

Teacher training for social sciences education and a democratic citizenship in a postconflict society. The case of the Basque Country

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Keywords: human rights and peace education, victims' testimonies, memory and history, Basque Country, democratic citizenship

Highlights:

- *Adi-Adian* is an initiative of human rights and peace education implemented at the schools of the Basque Country and related to the experience of victims of political violence
- This *Adi-Adian* initiative has been applied at Teacher Training School upon future teachers of Primary School
- The testimony of victims has proven to be effective at rising the empathy and the comprehension of other point of views

Purpose: The Basque Country has been suffering political conflict and human rights' violation for decades, tearing the social fabric. Human rights and peace education carried out through the testimony of the victims and their memory about this recent violent past can play an essential role in reestablishing the social understanding. This article aims to make known the experience of *Adi-Adian* initiative developed with the victims of the political violence in the Teacher Training School of the University of Basque Country and assess its effectiveness in terms of critical thinking and empathy.

Design/methodology/approach: This research is based on group discussion and personal surveys focused on students' feedback as a suitable method to analyze the way of thinking of students, their feelings and opinions about the violence.

Findings: The results indicate that these initiatives implemented at school might be suitable to achieve the goals of human rights and peace education and deepen on democratic citizenship.

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Suggested citation:

Saenz del Castillo, A., Arregi-Orue, J.I., Agirreazkuenaga, L., & Longarte, J. (2023). Teacher training for social sciences education and a democratic citizenship in a postconflict society. The case of the Basque Country. In: *Journal of Social Science Education* 22 (3). <https://doi.org/10.11576/jsse-4819>

Declaration of conflicts of interests: No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.




JSSE

[Journal of
Social
Science
Education](#)

2023, Vol. 22(3)

Edited by:
Reinhold Hedtke,
Jan Löfström,
Andrea Szukala

 Open Access



1 FROM PAINFUL SUBJECT TO VICTIMS´ TESTIMONIES IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE EDUCATION. THE BASQUE CASE

Eight years after *Euskadi Eta Askatasuna* (ETA-Basque Country and Freedom) unilaterally declared the unilateral cease-fire and just one year after its dissolution as an armed organization, Basque society has experienced a profound decrease in external manifestations of violence of a political or ideological nature. According to the evolution of other conflicts on the international scene, however, the process towards peace, reconciliation and the achievement of human rights is still a hot controversial issue, since as Paul Collier (2006; 2003) affirms, the risk of a reversed situation with a return to violence has occurred in numerous countries in recent history. As Theodor Adorno (1998: 79-92) predicted "the impending relapse into barbarism" is more than possible "as long as the conditions that made it mature persist in the main". Similarly, the United Nations (2019: 5) has recently referred to it as follows: "It is clear that a lasting peace is not only achieved as a consequence of the absence of armed conflict, and must be achieved through a continuous process of positive, dynamic and participatory dialogue". The controversy raised as to how to face the issue of violence from an educational perspective and "the battle of narratives" about this violent period are examples of the lack of social cohesion that is currently experienced in the Basque Country and glimpses about the way to face in the near future (Casanova, 2020: 271).

In this regard, it must be noted that the restoration of understanding between different people and coexistence in Basque society should be a function assumed by Education for Democratic Citizenship based on Human Rights and Peace principles (Buckland 2009; Levinson 2006). Precisely, among its objectives are the "recovery and real implementation of human rights and their supervision with the intention of overcoming conflicts of a violent nature in pursuit of understanding and coexistence between different, articulating the most elemental social ties of collective life" (Rosemberg 2010: 17). According to the experiences developed in other contexts of divided societies -North Ireland, Quebec-, Human Rights and Peace Education and Education for democratic citizenship are shown as effective tools for the reconstruction of the social fabric. What is more, "from a political, economic and social framework they provide a favorable environment for the resolution of conflicts by non-violent means and the consolidation of social coexistence" (Niens, Chastenay 2008: 534; Niens, Reilly, Smith 2006; Smith 2003; Kerr, McCarthy, Smith 2002).

To this end, Human Rights and Peace Education must inevitably take a retrospective look at the traumatic and painful past that occurred in Spain and the Basque Country during the contemporary period (Salomon and Nevo 2002). In this respect, it´s essential to introduce changes in school and university´s syllabus of Social Sciences and History (Smith and Vaux: 2003), focusing on multi-perspective and multiple narratives about this violent era. According to Mouffe (1993) and Sáez Rosenkranz and Prats (2020: 46), the open dialogue between different opinions, points of view, interpretations and experiences-memories helps developing a radical and democratic citizenship. Likewise, McCrary (2002) affirms that a large range of narratives could transform in an instructive tool that

underlines the richness of human diversity in order to understand and comprehend the society and the world.

This multi-narratives approach to the recent violent past is the main procedure of *Adi-Adian* program. Launched by the Basque government in 2013 and implemented at formal education, this proposal is an attempt to promote education for peace and the delegitimization of violence among the new Basque generations in order to restore social coexistence. This initiative is based on the testimony of the victims of political violence that occurred in the recent past and how they understand this period, in order to generate empathy and solidarity towards them and acquire a critical view on the violation of human rights (Seixas, 2013: 8)¹.

