The Basques
by
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Note on Basque Orthography

Julio Caroja Baroja first wrote *Los Vascos* at a time when the Basque language had not been standardized and its use was restricted by the Franco dictatorship. Since that time, however, Euskaltzaindia (the Basque Language Academy, www.euskaltzaindia.net) has developed a preferred orthography for the language and Basque has been granted co-official status within the Basque Autonomous Community. As a result, the original text has been modified according to the orthography of modern Unified Basque (*Euskara Batua*) for most place names. Spanish- and French-language variants of these same place names will also be included in parenthesis upon their first mention in the text.

However, there are several exceptions to this basic rule: While most of the provinces take their modern Basque form—Araba (Álava), Bizkaia (Vizcaya), Gipuzkoa (Guipúzcoa), Lapurdi (Labourd), and Zuberoa (Soule)—we have preferred to render Nafarroa (Basque) or Navarra (Spanish) as Navarre and Nafarroa Beherea (Basse Navarre in French) as Lower Navarre because these terms are consistent with modern usage (Navarre appears to be the preferred term in medieval and early modern English-language historiography on the former kingdom). A similar choice has been made regarding the common English-language variant for Catalonia (Catalunya in Catalan, Cataluña in Spanish). Bilbao has been maintained, being a recognized Basque-language variant, despite the use of Bilbo in certain other contexts. Although not generally recognized in many walks of life outside the Basque Country, the compound Vitoria-Gasteiz is, in fact, the official title of the capital of Araba; and Donostia (San Sebastián) will be used to refer to the capital of Gipuzkoa. Elsewhere, it seems redundant to use two terms where the difference is that of an accent alone: for example, in the case of Irun (Irún in Spanish) or Zumarraga (Zumárraga).

This does not mean that the Spanish- or French-language variants of place names have disappeared altogether. Occasionally these form a
central part of the discussion: for example, where Caro Baroja seeks to emphasize the importance of the word *villa* in Villafranca de Ordicia (Ordizia, in Basque), Villareal de Urrechua (Urretxu), Villareal de Álava (Legutio), or Villagrana de Zumaya (Zumaia). On such occasions, we retain the Spanish spelling of the town in question, but add a note to acknowledge its Basque place name: for example, Villareal de Álava (today, Legutio). Elsewhere, however, Caro Baroja underscores the importance of Basque place names: for example, in the Latin influence of *don/dona* (saint) in Donibane, Donamaria, Donostia, and Doneztebe.

We have also rendered surnames and other terms in their original orthography to underscore what has been termed most accurately elsewhere as linguistic flexibility, rather than inconsistency. We have anglicized certain Basque, Spanish, and French terms to fit the context of the work. For example, the inhabitants of Bizkaia are Bizkaians and those of La Rioja, Riojans.

Finally, we would remind readers that Caro Baroja also uses terms in Basque that existed prior to the standardization of the language. It would be impossible to amend all the terms used, but it is worth mentioning in passing that modern spellings of many of the words used in the current text exist: for example, *jauncho* is now spelled *jauntxo*, *machinada* is now *matxinada*, *sorguin* is *sorgin*, *guizon* is *gizon*, *berso* is *bertso*, and *aquelarre* is *akelarre*.
I first met Julio Caro Baroja in September of 1963. It was with trepidation that I knocked on the door of his house “Itzea” in the town of Vera de Bidasoa (Bera). I was a twenty-four-year-old graduate student preparing to do field research on some aspect of Basque rural life for my doctoral dissertation in social anthropology at the University of Chicago. My wife and one-year-old son awaited me in our car while I offered the somewhat startled Caro a letter of introduction from his dear friend Julian Pitt Rivers (my mentor at Chicago). In it Julian asked Julio to help situate and orient us, and he rose to the challenge immediately. My initial awe was soon swept away by a budding comradeship that would result in my frequent visits to Itzea for the following two years and infrequent ones over the next ten. I would even say that we developed a certain special intimacy during conversations that frequently consumed an entire afternoon and despite our generation gap—albeit if for his contemporaries he remained “Julio” and for many of his elders “Julito,” for me he was always “Don Julio.”

In many respects my intellectual debt to Julio Caro Baroja transcends our many hours together, not to mention his generous bibliographic and avuncular advice. For in a very real sense I entered Basque Studies through him, an influence that would prove to configure my subsequent professional life. As I first stood at the portal of Itzea the entire corpus of my knowledge regarding the Basques derived from my readings of La vida rural en Vera de Bidasoa (Rural Life in Bera, 1944), Los pueblos de España (The Peoples of Spain, 1946) and, above all, Los vascos (The Basques, 1949)—the work that I am presently introducing in translation to the English reading public. I had been so inspired by these texts as to become determined to conduct anthropological fieldwork in the Basque Country.

The following observations are drawn partly from my personal experience and recollections and those of others; in part from a reading
of Caro’s works—and particularly the extraordinary book *Los Baroja (The Barojas)* that he penned as both a family history and as autobiography. What emerges is the portrait (if somewhat blurred and anomalous) of an extraordinarily prolific, yet most enigmatic, intellectual. For we are considering an individual who wrote dozens of books and hundreds of articles on topics as diverse as Basque ethnography and folklore, kinship systems in the Spanish Sahara, the Jews and Muslims of Spain, Iberian ethnic diversity in Roman times, medieval witchcraft, among many others. The eminent historian Juan Pablo Fusi has pronounced Caro to be nothing less than “the most important personality of contemporary post-war Spanish historiography,” whereas others dismiss his work as quaint and idiosyncratic. To be sure, with the exception of *Las brujas y su mundo (The World of the Witches, 1964)* and two brief articles, none of Caro’s myriad scholarly production has been translated into English. The former was published by the University of Chicago Press in a series entitled *The Nature of Human Society* and coedited by Julian Pitt Rivers and Ernst Gellner. Julian also served as the catalyst for inclusion of Caro’s contributions in the two volumes *Mediterranean Countrymen* (1963) and *Honor and Shame* (1964). While *Las brujas y su mundo* was translated into French and German as well, translation of the remainder of Caro’s work into other languages is equally sparse.

It is impossible to situate Julio Caro Baroja, the scholar, without first considering his life and times. He was born the son of a publisher father and cultural activist mother, and nephew of Pío Baroja (a titan of Spain’s famed literary Generation of 98). Julio Caro Baroja was raised in the rarified atmosphere of Madrid’s intellectual circles. He lived in the extended family both when in his uncle Pío’s house Itzea in Bera for the summer or in the Barojas’ Madrid apartment building that housed Julio’s parents in one unit, Pío and his mother in another and Pío’s brother, the painter Ricardo, and his wife in a third.

It was simply assumed that Julio would pursue some sort of academic career, although by virtue of character and historical conjuncture his first attempts to acquire a university education proved abortive. Initially, he walked away from Madrid’s Complutense University by choice (“boredom”) and then saw his opportunity to return interrupted by the Spanish Civil War. He would eventually complete his studies in classical history (1942). In spite of his historian’s credential, by this time his budding reputation rested more upon his work as an ethnographer. Following the advice of Uncle Pío, as a teenager Julio had apprenticed with the two founders of Basque prehistory, ethnography, and anthro-
Introduction to the First English Edition

pology—José Miguel de Barandiarán and Telesforo de Aranzadi. Barandiarán was a disciple of the Austrian Wilhelm Schmidt’s *kulturkreislehre* school of ethnological thought that divided the world into sweeping culture areas and its history into cultural cycles. While a student at the Complutense, Caro had taken coursework with the prehistorian Hugo Obermaier. Later, his mentor José Ortega y Gasset introduced him to the thought of Jakob Von Uexküll regarding the nature of the animal kingdom and mankind’s place within it.

Caro’s first article had been published when he was but fifteen years of age and regarded house types in the Navarrese Basque village of Lesaka. From the outset, then, he manifested what would become his lifelong fascination with material culture. His first book was *Tres estudos etnográficos relativos al país vasco* (Three Ethnographic Studies Regarding the Basque Country, 1934). Published at twenty years of age and by his father’s publishing firm, its press run was but twenty copies! In 1941, Caro demonstrated what would become an abiding interest in folklore and myth by publishing a collection of essays *Algunos mitos españoles* (Some Spanish Myths). In 1943, he combined his interests in prehistory and classical studies (particularly Greek and Latin thinkers and sources), as well as the theoretical influence of Schmidt, by publishing *Los pueblos del norte de la península ibérica (Análisis histórico cultural)* (The Peoples of the North of the Iberian Peninsula [Historical Cultural Analysis]). Then, in 1944, he completed *La vida rural en Vera de Bidasoa*. While not strictly speaking akin to the community studies being produced by the Anglo-American social and cultural anthropologists of the day, it was certainly their first cousin. The book further established Caro as an “ethnographer” and configured his flirtation with anthropology over the next decade. By this time he was an avid reader of such journals as the *American Anthropologist* and *Anthropos*. He had mulled over the works of Kant and Durkheim and had devoured Frazer’s *Golden Bough*.

Life in Madrid during the 1940s was difficult for anyone, let alone someone surnamed Baroja. In 1937, Pío had nearly been executed by Franco’s partisans and then fled to France for the remainder of the conflict. Caro himself spent most of the war in Itzea, separated from his father who remained in Madrid. After he and his uncle Pío returned to the Spanish capital, the family was stigmatized as “liberal” within a society that was anything but. Times were tough and, at nearly age thirty, for the first time Julio was forced to find a job. He became the administrative assistant of the English writer Walter Starkie who was
then directing the British Institute in Madrid. The position allowed Caro
to improve his English and widen his circle of contacts, not to mention
indulge his passion for the nineteenth-century English novel. However,
working for the British Institute brought with it its own proscription,
given the popularity of Nazi Germany among much of Madrid’s social
and political elite.

Julio’s mother served on the advisory board of the nascent Museo
del Pueblo Español (Museum of the Spanish People) and, in 1944, Julio
was appointed that institution’s second director. It was a position that
he would hold for the next ten years. In addition to broadening his
knowledge of Spain’s ethnic diversity and deepening his lifelong interest
in material culture, leading in 1946 to publication of his *Los pueblos
de España*, the museum directorship brought him into contact with for-
eign anthropologists that began to take an interest in Iberia during the
post–Second World War period. Chief among these were George Foster
of the Smithsonian Institution and the British graduate student Julian
Pitt Rivers who was conducting field research in Grazalema in Andalu-
sia. The former was a Latin Americanist interested in surveying Spanish
regions to determine the extent to which there were Iberian origins for
certain New World cultural traits. George and Julio traveled extensively
together on two occasions, conducting itinerant ethnographic research
that each would later employ for his own purposes. Caro was descended
on his father’s side from Andalusia and it was during this trip that he
would first come to know the region. It was then that the seeds of his
curiosity regarding its cultural history were sown. It was also during
one of these trips that he first met Pitt Rivers, the beginning of what
would become possibly Caro’s strongest friendship tie (one that endured
throughout the remainder of their lives).

Thanks to the interventions of Foster and Pitt Rivers respectively,
Caro was able to visit the eastern United States (1951) and Great
Britain (1952). This allowed him to interact with important Ameri-
can anthropologists such as Alfred Kroeber and their British counter-
parts like E. E. Evans Pritchard. It also exposed him to the Boasian
cultural anthropological viewpoint of the Americans (with its open-
ness to historical perspective regarding circumscribed culture areas)
and the British functionalists who, at the time, were skeptical of his-
torical research. The historian in Caro made him hostile to the latter
position, although his fluency in French exposed him to the works of
Durkheim (or functionalist thinking that was more to his liking). Curio-
ously, given his fluency in French, he would never engage seriously the
French structuralists. In short, the late 1940s and early 1950s were the period in which Caro grappled with several schools of social scientific thought in an attempt to come up with a satisfactory and workable (for him) synthesis.

Directorship of the museum proved to be its own special *via crucis* as Caro struggled (without distinction) with administrative detail. Whatever advantages it might hold (including a good salary), the museum post demonstrated to him that he was unsuited for bureaucratic service. In the 1950s, in rapid succession Julio lost his mother (1950), his beloved uncle Ricardo (1953), and his avatar Pío (1956). He describes this disintegration through death of the Barojas, the coresidential extended family, as nothing short of devastating. By this time he was a confirmed bachelor approaching middle age, and this rearrangement of his domestic world produced in Caro both physical illness and mental depression. It also left him in possession of a modest Castilian estate owned by his mother, the Madrid apartment, Itzea, and an independent income from Pío’s book royalties.

Consequently, after resigning in 1954 as director of the museum and despite the urging of many of his friends and colleagues, Julio rejected the idea of presenting his candidacy for a university post and opted instead to become a self-supporting gentleman scholar. In his memoir, he describes his disdain for the dogmatized Spanish academic world of the period and the inanity and corruption of the “oppositions” process whereby candidates were grilled by a mindless selection committee. However, it is equally true that Caro was an uninspiring speaker and timid by nature. Throughout his career, with but a few exceptions, he avoided rather than embraced teaching opportunities, academic conferences, and public lecturing.

The decision to eschew a formal academic career had several consequences for the remainder of Julio’s life’s work. He was, of course, thereby free to pursue his interests. He was liberated from the constraints of academic standards and fashions. He developed his unique writing style and oftentimes illustrated his manuscripts with his own drawings. He was wont to take his inspiration from classical and medieval sources rather than contemporaries; his polemics tended toward engagement with nineteenth-century (rather than twentieth) thinkers. Therefore, even when addressing the theoretical and methodological issues of his day, his references to other living scholars were sparse to say the least. For some this was an unpardonable sin of neglect, one that excluded Caro from the contemporary debates within the social sciences.
In 1953, Julio conducted his most extensive anthropological fieldwork, lasting several months, in the Spanish Sahara. In 1955 he published the book *Estudios saharianos* (*Saharan Studies*), easily the most “anthropological” of his works. Nevertheless, from the mid-1950s on, and despite his recourse to his previous anthropological research for the occasional article, his scholarship, and particularly his monographs, became increasingly historical. Indeed, when I first met him in 1963 he stated both categorically and frequently that he considered himself to be a social historian rather than an anthropologist. It may be that by then he had tired of struggling to make sense of the contending schools of anthropological thought. It should also be remembered that at the time is Spain antropología referred exclusively to physical anthropology. Notwithstanding, in our conversations he was most assuredly rejecting the British functionalist school of social anthropology.

We may now engage the task of situating the present volume within Julio Caro Baroja’s life’s work. The first edition of *Los vascos* (*The Basques*) appeared in 1949, or the same year in which he published a theoretical book *Análisis de la cultura* (*Etнологía-Historia-Folklore*) (*Analysis of Culture* [*Ethnology-History-Folklore*]). Like much of Caro’s thinking, the latter assumed an idiosyncratic shape and tone, in part because of the paucity of precise references to particular thinkers and texts. As Francisco Castilla Urbano points out in his definitive treatment (*El análisis social de Julio Caro Baroja: empiricismo y sujetividad* [*The Social Analysis of Julio Caro Baroja: Empiricism and Subjectivity*, 2002]) of Caro Baroja’s thought, in *Análisis de la cultura* Julio rejects Barandiarán’s favored kulturkreislehre school without ever mentioning his mentor’s name, let alone providing citation of his work. By this time, Caro was prepared to eschew grand theory in any guise (be it of sweeping culture areas and cycles, Marxist, ahistorical functionalist, or structuralist). He found the Boasian view of narrowly defined culture areas that had to be understood in their own historical terms to be the most appealing. He was a clear proponent of the primacy of cultural differences in human affairs, including their capacity to define distinctive ethnic groups. However, the latter were to be understood as both unique historical precipitates and the result of a complex (indeed functionally integrated) interaction between the crucial components of society, economy, geography, and culture. He specifically eschewed explanations of human difference as expressions of inherent racial propensities (a postulate that still informed at least some of the social scientific thinking of his day). In the foregoing regards Caro proved to be thoroughly modern
and even visionary, however as always his journey to such conclusions deviated from conventional pathways.

If such theoretical positions are more explicit in *Análisis de la cultura*, they are also reflected in the introduction to *Los vascos* and that book itself became Caro’s attempt to apply them to a case study. Indeed, the introduction is a kind of synthesis of Caro’s academic and theoretical formation to that date (1949). Arguably, the application to the Basque data of the ambitious “model” (inspired by such disparate thinkers as Von Uexküll and Teilhard de Chardin—both of whom represented minority views with limited staying power within twentieth-century social scientific thought) was not completely successful. Nor did it seem to lead to further development in Caro’s theoretical viewpoint. Then, too, while the theoretical introduction to *Los vascos* is today quite dated, even in its own time it would have struck many as peculiar. There is also the evident disjunction between theoretical introduction and subsequent text. The latter is entirely devoid of references to the contemporary social scientific and historical literatures of the day. In short, to read *Los vascos* was to agree to do so in its own terms, a condition not accepted by all.

Despite his subsequent firsthand exposure to both American and British anthropology and anthropologists during the intervening period after publication of the first edition, Caro chose not to modify his introduction to the second edition (1958) of *Los vascos*. I take this to be but another sign of his transition from social anthropology to social history. I also believe it to have been a period in which he pretty much eschewed reading the anthropological literature. Certainly in our conversations he never mentioned people like, say, Clifford Geertz, Marvin Harris, or Edmund Leach, let alone Claude Lévi-Strauss. In later years, or after the term antropología acquired its current meaning that subsumes what might otherwise be designated social/cultural anthropology and even the etnografía/etnología of Caro’s youth, he retrieved this dimension of his scholarly identity. In 1983 he published the work *La aurora del pensamiento antropológico: La antropología en los clásicos griegos y latinos* (*The Aurora of Anthropological Thought: The Anthropology in the Greek and Latin Classics*) and two years later he penned *Los fundamentos del pensamiento antropológico moderno* (*The Fundamentals of Modern Anthropological Thought*, 1985). Nor was he uncomfortable with indulging his anthropological persona as the subject of two book-length series of interviews. Reference is to *Disquisiciones antropológicas* (*Anthropological Disquisitions*, 1986) and Francisco J. Flores Arroyuelo’s *Conversaciones en Itzea* (*Conversations in Itzea*, 1991).
Caro resist entitling the collection of his Andalusian essays *De etnología andaluza* (*Of Andalusian Ethnology*, 1993) despite their eclectical folkloric and historic nature in addition to the strictly ethnographic. I would note, however, that in all of these initiatives he remained pretty much fixated upon the anthropological debates of the first half of the twentieth century without the slightest reference to those of the second, thereby lending his arguments a certain quixotic air. In none of these treatments is there even a faint whiff of the symbolic anthropology and subsequent deconstructionism that would come to dominate the Anglo-American, French, and even Spanish anthropological discourse of Caro’s waning years.

Throughout his career, Caro’s gaze wandered over a vast array of subjects, but Basque Studies remained his one abiding interest. It is fair to say that *Los vascos* was the cornerstone of that corpus and in many regards remains rather unique within the Basque literature, as was its influence over the subsequent generation of Basque Studies scholars (including myself). Given such facts, it is rather anomalous that Caro himself says so little about the book in his memoirs. While mere speculation, I suspect that this is less a matter of neglect than of manifestation and culmination in Julio, the dedicated nephew even “by profession,” of the influences of a confirmed avuncular “Basquist.” In a myriad of ways, Caro emulated his uncle Pío in structuring much of his very own existence and thinking (both were bachelors and given to pronounced maternal devotion, they lived together for much of Caro’s life, both were anticlerical and anti-Catholic, both were profoundly interested in anthropology and history, both were political liberals, both viewed the nineteenth century to be far more noble and enlightened than the twentieth—while skeptical of the latter’s plethora of -isms—both were anglophiles, etc.). Caro emerged as a Basquist cut out of his uncle’s cloth, which is to say that both had a strong intellectual bent for things Basque but unalloyed by either Spanish nationalism’s anti-Basque posturing or the romanticizing and mythmaking of the Basque nationalists. Regarding the latter, both rejected the notions of Basque racial purity and superiority that was germane to the thinking of many of the followers of Sabino de Arana—the founder of the Basque nationalist movement.

At least implicitly, every writer has his or her prime audience in mind when creating the text, and in Caro’s case it is easy to envision that Uncle Pío occupied the sole front-row seat at the performance. Indeed, Julio added a dedication to the second edition (the first lacked one) of *Los vascos* (1958): “To the memory of Pío Baroja (1872–1956),
singer of the Basque people. In testimony of filial love.” To my mind this explains the unusual approach to a book that purports to be an overview of an entire culture. One might have expected such a work to begin with the standard “contextualization,” the geographic overview supported by descriptive statistics. Yet Caro does not bother to even tell us who the Basques are or what distinguishes them from others. Rather the opening chapter addresses Basque settlement patterns. But then Uncle Pío, who employed Basque protagonists and settings in many of his novels, possessed the background information to such a degree that it could be simply assumed. I even suspect that subconsciously Caro feared that his uncle might have found an exposition of the situational “facts” to be unnecessarily tedious and banal. I believe that whatever else Los vascos was, it was also an intimate family text. Furthermore, a reading of Pío’s accompanying essay to the photographic essay El país vasco (The Basque Country, 1922) in conjunction with the subsequent one on “Etnografía vasca” (“Basque Ethnography”) in the Guía del país vasco español-francés (Guide to the Spanish-French Basque Country, 1928) provides a kind of schematic or working outline not only of Los vascos but of Julio’s entire subsequent Basque production.

If we now situate Los vascos in its own times and terms, two thoughts occur. On the one hand, the work is totally devoid of any reference to twentieth-century historical and political developments within the Basque Country. This is scarcely surprising given the hostility of Franco’s Madrid to anything Basque, including a low-key attempt at eradication of the language that bordered upon cultural genocide. Virtually anything that Caro might have said regarding such matters would have been treated as outright political subversion with probable severe consequences for him. Caro’s silence in this regard should not, however, be taken as a sign of cowardice or timidity. For the very presumption of publishing in 1949 a book entitled Los vascos constituted an emboldened act. If, for its author, the intent was not explicitly political, the implication that Basques were sufficiently distinctive among Spain’s “peoples” as to warrant their separate treatment had clearly adverse political implications for Spanish nationalists. At the same time, the work presented its own particular challenge to Basque nationalist historiography (and invention) whose voice had been exiled to southern France and several Latin American countries—from which it proclaimed a highly mythologized view of Basque history that now included recent political victimization. Nevertheless, it would not be until late in his career (and life) that Caro would engage in criticism of contemporary Basque society by
publishing works like *Estudios combativos* (*Combative Studies*, 1985), *El laberinto vasco* (*The Basque Labyrinth*, 1986), and *Terror y terrorismo* (*Terror and Terrorism*, 1989) in which he variously criticized the excessive materialism of his contemporaries, and such social pathologies as drug abuse and alcoholism, while equating populist Basque nationalism to the oppressive impulses of Soviet thought control and that of Mussolini and Hitler, and also likening the political violence of ETA to the criminal actions and intimidation of the Sicilian mafia.

There remains the question of why *Los vascos* failed to receive a wider reading in international circles? I believe that several obfuscating factors provide the answer, each casting its own shadow over the book’s prospects. The first regards Caro’s previously discussed idiosyncratic writing style. By his own admission in *Los Baroja*, he had one foot in ethnography, another in folklore, and a third in social history. In Nature three-legged creations, such as tables and chairs, work because the three pillars are mutually reinforcing. However, when Caro intertwines all three disciplines (as he does in *Los vascos*) into a single text, there remains the legitimate question as to whether the final product works or is simply eclectically flawed. It should be remembered that he was writing at the time when disciplinary boundaries were hardening within academia. It was also a period in which quantitative analysis was becoming de rigueur with some social scientists and even among certain humanists as they aspired to scientific rigor and hence greater respect within the academy. Clio was the chieftess among Caro’s ancient muses and his works tended to eschew even descriptive statistics let alone probability theory. He was neither disciple of Pythagoras nor resident of Metapontum.

Another factor was the historical conjuncture that explains in part the neglect. When Caro was creating this text, Spain was the object of an economic and political boycott by all of the countries constituting the Occident. Just as Soviet and Sino scholars, and irrespective of the quality of their work, found it all but impossible to receive a serious hearing in the West, restraints upon thought and expression within Franco’s Spain made its intellectual output suspect. It was sort of assumed that any self-respecting Spanish intellectual of consequence was self-exiled—à la Salvador Madariaga and Americo de Castro, for example.

I would now detail some relevant background to the present translation. When, in the late 1960s, the University of Nevada Press committed to launching a Basque Book Series of which I was to be the editor, it was decided that we should begin with the three general overviews of the Basques that had become classics in their own right. It was, of
course, easiest to start with Rodney Gallop’s *A Book of the Basques*, published in 1930 and long since out of print. Julio’s *Los vascos* and Philippe Veyrin’s *Les Basques* supposed translation costs and delays, not to mention negotiation of publishing rights from a living author in the case of the former and from the estate of the latter. In the event, the Basque Book Series became an immediate success and from the outset began to attract its own original manuscripts. The Veyrin translation was set aside, but I remained determined to include in the series an English version of *Los vascos*.

It was then that my vision became clouded by youthful enthusiasm and stubbornness. I met with Caro and proposed that he might provide an expanded and revised text for the American edition. While Franco was still in power, there had been considerable the loosening of Spanish censorship that would have allowed Caro to broach more sensitive and contemporary topics. Also, his thought had certainly evolved since 1949. At first he agreed, but then, when a year later I visited Itzea, he confessed that he had been unable to revise the work and, furthermore, had lost any appetite to do so. He offered *Los vascos* to me just as was, but with the possibility of a few observations in a new introduction to the American edition. I urged him to reconsider and he agreed to do so, however I had essentially killed the project by not accepting his terms outright.

Today I can appreciate Caro’s dilemma since I experienced much the same when asked by the University of Nevada Press to revise the work *Amerikanuak: Basques in the New World*, which I had coauthored with Jon Bilbao a quarter of a century earlier. In light of all that had transpired in the interim, both within my own work and thinking and the area of Basque-American Studies, it would have almost been easier to scrap the original and begin anew! So I produced my own introduction to the second edition and let it go at that.

In the event, shortly after my visit, in 1971, Caro agreed to publication of a third (and last) Spanish edition of *Los vascos*. He prepared for it a new introduction that can only be characterized as cryptically short—and let it go at that. The present translation is that of the 1971 Istmo edition and I would note that in its Introduction Caro himself treats *Los vascos* as a “classic”—a work that now belongs to posterity. Yet like any good classic, in many regards its arguments remain eternal!
The Basques

by

Julio Caro Baroja
To the memory of Pío Baroja (1872–1956), cantor of the Basque people. In testimony of filial love.
Preface

This book, appearing now in 1971 in its third edition, was written in one fell swoop and was first published in 1949. Then, with a few chapters added and several material errata, it was published again in 1957. The author today no longer agrees with everything said in it; he does not intend, therefore, to offer it to the public as anything but a simple introduction to several arduous problems. But what most surprised him upon rereading his proofs after the passage of time is not that he himself has changed from the time he was thirty to thirty-five to today (now fifty-six), but that in many cases the things presented here as verifiable, stable facts have passed into pure history or pure archaeology. When World War II had just finished, it was impossible to have a clear idea of the changes that the following years, 1945–1955, would bring to village life, nor of the violent changes that would strike in the 1960s. The Basques experienced such changes to the same or a greater extent than any other Western European people. A synopsis of what has happened before our very eyes, of what has been suffered even by our own flesh, because of rural exodus, crises of development, imbalances in growth, political tensions, and so on, would require long hours of study. That alone would constitute an enormous enterprise. Updating the bibliography of this book would be a less arduous task but still a difficult one. The author would ask the reader to judge this work as a testimony to reflections made at a certain time, as a collection of data that remain useful though expandable to a considerable degree, because the bibliography on the Basques and their problems grows from day to day.

Another wish of the author (perhaps not as easy to grant) is that the reader should not see ulterior motives in what was written a long time ago, in such a dry way and without appeal. The author wishes to state now, first of all, as a warning from one who may feel disoriented, that he feels more than anyone the problems of the country; and second, that in spite of this he has never been an activist for any of the groups
or political parties that have had the greatest influence on it. Finally, he will say that, essentially, fundamentally, he is, above all else, liberal, and that that does not mean today—as it may have meant in the time of his grandparents—that he is a centralist or anything like that. If he spoke of medieval kings and queens, of enterprises carried out in their names, of lineages and factions, of conceptions of this or that class, he believes that he could and can do it without transferring to the twelfth, fourteenth, or sixteenth centuries the political concerns of the nineteenth or twentieth, although many authors of our time believe that in those remote centuries, the current political nature of the country was already determined. In this, I stand apart from Tyrians and Trojans. I believe that the peoples of Europe are more aware of their nature today than in past times. Perhaps they also run greater risks, and my only desire would be that these dangers never again loom as they have several times in my life and in that of my contemporaries.

Introduction

Every day one feels a greater and greater need to examine the problems posed by the relationship between man as a subject and the world in which he lives, or the world around him, in accordance with techniques and thoughts more complex than those used until recently by many ethnologists and geographers in their research, and especially by popularizers in books that are passed from hand to hand. Sometimes, the latter are dominated by a certain narrow geographic determinism, other times by economic conceptions about whose accuracy there would be much to say, and still other times by an arbitrary and confused spiritualism. Depending on the specialty of the researchers, causal links are established unilaterally in many ways.

Without embarking on a long-winded theoretical discussion, I would like to tell the reader now about the methodological point of view that seems the most reliable to me and that I have used in writing a large part of this book about the Basques, which was conceived neither in agreement with the determinism of those obsessed by the doctrine of climate and other related doctrines, nor with a historicism pretending to objectivity (which often merely masks smallness of thought), nor with any materialist, spiritualist, or other type of doctrinarian speculation of the kind that, in this sort of work, often serves as a plot, at least around these parts.

I will start with a few general psychological observations, tying them in later with other strictly ethnological observations and providing guidelines to my specific research, which I judge to be valid for conducting similar research in the peninsular field.

Since distant times, great similarities and great differences have been noted between man and animal. In the evaluation of both of these lies a fundamental source of controversy for many philosophers, psychologists, and biologists, both ancient and modern.
Mechanists, spiritualists, and vitalists order these similarities and differences according to their existing philosophical points of view, giving them diverse meanings. A true scientific objectivity is rare and difficult in the world of science. Leaving aside for the moment the problems related to the origins of the human and animal species, without arguing about the autonomy of each defended by some against those who defended the evolutionary unity of all, allow me to call to mind some principles useful in the investigation of the way of life of animate beings in the present-day world, principles highlighted (in publications that seem to have been very widely read in Spain) by Jakob von Uexküll.

The relationship of any living animal subject with the “particular” world that surrounds it is explained by Jakob von Uexküll as follows:¹

The subject, within the world that surrounds it, has two characteristic functions: observing (which constitutes the phenomenal world) and acting (the effector world). These two worlds form the “functional circle” within which the subject exists.

In the phenomenal world, the organs used to observe gather meaningful signals or signs of an object by means of a receptor. These signals pass quickly from the organs of perception through the neural pathway to the organs of action or active organs and from there to the subject’s effectors, which verify the action upon some part of the object: the surface of performance.

Between this surface on which the action takes place and the part that carries the meaningful elements lies the rest of the structure of the object, which is often unknown to the subject; the object itself is also called counterstructure. A complex chain composed of many circles and of which there exist numerous types in the visible world is thus formed, with it being possible to distinguish, in general, four types of biological functional circles of primary importance:

1) the circle of the environment in which the subject exists, which is closely related to its external configuration
2) the circle of the spoils of the subject
3) the circle of the sexual, which is very important in the superior animals, less so in some of the inferior ones
4) the circle of enemies

When a single object is observed by different subjects and therefore forms part of two or more visible worlds, we can say that its properties, which are meaningful elements to each subject, are different. That is, a single thing becomes two or more different things. Thus, there is an
interweaving of functions and visible worlds, which von Uexküll considers to be indicators of the existence of a general plan of Nature in the Kantian sense.

In modern times, various ethnographers and ethnologists, especially in Germany (Mühlmann, among others), have applied these ideas to the science that they have developed, extending them, of course. When we see how these four functional circles present different aspects when dealing with an Australian or Native American, or when dealing with a European who lives on these same continents, we clearly notice that there must be something different in man in comparison with animals, which has an influence not only within a single set of biological functions but within a single species.

In fact, man operates within the surrounding world in accordance with the four biological functional circles listed above. It cannot be denied that the environment is of exceptional importance for him. The labors that he performs in the search for, stockpiling of, and production of foods are likewise primordial; his battles and ventures in attack and defense can never be left out of consideration, nor can anything related to the circle of the sexual, whether the subjects be male or female. Why, then, does not the entire human species act uniformly? It is clear that each of these functional circles, which in the animal species do not seem to show more than a very limited number of variations (at least to our eyes), in man are observed in accordance with a multicolored casuistry, in both space and time. If a description of the life of a group of animals of a certain species is sufficient for us to know how the whole species behaves, the same does not hold in our case. The example of the existence of the Europeans in Australia or Americas and the indigenous peoples of the same continents leading radically different ways of life in the same environment is enough to make the difference very clear.

The observable features of the human functional circles vary widely. We can never explain the facts of man by taking the environment as something with almost always the same characteristics, in the way that the ground and the water in which the oyster lives are, for example; it cannot be said that the enemies of a human being behave in the same way at all times (like the starfish toward the oyster), if we take more than simple pathology into consideration, nor that his prey are uniform in character.

In short, the human life is much richer in content, in places, and in moments than that of any animal. Why?
First of all, because he has at his service a capacity for imagination and other related capacities that are distributed unevenly in each group of men and in each individual within a group.

Thus, his life is regulated not only by these functional circles but also by other ones that, from the psychobiological point of view, can be said to be conditioned by various very characteristic spiritual “dominant interests” of which we will speak further on. These various circles, instead of showing a single manifestation in humans (in the way that they are observed in some animal species), show various qualities that are limited to a community or to individuals and that are always variable. This last point seems to be the sole property of man.

This variable form of acting is what we call culture. We cannot speak of human functional circles without taking this into account. The crab, the oyster, and any other animal, presented with sexual stimuli or enemies of different species, always act in the same way, although they have marvelous resources of rare precision that they put into play with greater or lesser success, to the wonderment of biologists. Man also has such resources. But can he be imagined making use of them like a simple animal? If some philosophers and moralists have undertaken to dream of things related to the state of animality (which they often confuse with the natural), no true observer has the right to do the same. He can speak only of the ways in which man acts within different social structures, each with a different culture. A person who observes the numerous societies that exist, distributed irregularly in time and especially in space, is generally known as an ethnologist. He analyzes the various ways in which man attempts to satisfy his fundamental psychobiological interests. In the analysis of the set of such interests, we must include, in addition to those already listed when talking about animals, all functions of a spiritual order that are closely linked to them, those rightly called universals of culture. In fact, there is no society, no set of individuals with the same type of lifestyle, that does not comply with a cultural scheme in which technology and economy, social organization, education and political structures, beliefs and religious and preternatural practices, the arts, and, finally, language play a role. Each social structure and each culture gives its own special nuance to the functional circles, and society often obliges the individual to act in one way or another at a given moment, restricting even his sense of freedom.

Thus, one cannot speak of man’s adaptation to the environment in a direct way; we must not think that the physically strongest is always the most capable of survival, nor should other opinions of sociologists and
different types of researchers who lived not long ago and who are still very popular be taken as axiomatic.

In any case, we can assign to von Uexküll’s scheme a strict sociological and ethnological meaning and speak

1) of the world of perception (the phenomenal world) of a specific society in time and space
2) of the world of action (the effector world) of the same society
3) of society as a subject
4) of objects with numerous significant signs and as many other surfaces of action for that society

If we consider ethnological investigation in this way, the causal links about which so much is said, as if they could be clearly observed, become obscure for anyone without a varied and complex research technique. For example, what value does the word environment have, a word that geographers use so much, as if it were something that is always the same and has an active character? What reality can be encompassed by the method of interpreting a specific functional circle as an axis around which the others must be placed, a method to which various materialist historians have accustomed us?

If we consider precisely the circle of the environment in which the subject (society) we study performs, we will observe

1) that there is no pure physical environment on which other previous societies and cultures have not left their mark
2) that the same natural objects had and have different meanings for different societies
3) that this difference in meaning has modified those objects more and more
4) that successive societies and cultures have interpreted in various ways the modifications that were passed down to them and that they often considered to be produced naturally

This has given rise to the interpretation of the environment as a subject rather than as an object, a common but fundamentally false view.

More accurately than environmentalists, at least to a certain point, some modern investigators have claimed that there is a layer on the earth’s crust that could be called the anthroposphere and that is defined by all human activities, past and present. But let us now leave these general observations and go on to examine the other primary biological functions.
If we consider the circle of spoils, we note the following:

1) This circle shows different aspects in time and space.
2) These various aspects are linked first to the interpretation of the environment that society makes in accordance with a type of culture.
3) The meaningful elements of the circle first generally undergo modifications due to typical activities of the circle of spoils.

The same thing happens in the case of the circle of enemies, and even in that of the circle of the sexual with respect to the remaining circles.

The fulfillment of these four functions places man, and society as a whole, in a state of anxiety or unease, which acts on all his mental capacities. He is also seized by various serious concerns that are related more or less obscurely to these functions and that are, to a large extent, instigators of cultural variety.

The idea of death, of the great beyond, and other ideas about which it is difficult to prove what meaning they could have in the life of animals (if they have such ideas) are of fundamental importance for man, such that they constitute in themselves various basic psychic functional circles. We could try to order such circles, thinking about the existence of “functions that are always primary” and “functions that are always secondary.” But it seems that this classification is difficult to carry out as a scheme and that it should be carried out only in accordance with what may be observed in each case. In fact, there are peoples who develop their social and economic existence around a set of rites and ceremonies of a functional nature and others who assign a fundamental importance to religious beliefs based on the fertility of plants or the reproduction and fecundity of animals. The general cultural configuration of the people, of society, is deduced from the examination of such activities as a whole, as Ruth Benedict and other researchers of our time have highlighted.

In accordance with these ideas to a great extent, we will try here to give an overall vision of the life of a specific people, the Basques, who since ancient times have been thought to have very unusual characteristics.

We will speak first of issues having to do with the first of the four large biological functional circles briefly defined above: the circle of the environment.

But once we have completed a brief description of its features that are most clearly observed today, we will find that it is necessary to present the facts related to this circle in accordance with two different norms: the synchronic and the diachronic.
Introduction

It is a matter of observing with precision and of thinking properly (without aesthetic or sentimental detours) about what is observed in a society. One must not exaggerate the similarities, nor emphasize the cultural differences, that one society shows with respect to others. This is difficult, and in their efforts to provide general guidelines in carrying out such a task, ethnological theorists have not arrived at complete agreement. For their part, the people who speak of characteristics as regional, ethnic, and so on use words such as typical and exclusive with great abandon, words that in science have at best a very relative value; one that, in any case, is smaller than other lesser-used concepts. It is precisely when we study the problems of genealogy and those of operation as we should study them, that is, separately, that we see with greater clarity the importance of some concepts and the vagueness and insignificance of others. Among the important ones we will include those that we can generally include under the name of “supposed agents of differentiation.”

Let us briefly recall that, to explain the existence of the cultural peculiarities of different geographic areas, different schools of ethnologists have underlined the meanings that various physical and psychic factors in time and space can have to produce these peculiarities. One way of thinking popularized long ago is that mentioned earlier, of attributing most differences and similarities to the surroundings, to the climate, or to the exterior physical environment. But today ethnologists have learned their lesson in view of the failure of ingenuous mesological explanations of peoples of very diverse cultures who live in similar environments. The environment, rather than a primordial agent, is a favorable receptor at times, hostile at others, to specific types of a culture or particular features of it (e.g., crops, implements, living arrangements). Nor have there been any great advances in the explanations of those who fundamentally bear in mind the idea of “race” or similar notions in a physical anthropological sense. The Native Americans of North America constitute a human community that is more homogeneous than the distinct Native American cultures, which are quite diverse and well differentiated from each other.

It was thought in the third instance that the causes of differentiation were purely psychic or spiritual. This is saying both a lot and not much, because within the human psyche there is an enormous variety of nuances and aspects. Nevertheless, the first ethnologists who took them into account seem to have chosen a single, lateral path, highlighting rationalist and voluntarist factors of differentiation. According to
them, man is an essentially rational, intellectual being who, no matter where he is, seeks solutions to the same problems. In some cases, due to the lack of reliable previous data, he falls into errors, aberrations, and blunders (from which many myths and superstitions arise), whereas in other cases he is right because he has more exact previous ideas. But the supporters of this essential rationalism of humanity do not explain why something that seems to be a positive technological advance in general is often rejected by one society whereas another assimilates it, nor do they explain the coexistence of contradictory spiritual, social, or technological traits in any human group.

The psychologists, sociologists, and ethnologists who, with a very laudable clarity of judgment, highlighted the enormous influence exercised on the individual and on cultures by illogical, emotional, and nonintellectual factors in general placed themselves opposite the intellectualist posture, which tends to make every man a little genius of reasoning and independent in terms of power.

This victory in the field of scientific investigation has been the object of multiple, sometimes excessive interpretations. Some researchers underlined the influence that imitation without a logical base has on society and forms of culture, a type of mental contagion that is expressed in two clear but contradictory ways: the imitation of traditional forms of life and the imitation of new traits.

For the contemporary Euro-American man, the diffusion of fashions is a fact as familiar as that of the tenacious permanence of certain ideas, and the battle between these two tendencies lends itself to more than one interesting reflection. *Imitation, diffusion, contagion, and repetition* are four words that were analyzed more than half a century ago, without anyone being able to find absolutely rational bases for the phenomena that expressed them. Around the same time, thinkers of a different bent demonstrated that most cultural traits of different societies are particularly defined by a coercive power that emanates from them and that also lacks not only an intellectual origin but also an individual one.

In this way, the possibility of studying isolated elements of cultures was denied, and it was recommended to study them as a whole, pointing out their interdependencies. Authors associated with this last sociological school ended up defending the existence of a radical difference between primitive, prelogical man and the civilized, essentially logical man. This difference does not exist in reality; it is nothing more than a product of the analysis of many examples of supposed prelogisms extracted from
works on primitive peoples, after which one never speaks of those that could be found by studying our so-called civilized societies. In any case, the essential lack of logic of many human functions has been thoroughly highlighted.

Environment, race, rationality, and irrationality are insufficient as unique explanatory signs of cultural differences. In any case, we must consider them, perhaps in reverse order to how they are stated here. But if we place the irrational elements first, how do we observe their performance in all their strength? Ethnological works have been carried out since ancient times bearing in mind two different methods of seeing and showing. We can define one of these as atomist in essence, the other as totalitarian. In accordance with the first, every cultural element is studied separately, assigning it a value for itself and analyzing synchronically and diachronically its diffusion in very wide and varied areas.

In accordance with the second, a culture, a society as a whole, is studied, pointing out the connections that exist among all its components together, not set apart and isolated. On many occasions, when monographs have been written on a certain people (particularly in Europe), the authors have followed a classifying and essentially atomist principle that is easy to adopt. But we should reject it for the most part as not very scientific and lacking in precision, and deny the expertise of those who continue to recommend it in popular works. A society is something that, first of all, should be observed in its totality and without dividing it in advance into watertight compartments in a rather geometric and arbitrary way.

I do not advocate an extreme phenomenalism, but today the author who falls into it will be more interesting than one who follows the routine of a dry, verbal realism, bare and fossilized. Returning to our particular case, I will state that I have tried here to study the culture of the Basque people as a collection of current facts with more or less defined outlines, but that maintain a close relationship among themselves, even though each of them outside our sphere may have a different distribution in time and space. Nevertheless, the position I adopt goes beyond these considerations to a certain extent because, in order to clarify some of the problems of interest to all involved with this people, I have had to refer to cultural modalities that at present do not show forms as clearly defined as they were in the past or that have lost almost all meaning. If I gave the reader nothing more than a description, following the criterion of the synchrony of the most prominent traits of the Basque culture, it is likely that the reader would want to seek their causes, dipping into iso-
lated mesological, racial, intellectual, or emotional arguments as well as those that may suggest themselves to someone without previous knowledge of the history of the country. That is, I would not put more than a single conceptual intermediary between its “natural state” and its “present state.” I have tried to make the opposite clear: the complexity of Basque history from all the explanatory points of view given here and its significance as the basis of the present nature of the people in question.

When referring to history, I have subordinated the presentation of data to the notion of primary psychobiological realities and to the aforementioned “universals.” This is admittedly contrived, but it has a clear purpose. If when observing modern life one can obtain a well-defined vision of the importance society assigns to the different functions it carries out, all our ideas about the particular, touching on past societies or bygone cultures, are the product of a reconstruction that can seem somewhat risky because of its lack of caution. However, the primordial interests to which I alluded are inherent in all societies. I believe that there are some patterns that shape most cultures and that allow us to study the whole earth in a schematic but quite exact way and that it is good to abide by them when we do not directly see reality in all its dimensions.

Finally, I believe that those who have the patience to follow me to the end will see how well formulated are many of the questions people commonly pose about the origins of the Basque people, their customs and language. As an English philosopher and historian said, often the possibility of getting it right or wrong depends on some quality of the question, that is, that there are questions that may harbor a latent vice or virtue. And it has been shown on many occasions that questions about origins bear within themselves the impossibility of a single, clear, simple answer like those that are generally needed, and sometimes even the complete impossibility of an answer.
Part I
CHAPTER I

Types of Town Typical of the Basque Country:
Structure of the Settlements of the Basque-
Speaking Region and of the Central and
Southern Areas of Araba and Navarre

The traveler who drives along the border from the capital city of Castile
or Aragón toward the north of Spain will notice a remarkable variety of
landscapes in a short period of time from the moment he enters Navarre
or crosses the Ebro until he nears the ocean and the Pyrenees.

First, he will pass first through grayish, yellow, or reddish lands of
cereals, vineyards, and olive trees, with irrigated orchards on riverbanks
and near city centers, quite distanced from each other, and dense, solid.
Next he will come to a land with more mountainous horizons, a more
profitable land, although always with broad plains where vineyards and
olive trees come to an end and where one sees a great number of small
towns consisting of a few houses separated from each other and often
made of stones, unlike those farther to the south, where construction
is of earth and even mud at times. From among the houses, a small or
medium-sized church stands out. Clumps or lines of trees with dense
foliage sometimes block the horizon.

But our traveler will take in yet a third impression as he goes farther
to the north or northwest. The land narrows, the vegetation becomes
denser along the highways, the atmosphere much more humid. Having
crossed several winding and spectacular mountain passes, he will come
to valleys where the villages follow one another with dizzying speed,
where you can hardly tell when you leave one and enter the next, and
where there are neighborhoods or isolated houses with nearby crops and
cultivated lands on the mountainsides and even in the highlands. These
crops are different from the ones that our traveler saw before. And if, instead of going to the northwest, he travels to the northeast, the great mountainous masses of the Pyrenees will allow him to observe a fourth type of landscape, also with its own distinct alpine characteristics. It is not without reason that it is said that the small and ancient Kingdom of Navarre contains variations that large nations cannot offer except over much greater distances.

But let us assume that our traveler does not drive across Navarre, but that he takes the train from Madrid to Irun, passing through the provinces of Araba and Gipuzkoa. His impression will be similar, though he won’t pass through areas of vineyards and such. In Araba, the landscape is largely the intermediate one briefly described earlier, and in Gipuzkoa he will see an exaggeration of the characteristics of a landscape that offers both the greatest density and the greatest dispersion of habitations.

Crossing the border into France, for a certain amount of time (not really very long) our traveler will feel that there is a certain continuity with Gipuzkoa and the north of Navarre, although the lines of the landscape are smoother. But in the Gascon and Bearnese lands there is a clear contrast. Now we can say, without exaggeration, that the indicated units of landscape imply various other social and cultural structures, which we will analyze, structures with a different history, as we will also see after carrying out the initial analysis, and furthermore with a certain linguistic and anthropological significance.

In our descriptive work, it is appropriate that we follow an order different from the one we should adopt for our historical labor.

We will begin this task with an examination of the types of town in the area of the Basque Country that is best characterized linguistically, continuing with the peripheral lands that today are less linguistically distinguished. In the first group are Gipuzkoa, almost all of Bizkaia (except Enkarterri or Las Encartaciones), the Spanish Navarrese ocean–mountain area and a bit more of the Kingdom of Navarre, and the French Basque Country almost in its entirety, with the exception of the wilder part of the Zuberoan land. Araba, almost in its entirety, and most of Navarre belong to the peripheral area.¹

Present-day Navarre does not correspond completely to ancient Vasconia. But from a territorial point of view, it can be said that it is like a shrunken Vasconia. Nor do the three Basque provinces correspond to the known classical divisions. However, it appears that there remain a few modern traces of those divisions, which are not truly administrative
but linguistic. Campión insisted on the fact that, in the towns of Gipuzkoa that formerly belonged to the land of the Vascones according to the tables of Ptolemy, it is not the Gipuzkoan dialect that is spoken today but rather a variety of northern High Navarrese, and also on the fact that the part of the Bizkaian territory where Basque has not been spoken for centuries is the part that belonged to the ancient Autrigones. On the other hand, the border between the Bizkaian and Gipuzkoan dialects does not follow that between the current provinces but is in fact closer to the one that separated the Varduli from the Caristii.

In short, the Navarrese dialects would correspond to the great unified territory of the Vascones, the Gipuzkoan dialect to the Varduli, and the Bizkaian to the Caristii, whose expansion toward the south surpassed tribal limits. In Aquitaine, we find in the late period of the Roman Empire a colony called Lapurdum, which, according to most authors, was given to or received from the land of Labourd or Lapurdi, and Lapurdian is spoken there. For the names of Soule, Zuberoa, and Ziberoa one also seeks a background in a name reported by the Romans: Sybillates, which must be related at least in part to the medieval names pagus sibillatensis and Subola. That is, it is possible also to establish a relationship between the French Basque dialects and the ancient social units and territorial divisions that were known in medieval times. With respect to smaller districts, let us note something essential: the Basque Country as a whole is a country in which human settlements are organized around the geographic concept of valley (vallis), or aran and ibar in the vernacular. The settlers of a valley would have been distinguished by their community of interests and duties, certain legal customs, and so on, since ancient times, since the time when the also geographic concept of mountain ceased to be the primary one from the point of view of settlements, which I believe came about in Roman times. In a text by Fredegar that refers to the year 645, Zuberoa (Soule) is called Vallis Subola, and others speaking about an earlier time (the year 572) mention the Rucones, who seem to have been the inhabitants of the Erronkaribar or Erronkari/Roncal Valley. In later epochs, the names of the valleys appear over and over again in various documents, and it is accepted that in the first centuries of the Reconquest they must have had a form very similar to that of today as administrative entities, particularly in the east. Father Moret and other historians had no qualms about adapting the geography of the primitive Kingdom of Navarre to the divisions traditionally known in their time, which are roughly those followed in documents such as the census of 1366. I do not believe there was anything
wrong in what Father Moret did, but we would do well to examine the
dates on which the names of these valley entities first appear.  

Note also that the line of the maximum spread of the Basques, which is
historically recognized and well documented, is almost the same as the line
that marks the end of geographic division by valleys; to the south of this
line, the important entities of population are cities, towns, and so on. Each
valley is characterized to some extent not only by its geography but also
by its legal and administrative features. The Erronkari (Roncal) Valley has
its own customs, Baztan has its own, and those of Burunda are different.
From the linguistic point of view, it should be noted that in each valley, a
variety of Basque is or was spoken that is worthy of study in itself.

Within each valley, the typical Basque landscape is clearly charac-
terized by the dispersion or density of human habitation. Let us now
clarify these concepts. The social, economic, administrative, and reli-
gious base of Basque life (like that of other European countries) is found
in a nucleus of constructions of greater or lesser number, which is the
town itself.

This nucleus (*iri* in high and low Spanish Navarrese, *biri* in the French
dialects, *uri* in Bizkaian and western Gipuzkoa and in Araba) is composed
of houses (*etxeak*) arranged in various ways and also occupies different
types of places. It sometimes lends its name to larger districts. Two crite-
ria must be kept in mind to classify it from a topographic point of view: its
position with respect to the mountains (*orography*) will prove interesting,
as will the position it holds in relation to water (*hydrography*).

If we combine these two facts, the orographic and the hydrographic, in
a theoretical way, we can establish the existence of three types of towns:

1) those situated on a mountainside or slope, above a river or
stream
2) those settled on a hill or plateau, also near rivers
3) those that extend for a greater or lesser distance along the lowest
part of meadows or plains, similarly near water

Of course there may be exceptions, but most Basque population
centers are consistent with this scheme. Nevertheless, we should note
that in the third class, we must distinguish between towns located at the
bottom of a ravine or very narrow valley and those that have a nearby
plain, never very large. If we carry out a brief examination of the char-
acteristics of Gipuzkoan towns, for example, we can say that Aduna,
Altza (Alza), Astigarraga, Urnieta, and Usurbil within the legal jurisdic-
tion of Donostia (San Sebastián); Aizarnazabal, Zerain (Cerain),
Gabiria (Gaviria), and Segura in the jurisdiction of Azpeitia; and Arama, Asteasu (the old town), Zizurkil (Cizurquil), Hernialde, Irura, Olaberria, and Orendain in the jurisdiction of Tolosa are situated on hills, hilllocks, or small plateaus with a certain individuality. On mountainsides we find Hernani, Irun, Lezo, and Oiartzun (Oyarzun) in the first of these jurisdictions; Astigarreta, Aia (Aya), Beizama, Ezkio (Ezquioga), Goiatz (Goyaz), Itsaso (Ichaso), Mutiloa, and Errezil (Régil) in the second; Abaltzisketa (Abalciquesta), Alkiza (Alquiza), Altzaga (Alzaga), Altzo (Alzo), Baliarrain, Belaunzta (Belaunza), Berrobi, Gaintza (Gainza), Gaztelu, Itsasondo (Isasondo), Larraul, Leaburu, Orexa (Oreja), Villabona, and Zaldibia (Zaldivia) in the third; and Antzuola (Anzuola) and Elgeta (Elgueta), in the jurisdiction of Bergara (Vergara).

In the lowlands, there are Errenteria (Renteria; in the jurisdiction of Donostia), Azkoitia (Azcoitia), Azpeitia, Zegama (Cegama), Zestoa (Cestona), Bidania (Vidania; in the jurisdiction of Azpeitia), and Tolosa itself, together with Albiztur, Alegia (Alegría de Oria), Andoain, Anoeta, Ataun, Beasain, Berastegi (Berástegui), Elduain (Elduayen), Ibarra, Ikaztegieta (Icazteguieta), Idiazabal, Lazkan (Lazcano), Legorreta, Lizartza (Lizarza), and Ordizia (Villafranca de Ordizia) in its jurisdiction. Bergara and Antzuola are also in the lowlands, and various other towns of this jurisdiction extend, if not in lowlands, along the bottom of very narrow valleys or ravines, such as Aretxabaleta (Arechavaleta), Eibar, Elgoibar, Eskoriatza (Escoriaza), Legazpi (Legazpia), Arrasate (Mondragón), Oñati (Oñate), Soraluze (Placencia de las Armas), Leintz-Gatzaga (Salinas de Léniz), Urretxu (Villareal de Urrechua), and Zumarraga. Some, such as Angiozar (Anguiozar), are near a hollow. We must consider separately the structure of seaports such as Hondarribia (Fuentarrabía), Pasaia (Pasajes), Donostia, Orio, Zarautz (Zarauz), Getaria (Guetaria), Zumaia (Zumaya), Deba (Deva), and Mutriku (Motrico).

In Bizkaia, where the landscape is generally more open, the nuclei are more often of the first and last types, although there are some of the second type, and very characteristic of the type. The French Basque Country is similar, particularly in Lapurdi, whereas on the ocean in Spanish Navarre there are many towns on mountainsides or in narrow ravines, next to or around the old roads through the Pyrenees.10

If we now examine the structure of the nucleus, we will find various types. The simplest is that comprising a few houses with vegetable gardens and adjoining walled gardens, with an open space between them as a sort of square, very irregular in shape. Sometimes there are two or more of these open spaces, linked by narrow roads or streets of different
sorts that, outside the nucleus, become paths, roads, and routes for various types of traffic.

In the mountains of Navarre there are characteristic examples of towns with a single central area: Arruazu in the Arakil (Araquil) Valley (near the river), Aroztegi (Aróstegui) and Ziganda (Ciganda) in the Atetz (Atez) Valley, and various others in Araitz (Araiz), Imotz (Imoz), Larraun, and Ultzama (Ulzama) Valleys (figs. 1 and 2). In Gipuzkoa, such towns are found primarily in the southeastern highlands, in the area known as Goierri.

Figure 1.
Aroztegi. This place in the Atetz Valley is found at a substantial elevation. In 1802, it had 10 houses in use, in which 92 people resided. Madoz in 1845 ascribes to it 17 houses and 90 residents, 86 at the beginning of the century.

Figure 2.
Arruazu. This town forms part of the valley of Arakil, situated near the river of the same name. In 1846, it had 50 houses and 346 people. At the beginning of the century, there were 311 people in 69 buildings, of which only 6 lay outside the nucleus. It belonged to the seigniory of Uriz in the fourteenth century.
Types of Town Typical of the Basque Country

Typical among those more complex towns, although it cannot be said that they obey any formal plan, are Arano, Arantza (Aranaz), and Areso in northwestern Navarre; Arrarats (Arrarás), Beruete (fig. 3), Gartzaron (Garzarón), and Itsaso (in Navarre as opposed to that of Gipuzkoa) in the same area (greater Basaburua); and even some larger towns, such as Etxalar (Echalar) and Goizueta.

In contrast to the structures that we could call crossroads, nuclear, and multinuclear, there is the longitudinal structure. The towns that are organized in this way are found most often along a river or along a road of some importance; German geographers call this type of town Gassen-dorf or Strassendorf.

It is difficult to find examples of this structure in which the town, right on the road, has no other nucleus, no matter how simple; typical towns such as Ituren (in the Doneztebe or Santesteban Valley), Lantz (Lanz), Amaiur (Maya; Baztan Valley), and Navarrete (Bertiz Valley) have one. Farther to the east, Auritz (Burguete), and to the south, Larra-soaña, are organized in the same way (figs. 4 and 5). In Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, and elsewhere there are some similar ones as well, but in general the larger towns show a combination of several nuclei with one long street or streets. Examples of such towns include Altsasu (Alsasua), Betelu, Irurita in the the Baztan Valley, Olazti (Olazagutia), Sunbilla (Sumbilla), and Bera, in Navarre, where the relationship between the old nucleus and another, along the streets, is very clear (fig. 6).
Figure 4.
Auritz, in the high Pyrenees. In 1910, it had 86 houses and buildings, of which 3 belonged to the Arrobi farmhouse. In 1802, it had 43 houses in ruins, in part because of the recent war between France and Spain, and 193 residents.

Figure 5.
Ituren, on the Ezkurra (Ezcurra) River, a tributary of the Bidasoa. It consists of two neighborhoods in addition to the central nucleus, set out along the road to Doneztebe, which is the head of the valley and ancient archpresbytery.

Building with the elements street (kale) and town square placed according to a formal plan is seen in a good number of towns, generally in the larger ones in each zone. And an urban criterion, strictly speaking, is clearly seen in the composition of some Navarrese towns that are nevertheless not very big, such as Etxarri-Aranatz (Echarri-Aranaz; in the Arakil Valley), whose parallel streets flank a much wider central street, and especially Uharte-Arakil (Huarte-Araquil; figs. 7 and 8).
A compound town in the mountains of Navarre: Betelu, on the banks of the Araxes River. It had 80 inhabited structures and 550 residents in 1910. The spa is largely responsible for its unique modern structure. In 1802, there were 61 houses and 464 people, and in more ancient times it belonged to the Araitz Valley, from which it separated in 1694.

Etxarri-Aranatz, in the Arakil Valley. At the beginning of the century, its center had 201 buildings and 1,260 inhabitants. The rest of the population was either in another nucleus or spread out. In 1802, there were 177 houses and 721 people. The town of Etxarri (in the area of Aranatz) held various privileges, in exchange for which those who lived there defended it from bandits and criminals from the mountains; the charter founding the town dates from 1312. By 1351, it was built and a knight was commissioned to wall and fortify it. Other documents from the same era, such as the one concerning the relocation of the church inside the walls, show that the town was built to a plan.
Uharte-Arakil. Situated not far from the town shown in fig. 7, it is very similar to it in its configuration and history. At the beginning of the century, it had some 819 residents and 198 buildings in total, including the scattered ones. In 1802, it had 177 houses in use and 812 people. In 1359, it was agreed to move the town of Uharte (Huarte) and relocate it in a stronger position. It was then walled and many people from the surrounding area went there to live. In 1484, it burned to the ground, to the extent that of the 160 buildings it had at the time, only the four walls of the church were left standing.

The crossing streets are more irregular, though always straight. They show a particular layout in Gipuzkoa: Hernani, with its Main Street and town squares at each end of it, various streets parallel to the main one, and another that cuts across them; Tolosa, where it is easy to see what is part of the old plan (three long parallel streets); and Arrasate, which has a very characteristic “middle street,” with an associated square and various side and crossing streets. The town of Segura is also organized on a plan that we will find again in more interior towns (fig. 9).

In Bizkaia, there are four towns that are models of apparently planned urban nuclei. The first, Durango, has five parallel streets: a very exterior one where the convents are located; another called kalebarria (new street), whose name indicates that at one point it was the exterior one; and closer to the center there are the goyenkale (high street), artekale (middle street), and barrenkale (low street), next to a watercourse.

On one end of the middle and high streets is the Santa Ana square with the parish church of the same name, and on the other end, the parish church of Santa Maria. Outside this nucleus there are more modern neighborhoods, avenues, and streets. Before its destruction, Gernika (Guernica; fig. 10) showed a similar structure. On one side there was the
A Gipuzkoan town: Segura. In 1256, Alfonso X ordered the town to be founded, for the purpose of defending the territory where it is located from the invasions of the Navarrese. Various privileges were granted to it later, and it was the head of a wide jurisdiction. Throughout its history it has suffered many fires: one in the thirteenth century, another in 1422 that left it in ruins, and another partial one in 1645. In 1862, Gorosábal stated, “The body of the town consists of three orderly streets that are paved and have sidewalks of flagstones, with generally medium-sized and decent buildings . . . In the olden days, it was an enclosed town with walls and towers, with a moat and drawbridge facing toward Navarre.” On the city map, the four old city gates are indicated with capital letters: (A) upper gate, (B) lower gate, (C) Osinaga gate, and (D) Zerain gate. Numbers indicate different public places: (1) town square and city hall, (2) fairground, (3) pelota court, (4) parochial church. Within the walls there are as many as 94 houses, and 91 outside. The main street is indicated with an X.

Gernika. The old parts of the town are indicated in the sketch, as it was before its famous destruction. The privilege of foundation of the town, issued by a lord of Bizkaia, dates from 1366. As can be seen, it consisted of four parallel streets and one crossing street. In our time, three of them apparently maintain their old names: (a) Barrencalle, (b) Goyencalle, and (c) Santa María Street. But in the mid-nineteenth century these and the others were known by the following names: (a) Barrencalle-Barrena, (b) Goyencalle, (c) Santa María Street, (d) Barrencalle (simply), and (e) Artecalle or Middle Street. The poor quarters, fairgrounds, and so on were outside this central area.
high street (goyenkale or goyencalle), on the other, the low street (barren-kale or barrenkalle barrena), and in between, two more (artekale and barrenkale, that is, the older low street), and cutting their total length in two, another street (as in Durango). The pretty town of Markina (Marquina) has one middle street (erdiko kalea) and two side streets (auore kalea and calle okerra, that is, the winding street), and other more uneven roads or alleys that cut across them. Bermeo, a coastal town, has five longitudinal streets and four crossing streets.

The old part of Bilbao is organized on similar, though more developed, principles; it has seven parallel streets and the alleys that cut across them. The names of several of these are meaningful: Ronda Street, Somera Street, Artekale, Tendería, Belostikale or Belosticalle, Comercial or Carnicería Vieja, Barrenkale, and Barrenkale Barrena. They originate near the river, from the bank, where the San Antón church is, near the bridge that appears so often in old views, and continue to the buildings around Santiago (fig. 11). The later neighborhoods have very irregular outlines.

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**Figure 11.**

Old part of Bilbao. Founded in 1300, it later received many privileges. By the mid-fourteenth century it was already surrounded by towers and fortifications. In the sixteenth century it already had many more streets than those in the sketch (taken from J. de Ibarra and P. de Garmendia), in which the following appear: (a) Barrencalle-Barrena (as in Gernika), (b) Barrencalle, (c) Carnicería Vieja, (d) Belosticalle, (e) Tendería, (f) Artekale, (g) Calle Somera (equivalent of Goyencalle), and (h) Los Cantones. The later street of Ronda is indicated with an x. At the entrance of each street and of each city gate there was a tower or mansion (crosses), and the market was outside the city walls, next to the old bridge and church of San Antón (A). The church of Santiago was inside the walls (B).
However, we can establish two types of city nuclei: those with a central, long main street and other side streets that give the town a longitudinal, rectangular or elliptical structure, and those with more numerous, short parallel streets crossed by another, giving an overall square structure.

I will attempt to clarify the historical origin of similar structures later. For now, it is worth indicating the other forms of town with which these centers or nuclei are associated. Each town also possesses a larger or smaller number of neighborhoods, districts, and isolated buildings that constitute different units from the administrative and ecclesiastical points of view.

It is not necessary for a neighborhood to have as clear a form as the primary nucleus. The basic traits of a nucleus, longitudinal or nebulous, along paths, near streams and springs, on mountainsides or hillocks, may be shown by what in Basque is called ballara (Ataun) or ballera (Andoain), amarreko (Kortezubi, Cortézubi), ausune (Zeanuri, Ceánurí), zosker (Ezkio), alderri (in French Basque), or other less well known or less common forms. A characteristic example of the distribution of districts can be seen on the city map of Zeanuri (Bizkaia) by Eulogio de Gorostiaga, or on the one of Oiartzun (Gipuzkoa) that accompanies a monograph by M. de Lecuona, or the view of Bera (Plate 1). Actually, the true structure of a neighborhood is given by the simple sum of houses with their properties, lived in by one family each. The house is considered the clearest and best-defined expression of the Basque character, by Basques themselves, outsiders, scientists, and artists. The famous song by French Basque poet Elizamburu popularized a classical type of farmhouse:

“Ikhusten duzu goizean,
arguia hasten denean,
menditho baten gainean
etche thikitho, aintzin xuri bat—
lau haitz andiren artean
tchakur, xuri bat athean
ithurriño bat aldean?
Han bizi naiz ni bakean.”

(“In the morning when dawn breaks,
do you see
up on a hill,
a very white little house
among four big oak trees,
The Basques by Julio Caro Baroja

a white dog at the door
and a small well on one side?
I live there in peace.

The nine verses that follow this one paint an idyllic picture of family and country life, which has inspired many rhapsodies from sociologists, historians, and politicians, who have wanted to see in the farmhouse something without equal, a model of Christian propriety, and something from the distant past.

* * *

But before we speak specifically of the Basque house and farmhouse, we must point out the contrast between the described pattern of town and that found farther to the south, in Navarre and Araba, and examine the history of both. In the middle area of these two provinces we can record the existence of nuclei of the type described earlier. However, they are quite isolated from each other, lack a dispersed population and farmhouses, and are separated from the others in the vicinity by fields and property. In Navarre, these zones are characterized by the quantity of small nuclei close to each other, as in the valleys of Anue, Olaibar, Ezkabarte (Ezcabarte), Txulapain (Juslapeña), Ollaran (Ollo), Gulia (Gulina), and Imotz to the north of Iruña (Pamplona) and in its legal jurisdiction, the cendeas (groups of towns that together form a city council) of Antsoain (Ansoáin), Itza (Iza), Galar, Oltza (Olza), and Zizur, around Iruña, and the valleys of Etxauri (Echauri) and Ilitzarbe (Ilzarbe) to its west and south.

In the jurisdiction of Lizarraga (Estella), the valleys of Goñi, Gesalatz (Guesálaz), Deierri (Yerri), and Lana with the Ameskoa Ibarraz or Amésoas. In that of Agoitz (Aoiz), those of Esteríbar, Arriasgoiti, Artzi (Arce), Egues (Egüés), Lizoaín (Lizoain), Aranguren, Untziti (Unciti), Longida (Lónguida), Elortz (Elorz) Ibargoiti, Izagaondoa, and upper and lower Urraul (Urraulgoiti or Urrául Alto and Urraulbeiti or Urrául Bajo). In that of Tafalla, the Orba Valley.

In Araba, the whole plain around Vitoria-Gasteiz: the associations and city councils of Asparrena, Donemiliaga (San Millán), Agurain (Salvatierra), Barrundia, Iruraitz (Iruraiz), Ganboa (Gamboa), Dulantzi (Alegría de Álava), Vitoria-Gasteiz, Zigoitia (Cigoitia), Zuia (Zuya), Oto Goien and Oto Barren (Hueto Arriba and Hueto Abajo), Iruña Oka (Iruña de Oca), Urkabustaiz (Urcabustaiz), and Kuartango (Cuartango) and other smaller ones. In addition, several of the more southern lands,
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even as far as the Cantabrian mountains and including the county of Trebiñu (Treviño), which belongs to Burgos administratively. In any case, it can be said, that between the line drawn by that mountain range and others that are a continuation of it (like that of Toloño) and the mountains of Urbasa to the north, there is a concentration of larger towns, such as Markiz (Marquínez), Santikurutze Kanpezu (Santa Cruz de Campezo), and Durruma Kanpezu (San Román de Campezo), of a type similar to those found around Lizarra. In the western part of Araba (Erribera or Ribera, Gaubea or Valdegovia, Valderejo), there is a system of villages with all their most specific characters, with greater dissemination around Legutio (Legutiano or Villareal de Álava) and Aramaio (Aramayona), and toward Amurrio and the valleys of Aiara (Ayala), Laudio (Llodio), and Okondo (Oquendo).

A typical village in Araba generally has all of the following elements: (1) various farmworkers’ houses grouped together but not connected, (2) a church (often Romanesque), (3) a city council building or priest’s house, (4) a mill and other buildings for common use (such as a public washhouse) or dedicated to a particular industry.

Near the houses there are some vegetable gardens, and farther from the nucleus are the larger properties. On the horizon, one sees the peaks of the mountain ranges that surround the country on almost all sides, in which little towns have gained a foothold. One generally need not walk far in any direction to find other villages with an identical structure.

To give the reader a clear idea of the contrast between the landscape of villages and that of farmhouses, it is best to present now a panoramic view from the vicinity of one of these villages, Egilatz (Eguilaz), which, with fourteen others, makes up the city council (formerly association) of Donemiliaga, and which at the beginning of the century consisted of twenty-three houses with 104 people. Here is a sketch made in 1925 (fig. 12) of Aprikano (Apricano), in the Kuartango Valley. It is quite a bit smaller than the town shown in figure 11, because at the time the sketch was drawn, it had no more than twelve houses and sixty-two inhabitants. It forms a city council with twenty other places, on land somewhat more rugged and bordered more closely by mountains than Egilatz, which is found to the northeast of the great plain of Vitoria-Gasteiz and from which wider horizons can be enjoyed.11

The most important town nuclei of this middle Navarrese-Araba zone are often organized on an old, apparently very clear urban plan. In Araba, Agurain (fig. 14), not far from Egilatz, has a main artery, the
main street, that goes from the door of Santa María to that of San Juan. To the west there is another street, and to the east a third, much poorer. The parish of Santa María to the north gives onto the old wall; that of San Juan serves as a buttress to the south. Opposite them are two town squares or cobbled enclosures. But the part of the capital city Vitoria-Gasteiz from before the expansions of the late eighteenth century is the most complete model we can find of a town built on a plan. It must be stated that the streets plotted along the original axis show slight curvature. There are three on one side and three on the other, crossed by alleys (fig. 13).

The layout of Gares (Puente la Reina) in Navarre is no less significant (fig. 16). Farther to the south, Viana, also in Navarre, and Guardia (Laguardia), which was once Navarrese and today is in Araba, are worthy of study. In any case, both towns fall in a third area, in which the aforementioned types of small nuclei disappear almost completely or take on different characteristics.

