/1979, p. 342).³⁹ The emphasis on the hypothetical nature of his proposal is due not so much to his empiricist approach to ethnology—and even less to any influence from the Viennese school of cultural circles—as to the result of the influence of Wundt's ideas. As Barandiarán wrote about this question: “I have always kept in mind, as a methodological criterion, [Wundt's] principle that ‘human facts are not adequately intelligible if they are not lived.’ And, of course, we have not experienced the events of thousands of years ago. I have always kept this in mind” (interview with Barandiarán, in Manterola, 1984, p. 281).

Since the 1990s, these issues of the authenticity and originality of Basque culture were subsumed into a “nationalist” perspective, when some Spanish scholars interpreted Barandiarán's work partly from ideological positions. The origin of these interpretations can be traced to the relationship between VPs and racial differentiability, or, to be more precise, the confusion between “Wundt's Völkerpsychologie” and “differentielle Völkerpsychologie” and the consequent shift from the former to the latter. The “differentielle Völkerpsychologie” resulted from Houston Stewart Chamberlain's interpretation of Wundt's theory, an interpretation implying the differentiation, separation, and even exclusion of races, and that was to become an instrument for political goals in 1920s Germany.⁴⁰ In his obituary note on Barandiarán in 1992, the anthropologist Ángel Aguirre was explicit in this regard, stating that, following Wundt's advice, Barandiarán focused on cultivating an “ethnography made from within, an endoethnography” that “runs the risk of looking at itself, of not relativizing itself, of devoting itself to a nationalist ethnocentrism, of absolute, separate ideas” (Aguirre, 1992, p. 122). In his well-known work *La antropología cultural en España*, Aguirre went a step further. Considering the implicit risks of endoethnography, he perhaps unintentionally extended Barandiarán's Wundtian Völkerpsychologie to Chamberlain “differentielle

Völkerpsychologie" by stating that Barandiarán's work was dedicated "to the study of the racial, historical and cultural differentiality of the Basque people" (Aguirre, 1986, p. 79).

This interpretation placed emphasis on the search for the differentiality, authenticity, and originality of culture and race, and, in its most extremist version, on the instrumentalization of ethnology for nationalist purposes.⁴¹ Aguirre and others are careful not to say that Barandiarán was markedly nationalist, but that interpretation had strong political overtones. In fact, others, such as the philosopher and historian Francisco Castilla, have come to accuse Barandiarán and Catalan and Galician folklorists of trying to "turn their studies into the scientific demonstration of their political ideals."⁴² The greatest assumptions of these critics can be summarized as follows: (1) they accuse Barandiarán of legitimizing his political ideas from science, without providing solid evidence; (2) they allude to, but do not inquire into, the influence of Wundt's VPs on Barandiarán's work, which occupies the referential framework of his ethnographic descriptions of the social behavior of peoples; (3) they often take no account of the cultural or customary use of terms such as race, which was not always interpreted in a physical sense at that time; and (4) they take no account of the wider sociopolitical contexts, such as the lack of Basque political and educational autonomy, which contributed to the decline of the Basque language and culture, before which science offered means of rescue and recording.

Indeed, the differentiality argument has an air of a reactionary response. Viewing with displeasure this allegedly academic reproach, Azcona distanced himself from those scholars and rejected its implicit belief in the "aura of superiority" laying behind ethnic differentiation. For Azcona, "denying sharply and a priori the existence of ethnic-group differentiations because there are wrong approaches when it comes to cataloging and explaining the phenomenon, is as absurd and gratuitous as denying physical diversity because the term and conceptualization carried out until not long ago, has been proven inadequate, and has led to unfair approaches with a far-reaching social impact. Although, perhaps, the very terms and concepts of ethnic group and/or ethnicity require a rectification similar to that suffered by the term and concept of race from the genetic discoveries and the re-interpretation of Darwinian theory, there exist *different groups* and these show a greater or lesser differentiation" (Azcona, 1982, p. 757).

