

INVENTING THE BASQUE BLOCK: HERITAGE TOURISM AND IDENTITY
POLITICS IN BOISE, IDAHO

by

GRETCHEN LOUISE HILL

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Student: Gretchen Louise Hill

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This thesis has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in the Department of Geography by:

Xiaobo Su	Chair
Shaul Cohen	Member
Susan Hardwick	Member

and

Kimberly Andrews Espy	Vice President for Research & Innovation/Dean of the Graduate School
-----------------------	--

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Graduate School.

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THESIS ABSTRACT

Gretchen Louise Hill

Master of Arts

Department of Geography

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Title: Inventing the Basque Block: Heritage Tourism and Identity Politics in Boise, Idaho

This thesis examines the social, political, and economic underpinnings of creating a place for Basque immigrant descendants by the use of the Basque Block in downtown Boise, Idaho. In the past, unlike other immigrant groups in the United States, Basques lacked the desire to assimilate into the US and remained relatively invisible. Simultaneously, they created subtle ethnic communities and maintained transnational sociospatial ties with Basque Provinces in Europe. Today, these transnational ties are stronger, which has profoundly influenced the creation of the Basque Block. The Basques strive to maintain their heritage landscapes to retain their cultural identity and educate present and future generations about their unique legacy. Furthermore, the local community in Boise has recently marketed their heritage landscapes to attract tourists and bring attention to this “invisible” ethnic group. This thesis explores the challenges and opportunities brought on by the production and commodification of an ethnic heritage site.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Gretchen Louise Hill

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene
University of Nevada, Reno

DEGREES AWARDED:

Master of Arts, Geography, 2012, University of Oregon
Bachelor of Science, Geography, 2009, University of Nevada, Reno

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Basque Culture in the American West

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Geography, University of Oregon,
Eugene, 2011-2012

Teaching assistant, Department of Geography, University of Oregon,
Eugene, 2010-2012

MAP Librarian Assistant, Department of Geography, University of
Oregon, Eugene, 2009-2010

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS:

Graduate Teaching Fellowship, Geography, 2009 to 2012

International Geographical Honors Society, University of Oregon, Eugene,
2009 to present

Women in Graduate Sciences Parenting Award.
University of Oregon Women in Graduate Sciences, Eugene, 2011

Summer Research Funding. *Inventing the Basque Block: Heritage Tourism and Identity Politics in Boise, Idaho.* Department of Geography, University of Oregon, 2010

Margaret Trussell Scholarship for Women Graduate Students
Hidden in Plain Sight: The Boise Basques
Association of Pacific Coast Geographers: Coeur d' Alene, ID., 2010

President's Award for Outstanding Paper by an M.A. or M.S. Student.
Hidden in Plain Sight: The Boise Basques
Association of Pacific Coast Geographers: Coeur d' Alene, ID., 2010

Larry Ford Fieldwork Scholarship in Cultural Geography. *Hidden in Plain Sight: The Boise Basques.* Association of Pacific Coast Geographers: Coeur d' Alene, ID., 2010

Women's Network Travel Grant. Association of Pacific Coast Geographers: Coeur d' Alene, ID., 2010

Travel Grant Award. Association of Pacific Coast Geographers: Coeur d' Alene, ID., 2010

California Geographical Society Student Travel Award, 2010

Ronald E. McNair Scholar. *Basques' Attachment to Place in Nevada and the Basque Country.* University of Nevada, Reno, 2007-2009

Travel Grant Award. Association of Pacific Coast Geographers: Long Beach, CA., 2007

President's Award for Outstanding Paper by an Undergraduate Student.
Major Expressions of Basque Identity in the Great Basin Region
Association of Pacific Coast Geographers: Long Beach, CA., 2007

General Undergraduate Research Award. *Basque Shepherders and Their Attachment to the American West and the Basque Country.* University of Nevada, Reno, 2007

University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) Travel Award. University of Nevada, Reno, 2007

USA Funds. Recipient of National Undergraduate Award, 2006-2009

CEEC Abrahams Memorial. Davis, California Chapter, Soroptimist Scholarship, 2006

Nancy Gomes-Gojack. Truckee Meadows Chapter, Soroptimist Scholarship, 2005 & 2007

Associated Students of the University of Nevada Daycare Award.
University of Nevada, Reno, 2005-2008

College of Science Dean's List. University of Nevada, Reno, 2005 & 2009

TRiO Platinum Scholar. University of Nevada, Reno, 2004-2006

Nevada Women's Fund. Reno, Nevada, 2004-2009

PUBLICATIONS:

Contributor to Instructor Web Site (2011): *The Geography of North America: Environment, Culture, Economy* (by S.W. Hardwick, F. Shelley, and D.G. Holtgrieve, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2012, 2nd edition)

Hill, Gretchen. (2009) Map Publication in the Book: *Gernika, 1937*.
Author: Xabier Irujo.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the social, political, and economic underpinnings of creating a place for descendants of Basque immigrants in the use of the Basque Block in downtown Boise, Idaho. Specifically, it is an attempt to unravel the significance behind the creation of the Basque Block in relation to the construction of ethno-nationalism, the tourists and locals as they consume and contest the Basque heritage, and identify transnational connections that may have influenced the development of the Basque Block.

Statement of Purpose

Immigrants in the U.S. have been creating ethnic communities since the early days of European settlement in North America. Early tangible infrastructures were established at the turn of the century in places such as San Francisco's Chinatown. Their existence was more about maintaining their distinctive culture and survival in a foreign country rather than the commodification and maintenance of an ethnic identity for tourism development. However, by the 1890s "white" tour guides looked to the depravity of the Chinese and presented their exotic architecture, theatrical performances, and cuisine as 'authentic' and commodified their exoticness as a form of "otherness" unique to Euro-American ideals (Rast, 2007).

Today, second and third generation immigrants strive for the revitalization of their ethnic identity. Many ethnic groups in the U.S., for example, are experiencing this "revivalism" due to a myriad of factors. Concurrently, globalization and advanced

technologies have created a modern environment in which identity is not necessarily shaped by ethnic tradition, but by the society in which one lives as it endlessly evolves and transforms (Totoricagüena, 2004b; Massey, 2002). Increases in the speed of globalization, however, have created a sense of placelessness in many parts of the world, thereby altering or eliminating identities of people and place (Massey, 2002). Since identities are perpetually shifting and globalization is intensified, the need for creating a sense of belonging that has structure, form and meaning is essential in identifying with a place (Relph, 1976: 67).

Placelessness is ubiquitous due to the pressures brought on by globalization and therefore, it has had a profound effect on second and third generation migrant families and their identities. The relationship between migrants and placelessness, both a factor of globalization, goes hand-in-hand and exacerbates the need for creating a sense of belonging for immigrant groups and their descendants. Placelessness according to Relph, is the “removal of distinctive places and the making of standardized landscapes that result from insensitivity to the significance of place” (Relph, 1976:1). This notion of placelessness bodes well for immigrant ethnic groups and their children in re-creating a place that has meaning. Simultaneously, international migration linked to globalization has influenced the production and consumption of goods across the world and created standardized landscapes of uniformity (Massey, 2002). Chinatown for instance, is not only a United States phenomenon, but Chinatowns are a world-wide distinction that exhibits Chinese ethnic expressions that are mimicked throughout each Chinese community. Vancouver, British Columbia for example, has the largest Chinatown in Canada and was created as a tourist destination for mass consumption of Chinese goods

and services. Additionally, creating standardized landscapes has allowed people to be displaced from one location, become physically attached to another, while also maintaining emotional ties to their native country (Massey, 2002). The importance of documenting the creation or re-creation of immigrant place provided the original impetus for studying the Basque Block in Boise, Idaho.

Unlike many other immigrant groups in the United States, many Basques lacked the desire to assimilate into the U.S. melting pot society (Totoricagüena, 2004a & 2004b) and remained relatively invisible in local landscapes. At the same time, they created subtle ethnic communities and maintained transnational sociospatial ties with Basque Provinces in Europe. Today, these transnational ties are even stronger than before, which has had a profound effect and influence on the creation of the Basque Block. Due to globalization, however, many immigrant groups in the U.S. have struggled to preserve their heritage and distinctive landscapes and the Basques are no exception. The Basques strive to maintain their heritage landscapes in order to retain their cultural identity and educate present and future generations about their unique legacy. In addition to these goals, the local community in Boise has recently marketed their heritage landscapes to attract tourists and bring attention to this “invisible” ethnic group. This thesis explores the challenges and opportunities brought on by the production and commodification of an ethnic heritage site.

Research Objectives

Three primary objectives of this thesis exist. First to examine the factors involved in the establishment of a Basque community in Idaho based on a historical contextual framework and to untangle the creation of ethno-nationalism that may have aided in the

construction of the Basque Block. The second objective is to analyze the production of heritage in order to understand the processes that affect the construction and (re) presentation of the Basque Block and how it has played a crucial role in the maintenance of a North American immigrant group's ethnic identity. The third objective is to analyze the way heritage production of the Basque Block is being consumed, whether or not the heritage being displayed is authentic, and the contested meaning of heritage.

Additionally, the third objective will discuss transnational connections between Boise, Idaho and the Basque Country in Western Europe. This analysis will further address how the transformation of the Basque Block may have been influenced by these transnational ties.

Significance of Study

This research sheds light on urban redevelopment projects by arguing the production of heritage goes beyond economic concerns, but rather for ethnic identity maintenance. This issue is of particular importance to understanding the case of the Basque Block as part of heritage tourism for an urban redevelopment project. Cultural experiences or the ‘cultural industry’ is increasingly sought after by minority groups or “unfamiliar and unconventional cultures” to encourage ‘alternative experiences’ (Britton 1991: 454). The initiation of identifying and portraying heritage, along with the concepts of nationalism and patriotism, began during the “industrial revolution and urbanization of the nineteenth century [which] dislocated many people from a sense of social and geographical security” (Smith 2006: 16). Basque Americans, although a minority of the population in Boise, Idaho, exhibit a strong presence in the local urban landscape. One of their most visible heritage landscapes, or “landscape signatures” according to Singer

(2008), is the Basque Block located in Boise's urban center. Creating a place based off of a minority group's heritage can encourage tourists to encounter an alternative experience. However, the Basque Block is less about economic development and more about maintaining the Basque identity distant from the homeland.

This research contributes to two modes of thought. First, it complements the growing body of work produced by scholars interested in heritage tourism and how research on politics interplay with the creation of ethnic place. Second, this thesis will add to recent literature on the spatial construction of ethnic identity in a globalizing world. By recognizing the importance of heritage tourism as it is intertwined with politics and identity formation, this project will also advance current debates on sense of place and authenticity of place.

The Basque Block is not the only visible heritage site in the American West. There are a variety of cultural heritage developments in other places such as Chinatown in San Francisco's Central Business District, the "largest Chinatown outside of Asia" (San Francisco Chinatown, 2010; Almeida Santos, 2008). The Midwest's New Glarus, Wisconsin for instance, is another example of heritage tourism in the United States, and is known as America's "Little Switzerland" (Swisstown, 2011; Hoelscher, 1998). Both of these heritage sites are similar to the Basque Block in Boise and have also been created by distinctive immigrant groups. Alternatively, although these sites represent similarities among heritage sites, the motivation, production and consumption, and temporal and spatial differences exist within each ethnic place.

Three types of landscapes are typical expressions of heritage tourism and are grouped into the following categories. The "material landscape" consists of the built

environment or built infrastructures, such as museums, restaurants, or cultural centers, that mimic the native country's architecture. Examples of "living landscapes" are daily activities such as attending a Basque language school, the use of the cultural center, and organizing and/or attending festivals. Finally, the "symbolic landscape" is illustrated by the representation of symbols, such as the *lauburu* or Basque symbol, and the Basque flag. Each type of landscape helps connect Basque tourists to their native land, especially past and present migrants who have personal experiences and distinct memories and stories of their homeland. Heritage landscapes are indicative of the Basques' desire to identify with a place and maintain transnational connections with their native country.

Transnational ties are increasingly evident in the United States among ethnic groups and their homeland. Due to the fluidity of telecommunication and transportation, the number of immigrants continues to increase in the U.S. resulting in a "meeting ground and exchange hub for newcomers to the community and for visitors from the generating country" (Tremblay & Chicoine, 2011: 55). Basques in Boise are also contributing to the transnational phenomena. The immigration of native Basque politicians for example, are purchasing second homes and making frequent visits to Boise. In addition to a reverse Basque migration from Boise to the Basque Country, for social factors as opposed to economic, this further solidifies the transnational connections and relationships. Levitt articulates transnational communities as:

Once we rethink the boundaries of social life, it becomes clear that the incorporation of individuals into nation-states and transnational connections are not contradictory social processes. Simultaneity is a possibility that needs to be theorized and explored. Rather than viewing migration as a one-way process, increasing numbers of scholars now recognize that migrants simultaneously live aspects of their lives in their outgoing countries at the same time that they are

incorporated into the countries that receive them. Migrant incorporation into a new land and transnational connections to a homeland or to dispersed networks of family, compatriots, or persons who share a religious or ethnic identity can occur at the same time and reinforce each other. (Levitt 2001, 3)

Additionally, Latino and Hispanic populations in the West have created material landscapes that include restaurants, dress shops (quinceañera dresses), and money transfer stations (to send remittances to their native countries). Such transnational communities seem to correspond in particular with diasporic groups who continue to maintain a strong ethnic identity. These kinds of socio-cultural networks have created a visible Basque community in Boise as well as creating transnational connections. More information on these two related topics is presented in Chapter V.

Study Area: Boise, Idaho

The Basque Block, located in Boise, Idaho's urban center, was created in 2000 as part of an urban redevelopment project by Basque descendants based on over 100 years of Basque heritage landscapes. The largest and most significant Basque population is located in Boise, Idaho, with one percent or a little over 2,500 of the inhabitants identified as having Basque ancestry while the remaining population is dominated by a mixture of white Euro-American groups (US Census, 2009; Epodunk, 2007). The landlocked state of Idaho has an estimated population of 1.6 million inhabitants (US Census, 2010). As the state's political and population epicenter, Boise had an estimated 205,671 people in 2010. Situated in the southwest corner of the state, Boise is in a high desert region known for livestock ranching, in particular the herding of sheep (Figure 1.1). Many Basques initially emigrated from the Basque Country to the American West

for a myriad of push and pull factors during the Gold Rush Era. While economic opportunities were the leading factor in immigration, many Basque immigrants initially arrived in California and Nevada for mining and later to sheepherding. When mining, at times, was not prosperous, many Basques migrated north from Nevada and California to Oregon and Idaho to herd sheep or become miners. Sheepherding eventually became the leading industry in Idaho due to miners' and soldiers' needs for wool and mutton. Many Basques were admired for their austere work ethics and their life of solitude, which enabled the passing of the Sheepherding Law in the American West. This law was the impetus for chain migration of Basques who were from the Province of Bizkaia. The increase in Basque migrants led to the rise in built infrastructures and institutions developed for Basque immigrants. With over 100 years of Basque heritage landscapes created throughout Boise's urban center, the construction of the Basque Block was formed as part of an urban renewal project to assist with economic development.

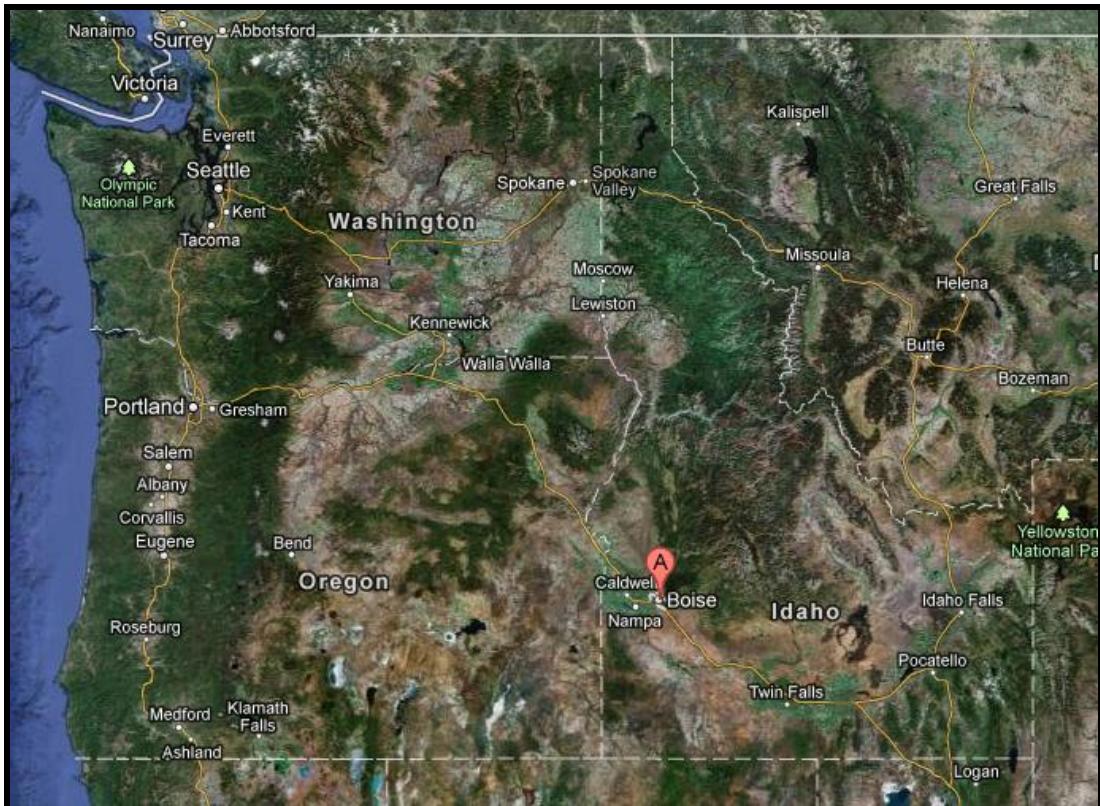


Figure 1.1. Capital city of Boise located in southwestern Idaho.
Source: Googlemaps, 2012.