In the jurisdiction of Agoitz, in the extreme east of Navarre, the towns are grouped on hills and steep slopes and have generally regular streets on which the houses often lack exterior individuality: Oibar

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**Figure 12.**
Sketch of Aprikano, in the Kuartango Valley (Araba) in 1925, by J. de Marquiegui. The numbers indicate (1) shoemaker’s house (Montoya), (2) farmworkers’ house (Eguiluz), (3) priest’s house, (4) mill, (5) cemetery, (6) farmworkers’ house, (7) roadhouse, (8) farmhouse (Alvaro), (9) farmworkers’ house, (10) farmworkers’ house, (11) house with granary, (12) farmworkers’ house, (13) bar, (14) inn or public washhouse, (15) church, (16) shepherd’s house, (17) farmworkers’ house, (18) bowling field. At the time the sketch was made, Aprikano had 62 residents. It forms a city council within nineteen other places.
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Figure 13.
Old part of Vitoria-Gasteiz. The charter of Vitoria-Gasteiz was granted in 1181. The original plan of the city dates from a somewhat later time. Alfonso VIII and Alfonso X later expanded it as described in chapter 3.

Figure 14.
Agurain (consistent with Coello’s map, “Contornos de Salvatierra”). It dates from a period somewhat later than Vitoria-Gasteiz but is organized along similar, though not as well-developed, urban principles. The area, which is walled, has the parish of Santa Maria at one end (A) and that of San Juan at the other (B), with two town squares or enclosures. The Main Street (aa) connects the two squares. To the west is Zapatari Street (bb), lodgings for nobility in the sixteenth century, and to the east, a much poorer street (cc).
Zangoza. This city stretches along the banks of the Aragón River, over which there is a bridge that also marked the axis of the old part, because its Main Street is an extension of the bridge. Others were designed around it, keeping to a quite geometric plan that was later no longer followed. Chapter 3 presents data on its foundation.

Fitting all the presented facts to a schematic map, we can say that in the Basque provinces (including the French Basque provinces) and Navarre, there are three fundamental areas defined by the forms of their towns, which we will call A, B, and C (fig. 19). However, if we compare this map with other linguistic and anthropological ones, we observe the following:
Gares. In its location there was a settlement called Gares, but in 1124 a queen of Navarre, Lady Mayor or Lady Constanza, had another built next to the bridge for pilgrims to use. Thus, it became known as Puente la Reina (Queen’s Bridge) or Puente de Arga. Its rectangular plan is curious and brings to mind that of other cities or towns situated on important roads, although they are sometimes also built on a squarer plan, as is Briviesca, for example, in the province of Burgos.
Figure 17.
Kaseda. At the beginning of the century, this town had 1,660 inhabitants, of whom 1,649 lived within the city limits, which consisted of 264 buildings, grouped to the left of the Aragón River on a rise. Its lands are rolling and dry; there are irrigated lands, olive groves, and vineyards. It existed already in 1129 and was granted a famous charter. At the end of 1366 it had 98 charters and three noblemen.

Figure 18.
Mendigorria, on the banks of the Arga, with 298 houses and 1,319 inhabitants. There are also irrigated lands. Its name (“red mountain” or “dry mountain”) is among those apparently given at the time of the greatest extension of the Basque language toward the south. The towns in the same jurisdiction, but farther to the south, show little Basque toponymy.
1) There is a relationship between this map and that of the expansion and retreat of the Basque language: In Zone A, the Basque language is in use today, in Zone B it suffered loss from the sixteenth to the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, and in Zone C, according to our data, there was never any great extension of the language, because the landscape varies radically.

2) The same map shows a relationship with that of certain physical anthropological facts.

![Figure 19. Types of town in the Basque–Navarrese territory. Zone A shows great density of inhabitants and extreme dissemination. Zone B has small villages and is the one from which the Basque language retreated from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Zone C has urban nuclei that are much more separated from each other, and it never seems to have been very Basque.](image_url)
Basques observable today, particularly in Zone A. But these observable ethnic characteristics (the present “functional circles”) have been shaped to a great extent by others of the past, about which it is worth speaking.

**Figure 20.**
Topographic profile of Araba and Bizkaia along the dotted line in fig. 19 (according to Ramón Adán de Yarza). (1) Ebro River, (2) Arrabako Errioxa (La Rioja Alavesa), (3) Toloño Mountains, (4) Urizaharra (Peñacerrada), (5) County of Trebiñu, (6) Vitoria-Gasteiz Mountains, (7) Vitoria-Gasteiz, (8) Araba prairie, (9) Legutio, (10) watershed, (11) rock of Anboto, (12) Mount Oiz, (13) Urregarai (Santa Eufemia), and (14) Mount Otoio (Otoyo), on the Cantabrian Sea. Zones A, B, and C are also indicated.

In fact, the described forms of town cannot be explained as a result of the action of modern man on a modern object. The meaningful elements presented by the Basque–Navarrese mountains and rivers to the rural and urban societies of our times are different from those presented to the societies of the various past generations, each of which saw something different within the same horizon and acted in a different way. What we see today is, to a large extent, the product of successive acts, of equivalent functions, carried out by societies with specific and typical cultural characteristics. To speak of adaptation to the environment, of evolution, and of the other concepts common in geography and history is to commit the sin of vagueness.
The biological cycles are in keeping with social structures and forms of government that vary with time, such that, as we will show, such reconstructions are hardly meaningful for the researcher.

In the most remote epoch about which we have reliable data, we know that the oceanic Basque territory was populated by a few groups of humans who lived in natural caves, near riverbeds and streams, or near beaches. But these settlements are not very interesting from our point of view. Nor do we need to say much about the epochs immediately thereafter. We will simply state that in the far south of Navarre there are still
man-made caves that are inhabited in towns with significant populations (fig. 21) and that this habit of constructing caves seems to have remote antecedents in Hispanic protohistory, in a specific cultural circle that apparently has little relation to the present Basque complex.

Figure 21. Man-made caves in Navarre, according to the data published by L. Urabayen in 1929:
All in all, the first archaeological evidence of the formation of “towns” corresponds to the Eneolithic period, in which almost all of the Basque mountains and ranges were covered in small dolmens. Barandiarán notes the relationship between dolmenic points and shepherding establishments of a particular type, such that one might think of a similar use of those highlands, from ancient times until the present, based on the possession of herds of sheep and other animals (fig. 22).¹

![Figure 22](image)

Relationship between the dolmenic and pastoral zones of the Basque Country (according to the data provided by Barandiarán). The horizontal lines indicate dolmenic zones; the vertical lines, pastoral zones. The curving lines indicate the borders of climatological zones: (A) Cantabrian, (B) subalpine and alpine, (C) lower western and eastern mountains, (D) middle, and (E) Ebro riverbanks. It is worth examining the collection of maps in this book to note the correspondence of the areas.

This economic exploitation of the highlands has not had a very direct influence on the form of the nuclei of permanent towns that exist today. We find proof that there were settlements in places similar to the ones where they are seen today in the middle of the Iron Age. Systematic research in Navarre, as well as some explorations in Araba and a few in Bizkaia, indicate that in that distant time there were peoples who populated defen-
sible hills and slopes near rivers. In southern Navarrese toponymy (and generally also in the toponymy of Aragón and Old Castile) names such as Castejón (Arguedas), Castellar (Xabier or Javier), and Casquilletes (Galipentzu) are often meaningful and refer to highlands with ancient ruins and vestiges. Leaving aside the most ancient ones, which show the least varied (though very typical) archaeological material, and the most modern ones (Roman), which we will discuss later, let us consider those that can be classified as post-Hallstattic, such as those of Etxauri, in the middle of Navarre, and those near Vitoria-Gasteiz (Kutzemendi, Salbat ierrabide, Iruña Oka) and Guardia (Santa Engracia).

These are very interesting, in fact, because they indicate the existence of a society of farmers and ranchers, always ready to fight, who had a certain central European technology, based on their ceramics, weapons, equipment, and farming implements.²

The study of the culture of these peoples poses many problems (some of which we will address later), but for now, continuing with the historical analysis we have already begun, we will state that not much later, primarily in the lands near the Ebro, there were urban nuclei of relative importance. In the middle of the first century AD, in the extreme south and center of Navarre, we find proper cities that apparently were founded much earlier. They existed in Araba as well. With respect to the lands farther to the north, the texts mention only ports of little importance and a few Roman mining or military outposts.

This is significant. In the first place, it clearly shows, in my opinion, that the pattern of concentration claimed to be typical of the southern, “not very Basque” region is as ancient as the cities mentioned earlier. But today we are able to state that the pattern of small villages in the intermediate zone also has Roman roots. Two methods of research, the archaeological and the linguistic, lead us to this conclusion. Using the first method combined with the data found in classical texts, one can produce a map of the Basque Country in Roman times (fig. 23) on which we note (1) the relationship between the large cities (old Latin colonies, federated or stipended) and areas farther from the sea and (2) the greater proportion of Roman remains in the zone between the two largest known roads (in Navarre, to the south of this zone, and in Araba, to the north), remains that do not always reflect urban concentrations (fig. 24).

Whereas in the prehistoric and protohistoric period human life developed preferentially in the highlands, the Romans brought it to the
plains to a large extent, establishing something of the greatest transcendence, which we have already mentioned: general circulation sponsored by a strong state. It is likely that there were previously some commercial and intertribal routes, but the notion of the public road that exists today started with the Empire. Moreover, the lists of cities that appear in works such as the tables of Ptolemy reflect first and foremost a network of road communications that can be reconstructed hypothetically and that is not yet well adapted to the terrain (see fig. 24).

However, the cities that were connected by these roads, in the full swing of the *pax romana*, took precautions against possible enemies. The excavations carried out in some of these cities show walled enclosures, such as that of Iruña Oka, in Araba. But more appealing than archaeological exploration of this type (still little developed) is the task of determining what remains of the ancient urban structure in cities that exist today. Can this be carried out in Iruñea, for example, where there are traces of a walled enclosure that suggest a city that was not very large, probably fortified under the Lower Roman Empire, and that later suffered various fires and temporary devastations, with their subsequent reconstructions? In the Basque language, Pamplona is the “city” par excellence: Iruñea. It is curious to note that the same name is borne by the aforementioned deserted town in Araba, which is full of vestiges of an ancient splendor, and by others even outside the Basque Country, such as the Iruña of El Moncayo.3

This provides an opportune moment to begin to speak about the second method we must follow in trying to gain an image of the ancient settlements: the linguistic method.

Toponymy has always been a particular passion of Bascologists and Bascophiles, among whom the oldest ones, such as Garibay and Ohienart, made good discoveries in this field. But in later times, the ones who followed them leapt into dangerous speculations. In any case, the authority of these early Bascophiles was sufficient to spread the idea that Basque place names almost always alluded to natural physical characteristics or features that were, above all, descriptive. When some of us, in more recent times, have reacted against this exclusivist tendency and have tried to explain several names, relating toponymy with anthroponymy, we have not earned much popularity in the attempt, and even less upon stating that a great number of Basque place names are inexplicable in light of the present-day language.4 In any case, among people of scientific stature, our attempt has not been unequivocally rejected, quite the contrary. And this fills us with a satisfaction that mitigates our bitter
Figure 23.
Map of the Basque Country in Roman times, according to old texts and archaeological and epigraphic data. On this map the following can be seen: (1) the greater density and importance of the cities of the south on the banks of the Ebro (Zone C on the map in fig. 24), (2) the frequency of somewhat isolated findings in the intermediate zone (Zone B), and (3) the scarcity of such findings in the Cantabrian zone (A).
impressions when we were the object of violent and excessive attacks. Yes, the country is riddled with “descriptive” names. No one doubts it. But other names are not descriptive and, furthermore, are consistent with the principles and rules of naming known in all of Western Europe. Why cling to theories of historical prejudice or theories that are respectable for their age but not for their precision?

The middle and southern areas of the country, where there is a relative abundance of Roman archaeological finds, are also rich in place names composed of a personal name together with one of several Latin suffixes, of which I will now point out two:

1) -ana; for example, Antoñana (from Antonius)
2) -ano; for example, Aprikano (from Aper), Vitoriano (from Victor)
The first maintains the sound it probably would have had in Latin. The second comes from Latin -anus in its accusative form, which lost the -m early on. Such names are most common in Araba, and in vast proportions of the Empire they were given to a personal possession, to a villa or fundus. Others, borne most often by possessions in the Celtic zones, also had a personal name, but one ending in -acum or -aca. These were rare in our country (although there may be a few), but we can report a fair number of names ending in -iecus and especially -icus (with the same functions), from which some present-day names descend directly, such as Kuartango (Quartanicus), Durango (Duranicus), Eltziego (Elciego), Lantziego (Lanciego), and Samaniego.

But I believe that the very numerous names ending in -ez and -iz, such as Marquinez (today, Markiz; whose base would be Marcinicus, genitive Marcinici, giving the present and medieval name Markiniz) and Okariz (Ocáriz), also derive from names ending in -icus. We also find names of towns connected to old possessions that have the following endings: -eia (Hereña), -oña (Argandoña), -aña (Artomaña), -oño or -oñu (Betoño or Betoño, Toloño), -on (Armiñón), -ica (Langarika or Langarica), and various others. The first six correspond to the following Latin ones: -enia, -onia, -ania, -oniu(m), and -oneu(m) (sometimes attested to in medieval documents). Araba is the province that has the greatest percentage of names with these features, but there are also many in Navarre, fewer in Bizkaia, and even fewer in Gipuzkoa. On the other hand, in the middle region of Navarre, many names of towns consist of a personal name and the ending -ain, which is phonetically related to Latin names ending in -anu(m).

The examination of the first part of such toponyms, the part that corresponds to a personal name, is very useful in determining the approximate date of the foundation of the fundus or town in question.

Many toponyms have a close relationship with the anthroponyms that appear in Latin inscriptions from the same zone or from neighboring areas. Thus, for example, in Kontrasta (Contrasta) we find a dedication that says Araica Arai f(ilia), and to the north of that town in Araba, in the foothills of the Altzania (Alzania) mountain range, there is a town called Araia (Araya; also written Araia in medieval documents), and to the southwest, in the county of Trebiñu, a town called Araiko (Araico). Even in Navarre we find a whole valley, the Araitz Valley, that must be related to an old fundus Araici.
The name of the *fundus* did not change through the centuries. Its first possessor was cloaked in a sort of mythical-legal mist. Additionally, the public tax office needed property lists that were not under constant modification. Although in Roman law there is room for many heirs of a single piece of land, they simply inherited parts (*unciae*) of the *fundus*. If the *fundus* could not be divided, it also could not be added to. That is, a rich man could not combine two contiguous *fundii* to form a single one under a single name. If he acquired two, each maintained its former name.

Sometimes the nature of the possession is seen even more clearly, for example, in names in which the word *villa* appears, either at the beginning or the end of the word, as in the names of Viloria (today, Biloria), Villambrosa, Berantevilla, Elenivilla, and Lacervilla, all in Araba.

In Gaul, it appears that the towns that have *villa* at the end of the name are older than those that have it at the beginning, and there is no reason to think that in our country it would happen the other way around.

But apart from this, we can affirm that the foundation of new settlements with names like those above and other ones, such as the ones very common in Navarre ending in -*oz* (e.g., Lekarotz or Lecároz, Urdanotz or Urdánoz), related to patronyms with the same ending, lasted from the first century AD to the eighth or ninth centuries. In the Middle Ages, the aforementioned word *uri* appears to have been used as an equivalent of *villa* in the Roman sense; thus, *Obécuri* (today, Obekuri) is equivalent to Spanish *Villaobeco* and *Obeco*, a well-known proper noun. Nevertheless, the formation of names of this last type may have begun in a very primitive era, since we know that a city in the south of Navarre consecrated to none other than T. S. Graco was called *Gracurris*.

There are many European countries in which it has been possible to determine definitively the size of the *fundus* and many of the facts, in addition to strictly archaeological ones, that should be kept in mind in such a task. First, we will focus on the density of toponyms of the types discussed earlier; second, on their relationship to administrative or other divisions that are traditional in the country; third, on the network of roads; and finally, on accidents of terrain and their botanical characteristics. I am not in a position to give a preview of the research I am doing on this topic in Vasconia, but I will say that in Araba and Navarre, the *fundus* seems to be medium in size, neither too large nor excessively small. It is likely that in the south, where vestiges of large towns have been found (Lede in Navarre, Cabriana in Araba), they were much larger than in
the middle, valley region. There is reason to think of different purposes according to size. In the Empire, in any case, a great number of possessions were operated by the master through his “family” of slaves, who were divided according to the labor they performed and who lived in a sort of barracks. But this had its disadvantages, and other factors also contributed to the establishment of different systems.

According to a well-known text by Varron, there were three necessary elements for the use of the fundus: the first, called the instrumentum vocale, consisted of the slaves, farmers, shepherds, and so on; the second (instrumentum semivocale), the animals; and the third (instrumentum mutum), the tools.

In principle, the Roman legislators apparently did not trouble themselves unduly to specify the links between the fundus and the instrumentum. But in the fundi of the Lower Empire, there was concern that the functional link not be broken. The lawyers did not stress the reality of the economic complex, speculating only abstractly on the topic. Nevertheless, it is known that since very distant times, rural societies, in which family life was the axis of the economy, accepted as logical this link that, in the Middle Ages, gained great legal importance.

Where there were no large villas, the rural slave with his family must have enjoyed great importance since ancient times as a type of serf. In Araba, various inscriptions tell of slaves and their wives who did not seem to have lived in the barracks. On the other hand, inscriptions that are also in Araba and Navarre indicate the existence of free people of no great economic position, and in the most important urban nuclei there are reports of more powerful peoples, including Roman citizens.

Before continuing, let us note that a great number of names are classical Latin, that a smaller and more localized number appear to be Celtic (analogous to the place names of the north and northwest of Castile), that there are hardly any “Bascoid” names, and that the rules of derivation of Latin or Latinized names are the same as those in other parts of the Empire.

It is not at all strange that, in the last years of the Empire, there was already a sort of aristocracy of the country, whose representatives maintained their names and most of their goods through many dark years, until the beginning of the Reconquest. I believe that this can be defended bearing in mind the latest epigraphic research done in Navarre, which has highlighted, for example, the possible existence of Roman Fortunatus and Fortunius (Ledea), which could have been related to the Fortunes of the first Navarrese dynasties.
Unfortunately, from the time of the aforementioned Latin inscriptions until the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, documentation about our zone is very scarce, and even more so that of a social or economic nature. Quite a few of the recorded toponyms may date from that dark period rather than from classical times. As in the whole northern zone, the Germanic peoples never settled definitively, and it is natural that there would not be place names consistent with classical norms but with a Germanic element (the personal name). This begins to be found in certain parts of Burgos and is most widespread in Palencia, Valladolid, and Zamora, to Galicia.

In any case, we know that the cities situated along roads lost strength at the time of the invasions, in wars such as that of the *bacaudae*, or rebel peasants (who in the fifth century caused much violence in the Basque territory), and in insurrections against the central power by the less Romanized inhabitants of the mountains, seen at the end of the fourth century.

We can say little of these, because whereas Bizkaia has the odd archaeological Roman remains, Gipuzkoa is very poor in them, as are the whole north of Navarre (the *saltus Vasconum*) and the French Basque Country, in whose extreme north Baiona gained a certain military importance in the early fourth century due to general insecurity.

Toponymy suggests possible Roman agricultural establishments in the heart of the present-day Basque lands (the small Gipuzkoan town of Orexa would be the ancient town of Aurelia, for example), but they are much less common, and most of the names seem to come from later times or to be of another type. In the French Basque Country, Romanization appears to have played a greater role. In addition to the fact that, as noted earlier, present-day Baiona at the end of the fourth century was a military fortification in which there was a cohort for the defense of the peaceful populations of Novempopulania, we know that the same rural populations of Tarbelli organized themselves in a similar way or, as seen in other zones of Gaul and the Empire, by placing a figure of authority called *magister pagi* at the head of a small territory. One of these rural judges is memorialized in the famous inscription from Hazparne (Hasparren), which allows us to state that in the Basque Country there were other Roman civil and priestly magistracies (flamines and duumvirates). Toponymy perfectly supports what the epigraphs indicate. There are names there ending in *-ain* (Azkaine or Ascain, Domintxane or Domezain, Ozaraine or Osserain), and others in *-itz* (*-iz*).
Roots of the Present Types of Town: The Middle Ages in Araba and Navarre

It is possible that at the end of ancient times the inhabitants of the remote territories of whom we spoke at the end of the previous chapter were still subject to a quite archaic native system, which influenced some of the features of later rural life. However, I do not believe that truly distinctive vestiges of such a system can be seen in that type of town, although there are vestiges of rural districts or cantons.

Based on what is known in general about Western Europe, we can place at the beginning of the medieval period an increase in the rights of the woman as an owner. Various town names clearly express her importance, which continued in later centuries: Recall that the most important towns include Biloria (Orta is a very well known feminine proper name) and Elenivila, in Araba. But in my opinion, in the north of Spain, the concept of the female heir (which will be examined later in this chapter) is older and must be related to the “maternal right” in pre-Roman towns, such as Cantabrian towns, which I have analyzed reliably elsewhere.

From the fifth to the twelfth centuries, at least, the entire country was subject to a quite anarchical social system, which is worth examining briefly. The general circulation typical of the Empire was weakened but did not disappear completely. Cities lost prestige, and mountain boundaries took on a meaning that they did not previously have. The countryside, the axis of life in general, was dominated by obscure little chieftains, in whose presence the Visigoth state was unable to show either sufficient strength or sufficient talent to establish definitive control. Nor did the Franks to the north achieve more than transitory and conditional submission. The mountain ranges of Araba and Navarre served as a barrier against all that arrived from the south. Sometimes the Visigoth kings
or Frankish generals achieved a military victory and believed themselves to have dominated the Vascones, but their dreams of definitive peace soon vanished.

To explain a resistance to the Germanic monarchies of the sixth to eighth centuries like that reflected in the chronicles in a land as small as the Basque territory, one can note (1) the great density of population, (2) the great dispersion of population, and (3) the robust network of roads and paths, suitable for maneuvering with great mobility and for preparing raids and retreats, disorienting the enemy.

In any case, one can imagine a general authority that around that time began to exert a strong and new influence on the country: the Church. In the southernmost part of Araba and Navarre there were already Christendoms in Roman times. Little by little, these must have extended the work of conversion to the north, along the major roads and in the primary urban nuclei. Christianity was promulgated throughout the countryside through the foundation of monasteries associated with the ancient fundi. This explains why the population of the north of the Basque Country (generally conservative) continued to associate the existence of every temple with a monastery even well into the Middle Ages. The existence of institutions of this type has been verified in Araba and Navarre up to the eighth century, although we have very little concrete data about those times. The toponymy in which saint names appear has its origins in this period, even though there was a greater push later to continue creating temples under the protection of different saints.¹

The old rustic or urban town acquired with its annexation to the Church distinctive features that make it very similar in structure to the more modern village. But if its inhabitants found themselves thus protected spiritually, if a not very well-defended manor house was sufficient to satisfy the demands of family and daily life, the need for authority made every feudal settlement raise a small or medium-sized fortification or defensive structure. Since very early times, the Spanish countryside has been characterized by the quantity of small towers and castles scattered across it.

Classical historians speak of those that the Romans came across in their campaigns, both in the Iberian part of the peninsula and in Celtiberia and Lusitania, but the Romans always took a dim view of them, considering them simply more support against their hegemony. But if they were destroyed, others followed, since at the time of the Germanic
invasions the Hispano-Romans had to seek refuge among them, as Hydatius recalls.²

At the end of the fourth century, most agricultural towns probably protected themselves with a small fortress against raids by bandits, as was the case in other parts. But it is certain that the creation of these turres and castella increased even during the Visigoth period, and from them the Hispano-Roman nobility of La Tarraconense carried out repeated actions against the Germans. The words dorre (tower) and gaztelu (castle), especially the latter, must have been introduced into the Basque language in very ancient times. All of the most distant medieval history that we know through documents features the following:

1) lords or masters of such towers and castles and of agricultural towns
2) clergymen associated with monasteries
3) workers of the ancient farmlands

The actions of all of these have been engraved indelibly on the rural landscape. They are also observed in various aspects of modern social and economic life, and even in the language. From the diplomatic point of view, we have more reliable data beginning in the ninth century.

But what happened in these northern regions as a result of the disaster of the Visigoth army sent by Roderick? Was there a certain continuity of life or, as a late medieval tradition would have it, was a large part of the Basque territory populated almost from scratch, beginning in the eighth century?

The former is much more likely than the latter, given that the tradition to which we refer (on which various eighteenth-century and later historians based hypotheses) shows that those who supported it were unfamiliar with the data on names that we have been examining.

With respect to Navarre, we know that the Muslims occupied the banks of the Ebro for quite a long time, that their settlements in the central mountainous zone did not last long, and that the Pyrenean and Cantabrian areas always remained out of their control.

Araba suffered repeated raids from the eighth to the tenth centuries, but above the Cantabrian mountains it appears that there was no Muslim control of any permanence.

However, the need for a methodical and orderly defense led to the development (if not the creation) of political organizations that are of great interest inasmuch as they created, in their turn, a great many new social and economic functions that changed the traditional structure.
The Basques by Julio Caro Baroja

The penetration of the Goths into the central territory of Navarre and Araba could never have been very great, based on what we know. Thus, when leaders who had arrived in Asturias from the south, which is the border with the Basque Country, founded a small monarchy copied from the Visigoths, not only did they have to fight the Islamic armies, but they also continued, like the earlier Gothic kings, to fight with the Basques. Alfonso I (739–756) held some jurisdiction over cities of central Araba. Shortly after he died, his successor, Fruela, had to quash a rebellion by the Vascones, and for this purpose he captured a girl of Basque lineage, whom he married. These Vascones of whom the chronicles speak apparently were not only those known as such in ancient times but also the inhabitants of Araba, since during the seizure of Mauregato, according to the chronicles, the legitimate heir of that king took refuge in the land of the relatives of his mother, in Araba. In the ninth century the uprisings continued, both by towns and by various men of power. But as noted earlier, institutions destined for greatness developed at the same time.\(^3\)

First, we must recall the Navarrese monarchy, whose origins remain completely obscure, and second, the counties, Araba in particular.

For the inhabitants of Navarre and Araba of those distant centuries, the landscape offers some “meaningful elements” that would not have been so clear earlier, in the mountain ranges and passes. If we divide Navarre according to its mountains and examine this division with the eyes of the historian, we will notice a line of fortifications that indisputably coincide with several other landmarks of the Reconquest and also with the first conflicts of the Christian “states” among themselves. In Araba two such lines can be clearly seen. One goes along the mountains that follow the southern border, the plains of Vitoria-Gasteiz; the other, farther south, runs parallel to the Ebro.

It is useful to note how these two lines of castles stand in relation to the northern reach of the area of villages, towns, and cities (founded at various times) that show greater concentrations, whereas the typical zone of villages lies to the north of the old fortresses, which must be distinguished from the rural towers mentioned earlier and to which we will return later.

It was undoubtedly the government of these castles that gave rise to the formation of counties. They were barely a few years old when they inspired serious quarrels with the Leonese and Navarrese monarchs, being a source of discord. The county of Araba, which at the end of the ninth century was governed by a gentleman of the Vela family, in
883 the defender of Cellorigo (Celloricum Castrum of the Albeldense chronicle), was united with the county of Castile, with Fernán González (whose marked hostility toward León is well known) and his successors. Then it passed into the hands of Navarrese monarchs until 1076, when Alfonso VI took control of it. Very little of it remained under Castilian jurisdiction. At the end of the twelfth century, the monarchs of Navarre continued to hold power over it, and it was not until 1200 that what are today Basque provinces definitively joined Castile. These political vicissitudes have given rise to many different interpretations and have polarized the opinions of many historians. It would have been much more useful in our opinion if, instead of the discourses to which we are accustomed, they devoted more discussion to the social and economic conditions of the life of the people of those remote times. Let us present a succinct idea of that life.4

A county such as Araba, in the ninth and tenth centuries, would have been inhabited by families of various types. At the head of the family, there was consistently the supreme civil and military chief: the conde. Then came the princes and lesser condes with private lands, that is, the most distinguished personages of the country after the conde, and the seigniors and barons, who possessed real estate and human beings in many places, the ancient nobility of the land without government distinction. Below them was the pueblo, that is, free people who would have been small landowners and who were summoned, as were the nobility, to testify in certain cases or to ratify agreements and other documents. The servants and serfs who lived in isolated manor houses that were independent of that of the seignior (casares in the documents of the time) lacked such powers.

The fundamental unit of population was the town, with its church or monastery. This is certainly not the classical Roman town but something that looks much more like the present-day village, including in very concrete traits. Agriculture and livestock were the bases of subsistence; it is hardly worth speaking of industries other than the milling of grains in privately owned watermills, and a few blacksmiths (ferragines) also associated with monasteries or secular lords. In the southern part of the county there were many cultivated vineyards, but in general, according to documents, abundant apple orchards were more common. There were no larger cities or towns, and the villas or vici were grouped into districts that can be considered the forerunners of the large seigniories and of the later associations and city councils, which bore different names.

Many documents of the time to which we refer justify this brief description, particularly those of the cartulary of San Millán de la
Cogolla (in present-day La Rioja). But furthermore, they are rich in allusions to events such as the following: donations by humble monasteries to other more important ones, made by people who had rights over the former; the foundation of monasterial churches, which were also provided with land and other economic resources (serfs, livestock, farming implements: the *instrumenta* of the ancients); donations of private estates of variable size; distributions of inheritances (hereditary “currency”); and the link between families of servants and specific houses in specific places. Throughout the documents, we find mention of different classes of working lands (flax fields, wheat fields, barley fields), vineyards, meadows, apple orchards, and orchards of other fruit trees. The use of natural pastures and firewood was regulated, as was that of the waters of the streams that turned the wheels of the mills.

There was no shortage of lands to settle, nor of whole towns under a single master, nor of the absolute seigniory of a single nobleman over a monastery. But it is most common for property to be divided in each old district, with each town having houses, vegetable gardens, and lands of the various types mentioned earlier belonging to different owners of different social standing, who could also have had interests in Castile and other regions.

Roads and paths of different sizes marked the boundaries of properties when they were not marked by streams or certain trees, as happens now.

The social structure, expressed graphically in figs. 25 and 26, and the corresponding economic system were related to territorial divisions, civil ones, in which we can distinguish the following population entities (from small to large):

1) place: *vicus*, a town together with its associated lands, divided or undivided
2) associations of towns, valleys, and city councils (in central Navarre, around Iruñea)
3) county

With respect to ecclesiastical territories, we find

1) monastery (parish)
2) monasterial district (in Araba, that clearly defined by the San Millán Codex)
3) archpresbyterate
4) archdiocese
5) bishopric
Figure 25.
Schematic representation of the structure of society in Araba in the early centuries of the Reconquest showing the different social classes: (A) the count with his peoples; (B) the lords and barons, that is, the first grade of rural nobility; (C) the second grade of rural nobility, that is, those later called *infanzones* (noblemen with limited legal authority); (D) tenant farmers and towns in general; (E) servants and serfs; and (F) prisoners and slaves of war.

Figure 26.
Schematic representation of the relationship of the topographic structure with the hierarchy, illustrating the connection between the tower, church, or monastery of secular patronage and the *casares* with their nobles, tenant farmers, and serfs, assuming that the seigniory is undivided.
That is, we find a large social complex, despite how elementary the economy was. First, this division does not prevent the existence of the large estate, but it would have been a dispersed one, usually monastic. San Millán is the monastery with the most property in Araba, property that carries feudal jurisdiction. We have much less information on the secular seigniories of this time, although we do know how nearby lands grew into new towns, how the lord with his serfs and a varying number of animals and tools put unsown or abandoned lands into use, placing them sometimes at the service of a given church or monastery. These seigniories also had a center, the regular residence of the lord, around which there were probably lands designated for his exclusive maintenance and use (*terra in dominicata*). There is clear evidence of later manor houses, used most frequently by the most powerful families in Araba. The lands of the serfs and tenant farmers were distributed regularly in a fair way to maintain a family, in which there were always extra sons and daughters with different destinies, who primarily settled new towns.

The names of inhabited places that appear in the old cartularies are of three types: (1) those related to the names of owners of the ancient *fundī* and *villae* that we examined earlier, (2) saint names, and (3) names of some other descriptive or allusive type, easy to translate into modern Basque. In the aforementioned San Millán Codex (1025), we find many examples of these, including Arçamendi (bear mountain), Bagoete (beech orchard), Essavarri (new house), and Hurizahar (old town). Newly settled places could no longer bear only the name of an owner because their property may have been divided from the beginning, and to name them one had to resort to descriptive names or the names of the saints who were the patrons of the local temples.

The development of descriptive toponymy meant that, to a great extent, the origin of the ancient names was lost, hence some popular etymologies that have changed the spirit of certain ill-advised linguists.

Navarre soon had a capital in which the highest ecclesiastical office of the kingdom was seated: the bishopric of Iruñea, which seems to date from very distant times, just like other more southern seats from which the Christianization of the north undoubtedly stemmed in part. Although around the tenth century the ecclesiastical head of Araba was not in an important city, Iruñea already controlled Navarre. Calahorra, the ancient metropolis of the Basque territory, remained for a long time outside Christian control, captive of the Arabs. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been studied in detail to what extent the monarchical principle developed in Asturias and Navarre since very early times.
(and apparently so little loved by the people of the intermediate regions) is related to the existence of old Episcopal seats in cities of a certain size, and to what extent the bishops were (as in other parts) their most tenacious defenders and propagandists. There are good reasons to think that, from the beginning, the higher urban clergy sympathized more with institutions that showed some sort of religious character, such as the royal ones, than with those of a less solemn type, such as the county, which belonged to more threatened lands.

There was great piety everywhere, but the interests of the higher clergy and those of the founders of the churches and monasteries in the country were certainly not one and the same.

The structures of the towns of the simple nuclear type, which we described earlier, and the multinuclear type, can now be said to have had definite precedent before the tenth century. It would be worthwhile to investigate what relationship they had with old processes of deforestation. I consider it very likely that these processes originated in circular preserves, in plowed lands such as those that gave rise to names like those common in Asturias, Galicia, and other parts of Spain, such as Redondo, Arredondo, Redonda, and Redondela. Mention of the “round preserves” as the lands associated with a particular place are common in Navarre and other parts. In some cases, some longitudinal towns may also have an equally remote origin. It has not yet been investigated whether there are any on the edges of ancient forests that adopt the same form, as in Germany, for example, and in the territories colonized by the Cistercians, who are known never to have had any importance in these zones, in contrast to the Cluniacs, who in the Kingdom of Navarre quickly gained the protection of the monarchs, with Santa María de Nájera being among them. But let us leave this aside and speak of another event of great importance.

Beginning in the eleventh century, there begin to appear population entities characterized by features very different from those of the ancient sites. I speak of the towns founded by monarchs (first of Navarre, then of Castile, by the lords of Bizkaia and others also), where there lived a more heterogeneous population given to business and trade. The second half of the Middle Ages was characterized to a large extent by a continuous battle between the towns and cities, founded or protected by monarchs and lords with sovereign powers, with a strong middle-class and artisan element, and the villages controlled by the old lords or jaunchos, who were often enemies of each other. It is obvious that the great liberation of a large number of the settlers of the country arose from the struggle
between the defenders of seigniories and the monarchic system, which continued in full force until the beginning of the sixteenth century. And with the settlers’ greater economic independence came changes in the construction of houses, in the types of crops, and so on.

Once the Roman–Visigoth municipality had collapsed and the Ebro was controlled by the Arabs, it cannot logically be thought that certain institutions that had been inherent in their more archaic forms continued to exist in Araba and Navarre (and even less in the rest of the country).

To resolve their collective problems, the inhabitants of these places met in a sort of council, as stated earlier, in what in Basque is called batzar. The vici, the burgos, did not have a very complex administrative structure, and entities with a large population, such as valleys and associations of towns, were subject to their particular seigniory and apparently to tumultuous and chaotic assemblies; in Araba, Gipuzkoa, and Bizkaia (the names of the last two of which begin to appear frequently at the beginning of the period to which we refer), the discrepancies that arose in the more general assemblies resulted in fierce battles whose theater of operations was the countryside, the mountain ranges, and the crossroads.

In Navarre, the situation had become even more complex, given the greater geographic and ethnic complexity of the kingdom. In fact, since very distant times there existed cities and urban nuclei, in the south of ancient Vasconia in particular, that were occupied and settled by the Muslims and used according to their most perceptible interests. With the exception of Iruñea, one need not seek them farther north than the zones of intense irrigation, farther north than the present-day reach of the olive tree, farther north than the great lands without bread. Once these territories had been reconquered by the monarchs of the first Navarrese dynasty, it was necessary to surround the ancient cities with fortified walls so that they could be defended against the great periodic expeditions of the enemies of Christianity and be given a new, solid civil and religious organization. But at the same time, they soon belonged to a border zone with rival Christian kingdoms. In addition to natural causes (e.g., the lack of abundant water), the persistence of the concentration of population thus had other clearly social causes.

The kings of the first dynasty mentioned earlier, men of vigorous personality, were able to shape the structure of these new lands to their liking. Nevertheless, the discrepancy between the monarchy and the nobility, whether that with limited legal authority or the nobility in gen-
eral, was always perceived. The noblemen, to defend their interests and resolve their quarrels, held regional and other more general meetings with great independence; the Assembly of Obanos is the best known of these. With the Champagne dynasty, the opposition between the centralizing, systematizing spirit of the monarchs and their closest servants and the particularist spirit of the nobility became clearer. Thus, the kingdom generally appeared to be divided into two sectors that, to some extent, are reflected topographically:

1) that of the nobility and their dependent serfs, spread throughout the country
2) that of the monarchy, located primarily in the cities of the central and southern zone

On the other hand, there exist on the same slopes of the Pyrenees whole towns or valleys, such as Erronkari and Baztan, whose inhabitants are recognized as a group by the lesser noblemen beginning at a particular time. 7

All of this has an observable material expression. It is known that the old Navarrese cities of the central and southern areas were fortified, expanded, and protected by the monarchs of the first dynasty. At the same time, other ones were founded on new plans. The clearly planned structure of Gares, on the most ancient known and documented southern border of the Basque language, cannot date from earlier than the year 1124 (fig. 16). Viana, which has also been put forth as an example of a planned city, was founded by Sancho the Strong in 1219, who also favored Irunberri. Zangoza dates from the year 1132 (fig. 15), granted it was given its charter of settlement earlier.

It was common in Navarre for the monarchs to assemble various residents of small places in the highlands of a territory to plan new “burgs” or cities in the lower part of the territory, just as was the case in Zangoza and Lizarra. The population quickly divided itself into rival neighborhoods for various reasons. An old and famous example of these rivalries is Iruñea itself. At the beginning of the thirteenth century (1213) the present-day capital consisted of four parts: La Navarrería, considered the true “city”; the “town” of San Nicolás, and the “burgs” of San Saturnino or San Cernín and San Miguel (fig. 27). The burg of San Saturnino, inhabited by Franks, apparently dates from 1129, and it is very likely that its distinct ethnic character and different social status produced the first conflicts and hostilities.
The quarrels were extremely violent, and the king had to enforce agreements and compromises to make them stop. But we know that they continued in 1222 and that years later each part (which had a separate council) took an opposing position when Queen Juana came to the throne and Castilians and Aragonese interfered in the business of the kingdom. La Navarrería, incited by García Almorabit, declared itself against the queen and in favor of the Castilians, and in 1277 it was sacked and burned by an army sent by order of the king of France (from whom Juana had requested protection). Later, in 1422, the government of the city in its undivided form was established, and the arguments among its neighbors that began at that time were of another sort and shaped by new and opposing interests.

Irunberri, one of the neighborhoods settled by noblemen, was a fierce enemy of another, settled by the Franks (1396). There is record of these Franks in Lizarra, Gares, Los Arcos, Tafalla, and even in small towns such as Lantz and valleys such as Larraun, and they are clearly different from the Navarrese. Together with the street vendors, they formed the most industrious class of the towns. There were also special areas in the cities inhabited by Jews. Indeed, the Jewish quarters of Iruña, Lizarra,
Lerín, and Tutera were famous. Franks, Jews, and Muslims developed the industry, business, and horticulture of the city, while the servants and tenant farmers continued farming and shepherding under the rule of some rather inhuman laws.8

The French dynasties tried to channel the nobility in a particular way, making it more courtly. But until the annexation of Navarre and Castile, the nobles, subject to the system of courts (once the ancient assemblies had been suppressed) and legally categorized into governments, districts, and so on, did not lose their partiality.

The beginning of a new phase of general road circulation with large roads coincides with the formation of towns with a new plan and was inspired to a great extent by a religious imperative: the pilgrimages to Santiago. The Orreaga (Roncesvalles) pass (which became so famous thanks to the epic poem about Roland) began to be used as a common entry to the peninsula by pilgrims from far lands, who in other areas also followed the route of one or many ancient Roman roads. In the twelfth century, it was still dangerous to pass by that spot, because the Basques of the mountains felt no great benevolence toward the passers-by. But little by little, the main road and the secondary ones used for the same pious purpose gained more security as lodgings and shelters were established along the way and supported the expansion of commerce and various spiritual activities (e.g., artistic styles, religious reform, literary genres).

However, these roads avoided the Basque–Cantabrian territory as much as possible. When the pilgrimages started, this area was still too lacking in higher authorities that could provide support to the pilgrims.

In short, the social structure of the southern zone of Navarre was, as we have said, much more complex than that of Araba, in principle. The middle zone, bordering on Araba and Gipuzkoa, was subject to a system that was more anarchic at first glance.

From the early period of the Reconquest, the conflicts between small neighboring states manifested themselves in a clearly economic way in the burning of crops and robbing of livestock of the enemy. The *Poema de Fernán González* frequently alludes to the predations of the armies of the Navarrese monarchs in Castile. But this predatoriness (which was consistent with local banditry and was already reported by classical historians to be typical of the Iberians and Celtiberians) had a more continuous and local expression. The mountain ranges of Urbasa and Andia, the mountains that form the Aralar massif (greatest center of
dolmenic sites and present-day shepherding, we recall) were throughout the Middle Ages the constant refuge of bandits and outcasts, of people who had become outlaws because of some misdeed or crime, who lived in huts or caves, and who, forming small gangs, organized raids to take control of the herds of livestock that grazed on lands held by the nearby villages, taking them up to the highlands.

By the late Middle Ages, similar mountain lands began to be used peacefully by the towns and areas on flatter lands. This does not mean that the monarchs and civil and ecclesiastical barons did not have authority over them and did not organize a police service against the bandits. But we must not forget that the rural nobility under discussion was in constant complicity with the bandits and that the borderlands of the mountain ranges allowed them great mobility. The invoices of the expenses incurred in the persecutions carried out on the “front lines of the evildoers” fill a great number of notebooks in the Cámara de comptos in Iruña. To the west, the Castilian monarchs were weaker in imposing general order; until almost the end of the fifteenth century, as we will see, insecurity reigned in the countryside, because the native organizations with the deepest roots, instead of imposing order, encouraged disorder.

With respect to Araba, historians of the country speak of a very ancient institution that had all-embracing powers not only in police matters but also in matters of a wider character: the famous Arriaga guild. Much has been fabricated about it. But it is clear that it existed before 1258, at which time its members made an important transfer of property. The guild consisted of noblemen of different ranks, from princes, ricos omes, and infanzones to simple squires, who met on specific dates for special purposes. The greatest activity of this guild took place at the same time as the creation of royal towns. The monarchs, whether from Navarre or Castile, were founding one town after another, and the nobles were scattered throughout the countryside in a chaotic way. The guild was incapable of achieving agreement, and because it was not able to counteract the Castilian and Navarrese powers, it may soon have divided into two groups, one supporting an alliance with the neighbors to the east and the other one an alliance with those to the west and south. The monarchs made use of one or the other as circumstances dictated, until the Castilians triumphed.

Concerning a little place of minimal importance, Gazteiz, Sancho the Wise of Navarre founded a town that has come to be the capital of Araba: Vitoria (today, Vitoria-Gasteiz). Its plan, extended and readjusted from the twelfth century onward, was composed at the beginning
of the next century, of three streets (numbers 1, 2, and 5 in fig. 13) that soon ran from the parish of Santa María (A) to that of San Vicente (B). But Alfonso VIII added three more streets that ran west and were called La Correría, Zapatería (cobbler’s street; 7), and Herrería (blacksmiths’ street; 8). Farther out were the “Cercas altas,” which gave their name to a fourth street (9), and farther still were the “Cercas bajas.” In 1256, Alfonso X caused another three streets to be built in the eastern part of the town, also dedicated to specific trades: Cuchillería (cutlers’ street; 12), Pintorería (painters’ street; 13), and Judería (Jewish quarter; 14), renamed after the expulsion of the Jews from the “Calle nueva de dentro,” as distinguished from the “Calle nueva de afuera” (15). The town with its walls remained like this for many years. Going north one left town through the Arriaga or Bilbao gate (IV); to the northeast was the France gate (III); to the southeast, the King’s Gate or gate of Navarre (II); and to the southwest, the Castile gate. Outside the walls were the “Tenerías” (tanneries; 16), and near them, the place where the rope makers worked. The cross streets and alleys led to several more gates, named mostly for saints.

In the fifteenth century (1496), Vitoria-Gasteiz had two thousand houses and various poor areas outside its walls; the regulations of 1487 mentioned the “poor quarter,” which was at the very back of the market, the slums and the shantytown. Farther to the east of Vitoria-Gasteiz, at another site, a town with new features was created and was named Agurain (whose charter dates from 1256; fig. 14); it was built on a plan similar to that of Vitoria-Gasteiz in its early development. Farther to the south, Guardia was founded by the same king who founded Vitoria-Gasteiz (1165), and its status as a military town remained obvious until the Modern Age, when a walkway was opened along its walls, as in many villes mortes of France.

We could also examine other less important foundings carried out from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. The monarchs granted charters here and there, and three facts related to their concession are worth mentioning:

1) A great number of the attractive places were located on what was the border between Araba and Navarre, a border that had to be defended carefully from each side because the country changed royal jurisdiction several times.

2) These places also correspond, overwhelmingly, to the zone of the greatest agglomeration. Names such as Laguardia (today,
Guardia), Labastida (today, Bastida), Peñacerrada (today, Urizaharra), and Portilla (today, Zabalate) allude to their strategic position; Salvatierra (today, Agurain), Villareal de Álava (today, Legutio), Monreal (today, Elo), and La Puebla allude to their legal status.

3) Various places took advantage of the royal charter to free themselves of the violence of the nobility of other neighboring places, as San Vicente de Arana did.

Some medievalists of the nineteenth century, fascinated by the spectacle of the battles between the nobility and the monarchy, painted an extremely lyrical picture of the benefits that the latter obtained for a large part of the population of Europe. Others spoke of the “bourgeois freedoms” as something obtained solely through the efforts of the common people. And there are also those who find the seeds of democracy in the old assemblies of nobles. Nevertheless, the reality of the situation must have been very different for the main players in the events described and explained by all these authors a posteriori. The division of any society into two sides or bands is such a normal thing that it is impossible to apply only the criterion of social class or institution to explain the battles that arise within it. If we specifically examine the case of the history of Araba in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, we can say neither that the events are due exclusively to the struggle between opposing powers (nobility and monarchy) nor that the aforementioned liberties were the product of the will of a single class. As in all epochs, each of these factors contributed a small effort to the common good and another much larger effort to sowing unrest. The clearest expression of the battle lies in the city and the country as hostile entities, but it is certainly not the only one.

For example, Vitoria-Gasteiz took away more and more jurisdiction from the Arriaga guild in its bordering lands; Agurain, to a lesser extent, also took away lands and towns. The guild also had to cede control of the markets and fairs to these two cities. Before their foundation, there were two rural markets in the county of Araba: Estibaliz (Estivaliz, a place also famous for its beautiful Roman temple) and Divina. But Vitoria-Gasteiz and Agurain gained privileges that made these markets disappear. In the time leading up to the concession of the fairs of Vitoria-Gasteiz, the increase in local wealth that such a concession entailed was emphasized. The market of Vitoria-Gasteiz had such fame that it is common in some of the Basque Country to use a formula that
refers to it at the ends of stories.\textsuperscript{10} The social structure of the country, organized vertically as we will see, was opposed by a new, more horizontal one: that of the men of the royal towns, who constituted different associations directed by people who had the confidence of the monarchs (fig. 28). The network of roads and streets between new cities or towns and existing cities was becoming more and more dense; one must study its development bearing the successive concessions of fairs and markets in mind. However, one should not believe that even around the fifteenth century it was particularly comfortable to travel on them. Through the centuries, a great number of towers and small castles, many of which are still almost complete across the whole north, had been raised at each pass, at the entrance and exit of each valley, and at carefully chosen strategic points. The owners of such fortifications considered the settlers of the royal towns to be enemies and upstarts. To defend their rights, which they believed threatened and reduced, they sometimes had to invent a whole history in which they presented themselves as the descendants of the original settlers of the country and highly deserving for having worked the hardest in the first period of the Reconquest.

\textbf{Figure 28.}

Schematic diagram of the structure of society in Araba in the cities founded from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. In the upper part of the social sphere is the king, who generally lived outside the country. Below, his direct representatives in city life (a); the artisans, grouped according to their trades, occupy a lower position (b); and a separate class is constituted by the settled Jews and Moors (c).
It was not only royal authority that worried them; there were also the ecclesiastical authorities, who refused to recognize the legitimacy of their traditional interventions in the country churches. The first known interpretation of Basque history dates from this time. But in reality, the luck of the rural nobility had run out; its lack of cohesion above all else destroyed their credibility. The idea of lineage (still so deeply entrenched throughout the Cantabrian area today) caused the members of the Arriaga guild to split into hostile bands, as mentioned earlier, on various general and specific issues (sometimes ones of pure etiquette). What Lope García de Salazar recounts about the origin of the division between the Oñacino and Gamboino clans is a history invented posteriori. It is more likely and more consistent with what we said earlier that the seeds of the division can be found in the two tendencies toward which the nobility of Araba could be inclined at the time: the Castilian, represented by the Mendozas, and the Navarrese, led by the Guevaras. Later, any pretext was good enough to cut throats. During the entire fourteenth and a large part of the fifteenth centuries, the phenomenon of family or lineage battles repeated itself over and over in the Basque Country; such battles have also been reported in other parts of Europe. Nor were they free of the plague, these towns of royal patronage where families of nobles had settled and placed justices and magistrates among themselves as best they could. The battles between the Ayalas and Callejas in Vitoria-Gasteiz are memorable. Rustic nobles threw themselves into frankly criminal activities, including one Pedro de Abendaño, who, in the company of his bastard sons, robbed the merchants who went from Burgos to the Cantabrian as they crossed certain mountain passes in Araba, or the Múxica brothers, who did the same in Bizkaia. The laws of Navarre speak of gentlemen who devoted themselves to banditry.

Neither industry nor commerce could develop peacefully in that region or in others. But because the economic needs of Castile were greater and greater and the seaports were growing in importance, it is not surprising that they sought a remedy to this chaos and that this particular violence was dominated by the coercion of the most powerful organizations. The clan wars played out in the fifteenth century, in the times of Henry IV of Castile, and the means by which the monarchs and towns tamed the old families was the hermandad, a sort of urban militia. By 1304, Vitoria-Gasteiz had one of its own, confirmed by Ferdinand IV. Years later, in 1315, together with other towns of Araba, it joined the hermandades of Castile, Galicia, León, and Asturias, and in later documents it is shown in a close relationship with all those of the
Ebro region. In 1417, Trebiñu, Agurain, and Vitoria-Gasteiz formed an *hermandad* with its own regulations to counteract many of the crimes that were committed in the territories under their jurisdiction. The king made almost all the population entities that today are in Araba join this group, from which there arose the institution that governed Araba from 1467 to very modern times. Once the province as such had been constituted, it was divided in 1566 into six squads, each of which included several *hermandades*.
Before talking about certain phenomena specific to the Modern Age and their influence on various features that are perceptible today in the landscape, we should go back and deal with lands that until now have almost always remained in the shadows: Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, and the French Basque provinces of Lapurdi, Zuberoa, and Lower Navarre.

The documentation we have on the more remote medieval periods of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa is extremely scarce. There is more information on the Basque lands on the far side of the Pyrenees, because they are close to lands that had a firm state structure dating from ancient times. In fact, beginning in the seventh century, there is information on dukes of Aquitaine and Vasconia, who held relatively effective jurisdiction over them under the aegis of the Merovingian monarchs.

Eudes was the most famous of these monarchs; he lived at the time of the Saracen invasion. Later the dukedoms changed, and we find various small states that correspond in part to present-day divisions and states ruled by counts and especially hereditary viscounts. The Frankish influence is obvious in this matter, as in others. The vice-county of Zuberoa appeared in history at the beginning of the eleventh century and apparently belonged to a family until the end of the thirteenth century. That of Lapurdi did not last so long because, at the end of the twelfth century, the last viscount sold his rights to the king of England. Basque borderlands such as the Baztan Valley, Arberoa (Arbéroue), and Baigorri (Saint-Étienne-de-Baïgorry) were also vice-counties of limited duration. Similarly, other outsiders of the same origin were introduced into these territories but must be distinguished from those of the
late medieval period, whether imported by the Navarrese Champagne
dynasties or ones associated with Lapurdi, especially the officials of the
English crown, beginning with the marriage of a Plantagenet to Eleanor
of Aquitaine.

But in dealing with the people of Lapurdi, Zuberoa, and Lower
Navarre, we see that their organization was essentially very similar
to that already described as typical of Araba and Navarre. If we take
Zuberoa as an example, which is the farthest away from the central
Basque nucleus, we find that at the beginning of the Modern Age (and
probably also much earlier) it was divided territorially into three parts:
Upper Zuberoa, which had two sections (le val dextre et le val senes-
tre), Lower Zuberoa (with the lands of Arié [Aroue], Lariúntze [Laruns],
and Domintxane), and what was called Arbaila (Les Arbailles), which
also had two sections, the large and the small. Each territory or section
thereof within this tripartite division formed a degairie or deaner. With
respect to the hierarchy, the nobility was divided into two groups. The
first rank was held by the potestats, who were no more than ten fami-
lies settled in the same domecs or domains; the second, the gentlemen,
would have been four to five times more numerous. With them were the
clergy, and the tiers état held its assemblies separately. The assembly of
Lextarre (Licharre) was the primary organization of the country. At one
time it was called the cort deu noyer because it dictated its sentences at
the foot of a walnut tree. They exercised a private justice separate from
other rural authorities in their business with precise territorial jurisdic-
tion (bailliage).

In Lapurdi, the general assemblies took place for a long time in
the forest of Haitza (Haitse), near Uztaritze (Ustariz); the biltzar of
Uztaritze is famous in the annals of the country. Also in Lapurdi there
was a stratified society, with the domengers at its head, and below, the
rural masses, who for a long time remained outside the great medieval
movements. In fact, while notable battles developed to the north and
south, the obscure settlers of the valleys and crests near the sea lived
closed in on themselves, as they had lived from the fourth to the tenth
centuries.¹

It can be claimed that in middle and Western Europe there was no
nucleus that assimilated the Christian doctrine later than the one that
today is formed by Basque speakers as a whole. The legend of Saint Leo,
bishop of Baiona, says that he Christianized the settlers of the forests of
part of Gipuzkoa and oceanic Navarre, which until the sixteenth cen-
tury belonged to the diocese of Baiona. Other monks around the ninth
and tenth centuries must have done the same in other mountain towns. Coinciding with this are other facts of social and economic importance. Beginning under the late Roman Empire, Baiona appears as a significant town in southwest Gaul. The modern name of Lapurdi recalls its ancient one (Lapurdum). Throughout the centuries, the name of the city is found rather sporadically, until in the ninth century, the Normans took control of it and also destroyed the whole central area of France. It has not been studied to what extent the Basque nautical tradition (and specifically that of Baiona, of which we have very detailed information beginning in the eleventh century) may have had its fundamental beginning in the time at which the Normans made their expeditions and were fought by the Aquitainians in general. There are indications of a link between the two facts, but it is clear that Baiona, after the time of pirate control and following a process similar to that followed by many other cities of the West, became a commercial city, a bourgeois portus or commune in which there was soon a certain concentration of industry. The first merchants and industrialists were recruited from among the peoples ousted from their lands and perhaps also from among former pirates and adventurers. The district of Baiona in the twelfth century was large (fig. 29).

The works of the cathedral prospered, as did the bishopric. The viscounts of Lapurdi ceded more and more rights to the booming town, and in the background a certain rivalry grew up between the town and its bourgeoisie on one side and the surrounding countryside on the other. In remote times, we find here a legal and administrative autonomy, the jus mercatorum, in an embryonic state but in a form that would be difficult to find in the Spanish Basque Country. At the end of the thirteenth century, there already existed some customs of Baiona written, like almost all documents from the area, in the Gascon patois. And it is interesting to note the quantity of religious and professional corporations that were present one century later. In addition to the guilds of Saint Andrew, Saint Nicholas, Saint Leo, Saint Augustine, and Saint Gratian, the Carmelites, Saint Francis, and Saint Peter the Martyr, there are guilds of sack makers, makers of lance shafts, pot makers, weavers, gilders, barmen, barrel transporters, ox drivers, makers of leather aprons and heavy wool coats, oven makers, millers, barbers, grape growers, lathe operators, boatmen (galupers), passengers, furriers, shoemakers, boatmen from Sordes and Mont-de-Marsan, bricklayers, saltwater fishermen, freshwater fishermen, house carpenters, fishmongers from the port, pharmacists, haber-
Figure 29.

Ancient, medieval, and modern Baiona. This diagram, taken from the one in *Le missel de Bayonne de 1543* by V. Dubarat, p. XIII, which was taken in turn from Ducéré and Dufourcet, authors of the end of the past century, shows, first of all, the Gallo-Roman district (A). Second is the Bourg-Neuf or Baiona Ttipia (Petite Bayonne), on the other side of the Errobi (Nive) River, and the district that was walled in the twelfth century (B); the rest seems to be of less ancient creation. The line of black circles marks the limits of the urban area in the twelfth century, according to Ducéré, and the outer one, expansions up to the fourteenth century. On the other side of the Atturi (Adour) River was the neighborhood of Espiritu Saindua (St. Esprit), where the Jewish quarter was; this area was very important in the sixteenth century. Numbers 1 and 2 show the wall and the street of the Basques. Other streets have names that indicate that they were inhabited by people with particular trades: Poissonerie (3), Sabaterie (4), Boucherie or Carncerie (5), Argenterie (6), and de la Mounnoie (7) in Baiona Handia (Greater Baiona). The street of the coopers (8) lies in the Baiona Ttipia. Here, as in many other medieval cities, many names of streets and places came from convents, churches, and ecclesiastical dignities.
dashers, coopers, rope makers, ship carpenters, seamen, town councilors, and clergy. All appeared in the Corpus Christi procession of 1398.²

The prosperity of navigation and commerce in Baiona undoubtedly served as an example and stimulus for the other peoples of Lapurdi and the coast of Gipuzkoa, both of which saw great development in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There was an undeniable influence of the middle of France on ports such as those of Pasaia and Donostia, where for a long time documents private and otherwise were written in Gascon. Nevertheless, most Gipuzkoan towns with a population of merchants, artisans, seamen, and so on, built on a formal plan drawn up then or a little before, obeyed interests that arose because of other contacts.

In early medieval times, when for the first time the word Gipuzkoa appeared in documents, the territory that today comprises that province (the smallest in Spain) was divided into valleys and similar rural districts that were taken into account by the Church when fixing the borders of the dioceses, as happened, for example, in a papal bull of Celestine III (1194) concerning the diocese of Baiona: Donostia appears as a point in the valley of Oiartzun. In a Navarrese document in which the borders of the bishopric of Iruñea are set, various other valleys are mentioned that today are Gipuzkoan. Whether or not this document is in fact from the period it is assumed to date from (1027), it was undoubtedly written with real divisions in mind.

Within each valley there existed various human groupings, in the form of villas in the old sense. Thus, Aia and Elkano (Elcano) appear in the donation to San Salvador de Olazabal, made in the time of Sancho the Elder of Navarre (1025). These villas had an associated monastery or temple, and in most cases they were probably older than the larger agglomerations in the surrounding area, which began to appear with such strength in the twelfth century³ and to which the same name was often given later.

The increase in population, which seems to have occurred in almost all of Europe in that century and the next, must have been perceived clearly in that area of the Basque Country. Such an increase had to favor concentrations of population, the newly founded towns. But other factors also must have contributed to these towns, such as the following:

1) the existence of royal power (in Bizkaia, of lords with sovereignty) that managed to put into intensive use specific natural resources and certain settlements with an obvious economic future, especially the ports
2) the need to protect the territories from bordering states with ancient designs on them (Navarre) and from the rural gangs
3) the increase in land and sea trade

These are factors very similar to those that combined in Araba and Navarre.

The first concentrated towns in Gipuzkoa, with the exception of Donostia, whose famous charter dates from the time of Sancho the Wise of Navarre (after 1150), owe their existence, like entities that had a charter, to thirteenth-century cartas pueblas, documents specifying the distribution of lands and rights to the settlers of a newly founded town, and the first of such populations were the sea ports: Hondarribia (1203), Mutriku (1209), Getaria (also 1209), and Zarautz (1233).

Later we see the foundation of towns in the interior of the province, on border routes and in border areas: Tolosa, founded like others of the north on the basis of the Vitoria-Gasteiz charter, apparently dates from 1256, like Ordizia and Segura. Mondragón (today, Arrasate) is a town founded by Alfonso X a little while later, in 1260, in the ancient land of Arrasate, and Bergara appeared in 1268. Then some years passed without more foundings until in 1294 Monreal de Deva (today, Deba) was founded, and from 1310 to 1338, twelve of the best-known towns in Gipuzkoa were founded.

The reasons for granting charters were always defensive and economic. Men behind walls feel more secure in the face of enemies from within or without and have greater possibilities for achieving wealth.

Thus, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, there were twenty-four chartered towns in Gipuzkoa, in the central part of a territory in which there were also many inhabitants “strewn throughout the mountains and wastelands,” according to some charters (such as those of Elgoibar and Zumaia). In any case, I believe that what is meant here is mostly settlements of the simple nuclear type, or multinuclear ones, rather than absolute dissemination.

In one hundred years, and in accordance with the same or similar principles that were at work in the toponymy of Araba and central Navarre, new Villareals, Villagranas, Monreals, and Salvatierras were settled in the ancient valleys. Today we sometimes use their names as they appear in the documents of their foundation, but at other times, we also drop the Castilian part, leaving only the Basque part that completed or individualized the name, or we use only the Castilian. Thus, we sometimes speak of Villafranca de Oria (Ordizia), other times of Zumaia (pre-
viously Villagrana de Zumaya) or Deba (Monreal de Deva), and other times simply of Villarreal (or Villareal de Urrechua, today Urretxu). Finally, some names have disappeared completely from circulation, such as that of Salvatierra de Iraurgui, which was given to Azpeitia.

It is curious to pin down the relationships of these towns with the valleys and territories in which they were located. Soon (as happened in Araba with Vitoria-Gasteiz and Agurain) they began to have jurisdiction over numerous surrounding places, “villas” in the original sense, municipal districts, or “parish lands,” as they are sometimes called. At the end of the fourteenth century Tolosa had jurisdiction over twenty-three; Segura, over nine; Ordizia, over eight. The reason for this annexation was that the people of the countryside believed themselves to be better defended in this way. Otherwise, they continued to have their marked boundaries and private lands.

Beginning in the times in which the new towns were multiplying, the struggle between the royal power and the rural families, which were grouped into bands that had formed in their particular assemblies, became greater and greater until the country lords found themselves under great pressure in the time of Henry IV of Castile.

In the darkest periods of the Middle Ages, it seems that there were some “lords” of the Gipuzkoan territory in general. But they later lost authority, and when Gipuzkoa joined the monarchy of Castile, its government ended up in the hands of other offices. Its powers took shape over time until, in 1375, seven mayors were named, of whom three had jurisdiction over the large mayoralties, Aiztondo, Areria, and Sayaz. When the mayors failed in their duties or the guild considered it convenient, general assemblies were called by turn, mostly in the towns founded by royalty and according to hierarchical regulations. The large mayoralties tried to group the rural population in a manageable way, and it was hoped that the ordinary mayors and other offices would be elected without reference to factions and lineages. But the results of the first laws of 1375 and of other later ones were felt slowly. In 1397, it became necessary to write some very meticulous ones; John II and Henry IV passed yet others. In this way, Castilian law was introduced into Gipuzkoa, and because of a lack of lawmakers as systematic as those who wrote the Old Law of Bizkaia in 1452 and its more modern versions, it produced serious anxiety in the country. In the south of the province there still exists, as a reminder of the past, the seigniory of Oñati, to which Leintz-Gatzaga and Eskoriatza were added, a seigniory similar to those that in Araba had other houses, without the stature that the Bizkaian one came to have.
At first, Bizkaia seems to have been divided into rural districts and valleys with their corresponding municipal districts. There, as in Araba, small lords reigned everywhere, there being mention of servants and serfs as late as the eleventh century. Little by little, the most important public powers ended up in the hands of a lord of the whole territory, who belonged to the house of Haro, which issued the founding documents of the most famous present-day towns and cities. Durango remained outside Bizkaia. It may be the oldest town of those that are important today. Almost all the others are even more modern than many of the Gipuzkoan towns.

Thus, Bilbao dates from only 1300, Markina from 1355, and Gernika from 1366. In 1379, however, the seigniory passed to the crown of Castile, after its last possessors suffered serious setbacks in maintaining their legitimate rights before the population of the country, to whom they had to concede special charters that were later expanded and modified until they ended with the servant classes, with the monarchs recognizing the nobility of blood of all Bizkaians and at the same time promoting industry and commerce.4

The individual, executive authority of the lords was to some extent mediated by a different collective authority, represented by the general assemblies. The origins of both are shrouded in a dense mist. The first local historians speak of Jaun Zuria and other equally legendary lords, recognized in assemblies to justify, no doubt, an interpretation of the history of the country that was somewhat hostile to the monarchy.

The general assemblies were held upon the summons of the feudal lords to solve problems of the highest importance (such as that of swearing in a new lord), under the oak of Gernika and sometimes also under that of Arechabalaguna (Morga). Five horns blown from five mountain peaks and the same number of bonfires announced them. The peaks were those of Gorbeia (Gorbea), Oiz, Sollube, Ganekogorta (Ganecogorta), and Kolitza (Colisa). In the assemblies great discrepancies became obvious, such that to enforce his authority (and even more so when the seigniory passed to the king), the lord had to surround himself with a number, even if a small number, of high-ranking officials and encourage certain establishments. The rural nobility rebelled as much as it could against all this, but, as in Gipuzkoa, it suffered a definitive defeat in the time of Henry IV, and its most distinguished members were deprived of their lands.5

The seigniory was traditionally divided into five administrative districts: Busturia, Uribe, Arratia, Zornotza, and Bedia. Markina and
Durango were added to these in the fifteenth century, and later still, Orozko (Orozco). In Busturia and Zornotza, there were three “chartered mayors”; in Uribe, Arratia, and Bedia, two (fig. 30). But, additionally, the lord (later the king, with more interest) maintained

1) a magistrate, who had a general lieutenant in Gernika and another two lieutenants in Durango and Enkarterri-Las Encartaciones
2) a vidame with a deputy for Durango and another for the other administrative districts
3) an administrator in each administrative district, except in Uribe, where there were two, and their corresponding deputies

If this weren’t enough, when he founded towns, the lord named mayors with special jurisdiction. Thus, Bizkaia was divided

1) by the discrepancies that broke out in the general assemblies between some feudal lords and others
2) by the distinction between the areas under lower nobility (the country) and the towns, which had different laws
3) by the administrative districts
The struggle between the municipal districts and the towns founded by Bizkaian lords was extremely important in the fifteenth century. Gernika, which in accordance with its foundation privileges must have had some four leagues of property, was reduced to its nucleus or urban center. Bilbao then began its memorable battle with the municipal districts, which actually lasted until the nineteenth century, since its commercial power and constant growth inspired great envy among the jaunchos of the surrounding area and some less fortunate neighboring towns. The industry and business of Bilbao produced as a natural result a set of social and economic problems. But these were most serious in the Modern Age, as we will see in the next chapter.⁶
The Development of the Basque Town in the Modern Age

Shortly after the constitution of the large guilds, such as that of Gipuzkoa and the one that governed Araba beginning in 1467, a series of events modified, once again, the social and economic structures of the Basque Country:

- the conquest of the kingdom of Granada and definitive suppression of the Muslim states
- the intervention in European politics of the Catholic monarchs and their successors
- the discovery of America and the first wave of colonization
- the annexation to Castile of the Kingdom of Navarre

The actions of the different social classes in all these enterprises produced a radical change in their lifestyle in both the city and the country. In the first place, the old families, who had been attached to the homeland for centuries and some of whose ancestors in the fourteenth century had moved from the country to put down roots farther to the south, in Castile and even Andalusia, felt more and more attracted by the brilliant careers that could be had at the side of the monarchs or in the government of the state. This is clearly seen in Araba, where the Mendozas, the Ayalas, and the Guevaras produced a number of distinguished figures in Spanish literature and in politics.

From the geographic point of view, the ancient seigniories seemed to be very well established in the Early Modern Age. The “lands of the duke” and “lands of the count,” both in Araba, were territorial designations of a character known by all inhabitants of the country. But there is no doubt that the seigniories lost significant social importance. Wars such as that of the communities caused some lords, such as the count of Salvatierra, to try to recapture the system of the feudal lords. The les-
son was exemplary. As time passed the seigniory changed—especially if it was very large—into an honor that fell, with many others, on the shoulders of the representatives of families little known in the towns and villages that formed it but very famous in the Castilian courts and cities. Counts such as those of Orgaz, Ayala, and Salinas and dukes such as those of El Infantado and Frias, as lords of the towns that constituted the guilds of Araba, acted from afar in the election of mayors and magistrates and the naming of rural chaplains and clergy. Often the nobles and state’s agents purchased the seigniory together, as in the case of the Kuartango Valley, which had been confiscated by the crown from the count of Salvatierra and sold in the time of Charles I. Often, also, the local personages brought lawsuits against people in higher positions, as happened in the eighteenth century concerning the county of Ayala (today, Aiara), which was owned by the duke of Berwick.

Thus, the true leadership of each town passed into the hands of one of the richest residents, or the most capable noble, from those of the ancient lord, who was largely absent. On the other hand, the men who returned from Americas, soldiers of fortune and so on, began to fill the old districts of the towns with sturdy mansions and new styles. The process of building them continued in crescendo until the eighteenth century. The towns were expanded and, above all, larger new town squares were built in which to hold festivals and markets in full comfort. The oldest commercial buildings that still stand today in cities such as Vitoria-Gasteiz also belong to the beginning of this period or the end of the preceding one; the town squares planned with the greatest majesty and art belong to its later years. But we will speak of them later.

A common phenomenon in the Modern Age, largely the result of the greater circulation of money, is small seigniories being passed from hand to hand through successive buying and selling. People who had gotten rich in different ways, primarily merchants, acquired them to be able to boast that they belonged to the aristocracy as much as to take advantage of them economically. On more than one occasion former merchants and speculators suddenly became lords. This appears to have happened in the north of Spain, and it is also clearly seen in the south of France, in the French Basque Country.

By the sixteenth century, the towns of Navarre often managed to salvage not only the seigniories but also the rights of patronage over the rural churches and other privileges. Similar rescues were on the rise in the centuries that followed. Thus, for example, Bera purchased what remained of the seigniory of Altzate (Alzate) and the sponsorship of the church in
The monarchs granted rights of township and honorific titles to the border towns. There was no shortage of valleys that had gained general nobility and that at various times published the ancient proofs of their accreditation to appeal to the treasury or for other purposes, such as the valleys of Baztan and Orba. In several of these, such as Zaraitzu (Salazar), the families of proper nobility tried to distinguish themselves, through carved coats of arms placed on the façades of their houses, from those of collective nobility. This is the time at which the science of the coat of arms began to have some systematic cultivators, who maintained meticulous registers and lists of noble families; under this system, being the “lord” of a house, even of a farming house, is an honor that is appreciated.