That said, the main purposes of this article are the following ones: first, the presentation of *Adi-Adian* Basque proposal to overcome the coexistence problems of a post conflict society; secondly, according to McCully (2012: 146), although there are many proposals based on multi-narratives of the past, there is a lack of research that measure the scale of their impact. In the same way, Lee and Shemilt (2007) affirms that there must be more investigations based on the relation of teaching history, memory and civic education in order to evaluate their contribution to generate common or segregated political and cultural identities. As a result, the assessment of this program and its effectiveness in building a peaceful coexistence and a democratic social network will be an important objective of this essay. To fulfill these goals, we will attempt to clarify the following questions:

- Is *Adi-Adian* and the victim's memory a suitable program to improve the notion of caring or "the growth of empathy to the victims" (Barton and Levstik, 2004: 207-208)?
- Is *Adi-Adian* a useful tool to improve the comprehension of others and to develop respect behaviors to other points of view?
- Can the memory of victims break the stereotypes we have of others?
- Is *Adi-Adian* a useful program to achieve open mind citizens?
- Is *Adi-Adian* able to promote the self-reflection and the critical thinking?
- Is *Adi-Adian* a suitable tool to reflect by their own and as a group about the use of violence and its social consequences?
- Is *Adi-Adian* a suitable tool to generate group discussion and to remove one own preconceptions listening to other mates?
- Is the memory of the victims useful to shake biased opinions?
- How the victim's accounts make history meaningful and influence beliefs or behaviors in the present based on what is learned from the past (McCully, 2012: 156)?
- At what extend does *Adi-Adian* program encourage the eagerness to learn history?

2 FROM HISTORICAL MEMORY TO DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP. AN EXERCISE TO RESTORE BROKEN SOCIAL FABRIC

In the way of social reconciliation and from an ethical approach linked to the motto "remember so as not to repeat", the exercise of memory will be more effective than history in order to achieve a democratic citizenship. Especially when history textbooks omitted controversial issues or the way they are treated is not so correct for the reestablishment of broken social fabric (Delgado, 2013: 312; Casanova, 2020: 269). As Delgado (2013: 1) advocates, "historical memory management in teaching of History has an important role in Citizenship Education" and in the type of citizens we want to educate. Moreover, and according to McCully (2012: 155), if we only focus on history and we don't deal with painful memories and reflect on personal and collective responsibilities, "there is a real risk to re-emergence of cyclical violence". Broadly, reminding, not being a closed or "external" story, would facilitate understanding of "otherness" and intergenerational dialogue. These are the starting points to reach recognition of common humanity (Franco, Levín 2007: 42); of course, provided that is not a "manipulated or forced" memory (Halbwachs 1968, Ricoeur, 2005, Banegas 2006; Ferré 2006).

In this respect, we approach the people who participate actively-passively or voluntarily-involuntarily in the conflict and let us know their different perceptions, meanings and emotions, becoming the most essential tool to understand the conflict (Lederach 1997). Likewise, these representations of the past in constant reworking and channeled through memory, could help students understand how different people perceive the events that formed the same reality subjectively, being conscious about the difference between history and memory. As McCully states (2012:148), students are encouraged to "recognize that actors in the past often saw events differently and to evaluate differing interpretations in the light of available evidence". Finally, the testimony of victims might act as a catalyst for personal reflection of the listener, since it formulates questions related to students' own attitude toward pain, suffering and loss of others, their commitment towards the human rights and finally, their responsibility for building a democratic citizenship based in mutual understanding (Rosemberg 2010: 9-11; Ienega, 2001; Smith, 2005). According to Theodor Adorno, "that insensitivity is what must be fought; men need to be discouraged from striking outward without self-reflection. Education in general would be absolutely meaningless if it were not education for critical self-reflection". Therefore, this transfer of memory should necessarily become an empathic process. To sum up, the education should overcome the "cold man" described by Adorno, "indifferent as to what happens to others" and awake emotions that conduct the attention, create meanings and erect meaningful remembrances in students (Adorno 1998, Ledoux 1999).

From an educational point of view, the usefulness of memory is justified by its potential to develop historical empathy in students, bringing them closer to a specific context of the past (VanSleright, 2001). This process would serve as a starting point to introduce them to the historical knowledge of a period characterized by the violation of Human Rights that

occurred in the Basque Country in the last decades of the 20th century. Besides, memory should be valuable, since based on its subjectivity, it allows us to approach and understand "what people did, what they wanted to do, what they thought they were doing and what they later believed they did". In other words, it provides the chance to "care about people in the past, to be concerned with what happened to them and how they experienced their lives" (Barton and Levstik, 2004: 207). Consequently, we would reach the intentional thought that is behind events or historical facts, expanding the historical comprehension (Rosemberg 2010, Domínguez Castillo 2015: 141-142; McCully, 2012: 152).