Boise, Idaho and Basque Country Comparison

Boise, Idaho and the Basque Country have both similar and contrasting features.

In contrast, the Basque Country in Europe has a population of over 2 million and features a maritime coastal climate. Politically, the Basque Country is made up of seven provinces that span a total of 20,947 square kilometers (8,088 square miles), four of which are located in northwestern Spain with the other three located in southwestern France (Figure 1.2).

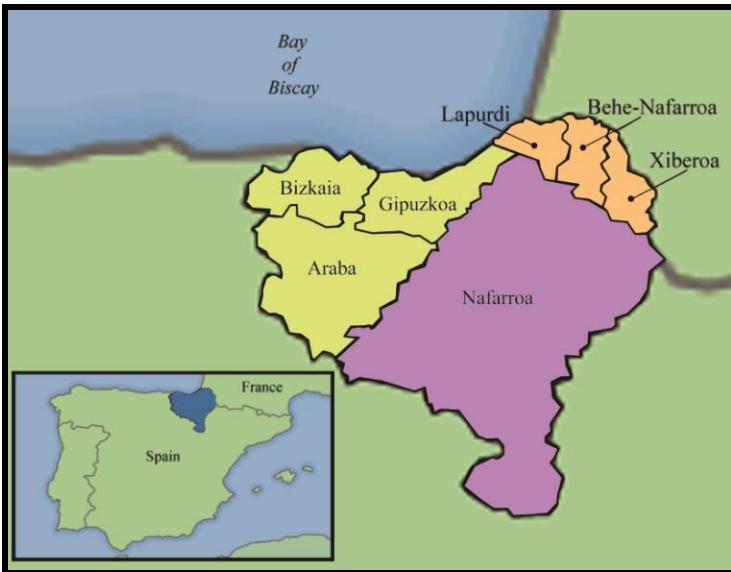


Figure 1.2. *Euskal Herria* (Basque Country).

This map portrays three provinces in northern Spain (mustard) recognized as the Basque Autonomous Community, the province of Nafarroa (purple) with its separate statutes of autonomy in Spain, and three provinces in southern France governed by the French regime (peach). Source: Author, 2010.

Despite the dramatic differences between Basque communities in Boise and in Europe, tangible similarities exist. For instance, Basque flags that are ubiquitous in Europe, are flown along the city streetscape in Boise representing Basque national identity. Meanwhile, Basque bars and restaurants sell cider and *pintxos* provide an authentic Basque culinary experience similar to the Basque Country, and a cultural center and museum have been built to carry on Basque cultural traditions and honor the historical significance of Basques in the world. In contrast, as part of the urban redevelopment project in Boise, Idaho, the Basque Block is pedestrian friendly with Basque surnames inlaid in granite along the sidewalks, and two distinctive Basque symbols inlaid in the center of the street. According to Britton, the tourist's experience involves the consumption and commodification of both tangible and non-tangible goods

(1991: 453 & 454). Tangible goods sold in both Boise and Europe includes souvenirs from gift shops. Non-tangible goods include the services provided by waiters in the restaurants which are all part of the overall experience. The experience itself, as Urry would argue, is part of the “tourist experience” and may be considered an intangible good that is irreplaceable (Britton, 1991; Urry, 1990). But what cultural connections link these two places? Is the Basque Block a (re)creation of the Spanish Basque Country in Boise for Basque Americans in order to provide them with a sense of belonging in an increasingly homogeneous community? Or is the Basque Block a way to reinforce the character of a developing ethnic community and enhance its ethnic economy?

Festivals, a form of heritage tourism are seen throughout the Basque Country and Boise during certain times of the year, but have distinguishing characteristics. Boise has established the largest international Basque festival in the world. This event is held every five years during the month of July to “reunite” Basques in the Americas and across the seas and celebrate their heritage. This festival, a form of heritage tourism, is a stark contrast with the Basque Country communities during the summer. The residents in the Basque Country of Europe travel out of town during the summer months to avoid tourists in their own cities. However, in comparison to Basques in the U.S., the Basque Country’s outer edge villagers stay in town and celebrate their heritage by holding their annual Basque festival for the residents.

During prior fieldwork in Europe for a McNair Scholar’s thesis for the University of Nevada, Reno in 2007, empirical observation showed that many urban landscapes in the Basque Country had transitioned from the industrial sector to a service industry heavily dependent upon heritage tourism. Spanish Basques were historically and

systematically oppressed from 1936 during the Spanish Civil War until after the death of Dictator Francisco Franco in 1975. After that period, Bilbao, Spain, in the Basque Country, once an industrial powerhouse for steel production, transitioned to a leisure tourist economy in 1997 with the development of the world renowned Guggenheim Museum. According to Spanish author del Cerro Santamaría, the commodification of this historically oppressed culture was established to stimulate economic efficiency and political visibility in the area (2008: 1). Although the Guggenheim Museum does not necessarily showcase Basque modern and historical art, rather art from Europe and America, the museum architecture is designed to represent the once economically prosperous community during the Industrial era. This political visibility represents the valorization of a distinctive ethnic group that outdates other ethnicities within the Basque territory spanning both northern Spain and southern France and provides both a voice for a historically oppressed group and caters to the tourist gaze. This is also true for the Basque Block in Idaho since the culture and heritage of this immigrant group is being commodified and “consumed” by both American and Basque visitors. Coinciding with heritage sites in other parts of the world, visibility or awareness has brought challenges and opportunities to the cultural politics of place and space. Discussing both the challenges and opportunities of place will be further discussed in Chapter V.

Fieldwork and Data Collection

The methods used in this study of the production and consumption of Basque heritage landscapes include participant observation, formal and informal interviews with native Basques and Basque Americans, and a discursive investigation of primary and secondary sources. “Mixed use of these research methods is believed to contribute to

gaining an intimate insight into the intricate social world of heritage institutions” (Park 2011: 521). Uncovering the creation of an institution, such as the Basque Center, may have aided in the impetus of the creation of Basque Block and will assist with understanding the significance of the Basque Block to Basque Americans and Basques.

Survey Questionnaire

Survey questionnaires were designed and disseminated to give a broad overview of Basque ancestry, immigration, volunteers’ interpretation of Basque heritage, and tourists’ views on the Basque Block. While attending a three-day Basque International Conference sponsored by Boise State University’s Basque Studies Program during *Jaialdi* 2010’s festival, survey questionnaires were handed out to conference participants for feedback. The questionnaire was available in English, assuming the majority of participants would be native English speakers because of the geographic location of the conference. The sample size consisted of roughly 15% of the conference attendants. This is a very low response rate, but it does not lack in importance based on the responses coupled with additional data collection methods that have aided in insight to the research. Although this was an international conference with lecturers speaking in Euskera, Spanish or English, all of the survey volunteers were born in Idaho and completed the surveys in English.

Participant Observation

Participant observation was also employed in this study to learn more about the daily tourism politics of the Basque Block. Through engaging in tourism activities and observing the locals’ interactions with the businesses, the business owners’ uses of space, and the role of the Executive Director of the Basque Museum, observations deepened the

understanding of the socio-spatial transformation of the Basque Block. During the summer of 2010, observation of the Basque Block and surrounding city blocks before, during and after *Jaialdi* in order to investigate the area during different stages of performance took place. The initial pilot study, during June 2010, included walking the downtown area, taking notes, and sketching the symbolic and material landscapes of the Basque Block in order to visually interpret the placement of the varied heritage landscapes. Of particular note, attention to the businesses methods that catered to a tourism clientele and the products that were for sale were documented and later analyzed. Moreover, observation of the unveiling of interpretive signs for tourists that delineated Basque heritage landscapes on and surrounding the Basque Block, took place before the *Jaialdi* event that was expected to bring in over 35,000 spectators to Boise.

In-depth Interviews and Discourse Analysis

Formal and informal interviews took place before, during and after *Jaialdi* with 12 local residents, business owners, museum staff members, and tourists all who were mainly of Basque descent. Before the *Jaialdi* celebration, formal interviews were scheduled for meetings during the event. Basque contacts were acquired sing the snowball effect from prior Basque interviews while conducting research in Reno, Nevada. Formal interviews conducted during *Jaialdi* lasted from 45 minutes to one hour in length and were digitally recorded to be later transcribed. Informal interviews with business owners, locals, museum staff members, Spanish Basque tourists and American Basque tourists took place during the three allotted timeframes in 2010 and were documented through note taking. In addition to formal and informal interviews, an

analysis of primary and secondary sources was utilized by reviewing historical and modern documents of the local Boise newspaper (Idaho Statesman).

Secondary Data

Analysis of several years' worth of the Idaho Statesman to identify both contentions between locals and transnational connections between the local and global Basque community was examined. An analysis of historical newspapers (dated 1888, 1942 and 1967) assisted with identifying if there were disputes between Basques and non-Basques coinciding with the creation of built institutions in downtown Boise. Furthermore, analyses of modern day newspapers (dated from 2008 to 2012) helped identify both local and global connections between Boise and the Basque Country that further solidify the transnational relationships between the two countries.

The examination of modern day documents to identify transnational connections and historical data to identify a shift in ethnic infrastructure ownership along the Basque Block was noted. First, the analysis of the North American Basque Organization (NABO) annual expense report of 2011, in addition to modern day newspapers, provided insight on the distribution of funds from non-profit Basque organizations and the Basque Autonomous Community in order to identify and further solidify transnational relations. Next, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dating from 1893 to 1956 accessed from the Boise State University map library archives were compared and contrasted with Boise Basque tour guide websites. Comparison of both the historical Sanborn maps and modern tour guide websites identified the historical ethnic shift that occurred prior to the construction of the Basque Block and identified historical and modern Basque infrastructures built in the surrounding Boise area.

This research centers on the use of a discursive textual analysis of guest log books and a listing of museum and cultural center services maintained by the Basque Museum and Cultural Center. These primary data were used to distinguish the ethnic identities of local and global tourists to better understand the identity building of the Basque community in Boise. Guest log books, dating from February 2008 to December 2010, were obtained from the Executive Director of the Basque Museum and Cultural Center with authorization from the Board of Directors. The guest books depicted the geographical distribution of visiting tourists and the tourist's ethnic background based on surnames. Although the guest books consisted of three years' worth of entries, it is noteworthy to mention that these three years include tourist presence before and during *Jailadi* (the largest international Basque cultural festival). Guest log books not only provided insight on who tourists were, but also included the tourists' comments based on their experience while in Boise and/or their ethnic identification. Moreover, the BMCC provided a spreadsheet of services that the institution provided dating from 1999 to 2010. These services were not only the Boise community, but to the state of Idaho. This data shows services within and outside of the BMCC before and after charging fees to tour the museum. Data provided by these additional sources helped identify the methods behind educating the state of Idaho about the Basque culture.

Structure of Thesis

In Chapter II, theories of heritage tourism in both urban and rural settings in order to understand the economic and political underpinnings of creating heritage tourist sites situated in an urban environment in the context of globalization is discussed. Although the Basque Block has not been officially recognized as a world heritage site, this thesis

refers to other heritage sites noteworthy of heritage production in Chapter II. The scope of Basque literature and discussion on any gaps that remain in heritage tourism studies will be addressed.

In Chapter III, the historical context of the Basque's political relevance within the Bizkaian province in Spain and the push and pull factors shaping Basque immigration to the United States will be further noted. Although the Basque Country is made up of seven provinces, the discussion in this chapter is based on the Bizkaian Province due to the significant number of migrants who have immigrated from Bizkaia to Boise. The goal of this chapter is to provide information needed to understand the political influence Basques have on the state of Idaho and Boise, which may have aided with the creation of the Basque Block.

In Chapter IV, the production of Basque heritage, first through identifying the historical transformation of Grove Street in downtown Boise into the Basque Block and then discussing why the Basque Block in Boise was originally created will be discussed. The primary goal of this chapter is to shed light on the construction of the Basque Block as a form of identity maintenance, rather than merely an urban renewal project.

Lastly, in Chapter V, summarizing the ways in which the Basque Block is being consumed by Basque tourists and discuss the challenges of heritage representation on the Basque Block in Boise will be noted. This chapter also discusses debates on authenticity and transnational connections between Boise Basques and the Spanish Basque Country.

The thesis concludes with an overview of its contributions to the literature on heritage tourism, migration and diasporic studies, and political economy in geography. Additionally, the concluding chapter will address the limitations of the study.

Suggestions for future research presented in this final chapter center on the implications and importance of heritage tourism, authenticity, and identity maintenance in order to understand the larger context of creating a sense of belonging.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The primary goal of this chapter is to discuss and critique the literature on heritage tourism and authenticity. Therefore, this chapter discusses the discourse of production and consumption of heritage tourism, debates on authenticity, and heritage tourism and transnationalism, and the limitations of Basque literature in both Geography and the United States.

Scope of Literature Review

Tourism researchers have applied numerous approaches to the examination of cultural production and phenomena, each employing different philosophical principles, and methodologies. In the application of many of these approaches, the focus of inquiry has been about cultural production and consumption as part of an urban regeneration or socio-economic development project commodifying a particular ethnic group or heritage. The creation or (re)creation of heritage sites has been widely studied across the social sciences (Hoelscher 1998; McIntosh 1999; Waitt 2000; Halewood 2001; Wirth and Freestone 2003; Chhabra 2003; Su 2010). While the scope of heritage tourism is steadily increasing (Timothy, 2002), there are few, if any, tourism researchers studying the production of heritage by second or third generation immigrant groups within an urban context. This thesis will contribute to heritage tourism studies and debates on authenticity in an urban context within the United States.

According to the Journal of Heritage Tourism,

“Activities such as visits to sites of historical importance, including built environments and urban areas, rural and agricultural landscapes, natural regions, locations where historic events occurred and places where interesting and significant living cultures dominate are all forms of Heritage tourism.” (JHT: Aims and Scope, 2011)

There is a fine line between cultural, ethnic, and heritage tourism studies that at times are co-mingled into authors' discussions. Cultural tourism appears to incorporate modes of production to maintain cultural traditions, such as dance or festivals (Adams, 2005); whereas, ethnic tourism is the study of cultural groups within their traditional settings that have been transitioned into tourist destinations (i.e., Chinatown) (Timothy, 2002). Although, my case study represents both heritage tourism and cultural tourism, for instance preserving physical facilities, commodifying heritage AND the cultural experiences offered by the region, this literature review will focus solely on heritage tourism based on tangible and intangible associations with heritage production.

Production and Consumption of Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism has been of interest to scholars since at least the 1990s and has taken on different meanings (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Timothy, 2003; Su, 2010). Heritage, for the purpose of this research project, is defined as the re-creation of the selective past that is both produced and reproduced through contemporary use for present and future experiences (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Graburn, 2001; Timothy, 2003). Heritage is a representation of the past in the modern times, and “part of past that incorporates-language, culture, identity, and locality” (Timothy, 2003: 4). According to Park, heritage, too, is an “element of national identification and attribute of national culture and symbolic embodiment that can be constructed and reconstructed to

show a sense of national belonging” (520: 2011). Therefore, heritage can be produced in many ways depending on both the producer that represents heritage and the consumer who consumes heritage and creates meaning for what is experienced.

Consumers experience heritage on display and generate meaning based on a variety of factors. Although representations or re-creations of the past are shaped by people in the present, it is the consumer’s experience of the representation that creates meaning. Experiences of heritage vary depending on personal circumstances and how and where this notion of heritage is represented. It is these “...interpretations of the past [that] are essentially transient, social constructions that are reflective largely of the particular time and place of their genesis...” (Graham, 1998: 23).