Finally, the differentiality argument (almost inescapably, given its ideological charge) fails to account for the intercultural relations of Barandiarán's ethnology within that process of "nationalist enterprise." Limiting ourselves to the field of ethnography, at least two questions arise. (1) How is it that in his ethnographic descriptions ideas, beliefs, and myths of Basque peoples that also occurred in other peoples and in old Indo-European cultures appear frequently?⁴³ If investigations, as Barandiarán pointed out, looked exclusively for what was differential and original in the Basque people, there would be no room for these news and facts.⁴⁴ And (2) what qualifies for the original in a culture? The critics' argument is too ambiguous to articulate with any precision an intentional motive of exclusive search for originality. Adducing the search for the original as a manifestation of racial or ethnic discrimination is for some an argument as imprecise as to be meaningless. Looking back on his work, Barandiarán recalled that 75 years ago he learned an axiom from the historian Ferdinand Brunetière: "the originality of a culture or a cultural element does not consist in the fact that a people has created something totally new or unprecedented, since this does not happen generally, but in giving common things a peculiar trait."⁴⁵ The examination of the peculiar, taking positions open to the incontestable evidence of empirical observation and field work, does not necessarily imply maintaining a discriminatory position, nor a segregationist, racist or separatist one, as many of his critics claim.

7 | CONCLUSION

Barandiarán died in 1991, 10 days after turning 102. The social historian Julio Caro Baroja was among those who best knew his teacher's work. In a tribute paid to Barandiarán in 1983, Caro Baroja (1983, p. 200) stated that his ethnographic monographs on Basque towns were half a century ahead of "social anthropology studies on small communities." In Caro Baroja's view:

What gives the strongest stamp of originality to his work is the study of Basque rural societies and mentalities. His contributions to Folklore are, thus, unique and his descriptions of the way of being and living of shepherds' and farmers' communities a model (Caro Baroja, 1979, p. 18).

Caro Baroja conferred on Barandiarán a place of honor in ethnology and folklore. But his sentiments conveyed a double meaning. Anthropology and ethnography were united in his spirit, not as two sciences but "as two fundamental aspects of his vital experience." This process of "introspection" of the collective conscience yielded fruits. Barandiarán was able to see "the Basque man's world *from within*: also his religious conceptions." This gave his work, according to Caro Baroja (1983, p. 200), "the greatest originality." Yet it also gave Basque anthropology the stamp of singularity. Among historians, there are good reasons to ask why.

I have outlined some of the aspects in which Barandiarán was influenced by the historical-cultural method of the Vienna School and the theory of survivals and the extent to which his methodological approach distanced itself from that of the folklorists of his time and that of the 19th-century ethnographers—the latter in favor of maintaining distances between the researcher and the investigated people. There remains ample scope for reinterpreting the place that Basque anthropology occupies in the course of the history of this science in Europe during the first three-quarters of the 20th century. It is well known that in France and in Europe in general, scholars of these sciences made a nominal and conceptual distinction within the discipline: while folklore was the study of peasant societies and their traditional culture, collecting the survivals of these societies in "civilized" countries, ethnography focused on analyzing the culture of non-European societies that were then called "primitive" (Cuisenier & Segalen, 1993, pp. 3–4; Erkoreka, 2021, p. 21). However, anthropology in the Basque Country took a unique path, since, as was shown, Barandiarán combined both techniques. The Basque case's specificity contributed in part to this: on the one hand, the Basque people shared signs of history and civilization with all European peoples; but at the same time, as Azcona holds, "its loss over time" made it "applicable to the methodology of peoples without writing" (Azcona, 1982, pp. 762–763). Paraphrasing Azcona, it should be recognized that Claude Lévi-Strauss's statement that "ethnological concerns arise from the encounter of various heterogeneous currents" (Lévi-Strauss, 1975, p. 17—quoted in Azcona, 1982, pp. 762–763) is "doubly applicable to Basque anthropology."⁴⁶ Since Barandiarán drank from both sources: on the one hand, he was inspired by the ideas and methods of European anthropology, halfway between science and the humanities; but on the other, he drew on beliefs, legends, customs and myths to study the collective mentality and material and spiritual culture of a people whose history was as distant as its echoes are audible today.