This exercise of empathy and tolerance towards the victim's testimony, which becomes an educating exercise, should allow identifying the similarities between the plurality of memories of the different victims. As a result, students might persevere in the construction of a collective memory or the dialogical truth that support the reestablishment of social coexistence (Minow, 1998). Consequently, they likely overcome the processes of patrimonialization, hegemonism and legitimization of a certain memory, which are generally excluding. This anamnesis exercise, by which we choose which events from the past must be remembered - in this case the violation of human rights- must have its impact on the present and stimulate "to live in one way or another", favoring students tolerant attitudes of the democratic citizenship (Adamoli et al. 2007: 26-29).

There are as many anamnesis as value systems people have. The aim of this exercise of recovering memories of the victims within the educational system is to subvert the scale of values and attitudes of the students in the direction set by Schwartz. The main goal is to overcome the less perceptible violence that persist after the cessation of direct struggle, as it is a hindrance to the achievement of a "healthy" coexistence (Schwartz 2010). As a result, students should be aware of the negative social consequences of certain attitudes or behaviors based on a value system supported in violent manifestations and conceptions, progressively moving away from them and delegitimizing these social environments. Furthermore, as Margaret Sinclair (2013: 25-29) asserts, this task related to Human Rights and Peace Education applied in the Faculties of Education is of outstanding importance, since "the training of future teachers emerges as one of the main avenues for a change in social mentality in favor of coexistence". In the following pages, we will describe and analyze the implementation of a memory program related to the recent violent history of the Basque Country at the Teacher Training School of Vitoria-Gasteiz.

3 THE ADI-ADIAN EXPERIENCE IN 2019

Having analyzed the fundamental role of the memory to achieve social coexistence, we will now describe the experience of *Adi-Adian* program developed at the Teacher Training School of Vitoria-Gasteiz. The department of Social Sciences Teaching decided to sponsor this encounter, since the objectives of the memory programs fit well with the contents related to Education for citizenship. It is in this context that collaboration with the *Adi-Adian* program of the Basque Government education department began, which aimed to introduce the testimonies of all victims of political violence into classrooms. The students

of the first grade of Primary Education Degree were the listeners, as they will constitute the future teaching staff. As McCully (2012: 150) states, this “development work is necessary with teachers to explore ways that their practice can help students be receptive to, and critical of, a full range of perspectives and interpretations” of the past. Furthermore, it’s essential to “move teachers beyond a pedagogy that concentrates on cognitive development alone to one that also fosters values and dispositions conducive to conflict transformation”.

The majority of the students participating in this initiative were 11-12 years old when ETA (Basque Country and Freedom) declared the unilateral cessation of armed activity in 2011 and they were in the second year of High School when its dissolution came in 2018. Coinciding with the assertions made by Rafael Valls (2007), an important part of the students have not received specific training on this particularly dark and painful chapter of our recent history and we have been able to verify that they are still prisoners of a forgetting strategy that dates back to the Civil War, the Franco dictatorship or the Transition. In an effort to protect and preserve future generations through an exercise of forgetfulness, chapters with serious human rights violations continue to be silenced and omitted with the desire not to "open old wounds" and promote reconciliation and coexistence (Domínguez, 2019; Casanova, 2020: 271).

In an attempt to reverse this dynamic, in 2018 we decided to participate in the *Adi-Adian* initiative previously developed by the Basque Government at Secondary School. To do so, we adapted the program to make its application possible at University of the Basque Country (UPV-EHU). The initiative described in the pages that follow was applied in the subject called Social Sciences and their teaching I, constituting an innovative experience as it was developed in a university environment with current students and future teachers.

The *Adi-Adian* initiative is based on the direct testimony of the victims who relate their experience, offering their witnessed memory as a tool to promote coexistence and conflict prevention. The use of primary sources in a context of direct communication and testimony constitutes a particularly innovative and relevant experience for focusing on a generation of future primary education teachers who will have to deal with the complex consequences of the terrorist violence that plagued the Spanish State for more than four decades. The development of this experience, the role of memory and the contribution of history and the achievement of Education for Democratic Citizenship competences through the initial use of the testimonies of victims will be the main objects of our reflection.

3.1 *Adi-Adian* at the University of the Basque Country. An outline of the first steps

Community and Educational Reason

The objectives of the Social Sciences Teaching I subject are the following ones. First, the main aim is to analyze the social phenomena in its different dimensions and at different space-time scales, understanding its formative value and its contribution to the construction of social thinking and social values. Secondly, the students should understand the components and principles of democratic functioning, its evolution process and the responsibility of public and private institutions on it, valuing the personal duty of each student to contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts in their environment.

These objectives coincide with the *Adi-Adian* initiative in its bid to promote a democratic education based on the practice of critical thinking in favor of coexistence, taking into account the reality and recent history of the Basque Country. *Adi-Adian* bases its proposal on a Community Reason:

The school create a learning community with its surroundings, its neighborhood, its locality, its country, its continent and its planet. What happens around us is a fundamental matter of the educational process. Since the end of the ETA violence, something very important and of historical scope is happening in our country. After decades, we can face a time of critical memory of the past and build a normal and peaceful coexistence.