Many case studies have been done on heritage tourist sites that consist of ethnic enclaves in urban centers, such as Chinatown, and Little Italy. Chinatown in San Francisco, for instance is a prime example of an ethnic enclave that was created for Chinese immigrants to live and work within a host country in an urban environment (Moy, 1993; Shah, 2001) and turned into a commodifiable culture. The widely studied phenomena of Chinatown located in both San Francisco and New York, and other metropolitan cities (Wong, 1998; Rast, 2007; Almeida Santos, 2008) focuses on the stereotyping of the Chinese as “others” and the marginalization of this particular immigrant group creating a space that was once deemed “filthy” to tourist destinations. However the shift from a marginalized stereotyped community to a tourist destination is explicitly expressed through America’s desire to “gaze” upon an exotic culture unique from the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Literature focusing on areas such as Chinatown exhibits an extensive amount of research on the acculturation of marginalized groups (Said, 1979;

Yu, 1998; Luk & Phan, 2005; Rast, 2007). The gap in heritage tourism literature is expressed through an abundance of research on marginalized communities rather than on second and third generation immigrant communities interested in expressing a sense of self identity.

The display of heritage is selective based on what the producers of representation want the consumers to see. Waitt (2000) claims that the commodification of place, located in Sydney, Australia, is based on an imagined national identity that excludes oppression, racism, and conflict in the representation of heritage and is created by a city with a particular political and economic motivation. Hence, conveying a selective representation of the past for the tourists to experience and determine what is relevant to The Rock in Sydney's past. Furthermore, according to Waitt "Heritage-based experiences involving conflict, misery, and social differences are saleable items that attract tourists" (2000: p845). However, such experiences are removed from The Rocks in Sydney in order to create a pristine, unchaotic place for the consumer's to experience.

The production of heritage can also take on nationalistic ideals to provide the consumer with a sense of belonging and sense of pride for place. Park (2010) expands on the production of heritage as not only a tangible asset of artifacts and sites representing the past, but with intangible characteristics in relation to nationalism that are used as a mechanism to solidify a sense of belonging. Park (2011) further analyzes heritage as an intangible good that caters to the importance of aesthetic, spiritual and symbolic values representative of national identity amongst two Koreas as "one nation". This form of heritage production solidifies a consumer's experience with both tangible and intangible experiences to provide a nationalistic understanding.

Ethnic theme towns have been studied by a variety of scholars; however, the case study by Steven Hoelscher has been the catalyst for ethnic theme town research. Hoelscher suggests, that “the continual invention of tradition among later generation white ethnics is part of a much larger movement and one important consequence of modernity: the assertion of local ethnic identity within a globalized context of shrinking distances” (1998: 18). Hoelscher argues that the Swiss village in New Glarus, Wisconsin, has been created as a result of disappearing memory and tradition due to the lack of ethnic pride and traditions. It wasn’t until a rural sociologist and historian evoked this notion of pride in Wisconsin’s diversity and proposed the creation of an ethnic theme town. Hoelscher bases his argument on empirical evidence, interdisciplinary studies, and theoretical literature to create a book about the commodification of place, historical relevance, and the search for authenticity to create an ethnic place. Hoelscher’s contribution to connecting ethnic studies with tourism studies is an exemplar documentation of the invention of an ethnic place for immigrants in the United States. Although casually addressed, the challenges of whether or not this “imagined community” was authentic lacked in further analysis. Additionally, the author addressed the continuation of the invented tradition of a particular ethnic group, but skirted over whether or not the theme town “Little Switzerland” assists with ethnic identity building or more on mass tourism and consumption. Theme towns however, as noted by several scholars, are being created throughout the United States typically in rural environments as viable economic-development strategies, thus inventing and creating traditions for the tourist’s gaze (Frenkel & Walton, 2000; Schnell, 2003a & 2003b; Hoelscher, 1998) and not necessarily for ethnic identity building.

Debates on Authenticity

Authentic experiences relate to the way heritage is represented and perceived by the tourist and how it has been transmitted through a variety of debates. As Wang argues, authenticity remains important to heritage (or cultural) tourism, but the experience is more about quality rather than an authentic object (Wang, 1999). Understanding these and other debates on authenticity will enhance the understanding of how and why a social group represents their heritage and how the tourist experiences a tourist destination. In terms of tourism in general, leisure activities have included packaging culture and heritage into commodities ready to be consumed by individuals who place the culture into distinct groups (Britton, 1991: 453). Creating a space that is both safe and encompasses a part of heritage that the visitor can feel proud of, is an essential component in creating a place that provides an authentic experience. Dean MacCannell introduced tourists' experiences of authenticity to sociologists in 1973 and discussed both the "back" and "front" of tourist locations that contribute to the authentic experience of the tourist, yet at the same time contest authenticity as being staged. MacCannell argued that tourists' wanted to experience the real truth about place, therefore interested in seeing how the production of heritage is displayed. However, tourists' became unaware that they too were part of the production and performance of the actors, thus creating conflicting ideas about the production of heritage as authentic. Conversely, scholars since then have expanded and elaborated on this notion of authenticity extensively (Wang, 1999; DeLyser, 1999; Timothy, 2003; Zukin, 2010 & 2011).

Case studies on tourist's perceptions of whether or not a place is authentic are one way to identify the contentions of an authentic display of heritage. "Authenticity is

central to much of heritage tourism as the product(s) on display are often re-creations of a region's past in terms of both the built and cultural landscapes" (Timothy, 2003). Viking heritage tourism in Europe is one particular case study that addresses the creation of a past and a tourist's perception of place as authentic based on the commodification of goods (Halewood and Hannam, 2001). Halewood and Hannam note that the "value is never an inherent property of objects themselves but a judgment made about them by consumers" (2001: 576). For instance, the authors relate the validity of goods being made at Viking markets further solidifies the authentic process. Therefore, the exchange value of the commodity is validated through instant visual gratification and the consumer's experience is thus deemed as authentic and real. However, the Viking study site is based on historical cultural practices that are being reenacted in a theme town setting or a Disneyfied form of commodification rather than identity building and cultural maintenance.

The authentic display of heritage according to author Sharon Zukin, encompasses both tangible and intangible experiences coupled with modern and historic infrastructures and familiarities. The discourse on the crisis of authenticity also has been extensively explored by Zukin. Zukin discusses urban spaces, in particular the New York area, as a place bound for authentic conflicts. She notes that New York has gone through numerous transformations and some would argue that the transformations themselves are not a true representation of place (2011). However, through empirical evidence, interviews, and secondary sources, Zukin was able to prove that urban spaces include both historical and modern renditions of place to maintain an authentic experience. She argues that maintaining both the historical tangible and intangible features of a place coupled with

modern infrastructures and experiences provide the impetus for authentic experiences felt by locals and tourists (2010 & 2011).

Heritage Tourism and Transnationalism

Studies on diasporic communities as a component of transnationalism lack in analyzing ethnic identity building within an urban context (Coles and Timothy 2004). These editors have chosen a wide range of examples in the study of tourism in the expression of diaspora and space, and tease out the internal and external themes on the experience of tourism and diaspora identity.

Case studies that addressed contested representation of place over diasporic tourists with non-diasporic tourists who compete over goods and services and transnational case studies between migrant groups and their homeland were discussed (Coles and Timothy, 2004). As heritage tourist sites are created, challenges and opportunities are also produced and exist between diasporic groups and non-diasporic groups who compete for attractions, amenities, resources, etc. Furthermore, a variety of authors in Coles and Timothy's book articulate the significance behind transnational ties between diaspora groups in a host country and their native land. Such ties are exhibited through the creation of tourist destinations for migration and mobility between the counties. However, further analysis is needed on the production of heritage for second and third generation ethnic groups who are deemed as a diasporic group as a form of identity building and transnationalism.

Nationalism and transnationalism can be created in a variety of ways. For instance, Anderson articulates that ethnic groups' have created national imagined communities that extend out of the community's boundaries, while Park expresses

nationhood thorough heritage production. Anderson (1983) illustrates nation building through this notion of creating an “imagined community.” He articulates that nationalism is built upon different ways in which they are imagined, such as collecting census data, the production of maps and the creation of museums. According to Park (2010 & 2011) nationhood is also established through tourism or heritage production. The creation of heritage sites can in essence create “imagined communities” between distant locations and maintain transnational ties. Furthermore, Anderson argues that members of many communities may never meet, but continue to share the same values. Both tangible and intangible values can be exhibited as goods in museums to study a particular ethnic group’s history. Museums then can further facilitate a collective memory and sense of belonging in both space and time which is indicative of nationalism. Traditions are also a characteristic of a transnationalistic “imagined” community. Hobsbawm and Ranger’s “The Invention of Tradition” discuss traditions as they “appear or claim to be old [but] are quite recent in origin and sometimes invented...’Invented tradition’ [means] a set of practices,...of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviors by repetition which automatically implies continuity with a suitable historical past” (1983: 1). Therefore, as traditions are invented or (re)created, they too can be produced into a commodity and consumed by tourists.

Basque Literature

Scholars of Basque research have written a number of books and publications on Basques in the United States, the Basque Country, and Basques of the world (Douglass, 2005 & 1992; Totoricagüena, 2004a & 2004b; Irujo Ametzaga, 2009; Bieter, J., 2000; Zia, 2005; Kenyon, 2009). Douglass has written a myriad of publications from an

anthropological approach focusing on Basques as part of a diasporic group that migrated to many regions around the world and Basque immigration to the United States (2005 & 2006). Totoricagüena in addition, has authored a variety of journal articles and book publications from a political science perspective focusing on Basque migration (2004a, 2004b). She has focused on Basque identity, politics, and Basque culture in the United States and Basques of the world. Both Totoricagüena and Douglass have used interviews as part of a historical narrative contributing to their analysis of Basque migration. Additionally, research on historical Basque laws in the Province of Bizkaia was written by Montreal Zia, who elaborated on the creation of the Old Law of Bizkaia (2005) that contributed to influencing nationalism in Spanish Basque Provinces. However, many scholars who have contributed significant research to Basque studies need further analysis from a geographic perspective.

Conclusion

As discussed in this chapter, the production and consumption of heritage tourism, and transnationalistic forms of heritage tourism enhance debates on authenticity and lacks in further analysis. Therefore, contributing literature on the creation or (re)creation of place that has meaning by second and third generation descendants of immigrants is essential in bridging the gap between debates on heritage tourism and authenticity that create a sense of belonging.

This literature review contributes to supporting this research in a variety of ways. Chapter III builds on a historical contextual framework from Basque origins situated in the Province of Bizkaya, Spain to Basques political influence in the State of Idaho. The use of Basque literature will address nationalistic ideals brought over from Spain to

Idaho. Additionally, the concept of production of heritage with nationalistic ideals is discussed in chapter IV & V, to articulate Park's theories on nationalism as part of heritage tourism. The display of heritage in chapter IV, in addition, will align with Waitt's theory based on the exclusion of oppression, thus providing heritage that is comfortable and safe for consumer's experience. Furthermore, the consumption of heritage and authenticity based on Zukin's theory of tangible and intangible experiences is expanded upon in Chapter V. Moreover, the expansion upon the articles that addressed contested landscapes *among* immigrant groups in terms of heritage sites is noted. Since traditions are a component of cultural identity and heritage production, the (re)creation of traditions portrayed on the Basque Block is further expressed in Chapters IV & V.

CHAPTER III

THE BASQUE BLOCK AS A POLITICAL COMPONENT OF BASQUE IDENTITY

The discussion in this chapter is situated within the historical context of the province of Bizkaia in Spain (15th -19th century) and later in Boise, Idaho during the 19th century and early 20th centuries. Four contributing factors that have influenced the creation of the Basque Block in Idaho are discussed to provide a deeper understanding of the Basque influence on Idaho politics and the reciprocal influence Idaho has had on Basques. My initial discussion briefly covers Basque origins and untangles the complex development of ethno-nationalism in the Bizkaian Province in Spain. I then discuss economic and political factors related to Basque oppression during the Spanish Civil War. Consequences of oppression, including migration to the United States and the subsequent development of a politically powerful Basque community in Idaho, will conclude this chapter's discussions.

The first substantial phase of the Basque Diaspora into North America took place from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. The majority of Basques who emigrated during this period were from the rural French Basque province of Behe-Nafarroa and the Spanish Basque province of Bizkaia. The American West, in particular, experienced the most significant Basque immigration during this time period due to the region's initial opportunities in mining, and later sheepherding which provided meat and wool to miners (Irujo Ametzaga, 2009; Douglass, 2005). Boise, Idaho, in particular,

received an influx of Basque immigrants during this time period, primarily males under the age of thirty, with over 96 percent of them coming from the province of Bizkaia (Bieter and Bieter 2000:30).

Throughout the years, Basques in the American West struggled to find or maintain their place in an ever changing world, and began building infrastructures and institutions to create a sense of belonging. After roughly 100 years of developing Basque institutions within Boise, Idaho's urban center and capital, the Basque Block was constructed and officially recognized in the year 2000. This city block of businesses representing Basque culture, located on Grove Street between 6th and Capital Boulevard (Figure 3.1) has not only undergone many different social and economic processes that play a critical role in identity politics among the Basques, there also has had a variety of diverse political factors associated with its construction and maintenance.

Basque Origins and the Old Law of Bizkaia

The origins of Basque peoples are distinctive and noteworthy to reveal. Basque peoples have a unique ethnic and linguistic background disparate to other Europeans, and are thought to be the direct descendants of cave dwellers who once occupied Spain and France (Douglass and Bilbao 2005: 10-11). The Basque language, known as *Euskara*, is a pre-Indo-European and pre-Roman language, and is a contributing factor to the uniqueness of the Basque identity. Also, the Basque peoples comprise the most concentrated population of O blood type in Europe and the largest population with Rhesus Negative factor in the world (Clark 1979: 45 and Totoricagüena 2004b), which sets them apart as a unique ethno-cultural group.

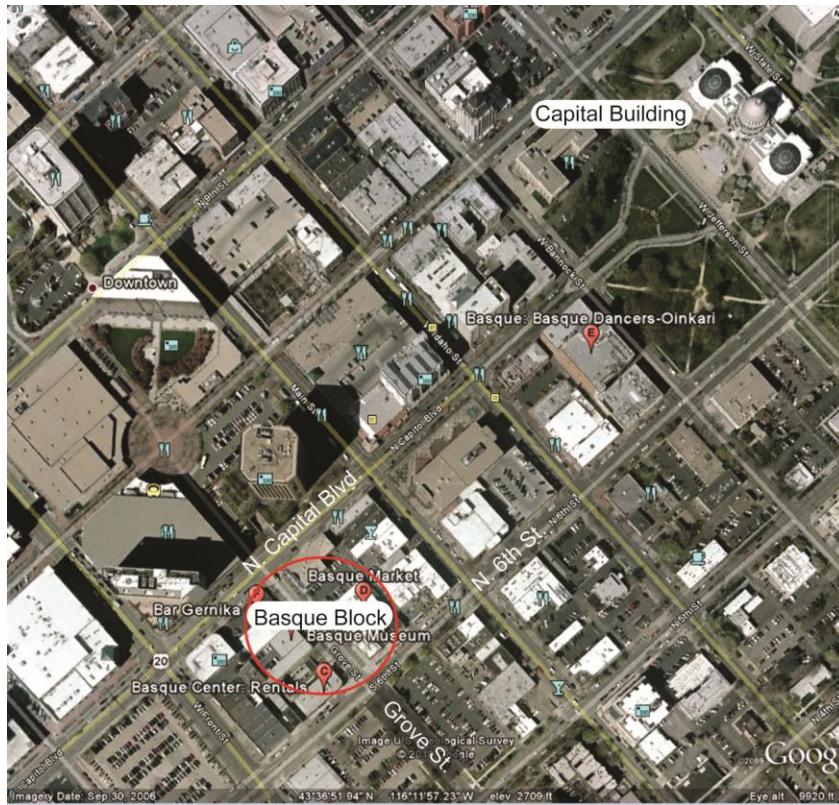


Figure 3.1. Basque Block. Boise, Idaho. City block of businesses representing Basque culture, situated three city blocks away from the state capital building. Map rendition by: Author, 2012.

The Basque Country in Europe, known as *Euskal Herria*, is situated along the Bay of Biscay and is composed of seven provinces, four of which are located in northern Spain with the remaining three in southern France (Figure 1.2). The Pyrenees Mountains, along the international political borders of France and Spain, divide the Basque Country into two separate sections with three different governances. The three Northern provinces in France (Lapurdi, Zuberoa, and Behe-Nafarroa) are governed by the French government located in Paris. The three southern provinces in Spain (Gipuzkoa, Alava, and Bizkaia) form the Basque Autonomous Community, known as *Euskadi*, which was written into the Spanish constitution in 1978. The seventh province in Spain, Nafarroa, has its own statutes of autonomy separate from *Euskadi* and was also recognized by the

Spanish government in 1978. Notwithstanding, the modern recognition and acceptance of the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain has gone through innumerable historical and political phases.