In Navarre, as in Araba, until the time of the courts of Cádiz and despite the trend of towns being salvaged, there were, as in the rest of Spain, large seigniories with the full range of features entailed, and even more so in modern times, despite the laws passed then. In the liberal period that ended in 1823 there is record of the existence of tributes, services, and so on of a clearly seigniorial origin, as we will see later. Until this time also, the mayors and authorities of the nobles and gentlemen and those of the townspeople continued to be elected in different assemblies. In any case, the boom of the city as an entity was large and can be seen clearly in the number of town halls and city councils that were built, with majestic proportions and great wealth, from the end of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth centuries.2

In Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, where the monarchs recognized the right of nobility of all the natives of the country, the ventures in Americas and other military, administrative, and industrial undertakings led to a remarkable flowering of parishes and municipalities. Once the lineage wars had ended, the rustic manor houses were rebuilt for more space and comfort. Money from outside contributed greatly to the houses in the towns, often broad, spacious, and artistic. City expansions and urban reforms were put into place everywhere, sometimes taking advantage of fires and destruction due to war, and the streets and houses were designed to follow a general plan.

The clearest and most common expression of the expansions is in the town squares, which were constructed according to an architectural plan and are presided over by the town hall. Some old plans of Basque and Navarrese towns display the innovation very well, in front of old town squares and fairgrounds, near a church or placed at crossroads. The expansions of Iruñea and Vitoria-Gasteiz, with their magnificent town squares placed at the foot of the oldest part of the city, set the stan-
The Basques by Julio Caro Baroja

dard. Other town squares, such as the “old town square” of Donostia, open into the old part, as can be seen by comparing the plan of that city drawn by Baillieux in 1719 and that of Tofiño in 1788 (fig. 31): in the latter we see the plaza, which still exists today, that was raised from the ashes of the fire of 1813. Something similar happened in Tolosa (fig. 32): The stone colonnades and many-storied houses bring to life these squares, which were inspired by those found in the capital city and most famous cities of the interior.

**Figure 31.**
Donostia in the eighteenth century. The larger figure is taken from the “Plano de la plaza y puerto de San Sebastián” created by Vicente Tofiño de San Miguel in 1788, and the inset is from the “Plan de St. Sebastien et de ses environs” (Paris, Chez le Sr. Baillieux, rue St. Severin au Soleil d’Or à côté de la bonne Foy, 1719) and from the *Introduction a la fortification*, by M. de Fer (Paris, 1723), which are almost identical. There are notable differences between these two figures, the main one being the appearance, in the more modern one, of a large and planned town square. This town square, which is located partly where Amasorrain and Embeltran streets were previously, was made following the design by Hércules Torrelli to avoid the disturbances that took place in the old town square before the church between soldiers and peasants during public events. The city burned in 1813 and was rebuilt, and much improved, following the 1788 plan. This reconstructed area as far as the Boulevard is what is now called the “old part.”
But in the more humble towns, in which such extravagances were not permitted, the stone arches were reserved for the city council building, whether baroque or neoclassical, and for certain other public buildings, such as market houses, schools, and tollhouses.

Additionally, much greater funding was needed for harbor works and new types of defensive fortifications, necessary because of the existence of large neighboring rival states. In some towns, such as Donostia and Hondarribia, these two types of works were combined, with the plan of the latter, for example, being very typical in the eighteenth century (fig. 33) in that the fortress is clearly seen, as is the fishermen’s neighborhood outside the walls, the two serving completely different functions. The designs of other small ports such as Mutriku, Deba, and Pasaia (figs. 34, 35, 36) are less severe in appearance. Even at the very edges of the sea there are still scattered settlements, however, whose buildings
contrast with the clusters of tall and narrow houses that define the port landscape of the aforementioned towns and others, such as the Bizkaian towns of Ondarroa, Lekeitio (Lequeitio), and Bermeo, that have been popularized in paintings and etchings.

**Figure 33.** Hondarribia in the eighteenth century according to the “Plan de Fontarabie,” of Baillieux, 1719 (see fig. 31). The drawing of the fortifications has been simplified, as has that of the church (a), the castle (b), and the orchards. The neighborhood of La Magdalena is on the right.
Figure 34.

Mutriku, according to the plan of the port and the coastal area belonging to the town as drawn in 1901 by the “Comisión Hidrográfica.” It is believed to be one of the oldest ports in Gipuzkoa. In another time, its irregular central area was surrounded by walls with five gates. In the early nineteenth century, there were 210 houses within the walls and 125 without. Among those of the interior there were many very imposing seignorial houses. For its commercial enterprises, Mutriku used the port of Deba; Mutriku’s own port is very small and appropriate only for flat-bottomed boats and small fishing boats.

Figure 35.

Deba, according to the plan drawn by the “Comisión Hidrográfica” in 1901. In another time it was an important port for Castile, but it declined as Bilbao prospered. It is a town founded by royalty (it was originally called Monreal de Deva), situated in territory that was considered to belong to Itziar (Iciar) before 1293.
Pasaia in the eighteenth century, according to the plan by Tofiño (1788). The scant development of the two city centers (Pasai Donibane or San Juan and Pasai San Pedro) can clearly be seen, in contrast to what the port has today with completely new neighborhoods, such as Trintxerpe (Trincherpe) and Pasai Antxo (Pasajes Ancho). The castle, now in ruins, still had strategic importance at that time. Jurisdiction over the port of Pasaia caused many controversies in its day.

The concession of fairs and markets, which at the end of the previous period were multiplying, continued to be made during this period, and a commercial hierarchy was established among them that must have prevailed until the beginning of the rise of industrialization and remains in effect today to some extent, although it is threatened.

Thus, in Navarre today one sees curious subtleties in certain types of commerce with deep historical roots. First of all, there is the marketplace, such as that of Irurtzun (Irurzun), which is a simple meeting place for strangers. Second, there is the town that, in addition to the periodical market (weekly, biweekly, or monthly), has permanent businesses on various streets, such as Lizarra. The market city tends to steal impor-
tance from the rural periodical markets. In addition to these, there are the fairs that are held once or twice a year and that offer much greater attractions. Thus, there is everything from business activities that are purely regional (which can show the existence of a “human region” characterized since ancient times) to superregional ones or even national ones, which are rather specialized and with different vicissitudes. It is evident that modern means of communication will change the state of things, which by the sixteenth century already had some features that were comparable to those of the nineteenth century.

Although the old towns of that time may have been expanded and improved, which suggests great prosperity, not all aspects of economic development were favorable for them. In Gipuzkoa, for example, Tolosa, Ordizia, Segura, Urretxu, and Bergara lost much of their territorial jurisdiction when villagehood was granted in 1614 to almost all the little towns that had previously belonged to them, and more similar concessions continued to be made. Thus, towns that are important today, such as Irun, received that status at a very late date (1817), and very old parish territories and municipal districts were again called villas, this word now containing a meaning that it did not originally have. A comparison of the rights of such towns with those of the seigniory is seen in the ironic telling of an event that happened in the towns neighboring Oñati. Every afternoon in the summer, when the count went to sleep for his siesta, a vassal or several of his vassals would go down to the streams near the palace and say to the frogs,

“Ixillik ao, ixillik ao
Kontia jauna lo eiten dao.”

(“Be quiet, be quiet,
the count is sleeping.”)³

The Gipuzkoan of the Goierri or Beterri, not to mention the coast, saw in Oñati a reminder of the feudal past and commented ironically on it.

Up to now we have clearly seen the link between the circle of spoils and the circle of enemies in the constitution of towns, whether ancient, medieval, or renovated in the Modern Age. It is not difficult to imagine the meaning of a walled city in a strategic area, nor that of an ancient village near a seignorial tower with its temple on one side. Nor is it difficult to guess the reason for the town expansions and urban reforms of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Between the “phenomenal world”
and the “effector world” of the inhabitants of cities, towns, and villages, there was successive and clear coordination in these two types of basic functions such that they influenced the collective mentality. We can thus establish the following division of historical periods:

1) up to the thirteenth century: period of the control of the seignorial structure
2) the thirteenth to the fifteenth: period of struggle between the seignorial and the royal structures, with the political triumph of the latter, and economic and social triumph of newly founded towns
3) the fifteenth to the eighteenth: period of the growth of provincial and municipal structures, and of commerce and industry

The tendency toward concentration of the population and the building of neighborhood houses with three or four stories, which were seen in the Basque port towns probably beginning in the seventeenth century, became more widespread in the nineteenth century with the great industrial revolution and the appearance, in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia especially, of important manufacturing centers. The towns of Bilbao, Eibar, Soraluze, and others were already famous throughout the whole peninsula for their arms factories, but after the First Carlist War, the process of industrialization gained unsuspected speed, a situation that continues today and that will undoubtedly bring an end to a great number of the ethnological traits that can still be seen at present.

If such a process is of great interest from the social and economic points of view, we must by no means consider it entirely negative. Anyone who intends to determine the most marked physical, linguistic, and cultural characteristics of the Basque people, although he may allow the inclination toward industry as one of the more recent ones, must dispense with the analysis of this tendency in itself as it appears today and carry out his investigations in the areas less affected by industry and where it arose on the remains of the past. The zone of dissemination is one of fundamental interest; the large cities are hardly interesting at all in this sense.

But the scene is not very clear when we try to solve the problem of the origins of the disseminated population. From the point of view of economic and social functions related to the circle of the environment, the circle of spoils to some extent, and the circle of the sexual, it could be thought that the isolated house, the “Basque farmhouse,” complies with an organization that is simple and primitive at the same time. But
if there are other functions in play as well, there is reason to suppose that, to a great extent, it cannot be a very archaic product. Given what we know about medieval battles, it is difficult to imagine that a family belonging to any social class would not find it objectionable to settle in an open field (if the field did not provide a certain level of security). I have no doubt that there has been since ancient times a scattered population in Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, and so on, but I certainly believe that the great increase in isolated manor houses must have begun at a time of economic prosperity and domestic peace, probably at the beginning of the sixteenth century, that is, at a time in which the circle of enemies did not show the narrowness, smallness, and proximity that it had up to the end of the Middle Ages. To clarify this, we must now analyze the internal structure of typical Basque towns, of the nuclei that we described earlier in terms of their general and exterior structures.

But before closing this chapter, it is worth indicating that since at least the seventeenth century, the subversive movements, which arose due to the economic difficulties of the popular classes, though not agricultural difficulties for the most part, manifested themselves in the heart of the country in certain important and interesting ways, such as peasant uprisings against industry and commerce.

Strange movements that were simultaneously communist and mystical have existed in the Basque countryside at different times from the fifteenth century to the present. But also, much earlier than socialist workers’ organizations or other similar associations were spoken of, there were worker rebellions, incited solely by economic difficulties or rivalries. In Bizkaia the uprisings that took place as a result of the salt levy from 1631 to 1634 are well known. The villagers, incited by the mountain jaunchos, killed various authorities who they considered traitors corrupted by commerce and wealth. There followed a bloody repression, of which the hatred declared between the city of Bilbao and the country served as a reminder. A similar hatred exploded dramatically in 1718 with the machinada (machín was the name given in Bizkaia to villagers in general), a peasant revolt brought about by the suppression of the old domestic taxes, a suppression that the villagers believed detrimental to them, while the large ports, in this case Bilbao, benefited. Once again the people from the municipal districts were defeated. Later, in 1804, there was another rebellion of villagers against the authorities of the seigniory, one that had significant ramifications and that was, as always, punished stupidly and violently by the central power.
Much has been written about the process of repression (especially that leading to the famous “Zamacolada” revolt) and the development of rebellion. On the other hand, to the best of my knowledge there have been few studies on the social revolts that took place in Gipuzkoa. Since very remote times, this province and Bizkaia had to import provisions in large quantities in order to feed their residents. In 1766, at the same time that there were famous popular-class uprisings in Madrid and Zaragoza, a number of blacksmiths from Azkoitia started a true rebellion whose cause was the excessive price put on grains and the sizes of measures. This spread around Azpeitia and the entire river basin of the Deba, that is, the western part of Gipuzkoa, and then to the adjoining lands of Bizkaia. In Mutriku, the rebels managed to force the authorities to make capitulations that are of great interest because they reveal discontent about high costs and because they provide insight into the system of tithes and ecclesiastical rights, and even municipal contributions. The rebellion was quickly quashed by militias organized in Donostia, assisted by some regular troops, and the ringleaders were sent to prison.4

These movements are the forerunners of the great political battles that bloodied the country during the nineteenth century, that have continued to stain it with blood to this day, and that are interesting because they arose before the introduction of any type of doctrinarianism.
The traditional house in most European countries deserves very diligent attention. In the Basque Country, the literature on it is both extensive and excellent. Therefore, I do not wish to repeat here things that most readers can find better expressed in other places. However, I must not fail to make a few particular observations on the abundant material for study gathered by architects, geographers, art historians, and folklorists on the problems analyzed in the preceding pages.¹

Any construction made by man for shelter can and should be studied with attention first of all to the four biological functional circles that were mentioned in the early pages of the present work. In fact, the internal and external configuration of the house is associated with the circle of the environment, but it is not only this circle that gives it its structure; the circle of spoils (economic), the circle of enemies, and the circle of the sexual must also be kept in mind in order to understand many of its features. As always, however, the human interpretation of the ensemble of functions is very variable and fluid in time and space, and even full of features that do not seem very logical. It is not surprising that the Basque house offers perceptible variations, even though it was conceived within a single cultural cycle. Nor should it seem strange that in each of the zones defined in chapter 1, there are radical differences when we describe the structure of the towns of the Spanish Basque provinces, Navarre, and the French Basque Country overall. By focusing on three or four formal criteria, the cultivators of human geography have been able to establish a clear classification of Navarrese houses into the following types:

A) Southern: characterized by the use of stone in part, but also of earth, bricks, adobe and mud walls, often a single-pitched roof
with only a slight incline \(10–20^\circ\). Typical of the zone with the highest population density.

B) Central: houses of stone with gabled roofs and a ridge parallel to the main façade, and others in which the ridge is perpendicular to the façade. Found in the zone of villages and in fact often shows hybrid characteristics.

C) Pyrenean: houses of stone sometimes with hipped, steeply inclined \(40–60^\circ\) roofs. Found in small villages.

D) Atlantic: houses of stone with wooden frames, with not very steeply inclined \(20–40^\circ\) gabled roofs with the ridge perpendicular to the main façade. Typical of the zone with dissemination of the population.

This classification can be applied to the rest of the country. Gipuzkoa, Lapurdi, and Lower Navarre would be fully characterized by Type D, Zuberoa by houses of Type C. To the west, Bizkaia for the most part would belong to Type D, although there is a zone (the western zone, especially the Karrantza or Carranza Valley) in which we would find the more distinctive features of Type B, which also occurs throughout Araba; that is, there are houses with a gabled roof whose ridge runs parallel to the façade (fig. 37). Once this general classification is accepted, it seems evident that the typical Basque house belongs to Type D. Let us now examine it in greater detail.

For this purpose, let us begin in the heart of the country, in Gipuzkoa. There it is possible to find, inhabited yet today, a great number of old manor houses in whose construction wood plays a principal role. This is of great historical-cultural interest because we know that, until at least the fifteenth century, most Gipuzkoan housing was of wood, and in view of the repeated fires that destroyed towns because of the wooden construction, the authorities began to grant certain privileges to people who built their new houses of more resistant materials, particularly stone. It is not unusual to find buildings in the country with names such as Ormaechea (“house of stone walls”; ormak from Latin \textit{forma}) and Tellechea (“house of tiles”), names that allude to something that at one time was unique and rare in the town or valley.

Various old texts indicate not only that the old Gipuzkoan houses were mostly of wood but that the houses of cities such as Iruñea and, more recently, Bilbao itself had a similar structure. When in 1222 a judgment was passed to establish amicable relations among the neighborhoods of Iruñea, one of its clauses prevented the residents of the town
who built houses facing the burg of San Saturnino from building solid walls more than three codos (a measurement equal to the distance from the elbow to the end of the hand) high and one long and that everything else on those walls had to be of planks and no higher than a military lance. In contrast, centuries later, the building regulations of Donostia dated 1489 grant “privileges and freedoms” to the houses of stone rather than those of wood. But even much later, this and other towns were built largely of wood. In fact, when Esteban de Garibay in his “Memorias” mentions the fire of Bilbao, which happened in 1571, he states that almost all the houses of that town were of planks before the fire and that then they were made of beautiful worked stone or bricks. From the same author we know that at about that time, street houses began to be made in the towns of the Basque Country with façades with wide windows
and glazed doors, which were brought from France or made in Vitoria-Gasteiz, then an industrial center of some importance.

Construction in wood for the most part can therefore be considered to be very old, perhaps the oldest in the land. It undoubtedly dates from a period in which the inhabitants of the countryside were typically *baserritarrak*, that is, settlers of the forest (*basoa*). Today that word refers to those who reside in an area of scattered population in general, as opposed to those who live in the city. But even in the most isolated mountains, the process of deforestation has been very violent from the sixteenth century to the present day.²

The oldest farmhouses made mostly of wood date from exactly the beginning of that century. A few authors have studied them meticulously.³ Figure 38a shows one that can serve as a characteristic example. Strong vertical posts that form the main part of the construction are raised over four not very high walls of stone. Between posts, thinner beams are rigged to form a horizontal frame on which the planks that serve as exterior walls and partition walls are placed. The farmhouse has two stories, each divided by interior buttresses: the lower, where life takes place, since it includes stalls for the cows and stables for other domestic animals as well as bedrooms for the people and the hearth, and an upper story that serves primarily as a store for the harvests (e.g., hay, grains).

The construction of the farmhouses, beginning with this type, underwent various modifications from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries. In the oldest ones, the skeleton was formed by the buttresses, the horizontal beams, which were placed at intervals of less than 1 meter from each other, and some very long rafters. This art of construction undoubtedly belongs to a period in which there were many available tree trunks of sufficient size. But at some point, frames began to be constructed with fewer secondary horizontal beams and more vertical ones, regularly placed, in addition to the rafters, which were generally short.

In a final phase, the rafters gain ground. In this phase the design also changes, and instead of the frame being covered with wood, the empty spaces it left were filled with bricks or other mineral substances (figs. 38b, 39a–b, 40). In Bizkaia and the extreme northwest of Araba, there are many old farmhouses in which the wooden elements are less abundant and appear primarily in the center of the façade. Sometimes their carving is delicate and complicated. The Bizkaian farmhouse typically has a porch, which is also in this lighter and wider central area (fig. 41a).
In the eastern zone, that is, oceanic Navarre and most of the French Basque Country, a similar type of house has developed in an interesting way. First, the ground floor is devoted solely to the animals and various daily chores. The family lives on the main floor, above which there may
Figure 39.
Wooden frame of another farmhouse in Ataun, according to the same author; this one belongs to the Iturralde berri house.

Figure 40.
A third type of frame from Ataun, that of the Machinchuberri farmhouse, which dates from 1739. The tendency for farmhouses to be rectangular instead of square is often exaggerated beginning in the seventeenth century, especially in those of secondary economic importance, such as bordas (huts).
be another (also inhabited) or simply a large attic. The frame is used only in the façade and is square in appearance, which accentuates the vertical more than the horizontal (fig. 41b).

In the middle of Araba, almost to Vitoria-Gasteiz, it is possible to find old houses with frames of the types described as the oldest in Gipuzkoa and roofs of the same type as those typical of Gipuzkoan houses. But in this province, as in the central area of Navarre, it is most common to see houses similar to the most complex of those discussed earlier, that is, with two or three stories, but made almost entirely of masonry (and even, to a large extent, of ashlars). In the Cantabrian zone (especially in the city centers) there is no lack of houses with all four large walls made of stone (fig. 41c); these can be considered a logical derivation of the framework house. But the use of stone gives them an appearance that may be deceptive at first glance and that appears quite similar to that of the oldest and most typical Catalan country houses, a fact that is worth keeping in mind for reasons that will be explained later.

Figure 41a.
Classical Bizkaian farmhouse. The Bizkaian farmhouses, also studied by Baeschlin, of the central zone and Durangaldea or the Duranguesado (the area in an around Durango) very often show this simple structure. Sometimes (especially in the extreme south of Bizkaia and northwest Araba) on the upper story, which is the attic, there is a corbel with one or three projections, which can also be seen on some granaries built on pillars in the Basque Country.
French-Basque (Lapurdi) and oceanic Navarrese farmhouse. Beginning in the middle of
the seventeenth century at least, this type of farmhouse, and even other more developed
ones, were found in profusion in the indicated zones. They correspond to operations
that were most significant economically in the country.

House made almost entirely of stone. The appearance of this farmhouse, which has a
square design and a gable end high on the façade, is seen in many examples that reach
far to the south of Araba and well into the center of Navarre and that recall the best-
known type of Catalan country house.
However, if we find these developments and variants of the Basque house, we must also record the existence of various other types, both in the oceanic zone and in the central, Pyrenean, and lateral zones. In the sixteenth century, also in the heart of the country, houses began to be built on a rectangular design with the façade on one of the shorter sides, but always with the gable end of the ridge on its highest point. Such houses may be of stone (decorated in accordance with somewhat outdated artistic styles), but in the borderlands of France and Spain, which are worth studying with the Bidasoa River as their core, they show large and medium-sized corbels and framework only in the façade (fig. 42). Although the most interesting examples are in the city centers of towns such as Goizueta, Lesaka (Lesaca), and Bera, there are many of them in the countryside. They are also found in Gipuzkoa in the same style but with simple frames, and finally, there are also some of simple masonry. The interior division is the same as that in the farmhouses mentioned earlier, with the bedrooms and kitchen on the upper floor, not on the ground floor, the opposite of what happens in the oldest ones.

Figure 42.
House of oceanic Navarre, Lapurdi, eastern Gipuzkoa. The evolution and spread through the countryside of this type of house, with a frame in the façade, corbels, and a rectangular design, can best be studied starting with the urban architecture of cities and towns such as Hondarribia, Donibane Lohizune (Saint-Jean-de-Luz), Bera, Lesaka, and Goizueta.
The fusion of the two types of house, those with the square and rectangular designs, has produced houses with very remarkable features in Lapurdi, Baztan, and so on. On the other hand, the expansion of a building can give it traits that do not precisely match those analyzed. Figures 43 and 44 show the most common forms of expansion for both types of houses. We must not forget that there are significant variations within the same types of house in the types of roofing (fig. 45). Finally, topographic position can also have an influence on some features of a house, to the extent that some authors have believed that they saw in the Basque Country classical models of what in French are called *maisons en hauteur*.

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**Figure 43.**
Ways of expanding a farmhouse with a square design (according to J. de Aguirre). These six solutions were used abundantly throughout the Basque Country but perhaps most often in Gipuzkoa. Designs adding annexes without reference to the unity of the building are independent of these.
Figure 44.
Ways of expanding a farmhouse with a rectangular design. These can be seen particularly in the eastern zone. The last may explain the origins of the farmhouses of the type shown in fig. 41.

Figure 45.
Types of roofing (according to J. de Aguirre). Those identified with the numbers 8, 9, 10, and 12 are most often found in seignorial buildings (palaces and towers). Those that bear numbers 7 and 11 are called “kitetail” (mirubuztán). Number 13 is used in bordas (huts) and similar constructions.
Let us say a few words here on houses in clearly differentiated marginal areas. In the Navarrese valleys of Auritz, Aezkoa, Zaraitzu, and Erronkari, there are the same types of high-mountain house, with very steep roofs.

The houses of towns such as Aurizberri (Espinal) are characterized by their two lateral walls that sometimes extend over the façade, as has already been observed in Lower Navarre. Until not very long ago the roof was made of shingles, and the interior distribution of rooms was not unusual, with the kitchen and stables on the ground floor and the bedrooms upstairs (fig. 46a).

In the valleys of Aezkoa and Zaraitzu, there are houses with gabled roofs, like those of common farmhouses but using much more pine. In Aezkoa especially, a large balcony that serves as a drying room runs along the first floor of the façade (figs. 46b and 46c). This balcony is much smaller in the Erronkari Valley, where there is another on the top floor; the interior structure is also remarkably different, with the kitchen up very high (fig. 46d). The form of the hipped roof looks like that found on other Pyrenean types of houses. In Zuberoa, most manor houses also show features typical of countries where it snows copiously (very similar to the manor houses of Auritz), and in the far north of Lower Navarre, there is a type of house with mixed features, some characteristic of the Bearnaise houses and others of the square Basque ones.
The house with the ridge of the roof parallel to the main façade and a rectangular design is more common farther away from the heart of the Basque Country. It shows many variants, of which I will discuss two here. In Enkarterri-Las Encartaciones in Bizkaia, to the west of the Nerbioi (Nervión) River, there are many houses with dormer windows, pronounced firewalls and a balcony on the main floor, and exterior stairs that are probably related to those seen in Santander.

In Araba there are curious examples from the sixteenth century, with frames in the façade and a socarreña, that is, a gallery that runs along the façade and that recalls popular mountain architecture (fig. 47). I will not speak now of the brick or earth houses of southern Navarre or of the other types found in that area.

From a historical point of view, the origin of the types of construction listed here and considered in their oldest manifestations remains obscure, and the many hypotheses that have been proposed are insufficient and unilateral. In any case, it seems likely that the square design and abundant use of wood must have arisen in very distant times, and if there are no archaeological traces of them, it is because of the rapid decomposition of such elements in a land as rainy as the Basque Country. A comparison of Gipuzkoan and Bizkaian examples with others from outside the Basque Country, ancient and modern, could be profitable. There is more than one similarity between the house in
the Jura mountain range and the farmhouse: In certain parts of Switzerland and southern Germany, the frames are very similar to those of the latter. Genetically, the houses of the alpine area and southern Germany built at the end of the Middle Ages may be related to those reproduced in classical monuments and reconstructed by central European architects. The historical link between these and the Basque farmhouse remains unclear, however.

The houses on the border that have corbels seem to be related to many other urban types of house that were built in the latter part of the Middle Ages in the West. With respect to those that have a lower gallery, I have noted elsewhere the possibility that they may even be related to the Roman villas, with a gallery typical of Gaul, Britannia, and other countries of the northwestern Empire.5

Figure 47.
House of the plains of Araba in a drawing by Baeschlin that shows the façade of the Bolo de Larrea farmhouse, of which he also gives the design, which is oriented around the center. The living accommodations are on the upper floor, and the whole lower part is given over to stables and warehouses. Near the house there is a medium-sized yard.
CHAPTER 7

Internal Analysis of Basque Towns: Names and Functions of Houses

The defenseless house on the plains must have increased in number at a time of general security, as stated at the end of the previous chapter. But, at another time, the manor houses with their servants, serfs, sandal makers, and workers’ quarters were also undoubtedly without this defense. However, they would also be associated with a building with different and less tranquil features. The information on materials presented earlier cannot be fully understood through the mesological criterion used most commonly by geographers. To determine their true meaning, we must also examine the buildings of a village as a whole in light of their present and past functions, which are not necessarily identical, as also occurs in an overall examination of larger population entities, such as the old fortified cities and royal towns.

Let us situate ourselves, then, inside a town or village composed of a small or medium-sized city center or nucleus and various districts with a scattered population. We must keep two sets of facts in mind as we examine it:

1) those related to different uses of the structures
2) those related to the names that the structures in question have traditionally borne

The facts that fall into the first group have a present-day value; those of the second, primarily historical. Let us now analyze the composition of the town using philological criteria. First of all, let us state that there are still many towns in which there remains an old seignorial tower that was built in the late Middle Ages. This tower (dorre) does not have a present-day function consistent with its original name and function, and it is not unusual to find it in ruins.
There are many legends about such towers. For example, in the Baztan Valley (Navarre), it is said that when the lord of the tower of Ursua discovered that another noble (of Bergara) had constructed his tower in the valley, also in Arizkun, he told him the first time he saw him, “Urbixko etorri zera” (“You’re too close”). The same story is told everywhere about similar buildings. The tower par excellence is called Jaureguia, Yoreguia, and so on (i.e., manor house, eg(u)i, of the lord, jaun or yaun). It was mentioned earlier that the origins of such towers must date back to ancient times. But we know hardly anything about its material structure in the early medieval centuries.

Some examples would lead us to believe that there must be a close relationship between the most rustic ones, which were built in the late Middle Ages, and some very ancient ones, such as those constructed at the beginning of the second century AD along the border between the Roman Empire and the Germanic lands of central Europe. To justify this hypothesis, we will first closely examine the images of structures surrounded by a palisade that are found on Trajan’s Column, for example. Some of them show the following characteristics:

1) an apparently square design
2) medium height, such that they can be represented as a rectangle whose base is on one of the short sides
3) hipped roofs consisting of four triangles with a common apex
4) walls of stone up to a certain height
5) elements of wood that seem to be closely related to what in the military jargon of Castile was called cadalso, that is, “a covered upper story or scaffolding with which fortresses were finished in times of war and where the defenders placed themselves to defend themselves and fight against those at the foot of the wall.”

Note that on Trajan’s Column there are also illustrations of houses with gabled roofs and a rectangular design likewise surrounded by palisades, with the façade and roof in a relative position similar to that shown by the Basque farmhouse.1

To arrive at a judgment, the reader can examine the tower of Donamaria (Navarre), one of the most typical of those that conserve their elements of wood. In Arraioz (Arrayoz) and a few other Navarrese towns, there are some with essentially the same appearance, but they are very rare. Lope García de Salazar’s book often mentions fires in houses and towers made mostly of wood, both in Gipuzkoa and in Bizkaia, set by enemies of the lineage that lived in them. In 1475, the guilds of
Gipuzkoa systematically destroyed whatever ones they could, regardless of whether they were built of stone or wood. Those later reconstructed had to adopt a less menacing character, like the homestead of colonist Legazpi de Zumárraga, where one clearly sees a change of activities toward more peaceful, agricultural ones.

In Bizkaia, a definitive study of towers was carried out by two conscientious researchers. Leaving aside for the moment the stylistic questions that it poses, it is clear that there is a close relationship between the towers, the networks of transportation, and the riverways; sometimes the tower is quite far outside the main nucleus of the city. But it is not unusual that even in planned towns, the fortresses of the old families stood together at the ends of the same streets (as in Bilbao), occupying a preeminent place.²

The denomination of “palace,” still so common in the country, also belongs to a hierarchical distinction and is used to designate buildings that are a little more sumptuous than usual and that, for the most part, date from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries (when they are not modern chalets). Nevertheless, palacios appear in much older documents, and it is possible to identify variations in the meaning of the word in different eras. Today a palace (palaziyo) is a luxurious house; in the sixteenth century, palacianas were houses where monarchs stayed or had stayed on their travels through the valleys and districts. Earlier, in Araba and other places, manor houses with a particular structure with a wide and roomy chamber must also have borne the same name. The Basque palace, like the tower, often has a hipped roof but has not lost its purpose as the house of a distinguished family to the same extent that the tower has.

Of greater interest now is an examination of the more common buildings. To determine their variable meaning within the communal organization, a study of their names is of great use. It is characteristic in the Basque zone, unlike in the areas bordering it, for each house (eche or etxe) to have its own name, as the town has its name, dating from the time it was founded or some other remote period. House names obey certain principles, with the following being those of general importance:³

1) names that indicate that the house belonged to a certain person
2) names that indicate a former use of the house
3) names that allude to its topographic situation
4) names that reflect the house’s antiquity or modernity, or its type of construction
The first of these groups is the most interesting. The names that can be included in it, like those of old towns, have two essential parts, the first one personal and the second referring to the settlement itself. Let us examine each one.

Many houses in Navarrese towns (not only those in a block) have names ending in -ain, which correspond to Latin names ending in -anus. However, such a suffix can be interpreted in these cases as denoting the profession of the owner, because it is found in trade names (as happens in Spanish, in words such as hortelano, orchard keeper). Mandazain is thus a mule driver (from mando, mule) and can also be the mule driver’s house in some places.

Many isolated manor houses, some grouped together and even whole towns, show in the second part of their name the word -eg(u)i (-eg(u)ia) or -teg(u)i (-teg(u)ia), which is related to suffixes that appear in the names of ancient Spanish cities (e.g., Tutugui, Olontigi) and to words used by Celtic peoples and others to denote a small dwelling. Berastegi (the name of a Gipuzkoan town) would in principle simply allude to a manor house belonging to someone named Beraxa, as Aperregi in Araba means “that belonging to Aper”; -teg(u)i or -eg(u)i is often found in compound words and also indicates the den of an animal (domestic or wild), the place where it lives. Sometimes it means a place where something is kept or deposited, or where something is done (hayloft, dung heap). The word eche or etxe, on the other hand, is almost always used to indicate only a human residence.

The endings -enea (in oceanic Navarre and the eastern part of Gipuzkoa especially), -ena (in oceanic and interior Navarre and eastern Gipuzkoa), -enia (in the French Basque Country especially), and -ene or -ne (in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia) are possessive. They may be related to the genitive -en, but we must not forget that there is a similar ending in Latin (-enia) with a similar function. Sometimes the possessive is expressed with the suffix -ko.

In the French Basque Country and the area around the Bidasoa River at least, there is an expression that also alludes to a settlement: baita or batha. It is undisputedly found in words reported in discontinuous areas in southern continental Europe, up to the eastern Italian Alps at least, where baite are rustic buildings devoted to some special occupation, which may also have been the case at the beginning in the Basque Country.
In any case, in none of these elements do we find any hint of the status of the inhabitant of the house. This appears in the first part of the name. Thus, it is not unusual to find in the same town (Bera, for example) a manor house called Apezteguia (priest’s house) and another called Apezenea, which means the same thing; and it is even possible to find houses called Apezechea or Apezbaita in other areas. Today it is hard to determine whether these variations were intended to express a particular social or economic nuance.

The same thing happens with different professions: Arostegui(a)/Aroztegi(a), Arotzena, and Arotzene are indiscriminately the carpenter’s house; Arotza is also the blacksmith in some places; Sastreaita, Sastriñe-nea, and Sastrearena are the house of the tailor; Barberenae, Barberena, and Barberekoa are the house of the barber. In a similar recounting, we find mention of the scribe (Escribenea), the stonemason (Arguiñenea), the shopkeeper (Dendariztenea), and the foundry worker (Ferronbaita) of yesteryear, and sometimes a mayor (Alcatenea). But on other occasions we know about the founder only that he was called Alonso (Alonsotegui), Lázaro (Lazarobaita), Lope (Lopenetegui), Martin (Martiniñenea), Pedro (Perune), Rosa (Arrosabaita), or Tomás (Tomaskoa); that he was dark skined (Martinbeltzenea); or that he was short (Cataliñmotzenea). Trades that have disappeared today, such as crossbow-maker (Baleztena), are likewise recorded. In sum, all of late medieval and early modern society (including people who had returned from the Americas, sailors and soldiers back after a life of adventure) is recorded in these names that modern people sometimes twist around strangely.

Let us now move from the first group of names to the second. In the town a new inn was founded at some point; today there is a building called Ostatuberria, a winepress, and today there is still Tolareta (dolare). The mill (errotas), the foundry or forge (ola, sutegui), and other industrial or commercial buildings gave their names to something that may not have a similar function in our time.

It is not unusual for names of the two classes we have examined so far to be given to scattered manor houses, but these often also bear a name that alludes to their topographic situation and the surrounding landscape. For many years it was thought that all Basque toponymy described the outside environment, and there are still those who do not accept the points of view that I espouse throughout this work. There are so many different farmhouses, houses, and other buildings that they receive a name that is clearly descriptive: Rivers, valleys, groups of trees, rocks, sown fields, bridges, and roads all served as points of reference to
denote human settlements as much as to specify locations of other types (e.g., properties, common grounds).

There seem to be areas in which the houses bear this type of descriptive name more often than in other areas. The eastern part of the country as a whole (including the French Basque territories and Navarre) is very rich in personal names, the western part (Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia) in descriptive names. In the former, thanks to its peculiar character in this respect, it is easy to see much of the settlement of the countryside starting from a small city center where there are many houses with names ending in -enea, -ena, -baita, and so on because many of what are now called farmhouses and that constitute the scattered population show other names that reveal their earlier dependence on street houses or city houses. If in the central part of a town there is a house called Apezteguia, for example, in the rural area there will be a farmhouse named Apezteguikoborda, that is, the borda (hut) of Apezteguia. A house called Sastrebaita will in turn have a Sastrebaitekoborda, and another named Trukena will have a Trukenekoborda.

Thus, of the approximately 195 buildings that exist in the center of the town of Lesaka, around 109 bear names of the -enea type; there are 20 of the -baita type, only 4 of the -egui type, 3 -eche, and 4 -aga; 41 seem to be descriptive or of different types; and the rest are Spanish. But in the rural territories or districts we find about 200 houses, 60 of the names of which include the word borda in the second position; 20 names of houses that form small nuclei are of the -enea type, 4 of the -baita type, 7 of the -egui type, and 60 of various classes. However, there are a few differences between those classified among the various types of country house and those belonging to the city center. In the city, many houses are simply given the surname of the owner, and some receive a name that refers to their functions, but few have a clearly topographic name. In the country, topographic names are evidently more abundant (fig. 48).

It is useful to compare this ratio with the results of an examination of the names in a Gipuzkoan town. Of the seventy buildings that make up the four central neighborhoods of Ataun, more than half of the names are descriptive, including those that refer to the personality of a previous owner.

Denominations of the baita type do not exist there, nor are there many inhabited bordas. No doubt this obeys a somewhat different settlement process from the one that can be reconstructed for the eastern
The bordas in vast territories of Romania began to appear late in the Middle Ages, and in the part of the Basque Country where they are inhabited they seem not to be very old.

In the mid-eighteenth century, Father Larramendi, speaking of Gipuzkoa, established the following categories of farmhouses and scattered residences:

1) Echalde, a farmhouse near town
2) Echondo, a farmhouse even nearer the town
3) Baserri, a farmhouse far from town

Within all these categories there were farmhouses that were family seats and dependent ones, and Larramendi states that from “Irun to Tolosa,” that is, in the Beterri region, the tenants or inhabitants were called bordariak.

It is interesting to note that farther to the south, in Araba, in the Kuartango Valley, for example, where it has already been a long time since Basque was spoken, there are two old structures adjoining the houses. One is a cabin for the sheep and goats when they return from the mountains; the other is the borde, which has a lower gallery where the cart, farming implements, and firewood are kept; and above it is a corridor that serves as a drying room and that gives onto the barn and hayloft. As a consequence, it can be said that in Araba, the borde has a
fundamental agricultural significance that it does not have in other areas where it is not inhabited and where it is used to shelter livestock.

Older and more widespread than the bordas are, without a doubt, the structures called curtes, which here were never more than small pastoral buildings and which in Basque are called cortac, kortak, or gortak. From these curtes, which were initially used at specific times of year, there arose many present-day farmhouses with names such as Cortazar, Cortaberrìa, and Garai corta. Furthermore, where there were similar areas of land use but with different names (Salaberrì, Salazar, Zala), more recent farmhouses have been built, as we will see later.

This leads us to believe, then, that the present density of the scattered Basque population does not go back very far in time. But this does not prevent us from assuming that in very distant historical periods there was already a less dense population of this type in the heart of the country and that it was therefore more isolated than the present one in all ways, though always better nourished that that of many other western areas, not to mention the peninsula.

If examined carefully, all the circumstances that come together with respect to residences can provide a guideline for proposing research on other aspects of human life, some having to do with the social structure typical of the peoples that created it, used it, and still use it and others concerning the economic structure. Form of residence is closely related to social and economic structure. In most monographs on the life of European peasants, however, the three topics are usually studied separately, and although it is recognized today that this method is insufficient, we have few models of organic descriptions. In any case, in the following chapters I will try not to fall into excessive fragmentation.

Before closing this chapter, I must stress that the typical modern Basque town has a very characteristic distribution, which is conveniently expressed in the chart in figure 49, made by an agricultural engineer with respect to the five districts of the province of Navarre.

We see first the areas of these districts (in square kilometers); second, the number of inhabitants; third, the city census, that is, the number of scattered settlements and farmhouses; fourth, the density of the population; and fifth, the density of the city, calculated as the total area divided by the census number. The northern zone, which is the most Basque and has the greatest dissemination, is also the most settled.
Figure 49.
Distribution of the rural population in Navarre in 1932 (according to Daniel Nagore).
CHAPTER 8

The Agricultural Sector: Types of Crops

The coordination between the circle of spoils, the circle of the sexual, and others related to these but specific to human beings is perfectly obvious today in the common Basque farmhouse. Everything that could initially be related to the circle of enemies (humans) is barely revealed to our eyes, with the result that it is not surprising that researchers of a romantic bent have believed that they saw in the farmhouse a faithful reflection of past eras that were both primitive and paradisaical. The landlord would be almost a “natural man.” There is nothing farther from the truth, however. It is neither socially nor economically possible to consider the life of our landlord as anything but the evolving product of a thousand years of experience. To demonstrate this, let us analyze from the two points of view in question the scheme in figure 50, in which we have tried to reflect all the most visible characteristics that are included today on the Basque farm.

The Basque farmworker’s house is generally built (whether in an urban or rustic zone) not very far from the lands. Within those lands live the master or, more often, the tenant, with his wife, his children, and some other relatives or servants (letter A in the figure). It has stables for the cows (B), sties for the pigs (C), and a place for chickens and other domestic animals (D), as well as places to house and repair the farming implements, presses to make cider (E), and silos and storehouses for harvests in general (F). Sometimes there is also an old structure next to it whose characteristics we will discuss later. The harvests consist of corn (1), which is sown (i) together with beans (ii) and turnips or beets (iii) and takes up a great part of the lands, and otherwise wheat, to which smaller portions of land are dedicated today, or some other cereal (2). Flax is grown in few areas (3), and the vegetable garden (4), with cabbage, broad beans, and other crops, is becoming more and more important.
This type of diverse use differs greatly not only from the types of farm in other parts of Spain and the west but also from those that, also in the Basque Country, would have been seen at the end of medieval times and the beginning of the Modern Age. Many cereals were sown then that are little known today, such as rye (*zikirioa, zekalea*; Latin *secale*), barley (*garagarra*), oats (*oloa*), and millet (the summer variety), which gave its name to corn, as well as various species of wheat (*garia*), including spelt wheat (*galtxuria; T. spelta*). The vegetable garden would have been very small, if it even existed. Peas have had to cede their name to beans (*illar*), as did millet to corn. The other name for beans comes from the old *faba vulgaris* (*baba*), which in the past was a basic food and even today (though disparaged) is sown and eaten by humans and animals.

The flax fields, meadows, and apple orchards have been cultivated since early times. Whoever believes that the country is more “native” with respect to its trees than to its agriculture should not forget that a large number of trees that today seem characteristic are actually of foreign origin, though not of such recent introduction as the cultivation of
corn or potatoes, the use of which as food did not become widespread until the Napoleonic Wars.

We can consider indigenous various trees that typify the countryside that surrounds the farmhouse and the nearby mountains. Of these, some form regular groups, such as the beech (*bago, pago, fago*) or the oak (*aritz*); others are found less compactly distributed in hollows and along roadsides, such as the alder (*altza*), the ash (*lizar*), the birch (*urki, burki*), the common elm (*zumar*), the hornbeam (*urkitza*), the maple (*astigar, gastigar*), the poplar (*lertxun*), and the willow (*saratz, zumalakar*). Often the residence bears a name that alludes to such trees. It is possible that some very well-known ones, such as the chestnut (*gaztaiñ*), were introduced through Roman colonization, as happened in England. Nor is the lime tree (*ezki, ezku*) indigenous. The black poplar (*Populus nigra* and *Populus nigra* var. *italica*), which are so common along roadsides and in the town squares of towns in Araba and Navarre, were first brought by the Romans as well.

With respect to fruit trees, the walnut tree (*intxaur*) must be very old, and even more so the hazelnut tree (*urrizt*); the plum tree (*aran*) also has old roots. Not so other trees with stone fruits, such as the cherry (*guerezi*), the clingstone peach (*mertxika*), the peach (*mixika, muixika*), and the loquat (*mizpira, mizpера*). The pear tree (*udar, madare*) is old.

Of very recent introduction are acacias, banana trees, and sycomores, which, especially in the French Basque Country, are found in profusion, and many people still alive today have noted the change in the countryside of eastern Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa in general that came about with the planting of pine forests. All in all, from the point of view of plant ecology, the Basque Country shows some quite artificial aspects that should be highlighted (fig. 51), indicating also that in the arrangement and planting of trees and bushes, norms are followed that clearly reveal this “humanized” character to the eyes of the perceptive observer.

Bushes were often planted to mark property lines or for other purposes; the best known are the hawthorn (*elorria, elorriya*), the holly tree (*gorostia*), and the muricated oak (*ametza*). Like other wilder species, these also contributed much to toponymy. More solid divisions were made with a wall (*orma*) and slabs of slate and other stones cut as flagstones and placed vertically. There are also many made of wooden posts with branches placed between the posts.
The rural landscape thus has little that is natural because it has been created by constant human intervention. If we examine the rustic properties of each area, we note that there are differences with respect to the scheme at the beginning of this chapter, and thus a specific type of crop has been developed more in some areas than in others, where perhaps a type of livestock is less common. Much farther to the south, the agricultural system varies radically. Let us now examine various types of land use, focusing first on the general state of Basque agriculture, strictly speaking.

We will begin with what we observe first of all: a farmhouse in the heart of the country. Remembering the old Varronian division, we can assign to the *instrumentum vocale* the whole family, from the grandparents or oldest relative still able to carry out small tasks to the youngest apprentice; to the *instrumentum semivocale* two or more teams of cows, according to fortune and the amount of property or rented land; to the *instrumentum mutum* a large and varied number of implements. Today, the burro (*asto*) and the horse have been introduced in some places as draft animals or to carry out small jobs, and there is widespread use of implements made in factories far away and without much connection to those that were traditionally used until the end of the nineteenth century, which were homemade, local, or regional. In our present discussion, we hardly need speak of the products of modern industry, which is strong
in cities such as Vitoria-Gasteiz and Iruñea and which has a long agrarian tradition and manufacturers known throughout Spain. The number of animals owned by a family of farmers varies according to their fortunes and has also changed with the times. There were probably more before than there are now associated with each farming operation and its dependents. Juan Antonio Moguel states that in the early nineteenth century a wealthy Bizkaian farmhouse had two oxen, two working cows, two breeding cows, two heifers, two calves, eight mountain cows (basa bei), one mountain heifer (basa idizko), two oxen to fatten, sixty sheep, two rams, eight goats, and one billy goat.

The area of land cultivated by one family, as shown in figure 50, is not really very large. In the mountains of the oceanic area of Navarre, the farmed fields are commonly of only four to five hectares. In Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia the tenants of a farmhouse work a similar total surface area. In the French Basque Country, Lapurdi shows similar uses of the land, and although in Zuberoa property could vary from six to fifty hectares according to one author at the end of the past century, the farmed lands, according to the same author, were rarely larger than five hectares. Among themselves they form a block in which each cultivated portion facilitates the use of the others. The qualitative division of this block, to the eyes of a modern spectator, is clarified in figure 50, but it is worth mentioning some changes that may occur each year in some regions.

Field labor is centered around three basic events. The first is sowing; the second, weeding; the third, the harvest. The names of the months in Basque clearly allude to the agricultural chores associated with these three events and other similar ones. This is interesting from the historical-cultural point of view, and we must note that such names show parallels in very remote areas of Romania, in Sardinia, and in the expressive illustrations that are found in different styles of medieval and renaissance works of art, particularly in the sculpted lives of the saints in churches and cathedrals.

Thus, November, azilla, is the month of the seed, or gorotzilla, month of fertilizer or manure (as in the Sardinian Logudorese dialect). December is the month of germination, lotazilla, or simply of winter, neguilla. January is the black month, ilbeltza, or month of the year, urtarrila. February is the cold month, otsailla, or month of bulls, zezeilla. March, the month of cutting, epailla, brings to mind a very common illustration of pruning grapevines or plants in general. April is the month of weeding, very commonly called jorrailla. May is the month of the
leaf, ostoilla or orrilla. June is the month of the barley harvest, garagarilla. July is the month of wheat, garilla, or of the harvest in general, uztaila. August is the time of drought, agorrilla. September is the month of bracken, garoilla, iraila, or the head, buruilla, because in some areas the year was considered to begin with September. October is the month for gathering natural fruits, bildilla. And here we close the cycle, which is reflected only in part by this scheme. The introduction of certain crops has substantially changed the order of these chores and the use of the lands, with the spring being a much busier season today than before because corn is sown. But the existing systems of rotation mean that on almost any date of the year the Basque countryside is full of workers of both sexes.

Every act of sowing requires careful preparation that is carried out using many different implements. In April, around Saint Mark’s Day, or somewhat later, in May, corn must be sown. Everywhere there are teams of oxen yoked to the plow and a great number of implements left on the edges of the fields at rest time.

In Gipuzkoan towns where wheat is still grown, a particular system of rotation can still be seen. Cereal is sown there until very close to Christmas. Shortly after it is sown, it is given the first plowing and fertilizing. Around March or April it is weeded, and in May the stalks of other plants that have grown up with it are cut. Then come the harvest and the threshing in late July and early August. Once the field is clear again, fertilized and plowed, turnips are sown in early September; it is weeded at the end of the year, and by February they are ready to pull. The field should then be ready for corn to be sown by the end of April. Once it is available for the seed, the furrows are plowed, and weeding is done, either with small hoes or with a tined plow when the plants have grown a little. Once the weeding is finished, the extra plants are thinned. When the remaining plants have reached their maximum development, the male flowers and some leaves are removed, a task called txirrista, and at the beginning of September most of the leaves are taken off (galdurrua). But much earlier, from July 10 to 15, in the same field where the corn has grown quite a bit, clover (faboxa) is sown and will not be cut until the corn or another annual plant has to be sown again. Later, until harvest time (November), the field is left unworked. Sometimes clover is not sown, and as soon as the corn is harvested, wheat is sown at random or in holes again. The fields are never left fallow, and after a maximum of nine years they are fertilized with lime, which is prepared in a regular oven or lime oven that is either personal property or com-
monly held by several farmhouses. The time when the greatest number of Basques devoted themselves to agriculture was when this system of fertilizing was learned.

In the eighteenth century, there was a particular trend to plow new lands, which had previously been covered by forest, thickets, and even meadows or apple orchards, but leave them uncultivated. This trend was so great in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia that some sharp observers sounded the alarm and pointed out the inequalities that would arise if the most necessary means of maintaining a pastoral, ranching economy and the traditional industries disappeared. In 1777, the author of Reflexiones sobre el sistema agrícola del país bascongado wrote, “The increase that farming has seen lately in the Basque Country (particularly in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia) has been almost unbelievable; thus one can be certain, without exaggeration, that the expanse of grazed and cultivated land is today a third again as large as it was at the beginning of this century.” There is no doubt that since that time, the Basque landscape must have acquired many of the features that can be seen today. Farther to the south I believe that the transformation has been much less perceptible.

In the central zone of Navarre, the fields used by a single family tend to total around fifteen hectares, and most rural farms in Araba also have ten to fifteen hectares. In theory these are divided into two or sometimes three parts: the first for cereals, wheat, barley, and oats; the second for fodder, potatoes, and beets; and the third for vegetables. Beans (babas), for example, are always grown in such a quantity in Araba that the settlers of the plains of Vitoria-Gasteiz were traditionally called babazorros. In practice, the three categories should be appropriate to the quality of the land, which also tends to be divided into three classes: excellent, medium, and poor.

Thus, some twenty years ago in the valley of Ezkabarte near Iruñea, crop rotation was carried out in accordance with the following norms:

1) Excellent lands: year 1, wheat; 2, beans, corn, potatoes; 3, wheat, oats; 4, beans, corn, potatoes; 5, wheat, oats; 6, garbanzo beans, corn, potatoes.

2) Medium lands: 1, wheat; 2, yams, legumes, alfalfa; 3, wheat, oats; 4, carob, yams, legumes, alfalfa; 5, wheat, oats; 6, carob, legumes.

3) Poor lands: 1, wheat; 2, fallow; 3, wheat, oats; 4, fallow; 5, oats; 6, fallow; fertilizer is always used on these lands in the years in which wheat, the core of the rotation, is grown.
In colder zones, such as Orotz-Betelu (Oroz-Betelu), the lands are cultivated according to a six-year rotation, such that the excellent lands are left free in the fourth, fifth, and sixth years, as are the medium lands, and in the poor lands there are crops of cereals and yams or peas in all but the last two years. Similar systems were already being put into practice a hundred years ago and probably much earlier.\textsuperscript{3}

Farther to the south of Iruñea, in the central part indicated on various maps (see particularly fig. 52), the wine-growing region begins and fallow lands increase. The holm oak also grows spontaneously, and cereal is cultivated following the “year and time” system. Irrigated lands, which are more abundant closer to the Ebro River and its lower tributaries, also appear at the same point.\textsuperscript{4}

Figure 52.
Map showing the most common reaches of certain species and irrigated lands:
- A) northern reach of the almond and peach trees
- B) northern reach of the olive tree
- C) northern reach of the grapevine
- D) southern reach of the chestnut tree

The vertical lines show irrigation.
With respect to agricultural ergology, there is no doubt that the Basque villager had reached a remarkable level of comfort without the interference of big industry. He brought beneficial implements and innovations to his territory from many places and, for his part, was very capable of modifying them.

It would be reasonable to think that the oldest farming in the country was done with very basic hoes. But there has been a lot of water under the bridge since then. Philologists and ethnologists have called attention to words such as aitzkor, aizkor (ax), aitzur, and atxur (hoe), which seem to contain within them the word aitz (stone), which is assumed to mean that they date from periods in which axes and hoes had a stony element, that is, to prehistory. But some specialists in Romance languages see in these words only compounds and derivations from Latin ascia, which also exist in Spanish with somewhat similar sounds (Latin asciata gives Spanish azada, hoe). Whatever the truth of this etymological problem may be, we must at least recognize that the Basque farmer has used some very singular and archaic implements to carry out tasks that are sometimes done with hoes and plows, such as the layak. Some believe this name to be related to lai (twig), others to lan (work). Lain is also a bud or vine shoot; perhaps the name referred originally to a wooden instrument.

The laya generally weighs seven to nine kilos and today is made of iron; only the handle is made of wood. One is held in the right hand and another in the left. Once the layadores [people who farm using layas — trans.] have organized themselves in a row of three, five, or six, they move forward together. The weakest (or the women) take the center positions; the stronger ones, the ends. The work done with the laya reaches a depth
of up to half a meter (currently thirty to forty centimeters) and is recommended for very narrow or steeply inclined lands that are difficult to plow.

It is likely that in past epochs the *laya* was more common than it is today in the north. Today it is found, in a rather fractured way, from the central zone of Navarre and the extreme north of Aragón to the Cantabrian coast, although its use is becoming rarer. The chunks of earth that are removed with the *layas* (which tend to be around half a *vara* wide and a quarter *vara* thick [a *vara* is a unit of measurement that varied by region from 768 to 912 millimeters —trans.] are called *zoiak* and are crumbled with hoes.

There are noteworthy variations in the structure of the *laya*. The modern and most common Gipuzkoan and Bizkaian ones have a short wooden handle, and the iron fork has two very long tines (fig. 53a). In contrast, those that appear as a symbol of San Isidore the Farmer (canonized in 1621) on many wooden sculptures on eighteenth-century altars from the provinces of Araba and Navarre show a long handle, and the iron fork is much wider and shorter, as on the present-day *layas* from certain parts of Navarre (fig. 53b), from the Burunda Valley to Agoitz, the Erronkari Valley, and the border of Aragón, where there also exists a type of radial plow.

Figures 53a (left) and 53b (right).
(a) Gipuzkoan *laya*. The *laya* from Gipuzkoa, like that from Bizkaia, is much narrower today and has longer tines than the ancient ones, according to what can be deduced from a comparison with those that appear in sculptures of San Isidore the Farmer from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
(b) Navarrese *laya*. The iron part is much shorter and wider than that of the Gipuzkoan ones, and it is used as far as the area where grapevines are intensively cultivated.

Work with *layas* was preferred to that with the old plows in many towns, which almost completely banished the use of the latter in the nineteenth century. Such a preference is explicable in a country of small properties and intensive farming and has nothing to do with supposed cultural backwardness. It would be more of an example of backwardness to use a modern implement without any practical utility, simply because it is modern. There are positive indications that throughout history the
Basque Navarrese villager has had occasion to use types of implements that experience led him to reject later. This is what must have happened, for example, with the wheeled plows that were so widespread during medieval times throughout ancient Gaul and in Great Britain and the Germanic countries. On the door of the church of Santa María la Real in Olite there is a relief that apparently dates from the fourteenth century showing a farmer (Adam) working the land with a wheeled plow. That type of plow did not last (if the artist observed it in situ), and today in Navarre wheeled plows seem very modern, a product of big industry. The traditional, the old, fits other molds, about which it is worth saying something, because what is known to date on the topic is confused and disconnected.

The Basque provinces and Navarre, based on what I have been able to discover, constitute an area very dense in different types of plows. Whereas in the rest of Spain there are extensive zones in which there is hardly any variation in plows, here one sees, or rather saw before the introduction of “standard” plows, variation almost from valley to valley. The distribution of types of plow is quite consistent with the division of areas that we made when discussing types of residence (fig. 54) and with the division according to types of crops.

First of all, there is a southern zone that includes all the banks of the Ebro River and the south of Navarre (Tafalla) and Araba, the cereal and extensive wheat-growing zone, in which the best-known Castilian plow, with a curved sole and spearlike beam, is found. This type of plow was undoubtedly spreading in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, at the same time as the Castilian (Spanish) linguistic wave, such that it is found, or was found until recently, at the same point at which the language had arrived; the valley of Laudio, the area around Agurain, and the vicinity of Iruña are places where it was still used until about twenty-five years ago, according to my data.

Farther to the north, there is an area characterized by the very simple angular or radial plow called cutre or golpino, which has the beam connected to the handle. It is used on the central plains and in the eastern mountains of Araba, the part of Navarre that extends along those mountains, and eastern Pyrenean valleys such as the Erronkari. It is also found in Aragón; it belongs to a strip of land whose southern limit is a line going from Santikurutze Kanpezu to Zangoza, even Zarrakaztelu (Carcastillo), and from there to Sos and other towns north of Zaragoza and Huesca, with Sallent as an eastern border: the watershed of the north (fig. 55a).
In territory that is Basque speaking today we find more heterogeneity. In Gipuzkoa there were plows with a curved sole and a large beam connected to the handle, like those of Arrasate and Gaintza (fig. 55b). I do not know how far east these are found. I can only say that in Bizkaia they were found around Elorrio and that farther to the east, in very remote valleys, models have been collected of plows with a curved sole and spearlike beam (fig. 55c), although with a different form of handle. To the east of Gipuzkoa and in oceanic Navarre, one finds the quadrangular plow with a large beam and a central European type related in more than one way to the Gipuzkoan models from the south and west. This quadrangular plow is also found in Lapurdi and other parts of the French Basque Country (fig. 55d).
In addition to those already discussed, we also know of other types of plowing instruments that were in simultaneous or at least complementary use. Leaving aside the different plows with a moldboard and two handles and the rather old industrial ones with wheels (txirrinkaduna), we must first consider the blades. These were used together with the laya and the quadrangular plow in field work, above all to make the preliminary furrows for the plowing, and they were known, more correctly than the plow, by the name of golde (plural, goldiak), from Latin culter (fig. 55c).

Figure 55c.
Gipuzkoan blade. The examples illustrated in figs. 55a, b, d, and e are found in the Museo de San Telmo in Donostia. That in fig. 55c is found in the Museo Etnográfico de Bilbao.
Now let us discuss plows with tines or teeth (ortzak), which began with two or three (bi- or iru-ortzak) and came to have several tens, arranged ultimately in tiers (aria, areak). In the eighteenth century and earlier, the most common ones had four or five teeth (bostortzak) and were used to prepare the soil in which corn was to be sown. To crumble the already plowed ground, an implement called an ola (board) was also used (fig. 56a), as was the erbil-yokiyak, driven by hand by both men and women. When plowing the lands, if they were very rough, a roller made of stone or wood (alperra or bombilla) was used in the preparatory labor. The furrows for the corn were made with an instrument called a marka, which could be operated by hand or pulled by cows (fig. 56b), and a weeder, either with small hoes or with a plow with preferably triangular tines called a jorraya (fig. 56c). According to Father Larramendi, this work was usually entrusted to girls.

![Figures 56a, 56b, and 56c (from left to right, from up to down).](image)
(a) Ola (board) used to break up clumps of soil. Some also have interwoven planks.
(b) Marka, used to make the furrows for sowing. It has five movable planks.
(c) Jorraya, for weeding. This and figs. 56a–b show plows common in Bera (Navarre).
The harvest, for its part, has ergological nuances that are worth recording, particularly with respect to wheat. The sickle (*iguitai, iguithi*) was preferred to cut the sheaves. In other periods of time, it was serrated, as in a great number of Western countries, although this feature does not prove ethnological relationships of the type that some authors from the beginning of the century wanted to establish, even using it as proof of the alleged association between the Basques and the Berbers. We would probably find significant variations of cultural interest in the way of placing the sheaves (*azpal, azao*) in the field, but I am unable to comment on this at present, although I am able to report some variations in threshing systems.

Temperature varies in an inverse relationship to latitude and elevation. Thus, one observes that the wheat in the south of Spain is harvested in June, but there are places in the north where it is harvested in August, that is, nearly two months later. Additionally, for every hundred meters of altitude the harvest is delayed by four days in comparison to the fields at a lower elevation. In a parallel way, when we arrive at the remotest valleys of a mountain system, we see differences with respect to the great plains in the implements used, particularly in threshing. In the Basque provinces and Navarre, the different ways of threshing match quite well the areas already defined based on other cultural elements (fig. 57). All of the southern part and the central zone almost as a whole are characterized by the use of board and flint thresher: *estrazia* in High Navarrese. This type of thresher spread as far as the western parts of Bizkaia (Enkarterri-Las Encartaciones), and in southern Gipuzkoa, in Oñati, it was made with interwoven planks of hazel (*tximintxuak*). There are many places in central Araba and Navarre where threshing is carried out by making oxen or cows trample the grain (to the south of this area, it is done on horseback) or even using carts, as in the Burunda Valley. But in the higher parts of the Pyrenees and in the Atlantic depression threshing is done largely in smaller spaces (even inside a building) using the following procedures:

1) beating the sheaves against the edge of a threshing sledge, plank, tree trunk, or other surface, as is also done in the mountains 
2) beating the sheaves with simple sticks (*makillak*)
3) beating the sheaves and rubbing them together in an enclosure called an *astua* (*burro* in High Navarrese)
4) using flails and beating the sheaves with them in a yard called a *larana*
The flail has different names in different parts of the country. One group includes *iraburi* (Gipuzkoa: Itziar; Bizkaia: Lekeitio and Markina; northern Araba) and its variants: *irabur* (Bizkaia: Txorierrri), *irabur* (Bizkaia: Ispaster; Gipuzkoa: Arrasate, Oñati), *ireburra* (Gipuzkoa: Deba-Mutriku), *ireurre* (Gipuzkoa: Atna), *iragurrimakillak* (Gipuzkoa: Oñati), *idabur* (Bizkaia: Markina; Gipuzkoa: Arrasate, Oñati), and *idaur* (Gipuzkoa: Berastegi, Gaintza). Another group is formed by *txibita* (Gipuzkoa: Astigarribia), *txipita, ibita* (Bizkaia: Elantxobe or Elanchove, Markina, Mañaria; Gipuzkoa: Andoain, Oñati, Usurbil). And the third group includes the Romance *korrre* or *kurre, korreiak* in the plural, which are mostly Zuberoan. And there is even *phaileru* (from Latin *flagellum*, French Basque), *traillu* (High Navarrese from Bera and the Baztan Valley, Gipuzkoan, and Lapurdian), and *zaroa* (also from the Baztan). The flails are composed of a handle (*eskua*), a belt (*uguela*), and a large stick (*aizebiloa*) and show variations worth study in each region. The most common flail in the Basque Country is of a type common in vast portions of Western Europe and also found in small regions throughout the French–Cantabrian Pyrenees. The one briefly described
by Father Larramendi in the eighteenth century seems to have had a thick handle and a thinner and shorter stick for beating the grain. There are many other models that have belts attached, as they are on the best-known Asturian flails.

To separate the wheat from the chaff (*aiseatu*), pitchforks and separating devices of the type common in northern Spain were used. The harvest was preferably kept in chests (*kutxak*). Also, especially in western Gipuzkoa and in Bizkaia, some of it was kept in granaries on stone pillars, which probably ceased to be built in the eighteenth century but of which there are still very differentiated Asturian and Galician examples.
 CHAPTER 10

The Agricultural Sector:
Draft Animals and Special Crops

Among the most characteristic crops of the country where Basque is spoken today are meadow crops. The artificial meadow is fundamental to the rural economy. Apart from the lands dedicated to the cultivation of alfalfa (arguibelar), clover (which goes by many names), and other forage crops, more and more lands of the oceanic region are plowed for meadows (belardi, belai, belarsoro, belastegui). They are fertilized intensively (between January and February), and there are several annual harvests. The cut is made with a scythe (sega) whose handle (kiderra) shows certain variations. It is likely that there were some earlier scythes without upper handles (eskutillak), but they started to be used beginning in the seventeenth century. In the reliefs in the ashlar of the church of Izaba (Isaba), in Pyrenean Navarre, there are illustrations of men using scythes with a single handle and others sharpening blades.

A wooden receptacle called sega poto or opots, which may be decorated, is used to store the honing stone.

The freshly scythed grass is gathered and stacked with a rake (arraztelu) with a special structure. Instead of having the handle perpendicular to the crossbar, which has the teeth, it sits obliquely, unlike in other parts of the north. The grass is sometimes eaten fresh by the domestic animals and cows, in which case it is transported in very coarse canvases called manyiriak (the same word is used for bedsheets) or in other special devices (other than the cart, which will be discussed later). Other cuts are left to dry in the field, stacked in a meta (from Latin meta foeni, haystack).

Similar to the labor of cutting the grasses is the annual and much more laborious cutting of bracken (garo in parts of Gipuzkoa, iratze more commonly). This plant, which grows on noncultivated lands in
extraordinary proportions, is used as bedding for domestic animals and as a base for manure (gorotz). It is cut once it begins to turn red in the autumn, and in some towns the cut is a true community event. It is also done with a scythe, and the harvest is likewise placed in stacks.\(^1\)

The rural chores we have described so far form part of a perfect, vital cycle in which men and animals who live in the same farmhouse participate, cows in particular, of which there are commonly four to six. The cow (bei) rather than the ox (idi), and certainly not the bull (zezen), which is used exclusively for stud purposes, is of critical importance at the farmhouse because it provides a large part of the domestic food with its milk and offspring, performs plowing and other agricultural tasks, and is used for transport yoked to a cart. Furthermore, it gives abundant manure. A large part of the corn, hay, bracken, and other cultivated plants are used for its maintenance and accommodation, to the extent that it could be said that the farmhouse would have no reason for existing, economically, without the cow. However, we should separate the study of the use of the cow from that of other livestock, for obvious reasons of strict functionality.

According to an Austrian zoologist, Adolf Staffe, the common Basque cow must have descended from that which in prehistoric times lived in the wild in northern Spain, in the Pyrenees. But since then its use has changed; it has been considered by man to be an “object” with different meanings (in accordance with what was said in the introduction). For example, I do not know when it began to be used as a draft animal, but it is evident that its use today as a draft animal poses a number of ethnological problems of great interest. First, the way in which it is yoked is worthy of attention.

The polemic between the supporters of yoking by the neck and those who yoke by the horns is ancient. Columella, who was familiar with both systems, recommended the former, as did other Latin agronomists, such as Palladius. In ancient times, in all the Mediterranean countries and in many countries controlled by the Romans, the same opinion must have prevailed. But in the Middle Ages, it is evident that the horn yoke acquired more prestige and finally took over in places that had earlier preferred the neck yoke. In Roman Spain, it seems that the neck yokes must have been very widespread. Nevertheless, there are models and examples of Iberian horn yokes. The Basque yoke (uztarri) is also a horn yoke, but it is very different from those of neighboring or bordering areas, such as the mountain area and Asturias toward the west and Aragón to the east.
Many years ago, Aranzadi studied them superbly. The area in which yokes, or rather Basque yokes, are used should be determined. Obviously, it occupies the heart of the country, where Azkoitia is one of the primary manufacturing centers, and reaches south as far as the county of Trebiñu. It includes the whole center area and eastern Navarre up to the latitude of Xavier at least, where the Basque yoke is used with a cart and an Aragonese yoke is used to plow. Toward the west it enters the Mena Valley in Burgos, and La Montaña, and in the north, in Zuberoa, it touches on the area of the Bearnaise yoke, which has a very similar structure.

In the Basque territory, however, there are notable variations for different reasons. This can be seen in the collection of the Museo Etnográfico de Bilbao, which is more complete, in this case, than that of the Museo de San Telmo in Donostia. It seems likely that resistance trials and the well-known oxen tests (idi-apustua) have contributed recently to significant modifications of Basque yokes, which are characterized by the profusion of adornments that are always on them, held by the straps (ediak) that hold the yoke, by the head pad (kopetekua, ipurukoak), and by the sheepskin that goes over everything. The yoke is used for plowing and for other agricultural tasks, as mentioned earlier, but also very consistently for the purpose of transporting things. These loads (whether of grasses, hay, bracken, firewood, manure, or ores) are most characteristically transported in a carro chillón or chirrión (squeaky-wheeled cart) or wagon (gurdi in Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, and oceanic Navarre; burdi in some places in Bizkaia and Navarre; orga in most of the French Basque Country).

We could spend a lot of time discussing the characteristics of this cart and its relationship with other types through time and space. But now we must speak of it only briefly. In the whole zone that is Basque speaking today, there is no wagon with solid wheels and rectangular bed.

This type of cart calls to mind the Roman plaustra, like that shown in a bronze votive statue of Civitá Castellana (held by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), or that on the sarcophagus of Annius Octavius Valerianus (Museo Laterano, Rome), or the one in the fourth-century Santa Constanza mosaic. In contrast to these with respect to the form of the wheels, we have the cart found in all of western Bizkaia and a large part of Araba, whose wheels have an axle and two crossbars (rueda de reja), just as very ancient European ones had and as many of the ordinary ones have in the Cantabrian–Asturian mountains.
In some previous publications, following the opinion of other ethnographers, I have perhaps given a thoroughly schematic idea of the geographic distribution of the types of wheel in northern Spain. I would like to state here that the solid wheel (*gurpil, kurpil, gurbil*) shows notable variations with respect to size and especially in the form of the springs. The single-axle wheel is found, or rather was found until not long ago, in the same area as the wheel with an axle and two crossbars in almost all of Araba (fig. 58). In Asturias and other western zones, solid wheels are found sporadically, although those with one axle are the most common, and the density of use of solid wheels is again high (according to the research of Vergilio Correia, who died before his time) in southern areas of Portugal. The quadrangular bed is not found in the old wagons of Santander and Asturias, where the bed is slightly curved in the front like some ancient models, Spanish and otherwise.

**Figure 58.** Area of distribution of the types of cart. Horizontal lines indicate the area of carts with solid wheels; vertical lines indicate the area of those with an axle and two crossbars (*rueda de reja*).
The origin of the cart is an ethnological problem of great interest given its peculiar distribution. In Spain today there is limited use of the so-called squeaky-wheeled cart (because of the noise its axles make when rubbed with grease) in all its variations in the humid zone where the artificial meadow is most developed. This does not mean that in other times it was not used in a greater or different area.

Apart from the elements that are indispensable for its general operation (fig. 59a), other things are often added to or taken from the cart, depending on the use to which it will be put. For example, an assembly of interwoven chestnut planks or slats, called prozela in High Navarrese, was put on the cart to transport substances such as manure or sand; the ezpata was put on the front of the cart when rigging it to carry hay or bracken, accompanied by a large pole and another small one on the rear; and the palkatxo is used to protect the wheels when carrying firewood, dried corn, or dried bracken.