In Barandiarán's choice of this unique path, the influence of Wundt's VPs was pivotal. Actually, there were both internal and external reasons for the materialization of this influence on Barandiarán. Among the internal reasons, the most important undoubtedly resided in his determination of the possibility of subjecting the study of popular mentality to a systematic investigation—the gathering and recording of facts. This meant a methodological break with respect to romantic folklore, insofar as Barandiarán analyzed the facts in their contexts while the latter isolated them for their literary recreation. Barandiarán's insistence on promoting fieldwork based on participant observation, as well as on following Wundt's principle that cultures are adequately intelligible only to those who live them, proved to be scientifically fruitful. It was a principle he could maintain consistently in the Etniker group's work until the 1990s, and, because it had become a matter of principle, he applied it to the field of religious ethnology, conducting collective psychology questionnaires at the Vitoria Seminary. Finally, Barandiarán's notion of adding a temporal dimension to folklore and ethnology through systematic fieldwork paved the way for examining the historicity of Basque rural societies and popular mentality.

However, these manifestations of Wundt's VPs, notable though they were, could hardly have come to fruition without the presence of certain circumstances that coincided in the Basque Country. Various external factors allowed VPs to have an important influence on the subsequent development of Basque anthropology that moved away from Anglo-Saxon evolutionary and neo-evolutionary anthropological currents. At the institutional level, a very weighty reason was the lack of a public university and university district in the Basque-Navarre provinces until

well into the 20th century. This meant that the Basque Country did not have the effective possibility of fostering university chairs or public research programs, which affected the institutional development of ethnographic projects, which were performed either by amateurs and personalities from outside the academic world and/or by institutions of the Catholic clergy. A second factor had no less weight, the growing secularization of Basque society, catalyzed by processes such as industrialization and the rise of liberal thought. In this regard, it was by no means a coincidence that it was a *religious* crisis—the need to understand the religious phenomenon as an element of a collective cultural complex in an increasingly secularized society—that led Barandiarán to approach Wundt's VPs. Wundt's doctrine that only those who experience cultural facts are capable of placing them in their real perspective and understanding them intelligibly proved highly instructive. His influence was felt in such specific areas of research as religious ethnology and sociology, which would flourish only a decade later at the Vitoria Seminary.

Just as Wundt's VPs proved a significant catalyst for Barandiarán's anthropology, the Vienna diffusionist school led him to improve fieldwork, epitomized in the preparation of ethnographic and collective psychology questionnaires. Of the various ways of judging facts and the different methods he knew during his long life (from the historical-cultural method to functionalism, structuralism, and evolutionism), Barandiarán only used, in his few interpretative essays, "those norms that seemed more reasonable" (Barandiarán, 1987). Looking back at the end of his long career, he admitted that the cultural-historical method did not help him much in his research; nevertheless, he did find "the general criteria of the historical-cultural methodology useful to enrich questionnaires and continue working on data collection" (interview with Barandiarán, in Manterola, 1984, p. 284).

But ethnographic projects do not exist in a vacuum, nor are their consequences purely academic. Barandiarán's mission was to rescue a sense of culture and history for the Basque people, and he did so dressed in the language of science and interpretation, fulfilling the primary Wundtian doctrine of living the human facts to be able to interpret them in their cultural significance. The challenge was colossal: if no action was taken quickly, the cultural facts associated with Basque traditional ways of life ran the risk of being lost forever. Reflecting his combination of empirical agendas and cultural-historical perspectives, Barandiarán's "vision" was also directed to the future of the Basque people. This vision sought to rescue not only material and physical culture, but also spiritual culture—the Basque people's mental universe—to form a heritage ensemble.⁴⁷ In contributing so powerfully to rescuing Basque cultural heritage, Barandiarán paid tribute to the value of a people who possessed an *acquis communautaire* of beliefs, rites, myths, and legends that, over time, their citizens would appreciate.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Barandiarán's personal testimony, quoted in Manterola (1984, p. 36). All translations from this article are mine.
- ² At least two biographies of Barandiarán were published during his lifetime: Luis de Barandiarán (1976) and Manterola (1984). His disciples welcomed several more after his death: Manterola and Arregi (2003). A selection of writings was edited by Altuna (2007). His personal diaries were edited by Alvaro Arrizabalaga and published by the José Miguel de Barandiarán Foundation (2005, 2009) in four volumes. He also received a good number of tributes in his lifetime; see, for example, Academia Errante (1963). In addition, several interpretive essays on particular aspects of his work have been published: as to his paleontological thought, see Apalategi (1981); for his archeological contribution, see Arrizabalaga (2015); and for his anthropological conception and methodology, see Azcona (1981) and Duvert (2014).
- ³ Barandiarán's position regarding evolutionism can be interpreted as an accommodation to his most immediate Catholic environment, which was openly hostile to the theories of Darwin and Morgan. As Altonaga (2016) has shown, in the public sphere Barandiarán was always a vehement antievolutionist while in private life he became an evolutionist in the 1950s.