The village of Gernika in the province of Bizkaia was once known as the ancient capital of the Basque Country (Zia 2005: 17). The Tree of Gernika, located in the town center, was not only a tangible structure under which Basque politicians would assemble, but also a symbol of independence and identity to the Basque peoples (Zia 2005: 17). The Tree of Gernika has become a symbol of independence and thus is embedded in plaques, cityscapes, business signs, and business labels found across the Basque Country in Europe and the American West.

Basque politicians wrote the Old Law of Bizkaia in 1452 in Gernika. The Old Law has resulted in a notion of Basque nationalism and the exclusion of others from their territory. The Old Law was written with great detail and discusses the creation and composition. The Basque codes were known as consuetudinary laws based on culture, community, and individual and collective liberties (Irujo Ametzaga 2009: 52). All Bizkaians were aware of the customary laws and origins based on customs and traditions; such mores consisted of the Basque family structure, which includes egalitarian roles at the home, and the respect for human rights (Irujo Ametzaga 2009: 52-53). Rather than dividing up the social classes when the Old Law was reformed into *Fuero Nuevo* in 1526, every Basque, not just Bizkaians, was declared noble and treated with equality (Zia 2005:15). “Each house or each family had a vote in the Basque Batzarrak or municipal assemblies and each city had one vote or one seat at the Basque parliaments. This system

is also the origin of the English political system, a system that has an echo in the US Senate non-proportional territorial representation” (Irujo Ametzaga 2009: 53).

During the 15th century, the King and Queen of Castile reigned over Spain and the Basque “citizens of the land” accepted the King of Castile as their sovereign (Totoricagüena 2004b: 29). However, the Bizkaian citizens upheld the Castilian law of legal process and civil matters that they observed through the Old Law or *Fuero* of Bizkaia (Zia 2005: 26). This “acceptance” by the “citizens of the land” implied that, by the Basque laws, “Basque loyalties went first to their own villages and provinces, then second to the King of Castile, contingent upon the monarch’s continued respect for local autonomy and tradition as written into the local *fueros*” (Totoricagüena 2004b: 29).

The law of Bizkaia was the first law to recognize Basque Provinces or *villas* as autonomous communities, thus establishing a notion of separateness or uniqueness from other non-Basque communities in Spain (Figure 3.3). The absolute recognition of unique identity codified in the law of Bizkaia can be considered the foundation of Basque nationalism according to Anderson’s (1991) definition of nationalism, stated as the creation of nationalism is through a shared absolutism. Therefore, these Basque communities, which share similar political autonomy, are coupled with the notion of nationalism. The Old Law of Bizkaia further guaranteed citizens the “freedom of every Bizkaian to engage in commerce; rights of due process in all legal proceedings; ownership of land in Bizkaia reserved for Bizkaians; exemption from taxes on maritime activity; and exemption from obligatory military service outside the Basque territory” (Totoricagüena 2004b: 29). In addition, the Old Law seemed to create a political ideology that further strengthened the notion of nationalism and independence by

restricting Bizkaians and other Basques to the *fueros* and excluding others from outside the Basque territory.



Figure 3.3. Province of Bizkaia divided up into smaller units known as *villas*. Twenty-one *villas* were formed between 1229 and 1376, with the town of Balmaseda founded in 1199. Each *villa* had political autonomy from the aristocratic officialdom that surrounded the region (Monreal 2005: 26-27).

Basque Nationalism: Enhanced by Industrialization and Modernization

A number of events led to the diminished provincial control by the Basques and consequently served as the catalyst for the creation of a Basque diaspora. The Carlist Wars (1833-1876), primarily fought on Basque territory between the Galicians, Basques, Castilians, Aragonese, Catalans and Andalusians, against the monarchs of Spain were the impetus for the dissolution of the *fueros* through the initiation of taxation on farmland to finance the war. Through a series of events in 1846-1847, including a year-long drought and lack of arable lands, rural Basques were becoming economically oppressed (Totoricagüena 2004b: 24; Clark 1979: 36).

The Second Carlist War led to the abolition of Basque law in 1876. This gave rise to Spanish industrial capitalism over the iron ore industry in Bilbao and led to heavy taxation, mainly on Basque farmland and livestock (Clark 1979: 36). Despite Spain's newfound economic regime, the Spanish market was not capable of sustaining the costly production of iron. Instead, capital from British investors developed industries and increased production. With the eradication of the *fueros*, and the previous law which "prohibited extraction and exportation of the province's natural resources," (Clark 1979: 35) the social, economic and political processes that once made up the Basque Provinces' ideals shifted and became stressed.

The stress factors were a contributing component to rural Basque emigration to the Americas, and potentially an aspect of emigration to Idaho. With Spain governing the area and production under British control, the extraction of iron ore resources from Bizkaia more than doubled to half a million tons in just a year, with production doubling again by 1899 (Clark 1979: 35). This rise in industrialization displaced Basque youth due to high demands for cheap labor outside of the region/villages. Furthermore, modernization, in addition to industrialization in the coastal Basque Provinces, disrupted the agrarian lifestyle and artisanal workers within the rural and urban areas. Meanwhile, immigrants in search of economic activities flooded the Basque regions, ultimately forcing Basques out of Basque Provinces in search of work (Conversi 1997: 47 and Totoricagüena 2004b: 25) in the Americas and Australia. Ultimately, these economic and social dynamics coupled with political oppression and the evasion of impending war, influenced subsequent waves of ensuing Basque emigration.

First Phase of Basque Emigration to the American West

While the Industrial Revolution was underway in the Gipuzkoan and Bizkaian provinces, the gold and silver mining boom was occurring in the western United States, increasing Basque immigration to the west. Economic opportunities were an enticing pull factor for the migrants, especially since Basques in the American West had already established communities. Many Basques, who had originally migrated to South America, heard of the mining opportunities in California, Nevada, and Idaho and began emigrating northward. Once Basques realized that mining was largely unsuccessful, many turned to sheepherding to provide wool and mutton for the miners. Sheepherding in the vast open land of the Sierra Nevada, Cascades, and the Sawtooth Plain was originally unregulated and allowed for successful sheep husbandry. Basques who remained in the American West sent requests for friends and family members to leave the Basque Country and join them in the west to pursue economic opportunities, leading to the creation of Basque communities.

Basque residents in the region who settled in both rural and urban settings established hotels and boardinghouses, which provided more than lodging for these newly arriving guests, such as news from the homeland. These built institutions provided a place for immigrants to meet other Basques and experience Old World Basque traditions such as food and language. However, while Basque communities were emerging in the American West, the continuation of the challenges brought on by industrialization and the war in Spain persisted and strengthened the Basques nationalistic society in their European homeland.

Basque Nationalism

The rise in industrialization and modernization, the displacement of Basque peoples, and the elimination of Basque laws all contributed to the emergence of Basque nationalism (Clark 1979; Conversi 1997; Totoricagüena 2004b). Basque nationalism was the result of a compilation of factors which were first initiated in 1452 and nationalism was later enhanced during the Industrial Revolution with the abolishment of the *fueros* and the displacement of many Basques. Furthermore, the expansion of transnationalism was being established between the Old World Basques and the New World Basques as many stressors were contributing to voluntary emigration and displacement, therefore creating and continuing the Basque Diaspora in the American West.

A the end of the 19th century, Basque nationalism in Europe was proposed by Sabino Arana y Goiri in an attempt to maintain the ethnic characteristics and language of the Basque people, despite the many influences of acculturation in Spain. The Basque peoples “cultural, ethnic and linguistic heritages had been forgotten or were derided as anti-modern; and political autonomy was subordinated to the benefits of economic prosperity” (Clark 1979: 42). Basque nationalism at this time helped increase an awareness and appreciation of the Basque way of life within the province of Bizkaia and was motivated by specific intentions.

Arana’s objectives were three-fold. First, to revive *Euskera*, the Basque language, in order to recognize political separatism and continue political communication between the Basque peoples (Clark 1979: 42). As the second objective, the Basque flag was created as a symbolic representation. Finally, Arana was known for founding the first physical structure, *Centro Vasco* (Basque Center), created for Basque folklore and as an

“informal club for nationalists” (Clark 1979: 43). These clubs soon dotted city landscapes throughout the world where Basque communities were present, including North and South America and the Philippine Islands (Clark 1979: 43). Through these objectives, Arana established principles that encompassed the ideology of Basque nationalism.

“Basques of the world unite” was formed to unify Basques around the world into one single unit (i.e., nation). This led to the slogan *Zazpiak Bat*, “The Seven are One,” and brought the seven Basque provinces together (Clark 1979: 44). These seven Basque provinces are now modernly known as *Euskal Herria* (in Basque) or the Basque Country (in English). Racial uniqueness and the Basque language, according to Arana, were the two factors that separate the Basques from other ethnic groups and thus he believed that the Basques should be self-governed (Clark 1979: 45). Likewise, the linguistic uniqueness was a key component to “Basqueness” and a dimension to Basque politics (Clark 1979: 46). The organization of a Basque nationalist group which “had in mind some kind of parliamentary democracy, with a moderate emphasis on social justice and the redistribution of wealth” (Clark 1979: 47) was the intent of political structuring.

The growing popularity for Basque nationalism, from 1893 to 1923, initiated the spread of violence due to labor strikes and militant nationalist protests. The spread of violence and protests was opposite of Arana’s ideals of slow, non-violent resistance (Clark 1979: 47). From 1923, during the rule of General Primo de Rivera to General Franco’s dictatorship in 1930, hanging flags other than the Spanish banner was prohibited and the Spanish language was the only officially recognized language; these

circumstances created stressors and strict repression of the Basque people's ethnic identity (Clark 1979: 49).

Franco Dictatorship and Final Stages of Basque Emigration to Idaho

When General Franco gained power in 1930, he continued Primo de Rivera's repressive theories and further augmented Basque domination. In response, the Basque nationalist parties employed Arana's theory and withdrew from the political arena. Arana believed that in order to maintain cultural identity through nationalism, Basques must "not engage in open rebellion, but simply continue the slow, steady pressure of cultural resistance, wearing away the chains of tyranny" (Clark 1979: 47). Arana believed that the thousand year struggle should continue in order to keep the Basque culture intact. Nevertheless, during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) Basque nationalism was heightened through the bombing of Gernika, (Bizkaia's political epicenter), the oppression of *Euskera*, and the control of the Basque language in written form. During numerous air raids by the German Condor Legion on Basque communities, including Gernika, Santandor, and Bilbao, many Basques who lived abroad in Argentina, Uruguay, and the United States sent remittances to their families while some men returned to *Euskal Herria* to fight with the Republicans (Totoricagüena 2004b: 39).

Franco strived for "Spanishness" in all regions of Spain. Forms of oppression included prohibiting the use of non-Spanish surnames, changing street names to reflect Spanish war heroes, and the elimination of non-Spanish newborn names (Totoricagüena 2004b: 41). Franco prohibited the use of *Euskera* on all public streets and in the media; both in printed form, such as newspapers and magazines, and in broadcasting.

Nonetheless, older generation Basques spoke the language in the privacy of their own homes where the youth could hear, speak, and learn their native *Euskera*.

Notwithstanding, Spanish dominated as the language of the younger generations, which had eroding effects on Basque identity. This was “most damaging to the Basque culture” since the use of *Euskera* is arguably the greatest contributing factor to the uniqueness of Basque identity and a feature of communication (Totoricagüena 2004b: 41). What is more, the Basque language was referred to as an aspect of “low economic status, and undereducated peasant lifestyle” by Spanish speaking citizens (Totoricagüena 2004b: 34). This devaluing of the language can be considered an attempt to discourage its use through prejudice. The Basque dictatorial repression continued during General Francisco Franco’s regime which lasted for nearly four decades and ended shortly after Franco’s death in 1975.

The years of the Basque Diaspora, from the late 1800s into the 1950s, were difficult times. As previously mentioned, many Basques migrated to the American West to evade the Spanish Civil War, escape oppression, or join family members who established communities in the Great Basin region of the Arid West. The most significant phase of the Basque Diaspora to Idaho took place after the turn of the century (Irujo Ametzaga 2009: 25) when Basques found sheepherding to be a successful occupation on the vast open lands available for grazing sheep.

It is important to note that, Basques were not the only immigrant group who resided in Boise around the turn of the century. In fact, during the late-19th century, Chinese immigrants emigrated to the west during Idaho’s gold rush. Grove Street and surrounding city blocks in downtown Boise, was comprised of a significant Chinese

population before the Basque Diaspora which was evident in the significant numbers of Chinese owned infrastructures. An ethnic shift occurred during the mid-20th century in this part of Boise during World War as the city's downtown district slowly shifted to Basque owned and/or built infrastructures either on Grove St. or surrounding city blocks. As previously mentioned, the Basque Block was not officially recognized until the year 2000. Further discussion on the ethnic, social and spatial transformation of Grove Street will be further discussed in detail in Chapter IV.

Moreover, for those Basques who experienced oppression and lack of human rights in Spain, their struggles did not cease upon relocation as they searched for individualism in a foreign country. After Basques settled in Idaho and became respected sheepherders, they began purchasing their own ranches in the 1930s. By the 1940s, many Basques had moved on to professional occupations, such as politicians, lawyers, professors, etc. (Irujo Ametzaga 2009: 31). These positions counter-acted General Franco's assertion that Basques were merely uneducated peasants, with an obscure language and bucolic lifestyle. Basques in Idaho were able to rise above these stereotypes Franco imposed on them, a factor likely due to the tolerant US society akin to diversity. Even though Basques were of a different ethnicity, their mildly tan complexion allowed them to fit in with the "melting pot" society of America, particularly in Idaho. Their European appearance was less unusual (or exotic) than the Chinese or African Americans in Boise, ID where other unique ethnic features stood out, for instance, darker skin, dark hair, and dark colored eyes.

However, Basque sheepherders on occasions were criticized and called, "dirty black bascos" or "sheep tramps" because of their mildly darker complexions and ability

to survive days at a time on the open range with anywhere from 1,000 to 30,000 bands of sheep at one given time. For example, in the 1993 film *Euzkaldunak: Basques in Idaho*, Basque sheepherders, describe how at times, they had to defend their ethnic background and mentioned that they “were as white as [the Americans] were” (Hormaechea 1993) and proved that the “[Basques] were just as able as they were” to be successful in the American West (Hormaechea 1993). This is evident through the continued success of Basques in their undertakings from ranching to politics.

In the American West, Basques maintained their ethnic identity, feelings of nationalism, and cultural traditions with minimal signs of prejudice from other ethnic groups. The transition from the province of Bizkaia to Idaho for many Basques was seamless in political terms. Basque politics bring the notions of commitment, community, and nationhood to Idaho. Even though Basques were oppressed for years in Bizkaia, their subtle resistance to acculturation has proven to be of greater significance in the United States than in their own Basque Country because of bringing quality work ethics and a promise to adhere by the American Dream. This promise was expressed through Boise Basque’s allegiance to the United States prior to World War I (Hart, 2009).

Basque Politics in Idaho

Basque politics have been entwined with American politics for centuries, long before Basques immigrated to North America. In 1779, John Quincy Adams visited Bizkaia and in 1787 wrote a book titled *Defence of Constitutions of Government of the United States of America*. In defense of his “federal democracy” for an independent and balanced judiciary for the rewriting of the Constitution of the United States of America,

Adams wrote on behalf of the Bizkaian's democratic system of government. Adams mentioned that,

"while their neighbours have long since resigned all their pretensions into the hands of kings and priests, this extraordinary people have preserved their ancient language, genius, laws, government, and manners, without innovation, longer than any other nation of Europe" (Adams 1787: 6).

Even though American democracy and the ancient Basque laws have very different historical contexts, their beliefs that democracy is for the people are essentially the same (Irujo Ametzaga 2009: 51). Therefore, their migration to a country with the same values, regardless of the native country's oppression of Basque laws, assisted with their transition to life in the United States. Pete Cenarrusa reiterates this concept in *On Basque Politics: Conversations with Pete Cenarrusa*, by Xabier Irujo Ametzaga. Cenarrusa, Idaho's former Secretary of State for the Republican Party from 1967-2002 stated,

"The Basque laws were conceived for protecting the individual people for people were supreme, not the government. Likewise, here in Idaho the Government is not supreme. It is the people who are supreme. I feel comfortable in this country, being Basque, because we think similarly and the Constitution provides similar feelings to the Basque people and the American people. It is very easy for Basques like myself to blend in to American society." (Irujo Ametzaga 2009: 35)

It appears that Basques were able to fit in with a country that has the same political views and were able to express themselves as being Basque with ease and creating a new environment for the Basque peoples. Additionally, many Old World Bizkaian views were a liberal and conservative mixture as expressed during the Carlist war. For instance, the Carlist theory was to "...restore conservatism and especially Catholicism to Spanish institutions..." (Totoricagüena 2004b: 32). Many Bizkaians have long been conservative, which mimics Idaho's Republican political ideals. It is no wonder that by 1910, there were nearly 1,000 Basques in Idaho out of a recorded state

population of 300,000 (Bieter and Bieter 2000:30), a number that continues to rise. The Basque population in Idaho, according to the 2000 US Census, was roughly 6,000 out of an overall state population of 1.3 million (Social Explorer, 2000; US Census, 2000) with nearly 2,000 of the state population were Basque descendants residing in Boise (U.S. Census, 2000).