The Basque cart used on the local roads, and even on the highways at times, cannot ascend the steeps inclines of hills and mountains, nor can it enter certain enclosures. To get into such areas, one uses a harrow or drag (lerak), of which there are different types, from very rustic ones made of several rough-hewn branches or a simple slab of stone, to those that have a structure similar to that of some sleds and also somewhat similar to the bed of a cart. Harrows are different from valley to valley and from region to region (fig. 59b).

![Figures 59a and 59b (from left to right).](image)

(a) Basque cart seen from above: 1, pertika; 2, gurditxia; 3, adurrak; 4, gurdiko ardatza; 5, ixtringa.
(b) Lera, or sled-type harrow, common in oceanic Navarre, Gipuzkoa, and Lapurdi.

It is in the High Pyrenees where the harrow is in greatest use, however, and it is not surprising that its use is associated with an increase in pastoral activities and a decrease in the agricultural activities described earlier.

Cart and harrow become rarer as the cultivation of wheat becomes more common, that is, toward the south, until they disappear in the
cereal-producing zones and wine-growing areas of southern Navarre and Araba.³

We must not close this chapter without devoting a few words to the cultivation of apple orchards and vineyards. Both are documented from very remote medieval times. As commercial relationships in the south intensified, the vineyards of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, producers of bitter and low-grade wines (txakolinak or chacolies), were eliminated or lost importance, and by the end of the Middle Ages they were in decline. The apple tree appears not only in ancient documents in Araba, but also in those of Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, and Navarre. Its cultivation, at least by the beginning of the sixteenth century, was quite scientific.

In 1524, Navajero, referring to Gipuzkoa, stated, “In this land there is no wine, and little wheat is grown, but all of this is brought over the sea from other parts of Spain, where it exists in abundance. Instead of vineyards, apple trees are grown, first in nurseries, and when they are big, they transplant them in an orderly way, as we do with grapevines, but even more densely. They put them in gardens, which makes a very agreeable view and they look like forests. With the apples they make a wine that they call cider and that is the drink of the common people, and it is clear, good and white, with a bitter aftertaste. It is healthy for any who become accustomed to it; for those who do not, it is difficult to digest, it harms the stomach and wakes a great thirst. They make this drink with great presses, as we make wine; but greater weight and greater strength are necessary.”

These lines could have been written today. The first seed is taken from the wild (basatia) apple. It is sown in a seedbed, at random, in February. At the end of a year or two, the seedlings are transplanted to the nursery (sagar munteguiya), and after two years, after various prunings, they are placed in the apple orchard (sagardi) in one of three ways: in a frame when the land is cultivated, using the triangular herringbone planting method in the meadows, or in equilateral triangles when the land is used only for apple trees. The distance from one tree to the next, based on that established in the charters of Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia, is usually 5.58 meters. The existing variations of apple are extremely numerous.⁴

The beginning of the area where there are vineyards and where olive trees begin to appear coincides roughly with that of the first irrigated lands, which in Araba occupy a small portion of the southeast and in Navarre all of the riverbanks and part of the central zone (fig. 52). Regulations on irrigation in Navarre and La Rioja are known to
have existed since very distant medieval times. As in the rest of the peninsula, the extent to which the Moors influenced the spread of irrigation remains to be clarified. What is evident is that the Moors did not settle definitively in areas north of places where irrigation, olive trees, and grapevines for high-grade wines are found, and areas where all of these agricultural features are highly developed are largely without Basques since very distant times.
CHAPTER 11

The Pastoral Sector:
Types of Shepherding Typical of the Basque Country. Woodcutters and Charcoal Burners

Some of the ranching and shepherding activities of the Basques show a peculiar aspect that is quite separate from agricultural tasks. If the breeding and use of the cow are closely related today with agriculture, if the fattening of pigs and the maintenance of farmyard birds, primarily chickens, are linked to the existence of grains and other crops; then the shepherding life has many of the aforementioned features of autonomy, and whoever speaks of sheep should also mention undomesticated mountain cows, horses, and mares. On the other hand, one can easily understand in which zones autonomous shepherding reached the highest development.

In chapter 2, we mentioned the fact noted by Barandiarán that the areas where there are the most dolmens are also those in which there is a particular type of shepherding: areas of mountains and ranges that form the spine of the country.

It is very likely that nuclei of specialized shepherds have lived there since very distant times. But their organization has been obliged to change through the centuries until it adopted the features it shows today; it also seems certain that many of the present-day farmhouses, whose inhabitants in modern times have developed agriculture with the characteristics described earlier, were located in ancient shepherding reserves or territories, sels, and so on.

Cultivated meadows and the rearing of cows in a stable have become more and more popular in the heart of the country, at the expense of natural pastures and sheep. For reasons of climate, the highest mountains
have not undergone this process, however, and that is where the most interesting observations can be made.

Today the farmhouses of a great part of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, northwestern Navarre, and Lapurdi tend to have in the mountains, whether privately or commonly owned, a small rectangular structure, *borda*, that is not inhabited and in which the sheep are sheltered at night. One of the men, boys, or girls of the farmhouse is responsible for going to the mountain in the morning to turn them loose and again at dusk to bring them back. When lambing and lactation time arrives, they are usually moved down to the farmhouse or to a nearby house, but how paltry this rearing seems compared with that typical of past epochs! All present-day researchers agree on the decline of pastoral activities, strictly speaking. On the other hand, ancient laws and reports mention such activities continually, and there are vestiges of their previous glory even in the areas of greatest elevation.

The words for the sheep (*ardi*), the lamb (*bildotx*), the ram (*ari*), the castrated ram (*zikiru*), the goat (*auntz*), the billy goat (*akerra*), the kid (*segaill*), the pig (*urde*), the sow (*sedal*), and their offspring (*arkela* for females, *ordotx* for males) seem to have little to do with Indo-European words and reflect the observation of their different qualities by people very interested in specific details and who undoubtedly had a certain quantity of animals of each species. However, Gárate believes that *ari* and *aries* are related.

It is a well-known fact that in various languages of different families, the concepts of wealth, money, and livestock are closely related. In Latin, *rich* (*pecuniosus*) originally meant one who had *pecunia*, that is, abundant livestock, *pecus*. In Basque, *aberatsa* or *aberatza* is a rich person, and livestock is *abereak*. Some philologists have speculated that this word is of Romance origin: *Habere* in Provençal apparently gave rise to a word parallel to the Basque one. But whether or not this is true, it is interesting now to note the relationship between these two concepts, which is consistent with what we know from history.1

A great number of the conflicts among the earliest known medieval chiefs, who fought for power in the Basque Country and in other bordering lands, were economic in character and most obviously involved the theft of livestock in invaded lands that were controlled, until raided, by the enemy.
In any case, the most ancient medieval documents, which are conserved in cartularies such as that of San Millán, allude to all of the following:

1) Community grazing lands belonging to monasteries of greater or lesser importance, towns, and settlements. It is characteristic of the Basque-Araba area and of the La Rioja region, which is tightly bound to it, that although the lands belonging to a town might have been granted to a monastery, the communal aspect of all grazing lands, given or received, is emphasized.

2) License to graze on less precisely defined lands, expressed, for example, as those that a herd can cover in one day, returning to spend the night in their own territory.

3) License to graze in wide territories. Thus, for example, in 1011 King Sancho of Navarre granted to San Millán the privilege for its herds to graze throughout his entire kingdom, except in farm fields and meadows.

4) Annotations on the ranges of meadows and pastureland.

5) The establishment of shepherding stations with appropriate lands and buildings.

The possession of different types of livestock is related to the different types of use of pasture lands. In this respect it is useful to distinguish

1) places devoted to herds of sheep and goats
2) those devoted to pigs
3) those devoted to herds of cows

Livestock stabled near the manor house or within it is distinguished from the animals that spend almost all their time in the mountains under the care of professional shepherds or herders. Cattle in particular are kept in both ways. Working cows and oxen are separated from those that graze in cow pastures, grazing lands, and winter enclosures.

The *busto*, in Navarre, was a herd of cows not larger than eight hundred head, a number that would impress any modern farmer. Old works of popular art illustrate the life of the Basque–Navarrese cowherd *(itzai, unai)*.

The amount of land used for shepherding provoked (as stated earlier and as happened in ancient times) great local or even more extensive battles. The *Poema de Fernán González* is a running complaint about the plundering by the Navarrese in Castile. But if the chiefs, counts, and kings habitually sacked each other, more humble peoples of lower reputation
also dedicated themselves to stealing and rustling. There is an enormous amount of documentation from the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries concerning thefts of livestock, held in the Cámara de Comptos de Navarre (a kind of fiscal regulating agency); these animals would have been taken to remote areas of the mountain ranges of Aralar, Urbasa, and Andia. In the fifteenth century, at the same time that municipal life was gaining stability and strength, the peoples living in the vicinity of those mountain ranges organized their land use in the form of parzonerías, which have almost always been respected up to the present day.

In general terms we can state that because of its great instability, the social structure of early medieval times lent itself to the mobility characteristic of a herding economy based on sheep, whereas the more modern social structure has relegated herding to very restricted lands, to a great extent bringing about its decrease and downfall.

The life of the shepherd nevertheless maintained until quite recently, if not still, certain features that for the most part were established very long ago. Basque shepherding today still shows the following:

1) seasonal migration of livestock over large distances
2) seasonal migration of livestock over shorter distances
3) seasonal local migration of livestock, from the borda to the farm-house and vice versa

The first two forms, but not the third, require professional shepherds.

The seasonal migration of livestock over large distances is particularly typical today of the inhabitants of the Erronkari Valley, who for half of the year maintain their animals in the mountains lands belonging to the valley and for the other half graze them in the Erribera-Ribera de Navarra and in parallel Aragonese lands (fig. 60). In Errege Bardeak (Bardenas Reales), Erronkari enjoyed a very ancient right to use land for grazing and the privilege of having guards and hunters and naming a mayor, who carried out his duties in conjunction with the mayors of Tutera, Caparroso, and Arguedas; people of these cities called the Erronkarians chalabardanos. The descent to Bardeak takes place at the end of October, the ascent to Erronkari at the end of April. I do not know exactly when this type of seasonal migration began, but if one considers how late, relatively speaking, the south of Navarre was retaken from the Moors, it seems likely that it cannot date from before the twelfth century, even though by the eleventh century, towns such as Tafalla seem to have been controlled by the Christians. In the Middle Ages, however, the livestock of Orreaga and other Pyrenean places used to go down to Les Landes, the flat land of Gascony.
Although it takes place in more limited lands than the migration in Castile, this seasonal migration is now comparable to it and, above all, to that in Catalonia. The livestock belonging to the people of the Erronkari at the end of the eighteenth century reached a hundred thousand head. At the beginning of this century, the number of sheep was between sixty and seventy thousand. Today their breeding has undergone notable variations, and to the breeding of sheep one must add that of goats and other small animals. We must not forget that these migrations have recently
contributed powerfully to the loss of the Basque language in the valley, which took place in a particular way. In fact, the men who went down to the south and stayed there for a long time generally spoke Spanish at the end of the nineteenth century, although they understood Basque. The married women and small children (who did not leave the valley) continued speaking Basque. In the end, the “masculine” language won.  

Let us now discuss the second type of migration. In Lower Navarre, Zuberoa, the Pyrenean valleys that extend to the west of the Erronkari (e.g., Zaraitzu, Aezkoa), and the towns of Araba, Gipuzkoa, and Bizkaia near the tall mountains of the central zone of the land such as the Gorbeia, Aizkorri (Aizcorri), and Aralar and the ranges of Entzia (Encia), Andia, and Urbasa, the shepherds practice a type of migration regulated by very precise legal rules, which are often passed by groups of different towns, among which we can cite the General Parzonería of Araba and Gipuzkoa, which affects 10,775 hectares of grazing land and forests; the union of Ernio with ten other towns, of which Ordizia is the most important; the union of Aralar, which consists of five towns of the Gipuzkoan Goierri; the union that distributes the grazing lands of the Gorobel (Salvada) range, in Araba, among the valleys of Amurrio, Lezama, Aiara, and Okondo; that of the Gorbeia, in Bizkaia; and that of the French-Basque towns such as Sara (Sare), with bordering towns in Spanish Navarre, such as Urdazubi (Urdax), Bera, and Zugarramurdi. It has been shown that the restricted migration in these areas is of great ancestry.

In 1150, the farmers of Durango obtained a charter from the king of Navarre, and it (or rather, copies of it) seems to suggest the existence of local migration of livestock when it tells of the livestock that those farmers had in their houses from Easter Day to Saint John’s Day and what they should pay according to the number of animals. Later there were more and more laws on shepherding. Charters from each province and regulations of each valley abound in such laws beginning in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Thus, in the book of customs of Zuberoa it was established that every year the herds of livestock should be taken up to the mountain passes (bortuak) by designated roads called alchoubideak and stay in the highlands from the day called Corstobolo (Septem fratrum) until Saint Peter Ad Vincula, with the general use of the grazing lands in the highlands being prohibited the rest of the year for all but the owners of the different corrals and highland shepherding areas. This general law did not include the Alga-ondoa or Assaleguie mountain, to which
the animals could be taken from Purification Day, February 2, to Saint Peter Ad Vincula, August 1.

In the customs of Lapurdi it was stated that in the winter, from Saint Michael’s Day to Saint Martin’s Day, livestock could not be taken from the land of the parish itself, within which each resident was allowed to build “cabanes, loges, et clôtures” free of charge. Characteristic of this region were some fenced areas of wooded land called barrende-guiak. In the eighteenth century, some people concerned themselves with drawing up the rules for the perfect regulation of the sels, which, in our time, like so many other ethnological features, were carefully studied by Barandiarán.

Grazing lands in general were called sel, soro, gorta, or korta (from which many present-day names of houses and surnames are said to be derived). The sel or soro (solum in Latin) had a central stone marker (kortaarria or austarria) and a circular area of a radius that varied, depending on whether it was for winter (korta nagusia) or summer (korta-txikia) use; the former was always bigger than the latter, almost double in size, and in Bizkaia it reached as many as 126 estados [a unit of measurement approximately equal to 5 feet 7 inches — trans.], whereas in the summer one normally had no more than 63 estados. In Bizkaia also, the shepherds went up to the summer sels from the Gorbeia in early May, and with the sheep they took cows, mares, goats, and even chickens and pigs, which they raised during the cheese-making period (from May to the end of July). They came down to their winter quarters on the first of November.

Every shepherd in some places (two or more together in others) lived during the summer in a hut or txabola made of stone, which was rectangular and had three rooms, partitioned with masonry or planks: the hearth (sutoki, sua), the bunkroom (kamaña, kamañeа), and the cheesery (gaztandegui; figs. 61a–b). The roof was generally gabled with slats of beech in the eastern zones such as the Erro and Zaraitzu valleys and in the central zones with sod taken from nearby fields. Until recently, it was strictly prohibited to roof the hut with tiles, because this was considered to indicate ownership, and it was said that no one had the right to claim the cabin as his own because it could be neither sold nor locked (Entzia, Aizkorri).

To maintain its usufruct, every year it had to be occupied by the shepherd or a member of his family; if he was absent for only one year, he lost his rights to it. To construct a hut, advance permission had to be
requested of the city council if the land was communal, or of the landowner otherwise.

In the regulations of the Baztan Valley, the *borda* is very precisely distinguished from the shepherd’s hut, the former being much more important than the latter. Thus, a new shepherd’s hut could be raised fifty *estados* from an already existing one, but from *borda* to *borda* there had to be two hundred *estados*, and from old *borda* to new hut, one hundred *estados*.4

The shepherds organize themselves, and above all organized themselves, in a particular way. In 1167, when the king of Navarre and other barons swore to defend the herds of cows of the monastery of San Miguel on the Aralar mountain (in an area plagued with bandits), they established the naming of a *maizter* (*magister pecoris*) as their leader; in some Pyrenean villages the farm manager is still so designated. The same document alludes to the *buruzagui*, chief of anything in modern Basque,
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as if he had a function other than that of the maizter. Perhaps the former had more power in general than the latter: in modern times bustegui refers to any owner, particularly of livestock, of the Erronkari and Zaraitzu valleys. It is curious to note that the meetings of these owners were called mesta in Basque.

The shepherd is now generally called artzai or artzain, the farm manager is called artzai-nagusi, and the shepherd boy is called artzai-mutil. They are usually salaried professionals to whom the livestock of all the residents of a village are entrusted. They lead a life that is radically different from that of the farmworker, who, extremely significantly, is called nekazari. This name is meaningful because the verb nekatu means to suffer, to become fatigued, and agriculture was originally the most laborious job; however, nekazale also refers to a day laborer or humble artisan in general.

It is worth saying something about the tools and clothing of shepherds, which differ markedly in the different zones. The Basque shepherd used to wear a traditional outfit of very ancient origin, composed of the following items:

1) kapusai, a cloak of brown fabric (marraga) made of goat hair or an equivalent article of clothing, xartex, which was usually grayish
2) a leather pouch (zorru) made of goatskin
3) kurkubita, a gourd for carrying milk or water

He covered his legs with stockings that he made himself (similar to garters) or with strips of wool, and the common shoes, both for shepherds and for farmworkers, were abarkak (brogues), which showed some differences from those of other regions of the peninsula. The Basque ones are trimmed and closed with seams in the front, whereas those of Pas and Miera valleys (Cantabria) and Andalusia do not have such a seam, and in the Aragonese ones, the toes are protected with a threaded piece of leather.

The shepherds from the Zaraitzu and Erronkari valleys had somewhat different clothes, like the rest of the inhabitants of those valleys, more closely related to those of Upper Aragón and Bearn than to the Basque ones in other respects. When there is a lot of snow, they add to the brogue a type of snowshoe called bularreta, gularreta, or gobarreta in Basque, barreras in the Spanish of Araba, and barajones in the Cantabrian–Asturian zone.

At certain times of the year, the shepherd carries out special duties. The first is the shearing (motzaldì), which in the Erronkari Valley, for example, takes place when the summer grasses arrive. Various types of
scissors are used for it (goraizek, Legorreta, Gipuzkoa; artasik, Baztan, Navarre; punxik, Ultzama, Navarre).

The second of these duties is cheese making, which takes place from May to early July. All travelers and observers have noted the wooden receptacles of a very particular form called kaikuak (in the plural), used for milking both sheep and cows (fig. 62). The milk (esni) is strained with a funnel (iragazki) into another receptacle called abatza, where it curdles (with animal rennet or cardoon) and is beaten (with a whisk, malatx, that takes various forms). The whey (gazura) is separated from the obtained mixture and placed in wooden molds with curious geometric designs on them called zimitzak, from which it comes out as cheese (gazta, gasna). In cheese-making season, curd with whey is a common food. This has various names, such as gatzatue, putxea, and mamiña (Orozko, Amorebieta, Bizkaia), mami (Gipuzkoa), and gaztambera (Bera, Navarre). The curd is cut with a type of wooden knife (epaki).

![Figure 62.](image_url)

Wooden receptacles used by shepherds and in the farmhouses when milking, drinking milk, and making cheeses: kaiku for milking and cooking the milk with stones, zimitz for making cheeses, and abats for drinking milk.

The milk is commonly drunk from medium-sized wooden cups, oporrak, esne poto (fig. 62); it is cooked in the kaiku with stones, generally ophites, that are put on the fire until red, picked up with tongs or two sticks, and placed in the liquid, bringing it just to a boil. In some places, these stones (esnearriak, txukunarriak) are limestone.

During the long hours of solitude and throughout the whole year, the shepherds devote themselves to various manual tasks. They are very fond of carding wool, spinning, and making stockings. For the first of these activities, they use cards (kardak) of a type common in the rest of the Pyrenees; for spinning, they use a spindle (txatill); and for making stockings, they use different types of crochet hooks (galtzerdi orratzak) made of heather wood. They still have time to make walking sticks or makil-
lak with various adornments with a penknife; supports for the zimitzak, called kartol or txurka; wooden dishes (txaliak) and spoons (cutxare) to eat with; other receptacles (kotxak); collars for the animals (zildaia); and belt loops. Cowbells (zinzarriak) are purchased at the market.

There are very notable differences between the shepherd’s tools and arts in the heart of the country and those typical of the southern and high eastern Pyrenean zones. The drinking horns, wooden vessels, spoons, and carvings in general by the shepherds of the southern and western mountain ranges in Araba, and those made by the people of the Erronkari, are similar in conception to those made by many Castilians or by the inhabitants of the interior of the Iberian peninsula, with the people living in the area around Salamanca notable for their great artistic abilities.

The Basque technique is based above all on carving the wood of sturdy trees, less so on carving bone and the hard woods of bushes. It would be worth carrying out extensive research on these two techniques and the relationships they may have with other ethnological data.

Of course, one observes other features of great antiquity in the life of the shepherds; they conserve these cultural elements, which made their first appearance in complexes of the most primitive type known. For example, the procedure for hunting wolves in the Gibixo (Gibiyo) mountain range (Araba) is that of beating, together with the use of two walls 300 meters long, 2.50 meters high, and 0.80 meters thick, which form an angle of approximately 50 degrees, in whose vertex there is a pit 6 meters long, 5 meters wide, and 4 meters deep. Between the two walls there are hides and shelters for the shepherds. This type of hunting with beating and pits was practiced in all Spanish mountain ranges until recently.

Also in the north, one finds the furrun-farra, or bullroarer, which is used particularly by shepherds for the purpose of calling the livestock. The malote, a stick with a cleft in one end, in which one places a stone to throw at livestock that wanders off, never ceases to be interesting, although a slingshot is more commonly used in some places for this purpose: abail (Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia), abaila, habaila (French Basque Country), ubal, ugal, ufaldarri (in the Arakil Valley, Navarre).

Similar objects, particularly those made of wood and horn, may date back to a different and even more ancient cycle than shepherding itself in Western Europe. Later we will make some general historical observations about such primitive cycles.5

A job that is often carried out in areas similar to those occupied by shepherds is that of the woodcutters and charcoal burners. In ancient times, the vicinity of the Cantabrian as a whole must have been covered
by very dense forests. The area between Iruñea and the sea was known to the Romans as *Saltus Vasconum*. Throughout the Middle Ages one often finds texts with allusions to its wildness. Today the state of the forest has changed quite a lot in the Basque Country, but vestiges of the ancient forests still exist here and there. *Basa* and *oian* are the Basque names for the forest and wooded lands.

We saw before that a resident of the zone of dissemination is still called *baserritar*. The highest points and those closest to great masses of trees are *basaburuak*; in oceanic Navarre there are two of the most remote valleys that even today bear this name (the Major and Minor Basaburua), where woodcutters still have, as they do in other neighboring valleys, a wide field in which to carry out their activities.

But it is worth making a distinction between those who live almost exclusively from the trade in specific areas and those who take firewood or wood from the mountains near their residences. By the time of the Roman Empire, the forests of the western Pyrenees were the center of a medium-sized wood industry, as is shown by the name of *Forum Ligneum* that was given to a station of the great Roman road that went from Zaragoza to Bearn (Lescun). It is also reflected in an epigram by the Greek poet Crinagoras, who alludes to the apparently Aquitaine woodcutters, and in other documents. This industry must have experienced several crises. But there is no doubt that, in the late Middle Ages and in the Modern Age, the continual need for wood for construction in general and sailing ships in particular caused part of the forests to diminish alarmingly and that the local civil authorities and generals concerned themselves with replanting forests and delimiting lands so that the wooded areas would prosper, free also from the continual threat of shepherds and farmworkers who wanted to graze more and increase the pastures. The results of the legislation were not as satisfactory as they might have been.

Even in the eighteenth century, however, the rivers that cross oceanic Navarre and all of Gipuzkoa from south to north were used to carry, in rafts, tree trunks cut in the nearby mountains to the ports of the estuaries, where there were shipyards and important warehouses. Today, the river transport of wood has become typical of the rivers of the easternmost Pyrenean zone of the country, such as the Eska, which flows through the Erronkari Valley from north to south; the Salazar, which bears the same name as the valley (in Spanish); and especially the Irati, which originates in a dense forest. Woodcutters and raftsmen are of great economic importance there, as in the adjacent land of Zuberoa. The rafts may be made of
planks or tree trunks. If they are made of planks, some forty are placed on their sides, or fifteen are placed together if they are made of trunks. Each plank or trunk has holes in the ends for wires, or earlier, branches of hazel, as towlines that bind them to a crossbeam. Strings of rafts, usually tied in fours, are formed in this way so that the raft can negotiate the turns in the river by what is called xintura. Each raft measures some five meters in length and three meters in width, so that the string of rafts totals twenty meters. In the forward part stand two men, the lead men, each with an oar or hook (gafa), and in the rear another two, the aft men. In the middle there are two wooden forks with a stick over them, from which the food and clothing of the raftsmen are hung in knapsacks. The work is hard and dangerous, especially in ravines with violent currents and at dams, where there are ramps built expressly for the rafts. The pine rafts of the Irati go all the way to Castejón, and those of oak and fir go to Agoitz.

The common woodcutter (egurguin, egurkin, egurarki, egurguille) works in the communal or privately owned mountains, particularly at specific times of the year. Epailla (March) is the most appropriate month for pruning trees, and then, or in February, is when the plots of land that belong to each family are cut. The state of the forest of many city councils has become desperate because there is no remedy for the proverbial hatred of the villager for the tree, even when it is always the tree that in hard times, times of economic crisis, earns him the money with which to solve his problems. Let it be noted that the Basque has lost the notion of the existence of an old generic word for “tree” (which it undoubtedly had and which appears in compound forms and old texts) in favor of the word arbola. In contrast with this loss, there is the fact that the names of the instruments used particularly by woodcutters, such as the ax, the knife, and pruning shears (to which we will add the names given to hoes and weeding hoes), are those in which one finds the component aitz, which is interpreted as stone or rock, although it is clear that all today are made of wood and iron. There exists a certain mystical relationship between the prehistoric ax, which is considered a “lightning stone” and which is generally used to protect huts, cabins, and farmhouses from lightning during storms, and the present-day iron ax, because woodcutters and charcoal burners generally place it with the blade up at the entry to their shelter when there is a storm and they do not have a lightning stone as a substitute and provider of the same protective virtues. This suggests that the practice originated at a time when the specific function of the prehistoric ax was known and metal began to substitute for stone,
as Barandiarán has pointed out. Many myths and traditions are particularly maintained in shepherding and forested territories. But we will speak of them later. Let us now discuss the other workers of the forest.

The charcoal burners (ikatzabilliak, ikatzguiñak, ikatzkiñak) work in groups hired by one or various employers and composed of eight or more people; some bands have as many as sixteen. They remain in the forests up to six months of the year (the hottest ones), sheltering themselves in huts of a particular structure made, more often than those built by shepherds, of wood and other types of plants. The etxola or txabola of the charcoal burners of Mount Aloña in southern Gipuzkoa, for example, is designed in the shape of a capital letter T. The body of the T serves as a resting place; in the cross of the T, one end is the kitchen and the other the bedroom. The roofing is held up by sticks and wooden forks and is composed of chunks of sod (zotalak), except for above the hearth, where there is an open space.

On the banks of a stream near a plot of firewood that will be made into charcoal, they raise a chimney of interwoven sticks, place vertical trunks around it, and then place various other layers of trunks on the chimney in the same manner until they form a pile of 1.60 meters or a little more. This is covered with soil and moss, leaving only a central opening. The fire is started with twigs, and once it has caught, holes in the sides are opened and the coahouse chimney or txondorra is closed.

The charcoal burner needs a set of particular tools. First, he needs a “moon ax” (illargui aizora), with the rounded blade for which it is named and a very dense blunt edge; a two-handled saw (arpau), and a wedge (burdin-ziri) to split the wood. Second, he needs the tools used in the carbonization itself: the club (ikatz-mazu), used to press down the soil and branches that cover the firewood to be burned; the hook (ikatz-kako or -mako), which is used to determine the state of combustion and to pick apart the pile of carbonized material; the ladder to climb to the top of the pile (segalera, sagalera, ezkilaria); the special shoes (ikatzkiñ-zapatak) to walk around or on the pile without burning oneself; the rake (eskubare, arraztelu) to scatter the charcoal; and the shovel (endaï) and dustpan (pelaki) to pile it up.

Once the charcoal is made, it is sifted in a wicker sieve (galbai) and measured in special baskets (ikatz-neurriak) that hold roughly the amount that fits in a sack. The sacks are closed with interwoven straps of chestnut, or bracken and couch grass. The tally of the sacks is noted on very rustic tags (ikatzkiñ-tai). Like the shepherds, the charcoal burners also use wooden bowls, dishes, plates, and spoons.6
In the preceding chapters, we studied facts concerning what those who deal with human geography call “nonproductive occupations” and “creative occupations.” To the first set belong the facts described in the pages dedicated to types of accommodation, towns and villages, transportation, and other related topics; to the second, what we have said about agriculture and shepherding. But there is a third class of economic activities determined by the land or the surface of the earth. The third group of facts consists of destructive occupations such as hunting, fishing, and even the simple extraction of minerals, of which we will speak later, as well as cutting trees in natural forests, which we have already discussed. Human needs (included in the circle of the environment and circle of spoils) are not covered once the tasks described so far have been carried out. And the Basques, for specific periods of time, have developed other activities in a way worthy of consideration, given that they are quite typical of Basques in comparison with many of their immediate neighbors. Many that in distant times had great significance in their own land have lost their meaning, however. This is what happened with the first of the destructive occupations: hunting (eiza, eizi, iiizi). The heart of the country is unattractive today to the amateur hunter (eiztari). The lateral areas, the Pyrenean and southern, offer more opportunity for practicing the sport. But the devastation of animals that is happening will eliminate species that still persist there, just as it has eliminated others that existed until recently, including in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the stag must still have been common in the mountains of central and south Navarre; Basque writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries still knew its name (orein, oren, orin), which was also given to the fallow deer, something that most villagers today do not know because they are not familiar with the animal, which was defini-
tively eliminated in the nineteenth century. Something similar can be said of deer, roe deer, mountain goats, and other animals that were once food for people and that today have disappeared almost completely.

Among the wildest animals, the bear (artza) and the wolf (otsoa), which were very familiar in the Middle Ages and used as heraldic emblems for a great number of families and in the names of many people, were beaten into full retreat from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Less so the third heraldic mammal, the wild boar (basurde), and some small- and medium-sized felines, such as the wildcat (basakatu), of which from time to time a specimen is seen. First economic necessities, then defensive ones, and finally pure love of hunting have finished off a great number of the old forest and mountain fauna, which had as much positive or negative importance in the economic life of the early peasants as in their psychic life and even in their social life. In fact, we will soon see how the hunter appears in folklore as a mythical being and how numerous are the narrations, stories, and fables in which these animals, which have heraldic meaning, are the protagonists. We must still note here that at one time there existed associations of hunters that, little by little, lost their importance and meaning. Thus, instead of paying tribute with hunting, as it originally did, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the association of Gurbindo de Leranoz in Navarre did it with money and agricultural products.¹

Another destructive occupation, sea fishing, which is closely related to navigation, has undergone the converse historical process. The curious researcher can quickly gather the scarce information on the maritime activities of the towns of northern Spain in ancient times. From the Galicians to the Vascones, all of the great social units that reached the Atlantic coast seem to have had very little interest or expertise in anything relating to the sea. The great Roman ships scared the coastal populations more than once. During the Empire and after, some ports were undoubtedly taken advantage of for commercial ends, but the reality is that intense deep-sea Basque fishing and navigation arose almost suddenly and quite late, and there is reason to think that it was the Normans, who invaded southwestern France around the ninth century, who taught the Basques the nautical arts.

Nevertheless, the times were not favorable to a great development of the nautical life until later, and it reached its splendor when the Reconquest of the peninsula reached very far to the south. The increase in fishing and navigation is logically related to the following events, to which we alluded earlier:
1) the constitution of Christian monarchies with power over wide territories
2) the constitution of city centers protected by royal power
3) the flowering of industry and commerce in such centers
4) an increase in networks of communication
5) an increase in the nutritional needs of the urban masses and those of the interior

Hunting declined at the same time as the power of the seigniorial nobility, whereas fishing prospered when the royalty and the bourgeoisie did. In the early period of its flourishing, fishing was limited to certain species that provided oils or that could be salted and preserved without fear of rapid putrefaction. It was later extended. During a certain period, on specific days of the year, Christians had to fast or abstain from meats. During Lent, fish covered the tables of nobles and plebians. The medieval poets recount a battle between Christianity and its followers opposite Carnival and its own, and one of the older poets from the central plateau of Castile said in the fourteenth century of the Lenten hosts,

“Arenques é vesugos venieron de Bermeo.”
(“Herring and sea bream came from Bermeo.”)

The fourteenth century was a century of great prosperity and the peak of all Basque maritime enterprises. But the first information on these enterprises goes back at least to the eleventh century and refers specifically to Baiona.

In the charter of Donostia ratified by Sancho the Wise of Navarre, the existence of a maritime territory for fishing belonging to the town is noted. The confederations of seamen and fishermen later arise in profusion, from Hondarribia to Santander. Let us now speak specifically of the fishermen. We can state that various types existed in the past, among which the whalers and cod fishers stand out on the one side and the coastal fishermen on the other. Until the eighteenth century, the expeditions in search of large cetaceans were organized regularly, such that Father Larramendi still saw the departure of the bold Gipuzkoan sailors in fragile boats for the fishing grounds and described, in an animated way, the battle of the harpoonist and the wounded animal, whose oil was very valuable. From then to present times, whaling has been decreasing. Its greatest peak must have been in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Various seals of maritime councils from that time and before show whales as an emblem and heraldic sign (fig. 63).
Cod fishing expeditions, whose greatest intensity was at the beginning of the sixteenth century, have given rise to various legends and fables and to conflicts between the fishermen of Spain and France, who went as far the coasts of Newfoundland and who ended with a series of arbitrations that were of little satisfaction to either party. At the beginning of the twentieth century we began to see the disappearance of the old forms of fishing in boats, sardine fishing boats, and small canoes, and today almost all of the Cantabrian fishing industry is based on the use of numerous steamers.

The most common of the small rowboats used for fishing near the ports generally had a draft of 0.30 meters, a length of 7 meters, a beam of 1.60 meters, and a mainstay of 0.60 meters. Above these were the great sardine fishing boats, with a draft of 0.40 meters, a length of 12 meters, a beam of 1.80 meters, and a mainstay of 0.75 meters.
In the seventeenth century (1644), the boats used by the people from Bermeo for fishing for anchovies and sardines, like the smallest *traineras* (sardine fishing boats), had 26 feet (7.28 meters) of keel, 28 feet (7.84 meters) of length, 6 1/3 feet of beam, and 2 feet 10 inches of mainstay. Those that the same people used for deep-sea fishing were bigger: 34 1/2 feet (slightly more than 9.52 meters) of keel, 36 2/3 feet (slightly more than 10 meters) of keel, and 3 1/2 feet of mainstay, with a mainmast of 35 feet (9.80 meters) and yard of 16 feet (4.48 meters), and a foremast of 26 feet (7.28 meters) with its yard of 12 feet. When the wind rose, they used only a topmast 16 feet in length with a yard of 8 feet. These deep-sea launches were common until the First Carlist War. In general, the traditional Basque boats contrasted with those of the Mediterranean in their greater slenderness and in their more developed sails. But to the best of my knowledge, it has not yet been determined with which types of boat they might have the greatest connection. Aranzadi states that certain tuna and sardine boats were very similar in their proportions to Norman ones constructed beginning in the ninth century.

More modern researchers point out that the boats of the Scandinavian type are characterized by specific traits of construction that differentiate them from Mediterranean ones. But both had an influence on ours and on those of other Western countries. One thing is clear: The Basque nautical vocabulary, like the Spanish, is riddled with terms that came from the north in Medieval times. The boat, in general, has a name that is the same as that used for glass or receptacle (*ontzi*); boats of particular types have the same names as they have in Spanish or very similar ones (e.g., *batelak*, *txanelak*, *txalanta*, *txalopeak*, *trainerak*, *kaleroak*). Basque shows greater individuality in its fishing vocabulary. The men of the sea until recently distinguished the sailor and deep-sea fisherman, the *mariñel*, from the coastal fisherman, or *arrantzale*. To the first category belonged the whalers and cod fishers; to the second belonged those who fished primarily in the coves. Both disappeared from the scene with the arrival of a new type of fisherman, not really very sympathetic, with greater pretensions and less practical knowledge. An old *arrantzale* would have been very well acquainted with the places and seasons most appropriate for fishing, with very different equipment for hake (*legatzea*), sea bream (*bixigotea*), anchovies (*majubatea*), mackerel (*berdeletea*), and horse mackerel. It is impossible to list all the procedures followed in these types of fishing all the variations introduced at different times.

However, let us state that with trawling, fishing has moved quite far from the coasts. In earlier times, hake (*legatza*), the most valuable
fish, was found along the coasts and could be fished with small skiffs and simple tackle (*txendelak*) and lines (*txatxola, irabenea*). Later it was necessary to look for it in the coves and use special, longer lines, but the coves also ran out of fish and were trawled. Complementary to fishing hake was fishing sea bream, which began in November and was done with tackle called *kordea*, composed of *trezak* (longline hooks), *kulubia* (buoys), and lines and ropes (*tiranteak*) that were set out at dawn. Sea bream fishing has also declined because of trawling.

In contrast, new modes of anchovy fishing are prospering. The old fisherman lay in wait for the movements of the tuna to indicate where the anchovies were obliged by the tuna to group themselves in shoals. Once the shoals were found, they put the stern to the sun with other neighboring *traineras*, forming a company and throwing their nets according to their order of arrival. The same happened with sardines. Because in fishing one had to submit oneself to the rhythm of the dolphin and the tuna, only rowboats were used.

For meteorological reasons, tuna (*egaluze*) fishing takes place off the coast of Asturias. Special nets of staggered sizes were used; the shortest ones (*uguerakoak*) reached more than ten fathoms, the *txoriko* up to sixty. Today three other pieces of equipment are used, and night fishing (*ardor*) and other smaller types of fishing are in decline.

The institutions that governed the life of the fisherman and fishing techniques have undergone radical change. In 1801, Wilhelm von Humboldt noted how people agreed on whether to go to sea in a small fishing port. Every morning when dawn broke, two men, the *señeros*, went to a watchtower to stop any boats from going out if the sea was very menacing. When the weather was doubtful, they called some girls, who ran through the town calling in Basque, “Get up in the name of God.” Once all the skippers and masters with their people had gathered, they decided what to do by voting. The vote was carried out using balls, which in Lekeitio were deposited in an urn (*atabaka*) that had two compartments with a single lid with two holes in it, marked with the figures of a launch and a house. By placing the ball in the hole on the side of the house or the launch, which led to different compartments, one voted one way or the other.

The fishermen of each port formed religious associations that also provided insurance, whose statutes through the centuries are well known. One of the members of these, the foreman, also regulated the wholesale
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selling of the fish, which was and still is auctioned in a building belonging to the associations or to the city.

In Hondarribia, this auction is carried out as follows. The foreman sits at a desk on the ground floor of the building, and the buyers sit in numbered seats in a higher gallery. Each buyer has a ball with the same number as his seat. When the foreman, who calls out prices from high to low, arrives at a number that is acceptable to the buyer, he throws his ball down a tube that leads to the desk where the foreman sits.

In earlier times, most of the fish was purchased by teamsters and muleteers, who then took it to the interior of Spain and who were not usually from the country. In contrast, in the valley and mountain towns of Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, Navarre, and Lapurdi fishermen exploited the services of their wives, who, in extremely fatiguing days, sold what they could carry in baskets and wheelbarrows. They covered up to thirty kilometers to the interior and another thirty back in the mid-nineteenth century and even later, to sell hake at four cuartos (twelve cents) a pound and sardines at three ochavos (five cents) a dozen.5

The fishing population in general can be differentiated in a very simple way from the agricultural population. The need to live near the port has meant that, since ancient times, the houses of this population are much taller than the farmhouse or village manor house, with three and four floors, and are occupied by several families, from whose windows and balconies hang nets, ropes, and various pieces of tackle. All Spaniards are familiar with the views of some of the Basque towns, such as Lekeitio, Ondarroa, and Mutriku, which are as lively as they are picturesque.

The lifestyle of the fishermen and their wives (kostarrak) is also different from that of the villagers. Later on outlines of their collective psychology will be made.

River fishing, which in past epochs had a certain importance, giving rise to abundant legislation, is in rapid decline. We know that in the Middle Ages, the right to fish in rivers was one of the rights granted by those who donated land to monasteries, a right granted with great precision because it solved the problem of how to comply with meat shortages within the local economy. Also in medieval times and more recently, we see monopolies on the fishing of certain species in certain rivers held by the cities and one or more families settled on the banks.

This is what happened on the banks of the Bidasoa, where the fish caught in one of the salmon traps of Lesaka around the year 1496 had to be divided between the city council, which received three parts, and
Martín Ibáñez de Echevarría and his family, to whom the other part had to be given, setting the price of the salmon (izoki) for him. Furthermore, the tackle for river fishing has varied since ancient times. In addition to fishing with a hook (amu) and rod, in streams and brooks people have fished with a fork or trident, with a fishing hammer (at night), with nets or traps consisting of a sack with two sticks that serve as handles, with lines also placed at night, with baskets (othar, asiaintzar), with botrinos and tresmallos, with the txinga (a type of net), and, finally, by poisoning the water with lime.

Today, salmon go upstream only with difficulty through dams and barriers of all sorts, and eels, trout, and other fish no longer swarm as they did before in the streams, which are often contaminated. Fishing legislation affects the few sport fishermen and amateurs in each zone more than real professionals or people for whom river fishing is an important source of income.

The names of the river fishes, such as trout (amurrai), catfish, and eel, do not reveal much interest in fishing among the ancient people who spoke a language directly related to Basque. The word for salmon is related to names of Celtic derivation, or from the Celtic sphere at least.⁶
CHAPTER 13

Miners and Ironmongers

Geographers also count mining among the destructive uses of land. For the ethnologist, who does not worry as much about natural objects in themselves as about the relationship of a subject (man as a social being) with them, categorizing is a little imprecise. The activities of miners and ironmongers respond to stimuli that are simultaneously very particular and very complex. Historically, their origins go back to a period in which agriculture and shepherding had already entered a phase of great development and even fusion, when regular and continuous trade was established between the Mediterranean east and the west.

It seems that an examination of the Basque words for metals and everything related to them would have to shed some light on this period. However, doing such an investigation leaves many doubts in the mind of the researcher. Considering first the names of the two most valuable metals, gold and silver, we find a relationship with the names recorded in ancient Indo-European languages. *Urre* (gold) must be related to *aurum*, and *zillar* (silver) is very similar to *silver* and the nouns of its group, which exists in parallel to the group formed by *argentum* and its related nouns.

We find two more words based on these: *urraida* (copper), which means similar (*aide*) to gold, and *zirraidia* (tin), that is, similar to silver. Judging from these names, gold and silver must have been seen before copper and tin. It is doubtful that the word for iron (*burdi, burdin, burdun*), in contrast, would have its most likely parallels in distantly related languages (it has even been thought to be related to Hebrew and Phoenician *barzāl*). The word for lead, *berun*, is ambiguous and has lent itself to many conjectures.
Perhaps, then, in ancient times, the inhabitants of the present-day Basque Country had a consistent trade in metals with towns of the Mediterranean and the north, from which they took some terms. But what is clear is that during the time of the Roman Empire, the Romans were familiar with and used many of the great iron mines of western Bizkaia, and others, such as those of Oiartzun, from which silver, lead, and some iron were extracted. The use of these mines suffered the complicated legal vicissitudes that apparently affected Roman mining in general.¹

Later it had to adapt to the conditions typical of the north of Spain in the first centuries of the Middle Ages, that is, to a rather closed economy and a system of local aristocracies interested for the most part in obtaining iron for daily, local use.

We know that the Roman ferrarius often was appointed to a villa. The work in the mines (e.g., silver, lead) was different and worse, the fate of those punished by the state. There is reason to think that once the north had become independent, the blacksmith associated with the town continued to function in Araba and Navarre at least, even when the other metallurgic operations declined because of a lack of any large state mechanism. We can also imagine that throughout the Pyrenees the use of iron was always self-governing to some extent.

Our old Atlantic metallurgy has two basic aspects:

1) The acquisition of iron to export it crude, that is, in the form of bars or ingots. When Vasconia began to participate in the political and economic enterprises of the late Middle Ages, at the same time that commerce, fishing, and navigation were flourishing, exportation attained a greater importance than it had ever had up to that point. Documents from the tenth century concerning Bizkaia and the charter of Donostia from the mid-eleventh century already speak of it.

2) The acquisition of iron to work it in the country. The study of this industry and of the evolution of local mining operations, from the early centuries of the Reconquest to the present era of industrial and political revolutions, is of greater interest than the extraction in itself.

As an economic symbol, iron has contributed in a fundamental way to the formation of the character of certain Basque centers. The fame of Bizkaian iron quickly spread beyond the borders of the Basque Country.
The need for offensive and defensive weapons, for farming implements, and for domestic utensils meant that the forging of metal was always encouraged in the country. But in the most remote times of the Reconquest, the use of deposits was undoubtedly very difficult. Thus, the obtained iron underwent various transformations, according to circumstances, in the ferragines (smithies) that are discussed so much in old documents, and it is not surprising that what today we call chatarra (scrap metal or scrap iron) was back in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries also an object of interest. There was a cycle of turning weapons into farming implements and implements into weapons; when the one got old, the ironmonger turned it into the other again.

The frequency with which a similar process occurred in all of Spain is clearly seen in texts such as the Poema de Fernán González, and the Primera Crónica General. The Basque Country was not as needy of raw materials as other areas, but it did not waste them either. It had mines and forests, two things necessary for the development of a primitive iron and steel industry. Water is also necessary. There was no shortage of torrential streams and rivers to provide it. Today we can say that the forests have been used up, the mines are almost empty, but the flow of water is what keeps the factories running, factories (descendants of the old foundries, for the most part) that have blighted the countryside.

The control of iron operations was apparently in the hands of the lesser lords or jaunchos of each region for many years. Thus, for example, Lope García de Salazar had jurisdiction over the Somorrostro mines in the mid-fifteenth century. The monarchs managed to limit the rights claimed by such people in order to give greater power to the cities. In Navarre there were even royal foundries. But the property of most of the major and minor foundries was until very recently in the hands of families considered bluebloods, and as a consequence the iron and steel industry as a whole was much influenced by them.

The seventeenth-century historians of the country, such as the Gipuzkoan Lope Martínez de Isasti, listed all the foundries of the province with their owners, and there is no shortage of literary texts that mention them, as in the following: “Having come from Bilbao to apply to the court for an increase in salary or control over lands,” said a certain cheating lady, speaking of her supposed father to a pretender, in Las harpías de Madrid, a novel by Castillo Solorzano published in 1631, “he fell in love with my mother, who is of the noble and highly considered House of Arancivica in Bizkaia. In the few days that he was there, he managed to oblige her parents to give her to him in marriage, and as a
dowry, a smithy, which is a property of worth in that land because it extracts iron for all of Spain.”

Nevertheless, a mine itself could appear unexpectedly or could be discovered by someone who was not associated with smelting. The custom among the country people, established at an imprecise time, was that it was sufficient for the discoverer to carry out a minimal extraction, on one day of each year, in order to be considered its owner. This type of property was called tomoydejo (“take and leave”; artuotcicoacoaindocumentsfromthemid-eighteenthcenturythatIsawinBera), and because it lent itself to abuses, it was declared in some places that, to guarantee its future personal use, one had to work in the mine for at least one month of the year.

The procedure of opening adits (atakak) and galleries (leyuak, meazuluak) was also regulated. With respect to mining technology, it can be said that conditions until the Renaissance were the same as those that had existed in ancient times in the west. Therefore, it is very difficult to determine the phases of use of the mines of the country, especially those of the very largest and best known.

On the other hand, I do not believe that either the Basque language or the Basque technique shows very specific or distinctive traits with respect to the mining of galena argentífera (a mixture of sulfur, lead, and silver) and lead. In contrast, the iron and steel industry in its different manifestations deserves all our curiosity, distinguishing the extraction of crude iron from hot forging and cold forging. In both, the Basques adopted norms of great ethnological and historical-cultural interest. Let us speak first of the extraction of iron and its vicissitudes.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, historian Esteban de Garibay stated that in many high places on the mountains one could still see slag and other residues of a time when it was not known how to use water power to move bellows, hammers, and so on.

The iron was obtained using huge quantities of carbonized wood. The mineral iron was placed with the charcoal in the trunk of a very wide tree that had been previously hollowed out and covered with clay and other mineral substances. The combustion was initiated with a bellows made of deer or goat leather moved with the feet or, more frequently, with the hands. The nozzles channeled the air that was produced. The dross from the mineral would fall in a pit called arrago or arragua, a word that may be related to arrugia, which Pliny used when speaking
about Spanish mining. The same word was used for the pit in which the first combustion of the seam was carried out later.

Even in the last years of the eighteenth century, the ironmongers of Zegama must have practiced this system, which rapidly exhausted the forests and wooded areas. It is also worth mentioning the fact that in the late fifteenth century and early sixteenth century women also worked iron in the aforementioned high and deserted places referred to in the charter of Segura, issued by Sancho iv in Valladolid in 1290, which states, “To do them more good and more mercy, I consider that the foundries in Legazpi that do not use water, that lie unused and are robbed by bad men and robbers, should move closer to the town of Segura and be settled, that they may be better provided for and safer.” Years later, Alfonso xi granted to the land of Oiartzun the famous “Charter of Foundries” (1338) in which their operation is regulated and solutions to the progressive deforestation are provided. This extended to other parts, in which there was a mayor of the charter who was knowledgeable in the issues that concern us.3

The old Basque system of smelting deserves new attention because its study could contribute to the clarification of some general ethnological problems. First, there is no doubt that it must be considered within the great Pyrenean (e.g., Aquitaine, Catalan) metallurgic tradition, even though beginning at a certain time it sometimes shows notable differences with respect to the famous Catalan forging technique.

It seems clear that those who in the early sixteenth century introduced the water drop hammer in Spain were Marcos de Zumalabe, a Bizkaian from Balmaseda (Valmaseda), and the Milanese Fabricario. Around 1540, these hammers were in general use, and in 1548 in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa there were no fewer than three hundred foundries of this sort, as described in the index of the regulations of Gipuzkoa, published in 1697: “A foundry,” it says, “is a workplace or device in which iron is smelted, under a violent and continuous fire, fanned by wind produced by a great bellows, moved by the power of a great quantity of water by means of some clever wheels that move them to set on fire a great quantity of charcoal, under the effect of which the crude metal, generally called vena, is converted into liquid iron, produced by the most rugged areas of the Cantabrian mountains.”

It is difficult to explain precisely everything that constituted a workplace of this type, and there were bigger and smaller ones. From the former, called zearrolak, large masses of mineral (agoa, agoe) were
obtained; from the smaller ones, **tiraderas** (large iron nails with a chain used to drag wood) or drop hammers, the mineral was taken out in smaller proportions (**tochos**), and what was obtained was used to make small objects. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, in Gipuzkoa and northern Navarre, which initially seem to have had almost more ironmongers than Bizkaia itself, the number of foundries decreased. In Bizkaia, they increased until 1800, then gave way to the well-known large iron and steel and mining industries. The last foundries that operated in Gipuzkoa apparently closed in 1880. After having given way to the industrialization of the province, to the creation of factories producing weapons, anchors, nails, and so on, the ironmongers passed into the category of mythical beings, as we will see.

Three devices were characteristic of every water-powered foundry: the oven, the forging hammer, and the steam hammer. It is difficult to study them completely, because today there are few Basques who have a clear idea of their use or the names of their parts.

On the other hand, since the first appearance of hydraulic machinery until it stopped being used, it underwent changes worthy of note. The most substantial have to do with the manner of delivering air to the oven. At first, the air was produced with a leather bellows. Later wooden bellows were introduced, apparently invented by a Bohemian bishop in 1620, and tubes (**aize arkak**) like those devised by Pablo A. de Rivadeneira, a Peruvian miner, and of other types, which were very widespread in Catalonia. Each of the three systems had its supporters, and in 1766, when a competition was held to determine which was the best, no categorical conclusions could be made. At the end of the eighteenth century, P. M. de Larrumbide invented a stone bellows, and in the few foundries that are still standing and can be studied in our day, there are examples of the different innovations. Based on my direct observations and studies of inventories and texts, the most widespread mechanisms seem to have been those shown in figure 64 (an oven) and figure 65 (a drop hammer), devices for rolling and forging.4

In each foundry it was normal to have two smelters (**urzallak** in Gipuzkoan, **urtzaillak** in Bizkaian); a bar maker (**ijelia** or **iielea**) who did piecework; a person who crumbled the burned **vena** (**gatzamallea** or **gatzamaillea**); the apprentice, who was there for up to 3 years; and various underlings, depending on whether the foundry was large or small. The ironmongers or **ola-guizonak** were usually contracted by season and were apparently unreliable, to the extent that there are very old laws (for Gipuzkoa, from 1397, 1453, and 1463) that prohibit them from
Figure 64 (left).
Oven mechanism of a Basque foundry. A hydraulic wheel (1) moved a large bellows (aspo) (2), which could take various forms, according to the available data. From the bellows, air was delivered to the oven (labe) (3) through the nozzle (A). The oven was separated from one of the walls of the foundry by a short wall, called berganazo in Spanish (B). It had four sides. The one opposite the berganazo, which was curved, was called txapa in Bizkaia (G). The wall through which the slag was discarded had a hole called ziar zulo (D), and the one opposite it was called idurijela (E). The back of the foundry was called zirillua, and the part where the slag was deposited was called ziarleku. The oven, most of which was red-hot, was loaded with successive layers of loose mineral and charcoal on one side and with tightly pressed mineral in the left side of the forge. From this was produced the zamarra, which was passed to the drop hammer to reduce it first to mazocas and then to bars.

Figure 65 (right).
Drop hammer and anvil of a foundry. The device as a whole was also moved by a hydraulic wheel (1), 2.50 to 3.50 meters in diameter. In the axle (ardatz) (2), which was made of wood covered with iron and had holes going through it, the cams (3) were fixed. The cams set in motion the handle of the drop hammer (gabi, kabi) (4) by means of a piece of hard wood and an iron semicircle that was struck (4). The handle was a beam of beech up to 4.30 meters in length, reinforced with belts of iron and a cast iron belt with two pivots in the central part (6), which were held by two supports. The part of the handle close to the wheel, called the tail, had a stone beneath it (9), where there was a sheet of iron that acted as a spring, forcing the hammer to descend with greater speed. The mallet (7) sometimes weighed up to 700 kilos and fell on the anvil (ingude) (8), which was also made of iron. The supports of the handle were held by a strong wooden framework (9). A good drop hammer would strike 100 to 125 blows per minute to reduce the zamarra into two pieces, in Bizkaia called tocho (the one closest to the handle) and guerrigalda or mazocas (from which the word masuqueras, for foundries, is derived) and then to bars.

The Basque foundries with bellows seem to have produced iron more economically than those that had tubes, in the Catalan style: In the latter, up to 463 kilos of vegetable charcoal was consumed in order to produce 100 kilos of iron.

cancelling or failing to fulfill their contract on pain of very severe penalties. Rivalries and conflicts between ironmongers and foundry owners sometimes resulted in broken bellows, and there was also legislation
The Basques by Julio Caro Baroja
dating from the same period against those who broke them. Because in
the beginning metalworkers were isolated and scattered throughout the
most rugged mountains, there is reason to wonder whether they consti-
tuted a sort of caste, as it seems was formed by the pagani ferrarienses
that appear in some Roman inscriptions from the French Pyrenees (from
Asque, or perhaps from Astè, near Bagnères-de-Bigorre) and many other
workers of the same class.

Elsewhere, speaking on a similar topic, I have said, “It is not certain
that the ironmongers [fig. 66] and their families formed a special caste, as
happens among many peoples, though we must state that in popular tra-
ditions they are celebrated as skilled and shrewd men.” Note that at the
end of the fourteenth century and even later, the monarchs were obliged
to pass strict laws, which the Gipuzkoan regulations of the seventeenth
century considered to be still in effect, against those who “break faith
with a foundry, or with the metal forgers, officials or unskilled workers
thereof.” In my opinion, this seems to confirm the idea that at one time
the ironmonger was held in low esteem by farmworkers and other work-
ers, which is consistent with a fairly common view in many parts of the
land. Nevertheless, at the end of the Middle Ages, he was, like the rest of
the inhabitants of the country, a free man who submitted himself (very
irregularly, according to what we have seen) to a work contract, not a
serf bound to his purpose by heredity, and at the end of the eighteenth
century, according to Juan Antonio Moguel in his amusing work Peru
Abarka, there was no cooking pot better tended than the one for the
ironmongers.

That medieval Basque mining may have been influenced by the Ger-
manic manner of treating minerals can be deduced from the fact that
German miners inspected the mines of Urrobi, Orotz-Betelu, Lesaka,
Bera, and Beruete in 1392 by order of the king of Navarre, and in 1395
two German miners from the same place, “maestre Euriq” and “maestre
Nicolao,” worked for Charles III. Earlier, in 1340, the copper and silver
of the Urrobi was of benefit to Paolo Giraldo, a Florentine, according to
J. de Yanguas y Miranda.

The foundry (ola) was at one time the quintessential workshop or
factory. Later, when the number of rural industries increased, its name
was made more specific: burniola, burdinola.

Later, the smithy or foundry and the carpenter’s workshop were
held to be very similar. Thus, the carpenter and the ironmonger bear the
same name in many places. In Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa arotz is a carpenter,
whereas in the eastern part of the country, the same word means ironmonger. Similarly, aroztegui is the carpenter’s workshop or the foundry; to designate the carpenter in the eastern zone, one uses compound words such as zugarotz (zur = wood) or zurguiñ.5

But if we begin to speak of these workplaces, we enter into an aspect of life that we should approach from different points of view from those used to date. Within the work of carpenters and ironmongers, who are closely tied to the utilitarian, there are a number of other concepts that sometimes overshadow it: aesthetic concepts, or religious ones that are more subtle and less apparent. Everything we have studied thus far has a psychobiological meaning that is easy to grasp. At first glance, it seems that the functional circles we spoke about at the beginning had hardly taken over when towns were built, when people were seeking food, protecting life, and making it more comfortable. But the unease with which the existence of societies and individuals always develops has produced constant changes in the ways of fulfilling all those functions. No one believes today that the biological preoccupation with survival is capable by itself of creating all the existing varieties in the human economy and that this in turn has given rise to specific social structures or specific reli-

Figure 66.
Ironmonger, or rather blacksmith (arotza), represented on the right side of the façade of Santa María la Real in Zangoza (Navarre), an important work of Spanish Romanesque art.
gious and philosophical conceptions. Classifying the functions in order of dependence, before having made a monographic study of each society, seems mistaken, as does establishing a priority or hierarchy.

Sometimes centuries must pass for a single mechanical principle to have multiple applications. The hydraulic wheel was known in almost all of Western Europe since early medieval times, and it was used for milling. Old documents from the north of Spain speak of the regulations that had to be established to allocate the water currents equitably for this purpose. Nevertheless, only at the beginning of the Modern Age did the hydraulic wheel begin to be used in tasks so common in the country as those related to iron.⁶

Let us now follow this analysis, without aspirations to a general perspective, to present our perspective finally in a more direct, faster, and more comprehensible way. Otherwise we risk confusion.

We have seen that the relationship of the Basque, in space and through time, with different objects and with different meaningful natural elements (mountains, rivers, seas, animals, plants, minerals) changed according to how he established different relationships with different social units, friend or enemy, possessors of certain types of knowledge, or other derivatives of them. Let us now review the nature of these relationships in themselves and the relationships of the Basques among themselves, to see what type of links were established throughout history that influenced the structure they present today and their ideas of all types.

I prefer not to end this chapter without reiterating how industrialization, prompted by fishing and the use of iron, has caused a great ethnic shift in the country, seen first as an increase in the iron and steel sector of Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia and an increase in industries of other types later (fig. 67).⁷

If the total population of the country is compared with that which today has a certain ethnological, historical, or cultural interest, it is soon observed that the latter is quite small. The birth rate in the Basque Country would not result in the growth that has occurred, which reflects the continual absorption of people from the interior of the peninsula, where the birth rate is higher and there is little industry. Vasconia is more a consumer of land than a producer of human beings, in the general scheme of the peninsular populations.
Figure 67.

Chart of the population of the three Basque provinces from the eleventh to the twentieth centuries. The solid line (A) shows the development of the population in Araba, beginning in 1025. The dotted line (B) indicates that of Gipuzkoa, and the dashed line (C) indicates that of Bizkaia. The prosperity of small industry in Gipuzkoa from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries can be seen clearly by comparing Line B with Line A, which corresponds to a primarily agricultural land. The industrial revolution of Bizkaia, from 1800 to 1925, can be clearly seen in Line C (comparable to the development of cities, such as Bilbao, which were full of foreign elements). The industrial electrification of Gipuzkoa marks a phase that began around 1900 and is clearly seen on the chart. The population of ethnological interest today is well below the numbers corresponding to the totals of each province.
The small size and narrowness of the country, its richness in mineral iron, its ancient abundant forests, and its geographic location have meant that, from a certain time in the Middle Ages to the Modern Age, the Basques have distinguished themselves not only as deep-sea fishermen and ironmongers but also as sailors, builders of wooden ships, and industrialists. And by a strange paradox of destiny, this industrial character, which differentiated them and still differentiates them from other peninsular peoples, has recently produced a change so profound from all points of view that it threatens to finish off traditional life once and for all. This will be reflected even more in part 2 of this book.¹

With the insight typical of a great Italian diplomat of the Renaissance, Navagero observed that sea, forest, and iron decisively shaped the Basque life of the sixteenth century.² Other authors have said similar things. For example, a writer on nautical issues at the beginning of the seventeenth century states that among all the peoples of Europe, we must grant supremacy to the Portuguese as deep-sea fishermen, but he judges the Basques to be the best crew members and great shipbuilders.³ Saint Peter Martyr even says that through their strange language they communicated with the fabulous marine creatures that inhabited the seas.

It is more than coincidence that the first voyage of circumnavigation was begun by a Portuguese, Magellan, and finished by a Basque, Elcano. But if much has been written of the first, and well written, of the second we have only a rather poor and imprecise idea. Taciturnity for a long time has been another characteristic of our people.⁴

The conditions under which the maritime life of the Basques developed from the end of the Middle Ages to the end of the eighteenth century are well known, thanks to bureaucratic documents. There are few
poems and rhetorical pieces but no shortage of legal entries, bills, and receipts: “Nordic utilitarianism” finally, some would say.

The Bizkaian ships contributed enormously to the conquest of Seville and to the control of southern Spain in the time of Saint Ferdinand. Later they also intervened decisively in the reconquest of the kingdom of Granada, and some Basque captains were responsible for transporting to African lands the Moors who refused to accept the yoke of the victors. In any case, we find Basque sailors fighting in France on the side of the English and the French during the wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The French Basques preferred the English group; the Spanish Basques preferred the French. We must not forget that at that time Baiona in Spanish texts still appeared as “Bayona de Inglaterra” (“Baiona of England”). We likewise find Basque ships trading in the Scandinavian seas and countries and in the eastern Mediterranean. And at the side of sailors and merchants there appear corsairs and even pirates who attack the English and French coasts, who sometimes go into the same Mediterranean or into the northern seas.

The enterprises whose point of departure was the discovery of America gave to Basque navigation a new, quite special seal. And at the end of the fourteenth century, the Basques and the Sevillians had participated in the first reconnaissance of the Canaries. Soon Seville and Vasconia were cores of the first order of the Spanish Empire.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Basque ships, never very large, were constructed in the small Bizkaian and Gipuzkoan shipyards by obscure seamen who used them for various purposes. Apparently anything could be done with them: an honest trade, piracy, privateering, or waging war against the infidels. Every time the monarchs needed them for an act of war, they seized them. At that time there was no possibility of distinguishing the war fleet from the merchant fleet, and a merchant fleet became a war fleet, or vice versa, as the need arose. This system continued for a long time. But royal interference in naval issues became greater and greater as needs increased. By the time of the Catholic monarchs, one tried to encourage the construction of ships of great tonnage, which allowed more solid commerce, granting special privileges to those who constructed them.

New types of ships were invented; the old caravels were replaced by ships with a more complex structure. At a certain time the galleon was created, and although the Cantabrian Sea did not lend itself much to navigation by oar, from the Bizkaian shipyards splendid galleys and
galleasses emerged. On the coast of the seigniory, as on the Gipuzkoan coast, there was feverish activity; the Nordic and Mediterranean forms multiplied. *Urcas* (small galleons), *pataches* (two-masted brigantines), *setias*, galleys, galleasses, caravels, galleons, *zabras* (a smaller ship used to supply the galleons), *galizabras* (fast frigates), and *filipotes* crop up over and over again in the documents. \(^1^0\) And more recently, frigates and other types of craft are mentioned.

But this activity brought with it a fabulous consumption of wood, if one takes into account the small size of the country. As a consequence, strict laws were passed concerning reforestation, and a forest inspection service was created. \(^1^1\) The naval industry, on the other hand, became a business in its own right. Until the mid-sixteenth century, the constructors were also the owners of the boats. Later, some considered construction to be a separate industry, and as a result, worse boats were constructed for sale. \(^1^2\)

Such a transformation coincides with the fact that the Nordic people were making great progress as sailors and, especially, as sea warriors. By the time of Henry VIII, the English had taken it upon themselves to build their ships with greater warlike efficiency. They changed their artillery, making it lighter and more maneuverable. During the reign of his daughter Elizabeth, the advances were greater, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada of Philip II against England revealed the inferiority of the Spanish ships, a type of floating castle, heavy and with neither offense nor defense. \(^1^3\) The proportion of Basque ships was high in the Spanish armada.

The histories often allude to the squadrons of Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, which in the early seventeenth century, together with that of the four villas (of Santander), constituted the Cantabrian squadron. The name is famous and fills with pride those who think about the role it played in Spanish life in the Golden Age. \(^1^4\) But we must rein in the impression we might form of it from reading books that defend or are hostile to the colonizing enterprises. First (and this is much more important than believed), behind this navy there was not a strong state power that could guarantee its effectiveness in war, nor was there much of an urban population. Behind the English navy were London and other large port cities; the Dutch navy had the same. The Spanish ships of the Cantabrian squadron came from small towns or even true villages: Pasaia and Donostia in the sixteenth century were very humble settlements, and Bilbao, even in the eighteenth century (1708), numbered no more than 1,300 hearths. \(^1^5\) We will not try here to determine the extent to which
the lack of a strong urban environment affected the development of
Basque seamanship. But there is no doubt that this lack was pernicious,
because a country without strong economic structures (which exist only
in big cities) cannot hope to have advanced techniques; it will always
be subordinate to others, an imitator of the foreign, or it will remain
in a state of dangerous antiquity. Spain paid dearly for its archaism in
naval architecture. At the time of Philip III, its decline in this area was
clear to all involved in matters of the sea. Both obscure captains such as
Thomé Cano and famous admirals and generals such as Pedro de Zubia-
ur declared it to be so.\textsuperscript{16} Attempts were made to update the industry,
but apparently they were not successful.

The system of seizing ships and pressing them into service continued.
Ship owners were asked to build larger, narrower ships, more appro-
priate for war and combat. But for valid economic reasons, they pre-
ferred short, pot-bellied boats that could hold more merchandise. In this
respect the Basques were very conservative. But, nevertheless, in com-
parison with the Andalusians and the Portuguese, they were advanced.\textsuperscript{17}

Years passed, and the shipyards of the country continued to build
great galleons, captain ships, admiral ships, and extremely luxurious
royal ships. There were whole families of prominent ship owners, such
as the Echevarris, some of whom were distinguished theoreticians and
innovators. But there was always a tendency to lag a bit behind. When
the Dutch had already stopped having a forecastle on the stern, a useless
element, on Basque ships and on Spanish ones in general they continued
to be built high, golden, and pompous, like altarpieces in a church.\textsuperscript{18}
Sometimes construction led to embezzlement and scandal. But this was
not the worst.

The ships’ captains, who were subject to the rigid rules of the House
of Trade of Seville, an exemplary institution when it was founded but
later disastrous, suffered continuous and expected attacks by the Eng-
lish, Dutch, and French on their great annual expeditions. Through-
out the seventeenth century, the inflexible and monopolistic system of
trade with the Indies produced innumerable evils and stresses, but not
so many as those caused the Portuguese by an organization even less
suited for trade with Africa and the East Indies, with too many boats
in poor condition that were carrying enormous loads. The Spanish do
not have, as the Portuguese do, an “Historia trágicamarítima,” but they
could easily have one, as could the Basques in particular.\textsuperscript{19} Their navy,
from the time of Philip II to that of Philip V, was closely linked to royalty.
This explains how so many naval generals and admirals came out of the
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Among them we remember the Oquendos, Recalde, Zubiaur, the Echevarrius, the Ibarras, Mateo de Laya, Gastañeta, Blas de Lezo, and, in the final moments of the Spanish Empire in the Indies, Cosme Damián Churruca. All or nearly all of these captains suffered setbacks in furious battles with the ships of Holland, England, and France. And what is typical of many of them is that, more than warriors, they were simply seamen or naval technicians. Gastañeta is known for a somewhat treacherous battle in which he defeated the first of the Byngs. But Gastañeta was not actually a military man. He was a very capable navigator and expert who advanced naval construction in wood in the early eighteenth century, using as a model the great navy of Louis XIV, who in turn owed much to a French Basque, Renau d’Elissagaray. The next generation rejected his ideas and put the English system of construction into practice, but at the end of the reign of Charles III, naval construction in wood entered a state of crisis, and by the end of the eighteenth century, the shipyards of Bilbao and elsewhere were a thing of the past. Furthermore, the Spanish Empire in the Americas lasted as long as that type of construction, and its fall coincided with the disappearance of the Basque shipyards. Thus, from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries, the life of the country was shaped by an activity that held it in a state of constant tension and about which it is impossible to have a very clear idea today, although it is evident that its influence has penetrated even the most remote corners.

This activity is connected to others that developed from the iron and steel industry. Thus, just as for a long period of time the military navy and the merchant navy were not distinct from each other (this differentiation took place in the time of Philip V), heavy industry was also not completely separate from light industry for a long time. From the foundry comes the iron and also many manufactured goods. Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia were already providing weapons and implements to Spain in the fifteenth century, and later to the Indies and other countries. But there was no advancement in this activity either; the weapon industry in particular suffered periodic production crises with the resultant changes. There is a zone, southwestern Gipuzkoa, with Eibar at its head, in which the industrial tradition seems to be among the most ancient and specialized of the peninsula. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the weapons that were fabricated in the family-owned workshops of that zone were well known. The swords and crossbows were held in particular esteem. But the crossbow ceased to be an important weapon with the invention of the harquebus. Soon the Gipuzkoans began to make har-
quebuses, and by the seventeenth century their firearms were famous; they are still made today. The tradition has not been broken, as that of the shipyards was broken at another time.

The nautical-industrial complex exerted a decisive influence through the centuries on the entire structure of Vasconia. This influence is reflected in many material aspects of life and in the social structure. Thus, for example, in the sixteenth century the figure of the man who got rich in the Indies, the indiano, began to have greater and greater importance in the country. More interesting than this, however, is that in the seventeenth century a very distinct and powerful class formed, one that had its seat in the largest population centers, such as Bilbao, or in the coastal towns, and that corresponds to what in England is known as the gentry. This class of people, who became rich through maritime trade, enjoyed great local influence, replacing the representatives of the oldest families, who at that time included the Castilian and courtly aristocracy (who were generally absent from the country and who enjoyed the status of “elders” and other titles) or were in decline. The newly rich were often related to foreign traders, including those from countries unfavorable to the Spanish monarchy, such as France and England, and were capable of inciting popular uprisings among fishermen and seamen against the decisions of Madrid. This was reported by the courtier and man of letters from Bizkaia, Antonio de Mendoza, in a document dating from between 1631 and 1634 and written on the occasion of a famous revolt in Bilbao concerning the salt levy.