The school is part of its society and its processes of advancement and progress. Within this interweaving, the guiding principle that must be safeguarded is the centrality of the student and the prevalence of the educational objective over any other cause. On this basis, the educational task can share with the society the collective learning process that represents overcoming a traumatic experience of violence and tension. We learn together to improve as people and as a society.

It is in this context that the testimony of the victims reaches its fundamental dimension in educational reason.

Violence, terrorism and human rights violations are not only an injustice intrinsically, they are fundamentally so because they produce radical suffering to specific people. Knowing or hearing from the testimony of those who have lived through this suffering directly and who maintain a constructive discourse of coexistence against hatred has a very relevant educational value.

This testimony places us in front of the reality of violence: the human suffering it provokes. This testimony offers the opportunity for a pedagogical reinforcement in human, personal and pro-social education. Through a real experience, it allows

students to deepen on education for empathy, coexistence, human dignity, human rights and a critical thinking against injustice

3.1.1 *Adi-Adian* in classroom

The integration of the *Adi-Adian* initiative in our subject was coordinated with two NGOs that participated in an initial and final interventions that took place before and after the testimony of the victims (one from ETA and the other from the Basque-Spanish Battalion), in order to introduce the topic and draw conclusions. During this experience, 160 students took an active part.

Prior to the participation of the NGOs, we passed a questionnaire in order to assess the previous knowledge that our students had on this violent period of our history –the result will be published soon-. Next, and during the former class before starting the *Adi-Adian* program, we discussed the reality of other Memory and Reconciliation processes developed in Guatemala, South Africa and Colombia. To make it easier, we carried out a task based on the last case, as it is better known. The students divided into groups of 4 worked with four key ideas from the document “21 Keys to know the Truth Commission” (Comisión de la Verdad 2018: 12-19). We focused specifically on the 8th, 10th, 13th and 14th solutions related to the testimony of victims, memory and the role of history in the processes of reconciliation and coexistence in post-conflict contexts.

KEY 8. RECOGNITION IS A FORM OF RESTORATION of the human dignity of the people who were victims in the context of the armed conflict. To achieve this goal, Encounters for the Truth will be organized based on acts of public and private recognition that will serve for a collective understanding of what happened.

The Commission must also promote the voluntary recognition of responsibilities by those who participated directly or indirectly in the conflict. The final purpose is to question the normalization of all types of violence and promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

KEY 10. COLOMBIA IS LIVING AN EXCEPTIONAL MOMENT of transition from a prolonged war to the construction of a peaceful country. It is necessary that the whole society find explanations about the violence suffered in these years and glimpse the changes so as not to repeat this traumatic period. It is also necessary that the new generations know their history and reflect on it.

KEY 13. FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED THE CONFLICT, REMEMBERING means reliving the painful experience. It is necessary, then, that in the settings in which a recognition of the truth is carried out, a psychosocial support team that helps to give meaning to the experience to advance in the reconstruction of lives and the social fabric with the mission of guarantee that this experience allows for social strengthening and prevents further individual or collective harm.

KEY 14. THE HISTORY OF MANY COUNTRIES, including Colombia, shows that IGNORING THE PAST KEEPS WOUNDS OPEN and fuels contempt for human life. This makes it necessary to assume the truth with a disposition to transform the conditions that made the conflict and its escalation possible. Facing what happened during the conflict will generate learning for us as a society.

After working on these questions, there was a presentation and a subsequent debate open to the group-class. Most of the students showed little historical knowledge about Franco's Dictatorship or the Democratic Transition of Spain and the activity of ETA, not considering themselves capable of addressing this issue. Several students denounced the exercise of forgetfulness they were experiencing in their surroundings in an effort by their relatives to protect them and not open old wounds. At the educational field, they pointed out that under the rule of the curriculum they hardly ever went beyond the Spanish Civil War or Francoism. In contrast to this reality, they were open to the initiative, although several of them were skeptical considering it "unilateral" and "indoctrinating". This last point of view is so common in other sectors of the society as they think that behind the historical memory there is a defined process of ideological persuasion (Delgado y Estepa: 2016: 523).

After this initial class, the first session of the *Adi-Adian* program was conducted by a member of a NGO specialized in social psychology. This contribution was extremely interesting because we carried out an interdisciplinary approach, working several professionals of different areas of social knowledge together (history, political sciences and psychology) to shed light on the complex reality that we attempt to address. After contextualizing the session in the relevant state and regional legal framework, several participatory activities were performed to promote reflection and debate.

The first activity took place outside the classroom, in the hallway, and was described as a "traffic light" or "barometer". The facilitator listed four statements related to personal development and the different forms of socialization and the impact of violence on them and the students had to be located outside the hall or in the center depending on the level of agreement / disagreement that the question generated to them². After carrying out the activity, a small debate was held that allowed reflection, from the general to the more specific scope, on the experience of intergenerational violence.