It seems that with the increase in the Basque population, both as citizens and politicians, the political organization of a state would favor the interests of a particular ethnic group. During 2003, the long-term conservative city of Boise was convinced by popular vote to elect David Bieter, a Basque Democrat, as mayor. Bieter was supported by Pete Cenarrusa, a Republican, regardless of political affiliation, due to their mutual ethnic identities. In Boise, as proven by their political activity, Basques are emerging from invisibility and reaching beyond postmodernity to connect both the local and global and shed light on the consciousness of globalization. This is keeping with the ideas of Dirlík who stated that: “The consciousness itself is an articulation not of powerlessness, but of newfound power among social groups who demand recognition of their social existence and consciousness against a modernity that had denied them historical and, therefore, a political presence” (1996: 27). The creation of the Basque Block has kindled transnational ties with Europe and “relocalized” the Basques in the American West, since this heritage site reconnects the Basque community in the American West with the Basque Country in Europe.

Conclusion

The history of Basques in Europe and their nationalist movements had a strong influence on their settlement in the United States. Basque nationalism in the *Euskal*

Herria was at its prime in 1936 and most powerful in the provinces of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa. Support was garnered from both traditionalists and the local bourgeoisie, which in turn created a middle-class conservative group geared towards industrial and agricultural producers powered by religious principles (Totoricagüena 2004b: 38). There were likely many Basques who emigrated from the province of Bizkaia to Idaho who brought this notion of Basque nationalism and “Basqueness” with them to a foreign land. It is through them that their audacity, austere work ethics and strong personalities created respect for Basque peoples in the American West and established Basque communities for future generations. These communities additionally have created invisible boundaries that reach beyond state boundaries. The boundaries of the American West Basque communities, for instance the Basques in Idaho, have expanded out beyond the boundaries of Idaho reaching out to the Basque Country in Europe, thus creating this larger imagined community and national identity indicative of Anderson’s imagined community theory.

Chapter IV will illustrate the production of heritage by identifying the historic shift of ethnic ownership on the Basque Block and illuminate the meaning and creation of Basque institutions and infrastructures on and surrounding the BB. The public and private stakeholders, who were key social actors in developing the Basque Block, will also be discussed. In addition, I will demonstrate that the development of the Basque Block is more than an urban renewal project, rather created to assist with maintaining the Basque ethnic identity.

CHAPTER IV

THE INVENTED HERITAGE

Chapter III illustrated the nationalist movements in the Province of Bizkaia influenced settlement in the United States, in particular Boise, Idaho. This chapter discusses how the production of heritage has played a crucial role in the maintenance of Basque identity in the American West. I begin with a discussion of the development of infrastructures and institutions in Boise from 1910 until 2010 to situate the reader in the context of Basque influence on the city as it led to the creation of the Basque Block. This analysis is based on the analysis of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps; Boise's local newspaper, the Idaho Statesman; the urban development company, Capital City Development Corporation's, master plan; and interviews with the Director of the Basque Museum and Cultural Center to determine whether or not the institutions were created to maintain the Basque identity.

Although the Basque Block is part of Boise's urban renewal project, this chapter will demonstrate that the transformation of the BB is more than assisting with economic growth, but rather a place created for Basque identity maintenance based on the institutions and infrastructures that were developed. First, I address the historical transformation of the Basque Block from Chinese to Basque owned businesses to show the shift from a means of survival in a foreign country to Basque heritage landscapes created for Basque descendants. Next, I identify the construction and significance for development of Basque infrastructures and institutions (i.e., Basque Center, Basque Museum and Cultural Center) prior to the transformation of the Basque Block. Later, I

address how the Basque Block was produced, by identifying the public and private investors and developers. Furthermore, I transition to a discussion on the development of modern infrastructures, heritage representation (i.e., Basque mural and interpretive signs) to a heritage institution (language school) that maintains transnational ties between Boise and the Basque Autonomous Community to further articulate the purpose of the Basque Block created by Basque and non-Basque producers.

Early History of the Basque Block

Prior to the turn of the century Grove Street and the surrounding city blocks in downtown Boise, Idaho, were dominated by Chinese laundry facilities and female boarding houses and later shifted to Basque owned businesses. According to data compiled from the Boise State University map library system, Sanborn maps that date back from 1893 to 1956 reflect a number of important shifts that occurred on Grove Street. Of particular note, Basque-owned infrastructures began around 1910 which coincided with a significant Chinese population owning several businesses within the area.

Chinese immigrants during the latter part of the nineteenth century migrated to Idaho for economic opportunities in mining and the service industry in the urban center, but later moved out of state, which assisted with the transition to Basque owned businesses. During World War II, Chinese migrants moved out of Boise's service industry and mining industry to communities outside of the region in search of economic opportunities. While simultaneously, the influx of Basque immigrants to rural Idaho increased due to the demand of wool fibers for WWII soldiers (Unknown 1942). By 1956, Grove Street consisted of nearly all Basque owned infrastructures, with no

evidence of Chinese presence or prior existence in the area (Boise, Idaho-Sanborn Fire Insurance Map: 1956).

Many Basques began owning, building, and creating both infrastructures and institutions in this part of the city beginning in the 1890s that catered to rural Basque sheepherders, which later shifted to heritage tourism for Basque descendants (See figures 4.1 and 4.2). There has been one Basque infrastructure devoted to lodging since 1893 that remains unchanged, other than the services it provides (i.e., lodging to living museum). This building, the Cyrus-Jacobs Uberuaga boardinghouse, is the oldest brick dwelling located in the city and has great significance to the history of Boise because of its continuous services to the community (BoiseBasqueTour, 2012). The institutions built on, and surrounding the Basque Block, represent a shift from a means of survival for incoming migrants and economic survival for first generation migrants, to a form of ethnic heritage maintenance representative of heritage tourism for their descendants (Figure 4.1 & 4.2).

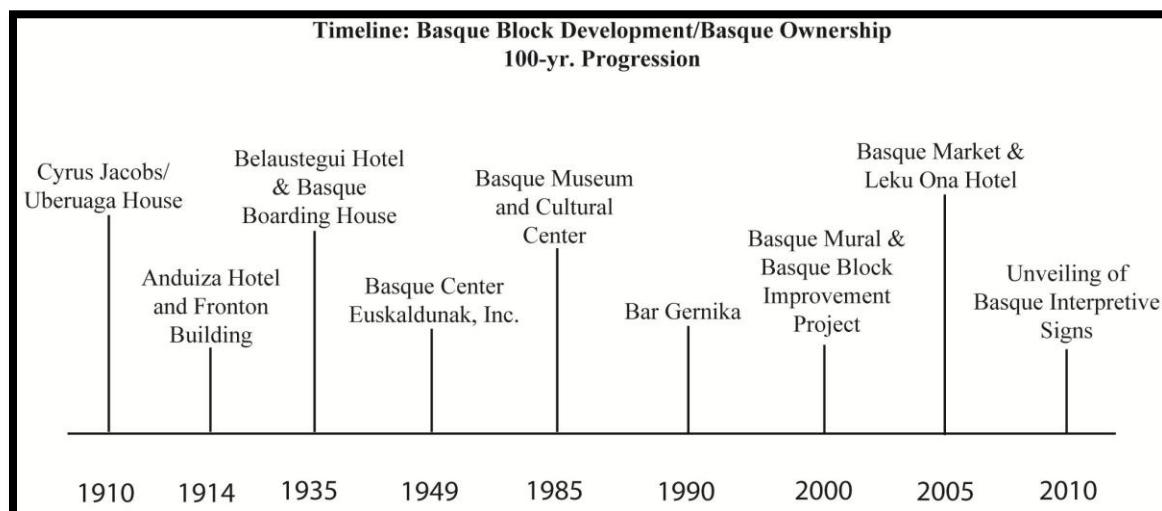


Figure 4.1. A 100-year timeline of the social and spatial transformation of the Basque Block beginning in 1910 until 2010. Timeline designed by: Author.

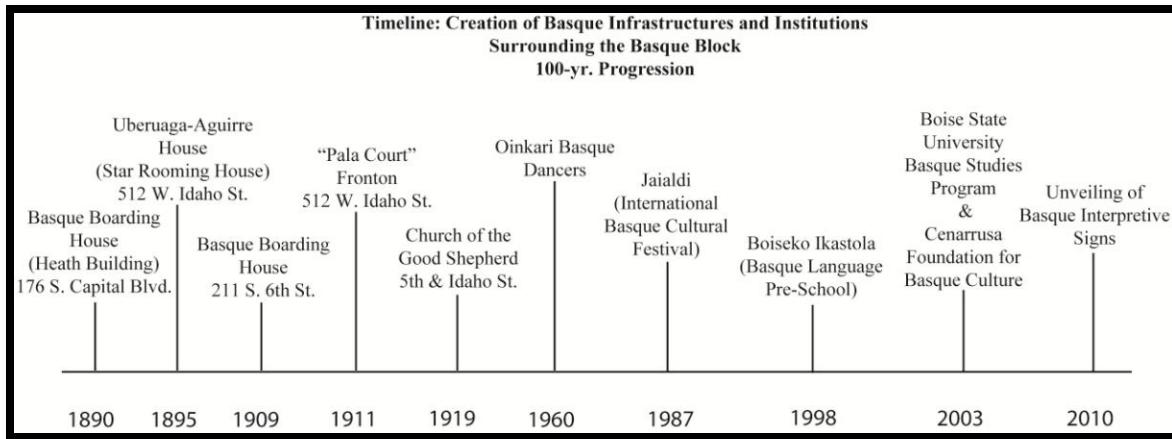


Figure 4.2. A 100-year timeline depicting the creation of Basque infrastructures and institutions surrounding the Basque Block. In addition, this timeline includes the unveiling of interpretive signs displayed both on the Basque Block and surrounding neighborhoods to signify the historic Basque heritage representative of Boise, Idaho. Timeline designed by: Author.

Heritage Production: Basque Center-Euzkaldunak, Inc.

The significance of the historical development of boardinghouses and the creation of a Basque Center (*Euzkaldunak, Inc.*-Speakers of Basque) relates to the role in encouraging camaraderie and community, and harnesses identity building. Both boardinghouses and the Basque Center was a response to the increase in Basque migration due to the struggles felt in the Spanish provinces of the Basque Country and also to economic opportunities in the United States. Boardinghouses allowed many Basques to continue to speak their native language and thus helped unify Basque communities. However, this also had negative consequences for Basques. “Basques in this Anglo host society were disadvantaged for socioeconomic mobility by the lack of communication and language skills” (Totoricagüena 2004b: 72) therefore, relying on boardinghouses to assist with networking for employment, short-term summer stays, news from *Euskal Herria* (Basque Country), and social interactions while in town (Totoricagüena 2004b; Echeverría, 1999).

In the mid-1940s during the Second World War, soldiers were dependent upon woolgrowers for wool fibers. Wool growers were “the leading industry” in Idaho and heavily reliant upon Spanish Basque sheepherders (Unknown 1942; Douglass, 2005) which aided in the push for Spanish Basque immigrants and sheepherding laws. Spanish Basques were known for their solid work ethic and courageous commitment to a life of solitude while on the open ranges of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Mountains, thus their work was reliable and admirable.

As more Spanish Basques migrated to rural Idaho, an increase in the development of boardinghouses and employment in the urban center rose. According to the Idaho Statesman, “Boise’s Basque community had pledged its total allegiance to the United States” (Hart, 2009) before the United States declared war on Germany in 1917. Roughly thirty years later, the Basque Center in Boise was established in 1949 at 601 Grove Street as a social club and gathering place to discuss politics, participate in festivities and play traditional Basque games, such as *Mus* (a card game). The creation of this institution coincided with the “Sheepherding Laws” that were passed in 1952, which allowed Basque herders from Spain to gain residence status who were initially considered illegal aliens. The establishment of the Basque Center also coincided with the Spanish Civil War during economic and political hardships felt in the Spanish Basque provinces, and the persecution of Basques by Dictator Franco (Totoricagüena, 2004b).

Although my textual analysis of the Idaho Statesman newspaper identified no anti-Basque statements, documented conflicts between Basque sheepherders and cattle ranchers during the first half of the twentieth century have been noted in both scholarly research and non-academic research (Zubiri, 2006; Douglass, 2005). Some noteworthy

contentions included, "The conflict between established ranchers and itinerant Basque sheepherders created some prejudice toward Basque immigrants and caused economic and political discrimination against them. Some families recall hearing epithets like "dirty black Basco" or "sheep-tramp" (Hormeachea, 1993; Douglass, 2005; Everyculture.com, 2012). Therefore, the need for creating an institution for both current and incoming migrants to Idaho was further solidified as a response to identity building, reducing stereotyping, and creating a strong ethnic group identity. In terms of nation building as a component of heritage tourism, Park suggests that the creation of a cultural (heritage) center "can be a safe and neutral ground for mediating political contentions and conflicts" (2011: 520).

The development of the Basque Center therefore, has not only provided the impetus for additional Basque-built and owned infrastructures in a safe place, it also has been created as a response to conflict and helped maintain a national identity for Basques in Boise. Since the Basque Center's design was modeled after the traditional *baserri* (farmhouse) style indicative of the rural Basque Provinces (See Figure 4.3 and 4.4), the center not only became a tangible symbol of heritage, "it is a reproduction that contains some cultural traditions that have changed..." (Chhabra, Healy and Sills, 2003: 707).

The Basque Center for instance, honors both the United States and the Basque Country. The United States flag and the Basque Country flag are both found hanging above the main entrance outside of the building (Figure 4.3). What's more, is that the members of the Basque Center are required to have "Basque heritage or married to a person of Basque heritage," (basquecenter.com, Accessed: June, 2012) which continues to harness Basque identity. This implies that Basque identity in Boise has a strong

connection with Basque descendants (and the homeland), thus creating a sense of nationhood and belonging (Park 2011) through nurturing Basque traditions and a commitment to the United States.



Figure 4.3. Basque Center located at the corner of 6th and Grove Street, Boise, Idaho resembles Basque Country *baserri*-farmhouse architectural style. Source: Thebasqueblock.com, 2012.

Figure 4.4. *Baserri*-farmhouse located in the foreground and background. Getxo, Spain. Source: Author, 2007.

Basque Museum and Cultural Center

During the next fifty years in Boise, from the mid-20th century to the early 21st century, numerous Basque-infrastructures and institutions were established that continued to build an ethnic community. Such establishments included the Basque Museum and Cultural Center built in 1985, *Jaialdi* the largest Basque international festival created in 1987, and the production and transformation of the Basque Block in 2000. The Basque Museum and Cultural Center (Figure 4.5) in particular, was created in 1985 and originally located in the 607 Grove Street Cyrus-Jacobs Uberuaga boarding house as a small museum.



Figure 4.5. Basque Museum and Cultural Center located on the south side of Grove Street on the Basque Block. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

In 1993, the BMCC moved to its current location at 611 Grove Street to display the increasingly donated artifacts and exhibit development. The museum was designed to interpret the Basque heritage of Idaho and surrounding communities, starting with Basque origins in the Basque Country to their new life in the United States (basquemuseum.com, Accessed: June, 2012). The creation of museums is significant in a variety of ways; they become tangible institutions developed to understand the past or nostalgia that has been told in intangible forms by ancestors, such as the case of the Basque immigrants. Understanding intangible forms such as nostalgia can be described as the "...ever-unsatisfied yearning to be able to return to a past time-to live and be engaged creatively in that past time, rather than just to inherit it as the 'received truth'" (Graburn 2001: 71).

The Basque Museum and Cultural Center portrays heritage through a variety of displays and is funded, in part, by the Basque Autonomous Government. Past Basque historical events throughout the world are on permanent display in the BMCC, in addition

to a mobile exhibit. The newly mobile exhibit was displayed in 2010 at Ellis Island, New York titled, “Hidden in Plain Sight: The Basques.” According to the Executive Director of BMCC, the exhibit was designed and implemented by the BMCC, yet funded by the Basque Autonomous Government for the first Basque display to be shown on Ellis Island.