In the eighteenth century, the influence of this class increased, and although it is true that its representatives sought military honors, titles, and other honors and positions, they were also more attentive to what was happening in the world than to what was happening at court. The price of iron and the quality of cargo were their basic concerns. They liked to bring furniture from England, clothes from France, and so on. An interesting study could be done on all their characteristics.

The idea of founding the Company of Caracas, which began to operate in 1728 and was inspired by those operating in England, Holland, and France, came from this sector of Basque society. This same sector is the one that gave life to the Real Sociedad Vascongada de los Amigos del País (Royal Basque Society of Friends of the Country), which was founded in 1766 and which introduced not only the principles of modern capitalism into Spain but also a type of utilitarian philosophical movement that is reflected in the publications and works performed by the aforementioned Real Sociedad.
From a wide historical-cultural point of view, similar events pose a series of problems. As we know, the modern commercial and industrial sense began to develop above all in the European countries controlled by Protestantism or, more specifically, by Puritanism. By the seventeenth century, English pamphleteers noted the lack of aptitude of the Catholic peoples for the new industries and commerce in comparison with Protestants.27 The paradox is that the Basques, the most practicing Catholics in Spain, were the ones who introduced a large number of the economic systems created in Protestant countries through a social class that was neither the aristocracy nor the rural masses, as happened in Protestant countries.28 Nor is it entirely by chance that later banking institutions and industrial companies flourished in Bilbao more than in other major cities of Spain.

A distinct concept of life shaped the great Basque economic activities, continuing to the present from its starting point in the sixteenth century, or at least in the seventeenth. One could even speak of utilitarianism, a Catholic utilitarianism rather than one of Puritan origin. The upper bourgeoisie that was forming in Vasconia soon found spiritual support in the Company of Jesus. We must not forget that in Portugal it was the Jesuits who proposed economic reforms and even recommended the use of Hebrew capital.29 In the Basque Country in the eighteenth century, the Jesuits sang the praise of work rather than the aristocratic concept of life, symbolized by Madrid. Some, such as Father Larramendi, came to feel almost democratic, though slightly racist. I believe that Larramendi is a precursor of the nationalist movement.30 Other such precursors have very distinct political tendencies. In the second half of the eighteenth century, a sector of high society, with the most aristocratic leanings, felt submerged in the general current of the “century of light,” to the point that one doubts their orthodoxy. It is at this time that the clear antecedents of the ideological, political, and social battles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were established. In these battles, the cities and towns, in a state of progressive development, provided advanced elements, whereas the rural masses felt themselves to be the repository of old traditions. Within the bourgeoisie, however, there are also large traditionalist and conservative groups, though with nuances that made them somewhat different from the typical rural masses. In the chapters that follow we will attempt to describe the life of the masses. There have recently been Basques, just a few, who were interested in the masses but who considered themselves more connected with the spiritual movements of the 1800s than with other movements that existed in
the country later. Pío Baroja was one of these. For him, the modern city Basque, simultaneously utilitarian and conservative, was uninteresting. He preferred to paint the characters of men of action (sailors, smugglers, ironmongers, and guerrillas) or to interpret the ideas of the *caballeritos* of Azkoitia than to praise utilitarian virtues. In this, as in many other things, I am his faithful disciple. But it seemed appropriate to add this historical digression to the first part of this book so that my perspective may be more focused.
Part II
Many centuries and even millennia have passed since the time when European man would have had reason to think (although he probably did not) that almost all the bases of his economic life were a spontaneous product of Nature, not channeled through any artifice that was a product of the determination and wit of his ancestors. If this happens with the economy, it is not surprising that we deny the possibility that the most primitive social institutions and the ones closest to a state of Nature can be found on our continent (and perhaps elsewhere on Earth), though perhaps only in traces. The idea of the first folklorists, who believed peasant institutions as a whole to be the survivors of primitive forms, lacks any sort of scientific basis. In reality, like the economy, rural sociology is the product of a series of transformations, sometimes quick, sometimes slow, that happened over millennia of life that may be more or less familiar but that can happen even right before our eyes, and that is worth studying first from a synchronic point of view and, second, diachronically. Some aspects of it will be very old, others modern.

What structure does it have, and how does the rural society that is the subject of our study function? What are the historical origins of such a structure and operation? These are two concrete questions for which it is more useful to give a simple answer than to throw oneself into an inquiry, however subtle, of the origins of society in the abstract, to take from it the premises of the investigation.

If we closely observe traditional Basque society, we will see that there is an institution with a very clear, precise, and constant outline: the family. There are also other institutions that are more variable or less permanent. It is not a mere whim to start the new task that we have set ourselves with an analysis of the family itself.
We have already seen how the life of the family has a clear material expression in the farmhouse, whether in the more crowded zone or in areas of scattered population; in the latter, its traits are more particularly defined, whereas in the towns of the extreme south, the family has merged into a strong and dominant urban nucleus.

Many articles, monographs, and even books have examined the family in the Basque Country; almost all were written as a justification, and their weakest point is undoubtedly the historical.¹

Here we will try first to draw a faithful picture of the institution in question, and then we will establish a few principles for the use of future researchers who may want to reexamine the topic from the historical point of view, free of common prejudices.

First, let us state that the language (the base on which the most ancient strata of family organization must be reconstructed) does not have very precise words to express the idea of family in the strictest sense of the word. Some towns use the term *erroyalde* (Bizkaia); others, *echaldi* (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa); others, *leiñu, leinu* (Navarre, French Basque Country), and there are also *senikera, supizgu, and auzo*. This last term indicates, more precisely, the idea of neighborhood, and the preceding ones denote the ideas of roots, farmhouse, lineage, clan, and hearth, respectively. *Askazi* and *azkuzi*, which are also used in some places, are words that in more general speech express clan and seed.

There is nothing more defined in reality, however, than the Basque family. It is normally composed of the following elements:

1) a mature married couple (the old folks)
2) a younger married couple
3) the children of the second couple (grandchildren of the first), unmarried
4) other close relatives of either couple, commonly unmarried sons or daughters of the first
5) servants (no more than one older one and one younger one)

The situation of such people is defined clearly in each case, but the structure as a whole is subject to notable variations: Sometimes the nucleus forms around the woman of the second couple (if the house is hers by inheritance), other times around the man. As expected, some of the elements listed here may be missing, but it is rare that the situation would change by the addition of others. Let us describe the character of each one.
The couple that, from all points of view, constitutes the most important link of the family is the second one. Let us first study the conditions under which it is constituted and its functions. It is typical of many people of our time to believe that in the matter of choosing a mate, absolute individual liberty should reign. Nevertheless, the theory of marriage for love has not managed to break many of the old principles, according to which individuals should submit themselves to the will of the group in this and other matters. We sometimes speak (following our individualist dream) of a “marriage of convenience” as a typical act of certain immoral people, but we must recognize that absolute freedom of choice does not exist and has never existed, and that love tends to develop today (in the best of cases) within a quite narrow field of observation. The social restrictions on the love experience that leads to marriage have changed quite a lot through the ages, but since very ancient times, in the West, the class and economic position inherent in this experience have had more to do with establishing its possibility than any other criterion. Other factors must have existed earlier, but there are no valid elements of them left today. An analysis of the Basque words for relationships allows us to suggest this possibility, as we will see, in our particular case.

When does one get a wife, how, and where? It is most common for the man to become interested in the issue when his parents are already old; the same can be said of the woman if it is she who is the heir. Marriage (ezkon, ezkontza) among country people is based on economic necessities and is channeled to a large extent by the parents of the spouses. It is said that the Basque Country, in effect, is one of the few areas in Spain and the West in which the core family is very much maintained with the patrimony undivided. There are areas in which the general Spanish or French laws have had a great influence against not dividing the estate, such as the most Hispanicized areas of Araba, some parts of Navarre (Burunda), and certain French Basque districts. But although it is common to have a single heir of the house and lands, and for this person to be designated by the parents, it is understood that the will of the parents plays a fundamental role in many matrimonial issues. The question is to find a good match. Where will it be found?

It is well known that in primitive societies, two opposing rules have been observed for establishing marriages: Some peoples practice endogamy, that is, that unmarried men and women should marry within the group or social unit to which they belong, regardless of incest taboos. Others practice exogamy, which is the opposite rule.
Today in Europe the most complete liberty (at least legally speaking) generally reigns in this sense. But it is useful to note that in the Basque Country there have been many local rules worthy of attention. Thus, in a certain area of Gipuzkoa, until the end of the nineteenth century at least, a villager sought a wife from another specific village, whereas in parts of the same province, such as the Erronkari Valley, it was the custom that marriages were entered into within very narrow topographic boundaries. Endogamy today is shaped in part by economic suspicion of outsiders, to the extent that exogamous marriages are commonly entered into by people less tied to the land (e.g., workers, artisans).

The most absolute endogamy has reigned within groups of the scorned, such as the Agotes. But let us now speak of the common villager. The marriage is sometimes established patrilocally (bringing a new wife “from outside,” as it is said), but there is no shortage of cases in which they settle down matrilocally, cases of great interest. It often happens that a young Basque man goes as a servant to a farmhouse in which there are no male heirs (or they have left the farmhouse permanently), marries the daughter of the residents, whether owners or renters, and then becomes the head of the family, to the extent that in such a system we find a derivative of the system of providing services. But there is another case in which the right to draw up a will freely, and one in which the woman can be an heir, has been used ingeniously to increase estates. In various Navarrese Pyrenean valleys it is the custom for the sons to emigrate to the Americas at an early age while the daughter stays at home as the heir. The hope is for an indiano of the valley, one who returns with money, to marry her and for the sons of the house to do the same in turn with other neighboring female heirs. The man provides the money, the woman the real estate, livestock, and other property.

There is a third circumstance that results in matrilocality, in places where there is a strict law of primogeniture and the daughter is the oldest. This law was in effect in another era, here and there, throughout almost all the Pyrenees. In the French Basque Country the charter of Zuberoa allows it, and Lapurdi was also ruled by it, Lower Navarre somewhat less. Although in Zuberoa each dominion had its exceptions (in feudal or national law), and in agreement with the saying collected by Ohienart (“to each country its own law, to each house its custom”), Jacques de Béla (1585–1667) found a very clear and general basis for this law, valid for the whole Basque Country, in the conditions of economic and especially agricultural life. According to him, the woman had
the same capacity to manage the estate as the man, because women and men worked in similar ways.

Leaving aside the historical problem that this functional explanation by Béla can pose (much shrewder than explanations given by historians and lawyers of the nineteenth century and of the present), I insist that today the important thing is to maintain the stability of the ancestral home or piece of land, whether or not it is the birthplace (jait-etxe). Whoever has traveled through the French Basque Country with the spirit of the curious observer will remember how numerous are the rural manor houses there that have an inscription in worked stone above the door, similar to the following, which was found on a house in Donibane Garazi (Saint-Jean-Pied de Port): “JOANNES DIRIBERRY ET LOUISE DVHALDE MAITRE ET MAITRESSE DE LA MAISON DE LONDRESENA 1722” (fig. 68). More recently, Basque has been used in similar inscriptions, such as this one from the Bidarrainea house in Bidarrai (Bidarray): “DOMINGO ETA MARIENA EIHERACAR EGINA 1876 AN.” However, Basque is more common in tombstone inscriptions, which reflect, as we will see, the same spirit united to a very deep-rooted religious sentiment.2

Figure 68.
Stone lintel of a house in Donibane Garazi in Lower Navarre.

It turns out that instead of being known by the paternal or maternal surname, the family as a whole is often known by the name of the house, which will be of one of the types examined earlier. During much of the Modern Age and in part of the Middle Ages, what could be called the “enhanced relationship” was established; that is, that the children of a couple would often stress their relationship with one of the members of the paternal or maternal family that they considered the most high-born by using the corresponding surname. Nor was there any shortage of examples of unions, in the case of the death of the wife (or husband), with other members of the family of the deceased in order to maintain the bonds established between two old families. Maximum attention was paid to this in the time of the clan wars to which we have frequently alluded. But what remains valid today is the primary importance of the ancestral home.
The importance of the younger married couple of the Basque family manifests itself not only in their greater capacity for work but also in the fact that these relationships are regulated in great portions of the country by a special practice.

In almost the entire present-day Navarrese administrative areas of Iruñea, Lizarra, and Agoitz, in some towns around Tafalla, and a small number around Tutera, in Bizkaia, the Aiara valley of Araba, and other less extensive zones, there is a regulation that real estate should pass from one generation to another in the form of a *donatio propter nuptias*, or marriage settlement, such that the parents of the inheriting spouse are left dependent, which has sometimes led to lamentable situations and which undoubtedly has given rise to certain reservations about the universality of this settlement. The young masters (*nausi gaztiak*) and the old ones (*nausi zarrak*) commonly work in an atmosphere of economic solidarity, however. Consideration toward women is greater than in other parts of the peninsula. The division of work, another basis of every matrimonial alliance, does not turn them into concubines, nor into slaves imprisoned in the house, nor into real beasts of burden, as happens among some agricultural peoples. In any case, it is worth noting that, based on the areas that were defined in the preceding chapters, the woman’s participation in certain labors may be lesser or greater. The farther to the south of Navarre we go, the less female activity we see in agricultural tasks. The more mountainous and rugged the terrain, the more she works (e.g., digging, weeding). More paternal and masculine hierarchy is seen in some valleys, especially those whose economy is based on shepherding, through certain habits. Thus, for example, in the Erronkari Valley, when family gatherings are held, the men eat alone in the living room or dining room, and the women eat in the kitchen, with the lady of the house going out at the end to ask whether the table companions have been satisfied. Consider that in most of the country, the terms *etxekoandre*, lady of the house, and *etxekojaun*, man of the house, are parallels: The woman governs some areas, the man governs others.

There exist (or rather existed) curious ceremonies to mark the passing of the executive authority of the old masters to the young ones, such as that in which the newlywed woman solemnly receives the soup ladle (*burruntzale*) from the hands of her mother-in-law or mother, as used to happen in Bera when I was still a boy; that in which both women would go to see the family gravesite (Bizkaia, Arratia Valley); or that in which the old master would hand the new one a pole and show him the livestock (Zuberoa).³
Once the young couple is established in the house, the fate of the other children of the old couple remains to be determined. Various solutions have been offered for this delicate problem. The sons and daughters not chosen as heirs can count on their legally required inheritance, in money, which is given to the former when they leave to seek their fortune and to the latter when they marry. This cash gift is very costly for those who remain at the head of the estate if there are many siblings. Emigration to the Americas, religious orders, an ecclesiastical career, military service, and artisanship can empty an old farmhouse of residents, but cases of obscure and humble peoples who prefer to live in it, subject to a state of dependency and perpetual bachelorhood or spinsterhood, are not exceptional. *Mutilzarrak*, that is, confirmed bachelors, and *neskazarrak*, or spinsters (old boys and old girls, literally) form a known class in rural society, the subject of facile satires. Sometimes, after long years of absence, *indianos* and the repatriated come back when they retire to occupy an empty space in their birth home, to which they send money. Sometimes also, because of illnesses, the lack of grown children, and too much work or other causes, it is necessary to have a servant (*morroi*, *morroe*, or *mutil*) who leads a life very similar to that of the rest of the family.

The people who defend peasant customs have praised the virtues of the *famille souche*, or core family, which until not long ago could also be studied in High Aragón, in Catalonia, and in remote villages in the French Pyrenees. However, we must not forget that this model of family was not the only one that existed in Vasconia; other types are also found, very similar to it from the outside, truth be told, but in an inferior economic situation. On the other hand, historical reconstructions of the genesis of the aforementioned type of family, among which we must remember one by Le Play in a certain monograph, are generally not particularly worthy of consideration because they are based not so much on an examination of documents or linguistic data as on pure abstract ideas.

The Basque family, as the simplest social cell, has undoubtedly undergone modifications throughout the centuries, and of course it did not begin with a type of patriarchal family like that often depicted in comedies and melodramas. What is idyllic and simple is almost never true.

These days, it is normal to consider family relations bilaterally. But Basque kinship terms suggest that in another time, although this may also have been done, these relations were subject to certain distinctions
and perhaps enhancements that today are not taken into account. The reason for these distinctions escapes us. Let us examine them in any case. The word for husband (senar) and that for wife (andere, andre) may perhaps be related to words of other Indo-European peoples; thus, it was thought that senar was related to senior, although we will soon see that there is an element (sen-, sein-) that appears in names of the same family complex. Andere is also, simply, wife or woman, and apparently has an equivalent in Old Irish. The husband and wife consider themselves “companions of marriage” (ezkontide) or perhaps “spouses,” because some see in the word zargueiak an altered form of uztargueiak (recall that uztar means yoke). The words for father (aita) and mother (ama) are not very meaningful because there are very similar forms in the infant vocabulary of numerous languages. The word for parents, aitamak, is formed by placing both together, which is a very normal procedure in Basque, although it is true that there is another more enigmatic word to designate them: gurasoak, which we will attempt to clarify further on.

It is when we examine the words for the children and siblings that we find the most curious distinctive criteria. The son is called seme, a word that, erroneously I believe, is claimed to be related to Latin semen, because the Bizkaian sein (boy) and senar make us think of all the words with a common first element, and the word ume (child) offers another final element that is also common. The daughter is alaba. And this is the curious thing: When it is a matter of establishing the kinship between brothers and sisters, the same suffix -ba (or another clearly related to it) appears in all the words, but not when designating brothers by speaking of them without reference to their sisters. Thus, anae, anaie, anaia means “brother of a man,” arreba is “sister of a man,” neba, “brother of a woman,” and aizpa, “sister of a woman.” The result of this is that the men are a little isolated, following this nomenclature. Brothers as a whole are simply boys who live in the company of each other (senideak, aurrideak).

The matter gets more complicated when we study the names of more distant relatives, such as grandmother and grandfather, aunt and uncle, grandson and granddaughter, nephew and niece. To designate the first, there are various words, which express (1) affection, such as aiton, amon (good father, good mother), aitatxi, amatxi (little father, little mother), aitobe (better father); (2) respect, such as aitajaun, amandre (lord father, lady mother), aitanagusi, amanagusi (master father, mistress mother), atagoia, amagoia (high father, high mother); and (3) a relationship
based on the suffix -so (which appears in the aforementioned gurasoak, parents), such as aitaso, amaso.

A similar suffix seems to compete in frequency with -ba in kinship names, and thus today the following words are used for grandson and granddaughter: semeso (grandson) and alabaso (granddaughter) or aurso and illoba (without distinction by sex).

The same word illoba designates nephews and nieces in general, which suggests that at a certain time, the kinship of a grandparent to a grandchild and of an aunt or uncle to a niece or nephew were comparable.

The words for aunts and uncles are curious: the uncle is osaba, oseba, osoba; the aunt, izaba, izeba, izeko, izeka, eseko. Here again, interestingly, the suffix -ba appears. Although the maternal and paternal aunts and uncles may be designated by the same words, there is reason to wonder (as has been done many times) whether this suffix, at first, would not have served primarily for the female line, for it appears that this can be deduced from the analysis of the words for brothers. In my opinion, this possibility is enhanced by the fact that one of the words for the master, ugazaba, expresses the idea of maternal nutrition (ugatz is breast, chest, or teat) and has the same suffix.

The words for the more distant relatives, such as great-grandparents and great-grandchildren, are formed from those already given together with prefixes corresponding to ordinal numbers, and there is no shortage of words taken from the Romance languages, such as kusu (cousin) and koiñatua (cognatum). It seems possible to deduce from all this that at another time the grandparents held the highest rank within the family, that the concept of generation was expressed in compound words by the suffix -so, and that the suffix -ba was a special nuance for highlighting bonds through the female line and underlining the distinction between different classes of brothers. It is not easy to know what type of scruples this system obeyed.

But there is no doubt that there must have been a conflict between obscure rights of lineage from remote epochs and the Roman, from which perhaps the family structure best known traditionally in the north may have arisen to a great extent, as various authors have noted.4

This gives us an opportunity to deal with a topic that has been little explored and that is difficult to clarify: social classes and the relationship of the family with units superior to it, socially and economically. Additionally, many large transformations of this type can be seen throughout
history. We saw earlier (chapter 3) that in the darkest centuries of the Middle Ages in Navarre and Araba, there was a clearly stratified society that later underwent some modifications that can be studied through documents, although it may not be a simple task.

In Navarre, when the general charter was written, at the head, after the king, were the “rich men,” who held great authority and had territorial governments. Then came the lords of the nobility, who did not participate so much in public business. Then various classes of noblemen, such as the plain _infanzones_ (noblemen with limited legal authority); the _infanzones de abarca_ (free men without the privileges of the true nobility), who used the lands of the royal patrimony; the gentlemen (_zaldunak_ in Basque), who could not bear arms until the age of twenty-one; and the squires. Economically there was a classification from a political point of view, and another military classification, among the men of the old families. The free men of the cities and towns, artisans and craftsmen, were called _francos_ and _ruanos_, and there were even those called peasants or laborers, of which there were different levels, such as the peasants of the _realengo_ (royal lands), those of the _abadengo_ (lands belonging to an abbot), and those who were considered the subjects of the owner of the land on which they lived. A division that was similar if not equal existed in Araba and even in Bizkaia; also, in ancient times there are reports of lords of various classes, servants, serfs, and so on. But it is well known that at a certain time the peasant class disappeared there, and not only was this class absent from the seigniory, but also in Gipuzkoa the nobility of all those who could prove descent from a noble lineage in the territory was a given, regardless of his profession. The Roncal and Baztan valleys and others of Navarre also held collective nobility, and the French Basque lands, in their old charters, declared themselves to be free of any type of servitude (“Franks of a certain status,” as the Zuberoa charter says).

But it is clear that this did not prevent an appreciable stratification within each of these lands, nor did it halt the practice of many of the acts that in an earlier time or in other places would have been considered servile. As a consequence, the concept of nobility in relation to work has been radically different in the Basque Country from that in other parts of Spain since ancient times, because within a population made up entirely of nobles, there was great diversity of economic and social positions. No trade is despicable to the Basque (except some practiced by outsiders), whereas for the Castilian any type of manual labor is degrading, as is typical of peasants or people without lineage. Even in the eighteenth century, there were people who wanted to do away with the state of things
determined by what was called *vizcainia*, or general nobility of blood. But it was impossible to erase the results of this democratization of the country, which was beneficial by all accounts. Nor was it possible to take it to extreme limits, because the concept of hierarchies was deeply entrenched.5

The Basque language, which apparently has not incorporated many of the medieval expressions that reflect political hierarchies or hierarchies of other types, such as *infanzón*, rich man (which must have been used a lot, at least in Navarre), has very ordinary words to indicate

1) special relationships between masters, servants, tenants, and dependents
2) relationships of lineage, which were broader than the family relationships analyzed
3) relationships by neighborhood

All of these correspond to other defined functions that must be studied and that are often very much connected with one another.

Let us now speak, first, of the relationship between master and tenant. The idea of master is expressed by words that originally must have had many different meanings with different nuances. First, there are some related to *jaun* (lord), such as *etxejaun* or *etxekojaun* (lord of the house). In an earlier time, *jaun* was the person who had seigniory over a territory and thus, even today, the cacique of a town is known by the diminutive, *jauntxo*. The Bizkaian word used to designate the master, *jaube*, is also related to *jaun*. A different group is formed by *narsi* and *nagusi*, words that, when joined to others, often express the idea of leadership or superiority in general, which Hugo Schuchardt related to certain words in Hamitic languages used to designate the leader, such as *negus*, which was so popular when the conflict in Abyssinia broke out. There still remains *ugazaba*, which, as we have already suggested, must have expressed some sort of nutritive relationship.

The master can be a direct master, who is served, or a master of whom one is a tenant. Most of the families that live in farmhouses in Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, Araba, and Navarre (and I believe that this is also common in the French Basque Country) live there as renters or tenants. Today the proportion of those who become landowners seems to be increasing because of the little profit that is gained from houses and lands. If one calculates the capital that is involved in every rustic property in the north, one could conclude that production is no more than 2 percent. But until the beginning of the century, when economic ques-
tions were not so much the focus, it was normal for tenancy to be passed from parents to children, through the generations, and it was wrapped in a set of relationships that, in a certain way, chronologically presuppose a seignorial state.

In Navarre, at one point at least, the owners clearly preferred that a primary, individual succession be maintained on their properties. Note also that these properties were of various categories, whether worked by servants or sandal makers, or by different types of people from Enkarterry-Las Encartaciones. “García Sanz, nostro coillaço,” says a document in the cartulary of the Iranzu monastery that has to do with the place of Argiñaritz (Arguiñáriz) in the thirteenth century, “deve cad aynno I kafiz de trigo . . . Esta devant dita peyta nunqua se deve partir, mas una de las creaturas a qual el padre li mandare que la tenga et mantenga en paz, e faga el servicio, e pague la peyta, e enpues ayll, su genoylla.”

This explains how, although laws such as the Charter of Navarre stipulate that the people who had to pay tribute or peasants were obliged to divide their goods among all their children when drawing up their will, this has not affected the structure of the rustic properties worked by them (the opposite of what happened in Galicia).

Also beginning in the thirteenth century, the serfs began to be emancipated, as in the rest of Europe. The lord got money in exchange for freedom; the serf continued working the lands. The monarchs often granted whole towns exemption from tributes and the services of servants, to the extent that those who were not exempt were looked down on by their neighbors, as happened, for example, around 1418 to the residents of Auza (Ultzama), who suffered many insults from the other towns of the valley because they paid tribute, beraurdea or eyaurdea, and the prejudice against them reached such a point that no one would marry anyone from that town. Despite the process of liberation, despite the fact that control over men decreased, in Navarre there were reminders, and more until recently, of the old seignorial system.

I cannot describe the system of tributes typical of that kingdom or list all of the tributes. They were numerous and had picturesque Basque names, like the ones cited earlier, but some of the tributes typical of the peasants of an abadengo and many of those of ancestral homes were satisfied regularly until our day. Thus, for example, the Agotes of Bozate accounted for theirs, called akura, to the administrator of a title owned by the seigniory of Ursua, until in our days they reclaimed all the houses and lands of that neighborhood. Until the Second Carlist War, the own-
ers of the Albistur palace in Donamaria also charged an annual fee, consisting of a black hen, of each house of Oitz (Oiz), and therefore until recently those of the first of these two towns insulted those of the second with the cry of oiztar pechero (tribute-payer from Oitz).

The custom of paying part of the rent in kind was in force in Gipuzkoa until the twentieth century; in Bizkaia it disappeared earlier, although it lasted longer in towns in the eastern part of the province. But it is interesting to note that, in addition to rent strictly speaking, certain special services were carried out by the tenant and objects were exchanged between him and the owner, acts that seem to indicate something more than a simple rental agreement. Let us also note that in Basque there are two words to express the idea of renter and tenant farmer. One is bordari, which is used in High Navarrese, Lapurdian, and Gipuzkoan and which is, of course, related to borda. It has a clear parallel in the Latin–Normand bordarius (bordarii in the plural), which is found in England beginning at the time of the Conquest and was used to designate the serfs and peasants who worked the smaller pieces of land within the manor, as well as those who put themselves under contract as less stable agricultural workers. The bordarii and cotarii were very often the younger sons of a servant family who had to leave the paternal house because there was nothing for them to do there. It is very likely that many of the old Basque bordak were inhabited by similar people, and it is evident that they are smaller than rural houses, which have names of another type (e.g., -enea, -teg(u)i).

The second word to designate the tenant is maister, maizter, master, a word that is related to magister and is parallel to English master, although the semantic evolution they underwent is completely different. The Basque evolution of the word may depend on magister (pecorum) and was initially typical of the shepherding vocabulary, where we have already found it. It may also be an equivalent of the major found in other parts, that is, the servant who held the greatest confidence of the lord. But today, master or masterra (adding the article) is a tenant in general, there being in some places a master-nausi or administrator charged with the collection of payments, which had aspects that could be defined as rituals, though within an atmosphere of benevolence on the part of the owners, which has given rise to the funny and poetic composition “Juana Vishenta Olave,” by Bilintx, in which there is a pretend dialogue between the daughter of a poor landlady who cannot pay the rent on time and the owner, who feels more than sympathy for the needy little girl.
It is said that in many parts of Bizkaia, from the late eighteenth century at least, rents were paid in money, which earlier reached a third of the product obtained by the tenant from his labors. But even at the beginning of that century, in the lands around Durango, Gernika, and Markina, it was paid in kind, the custom being particularly maintained in the farmhouses that harvested wheat. Saint Thomas’s Day was the day on which payment was made. In some towns of Enkartari-Las Encartaciones (such as Karrantza, Trucios-Turtzioz, and Sopuerta), one part of wheat was given on Saint Michael’s Day and another part of corn on Saint Thomas’s Day. To the rent a pair of capons was added, and chestnuts, walnuts, and apples. In exchange, the owner gave the renter codfish, chocolate, and garbanzos—that is, purchased products—and some gave clothes. The tenants were considered almost like members of the family. But what at one time made their situation seem more similar to that of medieval servants were the aforementioned personal services, such as the obligation to work a certain number of days for the master, in exchange for food or a very small day’s wages, or to bring him several carts of firewood, giving him some loads of charcoal at half the going rate, all things that in other parts (even in Navarre) would be considered seigniorial services or chores.

In Gipuzkoa at the beginning of the century, the owner, who was also called millarista, received the rent or part of the rent in kind for August or September and in cash at Christmas. At Easter, he was given a lamb, one or two pairs of chickens on Saint John’s Day, and the same number of capons on Christmas Day. In the eighteenth century, the farmers of the Goierri region paid in wheat, capons, pork fat, and cheese, whereas those of the Beterri paid mostly in cash. Dismissals were announced before Saint John’s Day, because it was thought that the renters would finish on Saint Martin’s Day, distributing in various ways what was then in the house and fields.

But the relationships did not end here. What certain lawyers have studied as livestock sharecropping, called erdirkue (Bizkaia), erdirako (Gipuzkoa), or zatirako (in the eastern zone), was very common. The master, with the farmhouse, provided the work animals and took half the annual profit. On some occasions (as happened in the Baztan Valley), the tenant put in half and the master the other half. The tendency toward usury (lukur), the intervention of livestock dealers, and other factors caused this type of sharecropping to disappear. But what was its origin? I believe that it is related, in part, to the contracts called métayage, medietaria, or Halbpacht, which appeared during the disintegration of the
classical medieval dominion. That is, it would have to be considered as a type of possession in itself, derived from the seignorial system. Métayage is very common in southwestern France, and in Basque the related word ameterixe has been recorded. Another form of contract common in the French Basque Country was the cheptel (livestock) or mi gain (half earnings; from which come the words miy-goadanb, miy-goadanherie, miy-goa-danheric, and migodoin, used particularly in Zuberoa), relating to livestock in particular. The master could cause livestock of the tenant (arader) to be taken to the market at Maule (Mauléon) as many times as he pleased, to make certain of its value. 7

Based on all of these facts, we see that the social structure of the Basque people shows features similar in many cases to those typical of other peoples of Western Europe, but since the end of the Middle Ages at least, the abolition of the idea of a servant class is very characteristic of the Basques. The freedom to hunt and fish, the right to bear arms, and the use of lands and forests by cities are several other traits that show the extent to which the Basque speakers had managed to throw off old seignorial shackles. In what hierarchical relationship did the rich and the poor remain, the masters and the tenants, when the peasant and the nobleman were still in residence in their seigniories in adjacent lands? Economic ties played a large role in the stratification of the country, but their significance did not extend to public law; this is a great victory. In private law, in addition to such ties, bonds of kinship also had a great influence. It is known that around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the people grouped themselves in bands according to old family lineages, led by their elders. Whether or not a person was a family member (aide, senikide) was considered even in the most distant degrees to form these factions. But the analysis of relationships of this type is beyond the scope of this chapter.
Orthodox Marxist philosophers seem to give great importance to a law they call the “law of the unity of opposites,” which is related to Hegel’s idea of perpetual contradiction and movement. According to this “law,” each thing in itself contains its own contradiction, or rather, every real fact includes in itself opposing elements that nevertheless unite and work together.

To preach the battle of the classes from a scientific basis, this would come as the icing on the cake if it were true. However, there are serious indications that it is not true, at least in its absolute form. But there is no doubt that often a single event in society contains the possibility of contradictory futures.

This is what happened with the systems of government typical of the different lands that form the Basque Country, which were very similar at first. We have already mentioned them in previous chapters, but it is worthwhile to analyze some of their aspects closely and directly.

Historians of the Basque Country of different and opposing tendencies have woven almost all their reasoning around problems that were more important when they were studied than they were in the times that were the topic of investigation. There are essentially three such problems:

1) the problem of whether the Basque Country has formed a nationality independent of those of the rest of the peninsula across long historical periods
2) the problem of whether the laws that were in effect in it (until the nineteenth century) came from a superior outside authority or from the “natives”
the problem of whether the political relationship, which became clear at some point, of the Spanish Basque Country with the Spanish monarchy came about due to free will or some other factor.

The autonomists say that one can speak of a certain medieval Basque union, which later changed: that Basque laws were based on ancient customs, that the three provinces joined the crown of Castile by free will, and that Navarre, Gallicized since ancient times, later fell, under the weight of its own weapons, into the Castilian–Aragonese orbit.

The centralists deny the medieval Basque union and maintain that the charters and so on are royal concessions, ones that came late besides, and that the quashing by force of various partial or general rebellions proves that the Asturian, Leonese, and Castilian monarchs always had jurisdiction over the country. Considering medieval enterprises and conflicts with the eyes of an eighteenth-century official who is a faithful servant of the Bourbon monarchy does not seem to be the most appropriate way to deduce scientific consequences. Nor is it advisable to portray the members of the old Basque assemblies and guilds from the point of view of a nineteenth-century autonomist member of parliament, hostile to central governments that have been often and rightly accused of modern arbitrariness.

Different results have been obtained by adopting at different times each of the two ways of focusing on the facts, which indicates that almost all is subjective under these methods. In the early- and mid-nineteenth century, the existence of the Spanish union appeared to be closely linked, by the advanced centralists, to the union of individual bourgeois liberties encouraged by the monarchy. In the opposite camp, absolutists and nationalists spoke of the ancient Basque political liberties as the source of the preservation of faithfulness to the throne and the Church. With the passing of years, leftist and federal historians and politicians also began to sing the praises of the Basque liberties granted by charter, shaking hands in this case with the extreme rightists mentioned earlier. Finally, today we have seen that some associate the notion of individual liberty with that of political, autonomous liberty, and others associate the notion of centralization with that of order and hierarchy in the most conservative sense possible.

Therefore, a nineteenth-century liberal would have ideas on the matter somewhat in common with those of a modern centralist and other radically different people. The principle of centralization invoked by one
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person is the opposite of that invoked by another. Is this due to the law of the unity of opposites? In fact, it seems that centralization itself bears within itself both the principle of liberty and another opposing principle, and that furthermore the system of autonomy has two different sides. Individual liberty is sometimes incompatible both with a system of small theocracies or local, rural aristocracies and with a system of large states and cities. But both of these show specific manifestations of the same thing. In any case, there is no doubt that the single principle of liberty is contradictory, because for some the fundamental liberty is individual liberty; for others, regional liberty; for yet others, national liberty or the profession of it. The Basque liberties—we must say so now—were more local than regional and not very individual.

Therefore, rather than studying the structure of Basque society in light of the idea of liberty, I believe is better to analyze it bearing in mind the opposite principle of coercion and asking ourselves, “What different coercive forces operate on rural society, giving it its features?” What social institutions express the existence of these forces?

We have seen that the native system was the one in force in very remote times, that there was a later epoch in which there were individual chiefs and in which the rural guilds and factions set the tone, and that the monarchy then fought these in turn. Once royal and municipal authority had grown stronger, new and powerful social entities developed. But this does not mean that there remained very many traits of very remote epochs, though with different derivations that we can consider indexes of coercion.

If we start by examining the present-day situation in the central zone of the country, we will see that the neighborhood exists as a numerically superior entity that is close to the family and that applies great pressures on a variable group of people. The neighbor (auzo, hauzo), especially in areas of scattered habitation, is the human being who has the most interests in common with those of the typical family settled there. In this way, the obligations engendered by the neighborhood are numerous. Different authors have highlighted them.¹

Let us first discuss some obligations of an economic nature, such as the one that in Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, and more eastern zones is called auzolan, neighborhood work. It is approximately the same as what in Asturias is called andecha. A family needs to carry out a given agricultural task rapidly, such as hoeing, and does not have enough hands for the job. So the neighbors who are able join the members of the family
and do the work for free, with the ones who needed their help feeding them and promising to repay the favor. Sometimes this becomes a real job with proportionate exchange (ordea); other times, it is a charity job, such as when a woman has been widowed or a worker is old and unwell. The spirit of cooperation in the neighborhood community is manifested annually in tasks such as making quicklime in an oven belonging to several farmhouses, the hoeing, the harvest, and the threshing, and in more day-to-day tasks such as repairing roads and similar jobs. A legal expression of these neighborhood commitments is now found in the guilds, such as that of San Miguel de Alzusta in Zeanuri (Bizkaia), which manage the mountain congregations and neighborhoods. It had its meetings, directed by a president or ranger (basosain), in which plots of bracken (by Saint Antoninus’s Day), tree leaves (October), and firewood (between January and February) were divided up. A guild with a half economic and half religious meaning tended to change completely, and neighborhood works were requested less and less.

The neighborhood engendered other types of economic commitments as well, avoided only in cases of obvious public enmity. Among these we must number the Bizkaian lorra. When a worker finds himself without sufficient fertilizer because of some unusual circumstance (e.g., moving house), he goes to the nearby houses asking for a lorra, that is, a “trawl” or contribution of manure. He carries with him a tally on which he marks with a line each cart of fertilizer that they promise to give him, carts that the neighbors bring to his doorstep. He gives them an afternoon snack, also called lorra or totuena. In addition to the lorra of manure (zimaur-lorra), there are those of lambs or sheep (bildotx-lorra) and wood (zur-lorra), all free of charge.²

Let us now cease our examination of noneconomic neighborly relations (there will be future occasion to speak of them again) to study a higher entity of population than that of the neighborhood or rural association: that called in Spanish concejo or ayuntamiento (town or city council). We mentioned earlier that the Basque–Navarrese municipality is a product of medieval times, like the Castilian one. But its geographic spread often reflects human divisions that are more ancient that the city or town council itself. We should therefore study separately the operation of each municipal organization and the division that it implies. Such a separation of issues can lead us to see very interesting things from the ethnological point of view in the Basque Country.

There were two types of councils in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia until the charters were suppressed. Some were closed councils of the towns
founded by royalty or noblemen; others, more interesting, were the open ones of the anteiglesias (municipal districts) or universities. As their name indicates, the anteiglesias were groups of populations that held their meetings in the atrium of a certain temple or in front of it. The aldermen of the faithful, who were elected in very different ways, directed matters. There were some places where the election took place by universal suffrage, and others where the prominent aldermen named the incoming officers, or where it was by nomination by the prominent, then drawing of straws. Sometimes also a system of rotation was followed in neighborhoods and farmhouses. There was no shortage of places where the newlywed owner was elected mathematically, where only owners could be officers, or where there was one officer for the owners and another for the tenants. The open council, which is also found in the French Basque Country and which today constitutes the ayuntamientos, was for the most part limited in older divisions by congregations and valleys.

In Navarre, the division by “valleys” is still much used to express entities of this type. Based on what seems to be the case according to the available documents, the valley in the most archaic medieval times was already considered not only a topographic reality but also an ethnic and social one. There are two Basque words for valley: aran and ibarra. The first is now especially common in the eastern dialects; the second, although used more in the Gipuzkoan and Bizkaian dialects, is also seen in Navarrese and can often be translated, perhaps more accurately, as vega (fertile lowland). It must be related to ibai (river). Aran is undoubtedly a valley with respect more to mountains than to rivers.

Thus, it is not surprising that in the high Pyrenees, and many kilometers to the east of where Basque is spoken today, there is a very characteristic and isolated valley called the Aran Valley, which is somewhat redundant. Undoubtedly, for a long time, for the people in the surrounding area it was simply “the valley.” Later, when the old language in which it was common was forgotten, the word became a proper noun.

The same thing has happened with respect to other Navarre valleys known as the “valley of” Oibar, Eteribar, Olaibar, and Ibargoiti. Even in the areas that are Basque-speaking today, there are outsiders who, instead of saying “Bertiz Valley” or “Bertizarana,” speak of the “Bertizarana Valley.” The towns in each valley form a council-type community or city council. Small natural borders separate one from another. On these borders there arise, as there arose in earlier times and with greater violence, acrimonious disputes concerning misuses or illegal
uses. The charters and regulations dedicate numerous articles to specifying the penalties that would be levied especially on the livestock owners of one valley or association who caused harm in the one in question. In the mountains of Navarre, *baikuntza* was the word for the prohibition against entering a plot of land, whether it held cows, pigs, sheep, or grasses, trees, or bushes. Once a *baikuntza* was established, the livestock that broke it were seized by the rural guards. Thus, if a strictly defined neighborhood creates close bonds that are broken only by enemies of a particular sort, the fact of belonging to a particular neighborhood, council, parish, city council, or valley produces a certain indifference or enmity, at least in theory, but with curious manifestations in folklore, of which we will speak later. The notion of the valley stretches as far as the central Navarre–Araba zone, where in other times the Basque language had its southern border. But it is interesting to note that around Iruñea there exist a few parallel entities, called *cendeas*, a word that I have explained through Latin *centena*. It is most likely that it has to do with divisions from the early Middle Ages, similar to those that are found among the Franks, the Germans, and so on with the same name or other parallel ones. Today there is no trustworthy record of the issues that were resolved according to this classification by *centenas*, but we must not forget that some decimal entities, such as *quincentas* [those based on units of fifteen —trans.] and *veintenas* [those based on units of twenty —trans.], which are constituted by various syndicates and elected large contributors, still operate in many town and city councils to resolve issues having to do with cattle, finances, and the like.

The ecclesiastical authorities seem to have kept these districts in mind since very early times, as well as other larger ones that had more general names and that in different epochs were governed by different civil authorities (e.g., viscounts, governors). Some valleys constituted a seigniory; others quickly formed associations, but with the exception of cases in which a new town with economic power was created within the valley, these organizations have continued to have great significance in the life of the country. From a geographic or topographic point of view, they are sometimes not as well defined as it may seem at first glance; their delimitations tend to be shaped not only by accidents of terrain but also by the existence of the most common road communications for certain towns. On the other hand, towns that are more grouped together or related to each other without belonging to a single geographic unit such as a valley are known collectively by names such as “five towns” (in the Navarrese mountains) and “three towns,” names that seem to be a
calque from Gallic Aquitania; for example, “five towns” seems to mean the same as pimpedunni, the name that Pliny gave an Aquitaine town. Very old road communications joined these neighboring towns, but they were also a reason for discord and enmity. In general, the road has been viewed with suspicion by the man of the country. There are numerous examples of towns that even in our times have absolutely refused to have new roads or railways pass through their lands. I can remember two very typical examples off the top of my head: that of the town of Oiartzun, rejecting the railway, and that of Oitz, in Navarre, ending up on the side of the road.3

One must keep various factors in mind when studying road communications in order to explain their origin and development, in addition to the mesological factors that may seem clearer to our eyes as citizens of a modern nation with a certain conception of the purposes of any road. Some factors are social and even spiritual; others (always linked to the first ones) are economic. The complexity of purposes sometimes leaves the mesological factor, which now seems to us most worthy of consideration, inoperative for long periods of time. The most visible meaningful elements for us were secondary for the man of the past, or even negative. It is as easy to confirm the truth of what is said by examining road communications between different areas of the Basque Country and between the Basque Country and its neighbors as it is by analyzing the ideas villagers have about these communications.

It is evident that in pre-Roman times road circulation must have been determined by quite significant native divisions and other lesser ones about which we can hardly say a single positive thing. But under the Romans, we see that the conditions imposed, possibly by the different contiguous social units (e.g., Caristii, Vascones, Varduli), were broken completely when the imperial administration drew the first great route of general circulation across part of the country; to draw it, the criterion of maximum efficiency from the point of view of the conqueror in relation to topography rather than to the ancient social environment was considered above all. The problem for the Roman administrator was to establish the fastest communication between the major cities of southwest Gaul and those of the north and northwest of Spain for previously unsuspected military, administrative, and economic purposes and to eliminate any quirks.

Once the great route had been drawn out (in relation to other equally great ones), various secondary and more specialized ones had to be made. If we allow that Ptolemy’s Geography was based both on
geographic measurements carried out with the greatest precision then possible and on the data of the itineraries adjusted approximately but never exactly around the few points measured precisely, we will obtain for our country a network that is more complex but otherwise related to the one that can be extracted from a study of the Ravenna Cosmography. Ptolemy’s tables depart in this case, as in others, from a place farther to the north and, zig-zagging, give the latitude and longitude of other places farther to the south.

In accordance with this, there would be at least one road that would start in western Araba and go to the sea by way of Bizkaia; another that would cross Gipuzkoa from south to north, also starting in Araba; and a third that would reach the far eastern side of Gipuzkoa, starting from Iruñea. Then by following the lists of the Ravenna Cosmography, we can reconstruct another road or route that would go almost right along the Cantabrian coast, starting from Oiartzun and heading toward Cantabria (fig. 24). It is very difficult today to fit the data provided by these texts to the terrain except on the plains of Araba, where some parts of the road from Astorga to Bordeaux, where important Roman ruins, bridges, and other structures, have been found, have been well known since the eighteenth century. The route in the center and south of Navarre, which is a land likewise abundant in archaeological remains of the Imperial Era, remains theoretical, although because of some milestones and vestiges of different types one would have reason to imagine the existence of roads that are not mentioned in the texts. On the other hand, it is clear that circulation between cities or military stations had to be related in some way to the local circulation between fundus and fundus, villa and villa. But we know that the great circulation was threatened and reduced by banditry when the fourth century AD arrived.

Even in the next century we have indications that the roads were used by the armies of invaders and the invaded, or armies of rebel peasants called bagaudae. When the Visigoth state was established, the interpretation of the old road communications changed substantially, given that they could not be used intensively for peaceful purposes. In the battles between Visigoths and Franks on one side and Basques on the other, however, they were used for military and strategic purposes. The same thing happened in the time of the Islamic invasions. The raids periodically carried out in Araba and Navarre by the generals of the caliphate had the great Roman roads at the center of their operation. In any case, the route taken by Charlemagne’s troops is well known. A series of castles and fortifications were created for defense against the outside enemy.
But for quite a while after the Muslim danger had retreated, many of the roads did not guarantee the security of the general traffic.

First, they crossed various states and regions that were not friendly with one another. Additionally, in every pass, on the dividing line between valley and valley, there were people who devoted themselves to charging excessive tolls. When the general circulation started up again, it was affected by different needs. Shortening distances is what is most important to the traveler, who avoids passing through troubled lands that remain too divided. The pilgrimages to Santiago increased the importance of some roads that hardly existed in ancient times but that the Romans considered less efficient for their services than the aforementioned road in Araba, for example. Having crossed Orreaga, the pilgrim descended far to the south, to the areas of greatest urban concentration, undoubtedly to avoid having to struggle with fatiguing perseverance with a dense rural population that would probably expect to charge tolls similar to or greater than those he would have had to pay to pass through the territory of each city. With the foundation of royal towns and similar nuclei in Araba, Bizkaia, and Gipuzkoa, there was again a radical change in the direction of the traffic, now halfway between the local and the remote to the ancient. Thus, a starry network was formed based on the most important centers and capitals. But this is not all. The large cities of the interior of the peninsula needed access to the sea and to Europe. Again there came to be a general circulation, this time of a political and economic nature, which was very different from that created by the pilgrimages. There appeared royal roads that offered rough routes perhaps related to the old secondary Roman roads. Commerce between the Gipuzkoan coast and the interior was done in stages that have been abandoned in modern times. All of the ancient travelers (of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries) speak with amazement of Saint Adrian’s Way, which goes through the famous piedra horadada (tunnel rock) as it leaves the border of Navarre and the Kingdom of Castile to the east. Another road went by way of the Arlaban range. There was a time when the new towns considered it a privilege to have these royal roads cross their lands, in contrast to the hostility of the villager toward the roads. Today we have returned to the Roman centralist principle in general, and the great road makes fun of the village or small city, although it must be recognized that because of special circumstances, the Basque Country is one of the areas that enjoy the greatest number of networks in the whole peninsula, despite the fact that the peasant authorities, for “moral” reasons, often oppose road
projects, railways, and the like. There is even the idea, popular among the local people, that the end of the world will strike when there is an enormous quantity of crossroads and a bar in every building. In reality, the different points of view on the different road communications show the rivalry between social forces with different coercive powers. From the point of view of the farmhouse family to that of the great states, there are different criteria concerning the meaning of these communications with respect to individual liberties, economic well-being, morality, and even ethnic traits.

This digression has taken us far away from our examination of the different social structures that exist in the country. But perhaps it will clarify a few concepts before we examine other types of social divisions, independent of rank and size, and of economy and geography, up to a certain point.4
As generally happens in the case of other European peasants to a greater or lesser degree of obviousness, the Basque peasant believes himself to be surrounded by dark and latent supernatural powers with different meanings and tends to see signs of such powers in the common and repeated events in the world around him. The development of his life depends on the correct interpretation of such signs under more or less favorable conditions. There are two basic types of these signs, or preternatural “meaningful elements”: the good and the bad. One must take advantage of the former and avoid or correct the effects of the latter. The sign itself expresses the need to act in a positive way, by carrying out a set of actions, or in a negative way, by avoiding and prohibiting other acts. The ethnologists call “taboo,” a word borrowed from another language, that which is generally prohibited for a particular group of people, in accordance with this principle. Among the Basques, for example, it has been taboo to do much work on Fridays (ortzirala) or at the time of the waxing moon, because any work done at this time will turn out badly. Nor must one use the same treatment when speaking of the death of donkeys or bees as when speaking of the death of other animals; with the former, one should use the forms of expression used when speaking of humans. The taboos of daily life are extremely numerous. The use of powers in a positive way gives rise to magic in its broadest sense. In any case, almost every qualm or act that concerns us is most often considered superstition.

Magic spells and tabooistic charms invade society everywhere and sometimes become rites when they are expressed outwardly. The rite is inherent to every social structure, even if it adapts to various other aspects of it. It is subject to great vicissitudes. For any given moment, the
community determines its forms (as it also determines signs and causes), which are then passed on by oral or written tradition. However, between the ancient, inherited forms and some new concepts, there may arise a confrontation with heterogeneous results. The dominant interests of the group at a given moment act on the inherited symbols and ideas in such a way that mistaken situations are established, or at least, situations not well defined by the old ethnologists, who provide extremely simple schemes to explain the relationship between them. The doctrine of the “survivals” and similar ones are among those most still used by a multitude of folklorists when speaking about the problems of interest to us, although from our point of view they are too unilateral to explain the raison d’être of many present-day traits of the mental and social life of a given people. It is certain that there are very elaborate forms of rites that are losing more and more validity in rural societies, whereas in other eras they were quite widespread. But beside these there exist a great number of practices and prescriptions that are less complicated and visible, that follow a similar process, and that are still developing vigorously, particularly those that do not offer great collective externalizations or those whose nature makes us confuse them sometimes with those called “social formulas.”

Let us now analyze, in light of the preceding lines, what those belonging to one of the Basque social groups defined earlier—that is, a family, a neighborhood, a city council, a parish—“should” or “should not” do, for the most part at least, throughout their lives.

Division is one of the ideas that dominates us in the most constant way when we study social structures, and that in itself contains a preternatural meaning. Today the battle of classes has brought divisions based on economic inequalities to the foreground, as if they were the most important ones in society. Nevertheless, it has not been demonstrated that other types of division have been less important in times other than ours or are less important in societies other than capitalist or communist ones. Divisions by age, sex, marital status, profession, and other divisions in which these clearly defined facts are not so obvious to the eye of the common observer sometimes qualify a specific human group in a very peculiar way for another group, without these divisions being assigned a pejorative interpretation, as is often done with division by economic class. In the Basque Country we can study different types of divisions, types of separations that are more or less voluntary, transitory, and graduated, of the members of a rural community with respect to the other members, although some of the most clearly defined have
lost a great part of the meaning they had at another time or that they still maintain in certain zones of northern Spain. We must also remember special acts and festivities in which one human group takes part with particular prominence. Divisions by age, sex, and marital status have varied folkloric manifestations, and it is of them that we will speak. And they are reflected not only in actions and rules but also in other deeds.

The deeds to which I refer (which are often related by very subtle links to the rite itself, although they are often found unencumbered by any type of transcendentalism) constitute three large groups: (1) games, (2) holidays, and (3) ceremonies.

The game is of great importance to the Basque, not only when he is a boy but also when he is a grown man and eventually an old man, and he associates it most frequently with holidays, ceremonies, and rites, as we will see, in a more intense way than do other Spanish peasants. In the strict terrain of holidays and ceremonies, his existence reaches a higher level. Let us deal now with all these aspects of his life, beginning with the notion of its stages. Small children, children, unmarried young people, married men and women, and old people form segments within society with special attributes and functions. Let us now place ourselves within a family at the moment when a child is to be born, and then let us follow not the life of the child but the future of the family, as problems arise that have to do with education, first jobs, love relationships, marriage, and the death of a family member, and the position that these hold in rural society.

There is a veritable mountain of rules related to the desire to guess the sex of the coming child, but it is not of much interest. More interesting are some practices (positive or negative, according to the given classifications) undertaken so that the baby will be a boy, such as making the future mother eat the end of a loaf of bread (kutxur) or making her abstain from certain acts. The greater value given to the birth of a boy is expressed in the number of strokes of the bell that announce the birth: three, in Gipuzkoa, whereas those announcing the birth of a girl are only two. Various rites surround this solemn moment. Nevertheless, one of those that most ethnologists consider very characteristic of the Basques, among European peasants, and the one that has produced the most scientific literature, the couvade, has no manifestation in our time, unlike what seems to happen in certain zones of northwestern Spain. Referring to the ancient Cantabrians, Strabo speaks of the couvade, that is, the custom that the father goes to bed and receives certain attentions when his wife gives birth (as if he himself had given birth). In the late Middle
Ages and in the Renaissance, some observed this custom in Bearn and in the country, and in the early nineteenth century, only one author and not one very worthy of credit, Zamácola, says that in somewhat earlier times, it was still practiced in Bizkaia. This piece of information, taken from Zamácola, was repeated here and there and is even repeated still, although modern researchers have rejected it as unproven. It must be noted in any case that, when the Bizkaian historian thought that the custom was extinct at the time he was writing, all the later corrections and negatives lose some of their meaning.²

If his testimony is accepted, we must include this rite among those typical in principle in a society in which maternal law is highly developed but in which the man, the father, was beginning to attack its religious and social bases, forcing his own personality to have value. Of this type of society there appear to remain other elements, such as technical, ergological, and economic ones (as I have several times tried to see), throughout the north. The expansion of Christianity, which happened much later, when that society was at its peak, produced various rites having to do with birth with very particular features. For example, it was common until recently in the farmhouses of Gipuzkoa and Navarre to believe that if she wanted to protect her child from all evil, the new mother should not leave the house for any reason until she could go to church. But because she was often able to work in the fields or do certain tasks in and around the house before the date of her presentation at the temple, she would do these tasks with a tile on her head and would also wear it on the way to the church to continue enjoying the protection of the home. This has a profound religious meaning in the country, which is easy to prove through an examination of other practices and beliefs. Thus, when a child dies before being baptized, there are still people who believe he should be buried in the land that is next to the walls of the house, protected by the eaves, so that he is at least sheltered by it, because he cannot be buried in the cemetery. Walking around the house or making certain objects or animals circle the stove are very widespread rites with which, among other things, the property is strengthened. Once the baptism and the visit by the new mother have been completed, the children (aurrak, umek) hold a certain position in society; in various towns they are spoken to with the more formal zu form of you until they reach five or six years of age, and only then are they treated with the informal ik, which is later replaced again by zu, because for old people the informal ika is considered too familiar. Little girls and little boys also receive different treatment. For example, if a little boy is asked to give
something, he is told ekartzak, whereas to a little girl, one says ekarran. As they grow older, their separation in games and activities increases until they arrive at the age at which the boys are considered mutilak and the girls neskak, neskatillak, or neskactxak. In another era (until the sixteenth century at least) the boys were distinguished from the girls because they wore their hair very short and partly shaved (hence mutil, like Spanish mutilón and others). Later the village girl was distinguished by wearing long braids without a bun or any of the complicated styles typical of full-grown women. It is very difficult to give an idea of the most essential traits of Basque childhood folklore, as rich and varied as it is. On the other hand, it is in childhood when the individual is charged with most elements of traditional culture, such that in maturity the man and the woman use their childhood experiences with greater frequency than they realize. Biological and social factors have more influence than mental factors on the existing divisions. The number of adult Basque peasants who live based on their childhood culture is notable, I believe, greater in any case than that of Castilian or Andalusian villagers, for example, who often cover their real opinions with literary rhetoric, with ostentatious and grandiloquent clichés.

Within the family, up to the age of ten or twelve the child is closer to the mother and female relatives in general than to the father and the males. This seems to have a biological basis to which are added a number of preternatural arguments, and it is the reason that a great part of the cultural bases on which life develops are given to the child by women in general. It would be interesting to carry out an inquiry into masculine and feminine points of view in an analysis of the total traditional knowledge of a given society. The sum of ideas passed on by mothers, grandmothers, and other female relatives joins the sum of those acquired at school, where, in addition to the basic ideas of mathematics and other things, the child begins to learn Spanish or French. Bilingualism has existed since ancient times in the country. In another time, the Romance languages were normally used in private and public documents by the authorities of a town, but Basque was the common language, into which edicts and the like often had to be translated. Today the proportion of people who know no Spanish or French has decreased, not only for political reasons but also for economic ones, and teachers have contributed much to this trend by using coercion to banish the use of Basque in school. There are differences from region to region, however, and it is worth noting, for example, that there is a much higher percentage of
French Basque villagers than of Spanish Basque ones able to write a letter, bill, or other document in their native language.\(^3\)

Little children and schoolchildren have their holidays and special occasions in which they play a certain role in rural society. On the occasion of baptisms, for example, they mill around the church waiting for the godfather to come out. They receive him with praise, both for him and for the child, if he is generous or with insults if he seems stingy. The festivals of Saint Nicholas, Christmas Eve, the Holy Innocents, New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, Twelfth Night, Saint Agatha, Carnival, and other holidays are distinctly attractive to the young, as are Easter, Saint Mark’s Day, May (dedicated to the Virgin Mary), and Saint John’s Day. In these holidays we find the constant economic manifestation of the practice of collection that is carried out by the young boys, which seems to contain a profound meaning of the solidarity of the group, about which it would be worth carrying out some specific research. With the collected food and money they have (or had) a community afternoon tea or meal, which is another expression of solidarity.

The idea of taboo clearly clarifies childhood life and is inculcated into the children by adults through a thousand concrete prohibitions. According to this idea, for example, on Saint John’s Day one must not climb trees, play with fire, or leave bread upside down. The causes are sometimes mystical, or sometimes the prohibition seems to be based on a simple, rational pedagogical principle, but there is no shortage of occasions on which such a prohibition rears its head in the most inexplicable and obscure way.

One very observable fact in childhood life is the periodicity of games. In the Basque Country a similar periodicity is followed, as in almost all the rest of Europe. At a given time of year, as if by magic, there begin to appear in the hands of children certain toys that also suddenly, or almost suddenly, disappear. Among these, marbles (kanikak) and the spinning top (xiba) are the best known. But this periodicity is reflected not only in the appearance or disappearance of toys but also in the playing of games in which toys are not used. Rationalist, unilateral explanations have been sought for this fact. According to these explanations, violent games, for example, would be more typical of winter than of summer. But the explanations are not really accurate because some of the most violent games, such as ball, are played at any time of the year. We do not know the extent to which there is obscure tabooistic thought behind this periodicity; however, it is quite clear in the tacit prohibition against boys playing like girls and vice versa. Distance and differentiation are later
followed in all ways by boys and girls coming closer to each other after adolescence with completely different traits and characteristics. But this rapprochement is ruled and regulated by a set of ideas, rules, and institutions. It is difficult to grasp it in its totality.

One of the institutions that still plays an important role in the rural life of many parts of Spain is the boys’ club, brotherhood, association, mocedad (youth group), or whatever it may be called. The modern states and political parties of different sorts, but lovers of direct action, have promoted the creation of new youth organizations, whereas in the nineteenth century there was a tendency to make the existing ones disappear. In some places in the Basque Country, especially the marginal areas, there remain very interesting examples of mocedades (that of Pipaon in Araba, for example), and in many towns what survive are either religious associations that absorb them or holidays in which the young men, although they may not be members, play the fundamental role of watchmen and flirts at the same time. Even within Basque-speaking lands there are societies of young men that are very characteristic, such as that of Auritz, in the Navarrese Pyrenees. The young women, except in one of the religious organizations of the town, which have recently been acquiring very different characteristics from those of the past and great coercive strength, do not appear to have grouped themselves in as systematic a way as the men. But they had and have their informal assemblies and special tasks in which the awareness of sex is more outlined. When they are washing, going to the fountain, or carrying out the spring weeding, their youthful preoccupations find an echo in their female companions, an echo that has been expressed more than once in song and verse, as in other parts of Europe.

Research could be carried out, folkloric research similar to that being done by some historians of medieval literature, on the topoi or themes most commonly used in these compositions, which correspond to social realities repeated to the point of satiety throughout the centuries. The images of the girls of the village washing in the stream, gracefully carrying the clay pitcher with water from the fountain, or brandishing a weeding hoe are among those of which the popular poets have made the best use. The expression of amorous concerns has also adopted forms of topoi, and those are manifested in a series of very specific magical acts though perhaps not as intensely practiced here as in other parts of Middle Europe.

The desire to have a fiancé gives rise to an endless number of such acts, which are linked in a particular way to a sanctuary or hermitage.
Thus, for example, Bizkaian girls who want a fiancé often go to San Antonio de Urkiola. If they want him to have dark hair they throw black-headed pins into the sanctuary, and if they want him to be blond, white-headed pins. In other areas they follow different mysterious rules, such as that of walking around a cross (Lekeitio). Sometimes, they simply invoke a saint famous either just in the town or throughout all of Christendom as a protector of engagements, such as Saint Anthony. Some amorous guessing rites are linked to specific dates, such as Midsummer’s Eve, when it is said that by cracking an egg over a glass of water one can see the image of the future, a very widespread rite throughout the West.5

Various occasions were or are considered the most favorable for entering into amorous relations. One such occasion, now rapidly disappearing, is the winter soirée, in which the women devoted themselves to spinning and only children and grown men were allowed to enter. There were other days, such as Saturdays, on which the young men courted the girls within the enclosure where they spun, or occasions on which they accompanied them home. Thus, in the Navarrese mountains, Saturday was called neskenegun or neskegun, girls’ day. Another typical occasion for the same purposes happens in the autumn, when the residents of a neighborhood devoted themselves to shelling corn together, an event that ended with improvised dances and pantomimes.

The fiancé is called guizongai or senargai in Basque, and the girlfriend or fiancée is called andregai or emaztegai; -gai and -guei are suffixes that most often seem to indicate the idea of aspiration. It is used as a word by itself to indicate both the unmarried state and ability. Thus, it does not seem likely that such a word would have to do with the names Gaius and Gaia of the well-known Roman marriage formula, as could be thought at first glance, given the compound word that designates the fiancée, together with the article (andregaia).

The engagement produces a number of tacit commitments. It also has its natural detours, about which idyllic authors tell us hardly anything but which should be studied because they are of great interest from a sociological point of view.

Until recently, rural society was extremely harsh to a girl who got pregnant and had a baby out of wedlock, a borte, as they say in the Navarrese mountains, and this explains why there have been many cases of abandoned newborns, a custom that was condemned by the charter of Navarre but is still practiced between valley and valley, town and town. Even at the end of the nineteenth century, there were towns in which
such a girl was obliged to go to the church for a certain amount of time and play the bells at daybreak to remind the neighborhood of her shame. Nevertheless, until the sixteenth century, the number of illegitimate children was very high (as proved by old reports and documents) and even today they are not scarce, especially in some places. The ideal of virginity, spread by certain ancient peoples and by certain religions, has reached even the most remote corners of Europe, at least theoretically. However, it is clear that among the most humble strata of farmworkers, in the Basque territory and in other western lands, it is not considered nor has it been considered in a rigid or absolute way. Thus, cases of women who get married after having had children out of wedlock are not unknown. Earlier, in some places in Bizkaia, married people in general who had previously led an immoral life were made by the priest to kneel at the main altar on holidays for a certain period of time as a public penitence. These public shamings are not used today.

Comparing what is observable today with what we know of yesterday, it can be stated that love relations are becoming normalized, such that there now exist neither the licenses of the past (for example, the premarital tests that were known in the French Basque Country up to the seventeenth century) nor the public shaming. Very often, indiscretions are resolved with nothing more than a somewhat hasty marriage. Furthermore, the big cities offer the disgraced woman greater possibilities for hiding and disappearing.  

The possibility of choosing a fiancé or fiancée freely, which today is considered indispensable for marriage by many city people, is less common in the country and in societies that are considered more old fashioned than in urban centers, where it is also not as widespread as imagined. One can imagine from what was said in chapter 15 that marriages arranged by the parents or the family as a whole are very common in the Basque countryside and villages, marriages that some modern thinkers have defended, undoubtedly to prove independence of thought, in contrast to the common sentimental position. The defense of the marriage of convenience, of the marriage based above all on economic reasons, is made by rural Basque society (as by the German and other societies) through the disclosure of a superstitious thought, according to which the couple should not love each other much, or they will then be unfortunate in their married life. Opposite this, there is the influence of all the folkloric motifs of young people who have married badly, of lovers pursued by a cruel destiny, of the loves of humble couples, of which there is no shortage in the Basque songbook nor in Basque poetry. The poem by Edmond Guibert,
Andregueya, shines above sentimental love poems by unknown authors. But there are anonymous ones dictated by similar sentiments.

In earlier times, long before thinking of marrying, the girl started to prepare her hope chest. In various Navarrese valleys on the border and in Zuberoa, when she was thirteen years old, her parents gave her a piece of land on which to grow flax and prepare it. The good spinners were considered good housewife material. Slowly a large quantity of sheets, shirts, and other linens was prepared for the future home. Neighbors and friends had the opportunity to view these pieces and other things shortly before the wedding (eskontzea, ezkontza). Today the hope chest is more modest. Once the banns have been announced, gifts from neighbors, relatives, and friends begin to arrive at the house of the bride-to-be or that of the spouse who owns the matrimonial manor house. In the farmhouses many offerings of food to be consumed in the wedding banquet are (and especially were) received.

The exhibition of the hope chest (arreoa, arriyua) follows a very strict etiquette. It was very common in Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, and Navarre for a person chosen for the purpose to list the articles by the dozen, until at the end he or she introduced the fiancée, and for the enumeration to be carried out according to a certain formula consecrated by use. Sometimes the presentation was carried out in groups of eight, or from one to the number reached by each type of article, almost always starting with the sheets. Some old marriage settlements are a faithful reflection of this ceremony, which had a bigger effect on the town if on the day of the third banns, everything gathered was driven around the town in a cow cart, a squeaky cart with the axle good and shrill, from the house of the fiancée to the new abode. On the cart went the bed, already made, the spinning wheel, the spindle, and a carved chest. A girl, either a relative or a servant of the bride, took care of everything, and with the hope chest, in various towns of the Bidasoa, they carried a ram decorated with a ribbon that entered the rear of the house. The girl who took off the ribbon when the ram arrived at its destination was believed to marry within the year. In the French Basque Country, the ceremony called etxe-sartzia offered even more pomp. Up to three carts carried the furniture, and on top of one of them, on a mattress, went the seamstress charged with arranging the bedroom of the newlyweds. The usual ram (or rams in some places) preceded the procession, in which girls who were friends participated, carrying great baskets loaded with gifts on their heads, baskets covered with lonjerak, that is, linens decorated in blue, like the Gipuzkoan zamuak used primarily as burial shrouds. Great breads, cakes decorated with ribbons,
and bottles were also transported with great ceremony. When the entourage arrived at the door of the house, a costumed man came out with a broom in one hand and swept the entrance, to make it understood that the wife should be hard-working and clean. Other practices entailed the same intention, such as that of placing in a preferred location in one of the carts the spinning wheel and in the back of the same cart, the mirror, an emblem of vanity that characterizes some of the less pleasant mythical beings, such as the *lamiñak* (witches).

In Bizkaia, a piece of forged metal with many small bells on it was added to the yoke of the wedding cart and covered with a badger pelt, instead of the common sheepskin. The badger seems to be an animal whose parts (e.g., claws, hide) fend off the evil eye, and thus both the hide and the iron decoration were called *azkonarra*.

In a limited area of the country there was also a curious celebration for weddings: the *toberak*. As they were celebrated even this century in Oiartzun, Bera, and other nearby towns, these consisted of a sort of epithalamium organized very strictly in each place, but with variations from one place to the next. In Bera they progress as follows. Three days before the first banns, the young boy who lived closest to the bride’s house on the side of the church gathered the others of the neighborhood (with himself as the steward) and then asked permission of the bride to begin the *toberak*. Once he received permission, all the boys together went to the house of the girl who was the closest neighbor of the bride (always on the side of the church), carrying an iron bar. The girl in her capacity as stewardess gathered together all the others of the neighborhood, and all of them decorated the bar with ribbons and large flowers. Once the day had arrived and the moment at which the parish priest published the banns or *preguak*, the steward, who attended with the stewardess, took the bar from the stewardess’s hands and, at the sound of a small drum, went to the bride’s house with the rest of the boys. In front of the bride, who received them in her home, and with her consent, he set the bar in front of the façade, where it remained until the afternoon or evening, when in a similar ceremony the steward gave it to the bride. Then some boys beat a steel bar rhythmically, first slowly, then fast, and between drummings, a boy with a good voice sang verses about the wedding while the others sang in chorus. The verses of the *toberak* are a mix of optimistic and pessimistic reflections, like those that in the Baztan Valley are called *yoyak*; there is also a pinch of bawdiness in them, although the Basque is not very fond of freedom of expression in erotic matters.
The custom of accompanying the wedding procession to and from the church with great blasts of a shotgun loaded with gunpowder was widespread in many parts of the country in earlier days; today fireworks have replaced these shots. There are various superstitions surrounding the moment of marital benediction. The man who wants his wife to obey him in the future must tread on her dress at that time, and the woman, to prevent herself from being dominated too much, tries not to allow her spouse to put the ring too far on her finger.\(^8\)

In earlier days, the banquets were so large and costly that they ruined rival families who wanted to compete in rank and hierarchy, to the extent that the laws of Navarre, Gipuzkoa, and elsewhere, both civil and ecclesiastical, limited the number of those present, according to the degree of kinship. Nevertheless, even in the nineteenth century there were French Basque villages in which the gastronomic excesses went on for up to three days. In Zuberoa, after the wedding banquet a man came out dressed as a white horse (saldi xuria) with a sheet, who first chased the guests and then chatted with them freely.

Certain weddings carried out under special circumstances were the object of particular rites. Thus, when the bridegroom was from outside the area, in various Zuberoan towns they placed at the entrance of the church a branch of buckthorn, which the godfather broke by depositing a certain amount of money in a plate. In the Erronkari Valley, only the deposit was made. In Lower Navarre, the boys (if the outsider was the bridegroom) or the girls (if it was the bride) placed at the entrance of the house an arch of hawthorn hung with a wreath closed with a silk ribbon and a small bouquet of flowers. The godfather opened the way with the usual payment, and then it was the guests who presented the bride with the hanging bouquet and their gifts.