The second activity aimed to identify relevant events related to violent episodes both historically and personally. The participating students and teachers had to write on a sticky note that date. Subsequently, we were asked to express the reason for our choice. The sticky notes were then placed on the board to generate a particular timeline. This was perhaps the moment of greatest tension. After several minutes of stony silence, the professor began his testimony by recounting a personal-historical event that he had never confessed before. When this testimony finished, several students took the floor to tell personal events, drawing the existing diversity in the group-class. There were relatives of prisoners of ETA, a listener has a family member who died in a police operation against

ETA, and some students mentioned family ties with several ETA victims. Each testimony was heard in silence with the greatest respect, while the timeline was fulfilling.

During the following two sessions, we introduced the testimonies of the victims. A victim of the Spanish Basque Battalion and the other of ETA. After the testimonies, the time for questions began. They were moments of great emotional tension (part of the students in tears) and debate in which there were memories and mentions of episodes of violence, torture, arrests, persecutions, harassment, *Kale Borroka* –street violence-, etc. and questions that the victims answered. After these sessions, the possibility was left open for the students to send their comments to the NGO or to the teaching staff on a purely voluntary basis.

The NGO's facilitator carried out the final session of this experience. From the point of view of social psychology and the Basque associative movement, she focused her contribution on how memory and action can hold a peaceful coexistence, based on the memory of what happened, on the testimony of the victims and on the desire that the serious human rights violations should not be repeated.

After completing the *Adi-Adian* program, we held a session in which we linked the experience carried out with the themes of change and continuity and the suitability of choosing current controversial issues to address history and citizenship contents. We also underlined the importance of the contribution of the different Social Sciences, focusing on disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches when we are dealing with such a complex subject.

4 INQUIRY METHODOLOGY

In order to measure the effectiveness of *Adi-Adian* experience, we focused on student's feelings and perceptions -future primary teachers-. 160 participants, who were born and life in the Basque Country currently, composed the sample. We underline this feature because the preconceptions and beliefs largely depend on geographical and cultural context (McCrary, 2002: 263). 44% of them were at the age of 18 when the inquiry was conducted. 33% were 19, 12% were 20 and the rest, 21 and 22 years old. Referring to the gender of the students, the 57% were male, whereas the 43% were female. The research was carried out in small groups and subsequently a large group discussion as a suitable technique to research society's big issues and the evaluation of the specific programs applied to them (Bisquerra, 2004: 345). Furthermore, as we build our identity through the interactions with others in a certain sociocultural context, this methodology allows expressing and negotiating our own views and transforming them by listening to the arguments of others. As McCrary (2002: 266) states, "group discussion in this case provided the opportunity for participants to practice "putting into words" that which caused them to feel conflicted". McCully (2012: 152) also argues that the debate is inherent in a multi narrative approach and reflects what people think about a controversial issue clearly. In this way, it becomes a suitable exercise to evaluate the impact of *Adi-Adian* program and its contribution to the development of democratic citizenship (Schuitema, Radstake, Van

de Pol, Veugelers, 2017). To begin with the group discussion and basing on deductive content analysis, we asked some questions to the participants in order to exchange the different views about *Adi-Adian* experience and victim´s story telling:

- How do you feel after listening to victim´s story telling?
- What do you feel when you hear the pain of a person that has lost her/his loved ones?
- Do you think that these victims can rebuild the trust on Basque society? Why?
- Do you think that these narratives are useful to recover the coexistence in the Basque Country? Why?
- What do you think about the use of violence to achieve social goals? Is it justified? Why?
- Can these crimes be justified? Why? On behalf of what?
- What do you think about *Adi-Adian* experience?
- After listening to victim´s memory, has you changed your way of thinking, your point of view? To what extent?
- What do you think about the introduction of *Adi-Adian* program in formal education? Is it useful? What would be its main contribution?
- Do you know more about this recent violent past after listening to the victims? To what extent?
- Do you want to know more about this period of our history? Do you have more interest?

Afterwards, we also allowed students to submit voluntarily some reflection on the experience developed. To conduct the investigation upon these sources of information, we concentrated on the prejudices, satisfactions, agreements, disagreements... that the participants felt about the violence manifestations in a society and their capacity to develop critical attitudes, empathy, democratic behaviors, etc. (Payne and Payne, 2004: 103-106). To extract relevant data, basing on the critical discourse analysis framework (Wodak and Meyer, 2003), we focused on the narrations of the students and the contents covered in them that were registered through the participant observation and delivered essays. To systematize this information we built a category system taking into account the objectives of this investigation. Then, to process and code the information, we used a CAQDAS (Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Softwer) (NVIVO) focusing on the regularities and tendencies appeared on students´ statements, attending to their meaning. Finally, in order to organize and identify these answers better, we synthesized them according to a Likert Scale (Gläser, Hagenauer, Stephan, 2020) (table 1).