In terms of display, the Basque Museum provides little evidence of oppression, assassinations, or economic hardships that were a contributing factor to emigration from the Basque Country to other parts of the world; in addition to minimal evidence of conflicts felt in the United States. The tangible information on display that is conveyed to the audience is more about traditions and cultural survival in both the Old World and the New which mimics Waitt’s theory on creating a comfortable place for visitors (2000). This form of heritage production, according to Graburn, is constructed and continuously refined by educators or ‘cultural producers’ (as termed by MacCannell, 1999) and are geared toward a specific audience (2001: 69). The Basque Museum and Cultural Center caters to a wide audience with particular motivations, both within the museum and outside of the museum. Further discussion on visitors, services and how the institutions and infrastructures on the Basque Block are being utilized and consumed will be addressed in Chapter V.

Development of the Basque Block

After the 60’s and 70’s urban renewal frenzy in the United States, downtown Boise experienced an unsuccessful regional mega-mall development during the 1970s and early 80s, but recovered beginning in the 80s. In 1967, the Idaho Urban Renewal law was written to promote agencies to collect property taxes from improvements that are within a district. Funding was available for the urban renewal agency, the Boise

Redevelopment Agency-now known as Capital City Development Corporation, to purchase property with federal funds. However, the funding was quickly phased out in the 1970s. In the mid-1980s Boise's urban renewal plan owing to the request for preservation and improvement of the area by property owners, began a new transformation (Bell 2002). The new Urban Renewal Area which encompassed Capitol Boulevard, First, Jefferson and Grove Streets, in addition to the historic Old Boise district, were funded by Capital City Development Corp. through a tax-led increment financing (Miller 2002). The CCDC became an active player in financing new projects by dedicating revenues as incentives to bring in more projects. "The master plans often become the framework for public-private partnering formed to develop actual projects" (Bell 2002).

According to Capital City Development Corporation, Grove Street was in dire need of re-construction and re-development due to degradation of the city block from heavy semi-truck traffic. After the creation of the Basque Museum and Cultural Center (BMCC) in 1985, reconstruction of the 600 block of Grove Street was needed to continue festivals and create amenities for participants. \$30,000 was placed into a fund for public art by mayor Dirk Kempthorne of Boise during his tenure (1985-1992) (CCDC 2011). The Boise City Arts Commission (BCAC) proposed an artwork project to the BMCC Director that would represent the area in which the BMCC was located. The Basque community became involved in periodic meetings to discuss the renovations. "They wanted a street that could also be used as a plaza space for festivals-paved in red and green for the colors of the Basque flag- and features that celebrated Basque history, language and folk songs, a way to anchor tents over performance stages, and amenities"

(CCDC 2011). It is not uncommon for urban development projects to incorporate heritage landscapes as a component of the economic restructuring of a city (Wirth and Freestone, 2003; Firth, 2011).

A \$415,000 project, the Boise City Arts Commission proposed the ideas to Boise City, the Basque Museum and Cultural Center, Capital City Development Corp. and Ada County Highway District (ADHD) to create a public-private partnership between agencies, the Basque community and the property owners of the 600 block (CCDC 2011). CCDC designed a reference and layout plan of Grove Street to integrate Basque emblems significant to the Basque culture inlaid in the street and sidewalks, in addition to designing a pedestrian friendly city block for ease of movement and festival celebrations.

While conducting fieldwork during the summer of 2010, many linkages to the Spanish Basque Country were documented including an abundance of Basque language signs, business names, and surnames inlaid in the sidewalks. The sketch shown in Fig. 4.6 indicates a (re)creation of place for second and third generations who were born and raised outside of the native country to maintain a cultural identity through a shared idealized national community.

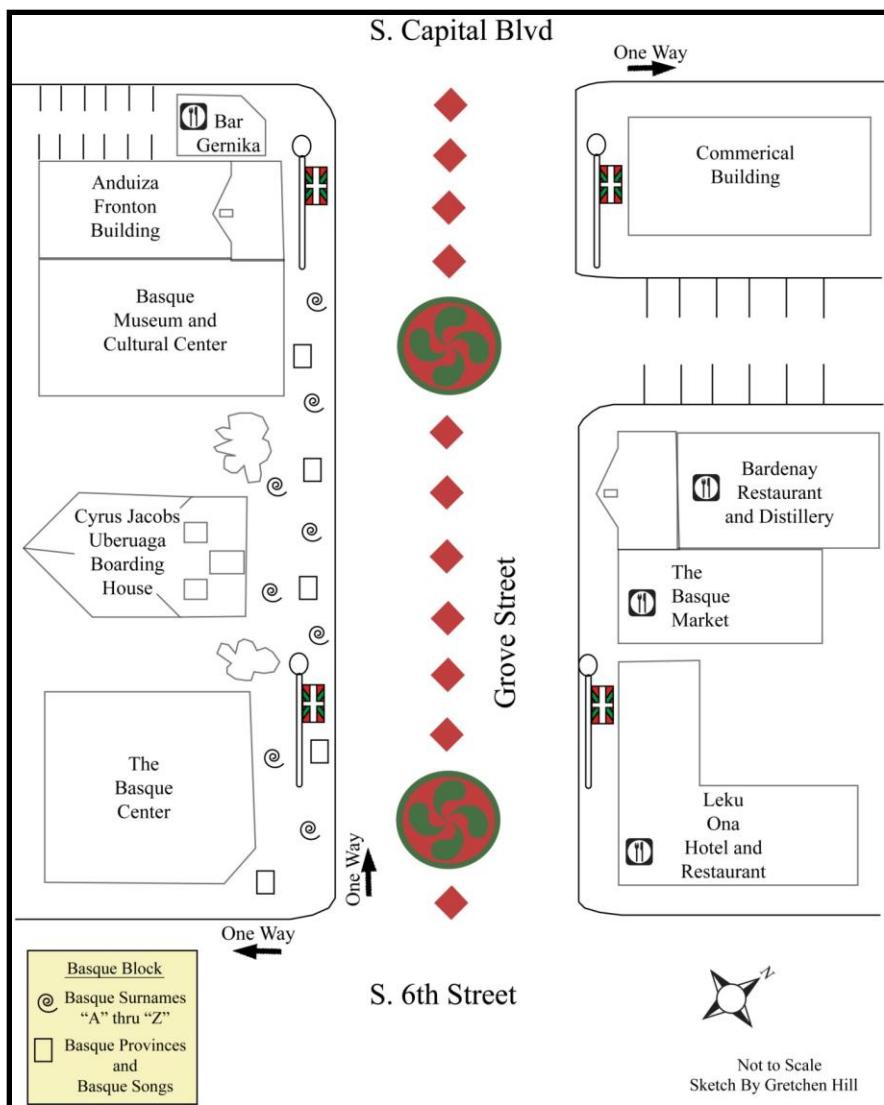


Figure 4.6. This sketch portrays both the symbolic landscape and the material landscape that is discussed in detail in Chapter V.
Basque Block, Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

Many players were involved in the funding and construction of the Basque Block. The CCDC contributed \$100,000 plus the cost for design and construction management for a variety of Grove Street improvements (CCDC 2011). The CCDC, additionally covered the funds for a *Laiak* (a traditional Basque tool used for turning the soil) art piece located at the “entrance” of the Basque Block (Capitol Boulevard and Grove Street). According to the CCDC master plan, the property owners agreed to make installments

over time to pay back the \$100,000 payment (CCDC 2011). In addition to CCDC's contributions, Basque families contributed \$25,000, property owners paid \$100,000, and Boise City provided \$100,000 and public art work (Basque mural) that cost \$30,000, in addition to the ACHD providing \$60,000 towards the project (CCDC 2011).

By the year 2000, the Basque Block improvement project was completed in time for *Jaialdi* 2000 to be hosted on the newly renovated city block. *Jaialdi*, meaning “big festival”, is the International Basque Cultural Festival which was established in 1987 to honor both Basques and Idaho State’s 100th anniversary. The festival, initially an annual festival, became increasingly visited and later transitioned from annually to every five years to manage the increase in participants and visitors. *Jaialdi*, a festival that has been created and celebrated only in Boise, is a component of traditional Basque festivals that have been carried over from the Basque Country. The significance and meaning of *Jaialdi* to Basque peoples will be further discussed in chapter V. In addition to the creation of the Basque Block and establishment of the largest international Basque festival in the world, other infrastructures that were developed along the Basque Block portray a significant contribution to the understanding of heritage production that has an element of national identification and belonging as exhibited by Park (2011).

Basque Market

By the end of 2000, Dan Ansotegui founder and proprietor of Bar Gernika, who is of Basque descent, signed a contract to renovate the former Mountain Telephone & Telegraph Co. warehouse on Grove Street and turned it into a Basque market (Figure 4.7 & 4.8). Ansotegui's renovation project was an estimated \$200,000 and contracted by XL

Construction Corp., in Boise (Martin 2000). Ansotegui's plan for the Basque Market was to integrate specialty foods and products from the Basque area of Spain.



Figure 4.7. The Basque Market on Grove Street specializing in goods from the Iberian Peninsula. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.



Figure 4.8. The Basque Market sign distinguishing the geographic region of goods produced. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

According to an interview with the second owner who too is Basque and owner since 2004, the goods and commodities come from the Iberian Peninsula rather than limiting purchases from the Basque Country. The owner's wife mentioned during a casual conversation that the goods would be very limited if they were strictly from the Basque Country (2010). Of particular note, the majority of goods and services provided by the Basque Market are mainly from Spain, as oppose to incorporating goods from Portugal as part of the Iberian Peninsula or regions of French Basque provinces. Therefore, the goods are selective of a particular region representing Basques from Spanish provinces as oppose to Basques from French provinces or other diverse ethnic groups of the Iberian Peninsula.

Basque Mural & Interpretive Signs

Two types of visual representation and interpretation of Basque heritage landscapes were added to the Basque Block, the Basque mural in 2000, and interpretive signs in 2010. The Basque mural was designed to incorporate both American West landscapes and Basque Country traditions that facilitate a cultural awareness between the two countries (Figure 4.9). Additionally, the mural portrays political relevance exhibited through the Tree of Gernika, remnants of Pablo Picasso's "Gernika" painting, religious ties to the homeland with a medieval Catholic church, and traditional ties to the homeland expressed through the images of men and women in festival attire. Lastly, the painting identifies sheep husbandry in the American West with a sheep wagon, sheep and sage brush vegetation indicative of high desert climates. The mural, painted by Brian Ladel hangs behind Bar Gernika along the wall of the *jaiali* (handball) court and was given to the city of Boise in 2000 as part of the newly renovated Grove Street and *Jaialdi* 2000

celebration to provide a tangible image that connects the Basque Americans with the Basques of Europe.



Figure 4.9. Basque mural hung outside of the *jaiali* (handball) court that exhibits both Old World Basques and the New. Intersection of Capitol and Grove Street, Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

While conducting field work in Boise during the summer of 2010 before *Jaialdi* 2010, I participated in the unveiling of eight interpretive signs that were strategically placed around the city to identify significant historical representations of Basque heritage (Figure 4.10). Two signs in particular are the Star Rooming House/Aguirre Building located on 512 Idaho St. and the former Church of the Good Shepherd located at 420 W. Idaho St. The Star Rooming House was a boarding house during the winter months for Basque shepherds that included a large pelota (handball) court adjacent to the building. In addition, the “former Church of the Good Shepherd was once the sole Basque chapel in the United States, circa 1919, before the Catholic Church began discouraging ethnically specific churches” (Webb 2010). The Director of the Basque Museum and Cultural Center mentioned that the creation of the interpretive signs were, “10 years in the making” and were “for visitors and locals to learn about the uniqueness of the area--the Basque community” (2010). The interpretive signs portray text in reference to the historical or modern infrastructure (s) that represents the Basque presence in Boise.

According to the Director of BMCC, each sign was funded by a variety of city members, for instance: the Basque Museum and Cultural Center, Boise State University's Basque Center, research and grant writing by BSU students, Cultural Center of Idaho, Humanities Council, and the Boise City of Art and History. The Boise City of Art and History was the final supporter and is responsible for maintaining the signs (Informal Communication-1: 2010). Additionally, the text for the interpretive signs was written by John Bieter who is second generation Basque, an Historian Professor at Boise State University, and author of the book "An Enduring Legacy: A History of the Basques in Idaho". Coupling the historical with the modern aligns with Zukin's theory of creating a place that is authentic for both the local and global consumers (2011). Zukin mentions that past experiences of a place along with modern infrastructures are two distinctions that locals and visitors can experience sequentially and classify place as being authentic (2011).

The newest addition to the Basque Block was the Arborglyph mural that was researched and designed by a Boise State University student who wanted to combine the history of an invisible immigrant group with a visual interpretation of a sheepherder's way of life. This mural depicts images of aspen groves with tree carvings by Basque sheepherders who utilized the tree's bark as a canvas to express their thoughts while living a life of solitude. The mural was funded by Boise Weekly, a local newspaper, from April of 2009 until its inception in 2010 (Informal Communication-1: 2010).



Figure 4.10. The Star Rooming House located at 512 W. Idaho Street was the first Basque boardinghouse in Boise. Although this building is not situated on the Basque Block, it remains significant due to its relative location to the Basque Block, thus providing evidence to the radius of the Basque institutions and infrastructures in downtown Boise. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

Production of Heritage: Boiseko Ikastola-Language School

The *Boiseko Ikastola*, which is the only Basque language pre-school located outside of the Basque Country is within blocks from the Basque Block and accommodates both the Basque and the non-Basque community. This particular institution which began in 1998 was established to provide language skills, written skills and math skills taught in Basque to school-aged children. The school's funding is assisted by the Basque Autonomous Government that sends Basque language teachers from the Basque Country to Boise to teach for a period of time (Informal

Communication: 2010). Additionally, when the institution was erected, the instructional materials and curriculum that follows the Basque Country standards was provided by the Basque government during the school's inception (boisekoikastola.com). Although, this institution isn't located along the Basque Block, it doesn't reduce the importance of the transnational connections between the State of Idaho and the Basque Country. Creating a heritage landscape that perpetuates Basque culture and language as an essential element in transnational representation that symbolizes a sense of belonging and aids in ethnic identity maintenance (Park, 2010).

Conclusion

Throughout the creation, decision-making, funding, planning and implementation of the Basque Block, stakeholders placed a greater significance on this constructed place than one would expect with a mere urban renewal project. Some would argue that Boise would not be the same without the Basques. If the Boise Basque community weren't devoted to creating an ethnic heritage destination, than their shared sense of belonging would need to be expressed in other ways. The construction of the Basque Block has created a central location for American Basques and Basques of the world to come from outside locations to unite and celebrate the Basque heritage within an urban context.

“...All environments are ‘built’ in the sense that...their meanings are constructed entirely by the culturally productive activities of the local people” (Graburn, 2001: 69).

The production of heritage can create strong attachments to both temporal and spatial elements in an environment that assist in an authentic (re)creation of a place. A variety of heritage preservation tactics can be expressed through the material, symbolic and living landscape that can construct an authentic place. Such heritage landscapes will

be discussed in depth with examples representative of the Basque Block in Chapter V.

Hobsbawm (1983) argued that traditions of heritage are invented through a set of shared practices that are repeated over time. Therefore, as heritage is produced, traditions then have the opportunity to be consumed (AlSayyad, 2001: 14).

In Chapter V, I examine and discuss the consumption of Basque heritage landscapes on and surrounding the Basque Block. I analyze who the consumers were and place of origin, in addition to the tourists' perception of the Basque Block. Additionally, I identify the way heritage is being consumed though a variety of heritage landscapes: living, material, and symbolic. The manner in which heritage is produced and consumed unavoidably creates contentions among consumers and will be further addressed.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSUMPTION OF HERITAGE

“Authenticity refers to the *look* and *feel* of a place as well as the social connectedness that place inspires” (Zukin, 2010: 220).

Chapter IV illustrated the construction of the Basque Block on Grove Street was more than an urban renewal project, rather a central place produced for Basque members of the local and global community to celebrate Basque heritage and maintain a sense of belonging. This chapter documents and analyzes the consumption of heritage by tourists and social actors of the Basque Block, in addition to identifying the transnational connections between Boise, Idaho and the Basque Country in Western Europe that may have influenced the transformation of Grove Street. The analysis stems from the way heritage is being consumed by both tourists and social actors of the Basque Block through a variety of landscapes: living, material, and symbolic. Inevitably, the production and consumption of heritage landscapes generate contested meanings within a single group (Collective Old World Basques) who have parallel pasts (French Basque v. Spanish Basque) (Timothy, 2007: xiii) . Therefore, identifying who consumers were will be essential in understanding the tourists’ perception and interpretation of the Basque Block.