If the wedding was carried out stingily or if one of the spouses was a widow or widower, the usual ringing of the bells still took place in many towns. This ringing of the bells has many names in Basque, such as arranotsak, galarrotsak, turutak, and txintxarriotsak, and has been condemned on many occasions by the ecclesiastical authorities, who have not managed to banish it completely. In contrast, other widespread practices of yesteryear are in decline or have disappeared, such as that of the family and friends bursting into the conjugal bedroom shortly after the newlyweds have retired to make them drink a bitter liquid to warn them of the misfortunes they will have to bear.\(^9\)
Marriage gives both to the man and to the woman the greatest prestige and authority that can be had in rural life, if this life is considered a journey, a passage through different phases. The person who, having arrived at a certain age, has not married is the subject of a variety of satires and ironies. Thus, popular poetry is rife with jokes about confirmed bachelors and old maids. Earlier, the different marital states were expressed in very visible ways, as were the hierarchies, and especially by clothing.

Contrary to what many seem to think even now, clothing is not something that changes only little in the village. In the olden days, peasants and villagers followed the vicissitudes of fashion as they do today, although their fashion may be somewhat behind the times, and even peculiar, compared with that of the cities. The Basques generally take greater care with their clothing than other peoples in modern times. Nevertheless, the latest thing that we can consider essentially “popular” does not shine for the richness of its color or the abundance of peculiar accessories from other parts of Spain in the same period of time. With respect to earlier styles, fashion also changed a lot, but clothing always reflects an interest in establishing not economic hierarchies so much as marital states and jobs or positions. Unmarried women, married women, and widows would have worn certain adornments or signs that would distinguish them. Among the men there was not so much concern about these distinctions, although in some places they maintained the use of certain articles of clothing as typical of boys, whereas others characterized adult or married men.

A history of Basque clothing could be written alluding to, first of all, medieval texts referring to the Carolingian Age and, second, the words of twelfth-century pilgrim Aymeric Picaud, who suggests a relationship between the dress of certain parts of the country and that of the Scots in
the same period of time. The chapters on the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries could be illustrated splendidly and plentifully. There is no room now to carry out this work, but we can emphasize that the desire to differentiate, which in the late nineteenth century, for example, was expressed in hairdos, headdresses, and other details of feminine attire, was even greater in the past. Girls in the early seventeenth century still wore part of their hair cropped very short (a custom that must go back very far in the Spanish past, because some ancient authors such as Strabo speak of a similar custom observed in the north of the peninsula). Married women sometimes adorned themselves with wimples with a phallic design, which gave rise to interesting controversies, and widows wore more cropped ones that seemed to express the contrast of their particular situation. From the French Basque Country to southern Asturias, the women of each valley, each settlement, distinguished themselves through the particular form they gave to such headdresses, which have been associated, in an entirely exclusivist way, with the French hennin and which were prohibited on many occasions by the ecclesiastical authorities as indecent.

There were masculine counterparts to the particularly feminine dress. In the eighteenth century, Larramendi notes a remarkable change in Gipuzkoan village fashion, a change that is very well reflected in the collections of Spanish clothing made by national and foreign designers in the second half of that century. What had been adopted by the people then was maintained in some valleys and isolated areas until the end of the nineteenth century. The latest caps, vests, and short jackets (called valencianas), and the style of older men wearing their hair long have all been seen in certain places, such as the Bizkaian Arratia Valley, at a time when photographs were quite widespread. Even later, we saw the disappearance of the custom of men attending public and private ceremonies, such as baptisms, funerals, and processions, wearing a cloak, or a cloak and top hat if they were acting as town authorities. Today even the braids of unmarried girls, the colorful scarves tied different ways in different towns typical of the married women, and the black ones of the widows are becoming more and more relegated to small or isolated areas. The egalitarian tendency, which arose as the result of known economic causes, has erased details still widely observable even around 1910 to 1920.¹ However, one article of clothing that seems to symbolize this tendency is very characteristic of the Basques, according to general opinion. This is the Basque beret (zapela, txapela).
Although it may seem strange, the beret has given rise to many controversies and publications. Some have attacked its age, others have defended it. However, it seems certain that it spread greatly between the First Carlist War (in which it was popularized by Carlist leader Zumalacárregui) and the Second Carlist War, although earlier, in the Basque lands and other neighboring Pyrenean lands, some berets were already in use, if not identical to the modern ones (which also vary according to taste, fashion, and ideology), at least quite similar, and knitted. The beret invaded extensive areas of Spain at the same time that the old traditional clothes were disappearing in these areas and the most obvious distinctions reflected in clothing were being erased. Other articles of Basque men’s clothing of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, illustrated ad nauseam by painters and caricaturists, such as the blue or black shirt, the *abarkas*, the sash tied rather obviously, and the short vest, have not had the same fate as the beret, undoubtedly because they do not offer as many industrial possibilities.

Contrary to what some generalizers could claim, the greatest loss of traditional dress is not closely related to the loss of other features of traditional culture. Thus, in the area in which Basque was spoken until the end of the past century, we see that there are valleys, such as the Erronkari, where the old ceremonial dress is still used by mayors and town councilors on solemn occasions even though the Basque language has been totally lost. In contrast, there are whole regions, such as Gipuzkoa, where the language is still strong and alive, but from the point of view of clothing they are uninteresting to the folklorist because even the clothes of the shepherds spoken of in chapter 11 are a thing of the past.²

The irregular way in which customs and beliefs disappear or spread, either in a territory that seems homologous at first glance or in very prominent traits, does not often allow us to speak here of the Basque Country in general but only of this or that part of it.

Consistent with this, the way of criticizing, of suppressing some disturbances and detours that may always strike in matrimonial life, presents in certain peoples, in very limited areas, modalities that are unknown elsewhere and that may earlier have had a moment of greater or at least different geographic expansion.

Until recently, in some valleys of oceanic Navarre and in Lapurdi, Lower Navarre, and especially Zuberoa, when the neighborhood learned that a marriage was going poorly and the woman had hit her husband, a sort of charivari was held in which two boys played the role of the
spouses, and the one who played the woman hit the supposed husband while he pretended to plow the fields or do some other task. These pantomimes were called *tobera-mustrak* or *asto-lasterrak* (donkey races), and there were people who specialized in them, who acted out real theater pieces on stages set up for that purpose in the town square. It seems likely that the word *asto-Lasterra* at first would have served only to designate the public shame that in another time was forced on an adulterous woman, that of walking her through the town mounted backwards on a burro, a shaming that was also inflicted on other delinquents such as corrupt authorities and gossips in all of Spain and a large part of Europe. The word *tobera-mustrak* is related to the *toberak* described earlier; otherwise, the word *toberak* normally designated the tubes of the foundry oven, as we have also seen.

The dignity of the married couple is compromised if there are repeated disturbances for which the man is responsible, but especially if the instigator is the woman. Thus, it is rare for a married woman to appear at certain parties where there are dances and excesses. Marriage reduces the social life of the woman to solemn occasions and religious holidays, to visits to women who have just given birth or similar visits, and sometimes to shopping (after mass) in the shops down the street or in the town square, to buy the products necessary for family life that are not produced at the farmhouse, or to exchange products of the farmhouse for ones offered by the shopkeepers of the town, a trade in which the shopkeepers almost always came out ahead. However, this severe life is somewhat interrupted a few days a year.³

In vast portions of Europe there is a winter date on which the holiday of married women is celebrated. In Spain, as in other parts of the West, Saint Agatha’s Day (February 5) is considered the most appropriate date to celebrate it, because that famous martyr is the patron saint of lactating women. But if it is true that in the Basque lands there are many places in which Saint Agatha is worshipped and she is venerated from this point of view, it is also true that, independent of this, there can be a holiday of married women to which no particular Christian meaning is attached. In fact, in the Navarrese mountains, in the Baztan Valley, women give gifts to men on the first Thursday of the three before Carnival, called *Izekunde*; on the second, the men celebrate the women, for which reason it is called *Andrakunde* (*andria* is woman) or *Emakunde* (*emakume* means matron), and the third is a general holiday called *Orokunde*. In those days, there were special dances for married women, as there were in Gipuzkoa as well, even if it is true that they took place at the very end
of the patron saint holidays. The holiday called *Emakunde* corresponds somewhat to the *jueves de comadres* (Godmother’s Thursday) in Castile, of which classical literature speaks so much.

As the years go by, the woman loses more and more contact with the world but does not stop having her little celebrations, her card games with other neighbors of her generation, like that described masterfully by Doctor Larralde, the French Basque poet, in a very well-known song, a game of truc played by three unmarried women and a widow.

The adult man is not as obliged to keep away from noisy places, such as inns, bars, fairs, and dances. But his attendance at them takes on particular forms and nuances. His most obvious excesses are gastronomical; whereas the young men, before the prospect of an upcoming holiday or special day, think about dances, competitions, and sports, the mature man savors the idea of long and lavish meals, livened up by an old song or two and by eloquent and jovial conversations with friends and guests. The hospitality of the peasant is quite ceremonial. Mistrustful of the traveler who appears without warning, fearful of strangers who may arrive at his manor house for purposes unclear to him, he is splendid and friendly with those he invites to his home and table when there is a solemn occasion or with those who come with a relative or friend. Then the reserve, the shyness, become a jocular loquacity that is reflected in various carousing songs, of which I have heard some impromptu ones called, not without reason, *ardokantak*, wine songs, for the wine that since the eighteenth century has wreaked more and more havoc on the country through an excessive increase in the number of bars, which have been replacing cider houses and the old town inns (*ostatua*).

Life takes place in the farmhouse with work days and holidays following one another in a monotonous rhythm that is changed in a less foreseeable way by some disagreeable event, such as the sickness or death of one of its residents, or other events that are easier to foresee, such as births, weddings, and special masses.

Sickness and chronic poor health are two calamities that in the country have a different meaning from the one they can have in the city, and they are also fought in a different way. From the time they are very young, children are taught a series of preventive and curative measures that are of questionable effectiveness but that introduce a very clear idea of medicine, one that is difficult for professionals to combat. According to this idea, the power to cure is often linked to definite and preternatural causes, because illnesses are the product of psychic influences of an
agent on the subject or patient or of nebulous elements such as “bad air” (aide or aize txarra). Physiology, pathology, and etiology are considered suspect, given these beliefs. Above all, the causes of illness are sought in the most antiphysiological ways. For example, many Basque villagers believe (as do others in Europe) that someone who swallows the finger-nail clippings of another person runs the risk of going insane. Miserers are afflicted with sties, as are liars and women who attract the attention of a widower. Buzzing in the ears is caused by a thirsty worm that lives inside the ear. To make the buzzing stop, you have to give the worm warm milk. Small, unimportant conditions but with exterior manifestations have specific names in Basque. But the ones that are serious and very distinct to the eyes of a scientist but not externalized so much are known by less specific names. The more mysterious the course of the illness, the more it is thought to be due to psychic or human causes such as a draft, witchcraft, or the evil eye. In past times, sickness (eri) of this type must have been almost always considered to be produced voluntarily by enemies, if not as a punishment from God or a test. It is not surprising, then, that a cure for it had to be found in the Christian faith on one side and in magic or superstitious faith on the other. Let us remember that until the beginning of the sixteenth century the profession of doctor was essentially unknown in the towns and villages of the country and that the systematic campaign in favor of experimental medicine has not been able to develop comfortably until recently, despite some general and specific laws that were passed particularly beginning in the mid-eighteenth century.

Thus, traditional therapy can be divided into three types. The first consists of all remedies of a religious nature and is based on faith; it includes prayers and pilgrimages to specific sanctuaries (e.g., to Lezo to cure stuttering). The second consists of remedies based on reasonings that establish relationships without any experimental basis, often magical ones resulting from some exterior similarity. The best-known example of this type of cure is taking children with hernias to a specific place on Saint John’s Eve and making them pass between two branches of a tree or bush, commonly an oak, one of which has been broken off, but then strongly bound after the event, which proceeds in accordance with other mystical circumstances as well. The third category is empirical remedies, such as medical dressings, vapors, and tisanes. The greatest experts in this triple therapy today are still the medicine people and folk healers, who can be of either sex and specialize in curing people and animals. Normally, in each village or neighborhood there is a native
woman who, because of having been born under special circumstances (e.g., being the seventh child, having a cross under the tongue or on the palate), is considered to enjoy the grace of curing some or all illnesses. Sometimes, the reputation of a folk healer or medicine person travels to far lands and he or she becomes more and more indoctrinated, learning not only old mystical recipes but also the art of fixing or adjusting bones and healing dislocations, sprains, and other injuries. The reputation of a folk healer called Petriquillo who tried to cure General Zumalacárregui in the First Carlist War led to the term petriquilleros, which refers to those specializing in healing fractures. The protomedicato’s struggle against folk healing is already old, but even in the eighteenth century we know that there existed municipalities in Bizkaia, Araba, and elsewhere where there was much faith in medicine people and their companions, the storm conjurers, and it has cost the municipal authorities much (at least externally) to publicly condemn the practice of medicine under the private conditions described. It will cost much more still for the people to lose their faith in mysterious and preternatural remedies, although today it is clear that we are passing through a period of eclecticism in which sometimes people call on the doctor and other times the healer. Popular rhetoric is very severe with the former and full of courtesy for the latter. But one must not give rhetorical positions greater or lesser value than they have.5

To what extent do the clichés of village conversation, the repeated sayings, and the beliefs with a very defined form have a greater value than that of the rhetorical figures used on specific occasions, in circumstances that may even be opposites, to avoid the production or enunciation of a personal thought? In the stance toward the cliché there are many different nuances. We can find everything from the person whose personality is completely dominated by it to the person who rejects it utterly. The type of villager who is fond of paradox, which we could call “inversion of concept,” is well known in the country. He is commonly called xelebre. One must not confuse him with the professional wag, the clown. He is particularly distinguished for his witticisms, his comments, in which he generally defends the opposition (inverse) opinion from that externalized by the majority. Some verses express his manner of thinking, which has also been portrayed various times by my uncle, Pío Baroja, in novels and articles. This type of person, who shows a very particular theatricality, plays his role to the end. When most men come to terms with dictated precepts, that is, at the time of death, the original thinker of the village makes an ironic observation, plays a joke, or makes
a demand that perplexes his family members because it is a contradiction of the gravity of the moment and, especially, of the rules.

There are a multitude of beliefs, practices, and rites concerning death. The Basque, who is not a sad man by temperament, who does not enjoy the gloomy poetry typical of many European and even peninsular peoples and in which one often sees cemeteries and spirits, surrounds the dead with an aura of great respect, reflected by numerous visible acts. Death (eriotza, eriotzea, eriotzia) is personified in some Bizkaian towns under the name of balbe. In southern Navarre and areas that are no longer Basque, it seems that death is also conceived as the figure of a very black magpie or plucked rooster. Many are the signs that announce a death: if the floorboards or the walls of the house creak, if a chicken crows like a rooster, if crows fly in circles around the farmhouse, if they caw or if an eagle owl or barn owl hoots, if the dogs howl, if the bells echo for a long time, someone will die soon. Generally, in specific cases of death, the premonitions or omens are followed by observations on the disposition of the dead body or the circumstances in which he gave up the ghost. If it is raining hard when death overcomes a person, for example, it is believed that the person will go straight to heaven or that the rain is a good sign at least. But if a thunderstorm breaks when the person dies or is buried, that is a sign of condemnation.

As soon as a person has expired, they close his eyes, they cover the mirrors, pictures, and portraits in the bedrooms and living rooms, and if the house has a noble coat of arms they cover it with a black cloth, which remains in place throughout the period of mourning. The bedroom window is opened in some towns so that the soul can escape, but in others (e.g., in Lower Navarre) one of the relatives goes onto the roof and removes a tile from it for the same purpose. In earlier times, the cadaver was wrapped in a richly worked shroud, and in medieval times, according to testimonies gathered by Iturriza, the men were dressed up in their best military dress, and the women were buried with the spinning wheel and spindle in their arms, which symbolized their hardworking nature. Once the first preparations for the burial have been done, a number of public rites are carried out. Friends must be told the bad news, as must the neighborhood in general; the church is responsible for announcing it with a special ringing of the bell. In many towns, if the deceased is a man, there are more strokes of the bell than for a woman, although the number for each varies from place to place. Thus, choosing two cases, in Lekeitio and Elorrio, the bell is struck seven times for a man and six for a woman, and in Zeanuri, three for a man and two for a woman.
Sometimes the bell is rung in combinations of large and small strokes, and the death of a priest is always announced with a greater number of strokes than the death of other men. For children there is a special pealing of the bells.

The notice given to the neighbors must be extended to the domestic animals in general if the deceased is the master or mistress of the house (Lower Navarre) or, more specifically, to some of them, especially the bees. Various rhymes used for this purpose have been collected from Bizkaia to Zuberoa. In some, the bees are asked at the same time to make wax, as in this one, which comes from Bera:

Erletxuak, erletxuak
egui zute arguizaria.
Nagusia il da, ta
bear da elizan arguia.”

(“Little bees, little bees,
make wax.
The master has died, and
we need light in the church.”)

Burning the straw mattress of the bed of the deceased was until recently a domestic rite of great transcendence, a rite that took place at a nearby crossroads and for which various historical-cultural explanations have been given. The researcher who has most called attention to it, Bonifacio Echegaray, has also gathered a large amount of data on another institution that is very characteristic of the country, that of the roads of the dead. The paths or roads that the residents of an area of scattered population used to bear the bodies of the dead to the town cemetery are known by names such as difuntuen bidea, gorputz bidea, andabidea, gurutze bidea, and auzoteguiko bidea. It is said that it was prohibited to build a house near these roads or fence in territories on the contiguous lands, and it is believed that it is bad to carry the dead along other routes, even though they may be shorter and easier. As the word andabidea suggests, the dead were carried on andas (stretchers), wrapped in the aforementioned shrouds (katona, eskuetako, Larraun, Navarre; anda izara, Zeanuri, Bizkaia). In various places, until the beginning of the century, they placed a small coin in one hand of the deceased and he or she was carried feet first, except in the case of priests, who were borne the opposite way.
The funeral procession was and is composed of various parts. The boys or young men who live closest to the house affected by death (always on the side of the church) bear the coffin (in earlier times, the stretcher) and are preceded by priests and cantors (if any). Then come the men, led by the relatives or the mayor, and finally, the women. Even in the mid-nineteenth century, there were towns in Bizkaia (such as Elantxobe) where there were famous hired mourners. In that province, they were called erostariak; they were nigar-eguileak in Lower Navarre. There were many different types of them; some simply cried and lamented spectacularly, but others sung dirges (ileta). We know of some old productions of this type, not necessarily performed by “professionals” but by relatives of the deceased.

Medieval laws (such as the charter of Bizkaia) repeatedly condemn the use of hired mourners and overly theatrical weeping, but we know that the custom of paying women to cry at funerals was maintained despite these laws until the nineteenth century. Widows were beaten and pitied at the same time by their neighbors in the eighteenth century, according to the testimony of Father Henao.

Today the funeral procession goes first to the church, where there are all the priests but one and almost all the women; the men and those closest to the deceased go to the cemetery. Each of the mourners throws a handful of dirt onto the coffin when it is buried, and in some places they kiss the soil first.

Until the early twentieth century, there were towns of the province of Gipuzkoa in which in the procession the coffin was accompanied by an ox adorned in a special way with a black cloak, tassels on its neck, and a four-pound loaf of bread on each horn. The ox had to be freed by the family of the deceased upon arriving at the church, where sometimes it remained during the services. Less wealthy families freed a ram.

Burials and funerals followed a rigorous hierarchy, with those of the primerísima, primera, segunda, and tercera (very first, first, second, and third) kinds. This classification, which has been preserved by those who dedicate themselves to the industry of funeral pomp in cities, in earlier times had more to do with the stratification of nobility and honors than with economic status. The number of attending priests and the number of seroras, or female assistants who serve the temple, indicated the category in a fundamental way. In Lekeitio (Bizkaia), the primary burials were called ones “of eight” (zortzikoa) because they had four seroras with two candles each, making eight in total; the intermediate ones were
ones “of four” (laukoa), with two seroras with four candles, and those of the last category (batekoa) had only one serora with a single candle.

We mentioned earlier that when a person died, certain rites were performed that clearly reveal that the population has, in part, a conception of the soul as something with a certain material consistency, comparable to air, a puff of wind, a breath.

But many other Basque funerary rites, connected in a practical way to Christian ritualism probably in earlier medieval times, seem to respond not to a similar animist conception or a dualist belief but to another, considered today by ethnologists to be older among men in general, according to which the deceased has a physical postmortem life. It is a sort of living cadaver that not only must be fed but also needs light and care in all senses. It can be seen that this conception has enjoyed much vitality in the Basque lands if one bears in mind a series of events that today appear somewhat dissociated but that until the late eighteenth century were coherent as a group.

In most present-day town churches, it can be seen that each house, each old family linked to a manor house, has a special place called the tomb. The tombs were assigned to families when the temple was raised or renovated, establishing a price according to how near or far the tombs were to the main altar and also according to whether they were to the left or right of it. The wealthiest families, who gave more alms, occupied the places of preference (replacing the old diviseros, small landowners). The tomb is not used, but in the late eighteenth century it was still used as such, though with the increase in towns, the affluence of outsiders, and the creation of new homes others were made around the temple, likewise according to an order. Lighting the tombs in a special way, placing foods and hand-worked cloths during funerals, and other rituals thus did not have a strictly Christian meaning at that time but mostly another one motivated by the aforementioned beliefs. There were also certain traditions and legends associated with those beliefs. In various places, for example, they remember men who were buried for some time in a mine, who later were saved and who later told their families that except for one day during the whole time they had been shut in, they had had light. That day was the one on which the women of the house had been distracted and did not attend to the lights of the tomb in the church, letting them go out.

The ways of lighting the tomb, of decorating it, and of celebrating funerals are very varied. Foods play an important role in funerals, and
even in our times in towns such as Lesaka and others in Navarre one sees catafalques on which there appeared a lamb if the funeral was of the first type, a leg of lamb if of the second, or a codfish if of the third, left there by the serora for the priest or priests, as did the luminaries, cakes and offerings (oladak, olatak), eggs, and a few coins that the women of the house of the deceased, presided over by one of their number, collected on top of the tomb, in accordance with a very special ritual in which each neighbor lady made an oblada. Today the inclination to stop such offerings is very clear and determined by a new economic situation and restrictions on the consumption of flour.

In another time, enormous feasts were usually held after the funeral, the ritual being to make a fire in the kitchen for them, with firewood recently chopped for the occasion. There are old laws that limited these feasts, as they also limited the banquets for baptisms, weddings, and special masses. Until before the last civil war, the memory of them remained in the fact that after a funeral, an amaiketako would be served to the men at the inn and a few glasses of mellow wine and biscuits to the women in a shop near the parish church, and there would be many prayers during these snacks.

It is considered very inappropriate to speak ill of the dead, even if they were people considered by the community to have reprehensible habits, and in some cases speaking of them or mentioning them was banned, except to state the destination of the prayers. Beliefs linked to souls in purgatory are sometimes suffused with old pagan aftertastes. In Bizkaia there are towns where it is believed that these souls walk the roads until they go to heaven, or they stay in the room where they died or under the eaves of the house, in the gutters. Sometimes they take the form of songbirds; this I heard myself from an old man of Bera whom the people considered disturbed, and later I saw that other folklorists have gathered similar reports in Lower Navarre and elsewhere.

Death does not break the commitments of the living to the deceased, nor does the deceased stop being considered in family life for many years. There are numerous narrations gathered directly from the townspeople that revolve around a demand made by a dead person to certain of his relatives to order masses for his benefit or to carry out other actions. Cases are remembered of servants who, when having to make a decision, went to the cemetery to ask the advice of the old leader of the house or family, using a rhyming formula like this one, collected by Azkue in Garazi (Lower Navarre):
“Hau edo horren eguitheko zure arguitasuna nahi nuke.”

(“I would like your advice to do this thing or the other.”)

Periods of mourning were long and strict. Widows still dress in black for the rest of their life in many places. For fathers and mothers, black dress is worn for two or three years, and during mass, while the period of mourning lasts, one must not stand up when the Gospel is read.

With all these data, then, we see the enormous role that the cult of the dead has in Basque life. Its exact place in overall religious practices and beliefs cannot be seen, however, before we study the rest of them in a systematic way, a delicate study to be sure, as we will see in the chapters that follow.7

To continue this study more fruitfully, we now make some general observations on various aspects of traditional thought.
When studying the beliefs of primitive peoples and of European peasants, the first ethnologists, the so-called evolutionists, believed that even the most absurd beliefs to the eye of the educated man of their time were due either to errors of observation or to a loss of the original meaning; almost never within their succinct intellectualism did they bear emotional factors in mind. On the other hand, the respective importance of individual and collective thoughts in the creation of those beliefs was not very clearly defined at the time, although soon there would be people who underlined the transcendence of collective ideas in studying the evolution of the mind. Without straying too far from the evolutionist doctrine, there have been some more recently who underlined the flowering of “prelogisms” [primitive mental categories—trans.] as something characteristic of all primitive ideological stores, as opposed to the civilized man, who is essentially logical. Thus, we attempted to study the rules, the norms that govern the thought of very large portions of humanity, establishing a radical difference between people who believe that a thing cannot be something else at the same time and those who see no difficulty in that. But, more recently, we came to see with sufficient clarity that, with respect to the usual logic, to rational logical–causal thought, the specific difference that was claimed does not exist, and it was admitted that the so-called primitive very often uses logical reasoning, although illogical or prelogical elements (the idea of “participation”) play a large role in his mental life, as they do in the case of the civilized man, or so-called civilized man.

The persevering importance of the individual as a thinking subject has also been highlighted opposite the supporters of primitive gregarious-
ness. With respect to the prelogisms, we must recognize that many of the mental traits studied by Lucien Lévy Bruhl in his works, which have been more widely criticized than read in our country, are found in European societies (as you will have been able to see in the preceding chapters), as also happens among those considered by him to be more primitive. The ideas most subject to a logic, the ones that are used in technical and special works, the reasoning with which it seems that we proceed following the idea of pure causality without deviations, contradictions, or associations, suffuse primitive mental life up to a certain point, but unreasonableness is almost as inherent in us as in the so-called savage.

In any case, despite the efforts of the philosophers, it is difficult to agree when drawing a line between the ones and the others. Often the battles between two sectors of a given society originate from a radical lack of agreement in appreciating the elements of the life of that society, in light of the criteria of rationality and irrationality. Those who believe one thing separate themselves from those who believe another, each considering the other irrational. The researcher must establish his categories without considering such conflicts as anything more than a topic for study, and he will try to give an idea of the importance of everything that has been a basis for the explanation of the beliefs and ideas of different peoples for the ethnologists of other times, at least. That is,

1) The extent to which logical–causal reasoning operates on the studied society.
2) The importance of errors produced by forgetting or not knowing the causes that produced certain beliefs, opinions, and ideas.
3) The value that should be given to individual thoughts.
4) The influence of collective movements of opinion, imitation, and coercion on reason and mentality as a whole.
5) The most notable manifestations of prelogisms and the sectors of life in which they are found. The rational and the technical are associated, and the nonrational is found in other very important spheres.

It will be difficult for the researcher to carry out this minimal program, in whose development he will have to keep in mind constantly the notion of the functional circles of which we have spoken so insistently, but until he finishes, it will be impossible to establish the mental traits of each human group, a labor that has been to the taste of many premature generalizers. In his Anthropology, Kant provides an outline for dangerous amplifications when trying to portray the mental characteristics of
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different peoples, analyzing the ideas that operate most commonly and that are best loved by them, or under whose impulses they seem to act most frequently, without much clarification. In accordance with such generalizations and amplifications, the Spanish are always a certain way, the English another way, the French yet another, and so on. In Spain, in any case, the tendency to generalize in this way has been found since olden times and has been given expression in a series of clichés accepted by the common people, among which it is necessary to distinguish the defensive ones from the hostile ones, and whose origins tend to be clearly determinable.

Certainly I am not going to say that everything in the generalization and in the cliché is false. But what happens is that one must prove their truth and overcome what has been said to date in this terrain of ethnic characterology.

According to its defenders, the Basque mentality would be sufficiently defined by a few laudatory adjectives; according to the enemies of the country, by others, no more numerous but disparaging. Aymeric Picaud, a medieval pilgrim, offers the worst set of the latter, slanderous in quite a few cases. Larramendi or a similar author can be consulted by those who prefer to read defenses. In a discrete middle territory there remain some anonymous or collective opinions of non-Basque Spaniards of other times. In effect, the Spanish of the seventeenth century, according to a multitude of literary texts collected by Miguel Herrero García, considered the Basques to be characterized by a series of very well-defined traits that reflect regular observation. Once their nobility of lineage was accepted as the basis of their mentality (very much in agreement with the spirit of the Ancien Regime), there were six qualities and defects attributed to them: (1) simplicity of spirit or candidness; (2) shortness of ingenuity, of reason, of words, and of manners; (3) an aptitude for being secretaries because of their administrative accuracy and calligraphic abilities; (4) aptitude for seamanship; (5) a liking for wine and a tendency toward drunkenness; and (6) an arrogant, quick-tempered, and captivating humor. That is to say, two defects, two technical predispositions, and two modes of expression, all of which can harmonize with each other, producing various types and characters. These interpretations, which are based on the experiences of that time, still have a certain validity today. Nevertheless, the secretaries would have become bank employees and other types of administrators, the seamen would have lost some of their mysterious character, and it is even possible that the fans of alcohol may be different from their ancestors.
in some way. In any case, these traits are perhaps of secondary interest from the ethnological point of view.

Let us now speak a little of the five questions raised earlier. If we examine carefully the elements of the material and economic culture typical of Basque peasants, we can appreciate that they often apparently work within very rational and logical principles. The features of traditional architecture, the rhythm and harmonious relationship of agricultural operations, the implements used in them, give us the impression that they were selected quite precisely, that they were the object of consecutive meditations and calculations, of discussions in which the most honest and upright individual opinion has prevailed. This technical and utilitarian logic continues to control rural societies in part, as is proven in the face of the increasing progression of agricultural innovations, which are always limited not so much by a pure conservative spirit as by a lack of economic resources, agreement between neighbors, or the desire to enhance the family effort to increase daily work. There is no shortage of those who oppose moral rationalizations to certain changes and technical perfections. But in general it is rare that, out of pure traditional spirit, archaic and imperfect techniques or implements prevail over techniques or implements that are more useful and practical.

But if we leave the field of work, of the domestic family economy, and enter the world of customs and beliefs, the panorama is much more confused and multicolored. As we have seen, the honesty or evilness of ideas are established somewhat ex cathedra by society as a whole or by sectors of it, and not by individuals outstanding for their recognized practical intelligence. It is clear that the people who guide rural society to a large extent today from the mental point of view are the Catholic priests, and this has been happening since the Middle Ages. Although the priest has not been nor is always invincible, it would be a good idea if from now on folklorists focused attentively on the character of the materials that they gather in order to assess the extent of the influence of medieval men of the Church on the traditional mentality. I do not refer to the traits of mental life in which piety is obvious nor to detailed prohibitions or scruples as much as to the features that assume a particular philosophical attitude. For example, who has been able to influence the realist philosophical conception of most villagers, who knows how to present it in a very specific way, better than the priests of the past? Who has provided an outline to examine a multitude of acts and thoughts but they? When years ago in the farmhouses the existence of witches was put in question by some esprit fort, the old-fashioned people and those with
the most authority answered that witches existed “because everything that has a name exists.” This radical realism allows a great number of opinions and beliefs, sometimes contradictory to one another. It does not channel thought too much. And the bad thing is that, because very few investigations have been carried out in a spirit wider than the cataloger’s and analytical in nature among a great number of folklorists, we are not going to be able to provide an exact idea of the mental functions of the peasants themselves for a long time. In general, folklorists have gone to the field to seek small curiosities and anecdotes, in accordance with previous, very poor ideas, and thus we have a mosaic with neither unity nor harmony. In our country, my teacher, José Miguel de Barandiarán, already reacted against this behavior, but even what I write now can be nothing but a type of program to follow, a theoretical commentary, something that has been collected in previous chapters and to which we will add the following.

Inspired by well-defined artistic and literary norms, the nineteenth-century folklorists, for the most part, have bequeathed to us works that in many cases remain as monuments of the language, as a contribution of fundamental value for the study of comparative literature, but that are difficult for a researcher of traditional life, interested in specific psychological and sociological questions, to use. For example, what is the exact function of a narration in which the poet sees a spontaneous product from the imagination, the common man, a trifle, and the cataloger of stories, an archetype, within a radical realist mentality? These tend not to have very precise ideas until after data are gathered personally.

In general, it is very difficult to identify the most disconcerting mental traits of the villager until one has sufficient confidence to speak with him about the problems of the spiritual life. Let us suppose that we speak with a woman who is somewhat distrustful and rather intelligent and that, after an ordinary conversation about the harvest, the weather, the price of groceries, or the relationship between these three things, what she tells us seems to belong to a common logic that can be found in any subject with a more complex or pedagogically elaborate education. But if we enter into more intellectual discussions, once the barriers of distrust have been broken, we see that the ideas she holds seem stranger and stranger until at last we arrive at the great surprise of finding that she believes things that, from our city point of view, seem archaic and ludicrous, in disharmony with those that we heard from her lips before. If after finding various people of this type we find another who exceeds them in credulity and many who show greater skepticism, we will be
in a good position to carry out a reasonably objective study that would contribute to determining in what environment certain stories, myths, and legends were spread and the cause of their different ways of being presented. Such a study would be worth much more than a classification of materials gathered previously in accordance with this or that morphological system.

The extreme case that I have known of a person who had no interest at all in hiding ideas in radical disagreement with those professed by the majority (at least in public) is that of a villager of Bera in his eighties, dead for many years now. He had always lived in a dark farmhouse, in the company of a sister, working irregularly. He did not speak Spanish, and I think he had forgotten almost everything that he learned on the few days that he went to school in his childhood. When I dealt with him he was already old, and the people believed him to be a little deranged. Why? Simply because he believed things that today are not deemed defensible but that at another time were considered axiomatic in all or almost all of the country. He brought things into the present that others in the same town told as fables, tales, or things that happened in the past. Thus, he himself had seen this or that relative or neighbor turn himself into a dog, a cat, an animal.

According to him, flying in the air was something that happened with equal frequency. To change shape or fly one need nothing more than a particular power. Our villager could speak with the animals and discover their ancient human nature. The world was full of mythical signs and nuances. There is no great difference between the opinions and ideas of this old man of Bera and those of the prelogical type studied by Lévy Bruhl using materials of heterogeneous countries and without focusing on personality. But even among the people who thought him disturbed, there were those who differentiated themselves from him more quantitatively than qualitatively; that is, they placed an arbitrary limit on their capacity to believe. Specifically, another neighbor of mine, who sometimes made fun of the ideas of the old man, also sometimes got angry, considering these ideas to be disturbing and forbidden. For his part, he had no trouble admitting that he had heard the barking of King Solomon’s dogs in the mountains and similar things.³

When many traditional ideas collide with common opinions and ways of thinking today in villas and cities, they become outdated, and people begin to tell of events that had been considered ordinary as typical of a mythical past. Sometimes also, in the company of people in whom one has little confidence, one speaks in the past, and the present is reserved
for real confidences. The prestige of the past is great even for the most tenacious realists, such that everything that is surrounded by a marvelous aura could better have happened in the past than in the present.

Then the animals often spoke, the trees went to the farmhouses so that their residents could warm themselves without having to work, the stones were animate, and heroes such as Roland and saints such as Saint Martin walked the world. The men were stronger and more vigorous. The decline is greater every day and is connected to the dissolution of customs and the loss of religion.

It is rare that bad ways of thinking are dissociated from bad ways of acting, in the opinion of the country people. In this respect, the borders between the good and the bad are sharp and categorical, subject to an absolute anthropocentrism. Thus, animals and plants are classified as good or bad according to their goodness or evil, their beauty or ugliness. These classifications by aesthetic considerations can sometimes weigh more than those of other types: An ugly but inoffensive animal such as the toad has produced a fabulous quantity of hostile beliefs. In contrast, the butterfly, which is much more harmful, has a very good feeling about it.

The tendency to believe that the ideological wealth of knowledge of the peasant has varied until the point at which the peasant confronted modern culture and technology produced the theory of the “survivals,” still so widespread among folklorists and sometimes so lacking in specific meaning, as noted in chapter 17. Almost all the mental products that conflict with the current ideology are considered to be such, and it was believed that they were caused by a basic difference in the way of thinking, which produced certain ideas at a certain time (that are defended by inertia) and produced others at other times.

The problem of the “survivals” must be studied in light of formal criteria above all. Although mental operations may be the same everywhere, from a psychological point of view, perhaps certain ideas can be considered to have been produced by (and to be encased in) a society, whereas others appear in societies that differ in time or place. They may then mix or develop together, but by attending to their form, the European folklorist, at least, can often reconstruct their history. The form of the ideas is shaped by objects and social institutions that also have unequal validity across time in the same area. But it is better that we speak separately of these forms in the chapters that follow and that we do not assign excessive value to the aforementioned notion, which was used by Tyler and his disciples.
The description of the religious state of an old-world country (like that of any other aspect of its culture) should be accompanied, so that it will be as comprehensible as possible, by various historical observations, or rather diachronic ones. Both the positive features and the negative ones of such a state always have some precedent, some prior cause, sometimes even an extrareligious one. Let us now present an idea of the characteristics of Basque religiosity from an ethnological and historical-cultural point of view. The subject is delicate, given that when speaking of religion more than when speaking of any other topic, one may fall into conceptual and interpretive errors, noting down ideas that are neither pleasant nor comprehensible for most people and being accused, more or less rightly, of partiality. Having considered the matter for a long time, I have decided to divide my presentation into four parts, in agreement with the common divisions used both by historians and by Christian theologians. I believe the distinction between Christian beliefs and practices and pagan beliefs and practices to be highly significant for the European ethnologist. I believe that the careful separation of orthodox beliefs from heretical or superstitious ones, within Christianity and within each country, is also very important. I will present my account in accordance with them. But in order for these divisions to be more valid and to reflect a particular religious state, they must not change a description based on very specific observations, to which, furthermore, a sort of table of values will have to be added that would indicate the strength and importance of each form of religiosity, yesterday and today, within communities and individuals. Orthodox Catholicism will undoubtedly occupy the most prominent position in this table if we consider the facts with reference to the present-day Basque Country, and I will concern myself with it preferentially in this chapter. The others cannot be ordered in a categorical way from this
point of view, but historical research itself will help us to understand at which distinct points they had more energy and mutual dependencies.

I must stress, finally, how limited the present analysis of beliefs and feeling is. For the ethnologist, religion is neither the only aspect of a culture nor the most important one but simply one of the various aspects that he must analyze; it evolves in a manner quite similar to that typical of others, and in a close relationship with them, nothing more and nothing less. Let us speak first of the Catholic religion. If this work were a defense, if I wanted to prove with concrete examples how advantageous is it to fervently profess Catholicism in order to rigorously maintain the cohesion of a society, I could very comfortably follow in the footsteps of many authors who are both ardent Catholics and defenders of the Basque Country. But this falls outside my orbit.

I do not present a legal, economic, or social defense. Nor will I present a religious defense. However, I will again point out the enormous importance of the Catholic religion. It can safely be said that it is the greatest coercive force of the many forces that shape present-day Basque society and that it has acted on that society at decisive moments since quite distant times. Thus, it is common today, when skepticism is gaining ground within society, that when speaking of a certain person it is said, “It seems incredible that Mr. So-and-So, being Basque on all sides, is so non-religious” (that is, non-Catholic). I do not believe that such a thought can be expressed with respect to the natives of many other zones of Spain, such as Andalusia, Valencia, and Asturias. Nor do I believe that the reasons that are commonly given to explain such religiosity are very valid. Defenders and enemies have allowed themselves to be led by easy and unilateral thoughts. One obvious example of arbitrariness is that given by H. S. Chamberlain, speaking of the reasons Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the greatest enemy of the Reformation, was born into the bosom of a Basque family. My task will be limited, then, to providing an analytical vision in which, perhaps, the general lines are not very clearly distinguished. But it is not my fault if I am incapable of drawing them both strongly and precisely.

First, I will make some strictly sociological observations that will help to clarify the limits of this investigation. The differences between the city and the country are clear and easy to perceive when studying religiosity in almost all of Western Europe. In the Basque Country, as in many other places, it seems evident that the strongest centers of irreligiosity have arisen, beginning in the nineteenth century, in medium-sized cities and towns that have been home to industry since ancient times.
Such centers are like one end of a chain of attitudes about the religion characteristic of Basque society. The extreme opposite of the same chain is found in the most remote farmhouses, where the Catholic religion is altered, to some extent, by the still regular flourishing of pagan beliefs and practices of pre-Christian origin and of old superstitions. It can be said, then, that today the type of religious person most suited to the demands of the Church is found in the urban zone of the agricultural and commercial towns and among the bourgeoisie and upper class in the cities. From the ethnological point of view, it will be the examination of the religious beliefs of the natives who are less connected to city people that will provide (as others of their customs have provided) more interesting and useful data. Such data or facts seem to have been shaped by a series of historical events of which the villagers themselves are only vaguely aware.

Within each individual, many of the conceptual classifications that we made earlier lose their clarity at a certain point. As ethnologists, we cannot allow ourselves to be led by a dry realism, and we must admit that here each person, as in any other place of the old world, can accommodate within himself, simultaneously, pagan ideas and Christian, Catholic, or heterodox ideas, in a greater or lesser state of conflict and opposition, or perhaps also in mutual unawareness. The division we may adopt to study them will always be artificial, but it is a resource that we cannot do without.

To what degree can a particular historical-cultural process influence the present-day form of the traditional religious faith common in a certain zone and differentiate it from the form of another? To a high degree, I believe. Christianity has dominated the West since very remote times, but no one can fail to recognize that the Andalusian forms of piety, for example, show exterior features that are very different from the Basque ones. An entire past culture is reflected in both. In the southernmost part of Araba and Navarre, one can already see a differentiation in this respect, parallel to many others already mentioned when speaking of the forms of town, agriculture, and so on. In any case, this part was the earliest Christianized, as valuable Paleo-Christian monuments have been found there, testimony to the existence of very strong communities that professed the faith.¹

The epoch in which the more southern zones were becoming Christianized should be borne in mind to explain, in part, the distribution of many beliefs and practices, and these, in any case, can suggest missionary and pious routes emanating from a specific point, as we will see.
I have said elsewhere that I believe that the tenth century is the most likely among those that can be proposed as the beginning of the great Christianization of the area that is Basque-speaking today. It used to be considered indisputable by the scholars of the country that the Basques were among the most ancient Christians of Europe. But since the end of the eighteenth century at least, a number of medieval texts have been circulated in which the Basques seem to be pagans. The authors of the Visigoth and Frankish periods, until the eighth century, spoke ill of them on the basis of their lack of affection for Christianity, among other things. Father García Villada not long ago went so far as to state that Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa still had not received the Gospel in the eleventh century. But such a statement must be corrected, bearing in mind the tombs of Argiñeta (Arguineta) (from the late ninth century). A medieval author, Aymeric Picaud, suggests in any case that the Navarrese and Basques of the Pyrenees had not been Christianized even after the tomb of Saint James was discovered (811), and a version of the legend of Saint Leo, bishop of Baiona, speaks of his evangelical work in the forests of Navarre and adjacent parts of the peninsula (Gipuzkoa) and among the Normans in a way that suggests that it took place in the years 889 and 891. Although it is not very reliable, this text supports our point of view, which does not exclude the possibility that before that time there may have been a few isolated Christians here and there. This explains, for example, the discovery of lachrymals and nonrustic Paleo-Christian ceramics in some of the caves in Bizkaia. These objects and others discovered at the same level reveal activity (by peoples previously accustomed to a different, more comfortable and refined life) in times of danger, grave crisis, or social and political cataclysm, which may have taken place during Late Antiquity. Perhaps these people were also taking refuge in the early period after Mahomet’s invasion, having come from the south and intervened in the Christianization of the old residents of the oceanic Basque Country, who held onto some of their pagan beliefs throughout the Middle Ages, devoting themselves intensely to divining omens and other arts (in which they were already outstanding in ancient times, in the time of the Roman Empire).

It is very significant that in the farmhouses of the central areas of the country there remain very many concrete ideas about certain beings called gentiles in Spanish (jentillak, heathens); it is believed that these were men with extraordinary characteristics and a superior culture, who lived in indeterminate, past times. The villagers of the Goierri say that their relationships with the natives were never very cordial. However,
this belief in “heathens” cannot reflect anything but the presence at a
certain time of nuclei or sectors of society in each rural zone that were
Christianized and others that were more archaic and conservative, pagan.
The triumph of the former made the latter seem to have an extraordi-
nary and malevolent nature. Nevertheless, over the centuries the word
*heathen* little by little lost part of its meaning, acquiring other mythical
and supernatural meanings. The heathens normally appear as magicians
(nothing strange among pagans) with extraordinary powers, which may
be associated with the general belief that the more one submerges oneself
in the past, the stronger the ancestors and primitive settlers of the native
land become—in other words, associated with the traditional idea, noted
earlier, that those who lived at the time of the “youth of the world” were
more vigorous than we, who were born in a period of decline.

The legends concerning the end of the heathens are particularly
interesting. This is the translation of what a resident of Ataun named
José María de Auzmendi told Barandiarán in 1917:

> They say that when the heathens lived in a cave in Leizai, a star of
exceptional beauty appeared in the sky. When they saw it, the heathens
were afraid and asked what was going to happen in the world.

> At one point they brought an ancient half-blind man from their
cave, opened his eyelids with a piece of wood from the oven, and placed
him so that he looked to the sky, thinking that he would know what the
star meant. As soon as he saw it, he exclaimed, “Oh, my children! The
*Kixmi* is born; now we are lost. Throw me over that cli
ff.”

> The heathens called Jesus Christ *Kixmi*, and they say that *Kixmi*
means monkey. As he ordered, they threw him over the cliffs and thus
the old heathen died. Later, when Christianity began to spread through-
out the world, the heathens dispersed and were lost.

> There are variations of this legend in Segura, Zaldibia, and
Oiartzun.

> Its historical significance is clear. Given the persistence and clarity of
the idea of the “heathen” in the most remote of the zones that maintain
the Basque language, it seems that it cannot have emerged in very remote
times. I do not know that it exists in the rest of Spain, for example.

> Finally, we must discuss the relationships that the people establish
between prehistoric monuments, especially cromlechs, and the heathens.
In Arano, many cromlechs that are in the mountains that stretch between
Goizueta and Berastegi are known by the name *Jentillbâtzak* or *Jentil-
baratzak*. Those in Oiartzun and Arantza also bear the same name. In
Ataun, the dolmens are called *Jentilleche*, that is, house of the heathens, and particularly one in the Gipuzkoan Aralar mountains is called stone of the heathens, *Jentilarri*. Sometimes, the heathens are confused with the Moors (*mairuak*), such that it is possible to imagine that, if not their legends, at least their names date from a similar time, which may be precisely the first centuries of the Reconquest.

Little by little, through these ancient monuments, rustic churches were raised, from which the present-day chapels and parish churches descend in part. Those churches were the patrimony of a few families in the surrounding area, and it is curious to observe that the strength of tradition is so strong that even today, in some areas of Bizkaia, the residents of certain farmhouses often go not to the nearest church to fulfill their religious duties but to another far away with which they feel more connected because that was the one their ancestors attended.

The church (*eliza*, commonly; *eleiza*, in Arrasate; *eleja* or *elexa* in Bizkaia) is not only the temple of God but also the place where the ancestors are worshipped, as we have seen, next to which the men met to resolve the most important issues that came up in the life of the community. Before the municipalities appeared and after the old native councils (which would probably also have had some touch of religion) were lost or distorted, the church was the clearest expression of a rural society, and in it the stratification of that society was reflected through the places of preference held by certain families or upon establishment of the tomb. There were often very violent arguments over such rights.

If today we analyze the religious life of a village society, of one of those rural parishes, which are some of the most simple units among those that can be clearly observed, we find that it presents specific aspects. One is the ritual aspect, another is the dogmatic, another is the narrative. The dogmatic aspect is difficult because of its very nature, which takes on very particular external forms. Not so the other two in their most fluid and also exterior features. Within the forms of religious life that can be defined as essentially superstitions, we can make a distinction, in any case, between some that are very widespread in Europe and those that, today at least, barely go beyond the Basque-speaking zone, which are undoubtedly the most worthy of careful examination.

The same can be said with respect to modalities in the customs, irregularities, and abuses that have arisen within the community of the faithful, priests, and servants of the temples through the ages. In this respect, almost always when speaking in a folkloric monograph about
the religiosity of the people, one must insistently touch on the aspects of it that may be less orthodox because they are the most susceptible in a particular way far from the universality of dogmatic religion.

Starting, then, from the assumption that the fulfillment of precepts is done more strictly in most Basque towns than in other parts of the peninsula, we must insist that customs and religious practices and nonobligatory beliefs also present curious nuances. These can develop unequally in each person and in the breast of family life, such that the collaborators on the Anuario de Eusko Folklore, when writing their reports on the religiosity of Basque towns about twenty years ago, were obliged to do them bearing in mind three expressions of religiosity (individual, family, and parochial) as perfectly definable. I would not dare to establish a fourth and speak of masculine and feminine expressions of piety, but I do want to insist that, despite the fact that it is said that the Basque is more religious than other Spanish peasants, in every town the proportion of women who attend the divine offices daily is much greater than that of men. I will also state that women, in general, give a stricter sense than men to the norms of behavior dictated by the Church, taking part in a very active way in parish life.

Since the time when their children begin to speak, the women little by little introduce to them the notion that everything in the world has a religious meaning and that the smallest actions can be interpreted in accordance with that meaning, such that the social group to which one belongs comes to take a central place in the world if these notions do not widen thanks to more in-depth instruction.

However, the religious activity of the Basque town (like that of many others) shows two tendencies that seem contradictory but that are intimately linked and tied to very strong needs of the human spirit. One is the tendency always to try to fit the facts of life to the doctrine of final causes. In the face of this teleological position, typically Christian, we find the complementary position of mechanizing religious activities to different degrees, adjusting them to the phases of the same life, to the periods that constitute it, seen from both the individual and community positions. Thus, men and women consider religion depending on their consecutive states, from childhood to death, the farmer in relation to the agricultural year, the livestock breeder in relation to the pastoral year, and so on. A relative mechanization is always necessary to externalize faith, but perhaps it would be appropriate to carry out particular studies on the nuances that it adopts and the extreme forms at which it can
arrive, and there is no doubt that these are more possible in a society of farmers than in any other.

However, I believe that it can be claimed that the Basque peasant’s idea of God, in general, is quite separate from any mechanicism, though not from some particular aspects of excessive egocentrism or anthropomorphism. In any case, to verify the precision of this way of thinking of mine, or to demonstrate its falsehood, it would be worth the trouble to do a survey concerning the notion that the most isolated peoples of the country have of God. Perhaps we would then see that, when speaking of this notion, one sometimes perceives a tendency to bring it closer to one’s own mode of being. When the peasants choose examples to illustrate an aspect of the moral, one also often sees the very comprehensible tendency to present the lives of Jesus Christ and the Virgin as if they had taken place in an environment identical to that of the farmhouses and villages. I remember when I was a child in Bera hearing a very old woman telling a series of episodes of the life of the Messiah that happened in places near that town, where, according to her, he had traveled, giving them names, in the company of the apostles. Like medieval artists, the country people make the characters of the New Testament move and speak in an environment and with a language identical to their own. Around 1860, when Donostia was beginning to be a tourist city, the children used to go to the port or down to the sea, where they saw some very ugly fish called paluxak (flounder) in the baskets of the fishermen. They used to say that such fish had a twisted mouth because, at the time of the flight to Egypt, the Virgin had asked them the way in Basque, and the paluxak, twisting their faces disdainfully, had answered in Spanish, “We don’t know.” To the Virgin, then, are ascribed the idiomatic features of the country, which are pleasant for that reason; to the fish are ascribed those of the Spanish, who were not very pleasant at that time for the most pious.

I do not wish to overestimate the value of these examples. But I must consider them inasmuch as they are characteristic of a type of mentality, formed in infancy, that enjoys underlining that sort of dualism, that sort of opposition, between the principles of good and evil to which I alluded in the preceding chapter, which it sees reflected in Nature itself. The good-looking animals and plants, which are pleasant to humans, come from God, the Virgin, or the saints; the ugly and repugnant ones come from the devil. On the other hand, it is clear that many disagreeable events and episodes of daily life are considered signs of the wrath of God. The idea that heaven often sends punishments in the form of hail,
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storms, frost, and plagues is common today, as it was earlier, among most pious European country people. Less ordinary meteorological phenomena, such as eclipses and monstrous births, have received a religious interpretation up to contemporary times. There is no shortage of occasions when the same phenomena are attributed to a malign spirit, in which case one resorts to spells and exorcisms and sometimes also to superstitious practices. If God intervenes often and strongly in human actions, the intervention of the spirit of evil is also manifest.4

The Basques adopted the Christian notion of the devil together with the Latin name; specifically, the devil is called deabrua. The evil spirits that the Basques previously may have believed in were not assimilated into the devil because they were probably of a very local nature. Nevertheless, it is known from Ohienart that in Zuberoa in the seventeenth century, the devil generally had a Basque name, apparently that of Tusuri. Schuchardt thought that this name was related to that of the dusii, demons in Celtic mythology discussed by Saint Augustine and Saint Isidore. Today this name has fallen into disuse. Other ancient evil spirits would have been mamu, which is still spoken of vaguely as a boogeyman in the mountains of oceanic Navarre, and mekolats, who is properly the spirit of evil personified, in southeastern Gipuzkoa. The mikolases or nikolases appear in legends from the same area as not very clearly defined fantastical beings. A study on the concept of the devil in the legends of the different countries of Europe would be of great interest. Of course, the disparate characteristics that are often attributed to him in a single zone on different occasions are not sufficiently outlined. These characteristics fundamentally fit two psychological states: terror and laughter. And nothing would allow us to see clearly the permanent link, the strange relationship that exists between these two states better than the suggested investigation. The devil of Christian, medieval, and rural folklore is surely the direct heir of old divinities who also showed two contradictory aspects, among which the best known is Dionysus. Azkue has collected a medium-sized number of names that refer to the devil and express a sort of burlesque familiarity. Thus, in many Bizkaian towns, they call him beste mutilla (the other boy); in Gipuzkoa, galtxagorri or prakagorri (red breeches); in places in Lower Navarre and the Erronkari Valley, he was called adar (little horns). At some point in time it becomes difficult to separate the acts of the evil spirits of pre-Christian origin from those of this devil of the imagery popularized everywhere, with tail, horns, pitchfork in hand, because everything that comes from “somewhere bad” is a diabolical work. We will see later on how, from
the historical-cultural point of view, the common notion of devil has greatly obscured certain religious events of exceptional importance in the country (until the seventeenth century, at least), which were known throughout the trials as witchcraft, sorcery, and magic.5

In the battle between God and the devil, the former has a strong cohort of defenders in which the saints occupy the place of preference, followed by the priests and the pious. Saints are treated with greater familiarity than the divinity, of course. The Basque words to the “Saint Ignatius March” portray that army, flag flying, always ready to do battle that we might enjoy peace and calm night and day. The worship of the saints is subject to random events similar to those observable in other parts of Europe. Not all saints are worshipped by the people, nor are all equally well known. First, there are some that are intimately linked to the country, for reasons of birth and ancestry; such as the aforementioned Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier. Second, there are others that have only recently begun to be the object of intense devotion. Third, there are ancient saints and old holy apparitions that continue to have many devoted followers, and finally, there is no shortage of chapels and churches dedicated to saints that in past times had more prestige among the faithful than today. But there have not been very many works in which all these aspects of worship and others are studied together and clearly.

We would have to adopt two norms to carry out such a study, as in many other cases dealt with here: a temporal norm, which would give us not only the vicissitudes of worship through the centuries but also the importance of each holy apparition throughout the year, within the rural calendar, and a spatial norm, which would give their areas. We can make some observations following these norms, in any case.

We have already stated how, beginning in the Middle Ages, the toponymy drawn from the lives of the saints begins to multiply. In it and in some very old texts, it is clearly reflected that the saints, in various zones (eastern, especially), were not known only by names beginning with san or santo, as happens today and in other places, but that their names often have the word don or dona, contractions of dominus and domina, in the first position. Thus we have Donibane Lohizune (Saint-Jean-de-Luz), Donamaria (Santa María), Donostia (San Sebastián), Doneztebe (Santesteban), opposite the numerous toponyms in which the more common word appears (e.g., Santimamiñe, San Adrián), which for their part reflect the existence of an old church or chapel, sometimes
gone without a trace, and other times a medium-sized town or village in
the place where first it stood alone.

It is not possible to establish a general rule, but it can be stated that,
very often, the chapels that today stand separate from municipal lands,
on high ground or in a remote valley, are older than the parish churches
that gather the community of faithful to their breast.

It even seems that the idea of the church as closely and fundamen-
tally dependent on the bishopric is quite modern, because in the chroni-
cle of Don Juan I it is told that, in a certain dispute between the prelates
of the kingdom and the Basque nobles in 1390, the former stated that
the churches, specifically in Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, and Araba, were called
monasteries “as the greatest insult,” monasteries undoubtedly being
considered isolated places.

From the formal point of view, we could make a very clear clas-
sification of the different types of churches and chapels in the country.
With respect to temples under the protection of saints, it is worth men-
tioning how important two such saints are because of their extraordi-
nary frequency. The first is Saint Mary; the other is Saint John. Local
holidays are connected to the holy apparitions of these saints and their
temples. In Navarre alone, they celebrate a holiday and have a church
or chapel dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin (August 15) in
107 places, from the capital city to the smallest villages. For his part, in
the first half of the nineteenth century, Saint John had some thirty-one
churches and thirty-seven chapels in Araba (some have disappeared)
but fewer in Gipuzkoa, where I find up to thirteen churches and
twelve chapels. In Bizkaia, I have found fourteen chapels and fourteen
churches, and in Navarre, more than thirty-eight churches and four-
teen chapels. The proportion is greater that that of the holy apparitions
of many other saints.

In general, the worship of these saints is of the sort most given to
mechanicist interpretations, which is explained in great part because the
festivities dedicated to them take place at a specific time of year and are
traditionally associated with some agricultural task or a job of another
sort. Let us not forget that the saint can even be a patron recognized in
order to obtain particular and even specialized terrestrial results.

Very specific geographic factors may also have had an influence,
with the result that some saints are worshipped more than others. Boni-
facio de Echegaray has pointed out how abundant are churches dedi-
cated to Saint Marina, with as many as 138 temples to the well-known
Galician saint, and those under the protection of Saint Martin, famous Gallo-Roman saint, with no fewer than 146 parish churches and 78 chapels. To explain such an abundance Echegaray believes that the pilgrimage roads contributed to the propagation of the worship of Saint Marina from the land to which the pilgrims flocked and of the other saint from territories passed through or left behind; that is, one of the two cults would have been popularized on the outbound journey and the other on the homeward journey of the pilgrimages. Saint James himself has as many as twenty-eight parish churches and fifty chapels, and the worship of Saint Sebastian and Saint Pelagius may also have existed in relation to the influx of pilgrims from certain regions. As a consequence, their respective holidays are much more abundant than the commemorative events of other saints and must be dated late because we know that in the first phase of the pilgrimages, the Basque-speaking zone was not considered safe for the pilgrims.

Before speaking of saints’ days, let us say something about the concept that the villagers have of the personality of the saint. Frequently in their narrations, one of the most famous appears as a civilizing hero. Among the most interesting in this respect is Saint Martin, who is also so important in the folklore of France. For old Gipuzkoans, Saint Martin was the one who had wrenched a series of technical secrets that were useful to men from the hands of very archaic mythical beings. In the following legend, collected in Ataun by Barandiarán, he is very well characterized:

They say that at a certain time there were basajaunes (men of the forest) living in the cave of Muskia. By cultivating the lands of the tops of the nearby mountains, they harvested a great amount of wheat. The Christians lived in the low lands, and they did not yet cultivate wheat, for they did not have the seeds. Once, “Little Saint Martin” put on very big boots and went up to the cave at Muskia; seeing there the mountains of wheat, he bet the basajaunes to see who could cross them, in one jump, most gracefully. In fact, the basajaunes crossed them with the utmost agility, whereas “Little Saint Martin” fell in the middle of the pile of wheat, but also his boots filled with grains of wheat. Later, when he was leaving, “Little Saint Martin” was on his way home when a basajaun remembered that he was carrying wheat seeds in his boots. He caught up a hatchet and threw it at him, but it didn’t reach him. The hatchet embedded itself in the base of a chestnut tree in Olasagasti.

The Christians did not know in what season to sow the wheat; but at one point someone heard a basajaun guffawing and saying,

“Ha ha! If they knew, they would take it:
When the leaves come out, sow the corn.
When the leaves fall, sow the wheat.
And around Saint Lawrence, sow the turnip.”

From that time on, wheat spread through all the towns.

Here the pious Christian element is not really very important; but the notion of the saint as a strong and clever hero is in harmony with ancient forms of faith. Naturally, this does not mean that we accept as true the thesis circulated by some folklorists that, in general, the worship of saints, considered historically, is the direct heir of the worship of heroes, who belong to pagan times. A paganism that we could define as eminently functional can become apparent when certain events are attributed to saints whose lives are well known and studied, as well as when their worship becomes something exclusive, as occurs in the case of some city people who believe “solely” in Saint Anthony, Saint Expedite, and so on, linking them to a small number of very specific wishes. It is worthwhile in this respect to establish a clear distinction when conducting research between historical factors (e.g., problems of the transmission of beliefs) and psychological factors, voluntary ones, and similar ones.

Within strict orthodoxy, the saint is the object of a devotion in which concrete individual or collective desire can intervene in an intense way. In addition to those who are known in general as patrons under specific circumstances, there are less famous saints of whom very special graces are requested and of whom it seems it is believed that they exercise a beneficial influence on limited regions. The localization of worship has even produced a lot of legends. For example, it is told that some thieves on a certain occasion stole the image of Saint Michael from the sanctuary of Aralar in Navarre and headed for the French border. No one stopped them in their flight, but when they arrived at the border, a mysterious force pinned them to the ground and the image was recovered. They say that this image, which is usually carried to many Navarrese towns when there is excessive drought, cannot leave Spain and that it was prescribed that it should be moved from one place to the next by a chaplain mounted on a horse, and in no other way.6

The Virgins of Arantzazu and Itziar, of Guadalupe and El Juncal, in Gipuzkoa; Our Lady of Begona, in Bizkaia; Our Lady of Estibalitz, in Araba; Saint Anthony of Urkiola; Saint Michael of Mount Aralar; the Christ of Lezo, and others enjoy a worship that is intense in a specific area, even though they are famous holy apparitions. Specialization in curing an illness or satisfying certain desires can sometimes exceed the
limitations of the worship, however, and it is not rare for some obscure saint of a parish altar to be the object of special pilgrimages. Rivalry in the holy apparitions is seen less in the Basque-speaking zone than in the southern Navarrese–Riojan part, where the attitude is more similar to that of the Aragonese or Castilians. Thus, in Lizarra (Navarre), a *jota* [an Aragonese folk song —trans.] is sung that is also heard in many other parts, where it is changed slightly:

“La Virgen del Puy de Estella
le dijo a la del Pilar:
si tú eres aragonesa,
yo soy navarra, y con sal.”

(“The Virgin of the Puy of Lizarra
told the one of Pilar:
If you are Aragonese,
I am Navarrese, and with salt.”)

This small religious vanity seems incompatible with the typical Basque character, which has a total respect for all holy apparitions, although some he considers to be his own and very much so.

The important saints that are worshipped independently of a local, topographic apparition are almost the same ones who are worshipped year round in other parts of Spain and France. Thus, Saint Agatha is celebrated as the patron saint of married and lactating women, Saint Anthony as the protector of the cavalry and domestic animals, Saint Barbara as a mediator against storms, Saint Blaise against illnesses of the throat in men and beasts. Saint John with an enormous bloom of rites around his day, is the protector of fruit, together with Saint Isidore, a more modern saint. Saint Mark is patron of shepherds and boys, and Saint Nicholas is patron of schoolchildren.

Their holidays are combined with other religious (Christmas, Easter) and secular holidays, in such a way that at the end of the year a cycle of protections is closed and another opens, exactly the same in general lines. Protections with a similar intent probably took place in pre-Christian times, in accordance with rites and practices that have left their mark on the present. But in general such rites have lost much of their meaning, and if they are still practiced it is because of that illogical, obscure impulse that seems to inform many of the acts of men when they live in accordance with traditional norms, to which we already called attention, alluding to the study done on it from a theoretical point of
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view by sociologists such as Tarde and ethnologists such as E. Hahn some time ago.

Sometimes, however, there is a strong relationship between the pagan and Christian practice; an understandable contact is established, but one that is subject to norms that are more difficult to define than those imagined by some authors seized by a certain intellectualism or elementary rationalism, who see no more than a possible historical or genealogical process in all links between paganism and Christianity. If we do not introduce into our method of study more criteria than the genealogical, if we do not observe reality bearing in mind also constant emotional factors and factors of will, all of our explanations of reality will collapse. Sometimes a saint with a clearly defined historical personality appears to the eyes of the villager with another that is not very similar to it and full of fantastical traits. And in this created personality there can be a permanent faith across centuries. It cannot be repeated enough that, from the ethnological point of view, history and tradition are two things that, if not diametrically opposed, are at least different in essence. The first tries to reflect what has happened, the second what a given society likes to believe happened, to highlight or justify their actions. The true histories of the origins of certain cults, the documented narrations, leave the way clear for fables that are repeated and imitated ad nauseam in Western Europe, in accordance with true clichés.

Thus, in many places it is said that certain traces that are seen on crags and rocks, some artificial, some natural, are simply the footprints of saints, about which there are homogeneous legends; the same is asserted with respect to Saint Michael of Ereñuzarre and Saint John of Gaztelugatxe, in Bizkaia; Saint Anthony in Laudio (Araba); and Saint Cyricus in Zalba (Navarre). Footprints of the Virgin are venerated in Oiardo (Araba), Lekeitio (Bizkaia), Soraluze, Amezketa (Gipuzkoa), and elsewhere.

Processions in honor of specific saints take on a peculiar form in the north and are different to some extent from those of the south. In the south, where the towns are concentrated but distant from each other, a procession is costly and difficult to organize. The faithful practice a true prior rite of itinerary (in which almost the whole family participates) before arriving at the center of their piety. But in the Basque Country, attending a procession is something simpler that does not entail (except in a few cases) long preparations or journeys in carts or other heavy vehicles. The participants arrive on foot by a great number of paths and
shortcuts to the area surrounding the church, where lively secular holidays are celebrated, dances are held, and so on, once the services and processions are over. If piety can fuel excesses and partying, it is no less true that any daily activity is full of the pious spirit.7

We have already seen how the associations that were organized to administer communal goods, to provide mutual assistance in agricultural and shepherding tasks, tend to be under the protection of a saint. In another time, a patron saint also protected artisans’ guilds and even the group formed for purposes of war, defensive or offensive.

Thus, for example, we know that in Guardia in Araba, the neighbors from the different streets each formed a religious association with its patron saint, and that each association was charged with the defense of a segment of the wall and its corresponding gates. In most towns, on a specific day of the year, an important festivity, the working troops were reviewed. Today many such displays still take place, although they have lost their original meaning. When they speak of the displays that take place, for example, in Irun on June 30 (Saint Martial’s Day); in Hondarribia on September 8, on the occasion of the feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe; in Tolosa, around Saint John’s Day; and in Antzuola on August 25, all of the modern articles and studies indicate that they commemorate some glorious military event for the residents of the town in question. But if we review old histories (e.g., that by Lope Martínez de Isasti), we will see that here and there (e.g., in Oiartzun and Hernani) this day or that date is selected for a demonstration of the royal, not symbolic, forces. In short, these displays were often a relic of the periods in which the military potential of each town was reviewed for practical purposes. When the conscripted soldiers are examined in accordance with other principles, it seems they have lost their original raison d’être and now consist of pure ceremony with a historical sense. But the most interesting thing about them is their old realist aspect and their partially religious character. The most widespread norm was that the military reviews were done on Saint John’s Day, and in various places there are still associations in honor of the saint that celebrate certain military rites, such as those of Torralba and Guardia, in the southern, not very Basque, part; these rites remain suffused with certain strange references to Christian beliefs,8 like various others. However, we must recognize that the Church is less flexible and accommodating in this way and that it rejects interferences, no matter how old they are, as soon as they appear.

Among the superstitious practices of a ritual nature that existed in the country, which outside it were as widespread or more and are
now disappearing, is that of submerging the image of a saint, or of Jesus Christ himself, in water, in order to bring rain. The oldest reference I have on a variation of this ritual dates from the late fifteenth century. A Navarrese theologian, Martin de Arles, says that around that time, the villagers of Erromantzatua (Romanzado) met in Usun (San Pedro de Usum) when there was a drought and that, after mass, they paraded the image of the patron saint and after various ceremonies, they threatened it so that it would ask God for water under pain of throwing it in the river. Someone would act as the guarantor. Martin de Arles says that they did the same thing in Labio (Labiano), a town in the Aranguren Valley, with the image of Saint Felicia. Barandiarán has gathered modern data from Altsasu (Navarre), Astigarraga, Ataun, and Aia (Gipuzkoa) that reflect the continuity of similar practices, and Thalamus Labandíbar states that it also survives in Izturitze (Isturits) (chapel of Saint Eulalia) and that in San Pedro de Oloron the same thing also happened not long ago. In a great many other regions of Spain, France, Italy, and elsewhere they have faith in the same practice, to which, for example, a burlesque verse that the villagers of Guadalajara sing refers:

“No he visto gente más bruta
que la gente de Alcocer:
que echaron el Cristo al río
porque no quiso llover.”

(“I have not seen people more brutish
that the people of Alcocer:
they threw Christ in the river
because it would not rain.”)

Men and women thus sometimes have a tendency that the Church tries to fight of taking excessive part in ritual, a tendency that is the opposite of the equally common tendency to be lukewarm in the fulfillment of the obligations imposed on the believers. Thus a set of practical problems arise, provoked by excessive zeal or by negligence, which also influence the religiosity of a zone or of a country. In rural societies, the Church has vigorously fought many abuses of customs throughout the centuries, obtaining concrete results through sheer patience. On occasion the priests, who were educated elsewhere, had to carry out unequal fights with ordinary people, and on other occasions they failed to understand that what in some zones could be interpreted as the evil eye would not be so interpreted in the one at which they had arrived.
Today, the Basque Country, from the religious point of view, is undoubtedly not the theater of many of the abuses that could be observed in it at the beginning of the Modern Age. The Jesuit missions of the eighteenth century must have exercised an intense influence (perhaps more intense than the synodical constitutions) on the rural clergy. But situations have arisen that did not exist at the time of specific disorders and that are considered to be much more serious than the abuses of the believers; I allude to those produced by the increase in religious indifference and the loss of faith. Common and learned people alike argue about whether today there is more or less religion than before, without doing the necessary quantitative and qualitative analyses.\footnote{A common tendency among the villagers is that of believing that we are in a period of declining faith. First the ideology of the liberals of the past century (who were called \textit{beltzak}, blacks), and after it, the type of corruption in the material life observable in our days, have provided arguments to justify this widespread opinion. It is evident that fewer people today attend services and devotions than in the early years of the century. But if the quantity of fervent faithful is less, perhaps the strength of the religious sentiment cannot be considered to have decreased. Nor have public morals declined as much as is said. None of those who today live in a Basque parish could withstand the way in which life evolved there three or four hundred years ago. Tradition, which in this order of values poeticizes all, portrays a venerable past in which the strict and virtuous families of the farmhouses followed the Church rigidly. But historical research reflects something very different: In the late Middle Ages, none of the commandments was followed strictly in the country, and wide margins were left for irregularities. All around there were homicides, outrages, and vengeance; on all sides we find a society given to excesses and violence. The priests were not free of the general passions, and the churches did not sit on the edges of the intrigues and desecrations. The later periods were milder in their morality, but I do not believe that they were much better than these much maligned modern times.}

The process of purifying (let us make use of this modern way of speaking for the moment) customs, generally led by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities, can be well studied beginning in the fifteenth century, at least. It is known that before the Council of Trent, in each nation and also in each diocese and parish, a number of abusive practices that today seem scandalous were accepted in various forms, depending on the energy and ideas of the clergy. The Basque Country, a country full of
churches with secular sponsorship in which the bishops at the end of the Middle Ages exercised a still very limited authority, was much given to certain types of abuses. The synodical constitutions, the mandates of the visitors to the parishes, the coercive regulations of the Inquisition, and the missions gradually suppressed these abuses. What very old councils had not been able to make rural societies do, began to be obeyed in the time of the Hapsburgs. The new political and social structure given to the country perhaps influenced more than a little the reform and suppression of old customs.