Table 1. Category system for group discussion

Categories	Scale
Feelings-attitudes after the listening to the victims	Empathy/Indifferent/Rejection
Victims can rebuild the trust on Basque society	Completely agree/ Quite agree/Disagree
Usefulness of victim ´ s testimonies to restore broken social fabric	High/Moderate/Low/None
Violence as a mean to achieve social-political goals	Always/Occasionally/Rarely/Never
Evaluation of <i>Adi-Adian</i> program	Excellent/Very good/Acceptable/Poor/Very poor
Impact in the way of thinking	A lot/Quite/A little bit/Nothing
Usefulness of <i>Adi-Adian</i> program in formal education	High/Moderate/Low/None
Eagerness to learn History	High/Moderate/Low/None

We also attempted to evaluate the personal experiences, beyond the pressure of the assembly and the influence of leaders, through an individual multiple-choice longitudinal panel survey, as it is useful “to analyze changing attitudes or behaviors that occur within the populations over time” and after a certain event (Stockemer, 2018: 32). Moreover, this test is essential for obtaining personal information (own conceptualizations and feelings), as a tool where the investigated person transmits the information directly, without any intermediation (Miralles y Molina, 2011: 109). Inspired by this technique, we focused on the contribution of *Adi-Adian* initiative to the educational system and the restoration of social fabric and peace. In other words, its value to achieve a democratic citizenship. To this end, we conducted a longitudinal quasi-experimental –lack of control group– research basing on a Pre-Test and Post-Test, developed before and after the *Adi-Adian* experience. Despite the internal threats (participants, their background and their representativeness, Pretest effects...), we consider it as a suitable research tool for behavioral investigations as it measures the changes “resulting from experimental treatments” (Dimitrov and Rumrill, 2003). In this respect, we will focus on the variance on percent change scores from Pre-Test to Post-Tets (Bonate, 2000: 25). That said, 27 questions and statements compose this survey that will evaluate the way of thinking, the behavior, and emotions of each student toward violence situations happened in the Basque Country and the choice of possible solutions (table 2). In this way, we will be able to assess the possible changes in students´ worldview and their approach to the democratic citizenship.

Table 2. Personal survey (Pre and Post Test)

Questions and statements
To what extent are you satisfied with the information you have received in <i>Adi-Adian</i> initiative regarding terrorism, violence and human rights violations in the Basque Country?
The right to life of a person is more important than any political project.
Acts of violence against a person's dignity must be rejected.
Sometimes, the use of violence is juts.
There are better ways to solve a problem than using violence.
The consequences of violence are negative.
It is important to acknowledge the suffering of victims resulting from any violence
I am against ETA 's violence.
The state violates basic human rights on behalf of the fight against terrorism
Today, we live in a state of peace in the Basque country
It is important that education centers develop activities seeking alternatives to violent attitudes
It is important that education centers develop activities to encourage people to have positive values (empathy, equality, solidarity...).
I am aware of the need of positive human values such as equality, justice, freedom, solidarity, dialogue, tolerance, peace... to live together successfully.
I am a tolerant person, accepting and understanding other people's ideas or decisions, even though I disagree with them.
I realize there are people of different beliefs and values in the Basque Country
I think we need to build a culture in the Basque Country that will integrate all of us in it.
I value positively to be able to talk about the social or political reality that we are living at school and to help us make a commitment to that reality
I know how to discuss issues or conflicts between people.
When conflicts arise around me (at home, at school, among friends) my level of involvement is... (high, medium, low)
When I have a conflict, I consider how I feel to face it.
I pay attention to other people's feelings and try to reflect on them.
I try to walk in other people's shoes.
I reflect on the causes, factors or situations that cause me negative feelings (sadness, fear, envy, anger...).
I distinguish between positive (love, solidarity...) and negative (anger, envy, avarice...) feelings.
I feel free to express what I think about terrorism and human rights violations in the Basque Country publicly.
How important is the acceptance and reparation of victims of terrorism and human rights violations in the Basque Country? (high, medium, low).
How much would you be willing to take part in the Basque Country 's peace and co-operation initiatives? (high, medium, low).

Possible answers for aforementioned statements:

- Completely agree
- Agree to some extent
- Disagree to some extent
- Completely disagree

5 OUTCOMES OF *ADI-ADIAN* EXPERIENCE

Among the opinions discussed in the groups, the value of the testimonies and the bravery of the speakers in publicly showing their experiences stood out. According to one student, “it is very meaningful being conscious of the life and social problems happened in the past through the voice of a person that has experienced and suffered this violent period at first hand, since it transmits feelings better than other medias”. Considering the results of the post-test, all students surveyed recognized the importance of being aware of the suffering of the victims for the construction of a democratic society, increasing in 10 points pretest’s results. Thereby, almost 9 out of 10 of participants in the last survey agreed with the participation of the victims in the educational system as a mean to achieve the democratic citizenship and to avoid the violence as a resource to overcome social problems or conflicts. As one student reported, “these kind of testimonies are very important for the school, since the narration of the experiences of two sides reinforces the historical memory. As a result, we are more aware about why the things happened and what their consequences were (...) in my opinion, they are more useful than textbooks of History in order to acquire tolerant and democratic attitudes”. In the same vein, another student emphasized the significance of this formation in Teacher Training School, because “we will be teachers of the Primary School in the near future and I consider we will have to work these values with our students from the very beginning in order to build a peaceful society”.