Consumers of Basque Heritage

Data analysis collected from guest books identified Basque tourists who were interested in Basque heritage on display and whether or not they were domestic or international visitors. Consumers of heritage landscapes vary, in terms of local and global tourists, depending on the heritage being displayed and the spatial and temporal

components of locale. According to the Basque Museum and Cultural Center's guest log book dating from 2008 to 2010, the data varied considerably (Table 5.1). The guest entries consisted of two years' worth of records before the largest international Basque festival (*Jaialdi*), in addition to data during the year of *Jaialdi*. During the year 2008, 13% of the tourists were Basque, fell to 8% in 2009 and then increased markedly in 2010 during the festival.

Table 5.1. Number of Basque tourists to total tourists, 2008- 2010			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Basque tourists</i>	<i>Total tourists</i>	<i>Percentage of Basque</i>
2008	93	725	13%
2009	59	744	8%
2010	328	1124	29%

Source: Author, 2011.

These data suggested that Basque populations come to visit the Basque Block to either educate themselves about their Basque heritage and/or to purchase goods and services from the museum gift store and/or neighboring market or restaurants (see interviews below). The Basque Museum and Cultural Center is the only Basque museum in the United States and provides unique educational services and saleable commodities, either made in the United States or from the Basque Country, which is indicative of Basque culture. Interpreting the percentage of Basque tourists stimulated additional questions in order to grasp the importance of the Basque Block to Basque peoples. For instance, what percentage of Basques comes from the United States or overseas? What percentage of Basques is French Basque or Spanish Basque? What percentage of French Basques comes from Idaho? What percentage of Spanish Basques comes from Idaho?

People traveled both internationally and domestically to visit the Basque museum, restaurants and be exposed to seasonal Basque cultural events. Table 5.2 depicts varying figures of out-of-country Basque tourists versus Basques' travelling from within the United States to Boise, Idaho. The figures show that while each year a majority of the tourists travel from within the United States, a fair number of Basques still travel from abroad. Therefore, the BMCC is catering to a population of both domestic and international visitors who are becoming educated on the Basque heritage. Steven Hoelscher has argued that "travel has become the quintessential means by which ethnic heritage is aroused, maintained, and rebounded" (2000: 66).

Table 5.2. Percentage of international and domestic Basque tourists, 2008-2010		
Year	<i>Out-of-country Basques</i>	<i>Basques in U.S.</i>
2008	35%	65%
2009	29%	71%
2010	40%	60%

Source: Author, 2011.

In reference to table 5.3, there were markedly more Spanish Basque tourists than French Basque tourists throughout each year of data collection. These data reflect a gap in either French Basques' awareness of the Basque Block or a contention between the representation of Spanish and French Basque presence in Boise or the American West. These data contribute to understanding Spanish Basques' influence in Boise, Idaho. Noticeably more Spanish Basques have influenced the design of the Basque Block with Spanish Basque nationalistic ideals in mind (i.e., foods from the Spanish Basque Provinces, Spanish Basque surnames, Spanish Basque business names, etc.). Heritage groups with political influence will emphasize a national identity, educational activities,

and tourism (Timothy, 2007: xiii) with a particular motivation and representation of the group's heritage.

Table 5.3. Percentage of French Basque and Spanish Basque, 2008-2010

<i>Year</i>	<i>French Basque</i>	<i>Spanish Basque</i>
2008	10%	89%
2009	3%	97%
2010	4%	96%

Source: Author, 2011.

The last investigation of tourist attendance analyzed the locale of the French Basques and Spanish Basques within Idaho. Table 5.4 depicts a conspicuously higher percentage of Spanish Basques who reside in Idaho than French Basques who visit the Basque Block. The fact that most of the Basques and their descendants in Idaho migrated from the Spanish Basque Province of Bizkaia may explain the large number of Spanish Basque compared to French Basque who visited the Basque Block. Moreover, this table suggests further evidence that Basque Block catered to the Spanish Basque tourists.

Table 5.4. Percentage of French Basque and Spanish Basque from Idaho, 2008-2010

<i>Year</i>	<i>French Basque-Idaho</i>	<i>Spanish Basque-Idaho</i>
2008	0%	100%
2009	9%	91%
2010	8%	92%

Source: Author, 2011.

Living Landscape

The producers interested in Basque heritage display consisted of a variety of community members. For instance, community members interested in preserving the Basque heritage donated Basque artifacts for display. The individuals responsible for displaying and educating the public about Basque history and culture were nearly all

Basque peoples. For example, the Executive Director of the Basque Museum and Cultural Center is Basque, with 14 out of 16 of the Board of Directors having Basque ethnicity (13) or being married to a Basque (1). These figures lend credence to the portrayal of a motivation that is less about economic development to sustain an urban renewal project, but more about producing a place that can be consumed with a Basque consumer in mind. Basque members of the museum and cultural center Board bring in decisions that cater to the Basque way of life and a means of preservation. Museums for instance, “[involve] local people in the creation of community collections, community exhibitions and community education programs” (Crooke, 2010: 25).

The BMCC was designed to “preserve, promote, and perpetuate Basque history and culture” (basquemuseum.com, Accessed June, 2012) as evident through the services that are provided and the targeted interest groups. However, the roles of the Basque Museum and the Cultural Center have distinguishing characteristics. For instance, the Basque Museum plays a dual role in preserving the past through tangible artifacts in addition to public educational outreach to the surrounding area about the Basque culture. These services cater to the public from elementary schools, high schools and universities, mainly in Idaho, to providing services to adults. The Cultural Center conversely, provides cultural preservation through language classes and a space for dance classes, cooking classes, etc., pertaining to the Basque culture. Financing such activities is an important component in maintaining educational outreach and is embedded in community relations (Crooke, 2010: 29).

On the Basque Block such community relations consisted of public participation and fundraisers. For instance, monthly “wine walk” tours heighten the public awareness

of the Basque heritage services and the BMCC hosting the highly profitable annual fundraiser for food and wine connoisseurs. According to the Executive Director of BMCC, the annual fundraiser hosted in August 2010 was estimated to have 700 people in attendance to support the museum. With nearly half of the attendants were non-Basque peoples (Informal Communication-1: 2010).

The Basque Museum and Cultural Center list of “All Services” obtained from the Executive Director of the BMCC, dated from 1999-2009, sorted services by a variety of categories. For instance, the services list provided the total number of people, event name (i.e., other), user group (i.e., Basque), description (i.e., Basque neighborhood meeting), event date, age group, and whether the services provided were on-site or off-site. The events ranged from presentations about the Basque culture both on-site and off-site to providing Basque (*Euskera*) language classes, a space for choir (the Biotzetik Choir), dance (BoiseKo Gatzeak) & folk music (Gaupasa Folk Band) practice, and dinner/luncheons for public and private organizations.

Jailadi, another form of living landscape, portrayed transnational connections with the Basque Country, in particular with the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain that encourages ethnic identity preservation. *Jailaldi*, the largest international Basque cultural festival in the world (Figure 5.1), held every 5 years in Boise, Idaho, receives financial support from the State of Idaho, BMCC, Basque Studies Program at Boise State University, and the Basque Autonomous Government (Informal Communication-1: 2010). As evident in Table 5.1, the 2010 festival brought significantly more tourists to Boise, Idaho, when compared to 2008 and 2009. *Jailaldi*, a unique form of tourism included active participation of both local and global tourists, with Basque dancers from

the American West and the Basque Country who juggled between performance and ethnic identity maintenance. Basque-themed festivals appear to be a catalyst for the maintenance of ethnic identity among Basques and Basque-American participants (Adams, 2005).



Figure 5.1. *Jaialdi* 2010 festival logo with Basque flag.
Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

Jaialdi in particular, has been identified as a central locale for Basques to “reunite.” While attending the festival for a week in 2010, I observed the majority of visitors speaking either Spanish or *Euskera* with very little English being spoken. The BMCC uses *Jaialdi* as a way to “bring culture outside into the streets” (Informal Communication-1: 2010) and to utilize the Basque Block as a convenient central location to bring Basques together. The festival in 2010 extended out beyond the city blocks to Boise’s fairgrounds where Basque culture and traditions were celebrated. Basque-American sheepherding wagons were displayed. In addition, commodities were available for purchase, such as Basque gifts from local and global vendors, and performances by Basques from the American West and the Basque Country were a few activities exhibited at the fairgrounds.

For many attendants, *Jaialdi*, was a safe space that allowed visitors of all ages to “be Basque.” Respondent 8 a former Boise resident now living in Reno, Nevada, mentioned that the festival is a safe place and that “[she] is not alone, [she has] all of [her] *Basque* friends” (emphasis added). The respondent’s comment implied that the festival was not only a space created to reunite Basques, but also a safe place that created a sense of belonging. Additionally, some tourists who were both performers and consumers had this notion of juggling between ethnic identity maintenance and production of heritage, through the living landscape. For instance, Respondent 10 mentioned “I attended it because I was dancing in it, but also because it is a week-long festival to celebrate the Basque culture and I would not miss that for the world.” Additionally, tourists were able to be part of the performance and reunite with family members from their homeland. Respondent 9 commented, “My daughter dances with the Boise Oinkari Dancers and we went to watch her perform. I also had cousins from Euzkadi [the three southern provinces in Spain] who flew over to join in the festivities.” Both of these respondents signified the importance of *Jaialdi* as more than a festival that celebrated a unique ethnic group for the general population; *Jaialdi* was also a place for Basque consumers to learn about and celebrate their cultural heritage and to reunite with friends and family members to maintain transnational ties. *Jaialdi* exists in stark contrast to other American festivals, such as the myriad German fests and Swiss fests that are created to educate the general public about an ethnic group’s culture and traditions (Adams, 2005; Hoelscher, 1998). In addition to *Jaialdi*, and the Basque Museum and Cultural Center’s services that offered authenticity to experiences, other stakeholders

helped provide authenticity: businesses (i.e., museum commodities, restaurants, the Basque market) and streetscape symbolic landscapes.

Material Landscape

The material landscape, a component of heritage tourism, includes the built environment or built infrastructures, such as museums, restaurants, or cultural centers that mimic the native country's architecture. The only historic downtown dwelling is the Cyrus-Jacobs Uberuaga boarding house (Figure 5.2) located at 607 Grove St.



Figure 5.2. Cyrus-Jacobs Uberuaga boarding house is the oldest dwelling in downtown Boise with interpretive sign.
Located on the Basque Block as part of the Basque Museum and Cultural Center's museumtours. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

The BMCC staff gives hourly tours to people interested in the sheepherders' way of life during off-season work in the American West. This "living" museum provides background into a shepherd's life of solitude, though a staged performance providing the viewer a snapshot into the past, in essence frozen in time, that can be gazed upon by the tourist (Urry, 1990), and not necessarily an accurate representation of a shepherd's life. As with many museums, curators create a replication of a past that is viewed in

contemporary times (Graham, Ashworth & Tundbridge, 2000; Graburn, 2001; Timothy, 2003).

Consumers travel to the Basque Block to experience both the historic heritage and the modern cultural traditions in a myriad of ways. For instance, the Basque Market, located perpendicular to the Cyrus-Jacobs Uberuaga boardinghouse provided goods from the Iberian Peninsula, specifically Spain. Such goods included foods and drinks produced within the Basque Country, locally made Basque products, in addition to goods from Spain to provide larger quantities of commodities for consumers (Informal Communciation-2: 2010). Once a month the owners, of Basque ethnicity, provided Basque appetizers, known as pintxos. However, the store owner's wife mentioned that they refer to the appetizers as tapas (Spanish) rather than pintxos (Basque) as more customers are familiar with the term tapas (Informal Communciation-2: 2010). The Market also prepared paella, a Spanish cuisine, for in-store customers and catered events. Given that the owner was Basque and prepared Basque and Spanish meals, they too juggle between maintaining a Basque identity and performing as a social actor for the tourists. The material landscape along the Basque Block however, incorporated both the modern landscape coupled with the historic past and built landscape. According to Zukin, coupling both the modern and historic tangible and intangible experiences further enhance the tourist's authentic experience both combining the modern culture with historic significance (2010).

Many Basques visited the Basque Block to purchase gifts and souvenirs (Figure 5.3) that are indicative of the Basque culture and traditions of the homeland and travel to the block as a social gathering place and/or as a form of "show and tell."



Figure 5.3. Gifts and souvenirs from the Basque Market, such as foods, lapel flag pins, and flags from the Basque Country and locally made glasses with the symbolic *lauburu*. Boise, Idaho.

Source: Author, 2010.

Consuming a place for instance, can induce the idea of an imagined community depending on the tourists' experience and expectations and potentially enhance a nationalistic sense of belonging for the ethnic group whose traditions are being commodified. “Through consumption, [tourists] can discursively make *sense* of the place they visit and generate meanings for the landscapes encounter[ed]” (Su and Teo, 2010: 103).

When asked what attracts visitors to the Basque Block, the respondents' replied with a sense of community and belonging. For instance, “I go to the Basque Block for the food at Bar Gernika or other restaurants and enjoy the people and Basque speakers. I also go to the [Basque] Market to buy [Basque] peppers” (Respondent, 7). “I like to go to the museum and have Kalimotxos [Basque-American alcoholic drink], because the Kalimotxos are the best at the Basque Block. I buy souvenirs at the museum and show

my [last] name that is in the street to my non-Basque friends" (Respondent, 6). "I like to be with the community. It's nice to share culture with other young people" (Respondent 4). "I go for cultural business, but mostly pleasure, to watch pelota [handball sport] and attend the annual San Ignazio festival. A lot of what Boise offers I have at my own town: friends of common interest, food, pelota, but the Basque Block's proximity is more appealing. I meet with my friends and 90% of the time we meet at the Basque Block. We go to watch pelota games, eat at Bar Gernika, [restaurant] Leku Ona...*the uniqueness is all in one place*....we go to Boise to reaffirm living the Basque culture. Basques need to find their place, feel safe, and be Basque" (Respondent 2) (emphasis added). Each of these respondents discussed their comfort with the Basque Block and a way to express their ethnic pride.

Another respondent mentioned that the Basque Block is consumed through a shared knowledge between Basques. "Friends, camaraderie, an unspeakable tie...knowledge of hardship we as later generations have gone through and jokes about our parents stubbornness and their comical ties at assimilation, those struggles we have helped with" (Respondent 5). As generations passed, the idea of ancestral migration that went through difficult transitions, oppression, etc. became part of the past and a myth told to later generations (DeLyser, 1999). Whether the Basque Block is reminding Basques about the struggles their ancestors endured as immigrants or is commemorating their Basque culture, each individual identifies this space as open for Basque expression without limitations, thus creating an authentic place.

An additional form of "show and tell" that provided the tourist with an understanding of the diversity of Boise and an awareness of the influence of a minority

ethnic group was the Trolley Tours. Boise has created trolley rides that take tourists around town viewing the historic and cultural landscapes of the city. The ride takes tourists to the Basque Block so they can be exposed to the cultural uniqueness of the Basque culture as a lens catering to the tourists' gaze in an otherwise homogenous community.

Although a response to identity building for Basques and their descendants, the Basque Center-*Euzkaldunak-Inc.* has attempted to branch out as a public institution similar to the museum and cultural center; however, it remains a private institution restricted to Basque consumers (Informal Communication-1: 2010). The BC services have continued to accommodate to the Basque community and to assist with cultural maintenance of Basques' identity. According to a visitor's perception, the Center is "...really the 'center' of the Basque culture, centralized, like a Mecca for Basques" (Respondent 8). Therefore, the Basque Center has been providing a central place where Basques can come together to celebrate heritage and partake in Basque traditions with like-minded individuals.

Business place-names can also connect visitors with the homeland. For instance, Bar Gernika (Figure 5.4) was created based on the Province of Bizkaia's ancient capital, Gernika, responsible for traditional Basque laws and influencing ethno-nationalism. Additionally, not only does this bar connect both Boise and the Basque Country, but in 1993 Boise and Gernika became sister cities and have continued to this day to perpetuate Basque awareness through education and services. Bar Gernika's sign, too, contains a Basque symbol, the Tree of Gernika, discussed in Chapter III. This symbol connects the Basque peoples with the old laws and ways of life.



Figure 5.4. Bar Gernika place-name that connects Boise with the Spanish Basque Province of Bizkaia ancient capital of Gernika. Boise, Idaho.
Source: Author, 2010.

Symbolic Landscape

The symbols on display in the Basque Block, that have been carried over from the Basque Country, were clearly intended to construct a sense of belonging for Basques and Basque Americans alike. Emphasis on the larger national and international contexts, as seen through the displays of flags, patriotic color schemes (red and green), imbedded symbology in the streetscape (i.e *laubur*, Basque lyrics, surnames, etc.), suggests that the Basque Block is not only about displaying Basque identity, but Basque American, and Spanish Basque identities as well. The production of heritage is generally (re)invented or a reproduction of the past for the consumer to experience during the modern times, and in the case of Boise, heritage is being (re)invented from homeland ideals. According to Hobsbawm and Ranger, the “‘Invented’ tradition is taken to mean a set of practices,

normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (1983: 1).