The factionalists, the old nobles of the countryside, prided themselves on being very religious, but in reality they did not have much respect for the ecclesiastical hierarchies. In the mid-fifteenth century, El Gerundense says that when he took Ferdinand the Catholic with him in his entourage to the bishop of Iruñea, toward Bizkaia, and they arrived at the seigniory, those who went out to receive him said that because the seigniory belonged in ecclesiastical matters to the diocese of Calahorra, it was against its laws for the bishop to cross its borders. The prelate had to leave the procession, and the Bizkaians carefully erased the footprints of the few steps he had taken from their land. This anecdote reveals a state of mind, common in previous times, that is reflected in other documents and seems fearful of the Episcopal authorities. If the people of the class that was powerful and the defender of the laws reacted like this, it is not surprising that in other respects liberties were taken that would be inconceivable today. In the fifteenth century, Gabriel Tetzel of Nuremberg also noted that Basque women worshipped the dead in a way that had little to do with truly Catholic religious practices: “There are in the country—he says—valuable tombs of stone in which they have great interest, and the women especially decorate them with plants and aromatic flowers and light candles before them; in the tombs that are outside the churches they always kneel and sit, whether or not there is mass; because of this they rarely go to church.” And in a rule (number 25) by the Council of Iliberris, the long-ago Spanish bishops condemned the custom of holding a wake for too long at the tombs because, under the pretext of piety, the women in particular committed great abuses. But a thousand years later, the Basque women did something similar to that condemned by them.

Nor were the customs of the clergy very restrained at this time. Tetzel says that the Basque priests knew the women in the biblical sense, and in the seventeenth century, Pierre de Lancre states that in the French
Basque Country, the same thing happened. The number of children of clergymen in Gipuzkoa in the first half of the sixteenth century caused serious problems for the authorities. The priests found occasion for their digressions even at public dances. I have found mandates from 1570 and 1640 in the church of Lesaka that prohibit the parish clergy to dance. The synodical constitutions of Calahorra of 1602 and 1698 and a regulation from the bishop of Iruñea in 1715 establish a similar prohibition. In some other documents it is seen that they decorated themselves to excess, in an irreverent way, and that they played *pelota* with unseemly passion. Several times nocturnal holidays or vigils had to be condemned in chapels and sanctuaries, as they are condemned in the synodical regulations of Iruñea of 1540, as is the introduction of dancers in the temples (Lesaka, 1597) or the performance of small theatrical works. In 1545, Juan Bernal de Luco dictated a regulation applicable to the whole bishopric of Calahorra.

Frequent moments in which the clergy could be strongly tempted were those of the baptism, marriage, or death of a parishioner. Not only the civil laws but also many ecclesiastical ones condemn (without great effect, apparently) the feasts that were held on the same occasions. Pretexts to eat were found in any occasion. In 1679 it was prohibited in Lesaka for the residents of the neighborhood of San Anton to kill a ram to celebrate the day within the chapel that bore the same name.¹⁰

None of this is exclusive to Basque society. Similar abuses are found in many other parts of Europe and, as is known, gave rise to positions contrary to the Church of Rome and its dogma. But there is a good distance between the villager who in a moment of Bacchic relaxation creates an anticlerical or satirical verse (no lack of them in the literature of our country) and the schismatic or heretic reformer. The first is generally of lukewarm faith, belonging to the group who confess once a year and attend mass on Sundays; the second generally arises among people with a more intense religious life but one that for some reason has become unbalanced, in discord with the environment in which they live. When it manifests itself in an explosive manner, this discord produces religious conflict. Sometimes, certain institutions, certain passive elements, of a simple mysticism can be influenced by violent and dominating personalities.

One institution that gives a specific nuance to Basque parochial life is that of the *serorak* (from Latin *soror*). These are women fully consecrated to the service of a temple. The *serora* is a sort of nun in charge
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of the sacristy, who does everything that a woman is allowed to do. She lives near the church and prepares it for its functions. Father Larramendi wrote a thoughtful description of her characteristics and powers, dating her origin to very ancient periods of Christianity. It is not necessary to go so far, but it is evident that in the rest of Spain, for sociological and other reasons, this type of female acolyte has been disappearing; they are called *ceroras* today by many peoples, undoubtedly because they associate her name with the wax (*cera*) candles which they see them constantly bringing and arranging. In another time, the institution of the *serorak* was given to abuses, and regulations were passed to examine them when they began to carry out their duties, and their numbers were limited in chapels and rural churches; they were also subject to a strict dependency that did not permit digressions from orthodox piety.\(^{11}\)

Reformist tendencies within the Catholic religion with heterodox results have continued to make themselves known at various times among the Basque peasants. But they never managed to triumph with any permanency. In the mid-sixteenth century, Protestantism took hold on some French Basque families of farmers in Zuberoa and Lower Navarre especially, but it did not achieve the evolution that it had in other parts of the middle of France. To better avoid its penetration into Spanish territory, Philip II asked for the annexation of the lands of northern Navarre and the extreme east of Gipuzkoa (which had belonged to the bishopric of Baiona since medieval times) to those of Iruña. Neither Calvinism nor other reform religions had followers among the great Basque rural masses of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. But, and this is most curious, from it there sometimes arose reform movements that started either from individual thoughts about the most common religious facts or from heterodox ideas, latent in the consciousnesses and of a much more archaic and simple origin than those brought into fashion by Luther and Calvin, or the great heresiarchs of the Renaissance in general. I have here some data that justify what I have said in the preceding lines, touching on sporadic rebellions of the peasant masses against the authority of the Catholic church or against the dogmas.

In the Durango area (Durangaldea) between 1442 and 1445, especially in the capital city of that ancient county, there was a heretical movement whose visible leader was a certain Franciscan friar belonging to a distinguished family of the country: Brother Alonso Mella. It is likely that he brought the ideas that he preached from Italy. His doctrine was apparently fully consistent with that of the *fraticelli*, earlier con-
demned by various pontiffs; perhaps, however, Brother Alonso added some personal details to it. For the most part, his followers were humble people, farmers and artisans, and many women also. The historians who provide details on the Durango heresy say that it was characterized by its followers practicing the communal sharing of goods and women, a great licentiousness mixed with certain mystical practices. Some also claim that the heretics gave each other names of saints (e.g., Saint Peter, Saint Paul) and that they denied certain dogmas referring to life beyond Earth. At the sound of the horns that some of them played on the street corners, they went to their nocturnal meetings, which were held sometimes in forests and mountains, sometimes right in town.

The proselytism of Brother Alonso and another religious companion of his reached such proportions that it is said that they thought of taking military control of the county and constituting an independent state. This is not certain. But it does seem to be true that the Catholics of the town and of Bizkaia were frightened in the face of the community losses that destroyed families and property, and they asked for help to be rid of them. Justice intervened, and the repression was violent. Brother Alonso Mella managed to escape with some of his lovers, although he later died under torture in Moorish lands for having continued to preach. Many peasants who had followed him recanted, but there was a core that refused to do so and were burned alive. Despite the harsh intervention of the Inquisitorial and civil authorities in the matter, around 1487 there were still followers of the sect in Durango, and in 1500 it is possible that as many as sixteen heretics, survivors or dead, were condemned and their sentences carried out, those of the latter in effigy.

It is curious, from our point of view, to note that the Duranguese religion in later times has been the scene of similar religious crises. At the end of the seventeenth century, a Dominican renegade practiced superstitious witch doctoring there, marrying a maiden of a good family and gaining more and more followers, until the Inquisition jailed him. But it is more interesting that a little more than four hundred years after the heresy preached by Brother Alonso Mella was quashed, in 1877, Durango was also the theater for the most notable of the many and traditional heresies that have occurred in the Basque Country in recent times.

A resident of the village of Mallabia (Mallavia), nicknamed el Manzanero, felt himself to be a prophet, a reformer of beliefs and customs. He began to preach in his town the uselessness of terrestrial goods and the proximity of the end of the world and the final judgment. Driven
out of his village by stoning, he moved with his wife and young son to Durango, allying himself with another type of prophet or seer who lived there at the time. The one from Mallabia returned to preach and expound his doctrines. He stated that he was Saint Joseph; his wife, the Virgin; his son, Jesus. Among the peasants there were some who abandoned their properties and followed el Manzanero, who, with his family and eighteen disciples lived in a commune on the second floor of a house on Artecale Street, which a few years ago bore the number 26. There el Manzanero had his office. He and the other prophet claimed to be in communication with the angels and to have visions, especially when praying in the attic of their abode.

They went to the church of Tabira, praying the Rosary in procession, bearing the wife of el Manzanero in the place of honor. But the prophet of Mallabia fell ill; he asked for the Sacrament, and it wasn’t given to him until he had left the house, the arena of community scandal. They took him to the hospital, where he died reconciled, but his family was driven from the town and the peasants returned to their normal life after a time.

Can it be thought that the heretic seed planted by Brother Alonso Mella has lived on in the farmhouses and humble manor houses of the Durango area, latent until the nineteenth century? It is not certain, although it must be noted that the memory of its immediate effects lasted in an unsuspected way until then. Even at the beginning of that century there were families who had an interest in seeing that the memory of the peoples not be removed because they were aware that their ancestors were the subject of repression by heretics, and the villagers of the surrounding area, in more modern times, made fun of those from Durango by saying that it was the town of the horns (tromperri), alluding to the manner in which the heretics typically announced themselves. Playing the trumpet in the immediate vicinity was a hurtful joke.

Cases of “prophetism,” of extravagant mysticism, have appeared in other towns as well. As a result of the Second Carlist War, there were “prophets” in Bergara and Mendata; more recently, various innovative movements have been reported but quickly squelched (e.g., in Mutriku). Of these, the most interesting is one reported in Urdiain, a Navarrese town, in our days, about which there is quite impressive graphic material. Certain women of that town began to state that the Virgin had appeared to them, recommending that they worship by night in some nearby groves and that they reject the cult of the Church and relation-
ships with clergymen. Soon in those meetings cases began to be reported of visionary children and other events, which ultimately caused the civil and ecclesiastical authorities to intervene to finish them off. This tendency to worship certain Christian saints in fields and on mountains, which is done quite regularly in the Basque Country, may have a certain relationship with an old naturalist religious feeling with certain pagan vestiges that we will study in the next chapter.¹²
The first systematic investigations on the pagan religious beliefs of European peasants were dominated by Tylor’s animist hypothesis, according to which the most primitive form of religion would be shaped by the repeated belief that all beings of the physical and natural world (e.g., stars, sky, waters, mountains, forests) possess an external body and a soul, like humans. The notion of the existence of the soul came to man directly when he observed the paralysis produced by death in any creature similar to him, and then he did nothing more than generalize this observation.

Today it is doubtful that animism is as primitive as Tylor supposed, and his disciples have already suggested the existence of more elementary concepts. For example, Marett spoke of animatism, the belief in an animation of Nature that does not imply the Tylorian dualism, and still other modes of thought could be imagined, according to which Nature is charged with obscure intentions. Christianity tried to erase the animatist and animist beliefs completely, as revealed by a multitude of council rules, constitutions, and sermons, as well as polytheist calls (in agreement with older and better-known languages), which some would consider, erroneously, to be derived from those rules. But the battle has lasted for centuries, and the rural masses are still not free of conceptions of this type, not only in their social life but also in the world of pure beliefs. Furthermore, there are even remaining traces of a belief in gods that some ethnologists associated with the theory of the existence of a primitive monotheism, as admissible or arguable, from the ethnological point of view, as the others presented here.

The conceptions that can be classified as having originated in a pre-Christian epoch and that fit within the traditional Basque beliefs of today are interesting. They have been formally studied by trustworthy
authors, such that we find ourselves in a satisfactory position to write a medium-sized summary of them. Let us first make some observations on the conceptual limitations of this summary. In general, narrations that enclose belief in reality are not distinguished well in books on Spanish folklore from those that should be considered to be mere literary productions. Myth, symbol, or metaphor and the mere pleasant fiction are not conveniently separated; although the villagers themselves may have an idea of the differences between these three categories, on occasion there is a real discrepancy with respect to what should be included in each of them. What are no more than stories for one person are realities for another. On other occasions, what is generally accepted is not applied in particular; thus, some say that witches exist but that one should not believe that this or that woman is a witch.

Independently of these problems of the evaluation of reality, the language itself reflects old opinions and beliefs of great historical-cultural interest. Let us first examine the linguistic material, and the more strictly mythological after that, leaving aside what can most often be interpreted as simple fictions, in the sense that the English give to the word.

Very curious observations have been made on one of the words that designate the sky in Basque, or rather on those that still served for this purpose in the mid-nineteenth century. Today, the most common is zeru, related to Latin cælum. But in Erronkariera (the dialect of the Erronkari Valley), which has now disappeared, the word ortze-a, ortzi-a was reported as an equivalent, which soon was associated by scholars with Urcia, reported by Aymeric Picaud in the twelfth century as a proper noun for God (Deum vocant Urcia). Urcia is also no longer in current use; Jaungoikoa, that is, “the lord of above,” whose origin is debatable, and its variations have been known from long ago to designate the divinity. Zeru and Jaungoikoa have completely supplanted ortzia and Urcia. But there is no doubt that the ideas of “God” and “Sky,” for the ancient Basques, were related to each other for a while and that they are also associated with the idea of thunder, exactly as occurs among various Indo-Germanic peoples.

Many of the Basque words for thunder correspond to expressions that, in part, can be translated as the sound of ortz (ortzanz), roar (ostroi), or noise (ostots); from the same source, ost and ortz are dialectal variations. Thus, ostegun in Gipuzkoa and ortzegun in Lapurdi both mean Thursday, day of ortz, an expression equivalent to Germanic Donnerstag and words related to it. Ortzeder, ortzadar, like are words for rainbow. Associating the sky with the supreme God, with thunder,
with Thursday, or with prehistoric axes (which are said to fall with the lightning) is something done by many ancient European peoples, from whom the Basques do not seem to separate themselves by more than their language, and not by their ideas. We do not know what image they assigned to the superior cosmic divinity, and it is likely that the name ortzi, urtzi, was not the only one used in other times to express the idea of sky but that there was another that today is reflected in compound words and derivatives.

Among these, one of the most representative is the word for sun, which shows many variations but has as its most widespread form eguzki; this is generally decomposed as egu-zki, and authors do not agree about what it may mean. Egun is day, and the most likely thing is that at another time a similar word designated the luminous sky; eguzki would be daylight, or something similar. Furthermore, there seem to exist affinities reflected in the language among the ideas of light, sun, and fire. All of this may have had a religious meaning that is lost today. However, the custom of greeting the sun (and the moon) both at their rising and at their setting has been conserved until the present by children and even by adults in some towns. These greetings are notable because in them the star of the day is treated as a grandmother and is therefore female, which also occurs among many Indo-Germanic peoples. Some old stories (particularly one from Errigoiti [Rigoitia]) seem to suggest that some people believed the earth to be the mother of the sun.

The moon has three types of names. The first group consists of illargui and many others related to it; the second, arguizari, arguizagui, and so on; the third, the Erronkariera goiko. The illargui type seems to be composed of il and argui (light); il is the opposite of egu. It is related to illa (month), illum (darkness), and il (death). Thus, the word illargui has been translated as “light of the month,” “light of the dead,” “light of death,” “light of darkness,” and the like. Also, among the Indo-Europeans the moon was associated with all of these ideas, and a parallelism is seen in examining the words arguizai, and arguizari, which seem to mean recipient or measurement of light, a light that would be indirect, not daylight. Goiko means “the one of above.” There is reason to think, then, that all of these names, as well as that of the sun, are allusive but not direct, that they may obey a taboo of vocabulary that prevents us from knowing the simple names of those astral bodies. Also, the moon is given the title of grandmother, and its path, which is associated with almost all acts of life, is followed with great interest. In fact, it is thought that a great number of things must be done when the moon is waning,
and it is better that others happen when the moon is waxing, such as death. As we have seen, the names of the months are related to the word for moon, and further on it will be seen that some of the days of the week are also probably related to the phases of the moon.¹

The difference between the animatist conceptions on one side and a conception that assumes the existence of a myth of the type commonly considered most typical of polytheism on the other rests fundamentally on the fact that the myth of polytheism almost always fits an anthropomorphic or zoomorphic concept, which is external and much clearer than the animatist conception. The mythical being not only has a spirit, a soul with human psychological traits, but also shows a physical form, human, animal, or a mixture of the two, sometimes changeable, but very well defined in each case. Anyone who believes in it believes not only that the forest, the tree, or the spring acts intentionally, for example, but also that within the forest, the tree, or the spring there live mysterious beings, with specific appearances, to whom favorable or unfavorable actions toward humans are attributed. This conception, which makes an external form stand out opposite the notion of soul, is older than was once thought, given that it has been proven that everywhere there exists a formal (though fluid) conception of mythical beings. For example, not only the so-called primitives but also European peasants can imagine animals, the sun, and the moon as dedicated to tasks that seem to presuppose a human form or some other particular form. Despite this fluidity, it is evident that there exists a belief in a group of mythical beings with a crystallized and well-defined form. I will speak next about those who people the mental world of the Basque peasant. To some extent, they seem to have very concrete historical antecedents, especially Mari, the lamiñak, the black hunter, and Tartalo. Some of them are found, first, within the Greco-Latin polytheist tradition and, second, within the Western European tradition in general.

Linked to caves and especially to the great mountains of the middle of the country, there is a myth that offers characteristics similar, in my opinion, to those of other chronic myths of European peoples. I refer to that of Mari, a deity studied by Barandiarán. Mari is also called “the lady” (of Muru, of Aketegi (Aketegui), of Anboto, and so on), “the woman,” “the witch,” and “the evil one.” Her dwellings are the mountain ranges and highlands of Orhi (Orhy), Aralar, Aia, Oiz, Anboto, Gorbeia, and elsewhere and caves and caverns in various places in Gipuzkoa, Navarre, and the French Basque Country; thus, she is also known as Mari of the Cave. She appears in various forms, commonly in
that of a woman of extraordinary beauty. She flies in the air from one side to the other, surrounded by fire, and great noises are produced when she hides in one of her holes. But there is no shortage of old farmers who claim to have seen her as a tree surrounded by flames, or as a raven, a ball of fire, a cloud, or a horse, or riding in a cart pulled by four horses. She also appears as a vulture, surrounded by her companions, who are in the same form, or combing threads of gold, making skeins on the horns of a ram.

Mari lures the shepherds to her rooms, which are full of gold and precious stones, by claiming some robberies. But if she gives them any of it, it becomes worthless when they leave. However, there is no shortage of cases in which a piece of coal given by her turns into pure gold. Originally, Mari was a mortal maiden. Her mother cursed her for disobedience and offered her to the devil with great imprudence; agreeing to the offer, the enemy of the human race took her to his subterranean mansions, from which he presides over droughts and rains. Therefore, in various towns they conjure up Mari on the day of the cross in May. Thus, Mari is sometimes a sort of Basque Persephone. She is mistress of all the witches, and many of her traits were exaggerated, probably when Christian ideology came into play. There are some places (Azkoitia) where her husband is not the devil but a being called Majue, and when they come together, hail falls. At other times she appears with seven children, or sometimes with two: a good one and a bad one. The bad one is Odei, that is, the storm cloud, who must be appeased with spells. On the other hand, we must consider the possibility of associating a belief in Mari with the half-animal figures in prehistoric engravings and paintings in caves if we want to have an idea of the complexity of the origin of the myths, not only present-day traditional ones but also old ones. The mythologists who specialize in the classical have often tried to place the fluidity of folklore in opposition to the crystallization of the Greco-Latin beliefs, but this is nothing but an illusion. There is fluidity in both cases.

The myth of the lamiak, lamiñak, or laminak takes on many forms and variations. The Basques took this name from the mythology of the Romans, with whom they established contact, although the Romans in their turn had taken it from the Greek world, where there is a character first called Lamia, whose descriptions are quite contradictory, and then a whole series of terrifying beings with the same name. During the Renaissance, there was no shortage of those who confused the lamias with witches and sorceresses, but the Basque peasant generally distin-
guishes them well. Of the *lamiak*, he says first of all that they are not Christians, whereas witches are. It must be noted that for many people the word *Christian* does not denote one who professes a certain religion but the state of being a human being. The *lamiak*, in legends from coastal Bizkaia and other zones, appear with the bust of a woman and the tail of a fish. But in the interior of the same province and in the highlands of Gipuzkoa they appear with bird feet (chicken, duck) or talons. There is no shortage of testimonies that attribute other physical characteristics to them, and in Zuberoa, finally, they speak of male and female *lamias*. The aforementioned confusion with witches is also seen in some cases. There are abundant places whose names allude to the belief that witches appear there: caves, springs, streams, rocks, and rocky slopes. The legends told in many places about the intervention of the *lamiñak* in the lives of men are quite homogeneous. They appear sitting down, combing their hair with a beautiful gold comb in one hand and a mirror in the other, like the sirens farther to the south. They pursue men, and sometimes the same acts are attributed to them as to Mari. On rare occasions they do not seem evil and captivating. In any case, they appear very similar to the *xanas* of Asturias (ancient *dianae*), the *donas d’aigua* of Catalonia, and the *melusines* of the folklore of various parts of France. According to medieval and Renaissance writers, the nobles of Bizkaia descended from a gentleman and a sort of *lamia* with the feet of a goat, and similarly, the nobles of Lusignan descended from a being with monstrous features, half woman, half serpent, features that she was obliged to adopt one special day of the week. Because the human husband had broken his agreement not to cross the threshold of the room where his supernatural wife shut herself away on those days, the wife disappeared, leaving him children that she took care of in secret and when no one could see her. It is very likely that, in the social environment of medieval times, similar genealogical legends were very widespread but later lost ground and became localized to the point of disappearance as that environment largely disappeared. These and other legends are connected to a more remote past; thus, when he visited the Basque Country, Wilhelm von Humboldt raised the question of why in the farmhouses some were still told that were similar to Greek fables, such as that of Hero and Leander (localized on the island of Izaro) or that of Dejanira, which refers to a Basque Hercules called Chomin Sendo (Strong Dominic). Ibargüen’s chronicle tells a story similar to that of Agamemnon, which refers to a leader named Lelo, his wife, Tota, and a chief named Zara.³
But let us continue talking about conceptions with greater vitality and expansion in contemporary rural society. The belief that on windy and stormy nights a pack of dogs belonging to a mysterious hunter can be heard in the air in the mountains is very widespread. A similar hunter is often called by different names, such as eiztarie (simply the hunter), eiztari beltza (the black hunter), Salomon erregue (King Solomon), Salomon apaiza (priest Solomon), Mateo txistu, Juanico txistu, and Martin abade. It is said that he was a real person who was overly fond of hunting and who heard his dogs following a hare when he was in mass (or saying it). Then he left in the middle of the services so as not to miss the opportunity. From then on he has wandered, associated with the hurricane. The myth itself is probably more ancient that the legend suggests, with respect to the origin of the character; there are other very similar myths in Germanic folklore and in France (Odinjäger, Helljäger, Le chasseur noir). It is possible that, in another time, the pack of dogs had a more religious nature than later and that it was related to a belief in mysterious entourages that accompanied the divinities of the night.

The myth of the hunter is also found in the Catalan Pyrenees. In contrast, toward the west, beginning at Enkarterri-Las Encartaciones in Bizkaia, the belief in entourages of evil spirits, condemned souls, or souls in pain, such as the Asturian huestia, is much more common. The French Basque writers of the nineteenth century already mention the Basojaun, the wild man of the woods. Among them, A. Chaho does it with his usual hyperbole. Next to the Basojaunak there are, though less well defined, the basanderiak, their female counterparts; this happens especially in Zuberoa, the most wooded area of the Basque Country. The Basojaun, with his hairy body, his large beard, his extraordinary strength, and his animal-like features, both physical and spiritual, appears less frequently in Spanish Basque legends. Nevertheless, in these legends (one from Ataun was transcribed earlier) something is seen that many mythologists have noted in general surveys: the close relationship that is ascribed to the deities of the woods and of the trees, and the origins of the cultivation of wheat and grains. The legends in which Saint Martin appears, stealing their agricultural secrets from the “men of the woods,” are widespread throughout Bizkaia, but in some towns, such as Kortezubi, the men of the woods are replaced by the devil. Farther west on the peninsula, a similar notion of a spirit of the forest, such as the Asturian Busgosu, seems to have existed until the Modern Age, but it has not been possible to find traditions surrounding it as elaborate as the Basque ones. In Santander, on the other hand, it is said that there has
been the notion of a spirit of the trees, a sort of goblin and therefore less brutal and terrifying. In general, the Basque seems to have had a predilection for powerful and somewhat menacing myths in which the demonic (in the widest sense of the word) is more obvious than the poetic.

The story of the Cyclops, blinded and fooled by a human, which is found in the Odyssey and which many Old World towns know in a rather abbreviated or changed form, is also known to Basque villagers, especially shepherds, in certain areas. Tartalo or Tartaro is the Basque Polyphemus, an anthropomorphic monster with a single eye in the middle of his forehead. In Zegama (Gipuzkoa), Tartaloetxeta is a place where there is a dolmen. Tartalo was a hunter and cannibal. The vicissitudes of a man (or a boy as a general rule) opposite the stupid cruelty of the monster are expressed in different ways in the different versions of the legend gathered in the French Basque Country and in Gipuzkoa. Tartalo is sometimes confused with the heathens about whom we have already spoken. Such confusion allows the hypothesis that perhaps his name dates from a time near that in which the notion of the heathens arose. The tartaro for the Europeans, at one point, must have been the most hated, feared, and menacing character of the West, and just as the word ogre (ogro) seems to be somewhat related to Hungarian (húngaro), it is possible that Tartalo, Tartaro may be a mythical name related to the similar ethnic one. It is clear that man has often transformed evil-doers, his old ethnic enemies, into mythical characters. The easiest case to study in Spain is that of the Moors. Among the Basques, in both Spanish and French parts of the country, even the ones called Moors (mairuak, mairiak) are considered to be old settlers of the country, strong, rich, great builders of bridges, castles, churches, dolmens, and the sorts of cromlechs that are called mairubaratzak. Before the name of mairuak took on its present-day meaning, it is likely that people believed in mythical beings with similar attributes but under a different name. But there is no doubt that the idea of the moro has been incorporated into myth, thanks to a common mode of thought that allows a large dose of euhemerism and is found not only in the rest of Spain but also in southern France and in the areas where the Moors have sometimes been a threat. In Greece, for example, they call certain spirits of the waters “Arabs.”

The idea of the existence of the loup-garou (guizotso, wolfman) seems to have spread through a small area in the French Basque Country, especially in Lower Navarre; other beliefs that exist in different regions of Spain and France are hardly seen here. There is no shortage of myths in danger of disappearing completely, such as that of the seamen
or newtmen. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Basque sailors claimed to have heard very pleasant music in the middle of the sea that they attributed to them, and Lope Martínez de Isasti swore that in his time they were still seen sometimes. But modern navigation has banished from the sea many more fabulous creatures than those made to disappear from their still dark and isolated mountain homes by industrial agricultural techniques.⁸

The dragon, the winged serpent, appears many times in stories from the coastal region and in hagiographic and genealogic legends with a Christian twist, particularly from the eastern and central parts of the country. Until quite recently, the boys in the ports of Gipuzkoa used to hear about the egansugiuia, who lived in one of the caves of the nearby cliffs. The romantic writer Chaho fantasized a great deal about the lehen or herensugue of the Zuberoan and Lapurdian legends, killed by a gentleman of some illustrious house emulating Saint George. But it is worth noting how little such legends spread in other zones and their often semi-learned nature, a nature shared by some other traditions collected in ancient chronicles or local histories, such as that of Teodosio de Goñi, a Navarrese gentleman who killed his parents in the bed where they lay, believing they were his wife and a lover of hers, and who, when the devil appeared to him in the form of a dragon, was saved by Saint Michael. The widespread belief that there are some small familiar spirits (pamerialak) that can be “gathered in a pincushion” or even purchased at the market is also associated with Christian notions; these spirits are clearly related to those frequently mentioned in classical texts of Spanish literature of the Golden Age, and they should not be confused with the goblins, imps, and elves that were also very popular in that literature.⁹

The idea of the imp exists in Basque farmhouses but in a very free-flowing and indeterminate way. All of the following names are given to mischievous beings of lesser and burlesque evil that are linked to the home: iretxo, ireltxu, irelzuzko, iratxo (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa); arguidunak (those who have light; Zeanuri, Bizkaia); etxejaun (lord of the house; Bizkaia); txitx; khuso; lompipa; and malo. But the ireltxu or ireltxo is also sometimes a forest demon, like the intxisuak, of which there are hardly more than references, just as there is also little to say about loki, amalauzanko, and other ghosts and terrifying beings.¹⁰

In short, what could be called the present-day mythology of the Basque people seems to be a mixed bag that can be explained neither by the widespread hypothesis of the shift from animism to polytheism nor by other equally schematic hypotheses that have been put forth. In any
case, it can be seen in the preceding pages that, with respect to various myths, there is a marked tendency today to explain them from a realist point of view according to which Mari, the hunter, and others were at one time common people who became supernatural beings because they broke some social or religious rule. It is a short step from here to pure euhemerism (we could also say to Spencerism). Next to this tendency, there exists its opposite, to our eyes: that of turning historical peoples, such as the Moors, into mythical beings. But perhaps the world of the values of the common people may be so different from that of the scholars and thinkers who have made these distinctions according to use that it would be worthwhile to rethink our assessment of the myths.
Inherent in every religious belief with a certain form is the existence of a rite in the sense given to this word at the beginning of chapter 17. The task we have reserved for this chapter is that of giving a succinct idea of some of the rites carried out by the Basques, paying particular attention to those that show the most particular and elaborate features, whose intention is more problematic both in the eyes of those who perform them and for those who observe. We cannot clarify the topic we are tackling as (according to Merimée) Stendhal claimed that every topic should be: by asking first of all, “What does logic dictate?” The eighteenth-century logic of the great novelist (the “Logique”) says precious little to explain rites, and less if we fall into the common error of thinking that the problems posed by the study of the traditional spirit can be elucidated by admitting as intangible truths several divisions of the psychological events brought about by pedagogues that have made the rounds. All of our predisposition, encouraged by educators more well intentioned than quick witted, to a schematic intellectualism must be overcome if we want to delve deeper. And thus, first of all, we must come to terms with the idea that a thing is a rite in itself, in its formal aspect, second is the present-day intention of the same rite, and third is the intention that gave rise to it. Analyzing the three aspects of the problem, based on specific examples, is when the truth of that said earlier can best be shown.

Many folklorists, influenced by the interpretations of rites typical of the ethnologists of the comparative school of the late nineteenth century, still tend to give unitary explanations in which form, present intention, and past intention are fitted to a general scheme that is valid for almost everyone. Thus, for example, the “vegetation” theories of Mannhardt and Frazer has changed a great number of specific valid investigations,
by establishing links and associations, seeking general and native causes
that are very problematic in reality.

Thinking that the fundamental intention of an enormous quantity
of rites with various reforms is always the same, and establishing a type
of original rite from which many others then arise by “evolution,” are
two theses that cannot be maintained today as they were in Frazer’s
time and that no one who carries out concrete investigations, whether
historical or functional, will defend. Through the years and across
regions, it is possible to find similar rites, sometimes almost identical
in their external form, but it is risky to give a single explanation for all
of them, whether mythical, magical, or historical-cultural. The causal
relationships between belief and rite thus should be the subject of con-
crete research, and certain general schemes of this type will not carry
it out, schemes such as that of those who maintain that the rite always
depends on the belief or that of those who state the opposite, that is,
that the rites are older and always adapt themselves to new beliefs. Both
options are possible.

From a theoretical point of view it seems most likely that all reli-
gious ritual manifestations should obey a set of beliefs previously estab-
lished from the mythical point of view. But it is not unusual to find cases
of rites that have been practiced without the base of a rigorous credo or
after the beliefs that gave rise to them have been, for the most part, inval-
idated, and for which new explanations are later sought. Sometimes the
change in meaning is so absolute that the rites are left almost entirely
lacking in religious transcendentality. The intellectualist doctrine of
the “survivals” should, then, be used carefully whenever we speak of
relationships between existing rites and their origins. It is advisable to
bear in mind first, when carrying out our exposition, the observations
presented in the introduction with respect to meaningful elements and
that we accept that a single thing can offer two or more different aspects
to different eyes. In the present case, we will accept that a single rite
practiced at different times in the life of a people is different in its mean-
ing. The mystery of its permanence, despite the fact that the theoretical
religious bases have disappeared, must be clarified in light of different
psychological and sociological criteria.

Small episodes of life can occasion a brief rite, a rite that is hardly
given formal importance and that, nevertheless, in essence is dictated
by motives analogous to the most complicated ones. When a dog howls
or when another sign considered bad is observed, or when carrying out
an action likewise judged to be harmful, it is customary, for example,
in the Basque farmhouses, to throw a handful of salt on the fire in the kitchen. If a beggar prays at the door in Spanish or if a person arrives in the vicinity of the farmhouse who speaks strange Basque (a dialect from another region), one makes a furtive gesture against the evil eye with the thumb between the index and middle fingers (pujés), pronouncing a few words. These are two well-defined individual rites of security. But there are some that are much more varied and obscure in their purpose, of which we can make different classifications according to what aspect of them we pay attention to, classifications that for this reason have only a partial value no greater than the value of the convenience they offer to the folklorist researcher in his work.

The typical tendency of society to manifest itself rhythmically, repeatedly, has produced a certain homogeneity in rituals and, above all, a certain order that, when observed, can establish a first classification of those rituals once they have been described. Thus, we can follow a chronological criterion by studying the annual cycle or other bigger or smaller temporal cycles. But on the other hand, the desire to ensure an aspect of life or a sector of society with a concrete propitiatory rite has been highlighted also, adjusting the classifications to a wishful, intentional criterion. The individual or family nature, or that of a wider social group, of the rite is useable for the same purpose.

Given that it is impossible to deal with all rituals existing in the Basque Country (although many will already have been discussed in earlier chapters), we will concern ourselves here, as stated earlier, with the most elaborate, which are the following:

1) those that are repeated in a rhythmic and orderly way in the year
2) those that involve a greater number of participants
3) those that involve, rather than each individual, the different sectors of society as such

Basque life unfolds in accord with the divisions of time typical of all Christianity. The day is organized into weeks, the week into months, the month into years. Holidays and work days are classified, above all, in the weekly division. However, we must observe that this division, in contrast to the belief of some linguists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, who defended it as a very old institution (e.g., Astarloa, Erro), is evidently quite a modern division (as in the rest of Europe). The same names of the days of the week seem to indicate that at some earlier time the Basques established, first of all, a ternary division of the days. Astelen (Monday), astearte (Tuesday),
and *asteazken* (Wednesday) are names that reflect this ternary division inasmuch as they mean “first of *aste*” (*astia* today means the week as a whole), “middle of *aste,***” and “last of *aste,***” or something similar. *Ortzegun, ostegun* (Thursday), is the day of ortz, the sky, the ancient god of the firmament, as noted in chapter 21. The name of Friday, *ortzirala,* seems to have corresponded at one time to a day, after that of ortz, of an unlucky nature; even today it is believed that Friday is a bad day. For its part, Saturday has a name that probably was used to designate the lunar quadripartition: *larunbata* is Saturday and *laurenbat* a quarter. Sunday, apart from the Romance name it bears in some dialects (*domeka*), has another, *igande,* *igandia,* that may have corresponded to a great holiday that was celebrated in ancient times at the full moon and means big rise. The arrangement and selection of such names seems to have been carried out at a time of transition from paganism to Christianity, in a parallel way to how it occurred in other parts of Europe upon giving names of the gods to the days of the Hebraic week.¹

A similar parallelism is observed in the folkloric calendar and in a sort of particular oscillation between the Christian faith, expressed and defended publicly, and a paganism, dark and shameful, that is more and more toned down and diffuse. But although the holidays of the year may offer the same or similar traits here and there, this repetition should not be understood to be uniform; it in no way excludes irregularity, with the result that, for example, in the Basque Country there are zones where there is a type of masquerade that is not found in the rest of the country, although it is found in vast and discontinuous areas of Europe. This lends itself to more than one historical-cultural consideration, with the result that if it fits, some rites that have a smaller area of expansion in Europe and outside concomitances, at least in well-defined formal aspects, turn out to be more enigmatic and meaningful at the same time.

From the point of view of periodicity we can note the existence of three great ritual cycles: The first consists of the winter holidays, which are celebrated from the end of the year until the beginning of Lent; the second, the spring holidays (May and June especially); the third, the summer and autumn holidays. Perhaps ancient man, who did not pay great attention to the division of the year in four seasons but considered there to be two large ones, winter and summer (a division reflected in a fundamental way by the Basque language), would not bear in mind any more than two cycles: the summer and the winter ones. The beginning and end of the cycles are related to the end of one year and the beginning of another. Today, the year begins on January 1, but we know that in
medieval Navarre, this could be established on another date, March 25, for example, or Christmas Day, and there are some names of the month used in certain zones, such as the French Basque for the month of September, buruilla, that seem to indicate that the month in question was at some time considered to be the first month.

Considering the year as a unit, with its beginning on a fixed date, though a different one depending on places and times, may have had certain consequences in the ordering of rites. Let us begin (to follow some order in our examination) on January 1. From this day to the last day of Carnival is when the famous Zuberoan masquerades take place, which have been the subject of many publications. The young and unmarried men of each town take part in them. The first and the last are held in the same town and the rest in nearby villages to which the organizers have been invited.

The processions are much more numerous in Lower Zuberoa than in Upper Zuberoa and are always divided into two parts. The first is formed by the red masquerade, composed today of a set of fixed characters that are fewer in number than those who composed it in the mid-nineteenth century. At the head, there is the Txerrero, armed with a stick from which there hangs a large horse mane mop. After him are the lambs and the bear, which have disappeared today, leaving the cat (Gathia, Gathusain), who is distinguished by some sort of wooden scissors with which he pesters the spectators, in second place. Then, in this order, come the barmaid (a boy dressed as a girl); Zamalzain, that is, the horse or the man mounted on a horse, who is represented in a very schematic way and who seems to be the most important character of all; the castrators; the kukulleroak (dressed like Gathia); the farriers; the standard bearer; the lord; the lady; the farmer and his wife; and finally, the musicians. The female roles cited last are also played by boys. The “black masquerade” follows the musicians, without maintaining the composure and symmetry of the red. It may have its black Txerrero or black Zamalzain. But the most common is for it to be composed of three musical groups of gypsies, boilermakers, and knife grinders, as well as a doctor, a pharmacist, and other changeable characters (e.g., barber, notary, chimney sweep, beggar, who used to appear more regularly).

The actions of the reds and the blacks follow a strict plan. First, a battle is enacted between the procession in general and the residents of the town, who put obstacles in their way: carts, ropes, men lying in wait with jugs, and finally, barricades defended by young men dressed in skirts, with their faces blackened, and armed with pitchforks, known as
basandereak (women of the forest). The reds advance in order and the blacks in disarray. After some solo dances by the characters of the red masquerade comes the assault on the barricade, followed by a sort of stick dance by the kukullerok. Once the town has been “conquered,” there is the visit to the notables, which includes a special incident: the temporary flight of Zamalzain, in which his animal nature is accentuated.

The third part consists of various dances (e.g., branles, quadrilles, the dance of the snail). These dances—and the rest of the performance, which takes place in the town square—always include a series of struggles of the well-defined characters of the red masquerade, who are presented with various obstacles. Last, the fonctions are developed, the most important part of all the masquerades. The first of them occurred before the one of the bear, the lambs, and the shepherd, in which a battle was simulated between the wild animal and the man, at the end of which the bear died. Today the performances open with the gobalet or godalet-dantza, in which Txerrero, Gathusain, Kantiniersa, and Zamalzain take part, leaving the latter to dance alone and stand on only one foot on top of a glass of wine without spilling it.

After this performance, there follows that of the farriers, in which horseshoes are put on Txerrero and Zamalzain, always by force. Then there is the dance of the castrators, who castrate Zamalzain, who pretends to be debilitated and later recovers his vigor. Still later, there are the performances of the knife grinders (which has to do with the sharpening of a sword ordered by the lord), the gypsies, and the boilermakers, in which the cause of the battle is the repair of a boiler, during which the boilermaker’s apprentice dies and then recovers.

The masquerade ends with a final dance. The whole thing lasts from seven in the morning to three in the afternoon. Its fundamental theme is the battle between the different elements that compose it, but its intention remains hidden to the eyes of those who perform it today, even if they all accept that it is one of the most valuable elements of the culture they inherited from their ancestors. It is not surprising that the folklorists have tried to make up for this lack by putting forth consecutive hypotheses. Some from the past century thought that the masquerades had been introduced into Zuberoa in the seventeenth century by certain gentlemen, a completely gratuitous opinion. Others offered a sociological theory, according to which the red masquerade reflected the different social classes that existed in the country, the healthy element of society, whereas the black, in which all was disorder and confusion, symbolized the foreigners and undesirables. Finally, there has been no shortage of
those who have given a nod to the aforementioned theories of Frazer, failing to see in all its development anything more than the usual rite of sacrifice of the divinity of vegetation, the plant spirit. I believe that none of these three explanations is appropriate from the historical point of view.

From the point of view of geographic diffusion, I will point out that masquerades on the first of the year very similar to these were performed in various places throughout the Pyrenees and pre-Pyrenees, from Catalonia to Galicia, passing through Santander and Asturias. They are likewise analogous to the masquerades called Perchten of southern Germany and other Germanic countries, such that the theory of their chivalric origin, and the theory that seeks their roots in the simple interpretation of the social structure of Zuberoa at a certain time, do not stand up to rigorous examination. Although I will not now undertake a unique religious explanation of their origins, I would like to point out that all the masquerades we have mentioned that take place on the first of the year fit very well, historically, with those that many fathers of the Church (eastern and western both) condemned as typical of the kalendae januariae, and in which we know men performed dressed as animals, women, and so on in the different pantomimes. Many associate the masquerades of the kalendae with the old Dionysian ritual, but this is more problematic.2

There is no doubt that the Zuberoan masquerades always had a transcendental character, because others typical of the same period that are performed outside that region but within the borders of the Basque Country also seem to have the same character (although equally obscure), such as the kaskarotak martxa of the Lapurdian carnival, in which young boys dance the stick dance (makildantz) led by people in strange masks (kotilun gorriak and others); the cavalcades of Lower Navarre, which included “little giants,” couples, and men on stilts; and some functions no longer typical of whole regions but of particular places. For example, we can cite the one that takes place in the Navarrese town of Lantz during Carnival. Almost all the boys (always the boys) participate in it, but its main characters are a man who wears an apparatus that makes him look like a giant; he is called Miel Otxin. Then there is Zaldiko, which brings to mind Zamalzain, the horse of the Zuberoa masquerades, and third, a boy with his legs and body wrapped in sacks full of hay and dried ferns so that he looks monstrously fat, called Ziripot. The rest of the boys are costumed with furs and fabrics, forming a chaotic and picturesque entourage. Before them are four who play the farriers. The
action, which takes place over the different days of Carnival, culminates in the trial and burning of the giant on Tuesday afternoon. Before this act, Zaldiko attacks Ziripot several times and at first, on Monday, he pretends to put horseshoes on him (always as on Zamalzain).

The giant of Lantz is undoubtedly related to others that in different regions represent the Carnival, whose triumph and death were often used as a theme by poets, writers, moralists, and artists of the medieval Christian period or immediately after it. But it is also very possible that in these local masquerades, old pagan rites of community security are reflected for wider purposes, or at least different ones, than the strictly agricultural one that is usually ascribed to them. However, we must not forget that a fundamentally religious intention can be displaced at a given moment by another satirical or aesthetic one. And this, on the whole, can be said to have occurred with the European Carnival in general, which has religious roots, though with an aspect that is simultaneously satirical and aesthetic. But as time passes, the religious roots are lost, leaving the moral derivations to stand out and, finally, the burlesque ones, which are the best known.

The Carnival has names in Basque that reflect the burlesque aspect of the holiday. Larrañendi in his famous Diccionario trilingüe collected many of them. Under the word antruejo he gives as equivalents iñoteria and aratuztea, as under carnestolendas, iaunteriak, and zampantzartak in the plural form, as well as the previous ones, likewise in the plural. For Carnival Sunday, he gives zalduniote and higande hiaute, for Monday asteleniote, and for Tuesday asteartiote. Recently, the variants aratiste, inauteri, iñauta, and asteartiñak have been collected.

The form zampantzartak is Romance, or rather, French; it is related to the name of a classic medieval carnival character, Saint Pansart. Asteartiñak is the plural of asteartia (Tuesday) and seems to reflect that Tuesday in some places was the most spectacular day of all. There are otherwise two other groups of names: that constituted by iñauta and its variants (iñauteri, inauteri, iñoteri, iyoti, iñautei, iaunteri) and that formed by aratuzte, aratiste. Larrañendi notes the existence of the verb iñakindu (to make fun of) and of iñakina (joke); -eri, -heri, or -keri is a suffix that often indicates a bad quality or disdain (erguelkeri [stupid thing], astakeri [nonsense]), and its origin seems to be Romance. Carnival is, then, the time of jokes.

The idea that during the most severe period of winter one must expel the bad things of a place, or rather, fight the agents of evil through spe-
cific rites that also ensure the normal development of men, animals, and crops, is reflected in other holidays with an apparently clearer intention than those described and linked to specific dates and days. Within the cycle we are studying is a curious custom that the boys of certain towns of the Gipuzkoan Goierri (such as Ataun) celebrated on the Thursday before the last week of Carnival: the *Otsabilko*. This consisted of a collection around the farmhouses, during which certain verses were sung in which the boys threatened to bring the wolf or warned of his coming if the residents of each farmhouse did not give them something: chorizo, ham, or eggs. The name *Otsabilko* means “collection for the wolf” and perhaps suggests that this collection had a propitiatory meaning, that through it one could avoid the misdeeds of this animal. According to Serapio Múgica, the collection more often took place on February 1 and would be related to the name of that month, *otsailla*, which rather than the month of cold would then be the month of the wolf. Until the mid-nineteenth century at least, an entourage of dancers with their captain at the head doing a collection also performed on the last days of Carnival in Gipuzkoan towns. Once something was collected at the door of a farmhouse, they performed a pantomime whose first part consisted of killing some chickens hanging from sticks with their eyes covered; in the second the captain set fire to a piece of hair or tow that he hung from the noses of his companions at the sound of a special toccata, at the end of which all were supposed to pass their heads through a hoop hanging from a rope and placed between two sticks, walls, or trees. This strange pantomime was called *azeri dantza*, that is, the dance of the fox, and it is undoubtedly related to the one that takes place in our days in Luzaide (Valcarlos; Navarre) on Carnival Sunday, called *axe ta tupin* (the fox and the cooking pot). On the morning of that day, a man dressed as a fox goes around the neighborhoods of Gaindola and Gainekoleta (Gainekoleta) and pretends to steal the eggs that the neighbors have left in doors and windows. After him come various masked men with the *gorri* (red) at the head, who dance in front of each house with the owners. After high mass, there is a dance in the town square called the feast of the fox (*axeri besta*), which concludes the morning festivities. After eating, all the people in masks go out again, with a couple, the lord and lady, now standing out, in addition to the fox and the *gorri*. The people chase the fox and the couple, who are defended by the *gorri*. The grand prize is the tail of the fox, and the one who loses it when playing the role of that animal is made a fool. Later, at the inn, the eggs gathered in the morning are thrown in a large pan and a snack is offered. The worry of freeing
oneself from the fox’s traps seems to have given rise to these functions, which are similar to those celebrated in other towns of the west.³

On nearby dates there are also the holidays of married men and women (as mentioned in chapter 18), the latter sometimes linked to Saint Agatha’s Day, February 5. Similar holidays seem to serve to ensure the fertility of married people and the health of lactating women. On occasion, Catholicism has been strong enough to bind a common desire in rural society to the worship of a specific saint and almost completely undo the links between that desire and religious beliefs and forms of prior origin. This happens, for example, in the case of Saint Anthony’s Day, January 17, a date on which blessed cowbells are placed on the animals and they make the usual rounds, in threes or sevens, to temples, crosses, or certain places, to protect them from all evil. Let us note, however, that the belief in the prophylactic virtues of the shearing and roundup to a determined point have nothing to do in themselves with Christianity in general. The belief that certain practices carried out on Saint Blaise’s Day (February 3) can cure illnesses of the throat in man and beast, or save them, such as that of giving bread, salt, or bran blessed for eating, is similarly not free of certain old superstitious links.⁴

But the flourishing of musical groups, masks, and dances that is peculiar to the months of January and February is interrupted by Lent and Holy Week, after which the cycle of spring holidays begins with two peak dates: May 1 and Saint John’s Day.

In earlier times, April 25, Saint Mark’s Day, was considered important for farmers and shepherds for various reasons. On it, blessed corn and broad beans are sown and godmothers give their godchildren a special cake that has different names, similar to the one that is also sometimes given at Easter. A few days after this date, the big holidays of May begin in many places in Europe and, more specifically, the Iberian Peninsula. The Basques know them, but just as there are towns that give them much more importance than the holidays of Saint John, they have continued to go the opposite way.

In his Diccionario, Larramendi speaks of the May tree that the boys put up and calls it mayatzar echa. In various towns of the north, center, and south of Navarre, it has continued to be put up in modern times as a basic emblem, but sometimes, instead of the last day of April, and so that it appears on the first of May, it is put up on other holidays, such as Ascension Day or Saint John’s Day, without losing the name of May.
In the Baztan Valley, the May holiday is characterized above all by the selection of a little girl as queen, *mayatzeko erreguiña* (the *maya* of Spanish folklore), but this did not take place on the first day of the month but on Sundays. The last Sunday of the month in Arraioz received the special name of *Erreguiña ta saratsak* (the queen and the willows), a name that may reflect a first association between the central character of the fiesta, the girl, with trees and intertwined branches. However, it must be noted that in the latest times of its celebration, the girls who accompanied her were called *saratsak*. The queen was carried from house to house, dressed in white, and she danced at the doors, singing a begging song. The people who gave something were sung verses of gratitude or praise; the stingy received only mocking. In general, in the Basque provinces, the belief in the virtues of the water of May is very widespread, and in the French Basque part it is believed that the milk and bacon of the same month are also very valuable. It has been possible to link some of the aforementioned holidays and practices of pre-Christian origin or independent of the Christian religion to a holiday very much celebrated by Catholic towns in general: that of the Cross. On the Feast of the True Cross, which is the third of the month, benedictions and prayers are said to protect the fields, intertwined branches are put up, and crosses are made of white hawthorn to be placed in a prominent position on the estates of many towns.5

But the holiday that is far and away the most “naturalist” is that of Saint John. It has already been mentioned how abundant the churches and chapels of this saint are in the country. Now let us examine briefly which are the most important rites among the numerous ones that are celebrated, particularly on Saint John’s Eve and dawn, more than on his day. These rites, in substance, are also the ones that are found in large parts of the European continent and that reflect first an ancient cult of the sun, second a cult of the waters, and third a cult of plants.

There are villagers, male and female, who believe that one can see the sun dancing on the horizon early in the morning of Saint John’s Day, and there is no shortage of those who try to observe this supposed event by climbing nearby peaks. Folklorists commonly believe that the fires of Saint John are an emblem, a symbol, or whatever you want to call it (there would be reason for a long discussion about this) of the diurnal star. The residents of many rural Basque districts still light fires and dance around them. But leaping over them is a more essential rite. Blessed leaves of laurel and other special plants burn in each bonfire, in addition to firewood and undergrowth gathered by the boys. When
jumping over it, people recite special poetic formulas in which they ask to be protected from the mange and other evils. In fact, according to the data I have been able to gather, when jumping over the bonfires, breathing their smoke and dancing around them, one can gain all of the following: (1) protection from certain illnesses (e.g., mange, ringworm), (2) the cure for the same illnesses, (3) banishment of the producers of illness to other regions, (4) protection from the curses of witches and the banishment of witches and thieves, (5) protection from harmful animals (e.g., dogs, snakes), (6) protection from more arbitrary setbacks, and (7) the guarantee of a prompt marriage, if one jumps in a certain way.

Very similar virtues are attributed to the water of springs dedicated to Saint John, or to waters in general taken in that season. The waters of San Juan in Hernio, Itsasondo, Igantzi (Yanci), Betelu, and other places to which many people used to come from far away are famous, but in the absence of a famous spring, in other parts they make use of the supposed powers of the dew, which guarantees the health of the men and animals that receive it on their skin, or of baths in springs and streams.

Beliefs that revolve around the plant world and its relationship to the holiday have even more public manifestations, if possible. Saint John’s tree, which is placed in a visible place by a rural community, can still be seen in many towns of Gipuzkoa and oceanic Navarre at least. In some, such as Bera, where the custom of putting it up has disappeared, there was a boat at its feet and rag doll hanging from the upper branches. More common than the tree are houses adorned with branches of white hawthorn and other plants; similar intertwined branches are assigned special powers. The black poplar, the ash tree, and the hawthorn protect, particularly when it is stormy. But in addition to putting up these intertwined branches, which may have an amorous meaning and which are sometimes replaced by little wooden crosses made from the same trees or bushes, one observes the custom of gathering a multitude of grasses and flowers that are considered medicinal and able to protect against curses. Bracken, verbena, rue, and celery are the best known of these plants, plants that some people carry together with other useful ones to bless at the church. The practice of growing many of these useful plants, like corn or wheat, is also widespread, sowing them a little early in order to bless them on the morning of Saint John’s Day.

Offerings of plants in places in southern Navarre are associated with other offerings that are borne in procession with the image of the saint, a procession for which rag dolls are also hung up along the streets and in the town squares. These rag dolls are related to those placed in
the tree farther to the north in the same province and perhaps also to the hides that in Gipuzkoa (Zegama) were burned with the remains of the bonfires and were carried through the countryside, with spells and formulas recited to ward off evil spells. During these nocturnal wanderings, the boys could place obstacles in the roads, such as carts, wheels, or plows, and they were even allowed to take possession of certain items of personal property, without the owner having the right to protest. This disorderly behavior was also permitted during Carnival and at the New Year, a date on which the burning hides apparently represent the ending year, which they pretend to banish (e.g., in Araba, Bizkaia, and Gipuzkoa).⁶

Leaving aside for the moment the analysis of some medical rites (such as the one described earlier for curing children with hernias) and of some fortune-telling practices using water, plants, and so on, I will now call attention to a feature less highlighted by those who have studied the holiday of Saint John. I refer to an aspect of certain dances, masquerades, and military displays. Until the early seventeenth century and typical of Irun, Lesaka, Zugarramurdi, and perhaps a few other towns were musical groups of Moors and Christians who attended the mass of the day, making a great din, and at the head of which there were a Moorish king and a Christian king, perfumed with incense. Such groups were abolished for their irreverence. Around the same time and later, in Oiartzun, there were certain masked men called mozorros who went out to make a racket. The military field review of Lakua near Vitoria-Gasteiz had a less burlesque character, and in Guardia even today, they have a curious half-military, half-carnivalesque holiday, as also in the Navarrese town of Torralba, during which the death of a character named Juan Lobo (John the Wolf) is acted out. Also in Tolosa, the former Gipuzkoan capital, a dance with snare drums (bordondantzta) is danced by twenty-four young men on Saint John’s Day, and at their head are four carrying something like halberds and a town crier carrying a naked sword, covered with carnations and roses. Most such reviews today are assumed to have concrete historical origins in a medieval event. The bordondantzta thus commemorates the Battle of Beotibar, which was won by the Gipuzkoans over the Navarrese. But we must agree that similar local historical explanations are not consistent with the diffusion of such groups. It can be accepted without difficulty that for a long time the holiday of Saint John was considered not only a safeguard against all types of natural and preternatural evils but also a military holiday, on
which (for who knows what magical or religious reasons) the armed forces were inspected in many places.\footnote{7}

This inspection also used to be done on other nearby holidays, especially on those in honor of a patron saint. The patron saint holidays show homogeneous features in quite wide areas of the Basque Country. Because most of them take place in the summer and autumn, it is thought that they are closely linked with the harvest. The economy of our time, when general circulation and means of transportation have increased so much, has blurred many of the essential traits of the old patron saint holidays, which were often associated with fairs and markets of varied importance. Sales, purchases, and contracts of all types were carried out as people took advantage of the opportunity they offered, an opportunity that also manifested itself in an explosive way. The word for fiesta or holiday, besta in Basque, includes an idea of optimism, of happiness, and is used in many compound words. Bestaberrri (new festival) designates the day of Corpus Christi; atso-besta (holiday of the old ladies) is the holiday of women who have just given birth; the bizkar-besta (holiday of the back, or of the dorso, the back of an animal, as Gárate would have it), is celebrated when a roof is finished on a house. But there is also another word, which is also Romance in origin, that is used to designate certain public times of relaxation: jaia, jaiarina (related to French joie), times of relaxation in which dancing always places a main role, although in other times (as shown in Iztueta’s book about Gipuzkoan dances) it was associated with certain ritual norms. For the ancient Gipuzkoans, dance was typical of special holidays in which the whole town, from the most aristocratic families to the most humble, took part and in which not only young people participated, but also married people, old people, and even priests and civil authorities.

The Sunday or holiday dance, which generally took place in the afternoon in the town square, was presided over by the mayor, who gave the order to start and who arrived at it preceded by drummers playing a minuet; hence, this type of musical composition is still called alkate soñue (mayor’s song). The dance happened in the following order: First the old and married men danced, in deference to some foreign girl or the daughter of a distinguished neighbor. Second were boys and girls; third the married women, with everything ending in a run around the streets in which men and women, old people and children, married people and single all participated. The spirit of the choreographic rite was clearly seen in the dance that preceded all the others, the guizondantza, or royal dance. This dance is the one now known as aurresku, really the proper
noun for man who led the line of dancers, and the man who marched at
the end was the \textit{atzesku}. Both the lead dancer and the following dancer
were usually local authorities. To make it clear how much importance
was placed on the participation in the \textit{guizondantza} of the town halls
and Basque councils, one must remember that in the late eighteenth cen-
tury it was still customary for the mayor of the town, a week before the
patron saint holiday on which the dance was going to take place, to send
an invitation to the sheriff of a neighboring town for its mayor to eat
and dance. Thus, the first dance of the afternoon on Saint Anne’s Day in
Ordizia was led by the mayor of Beasain, whereas in Beasain, on the Sun-
day of the holiday of Loinaz, the \textit{guizondantza} was headed by the mayor
of Ordizia. Iztueta gives a list of all of the Gipuzkoan towns that had a
similar established system of etiquettes and courtesies. I will not copy
the list here or describe the dance in all its details, but to understand its
ritual significance more fully, we must remember that as a preliminary to
the dance, two “bridges” were made with the arms, one for the \textit{aurresku}
and his immediate follower and the other for the \textit{atzesku} and the person
who went immediately before him, and all the participants had to pass
under them. The purpose of such bridges was to make a selection or at
least to ensure that there were no undesirables among the dancers; the
moral criterion was that followed in many cases, but in other cases it is
very clear that there was a racist criterion. In the mid-twentieth century,
such a bridge was made in the Baztan Valley to banish the Agotes from
the dance, and it is still done in the \textit{ingurutxo} dance in Leitza (Leiza):
When there is a poorly endowed person, they lower their arms, the mel-
ody is interrupted, and the drum is beaten loudly until the person leaves
the group and reaches the outskirts of the town.

In the Gipuzkoan dance of young people, \textit{gazte dantza}, the bridge
was also made, but not in the \textit{esku dantza}, considered the worst of all.
Iтурриза even says of the \textit{gazte dantza} that “it is a diabolical invention
and ancient custom that should have been banished from Christianity.”
Today it seems a piece of idyllic innocence.

The \textit{etxe-andre dantza} (dance of the housewives) was typical of the
end of the holiday and of the fourth day and, according to Iztueta, was
not performed until the men of the neighboring villages and outsiders
had gone away. These dances were distinguished most by the people
who performed in them and by the melodies that were particular to
them. The final run or walk through the streets had to be authorized
by the mayor. It was called \textit{edate} or \textit{karrikadantza}, drinking dance or
street dance.\textsuperscript{8}
If in the evening dance in general we find all these ritualistic elements, it is not surprising that they appear yet more defined in dances associated more closely with processions and honors for the saint, in which normally only the boys or unmarried young men perform. There is great variety in these dances, and in principle they seem to have obeyed intentions that were also varied but mostly obscure for the present-day observer.

In the Baztan Valley, the men, directed by the majordomos of the associations and wearing special clothes, dance one behind another in what is called the mutil-dantza (dance of the boys), which consists of various numbers that bear strange names: pig’s eye, the redwing, the swallow, the swallow’s young, the bird dance, and the thrush dance. Also, sometimes any man in the town square may place himself at the head of an improvised mutil-dantza. Because of its structure, this looks like some dances from the French Basque Country, such as the mutxiko, which, according to early-nineteenth-century writer E. Jouy, took place between the town square and the village cemetery and was led by the mayor. The meaning of both is problematic.9

There may be reason for controversy also with respect to the meaning of the much better-known Gipuzkoan and Bizkaian sword dances and others, such as those of shields and snare drums.

At the end of the eighteenth century, few Gipuzkoan towns had stopped having a team of boys who performed the ezpata-dantza, either on the day of Corpus Christi, on the day of the patron saint holiday, or on the occasion of a visit by some illustrious personage, such as a king or bishop. The wars of the Revolution and the Empire made many abandon the tradition. The dance was composed of an unarmed captain and a variable but always even number of boys armed with large swords, except for the last two, who carried two small daggers. When they had the ideal number, that is, twenty-four plus the captain, they boys lined themselves up in four rows of six and performed moves that are difficult to describe briefly. The corresponding Bizkaian dance has been much popularized in our days thanks to the exhibitions of dancers from Berriz; it is different from the Gipuzkoan one described by Iztueta, which itself includes special moves in each place. The best known begins with the greeting: The dancers kneel and over their heads flutters the municipal flag. Then there are combinations of one, two, and four dancers, more and more mixed. The enactment of the final combat ends with the dancers lifting the captain, who stays horizontal and rigid, as if dead.
In contrast to the traditional military interpretation in the country, there have been modern folklorists, influenced by reading Frazer, who have wanted to see in this dance (as in the Zuberoan masquerades and other practices) the survival of an agricultural rite in which the death of the plant spirit is always repeated. I believe that such an interpretation is at least as unilateral as the first, without the advantage of the first of supporting itself on concepts that are clear to the eyes of the people who perform the sword dance today. It is clear that, from the nineteenth century to today, the moves seem to have been modified a bit, as have the costumes. Even in the days in which Ferdinand VII ruled the fate of Spain, the dancers of Durango performed with a rag doll hanging from a pole, and the similar rag doll dance was one of the principal numbers of the performance as a whole. On the other hand, if we accept the fundamental military meaning of the dance, this does not exclude the possibility that it also had other meanings. Using texts and comparative materials, we could defend not only the idea that sword dances have been done for agricultural purposes but also that they have existed with an eminently funereal character, one of funeral rites. Perhaps at another time, these Basque rites were considered the maximum honor that could be conferred on a dead leader. We must not forget that from the time in which the country was dominated by the old families to that when the municipalities reached their peak, the social environment in which these rites were carried out changed radically, with which a lot of its meaning should also have changed.

There are special dances, such as the Tolosan snare drum dance mentioned earlier, whose military character is also notable for its literary tradition, and others, always in Gipuzkoa, that Iztueta says were not performed more than once every four years, or on very solemn occasions, because of how difficult they were, such as the brokel-dantza. The classical brokel-dantza consisted of nine moves: (1) stroll; (2) curtsey, bow, or salute; (3) stick dance with short sticks; (4) zortziko (a Basque dance in 5/8 time) on all four sides; (5) striking of the shield with the sticks; (6) zortziko, morisca (Moorish dance), or forty leaps; (7) stick dance with large sticks; (8) carol; and (9) ribbon dance associated with others from other places.

In modern times and in different places, rather than the whole series, only some of its numbers are danced, combined in a different way or with variations. If the sword dances can have another meaning than the military, as we have said, the brokel-dantza as a whole is difficult to explain attending only to military interests. Many stick dances, arch dances, and
ribbon dances seem to be more closely related to old agricultural rituals, including within the Basque Country, as we will see in the following.¹⁰

In Bera, on the occasion of the patron saint holiday of Saint Steven, one can still see the performance of a stick dance (makildantza), whose final number consists of a boy with an inflated wineskin passing through two rows of dancers, who strike the wineskin rhythmically. This number of the stick dance, zagui-dantza, is the same as the one that in Gipuzkoa ends the special dance with which the festivities are sometimes closed, called jorrai-dantza (dance of the weed). Iztueta, our old and congenial guide, says that in his time the jorrai-dantza consisted of eight, twelve, or sixteen men, plus the usual chief, who carried a large snare drum with a filed piece of iron on the end. The others carried small hoes or week hooks (today simple sticks). For each four boys armed with a hoe, there should have been a fifth carrying a wineskin. In each place in the town where the group stopped, the captain was supposed to dance a zortziko solo first, followed by the others. Third, a special melody was played, at the sound of which the dancers beat the ground as if they were weeding, in groups of four and facing each other. The one carrying the wineskin, or zagui, placed himself inside the square, and the dancers struck the hide with the handle of the hoe. They then turned to the other side and there also found a hide to strike. Iztueta says that with this rare dance, it was given to understand that the festival was coming to an end and that on the next day everyone would have to return to work. This explanation should not be totally scorned, but it is insufficient from the historical-cultural point of view.

On the day of the Virgin in September, in Otsagabia (Ochagavia), Zaraitzu Valley, after the mass celebrated in the sanctuary of Our Lady of Muzkilda (Muzquilda), patron saint of the town, there is a very interesting dance that perhaps will tell us more about the meaning of all dances of this type. The usual boys start out, dressed strangely and led by one whom they call Bobo, and perform various numbers in which they use sticks and scarves. The first, called the Emperor, consists of groups of four who cross past each other, striking each other with their sticks. The second is another crossing dance with a different rhythm and melody. The third, called Tru-la-la, is faster and livelier than the first two. In fifth place (after another stick dance) comes the Modorro (the sleepy dance): The dancers strike the ground with their sticks as if they were weeding, and sometimes they lie down as if they were sleeping. Then there is a game of scarves, and then comes the Bobo. For this moment, the Bobo puts on a double mask, such that he looks like a sort of Janus with
two faces. The Bobo passes, also pretending to weed, under the dancers, who hold up scarves to form triangles over his head, and then there is a final jota, also danced by the Bobo, last in line. The weeding dance in Otsagabia seems to reflect the course of the year, life with its moments of weakness, and the Bobo may be a representation of that or of some other similar demon, of the kind that Frazer expansively called “plant spirits,” such as the *Mamurius Veturius* represented by a hide or man dressed in furs in the dance of the priests of Mars from Rome and those from some other city, whom the former struck as the Basque *dantzaris* strike the *zagüía*.

The clothing of the dancers could be the subject of investigations that would somewhat clarify the original characters of all these dances. Here, as in other places, the feminine aspects of the attire of some of those who perform stick dances often attract attention as aspects that are not essentially in harmony with a military rite.

Various games and diversions serve as a complement of all patron saint holidays and other very important days. In Gipuzkoa as a rule, there are pelota matches, *bertsolari* contests, bets on oxen and rams, and contests in shot-putting, long jumping, and metal bar throwing. Nor was there any lack in years past of goose fighting and cock fighting, ring games, sack races, races with containers full of water, and the like. In medium-sized towns or villages there was herding of bulls (such as the famous ones of Donostia, which ran at the sound of a beautiful melody called *iriyarena*) and fire bulls (*zezen-suzko*), perhaps imported not long before. It is difficult to specify the extent to which many of these diversions, these games (*yokuak*), were associated with ritual of which past generations were aware, assigning them some particular meaning. Medieval society, or Renaissance or modern and contemporary society, I believe would have had different conceptions of these holidays (as of the rest of life), and let us not fail to speak of the pre-Christian, in which many games and dances must have already taken some of the formal characteristics they now show.

The last patron saint holidays are very near the end of the year, a season in which it can truly be said that the aforementioned winter cycle begins, the one that ends with Holy Week. The whole month of December is a string of holidays that take very specific forms. Of these forms, the one that most strongly attracts attention consists of choosing a burlesque authority for a given day, on which collections are taken and jokes are played. Thus, on November 6, in many towns of Navarre, Araba, and elsewhere, the schoolchildren chose one of their number that
they dressed as a bishop and with whom they went begging from door to door. The obispillo de San Nicolás (as he is called in Spanish) corresponds, in other areas, to the obispillo de Inocentes, and he exercises a similar authority on the day of Epiphany and on other days, one of which they call king. The king of the bean is mentioned various times in accounts of the court of Navarre of the fourteenth century. Today the king of the bean continues to be elected as the person who finds a broad bean placed in the king cake in many towns of the jurisdiction of Agoitz, in Navarre, and in the French Basque Country. The Christmas holidays show different characteristics according to the zones. The name Gabon, which is very widespread, seems to be a simple translation of Nochebuena (Christmas Eve). More interesting are the names Eguberriak (new days), which seems to allude to the days surrounding the winter solstice rather than to any Christian notion; xubilaro (season of the log), reported in Lower Navarre; and Olentzaro, typical of the northeast of Gipuzkoa and some towns of the Navarrese Bidasoa, which in another time belonged to the diocese of Baiona. The custom, very widespread through all the west and southern Europe, of putting a great log on the fire on Christmas Eve, a log whose ashes are believed to kill vermin, or that is only partly burned and kept to be put on the fire quickly in a storm, is the reason behind the Lower Navarrese name.

The name of Olentzaro is more enigmatic at first glance, but I believe I have shown that it can be translated as “time of the Os,” alluding to “Les O de Nöel” [a set of nine antiphonies all beginning with “o” —trans.], which were sung in different parts of France and for which the days around Christmas there were called les oleries. However, it is interesting to note that a mythical person bears the same name (which has variations in each place), a charcoal burner with reddish eyes, sometimes brutal and menacing, other times grotesque and drunk, who is said to come down the chimney of peasant homes bearing his sickle, to warm himself at the yule log, and who is represented by a child, a boy, or a rag doll that is traipsed around during the collection that takes place on Christmas Eve. This character appears in the songs as an ambassador, herald of the birth of Christ, but on the other hand is related to those that in different countries of Europe are said to come down to Earth around the winter solstice, completely unattached to any Christian idea.  

The information presented in the preceding pages is sufficient to allow the reader to see the strength that formal tradition has, with the result that ancient rites that seem to have conflicted with more widespread and better-defended ideas, beginning at a certain moment, are not
totally extinguished by the more powerful elements of society, although in that conflict, logically, one could have expected that they would have been pulverized. The popular masses were against a radical antagonism in this respect: in principle they undoubtedly preferred a series of casuistic and ambiguous social solutions to dogmatic or ideological ones. Little by little, the ecclesiastical authorities were removing religious content from the most elaborate rites, of which there often remained only their aesthetic or social aspect, or they added them onto obligatory mass days, without giving them the same quality of obligation as the masses. They knew how to reconcile many of the dominant interests of rural society with devotion to saints and their manifestations, such that the ancient theoretical bases of the ancient holidays of protection for animals or for married people, of the rites intended to cure or to promote the development of plants, disappeared in part, but what most attracted the attention of the human beings of any time did not disappear. These dominant interests have not decreased as much as some of the aforementioned ethnologists thought, nor are they expressed in such a limited number of forms as they thought. Nevertheless, within the European framework we must agree that they fit themselves quite a lot to certain molds. For this reason also we cannot shut ourselves in a strict functionalism when analyzing them but must delve deeper into what philosophers call the historical reason in the strictest sense.