- ⁴ See also Barros (1993, p. 65), who seeks to link French historical anthropology and Anglo-Saxon psychohistory to the German philosophical tradition of the study of *Völkerpsychologie*.
- ⁵ What I call here critical historiographical production does not come from a homogeneous group of scholars; actually, this group includes some who are critical of certain epistemological aspects of Barandiarán's work—such as Azcona (1982, 1987) and others who have tended to see political ends or ideological motivations in his scientific thought—for example, Aguirre (1986) and Almagro-Gorbea. For further details, see Section 6.
- ⁶ Throughout its 20 volumes, this journal brought together philologists, folklorists, historians, and anthropologists.
- ⁷ On Wilhelm Wundt and his contribution to psychology in general, and to *Völkerpsychologie* and experimental psychology in particular, see, Danziger (1983), Farr (1983a), and Hatfield (1997).
- ⁸ For Wundt (1897, pp. 15–17), psychology was niched into the field of mental sciences: “psychology is in relation to natural sciences the *supplementary*, in relation to the mental sciences the *fundamental*, and in relation to philosophy the *propaedeutic empirical science*”—italics in the original text.
- ⁹ Lazarus and Steinthal (1860, p. 29) defined the term *Volksgeist* as ‘that which is common to the inner activity of all the individuals’.
- ¹⁰ “I needed to convince myself that Christianity had not been an effect of the general environment; a projection of a general mentality onto a specific person: Christ”—quoted by his nephew Luis Barandiarán (1976, pp. 49–50).
- ¹¹ Barandiarán (1979), quoted in Manterola (1984, p. 34). The letters that Wundt wrote to Barandiarán were lost during the Civil War, as Barandiarán confessed to Gondra (1992, p. 63).
- ¹² Wundt's advice to Barandiarán and his reaction are quoted by Manterola (1984, p. 36).
- ¹³ For a summary of Barandiarán's archeological excavations during the three stages of his life—from 1917 to 1936 (together with Aranzadi and Enrique de Eguen), in exile, and after his return until retirement (1953–1974)—especially in Bizkaia, see, Arrizabalaga (2015).
- ¹⁴ Established in 1907, the Institut d'Estudis Catalans promoted studies on popular speech and dialectology as manifestations of Catalan identity. On the institutional framework in which anthropology, ethnography, anthropological archeology, and ethnic psychology were developed in Catalonia, see, Calvo (1997, pp. 48–55).
- ¹⁵ The SEV published two courses: Frankowski (1920a, 1920b).
- ¹⁶ Manterola (1984) has coined the expression “Basque school of ethnology” led by Barandiarán.
- ¹⁷ The Catalan focus was influential in the institutionalization of Basque ethnography. In addition to the chair held by Aranzadi, the Associació Catalana d'Antropologia, Etnologia i Prehistòria was established in 1922, which promoted studies on ethnic and cultural psychology in Catalonia. Similarly influenced by Wundt's ideas, Tomás Carreras i Artau established the Arxiu d'Etnografia i Folklore de Catalunya in 1915 to determine the ethnopsychological characteristics of Catalans. In a letter addressed to Carreras on September 21, 1920, Barandiarán lamented the little folkloric work done in the Basque Country and extolled the substantial work done in Catalonia: “Aranzadi told me that you have organized research centers in the Seminaries there. Could you let me know how you have done it? I would be very grateful if you would let me know about this, so that we can do a similar thing here.” Quoted in Calvo (1991, pp. 104–105).
- ¹⁸ Following a work by Barandiarán on magism, in 1922, Schmidt invited him to be the correspondent for the ethnology and linguistics journal *Anthropos* and deal with the ethnological part concerning Basque culture. Barandiarán not only accepted the invitation, he also participated in the International Week of Religious Ethnology held in Tilburg, Holland in 1922, with a lecture on *La religion des anciens basques*. Barandiarán was also to attend Graebner's lectures at the University of Cologne in 1922.
- ¹⁹ Barandiarán seems to have seen in the investigation of Basque ethnography an attempt to rid pastoral activity of social and intellectual threats, a goal he then pursued in and through the ethnology which he began to cultivate in the 1920s on the basis, to a large extent, of the methodological principles of the Viennese cultural-historical school. Recalling those early years, Barandiarán stated in 1978: “I understood that the religious phenomenon is an element of a cultural complex outside of which its meaning is not understandable. That is why I devoted myself to the study of ethnology”—quoted in Manterola (1992, p. 128).
- ²⁰ Barandiarán (1921, p. 4) made his objective explicit in the prologue to the first issue of the *Anuario de la Sociedad Eusko-Folklore*: the aim is to “investigate Basque popular knowledge and study the psychological and cultural history problems raised by data and questionnaires.”
- ²¹ The conversion of the Sociedad de Eusko-Folklore into a Laboratory of Ethnology and Eusko-Folklore coincided with its change of headquarters from the Conciliar Seminary to the School of Arts and Crafts in Vitoria, a change that was