The Basque Block was transformed from a city street reminiscent of vehicle traffic to a pedestrian friendly streetscape indicative of Basque cultural influence. The center of the street has been inlaid with the Basque symbol (or "Basque swastika") that portrays "four heads" in *Euskera* (Figure 5.5).



Figure 5.5. Basque symbol, known as the *Lauburu* is embedded in Grove Street on the Basque Block. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

This symbol with its many interpretations, is red and green symbolizing the Basque colors of red (Bizkayan peoples) and green (the tree of Gernika). For some, the *lauburu* represents points on a compass; for others, the basic four elements of fire, earth, air and water. Either way, this symbol is ubiquitous in Basque cultural expressions world-wide and can be found in cemeteries, over doorways (Figure 5.6), as part of interpretive signs, and at funeral wakes. Now, as part of a (re)invented tradition, the *lauburu* is permanently embedded in Boise's Basque Block.



Figure 5.6. Plaque with surname of resident inserted between two *lauburuz*. St. Jean de Luz, France. Source: Author, 2007.



Figure 5.7. *Ikurrina* (Basque Flag) is attached to every lamp post along the Basque Block. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

Several additional symbols that connect Boise with the Basque Country that are noteworthy are *ikurrina* (Basque flag) (see figure 5.7), surname spirals (see figure 5.8), the Basque Provinces, Basque song lyrics, business place names, and the Basque Country crest. The *ikurrina* for instance, is found hanging along light poles on the Basque Block and is used during traditional Basque dances signifying Basque nationalism.



Figure 5.8. Spiral with surnames of Basque residents who have migrated to Boise, Idaho. The majority of surnames are from Spanish Basque provinces.

Source: Author, 2010.

As previously discussed in Chapter III, the flag was created during a time of intense Basque oppression in Spain and was a way to express a tangible object that represented Basque nationalism. The displaying of the Basque flag, according to Douglass, was more a “symbol of the New World Basque ethnic identity than of solidarity with an Old World political movement” (2006: 107). However, Park noted that the “element of national identification and attribute of national culture and symbolic embodiment...can be constructed and reconstructed to show a sense of national belonging” (2011: 520). Therefore, the recreation of both the flag and the *lauburu* represents symbolic forms of nationalism and caters to a national identity that can be openly displayed in a country that lacked Basque conflict. Hall has argued that national identity is a socially constructed identity that is told, not only by stories of the past that are told and retold, but through symbolism and representations (1996). Basque symbolism and representation for example, is exhibited through Basque surnames, Basque song lyrics and Basque crests of the Provinces that are inlaid in the sidewalk as part of the symbolic landscape, thus catering to tourists’ gaze and consumption (Figures 4.6, 5.7, 5.9, and 5.10).



Figure 5.9. Basque song lyrics inlaid in the sidewalk. Lyrics are written in *Euskera* with a quote in English on the bottom. Boise, Idaho.
Source: Author, 2010.



Figure 5.10. One of the seven Basque Provinces with crest inlaid in the sidewalk. Boise, Idaho. Source: Author, 2010.

Nationalistic Expression and Transnational Ties

Basque Museum and Cultural Center's guest book entries allowed Basque visitors to express nationalistic views that may not be openly expressed in the Spanish Basque Provinces. Consistent with Robin's theory on "reterritorialization" (1997), while analyzing the Basque Museum and Cultural Center's guest book, many Basque tourists expressed their nationalistic ideals through written statements. For instance, a museum patron wrote "*Aupa Jaialdi 2010 eta Gora Euskal Herria!!!*" ("What's up Jaialdi 2010 and Go Basque Autonomous Community!!!"). This one particular expression portrayed a cultural connection with both the Basque festival (*Jaialdi*) in Boise and a nationalistic connection with the Basque Autonomous Community in Spain. In addition, another Basque tourist commented, *Gora Euzkadi Askatuta!!!* ("Go fight until freedom!!!"), an added political expression of nationalism. Both comments represented nationalist ideals, but the combination of the Basque Block infrastructures coupled with the largest Basque

festival in the world created a safe space for visitors to feel more nationalistic and expressive than in Spain. This form of expression may be due to freedom in the United States and Basque community in Boise. Of particular note, both Basque tourists who commented in the guest log came from villages within the province of Bizkaia and thus shared a sense of belonging and a desire of expression that may not have been exhibited in the homeland. Their comments were consistent with Robin's theory of cultural mobility and provided evidence that globalization not only creates "de-territorialization," it also emphasizes "reterritorialization" by linking geographically distant communities into one (1997: 33).

Contested Landscape

Contentions around the production of Basque heritage have been created for a variety of reasons. The Basque Block has been created by Spanish Basque descendants and influenced by the Spanish Basque peoples' trials and tribulations. Although the Block might appear to represent all of the Basques, subtle underpinnings may state otherwise. A French Basque American who lives outside of Boise said "the Basque Block doesn't represent all Basques, just Basques of Idaho" (Respondent 11). This statement implies that the Basque Block caters to a select group of Basques and not to all Basques. Additionally, jealousy exists between French Basque Americans and Spanish Basque Americans in the American West because of the lack of institutions and built infrastructures for French Basque Americans (Respondent 1). Therefore, the production of heritage in this case was not necessarily an accurate representation of the past for all; rather the Basque Block portrayed a selective past for a particular group of consumers. Production and consumption of heritage not only provides debates on authenticity, but

also creates levels of conflict between cultural groups whose traditions are being commodified. In reference to Coles and Timothy's book on diaspora groups and tourism, ethnic groups compete over goods and services, such as attractions, amenities, and resources.

Conclusion

The data in this chapter identified where the tourists to Basque Block came from, explored how the Basque Block was perceived by the tourists, and illustrated transnational connections between Boise, Idaho, and the Basque Country. Heritage tourism for the Basques then has been a form of identity politics, maintenance and survival, created in response to the age of globalization (Aoyama, 2007 & 2009) and the desire for a sense of belonging. The data not only shows that the creation of Basque Block as a social institution where Basques can partake in ancestral traditions and maintain a Basque identity through authentic experiences, but also maintains transnational ties between Boise, Idaho and the Basque Autonomous Community.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This thesis seeks to examine the creation of space for descendants of Basque immigrants to maintain ties to their heritage through the construction of the Basque Block in Boise, Idaho. The investigation involves myriad social, political, and economic factors key in heritage tourism development. More specifically, it explores how a community of Spanish Basque descendants from the Province of Bizkaia has influenced the production of Basque heritage. “How a tourism landscape is shaped does not depend on production forces alone” (Su and Teo, 2010: 164). Consumption of heritage landscapes is also an important characteristic in understanding the perception of place based on the tourists’ gaze (Urry, 1990). By unraveling the global (international tourists, and transnational ties) and the local (domestic tourists, museum services and redevelopment contributors) factors that contributed to the production and consumption of Basque Block tourism, a critical analysis is provided to untangle why the Basque Block was created. In this final chapter on heritage tourism, summaries of key arguments and empirical findings of the thesis, as well as a discussion on research limitations and the broader significance to geography are addressed.

Summary

Chapter III outlines the historical and political settings of the Province of Bizkaia, Spain. The historical significance of the Province of Bizkaia in Spain and how that relates to the development of ethno-nationalism, Basque migration to the American West, and the political influences Spanish Basques brought to the State of Idaho is addressed.

The motivation behind identifying the historical creation of Basque nationalism stemmed from the significant Basque population in Boise, Idaho that is primarily from the Province of Bizkaia. The methodology included identifying and analyzing Basque literature that pertained to the Province of Bizkaia that was written by scholars of Basque Studies. According to the Basque Studies Program at the University of Nevada, Reno, the compilation of literature on the Province of Bizkaia, a political epicenter in the Basque Country, has not been compiled until this thesis therefore making this a significant contribution to the literature. The analysis of the Bizkaian Province contributes to literature on Basque studies both in the United States and Europe and provides the foundational framework for interpreting Spanish Basque influences in Boise, Idaho. This investigation found that Basques from the Province of Bizkaia brought nationalism to the United States that aided in the decision making of creating a public space for Basque consumption.

In Chapter IV the transformation of the Basque Block was identified along with the production of Basque heritage landscapes that were represented on or near the study site to investigate the significance of Basque heritage production. It is argued that the transformation of the city block was more than an urban renewal project rather the Basque Block was constructed in such a way to maintain Basque ethnic identities. The thesis documents and designs a historical timeline of the development on and surrounding the Basque Block of Basque institutions and infrastructures to gain an understanding of the Basque influence both temporally and spatially in Boise, Idaho. Through the analysis of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, dated 1893-1956, an ethnic shift from Chinese owned infrastructures to a considerable amount of Basque ownership by 1956 was uncovered.

In addition, the production of specific heritage landscapes that were indicative of maintaining transnational ties with the homeland (i.e., *Ikastola*-Basque Language School, Basque Market (goods from Iberian Peninsula), Basque Museum and Cultural Center (preservation of Basque heritage), and the Basque Center (preservation of Basque cultural traditions) are discussed.

Public and private shareholders responsible for the planning and implementation of the transformation of Grove Street, were also noted. The decision makers consisted of the Boise City Arts Commission who proposed a \$415,000 project to transform the 600 city block of Grove Street into a more attractive streetscape for consumers. This project part of an urban renewal plan included the following members: The City of Boise, the Basque Museum and Cultural Center, Capital City Development Corporation, Ada County Highway District, the Basque community, and the property owners of the 600 block. Boise City Arts Commission proposed redevelopment ideas to the City of Boise, which would include a public-private partnership between agencies.

While investigating historical Sanborn maps, dated 1893-1956, modern Basque Block tourism websites, and the local Idaho Statesmen newspaper, it was found that the production of heritage, coupled with historical and modern infrastructures and institutions, was a space created for descendants of Basque immigrants to maintain their ethnic identity and cultural ties to the homeland.

In the final empirical chapter (V), the three components of heritage landscapes indicative of heritage tourism: material, living, and symbolic and how the landscapes were consumed by tourists are discussed. The material landscape, for instance, was built infrastructures necessary for perpetuating Basque history, such as the Basque Center

designed to mimic a Basque *baserrí* (farmhouse). The living landscape consisted of daily activities, such as festival performances, language schools, etc. that are created to maintain ethnic and cultural connections to Basque identity. Additionally, the symbolic landscape encompasses symbolism and representation that can enhance a national identity, for instance the *ikurrina* (Basque flag) and the *lauburu* (Basque symbol of earth elements).

The thesis provides a description of the transnational connections that were represented on the Basque Block between Boise and the Basque Country, and the interworking of Basque peoples' perceptions of place, through a discursive analysis of guest log books and interviews. The identification of the tourists' Basque ethnicity was possible based on surname, the percentage of Basque visitors, place of origin, and perceptions of place. Empirical data included participant observation, before, during and after the largest Basque international festival in the world (*Jaialdi*), in-formal and formal interviews, and primary source data analysis of the Basque Museum and Cultural Center's services. Interviews were conducted primarily with local and global Basque peoples, on and off of the Basque Block. Dialogues with Basque tourists revealed the connection many Basques have with the Basque Block and how the transformation of the city block has created a safe place for nationalistic expression and Basque identity maintenance. Following along with a safe place ideal for expression and identity maintenance, the Basque Block provides evidence that this space is authentic to the tourists, based on continuous visits and consumption of goods and services. According to Zukin, authenticity couples both the modern and historic infrastructures and experiences (2010). More specifically, the tangible goods that are consumed on the Basque Block

come from the Basque Country and surrounding regions in Spain, in order to unite the consumers with the Basque Country. Additionally, business place names (Bar Gernika) connects the consumer with the historic capital of the Province of Bizkaia, thus connecting the tourist with a significantly important village responsible for the impetus of Basque ethno-nationalism. Non-tangible experiences expressed by the consumers relate to interviewee's responses in regards to visiting the Basque Block to visit Basque friends, family members, and to speak *Euskera* (Basque language).

Furthermore, as heritage sites were produced and consumed, contentions about heritage production were identified. Even though Boise, Idaho's, Basque population consists of nearly all Spanish Basque descendants and immigrants, a French Basque population in the American West is still interested in maintaining their Basque cultural identity. What is more, many French Basque Americans are feeling disconnected from the Basque Block as the Block represents mainly Spanish Basque nationalistic ideals and less about French Basques. The percentage of Basque visitors who are Spanish Basque range from 89% to 97% over the 3-year period of guest log book entries, portray a markedly Spanish Basque influence on the City of Boise.

The production of Basque heritage, in the form of the Basque Block, is more than the creation of a heritage site for mass tourism, such as Chinatown, rather it is a place that has been produced to be consumed for Basque national identity building and maintenance for Basques of the World. Nevertheless, Boise, Idaho's, Spanish Basque population and nationalistic influences on the State of Idaho needs further analysis. For instance, is the Basque Block a re-creation of the Spanish Basque country in response to the age of globalization (i.e., modernization, industrialization, technology, and immigration)? Are

the social actors and producers of the Basque Block aware that French Basque Americans have contentions about Boise's production of Basque heritage? If so, are the producers going to make adjustments in constructing an exclusive place for Basque heritage production? Nonetheless, the Basque Block is significant to local and global Basque communities who are interested in maintaining a unique ethnic heritage during an ever-increasingly globalized world. The underlying interconnectedness of this research lies in identifying the pressures brought on by creating ethno-nationalism in a historically oppressed State and the influence nationalism has on the production and consumption of a newly erected heritage site as part of an urban renewal project.

Research Limitations

Limitations to this thesis exist and the need for discussion is noteworthy. Basque emigrants have been classified as a diasporic group (Douglass, 2006); however, this thesis limited the use of diasporic literature as a primary component of the literature review in an effort to focus more on heritage tourism studies. Literature on diasporic studies can contribute to better understanding why and how descendants of immigrant groups maintain their ethnic identity in the form of heritage production.

Additionally, informal and formal interviews were exclusively with Basque ethnic groups, rather than incorporating both Basque and non-Basque tourists into the research study to identify the significance of the Basque Block to tourists. Interviews were limited to the Basque ethnic group, in order to recognize the purpose of the Basque Block to Basque peoples. The interviews that were conducted were within a restricted time-frame and could have provided a more secure case analysis if the time period was over a longer time frame.

Moreover, the Basque Museum and Cultural Center's guest book entries provided significant contributing data during a 3-year period; however, the limitations of accessing the guest books consisted of both contact constraints and availability. It would be ideal to analyze 10-years' worth of data, from the year 2000 to 2010. Obtaining guest book records dating from 2000-2010 for instance, would contain 3-periods of *Jaialdi* celebrations and tourist entries.

City Directories and census data could have been used to identify historic Basque owned businesses in Boise and residential distribution. A partial record of City Directories dating from the 1960s, provided substantial evidence to Basque ownership of businesses downtown, but was not used due to limiting access of directories. An additional method that could have been used to identify Basque heritage production and ownership relates to census data. There is 70-yr archived census data for Boise Basques that would identify the geographic distribution of both Basque owned businesses and residences within and surrounding the city of Boise. Although research limitations exist, the current data that was documented and analyzed still provided ample evidence for the Basque Block case study, in arguing the production and consumption of Basque heritage in Boise, Idaho.

Broader Significance to Tourism Geographies

The heritage site in Boise, Idaho known as the Basque Block contributes to geographic modes of thought concerned with discourse in migration and diaspora studies, heritage tourism and scales of political economy. First, it complements literature on migration studies with its concentration on identifying how descendants of immigrants maintain their ethnic identity through sense of place in the creation of heritage

landscapes. Moreover, this research contributes to heritage tourism studies concerned in the production and consumption of these heritage landscapes while enhancing critiques on authenticity. What is more, though this thesis had a narrow discussion on diasporic literature, this case study does contribute to discourse on diasporas as the Boise Basques are part of a larger diaspora group. Furthermore, this research contributes to literature on Basque studies from a political economy lens as it takes into consideration the local, regional, national, and transnational ties between Basques in the United States and the Basque Autonomous Community.

The underlying significance of this study relates to three fundamental factors of the human experience. Identity, belonging, and place are three concepts that compound and contribute to a human's desire to create a sense of community which is a theme intrinsic to geography. Identity is defined as the name or essential character that identifies somebody or something. Furthermore, it is understood as a set of characteristics that are recognized as belonging uniquely to a person or thing. Identity is constantly evolving. Identity then, is non-stagnant and is in a continuum of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. Identity leads to a person's desire for belonging, which according to the Encarta Dictionary, is defined as the state of being accepted and comfortable in a place or group. It is therefore, an important concept regarding the desire to fit into society and is vital to survival due to our social nature. In belonging, there must be a locale, whether it is a conceptual or physical space, place is created to connect people who have similar identities and ultimately establish a sense of community.

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