Dealing with the violence and according to pretest outcomes, the 13% of the interviewees would be ready to use a harmful behavior to achieve their political goals and justified their support to ETA’s actions (22%) for the sake of Basque Country’s citizens. Likewise, the 23% of students thought that the use of violence doesn’t cause negative social effects. Despite these last outcomes, the 90% of the students stated and accept that the Basque society is plural with different worldviews, believes and value systems that we should respected. Accordingly, the 80% of the students define themselves as tolerant, since “they respect the ideas and decisions of others despite they don’t think the same”. After listening to the victims, this democratic way of thinking was reinforced as nobody support violent means and they continued looking at themselves plural.

Many recognized that these are issues that are not discussed at schools, and if they are, they are reported from a biased point of view. To deepen on this question, according to the first survey results, the 71% of the students was not satisfied with the information related to this recent violent past obtained at Secondary and High School, feeling that they didn’t know too much. In fact, the main source of information related to this period for

the 88% of the students was out of the formal education channels (media, social networks, group of friends). In this way, a student of the group discussion affirmed, “The information I have got of this period comes from social networks and the family stories and memories mainly. I also try to get the information from the media, but I don’t trust on them too much since some of them are manipulated or the information they provide is not so correct”. Another partner when indicated, “there is a lack of knowledge of this period because TV, press...choose the information as they please”, was supporting the same idea –the skepticism about the media-. They highlighted that this topic seems to be a taboo and it couldn’t be learnt at school. After victims’ speech, the dissatisfaction was bigger (82%) because the eagerness to know more about this historical period increased notably. As a student manifested in the discussion group “I have never been interested in knowing about this recent violence and its consequences. But after listening to the stories, I wanted to get more information about the topic and the events that happened in those years”. To overcome this drawback, in the last survey they claimed (89%) that this social and political reality must be taught at classroom, in order to understand people’s way of thinking, their motivations and behaviors and to participate in society in a critical way. Moreover, in the post-test all students stated that it’s important to develop different activities at school to avoid and overcome social and individual violent behaviors, increasing in 8 points pre-test rates. As one student manifests in the discussion group, “if we teach this kind of values at school, children will realize that violence is not the suitable mean to sort out different social problems”. Likewise, “this may help not repeating what have happened in the recent past described by the victims”. As a result of this training, the 75% of students, future teachers, would be ready to join in different initiatives to support the coexistence and a durable peace, growing their implication in 1 percent.

They underlined the fact that both victims would have highlighted the cost and the psychological consequences caused to the families that last so far. In this regard, in the last test the 97% of participants said that is very important to apply the emotional education and teach-learn values (respect, equality, solidarity...) at school in order to develop the empathy and comprehend “the other”. Accordingly, the 100% of the interviewees said that *Adi-Adian* experience helped them in this behavioral exercise entirely, being able to put themselves in the shoes of others (this emphatic capacity grew 2 points comparing with the pretest). In this way, we reproduce a significant statement of a student that exemplify this evolution very well: “A member of my family was a victim of *Triple A* (Apostolic Anticommunist Alliance) and after listening to the testimonies I realized that the two sides suffered the same and now I’m able to comprehend what happened to ETA’s victims”. From an introspective reflection, they agreed with the following statement largely: “I’m aware of other feelings and reflect on them”, showing the significant value of the emotions among students and the effectiveness of *Adi-Adian* program as the positive answers increased in 3 points and reached the 88%.

Within group discussions, some participants were surprised because they expected “fascist” and they actually met people who decided not to remain in suffering and their

condition as a victim. Moreover, these victims have bid to the reconciliation despite having suffered serious losses and they face the social improvement through their testimony and the future generation's education. As a result, *Adi-Adian* experience pushed to these students towards the testimony of the "other side" and opened their minds. In other words, they recognized the contribution of *Adi-Adian* program very positively as it offers a plural point view that helps them comprehending the traumatic past of the Basque country and the perspectives and experiences of "the other community better". As Barton and McCully (2005) advocate, students understand the past thanks to many historical sources and the memory becomes suitable since it mobilizes their preconceptions and prejudices. In this respect, in the pretest 89% of the students surveyed thought that is important to introduce and talk about social and political controversial issues in class; after the testimonies, this result upped to 94%. However, we still have to take further steps toward the reconciliation, because the mistrust on the state security policy was high among these students. Thus, in the pretest 76% of them stated that the state in the fight against the terrorism usually overwhelms the human rights. After listening to the victims, this percentage increased 5 points, reflecting they were less sensible to the state violence before *Adi-Adian* experience, and afterwards they knew more about police repression and state supported terrorist groups (Spanish Basque Battalion, G.A.L., Triple A...). In the same way, the 44% of the students stated that "they don't feel free to express their thoughts about this difficult period of the recent history of the Basque Country" after victim's storytelling (before the percentage was bigger -47%-). During the focus group, some of them justified this fear to freedom speech basing on the law known as "Ley Mordaza" that from their point of view threaten any pro-independence opinion or any attitude against established system considering as terrorism. They supported this idea giving the example of Valtónic rap singer and his punishment by Spanish Courts. Others highlighted that to talk about this controversial issue they needed a confidence environment as this initiative offered; however they didn't feel it in society. To conclude and totally agree with Ángela Salazar referring to Colombia's peace process and extended it to the Basque society "in this country all people are victims because the conflict brought us distrust and misunderstanding. We must recover the confidence in each other" (Comisión de la Verdad, 2018).