largely motivated by political reasons—that is, the religious authorities' reluctance to the allegedly “nationalist” approach of Barandiarán's investigations.

- 22 As a result of Barandiarán's fieldwork campaigns, the *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* published materials concerning both material and immaterial culture: popular festivals (1922), beliefs and funeral rites (1923), the religiosity of the people (1924), human settlements (1925–1929), toponymy (1928–1930), and popular songs (1930–1933).
- 23 The work was published in Basque (*Euskaleri'ko Leengizona*. Itxaropena, 1934) and Spanish (*El hombre prehistórico en el País Vasco*. Itxaropena, 1934).
- 24 In his studies, Barandiarán mentions Lang's work, *The origins of religion* (1908), as Apalategi (1987, p. 159) has noted. On Lang's conception of “survivals,” see, Hodgen (1933).
- 25 On the role of Obermaier as the initiator of scientific prehistory in Spain in the first decades of the 20th century, see, Almagro-Gorbea (2012) and Gran-Aymerich (2001).
- 26 Obermaier (1916, pp. 135–146) was even able to provide a list of cultural materials that the prehistoric culture and the set of cultures of contemporary peoples could share. Apalategi (1981, pp. 75–76) has highlighted Obermaier's influence on Barandiarán's work.
- 27 Among the abundant literature on the relations between the Spanish Church, politics, and power, see, for example., Lannon (1987), Casanova (2005), and Fernández Fernández (1999).
- 28 Goicoecheaundia (1983). On the sociological distribution of the diocesan clergy in the Basque Country, see, Lannon (1979, p. 31).
- 29 On the process of secularization in Spain, see, Suárez Cortina (2001).
- 30 The rest of the founders were Manuel Lecuona, Antonio Pildain, and Leoncio Aravio-Torre. For their contributions to laboratory studies, see, Lannon (1979), Rivera and De la Fuente (2000). For these fieldworks, see, *Trabajos de los Laboratorios Gymnasium*. Seminario Diocesano de Vitoria, 1930, 4 vols.
- 31 *Reglamento General del Seminario de Vitoria*. Diócesis de Vitoria, 1933.
- 32 Barandiarán (1939/1984, p. 156) saw in the closure of Gymnasium an attempt to impose a peculiar fundamentalist interpretation of the Catholic doctrine, the acceptance of which entailed also accepting certain political commitments and patterns of social analysis and which did not admit any trace of pluralism: ‘it was said that [the closure] was by disciplinary reasons. It is not true. Political passions made many people see attempts of separatism in everything that was eager to study the Basque race, people and soil. For the same reason, they considered sinful to investigate the history and religious life of the Diocese of Vitoria.
- 33 Barandiarán in *Gymnasium*, 1929, 3, p. 405—quoted in Rivera and De la Fuente (2000, p. 15).
- 34 *Idearium: Revista de investigación y síntesis de ciencia religiosa*. Seminario Diocesano de Vitoria, 1934/1935, 11 vols.
- 35 “El sacerdote social,” *Idearium*, 5, November to December 1934.
- 36 Azcona (1987, p. 22): “Aranzadi and Barandiarán were concerned—and the latter continues to be concerned—with the reconstruction through archeology, prehistory and physical anthropology of the authentic and original Basque culture and of the racially pure Basque man.”