6 CONCLUSIONS

In the second decade of the 21st century, we face a countless amount of ethnic intrastate conflicts that pose a highly complex scenario. International experiences recognize the role of education, highlighting the great importance of history in post-conflict situations. Historically, textbooks have fostered national identities antagonistic narratives that drive continuous conflict and as a result, they do not contribute to conflict resolution and even threaten to endure social fractures even after the end of the hostilities. That is why the international effort has focused on textbooks and attempts to "overcome biased presentations of different cultures, religions or issues of national pride" (Höpken 2001,

2003; Pingel 2010: 5). These initiatives require extensive prior political consensus between the parties to ensure a minimum success. Complementary to this area of intervention, the experience carried out in several countries (Guatemala, South Africa, Colombia, Chile, and Argentina) through the Truth Commissions that have given great prominence to the direct testimony of the victims and their memory stands out.

Following and developing this last tendency, the *Adi-Adian* program promoted by the Basque Government is committed to bringing an initiative previously developed in Secondary and High School to the University, targeting Primary Education students who will constitute the future Basque teachers. This innovative experience constitutes a commitment to generate spaces for critical reflection on history itself that serves as the basis for democratic citizenship in the 21st century. At the beginning of the *Adi-Adian* program, we were able to confirm that, as other recent and highly painful historical periods, ignorance and forgetfulness prevail over the events carried out by ETA and the response terrorism conducted by the state. This absence of collective historical knowledge or memory is still occupied by “one side” discourses that recreate the divisions between endo -group and exo-group existed in periods of open conflict and have been verified during the development of this initiative.

In this complex context, the experience developed has served to visualize and give voice to the victims' testimony in a direct format, generating a space of empathy and tolerance that previously did not exist in many cases. The testimony of the victims in their pain and resilience process has served to break the psychological trench of the endo-group and humanize the political opponent to the extent that a predisposition to learn more about the historical framework in which the reported murders occurred has been promoted. All this involves an exercise of critical citizenship with the past itself, based on memory and several testimonies, and guided by the firm belief that situations of this type should not be repeated. As the experience of one student´s states: "I knew a version before, now I can understand the other side that I have never listened before and was not told to me". In this respect, we have overcome the battle about victim status (Casanova, 2020: 283), since the students have considered them all equal.

Adi-Adian experience shows the potential of the historical memory and testimonies of the victims in post-conflict scenarios that are able to break social amnesia or “one side” story to create opportunities for empathy and tolerance that precede cognitive conflict and prepare the way to the necessary future work of historians and their scientific knowledge (Bédarida, 1993: 25). In this way, according to the results, we confirm the internal validity of *Adi-Adian* program as it made considerable changes in student´s way of thinking and their behavior. Thus, after this experience, the students of Teacher Training School have shown more empathy feelings to the victims of violence and become more tolerant to other worldviews, being more critical with their own attitudes and thoughts. In this respect, they rejected the violence as a mean to achieve any social objective and they stood up for peaceful procedures.

On the other hand, they also recognized the validity of the historical memory, testimony and stories of the victims as a tool to know more about the recent past and increase the eagerness to History. Almost all were pleased to victim's contribution and they underlined the need to bring it in the educational system. Two main reasons support this idea. First, because they considered the testimony and the historical memory attractive and motivating resources to learn History. Secondly, they argued that these stories were more suitable to work behavioral contents than the textbooks as they mobilized their feelings more easily.

If the bet of *Adi-Adian* program was to place the democratic citizenship in the center of students' experiences and their educational process by the introduction of historical memory, we can conclude that it achieves completely.

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ENDNOTES

¹ The voice of victims of a conflict as a didactic resource to understand the past, as a tool for teaching-learning History and as an exercise for the formation of critical and peaceful citizenship has been already applied in other contexts. Thereby, in the case of Japan, and following the didactic and pedagogy defended by Ienaga (1993, 2001), the memory of the victims of Japanese imperialism of the Second World War has been incorporated into the history textbooks of Secondary School in recent years (Delgado, 2013: 313; Bukh, 2007).

² The questions were as follows: social conflicts are negative; conflicts break social relations; violence is rightful to sort out problems or conflicts; and death penalty is justified in some cases.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We like to thank the following research group *Biography and Parliament* (COD IT-1441-22) for sponsoring this article.

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