- 37 Actually, Azcona does mention Wundt once, but he does so within a quote from Barandiarán himself. See, Azcona (1981, p. 73).
- 38 This outline was published in the second part of Barandiarán (1931)'s article.
- 39 Before we accept as a fact that Barandiarán defended the existence of the same multi-millennial Basque culture—as many of his critics suggest—we should hear what he said on this score in the early 1980s, the time when Azcona published his articles: “In certain cases I suggested these possible relationships. But I did not ensure that this must necessarily be so. I said that perhaps there could be a genetic relationship between prehistoric phenomena and current phenomena. But that is not assuring.” Manterola's interview with Barandiarán, in Manterola (1984, p. 279). On the evolution of Barandiarán's thought toward an eclectic position in archeology (rather than in ethnography) in the 1960s and the incorporation of assumptions of structuralism and neo-evolutionism, see, Arrizabalaga (2015, p. 189).
- 40 A consultant to Emperor Wilhelm II, Chamberlain's leitmotif was discrimination between races, especially between Jews against Jews. On the interpretation of “differentielle Völkerpsychologie” for anti-Semitic purposes, see, for example, Chamberlain, (1915, 1918). On this loss of the scientific approach of Wundt's Völkerpsychologie, see, Guski-Leinwand (2009).
- 41 Interesting for its testimony to the extent and strength of belief that the accusation of being a scientist at the service of the Basque nationalist cause received among Spanish academic circles—as for much else—is the biography on

Barandiarán written by Martín Almagro-Gorbea (2010, p. 748) for the Real Academia de la Historia. For this prehistorian, Barandiarán always tended to interpret Basque culture “in a ‘mythical’ way, following nationalist postulates [...] His prehistoric and ethnological nationalist interpretations come from the tradition of Sabino Arana [the founder of Basque nationalism] and from G. Kossina's German nationalist prehistory, as they are based on a ‘mythical’ concept of the ‘Basque people,’ different from the others and ‘superior,’ today scientifically superseded, although it continues to be used as ideological support for political positions that have nothing to do with science.”

- ⁴² According to Castilla (1994, p. 262), Barandiarán and others scholars defended “the existence of a Galician, Basque, Catalan culture, and so on, whose traditional roots would have assimilated all external influences in a peculiar way.”
- ⁴³ For a list of some of these cases of shared facts and beliefs, see, Manterola and Arregi (2003, p. 288).
- ⁴⁴ Barandiarán in his Lecture on the investiture as Doctor Honoris Causa by the Complutense University, Madrid in 1987—quoted in Manterola and Arregi (2003, p. 288).
- ⁴⁵ Arregi—quoted in Manterola and Arregi (2003, p. 288).
- ⁴⁶ Azcona (1982, p. 763). Azcona stresses the uniqueness of Basque anthropology. However, he focuses this particularity almost exclusively upon the historical method and the theory of survivals, completely overlooking the influence of Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie*.
- ⁴⁷ The consideration of Barandiarán's ethnographic work as a “cultural rescue work” and his role in the recovery of the Basque cultural heritage has been claimed by Arregi (1999, p. 343).

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