If we again examine the set of rites described briefly in this chapter and then compare them with what is known of other countries and times, we will have occasion to prove, first, that the cyclical order that the Basques observe in their holidays is sometimes very similar and other times identical to the order that many other peoples of Europe observe and that some winter masquerades, May practices, and events of Saint John’s Day or other dates show surprising similarities here and there, from England to Eastern Europe. Second, let us observe that there is a more obscure and enigmatic similarity among many of the traits of the European festivities held even today and those of old holidays known through texts, classical monuments, and other sources. The similarity between the “kings of Christmas,” “king of the innocents,” and “king of the bean” and the king of the Roman Saturnalia, the similarity of the Latin Lupercalia and whipping masquerades with pastoral qualities, that of the Matronalia and the festivals of married women, cannot be pure chance, due to coincidence or to a radical identity of the human mind anywhere, but must be due to concrete historical events that have not yet been studied in detail.
The idea that forms of culture, like forms of life, have their birth, their development, a peak, and finally a fall, followed by death, has been developed and illustrated by various contemporary philosophers, who have been influenced in more than one case by ethnologists. It is best not to give it too categorical a meaning and, when speaking of any cultural process, banish the words *life* and *death*, which are too unequivocal, and instead admit, in a straightforward and simple way, that a cultural form, such as an artistic style, always shows multiple heterogeneous antecedents so that it can later have a period of maximum expansion and importance, though later occupying a more obscure and secondary rank or forming part of a more complex form. Life and death in themselves assume a completely different process of development of the objects that experience them: First, they arise in a way that, to use a biological expression, is essentially monophyletic, whereas a form, including any cultural element, is polyphyletic, as Kroeber states. It is not only here where radical differences can be found.

In any of the preceding chapters, it is possible to identify cycles with a chronological sense, within the described cultural functions, diachronic cycles. But perhaps it is better in this than in any other instance where we can mark various phases defined for a set of ideas, from an obscure initial moment to the moment of its evident fall, passing through the moment of maximum validity. In the history of the Basque Country, what is commonly called witchcraft has had great importance, as in the history of other rural European communities. But to the best of my knowledge, there have been no studies of value dedicated to analyzing it. Those who have dealt with it in modern times have been either simple collectors of materials or people influenced by better or worse literary works, who saw no more in it than a motif, an artistic topic to develop. There has been no shortage of proponents of ordinary Satanism, distant disciples of Huys-
man, who have spoken of wizards and their black masses with the mixture of pure stupidity and pseudo-perversity that in our days is quite common. There are, finally, sanctimonious people who think it in bad taste to deal with the topic, given that it does not, according to them, bring any glory to the country. But the opinions of the rhetoricists, the Satanists, and the prudes should not and cannot make an impression on us. Let us face the problem of witchcraft, of sorcery, calmly and dispassionately.

Religious historians, ethnologists, psychologists, and sociologists have dealt for a long time with ascertaining what specific differences there can be between what is commonly called religion and what is called magic. After having established subtle distinctions between what is fundamental for the religious person and what is fundamental for one who practices magic, they reached the conclusion that it is impossible, from the empirical point of view of the ethnographer and not of the theologian or philosopher, to find peoples in which both are dissociated as clearly and unequivocally as they are, for example, in the head of a rationalist researcher, such as Frazer, or in that of a wise Catholic, such as Father Schmidt. Nor can we arrive at giving magic priority of origin, as the former tried to do, nor is it possible to assign it to religion (speaking always empirically), as the latter would want. The tendency to worship, to adopt a submissive attitude before supernatural powers, a god or different gods, the attitude taken by anyone who professes a religion, is linked in many peoples with that of facing and challenging forces that are more or less personalized and mysterious and that surround us, in order to obtain the desired ends, a challenge not exempt from a touch of reverence. One attempts to secure aid in daily tasks, in amorous desires, in moments of illness, and so on not through prayer but through spells with a coercive or contractual aspect (like a pact). Theoretically, the conduct of the wizard is totally different from that of the priest. In practice there is no longer so much differentiation, at least in what many primitive peoples refer to. But in the ancient world, since very remote times, the idea that magical acts often have a negative religious meaning has been quite widespread. That is, those who practice them are considered, especially if they are related with certain aspects of life, with certain individual or not very moral desires and appetites, to be associated with malignant gods. Magic is often a medium contrary to the interests of society, a way of obtaining advantages or seeing personal desires fulfilled, whereas religion always seems beneficial for the community. But such a distinction is not always valid. The limits of the illicit and licit in the sphere of magical operations are very variable, according
to the times and people in question. Only certain dogmatic religions, in
times of complex culture, have radically, unequivocally banned all acts
of magic, previously defined, whether of the sort that is called imitative
magic (that is, the way of obtaining an end by imitating the ways that get
it) or contagious magic (that is, the way of reaching an end by means of
contacts and approximations between beings and objects).

When analyzing the magical beliefs and practices in any country, we
must first clarify which ones had and have a negative character from the
religious point of view, and which were considered by most people to be
perfectly compatible with the religion of the moment.

It is worthwhile for us to study the different functions of the magical
acts in a given cultural environment. In the Basque Country, as in many
other European countries, the difficulty in carrying out this investigation
depends first on the enormous strength that various legal and theological
interpretations of the cases of witchcraft and sorcery observed in that
environment had in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which were
discussed and are still open for discussion; second, there is the scarcity
of present-day critical data. Despite everything, I believe that something
can be specified from the historical-cultural point of view, beginning
with an examination of the existing data.

There is no doubt that when the Basque people still practiced a reli-
gion that was more polytheist than animist, around the second and third
centuries BC, they were much given to the magic arts and to related arts,
with the Vascones being known in vast territories of the Empire as able
fortune tellers, for example. Later, in the early Middle Ages, this reputa-
tion continued, alongside the reputation that the Vascones themselves
were still unfamiliar with Christian rules. It is difficult to reconstruct
their ideas then with clarity, but the language reveals that in this respect
they borrow beliefs and practices from the Romans.

In the Basque language today, the word with which professional
witches are designated, sorguiñak, is a compound word, similar to oth-
ers used to name those who have specific trades (e.g., arguiñak, zurgui-
ñak), from eguin (to make, to do) and the Latin word sors. The sortero,
the sortiairio, and the sorguiñ are the same in principle: people who
make fates. In contrast to them, there is a more passive character, a pure
observer, the one who foretells: azti.

The word sorguiñ has been pejorative since ancient times. Women
and men considered witches and warlocks have a bad reputation in
the remotest towns and farmhouses of the country, where there is still
a “concern” (as our illustrious grandparents of the eighteenth century would say) about witchcraft. But let us note that in our days also there are people believed to possess certain powers of conjuring storms and curing animals and humans, the medicine men, folk healers, and witch doctors who use magic for the most part (never unrelated to religious elements, including Christian ones, though not orthodox ones) and who, far from being considered bad, enjoy prestige among great portions of the rural population. We know that at the beginning of the Modern Age, the act of conjuring clouds, of protecting the fields from plagues, was even sponsored by the municipality, which paid a yearly sum to those who carried it out. This is recorded in the archives of Balmaseda, in Enkarterri-Las Encartaciones, which put great care into remedying the plagues of the grapevines not only with spells and exorcisms carried out by expert priests but also by contracting folk healers from outside (e.g., in 1516, 1529, 1532, 1583). The storm conjurers in Gipuzkoa and other areas even in our days appear in a less official form.

A newspaper of Donostia (El Pueblo Vasco) of July 2, 1936, among the news from the correspondents of the province, bears these data attributed to the correspondent from Alegia, who remembered them when speaking about a hailstorm that happened in Orendain: “Speaking of this hailstorm, the old people of the town remember a picturesque resident of Orendain who, more than sixty years ago, when a storm was seen coming from the heights of Aitzgorri with a prelude of lightning and thunder, used to climb a mound, equipped with a small branch of walnut sprinkled with holy water and saying as a sort of spell the words ‘break over Murumendi, stop on Aralar and spend yourself on Gorritimendi,’ made the storm follow its route without breaking over Orendain and toward the rocky and uninhabited part of the Navarrese mountains.” Within the same period of time, similar reports were collected in other parts of the Gipuzkoan Goierri about conjurers from more recent times.

The Inquisition, throughout the sixteenth century and in the centuries that followed, had denounced as being against religion almost all practices of this type that were common among the working masses. We know of an edict in Logroño from 1725 in which many of the spells and incantations typical of the Basque-speaking towns are listed and described, and there are even transcriptions of several in which there is a string of Basque words, but without a clear meaning, as happens in relation to Latin with those that Cato the Elder copied in his treatise on agriculture as common among his countrymen and contemporaries. It is
clear that in most cases dealing with agricultural and livestock magic or simple curative magic, the person who practices it does not believe that he is committing a punishable offense. The Church has emphasized that this form of magic is as evil as any other, but the people are taking a long time to admit such a point of view without reservations, whether out of ignorance or for other, more profound reasons. In contrast, there is a set of aspects of life in which it has always seemed illicit to use magic: those that involve an imperative individual desire to do evil, in a spirit of revenge, and those that involve amorous relationships. The classical peoples apparently believed that this individualist magic, malevolent or erotic, was typical above all of the female sex and was associated with the worship of divinities of the night, such as the moon and the earth.

Thus, in Theocritus, Horace, Ovid, Petronius, and so on, a type of well-defined witchcraft is seen, which we will later find again in the Spanish literature of the Golden Age, not only as a simple imitation of the classical model but also as a copy of the natural. The trials of the Castilian Inquisition against women such as La Celestina are very common. And this type had existed since antiquity, throughout the entire Middle Ages, laden with a science or pseudoscience that became, if possible, more and more complicated.¹

In the Basque lands, the idea that there existed a woman who could make love potions, who could tie knots to stop procreation and whip up storms, had enormous importance at the end of the Middle Ages. It had undoubtedly figured in the battles between factions and clans, although I do not believe that her function was as limited from the social point of view as Michelet claimed in a memorable book, nor motivated exclusively by the events that that great writer highlights.

In my opinion, some of the oldest documents we have on the repression of Basque witchcraft open the horizon to us not only to overcome Romantic interpretations but also to be able to manipulate critically the reports and books from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, written by judges and theologians overstuffed with learning, both sacred and profane. One of them is the warrant issued in the time of Henry the IV of Castile, in 1466, so that the association mayors in Gipuzkoa would intervene in these matters. It seems that for reasons of kinship or friendship, they did not want to intervene when complaints were made of evil spells carried out to stop sexual relations between man and wife, or procreation, or for the purpose of calling up thunderstorms, hailstorms, and other damages to field and beast. The same ordinance says that the meetings where the spells were planned took place in secret and dark places, and it was
proclaimed that those who devoted themselves to such actions stepped away from the law of God. The witch and warlock appear here in a way common in a great number of European towns from the same period of time, above all to damage their enemies. In a country as much given as the Basque Country was in the fifteenth century to factions and fierce battles between different families, one understands very well that magic would be used to complete the effects of hatred and passion, and that the mayors of one faction or another would turn a blind eye to denunciations made to them against people belonging to their own supporters. And not only should there have been exorcisms and spells that the sorcerers used to achieve their goals, but they also managed to make highly toxic poisons, given that we know of some clan members who were poisoned, such as Martín Ruiz Arancibia, who died of herbs given him by his relatives after 1460, about whom Lope García de Salazar speaks.\(^2\) However, beginning in the early sixteenth century, the repression of witchcraft was entrusted to the judges of the Spanish Inquisition or to secular judges with a wide and humanistic legal and theological culture. The persecutions and inquiries were sometimes done very systematically and sometimes in accordance with a spirit of foreign works and conflicting with the point of view of many medieval Spanish theologians, who maintained a discreet doubt with respect to the reality of certain acts attributed to warlocks and especially witches, such as flying through the air to their meetings. Thus, the modern historian finds himself in the grave circumstance of having to take a position with respect to the following issues:

1) To what point are the records of the trials a faithful echo of the mentality of the accused? Where does the part superimposed by the judges begin and where does it end?

2) What influence did the ideas of the judges have on ideas after the epoch of the great trials?

3) What historical-cultural explanation do the real acts, the ones that fall outside pure magic, carried out by witches and warlocks have once we have abandoned all partial interpretations of a theological nature?

Let us present the opinion that can be formed about all these after a meticulous analysis of the abundant sources we have. To carry this out we will follow a historical method. Already around the early sixteenth century (1500, 1507) there were large trials carried out by the Inquisition. El Cartujano and other authors speak of the witches of the land of Durango, of the Anboto mountain range, to whom the devil appeared
in the form of a man or a mule, but with some strange sign “that proved his evil.” But we do not have the minutes of their trials. However, we do have a report written apparently by Inquisitor Avellaneda, who went to the Navarrese mountains to do justice there around the year 1527 and undoubtedly struck fear in the residents of Aezkoa, the Zaraitzu Valley, and especially Orreaga. This report seems to be written in good faith. The inquisitor arrived at those latitudes with “knowledge of cause.” That is, he had read a good number of theological works in which the reality of the most implausible acts attributed to witches was discussed; accompanied by a technical team, he leaned toward the admission of such acts because he saw them carried out with his own eyes—flights, metamorphoses, all true.

The acts that Avellaneda considered typical of those initiated in the witching meetings are the following: (1) renouncing the Christian faith as a prior condition, (2) introduction to the devil of the neophyte by an initiated member on a date chosen in one of the previous meetings, (3) feast, (4) parody of communion, and (5) sexual debauchery. Outside meetings, the sect members devoted themselves to proselytism and black magic.

When a man confesses that he has seen a witch flying with his own eyes, everything he says must be held in quarantine. But the bad thing is that testimonies of this genre are repeated ad nauseam in the documents of that and later times. Without leaving the country, the civil trial of the witches of Zeberio (Bizkaia), from 1555 to 1558, reveals a similar credulity, as do various episodes, representations, and measures taken in Gipuzkoa and Navarre from 1528 to 1555, in 1575, and in 1595. But the moment when the problem reaches its culmination is with the trial of the witches of Zugarramurdi in 1610 (whose somewhat altered minutes deserve the honor of being published) and the bloodthirsty adventures of Pierre de Lancre through Lapurdi at the same time. The data on the peoples of the oceanic mountain area of Navarre and the books that the French magistrate wrote as the fruit of his experience will be obscured before the wealth of detail in both.

Witchcraft, they say, was transmitted from generation to generation, such that one must think that by this time it would have constituted an entire system. To attend the aqelarre (coven or witches’ Sabbath), one had to consent or be an adult and have no interests for or against the witching creed. If an underage person went, he was placed in the company of others, to carry out subordinate functions without importance. A number of guarantees were demanded of the adults; without them, they were not admitted. Once admitted, one of the warlocks high
in the hierarchy acted as godfather and made the individual introduction on the chosen night. The neophyte made a profession of complete faith and was marked with a special sign. He swore not to reveal anything of what happened in the *aquelarre*. From that moment on, he began to be strongly indoctrinated and remained under the custody of his master until it was seen that complete confidence could be placed in him. Then his tutelage ceased, and he acted more freely. At the end of many years, he became a master and sometimes one of the leaders of the group. Based on the communication of 1610, it can be stated that there were the following ranks among the men and women together in questions of witchcraft: (1) children (under tutelage) and catechumens, (2) initiates (under tutelage), (3) acting members (without tutelage; makers of poisons and curses), (4) masters (propagandists, initiators, and tutors), and (5) leaders (mayors of children, executioners, king and queen of the *aquelarre*).

With respect to the nature of the *aquelarre*, it can be said that it revolved around worship, especially nocturnal, of a being with multiple aspects, in a frantic dance, in a feast, and in sexual abuses. The accounts leave no doubt that there were greater and lesser meetings. All of this is acceptable in principle, when presented on schematic lines. But if we examine details, the doubts begin to assail us. First, despite certain external liberties that existed in the *aquelarres*, all in all, the acts that characterized them were more disagreeable than agreeable. All that can inspire the most repugnance in simple people is claimed to be characteristic of them. There is reason to think that this accumulation of disagreeable and repugnant things was done on purpose, by those who wrote the affidavits, for a certain purpose. If in the minutes of the trials it had been recorded that the *aquelarre* was something wild and entertaining in which certain excesses were committed, although later there may have been a mysterious side, once published and communicated orally they would have excited curiosity and provoked the desire to attend them among the people. Perhaps, to avoid this evil, judges and inquisitors chose certain elements of the declarations and presented them as essential, decorating them furthermore with ugly details. This procedure was often used by the followers of a certain religious doctrine to demonstrate its goodness, not only by theological means but also through attacks on the customs of the enemies and by instinctive means, saying that, in addition to being immoral, these customs were also repugnant to human nature. As we will see, other explanations can be sought for the monstrosities Lancre recounts. But the reality is that the minutes of the trials seemed so absurd to the informed spirits of the time that, at least
in Spain, a healthy reaction was produced in the sense that they had to proceed with more critical thought when carrying them out. Although later there were ecclesiastical authorities of the Basque Country, such as Dr. Lope Martínez de Isasti, who dealt with the problem with a spirit of absolute credulity, and although in 1611 the municipality of Hondarrribia still sentenced various witches, the excessive doctrinal confidence that the inquisitors and other authorities had suffered from ceased once the inquiries of lawyer Alonso de Salazar y Frias, one of the three judges in the trial of 1610, had been completed. Salazar was in complete disagreement with his colleagues with respect to the nature of the crimes of the witches. He was commissioned by the Supreme Court to apply efficiently an edict of pardon given as a result of the same trial and probably because of the influence of two reports that Pedro de Valencia wrote finding fault in the account mentioned before, reports that we will discuss further on. Salazar then spent a long time going from town to town in the river basin of the Ezkurra, a tributary of the Bidassoa, and visiting the towns in the Baztan Valley, five towns and others located around there, establishing his central office in Doneztebe. The number of people who confessed to him of having some relationship with witchcraft was large. But of that number, 1,384 were not believable because they were underage or daft; 190 were those chosen because they demonstrated a certain mental level within the limits of the misery in which they lived and despite the fact that they were also underage. Then there were quite a few undecided people or people who had participated only a little, and six people who confessed to being continuing sinners. The witnesses inspired little confidence in Salazar; it seemed to him that their declarations were really only stories most of the time.

At the end of a report in which he narrates his acts, Salazar himself tells how he abandoned the theoretical side of the problem, limiting himself to observing reality. The terrible power of the devil is already known, he says like a good Catholic, but it is not appropriate to mix it in this lawsuit because everything that has happened can be explained rationally, bearing in mind (1) the little culture of the people among whom witchcraft arises, which allows them to believe in a good number of superstitions; (2) the lack of comprehension shown by the judges, his colleagues, full to the brim with bookish theories but lacking skill as observers, in taking from the declarations what most agreed with their previous points of view; (3) the state of mental perturbation that had developed several times already among the accused before they fell into the hands of justice, but particularly when they were threatened
with great torments and very grave punishments; and (4) the ill will and unbalanced and lying imagination of some witnesses.

Salazar then presents a series of problems of penal law and legal medicine in a way that deserves all sorts of praise. He manages to take away great importance from much of what had been accepted until then. Thus, when in Doneztebe, Iraizotz (Iraizoz), Zubieta, Sunbilla, Donamaria, Arraioz, Ziga (Ciga), Bera, and Altzate they spoke to him of certain places where the *aquelarre* was held, he proved that only in two of these did it actually take place. Stealthily they turned in to him some pots with the mysterious unguents of the witches. The first thing that occurred to him was to have a medical expert analyze them, rather than read what the authorities had to say on the matter; he found inoffensive herbs to be the ingredients. In any case, Salazar admitted that there was a background of superstitious reality in the matter. It seems certain that in some places there were *aquelarres*, although people did not fly through the air to them, and that black magic was practiced also. And it is clear that these meetings of witches and warlocks in the country had a more mixed character than in other parts of Spain.

According to Avellaneda, according to the report from Logroño, according to the books by Pierre de Lancre, and reflected in the description we provide, the structure of the *aquelarre* is very similar to the structure of what the classical peoples knew by the name *mysteria* (*mysteria*). This was already seen clearly by Pedro de Valencia, who compared the acts attributed to the witches with those attributed to the ancient Bacchanals. That great humanist believed that the opinions common among the inquisitors were contemptible. Allowing the reality of the meetings, they could well be explained by reprehensible motives, but ones in which there was nothing extraordinary; the desire to give free rein to certain appetites and the yearning to fulfill certain desires in a secret and mysterious way entered into play in a fundamental way. In any case, it had to be admitted that on many occasions the disturbances were purely psychic, produced by a voluntary excitation of what we now call the subconscious.4

With the matter presented in this way, it remains for us to clarify a fundamental point. To what degree in the *aquelarres* was the devil worshipped, in a positive and formal sense as the enemy of God within Christianity? In a word, I do not believe that the being that the inquisitors constantly called “devil” was actually the devil in anything other than a figurative way, that is, if we consider as such all the numbers of pagan religions. For a father of the church, Venus, Mars, and Bacchus
were devils. For a conquistador of the Indies, the idols worshipped by the natives with whom they established contact were also. But a modern historian should know how to distinguish pagans who profess a positive religion from the proponents of Satanism. And I personally have my reasons for thinking that the Basque villagers of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, in some possible meetings, did not perform parodies of the ceremonies of the Church, or black masses, or anything of the sort. To prove it one need only investigate the beliefs still reigning today with respect to witchcraft and above all with respect to the nature of the *aquelarre*, which is said to mean field of the billy goat. The present-day peasant generally has a vague idea of these fields that, in some places, receive the strange name of *eperlanda* (land or plot of the partridge). In them, the witches celebrated their meetings, which were not free of the burlesque, as portrayed in the story (very widespread in other parts of Europe as well) of the witches and the hunchbacks. There are various other narrations in which the *aquelarre* is spoken of as a mythical or historical thing, but there is no shortage of information, though imprecise, on such meetings in modern times in small towns of Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia, covert and of the greatest secrecy.

The witch has generally continued to exist throughout almost all of the country until our days, represented as an old woman, expert in the art of fortune telling, with a bad reputation, capable of adopting different forms, producer of known illnesses and harms, such as the *beguizko* (evil eye). There are various remedies for her evil actions; one is to make a gesture against the evil eye with the thumb between the index and middle fingers when passing in front of her or by a place that is reputed to be a place of witches’ meetings, such as the cave of Azkondo (Mañaria, Bizkaia), Arkaitz (Peña de Osquia, Itza Valley, Navarre), a spring in Narbaiza (Narvaja, Araba), Petralanda (Arratia, Bizkaia), and Petiriberro (Azkoa, Navarre). Children, who are more often threatened by the witch, are protected with an object named *kutun*, *güthun*, *guthun*, or *büthun*, which is an amulet. A scapular, a pincushion, a letter, or a book is called by the same name, however. This suggests a series of curious associations. Paper as an object with magical powers is very much used among many peoples, the pincushion appears very often in stories of witches, and confusing the Christian scapular with a piece of a sacred book, with the amulet used for similar purposes, is a natural thing.

It is difficult today to determine how far the belief in witches reaches and what value is given to much of what is told about them. But not very long ago, towns in the Navarrese mountains, such as Arantza, were
very much controlled by the belief, to the extent that their residents took constant measures to protect themselves. Whenever there was a family calamity, the housewives would open the mattresses to see whether there were balled-up pieces of wool inside taking on forms that would suggest bewitchment (sorguinker), the cultivated fields were put under the care of the cross, and for passing by the crossroads (bidekurtze) various measures were taken because it was known that that witches could appear at them more frequently, though only in the form of whirlwinds, feather flowers, or thistle flowers. Let us note that witchcraft was considered as something not often acquired but rather inherited, or taken on in an involuntary way, as happened to a woman from the Jaulei farmhouse, they say in Berastegi (Gipuzkoa), because she went around the church three times.5

In short, all these beliefs have their autonomous development or evolution independent of a positive Satanism, such as that reflected in the old stories. An English writer has claimed that Western European witchcraft, as a whole, is a vestige of the cult of Diana and the classical divinities of the night. I do not believe that one must be so specific when seeking its historical explanation.

On a pre-Christian magical-religious base, on a type of mystery typical of obscure rural societies, the tendency, typical of theologians, to generalize the Christian idea of the omnipresence of the devil in pagan rites and inquisitorial procedures created a very well-established body of doctrine. Mythomania, hysteria in general, and the hallucinations produced by narcotics known to the farmers had to be brought to bear so that they would constitute many of the classical ideas of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but at the time of the persecutions they took on a new meaning. Hatreds between families and rivalries always appear behind the trials, such as the case of Hondarribia.

To increase the chaos, the language of the witnesses and defendants was for the most part unknown to the judges, who used interpreters of questionable skill.

The problem of witchcraft is one of those in which the historian should take greater critical precautions. Understood as a serious social phenomenon, it is much more interesting than considered from a satirical and humorous point of view or accepting the Satanist theory lightly. And finally, it is possible that in the systematic persecutions of a layman such as Pierre de Lancre, there might have been a political intention, more or less veiled, of a centralizing spirit.
Primitive art and also the art of European peasants have been studied from multiple points of view. More specifically, the art of the Basques has caught the attention of many authors, beginning in the late nineteenth century at least, such that we now have abundant published material on it. Nevertheless, there has yet to be an overall work on all its aspects, written according to the theoretical and methodological principles most worthy of consideration at present. In the pages that follow, we will not claim to fill this void but simply will gather some observations and data that may contribute to such a work being done in the most systematic way possible.

Many of the authors who have dealt with the origins of the fine arts, of its most primitive types, have tried to determine above all its ideological motivations by posing a set of problems that are perhaps not reasonably posable without first expanding the field of research.

As the great American ethnologist Franz Boas highlighted quite a while ago, primitive art cannot be understood if one does not bear in mind two basic types of problems, rather than only one. The first is that referring to forms themselves. The second regards ideas.

Forms are related, first of all, to technical experience: Their greater or lesser development depends to a great extent on the amount of time spent in devising them, and greater skill is acquired as a function of greater regularity. On the other hand, skill and patience in the execution are connected in their turn to a certain degree of luxury. Technical patience and skill must be studied, in a society that has arrived at a level of regular stability, as factors of formal, artistic creation. Speaking always from a strictly morphological point of view, these factors result in different degrees of regularity in the objects produced and of unifor-
mity in their types and sorts. The human mind has a marked tendency to produce symmetrical objects; and the more symmetrical, the more mastery over the technique in the person who makes them. This principle of symmetry has formed the well-known classifications of prehistoric tools of different zones and periods, and there is no doubt that if we were familiar with the works in wood and other degradable substances made by those tools, we would see an even more pronounced symmetry. The present-day primitive peoples make up for this lack and have provided abundant examples of symmetry (1) in straight motifs, (2) in curved motifs, and (3) in compound motifs, where it can be normal or inverted. Symmetry is produced not only through such motifs but also through the rhythmic repetition of colors and designs.

There are many sensations, observations, and experiences that lead to technical symmetry. One soon arrives at the ideas of curved line and straight line when contemplating many natural objects. The relative symmetry of an animal skin or a plant provides other models. But from the same work, physically or physiologically considered, symmetrical forms may arise that are independent of any complicated ideological process. Some techniques, such as those of basketry and weaving, lend themselves to very varied symmetrical combinations and rhythmic repetitions of designs and colors, to which so-called civilized man has not added great innovations.

It is worthwhile then, in principle, to begin by drawing a distinction between the different arts and trades according to the types of symmetry to which they most seem to lend themselves. It is also worthwhile to keep in mind the amount of geometric, mathematical, and scientific knowledge of all types typical of a society that can play a role in the production of artistic forms. For example, many people say that designs of rosettes, stars, and the like, made with a set square and compass, are elementary (in the sense that Bastian assigned to the word). But the reality is that such motifs presuppose, at least, familiarity with a technique that is not within the reach of all peoples and that, depending on where they appear, may obey a cultural or other conception.

Once the importance of technical and formal questions in dealing with the fine arts has been highlighted, we are in a better position to face the problem of ideas. All desire to illustrate is intertwined with the cultural environment. For this reason the position of psychologists and ethnologists who tried to combine the art of primitive peoples and children’s art in a single unit is false. From the time that he begins his first awkward attempts, the child of civilized countries manipulates a number
of substances and sees a number of artificial forms that are quite different from those used and seen by the primitive, who for his part, if he is an adult and a lover of art, has a quite elaborate technical (formal) and ideological (cultural) experience. When he exerts his desire to illustrate, it is not done on a whim or clumsily, by trial and error. He can carry out his labor for pure aesthetic pleasure or for practical or religious purposes. In each case, the work of art is suffused with a particular intention, which must be studied carefully so as not to fall into sterile generalizations.

One of the most curious expressions of the desire to illustrate is that of realist works of art, that is, those that manage to precisely reproduce the external features of natural beings and objects.

Much has been expounded on the importance and position of realism in primitive representational art. Some archeologists and historians have even stated that this art reflects a very primitive point of view, whereas schematic works of art would reveal more complicated and subtle mental conceptions, later ones. Such a hypothesis does not seem entirely correct in that it tries to establish the evolution of a way of conceiving toward the other, given that in this supposed process one does not bear in mind the distinction between formal and ideological problems in primitive art; and its determination is based on an examination of materials that are simultaneously heterogeneous and insufficient. What is evident is that, within realism, there can be two tendencies: a very formalist one and another that is more expressionist or ideographic and that produces special results, merged with specific, simple, regular forms of technical origin. It is when we attempt to interpret works of art in which form and meaning are obscurely intertwined without presenting defined and distinct contours that we begin to face another artistic problem: that of symbols. Among the primitives, one sees with relative frequency a case in which some very simple geometric designs are considered to be representations of beings and objects with a very different and more complex form. A form is thus associated with a meaning by a very particular mental path, and an entire human group accepts such an association as good. But over time, the notion of the symbolic meaning is lost in many places and changes in others; in this way the study of symbols, to which many archaeologists and specialists in traditional art have devoted their efforts, is full of difficulties and lends itself to innumerable confusions. It cannot be carried out, at least with respect to Europe, without very concrete and detailed historical research through time and space. This research will also clarify the succession and spread of what we call “styles.”
When a human group comes to specialize in the creation of certain objects, of certain artistic forms, such that they show a quite consistent number of particular united traits, and when this specialization reaches a certain permanence in time and space, we say that such objects and forms fit a style. There can be individual styles, but it is best to begin studying styles collectively. Let us now examine traditional Basque art in the light of the catalog of issues posed, beginning with an analysis of the regular forms that most commonly appear and of the objects in which such forms arise as decorative elements and products of a specific technique.

There is no doubt that where symmetrical motifs and rhythmic repetitions are most repeated is in woven fabrics, wood carving, and stone sculpture. On the other hand, where the artisan or artist puts the most patience and skill when he works is in these same tasks, which imply specialization in most cases: carpenters, stonemasons, and weavers were abundant in the country until the end of the nineteenth century, alongside blacksmiths, and not all have lost touch with the old traditions.

Let us now study, first of all, the decorative motifs typical of the textile industry as dependent on a very exact and meticulous technique. A sheaf of flax (liñu-belar-sorta), before being submitted to the domestic operations of retting, scutching, soaking, and carding, does not have a very specific or symmetrical form. But after it has passed through scutchers (karrama, zuratz, garba) of different forms, after having been crushed with the pestle (mazu), and after having been carded with the xarrantxa (implements that in the country have their particular types, including artistic), it looks quite different, to say nothing of when it has been spun with a hand-powered spinning wheel (linai, kullua, killua) or treadle spinning wheel (tornu) and the spindle (ardatz) and passed through the swift (matazuri, ikuski, astalki) and the winder (arilkai). Until this point, the flax is worked by the women of the house, but then it passes from the hands of the spinner (irule) to those of people devoted to the textile industry (euntza) as professionals, who are now very few in the towns. The loom (euntegui) familiar in the Basque Country is the rectangular one found in vast portions of Spain, and its parts, although they have Basque names, do not have many special features. But on it, in addition to simple linens, other decorations were made with blue cotton threads, woven simultaneously by means of thick hemp threads, which formed symmetrical motifs, rhythmically repeated. These linens were destined above all for pious uses: cloths for offerings and funerals (zamuak, zamauak). Such a decoration implies the perfect mastery of a technique, as can be seen in some of the zamuak from Gipuzkoan towns.
It is interesting to note that the Basque, in general, likes these rhythmic repetitions in design (which has meant that some feminine works such as leggings and drawn thread work for shrouds, iltzapeak, also prosper in the country) but does not seem to have much affinity for combinations of different colors, as do other peoples of Spain whose embroidery has also reached considerable development, although there are cloths in which brown and blue are combined. The decorations made by the weaver illustrate one of the most typical forms of technical formalism. But these are already a thing of the past. Not so the decorations on furniture made by carpenters. In fact, furniture in the Basque style is known on the Spanish and French markets as furniture that fits traditional norms, decorated with symmetrical, straight, curved, and compound motifs, often drawn with a set square and compass. Wedding chests (kutxak), tables (mairak, mayerak), chairs, and wooden benches are decorated profusely, but there is no shortage of carvings on smaller pieces of the domestic trousseau (e.g., cheese dishes, spinning wheels), on implements (yokes), and on the beams and other wooden elements of the old manor houses.

There are areas, such as the French Basque Country in general, in which carving has been studied more attentively than in others; it also seems likely that in these areas not only wood carving but also stone carving and iron decoration reached a greater level of development than in other regions from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Rectilinear decorative elements that are found almost throughout the entire Basque territory include a checkered design with slender stripes, triangles arranged in a linear series, squares divided into four triangles, and rectangles divided into two triangles, as seen on the edges of some chests, which also show a great number of curved and compound ornaments. These are arranged according to how the circumference (the basis of a decorative design) is divided: (in two half-circles, or in four, six, eight, or more segments), and one uses only the set square or the compass to make the division. Veyrin and Garmendia published a very good study on the development that this art achieves with its strictly geometric designs, in a multitude of samples in wood and in stone, with roseate forms of four, five, or eight leaves; Maltese crosses; stars with five, six, or eight points, solid or not; and radial motifs appearing fanned out, simple or compound (that is, some within others). Such combinations are often seen even in cheese molds. Sometimes the traditional artist abandons such geometric motifs determined by fixed measures (as Veyrin says) and embarks on drawing linear decorations with a little more expressive
liberty. This is how ornaments develop in the form of a spiral (so common in the French Basque Country) as well as those that show a particular form of “comma” (*virgule*), also very typical of the French Basque Country, in addition to rosettes and other designs, whose interior has been worked more freely and that have given rise to more reasonable symbolic interpretations all the same, as we will see.

Representations of natural objects or beings can be joined to these or separate. Those that can combine more harmoniously with them are plant designs, which lend themselves to exquisite stylizations. Representations of grape leaves and bunches tend to be more realistic, however, as do those of thistle leaves and flowers, which probably have a primitive symbolic meaning.

Trees, flowers, and leaves of other species take on a marked heraldic air and often fit the norms of interpretation typical of learned and modern styles, such as the Renaissance and the Baroque. But we will speak later about the factors that have modified traditional art through the ages. Finally, the plant is often found associated with containers, also shaped in a schematic way, such as boilers, flowerpots, and pitchers, on which it forms designs that are always very symmetrical, or with birds that peck at the fruits and to which symbolic meaning has been given. However, plant decorations do not tend to alter the principles of symmetry and rhythmical repetition. There can even be animal motifs adapted to them. But when they are broken to the maximum degree is in the introduction of silhouettes of animals and people forming scenes, whose decorative meaning is sometimes problematic but that are highly interesting as examples of representational art.

Here is where we find the greatest qualitative differences: from awkward doodles lacking in beauty to compositions (not many, really) of great quality. When dealing with the human figure, we must bear in mind, first, that very simple stylizations or representations of faces, for example, often appear on the façades of houses in the mountains of oceanic Navarre and more in the interior, probably without any aesthetic intention. On the other hand, sometimes the animal motif, without any function other than the decorative, comes to be stylized with grace; it can thus be imagined that, when carving eave braces for houses, it occurred to the Basque carpenters that, seen from the side, they had a similar profile to that of a bird, and they insisted on such an appearance (fig. 69). There are radical differences between stylization carried out for aesthetic reasons and stylization that arises because of lack of skill or other reasons.2
But if we want to specify more in the study of representational art, we have no other option but to examine a series of functions of the fine arts in general, through time and at the present time, using, as always, two norms of investigation: the synchronic and the diachronic. These two norms clarify also the history of the forms themselves. For greater clarity in the presentation, let us first make some general historical observations.

The history of the plastic forms and of the representations used in Basque art is very complicated and obscure. However, there is no doubt that we can trace it back to the time of Romanization or immediately before. Some Roman gravestones have been found in central Navarre and Araba, but not in Gipuzkoa, Bizkaia, or the French Basque Country, which show decorative motifs and representations related, from a formal point of view at least, to those that we find centuries later on the chests, steles, and so on from those same zones and the area farther to the north. Let us suggest as examples the gravestones of Gastiain in Navarre, and those of Kontrasta and Luzkando in Araba, where we find geometric decorations with curved lines and similar plant designs. This provincial style, which dates from the time of the Roman Empire, is neither exclusive to the indicated area (because monuments in Old Castile and León, above the Duero, correspond to the same style) nor typically “Latin.” Such a statement is corroborated in the fact that in southeast Araba a fragment of a sepulchral stone was recently found on which a decorative motif with squares and triangles like that on the chest mentioned earlier appears to be associated with representations of clearly Celtic divinities.³

Bunches of grapes and grapevines, roseate designs, and suns in the art of the Roman period that we are dealing with had a mystical signifi-
cance that may have lasted longer than many people think. In any case, data on the history of the art of the Basque Country during the periods immediately afterward are so scarce that there is no way to speak with complete certainty. We do know that, on Visigoth and Mozarabic monuments of the northern zones of the plateau, the usual geometric designs and some plant ones often appear. Centuries later, in the Romanesque period in Araba, and to some extent in Navarre, they continue to appear, as on the baptismal font of Durruma (San Román) in Araba, which is decorated with rosaceous designs.

However, with an autonomous life, independent to some extent of the succession of styles, there must have been a decorative and sumptuous art in the country throughout the whole Middle Ages, a technique of wood carving in harmony with the frequency with which wood served as a material for construction and adapted to traditions of great archaism. The interior of the Antigua church in Zumarraga is a good example of this type of art, which has disappeared for the most part because of the fragility of the material with which it was made. In the church, very curious geometric designs can be seen, similar to those of the most modern popular art, combined with human faces that an archaeologist would be perplexed to date if it were not known that they date from the very late Middle Ages. Other churches in the country show the same sort of art, in which certain “Mozarabic” touches continue to turn up.

When the gothic style triumphed in Western Europe, it adapted itself, sometimes, to popular tastes, thus creating hybrid works in which the usual ancient elements appear. The same thing happens with the Renaissance and Baroque styles, which contributed to the style created by the Basque carpenters and stonemasons of the towns in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

Let us note that it is then when the greatest social stabilization took place, when rural families prospered, when endless manor houses were constructed with more solid materials than ever before. It is not surprising that it was then when the most abundant and expressive forms of traditional art were produced, because the nineteenth century is a century of decline in that respect, a decline that is exaggerated in the present times. The Basque villager’s desire to illustrate should adapt, then, according to experiences of all types acquired through the centuries and within his surrounding world. It will likewise respond to a set of functions that we have already studied in the previous chapters.
It is not pure whim if we place religious functions at the top of the list. The different types of beliefs that dominate him are a powerful incentive for the popular artist. From a time that would be difficult to determine, religious symbols, cult objects, have been illustrated abundantly in Basque works of art. Monograms such as MA [Mary], INRI [Jesus Nazarens Rex Iudaorum, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews], IHS [Iesus Hominum Salvator, Jesus, Savior of Men], were placed on funerary steles, lintels, and so on (fig. 70a), adopting various calligraphic, gothic, and Roman forms and associated with different symbols. Candelabras, devotional objects, hearts, chalices, and other objects appear quite frequently in the French Basque art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Veyrin and Garmendia have gathered many examples of such imaginings. The cross has been dealt with in multiple forms, each more decorative than the last, studied by the same authors, Frankowski, and others. From the formal point of view, as well as from the ideological, these clearly Christian elements of art do not pose very difficult problems to solve. But when we examine others, we begin to founder. The bunches of grapes and fruits pecked at by doves or other birds, the suns,
the moons, the stars—what did they mean to the artist who made them and to the people who saw them, generation after generation? When do they correspond to a series of religious and symbolic concepts, and when are they no more than the product of an imitation of forms, whether done for clearly decorative reasons or out of pure routine? How many times and how has the meaning of these motifs changed? The present-day lack of stonemasons and carpenters who have inherited all the cultural assets of their forefathers (not only the technique) prevents us from responding to the preceding questions in a wholly satisfactory way. In any case, we can identify some possibilities in this respect by examining the objects on which the motifs are found.

Leaving aside the analysis of the decoration of chests, lintels, and fireplaces, in which the themes may have shifted more toward strictly decorative principles or toward personal tastes (although there is no shortage in decorations of very complex examples of such representations), let us focus on specific objects with a very special function. The first will be funerary steles. Apparently, at a time before their definitive Romanization and during the time of Roman rule, the peoples of the northern peninsula, especially the Cantabrian ones, placed gigantic disc-shaped steles on certain gravestones. They decorated them with concentric circles and other motifs. There are also some smaller ones with an inscription in the Castilian–Leonese and Portuguese territories. Centuries later, in the Basque Country, we find steles with structures similar to those in the area of the Duero and more similar to the mountain ones (though smaller), such as those of Arguineta, which must date from approximately the ninth century. But it is closer to medieval times that we find in cemeteries in Navarre and in the east of the country, especially, a profusion of discoid steles with a large and varied quantity of illustrations, whose antecedents are multiple and whose representational value leaps to the eye even though we may not be able to clarify it completely.

First of all, there are clear astral representations on them, which may be related to some of the ideas that the study of the Basque language also reflects. The fact that one of the names of the moon apparently means “light of the dead” or “receptacle of light,” the fact that the sun may be a sort of God’s eye, protector from evils and purifier, are things that might explain why representations of moons and suns were placed on the ancient tombs of the dead. Other starry signs may have a magical meaning that is more difficult to define, and the problem of meaning is accentuated when we examine certain illustrations that have been considered astral but about whose value there is no absolute agreement.
To clarify the question of symbols, we must bear in mind that they can be divided into three fundamental classes based on their formal aspect. First, there are very schematic motifs, even geometric ones, with a concrete meaning, that allude to forms that are in reality not very similar to them. Second, there are stylized motifs with a clearer ideological explanation. And third, there are quite realist motifs that allude to abstract ideas.

Among the geometric motifs that already appear on the most ancient traditional Navarrese steles (e.g., in Lizarra, Oloritz [Olóriz], Azotz [Azoz], and Oritz [Óriz]) we find rosettes and stars. But there are also Christian emblems (primarily the cross) on them; nevertheless, what most attracts the attention on some of them are other enigmatic symbols, such as the tetraskele, which is associated with instruments, as it appears on a stele in Santakara (Santacara; Navarre). What ideological relationship does the tetraskele have with the swastikas that appear on Aquitaine burial monuments from the Gallo-Roman era and on Cantabrian tombstones on one hand, and with the Basque cross on the other, which is much repeated on steles and in decorations on lintels, the most modern from the French Basque Country and adjoining Spanish zones? This is a matter that is difficult to clarify, as is the meaning of the tetraskele, the swastika, and the Basque cross, which many consider to be solar symbols. We must not forget that the discoid steles show such signs associated with others of obvious symbolic value (such as the cross), such that it is risky to state, as some have done, that they have only decorative value. Other associated motifs allow us to think about the existence of complex ideas linked with them: tools, implements, and scenes.

The tools represented on the aforementioned Navarrese steles are blades for cutting leather, vineyard clippers, hammers, and stonemasons’ compasses. There are also shoe soles. Such objects probably allude to the profession of the deceased, which is consistent with the custom, already existing among the Romans and Gallo-Romans, of carving on tombstones scenes and instruments referring to the trades of the dead, with a devout mystical meaning. We find similar representations on Portuguese steles, also combined with crosses, stars, and usual geometric decorations in general. But where there is a true increase in the number of motifs is on the steles of French Basque cemeteries, which have been the subject of very detailed studies. On their discoid steles we see representations of plows, tools for spinning, keyrings, instruments for stonemasons, blacksmiths, ironmongers, and carpenters, and even weapons. There is no shortage of agricultural and hunting scenes (figs. 70b and 70c).
French Basque steles from Anhauze (Anhaux) (b) and Mendikota (Menditte) (c), the first with tools and the second with an anagram and two hoes, a cow, a plow, and a knife, which indicate that the dead person was a farmer (from drawings in Veyrin and Garmendia).

The representation of ordinary scenes and tools is also found in less funereal art. When the ancient married couples of the village built a new manor house, when wedding chests were prepared, on these and on the lintels of the door of the main façade, they ordered similar scenes to be carved in wood or in stone, scenes that were sometimes more developed and with which mystical Christian emblems are associated, as well as those of doubtful origin about which we already spoke.

In each epoch and in each zone this representational art adapts to the special conditions of life. It is not surprising that, in the coastal towns, the houses are sometimes decorated with nautical instruments and scenes. Thus, in Orio we find a lintel that dates from the fourteenth or fifteenth century on which whaling is represented, and another more modern one shows a very fine carving representing a galleon. Compass roses and compasses are seen in Orio, Errenteria, and many other Gipuzkoan and French Basque towns with a marine tradition. In various interior towns in the Bidasoa region, in Lapurdi, and elsewhere we find houses on which the tools of the carpenter, bricklayer, and so on appear, forming a decorative motif, and there is no shortage of houses on which it is clearly indicated that it was inhabited by a family of pelota players, such as that of Ioannes Etchebers, who sculpted a stone alluding to this for his house in Ahatsa (Ahaxe) in 1785.

Without a doubt, from the aesthetic point of view, one of the works of this type that most attracts the attention is the stone of the lintel of the
old mill of Asconeguy, in Maule, which dates from 1757 and that has various scenes full of movement along the two edges.

Representational art can also have a practical meaning. In some cases (and more often) it reflects the desire of the owners of a house or object to distinguish themselves from the social point of view, the point of view of the nobility. A single motif can be interpreted from these two different points of view. The representation of a knight, a horseman, is very common in decorations on chests and lintels. In cases such as that of a Gipuzkoan chest from near Tolosa, reproduced by Veyrin and Garmandia, in which the rider plays a wind instrument and has two dogs at his side; a lintel that dates from no earlier than 1860 on a house in Baigorri, with a dog also accompanying the rider; various chests from the Baztan Valley; and the lintel of the first mansion of Bishop Sossiondo in Azkaine it can be maintained that it is an attempt to indicate the noble category (including of a particular type) of the owner. In contrast, the case of the horseman that appears on the left side of the door of a house in Ibarre (1716) is an image of Santiago, indicating that the building was a hospital for pilgrims. Pilgrims’ emblems decorate other hospitals in obscure places.

We cannot go on with too many considerations about heraldic carvings. But it must be stated that although there are many that are consistent with gothic, Renaissance, and baroque tastes of a strict form, there is no shortage of those conceived from a much more traditional and archaic point of view. The heraldic must have had a great influence on ornamental concepts and motifs, but to the best of my knowledge there has been no study that clarifies the extent to which very old traditional symbols have been incorporated in it. The siren or lamia (nymph) on a coat of arms from the Bertiz Valley (fig. 71), the man-eating wolves on other coats of arms of Navarrese families (e.g., Altzate), the trees, and so on may have an origin independent of the dry heraldic codifications of the late Middle Ages. Let us point out that emblems of more general meaning (e.g., the chains of Navarre, the fleur-de-lis of the French house) have come to be essential in the popular decoration under consideration, as have epigraphs of very diverse styles from the most obscure to those with very beautiful lettering.

From the ethnological point of view, it is at first glance difficult to explain how Basque–Navarrese decoration overall has so many things in common with that of distant zones that apparently have little connection with it, such as the extreme west of the central Portuguese zone, Sardinia, and, above all, Alsace. Theories on remote origins that
fully explain such similarities should be rejected almost categorically (although we may allow a background of artistic traditions common to these and many other European peoples) to explain the coincidence in the conception of chests, funerary steles, lintel stones, and other objects dating from times no more remote than the late Middle Ages. We must bear certain concrete facts in mind, including one that is interesting to analyze from a sociological point of view, the one that I will briefly discuss in the following.

From at least the fifteenth century until the end of the eighteenth, when the Ancien Regime came to an end, the Basques, who were generally called *vizcaínos* in the rest of Spain, were very well known as stonemasons and builders in stone, opposite the Moors who, until the moment of their expulsion, almost monopolized bricklaying and construction in bricks, plaster, and wood. The Basque stonemason (*argüiña*) formed with others of the same trade, of the same region or nearby regions, and often with his kin a migrating team that carried out different endeav-

Figure 71.
Coat of arms from the Bertiz Valley (Navarre); a siren or *lamia* (nymph) with a mirror and comb.
ors in close or distant lands. Sometimes, he finally settled down in one of the places to which he had traveled, as did, for example, the father of the Extremaduran painter Zurbarán. Other times, he returned to his own land. During their years of wandering, each team of stonemasons formed an association of a very particular type that was characterized—above all—by its secrecy. With respect to the signs or marks of the medieval stonemasons in general and of their organizations, much has been written, and it is known, in any case, that those signs and organizations are associated, more or less imaginatively, with the origin of the great modern secret societies of a political nature, such as that of masonry, whose name is linked with that of maçom. It is likely that many of the signs that are found on the examined steles are related to the Masonic signs mentioned above. There is less information about the “special languages” that characterized certain professionals, and the stonemasons in particular. In Spain, for example, the teams of stonemasons from the north (mountain men, Galicians, Asturians) have maintained these languages until contemporary times. The team of Bizkaians that came down to Castile or Extremadura did not need to invent a particular language to protect their secrets and intimacies. The same happened with the Galicians and Asturians. But within the country itself and where the same language was commonly spoken, both by the team and by the rest of the inhabitants, and when the team was composed of heterogeneous elements, the “special languages” were used a lot and served as a lingua franca and the first proof that one was of the same profession when individuals who didn’t know each other met. The special languages of the stonemasons from the mountains, like the pantoja spoken by those from Trasmiera or others from Asturias and Galicia (the latín dos canteiros), contain quite a good number of Basque words and others that were created in accordance with the usual procedures in the formation of argots and such, such as semantic specialization, metaphor and metonymy, the use of proper nouns as common nouns, and distortion. In the Basque lands, I have not found special stonemasons’ languages in use although there are ways of speaking related to those alluded to in general, like, for example, that consisting of inserting another fixed syllable between the syllables of a word, or a consonant (“p,” for example), a typical childhood game called sorguiñ-solasa, belaguileen solasa (Zuberoa), that is, language of witches: also of goats or toads (sapoerdera).

The secrets of the trade and professional solidarity of wandering peoples may have had an influence on the transmission of various special motifs in stone carving. But we also must not forget that there exist
objects with a very limited area of expansion that reveal the validity of curious local specializations and traditions. Thus, for example, Veyrin has pointed out a very small French Basque area in which there are decorated stone fireguards.

In any case, in an area that is no larger than the province of Gipuzkoa and, indeed, is contained within it, a wooden utensil of a particular form is used to light the family tomb in the church. It bears the name *arguizaiola* and, within limits, shows very noteworthy local variations. The *arguizaiolak* (literally, “wood pieces of wax”) generally show many geometric, floral, and plant motifs (including the thistle flower, related to the solar worship of Saint John’s Day), put on them with a possibly religious intention (fig. 72a), as it also seems that on *zamuak* and similar cloths the tree of life was placed, to follow the analogy.

![Figure 72a.](image)

Gipuzkoan *arguizaiola*, held in the Museo de San Telmo in Donostia.

Leaving aside woodcarving and stone carving and weaving, which are the primary arts of the Basques, we should dedicate a few lines to the study of two other artistic activities in which the Basques produce less differentiated works. The first is wrought iron. When making keys, spits, andirons, and other pieces of the trousseau and when he made iron nails,
latches, and hinges, the Basque blacksmith tried to make everything that left his hands not only useful and strong but also beautiful. His aesthetic norms were often dictated by a thousand-year-old tradition. For this, it is enough to examine some parts of the stove irons (laretzak; fig. 72c), some andirons (suburniak) or spits from the country (fig. 72b), whose conception recalls in a quite strange way similar central European and western objects from the Second Iron Age above all, though without Spanish representatives. It is common both in Basque art and in the art of the specified period to use animal motifs in the form of these utensils or to interpret them generally as zoomorphs overall, but this also happens in vast portions of Spain.

**Figure 72b.**
Spit with the Figure of a stylized animal, comparable to those from other Spanish regions.

**Figure 72c.**
Laratza with an animal figure, from Bera.
Sometimes carving motifs are repeated in artistic iron pieces (e.g., balconies), but these almost always seem to have had an autonomous development imposed by technique to a large extent. In order to examine them closely, we must not forget that Basque ironmongers and blacksmiths also went down to Castilian lands as specialized artists and that even very far to the south, there were Bizkaian fencemakers carrying out great works for churches and cathedrals.

The artisan, then, can be a transmitter of styles between ethnically different regions. But there are also other professional types who contribute to the establishment of strange aesthetic and ideological units among the different rural masses always considered resistant to exterior pressures. In the mountain ranges of Araba, which are inhabited seasonally by shepherds, and in the Navarrese valleys, which are a focus of seasonal migration of livestock, such as the Erronkari Valley, walking sticks have been collected along with horn cups, spoons, and receptacles mostly of bone, engraved by skillful hands both old and young, that are similar not to the objects of Basque art we discussed earlier but to those made by other shepherds from the Pyrenees and interior of Castile. In addition to the material causes of such a similarity, we must bear technical motifs and mutual influences in mind to explain it. It is interesting to point out how the persistence of certain forms is perceived in these objects created by men of more remote epochs than those alluded to up to this point, forms that can be produced without much mastery of the technique of engraving.

Basque ceramics shows some special modalities, but on the whole it can be stated that until a very late period, there were no workshops in the country that made pieces with elaborate decoration, and what decoration there was tended to be strangely inspired. As a separate case, we note the ancient ceramics of Lizarra, decorated with traditional rosettes, and some pieces of other pottery styles that have disappeared today, with concise paintings. In general, the Basque does not seem to have used many colors or painting. In the French Basque lands, however, abundant wooden carvings strengthened with paint are found; these were generally used in the eighteenth century to decorate the headboards of beds with motifs that are already known to us (though slightly varied because of the use of the paintbrush) or with others copied from works in the seignioral style that influenced the form that certain pieces of furniture (especially wardrobes) were given beginning at that time; above all, I refer to the Louis xv style.7
CHAPTER 25

Music, Poetry, Dance, Theater, Sports

The fine arts do not capture all the aesthetic activity of the Basque village. Furthermore, it can be said that with respect to the fine arts, he is most often a spectator or consumer. It is isolated individuals or professionals who have the reputation of artists in this sense. Other activities of an artistic bent are undoubtedly more common and widespread; in them, a greater number of people participate more actively. I refer to music, poetry, and dance. Learning a few dozen melodies and songs, or some dance steps, does not take as much of an effort as learning to carve or engrave. What is learned takes up no space, nor does it require the conditions of stability or technical resources to be well taught or practiced. Thus, the peoples who seem the most primitive from the point of view of material culture can have a highly developed literary and musical culture. The Basque, compared with his neighbors on the Peninsula, tends to be considered first and foremost as a man very much inclined toward technique (a clear sort of homo faber) but also toward music and dance. His poetry and oral literature are less well known, but it cannot be said that they are either less personal or inferior.

When studying music, dance, and poetry as artistic manifestations, we can establish the same distinction that we did in chapter 24 when speaking about the plastic arts. That is, on one side we must place the problems that arise from the analysis of the forms themselves, and on the other, those related to meaning, to the desire to illustrate. We have already spoken about the latter in chapter 22; now we must deal with the former more strictly.

If it is appropriate to study the plastic arts bearing in mind the principles of symmetry, rhythm, and patience in execution, such principles are no less worthy of consideration when we examine the poetic and musical works and the dances of a people. The greater or lesser delicacy
with which a village dance is performed depends on the greater or lesser patience and the skill acquired by the dancers. Verse and music are also largely shaped by the métier; the tendency toward symmetry and rhythm, toward ordered repetition, plays a decisive role in both. A minimum amount of training is needed to produce them. Thus, when a boy reaches a certain age, he often attends the lessons given by an old neighbor so that the town may have a group that performs the sword dance, the stick dance or makil-dantza, or others of the aforementioned dances in processions on holidays. Each village, each teacher, safeguarded his modalities, his special features of performance that today, with the tendency of states and regions to encourage folklore performances for commercial or political purposes, are becoming blurred, such that a Bizkaian dance may be introduced into the Navarrese mountains or the French Basque Country a little adulterated, and a Gipuzkoan melody goes where it was previously unknown through transcriptions, radios, and other means of transmission.

The common dances are not the object of such detailed learning. Mastering them or not is up to each subject, although there are always couples who stand out for their ability and others that shine for their lack of choreographic sense. The same thing happens with songs and verses; a clear distinction should be established between the creator and the mere repeater. Basque society has had its distinctly individual musicians and poets of marked individuality, and there are still some with a certain professional air, specialists in improvisation. There are the bert-solariak, about whom we will speak later.

It cannot be said, as Buffon seems to have said, that patience is the key to genius, but there is no doubt that the superior quality of the choreographic and musical art of the Basques, compared with that of various others of their neighbors, is due to the greater effort that they put or used to put into their productions. The differences in quality lead to inexact ideas in many observers of popular traditions, who see in one country a type of dance that is clearly outlined and drawn and, when seeing the same dance in another country, indistinct and clumsily executed, cannot even identify it. The principles of quality and quantity are those that the majority of people bear in mind to establish what seems typical or not typical of a region, and although the ethnologist should not consider them from the same point of view, he generally judges them as being of great theoretical importance. If there is a link between what is called typical and what is both most common and produced by a greater effort, it would be good if we now take a look at Basque poetic, musical, and
choreographic works, defining their basic technical and morphological characteristics, in contrast to those of the neighboring countries.

Let us begin with poetry. As we examine it, we must follow various conscientious and wise authors, among whom Manuel Lecuona stands out. As he has stated very well, before beginning to study genres, we must first analyze the rhythmic order and logical order in most of the material we examine. The structure of Basque poetry, which is traditional in any case, considering that it normally goes with music, will clarify much for us. A Basque verse, no matter how elementary, is not conceived without music, unless it is a learned work by an author directly and clearly influenced by Spanish or French written literature.

Popular poetry is thus musical above all else, and associated with the music we find the most primary forms of poetic expression in the peculiar rhythmic coordination of sounds articulated with random words that is found in some lullabies or children’s songs. One languid lullaby has these “words,” for example:

“Thun, kurrun, kuthun, kuthun, kuthun, kurrun, kuthu, na. Run, kuthun, kuthun, ku, run kthun, kuthu, na.”

The softness of the music, the appearance in a series of sounds of the word *kuthun* (beloved), are sufficient for the woman to express a particular state of mind in relation to the child she cares for and whom she is trying to get to sleep. On other occasions, rhythms, articulated sounds, and an isolated word, instead of expressing somnolence, tranquility, and care, reflect the child’s happiness and excitement, as in these “words,” also chosen by Lecuona:

“Riki, thiki, thiki, thiki, riki, thiki, thona.”

In this verse, the word *thiki* (small) plays the main role.

Rhythmic onomatopoeias constitute one degree more within the categories of poetic expression and are likewise found in various children’s songs and in marches or passacaglias, such as the *thi, thibili, thibili, thi* of Irun and Hondarribia, whose words imitate the *txirolak* or flutes that the participants use in the famous military reviews of these two border towns.
But the tendency toward symmetry, toward ordered repetition, that in the plastic arts produces so many motifs that are purely decorative apparently has its clearest poetic manifestation in certain refrains that, according to the always-cited Lecuona, are somewhat equivalent to the decorations that frame a specific pictorial or sculptured theme. There is no doubt that there are various Basque refrains that seem to be simple series of sounds or words rhythmically arranged, with a more than problematic meaning. Let us give as an example (and not one of the simplest ones) the refrain of *Iru damatxo*:

“*Eta kriskitin kraskitin*  
*Arrosa krabelin.*”

Among these the author we follow also places the famous and much-discussed *Canto de Lelo*, about which I have done a special study. The best-known version of it (of all those contained in Ibargüen’s chronicle compiled in the sixteenth century) goes like this and appears at the beginning of the so-called *Canto de los cántabros*, about whose falsehood there is no doubt:

“*Lelo il lelo, lelo il lelo,*  
*lelo zarak il leloa.*”

But in the same *Crónica* and in other contemporary texts carefully studied by Julio de Urquijo (highest authority on Basque bibliography), there appear different versions that do not lend themselves to a correct “translation,” as this one does. The fact that the refrain was apparently very common in the whole country by the sixteenth century has been used by most modern critics to defend the hypothesis that it has no greater meaning than that of *mirondon, mirondon* from the song “Mambrú” or another similar song. However, the *Crónica* gives a very concrete explanation of the transcribed version, agreeing with a legend, according to which a certain chief named Lelo was killed (*il*) by another called Zara, who had illicit relations with the wife of the former. When they were found guilty, it was decided that the fact would be briefly expressed in some verses that, beginning at the time of the sentence, were recited at the beginning and end of any poetic composition as an example and lesson. It may be that this legend is somewhat forced a posteriori, but I would call attention to the following facts:

1) There are reports of brief poetic compositions by ancient peoples that were recited as refrains at the beginning or end of longer
ones and that seem to commemorate the death of a mythological hero.

2) These compositions came to adopt a very schematic and succinct form.

3) Some of these compositions were a simple lament, as the Basque refrain itself seems to be. That is, we do not have sufficient reason to maintain that the so-called “Canto de Lelo” is a typical case of a meaningless rhythmic refrain.²

The problem it poses is similar to that presented by various examples of the plastic arts, in which we do not know whether certain themes are purely decorative or whether they are expressive, from the ideological point of view, within their schematism. In any case, we must allow that decoration is important in Basque poetry, even though it may always serve as an enhancement to intelligible verses belonging to various genres, of which various classifications have been made by the different folklorists and lovers of literature. Here we will not abide by a copied division of any literary set of rules, of any old treatises on rhetoric and poetry, but rather we must determine how in each epoch and under each circumstance poetry has had some traits that differ and some that remain constant. The oldest Basque (literary) monuments are fragments of poetry from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that we can describe as family epics. We are already familiar with the scene in which they were produced. The Oñacino and Gamboino bands, members of different gangs in the French Basque Country and Navarre, attacked each other with all types of arms. The death of a chief, the destruction of the enemies, a family intrigue, all were inspiration for the poet or poetess.

We know that at that time there were women of great talent who, on occasions such as weddings and burials, improvised and sang elegies or other appropriate pieces, with real differences in concepts among them. Each band, each group, had its poem with its own version of an event in which it had participated. What the Gamboino recounts in dramatic tones, the Oñacino expresses in a satirical, sarcastic way, and vice versa. It is a pity that we do not have more than a few examples of the poetry of that terrible time because, judging by those that remain (collected and studied by genealogist Juan Carlos de Guerra and others), it was as good as the contemporary poetry of any other part of Spain, and even ahead of its time in certain lyrical qualities.

Nevertheless, one accustomed not so much to the language as to the constructive norms of Basque verse will need time to comprehend the
power of evocation of these fragments or complete poems, in which, as in later ones, one starts with an observation that seems unconnected to the fundamental motif. But this apparent incoherence is simply a rhetorical device, a type of riddle that the rest of the verses solve. Among those selected by Lecuona, we can choose the beginning of the song of Bereterrretxe as a model of verses in which one follows such a procedure:

“Altzak ez dik biotzik;  
ez gaztanberak ezurrik . . .  
Ez nien uste erraiten ziela  
aitunen semek guezurrik.”

(“It is certain that the alder has no marrow;  
nor does curd have a pit . . .  
I was so certain that  
the noblemen did not lie.”)

The reason for this thought comes later, in the rest of the song. From neither the metric nor the stylistic point of view can the Basque ballads and elegies or epic songs (leloak by nature) be related to the Spanish, I believe. Perhaps some have a greater connection with old French literature, and when translated they have a vaguely Nordic air. The poem of Alós (today, Aloze) is one of the most successful in its genre. This excerpt from it has been chosen rightly by the always-cited Lecuona as one of the most expressive of our old poetry:

“Alos-Torrea, bai, Alos-Torrea!  
“Alos-Torreko eskallera luzea!  
Alos Torrean  
nengoanean  
goruetan  
bele beltzak  
kua-kua-kua-kua  
leyoetan.”

(“Alos Tower, oh, Alos Tower!  
How long is your staircase, Alos Tower!  
As I was  
spinning  
in the Alos Tower,  
a black crow  
at the window,  
caw caw caw caw.”)
Even in the late nineteenth century, in Zuberoa, Navarre, and elsewhere, there were people who remembered pieces of old songs from the late fifteenth century, saturated in a medieval perfume that would have delighted a disciple of Walter Scott.

But most of what was then already called *kopla* (verse) or *kanta zaarrak* (old songs), those characteristic (and already described) of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, above all, referred to a peasant society that was less tragic and more in tune.

Songs that have been collected (for Christmas, New Year’s, and other holidays), love songs, satirical songs, wedding songs such as the *toberak*, and dance songs (e.g., *sasi-soñu*) often reflect the opposition and connection of concepts about which we have already spoken. For example, I have here a verse from a very popular dance song:

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“Baratzako pikua
iru txorten ditu,
neska mutil zalia
ankak ariñ ditu.”
```

(“The fig tree in the garden
has three branches,
the boy-crazy girl
is light on her feet.”)

Following this one are others in which the reasoning leaps like the rhythm. Thus, we can speak about an eminently expressionist poetry, based on contrasting images, but always full of judgments, whether in a satirical tone (as in the previous case) or in an elegiac tone, as in the following:

```
“Mertxikaren loriaren ederra!
Barnian dun exurraren gogorra!
Maitatu dut neretzako etzena . . .
Orrek emaiten dit biotzean pena.”
```

(“How beautiful is the flower of the peach tree!
But how hard the stone the fruit bears within!
How beautiful also the object of my love . . .
But how hard the pain of seeing that she is not for me!”)

The abruptness of the transition or the quality of the subject for comparison can make the poem fail if it is read or heard outside the envi-
The Basques by Julio Caro Baroja

Mention for which it was written; we may be left with the impression that something is missing.

Moderation of word is characteristic of Basque verse, and this contrasts with the tendency toward verbal superabundance seen in the traditional poetry of other parts of the peninsula. This moderation and the fact that verses are not measured by the number of syllables but by feet always make the Basque poem sound surprising to the Spanish ear. The old songbooks of the nineteenth century and those by Azkue, Donosti, and others include thousands of melodies and poems; it is difficult to give the reader a list of the most beautiful, because this depends to a large extent on personal taste. Nevertheless, I believe that it can be said that the French Basque poetry is the poetry of the highest overall quality.

In the past century, various well-known poets and musicians developed the tradition of the koplak zaarrak (the old verses) in their own way. The ones who achieved the greatest popularity, those who created the most valuable compositions, were also French Basques and, above all, Gipuzkoans. They belonged to different social classes ranging from villagers such as Iztueta, bohemians such as Iparraguirre, and humble workers such as “Bilintx” (three Gipuzkoans) to doctors, military men, and engineers. Elizamburu, Doctor Larralde, and Edmond de Grubert in France composed anthology verses that today are known by a great number of Basques on both the Spanish and French sides of the border. But in their time the creations of these bards perhaps did not reach the people to the same extent as those of others, about which we should still talk, and that occupy a position of exceptional importance in the Basque artistic tradition and in the history of the rural masses.

I refer to works by bertsolariak, or versolaris, as it is now spelled in Spanish. What is a bertsolari exactly? Any person who distinguishes himself in his capacity to improvise in verse on a topic, with a given meter and given music (or monotone). The title of bertsolari is established in competitions that are held on the occasion of a patron saint holiday or some other holiday in a chosen place, in which before a large and attentive audience the competitors face each other two by two. The audience, by their acclaim, serves as the supreme judge, awarding the prize and setting the hierarchy.

The bertsolari improvises quickly. His improvisations are shaped by the dialogue with his opponent; in them, the apparent incoherence of the Basque verses tends to be exaggerated and become real incoherence and verbiage. Logical order breaks down more than ever, and some
verses are joined to others by means of acoustic, visual, and tactile links. The short notice forces strange rhymes, and if the technique of improvisation has not been mastered, one falls into a foolishness that inspires a somewhat disparaging hilarity among the audience, who nevertheless know how to appreciate the merits of an improvisation that contains a concise thought. Here is a model of improvisation that is the work of the previously cited “Bilintx” (nickname of Indalecio Bizcarrondo) from Donostia. He found himself one Sunday at the door of a cider house when there passed before him, riding a mule, a well-to-do peasant from Urnieta, who was known by the name of “Domingo Campaña,” and who, although a mediocre *bertsolari*, tried to compete with the best. The ingenious Bilintx softly sang to himself (to the tune of “Mariya nora zuaz”):

“Mando baten gañian
Domingo Campaña . . .
etzixiak utsikan
mando orren gaña.
Azpiyan dijuana
mandua dek, baña
gañekua ere ba’dek
azpikua aña.
Mando baten gañian
bestia, alajaña!”

(“Domingo Campaña
on a mule . . .
The back of that mule
is not empty.
The one below
is certainly a mule,
but the one above
is another.
My God!
One mule on top of another!”

This epigram, perfect in its genre (the work of the best Gipuzkoan lyric poet of the nineteenth century, in my opinion), contrasts with the compositions of certain less educated improvisers, such as the unfortunate Justo, who had the audacity to compete with the king of those of his time, the famous Xenpelar. They challenged each other about which of the two could say more rhyming absurdities. Those by Xenpelar fit the
canons of this type of poetry, known by almost all European peoples. He started as follows:

“Arano’n sortu dira
amalau nobiyo:
zortzi konpiteruak
sei botikariyo.
Seiña kintalekuak
amar armariyo
guizon batek a pulso
bizkarrian iyo . . .
Arrazoi oni kontra
nork eguinigo diyo?”

(“In Arano there were fourteen bridegrooms:
eight of them confectioners
and six pharmacists.
Ten hundred-pound
wardrobes
were lifted by a single man
with his bare hands . . .
Who could contradict
these ratios?”)

Justo answered:

“Kontzienzi ona dauka
Lezo’ko jendiak
Askoz obia ezpalu
Gurutze Santuak;
urrikari dizkiyet
persona pobriak.”

(“The people of Lezo
are of good conscience . . .
if that of Santa Cruz
were not much better.
I feel sorry
for the poor.”)

That is, with absolute incoherence.

The compositions do not generally evolve in such a ludicrous way. They are often based on mutual attacks, in which some small vice is laid bare or some aspect of the rival or his countrymen is mocked. Other
times, when the audience is smaller, in the intimacy of the cider house, a rhyming and ingenious conversation develops in which the attack almost disappears, making way for brotherly thoughts.³

The performance of the rural bertsolari was not confined to these competitions. On the occasion of certain public events, he composed verses. Civil battles, the wars of the nineteenth century, gave rise to a multitude of verses, coming mostly from the Carlist side (on which almost all the peasants were active). They censured the acts of the liberal leaders (e.g., Mina, Espartero, O’Donnell), underlining at the same time how deeply entrenched were the religious convictions of the Basques. Around 1914, in Bera, my uncle Pío Baroja was able to gather a number of songs that referred to the expedition of 1830, apparently composed by a bertsolari named Martín Olaechea, from the mouth of his grandson. The quality of these songs is variable, but in all of them he appears to follow an old tradition of satire, which is found (although in a much more valuable form, artistically speaking) in the songs of the faction members such as the song of Aramaio, which tells of the hard times of Pedro de Abendaño in 1443, or that of Urrexola (Urruxola). Nor was there any shortage in the nineteenth century of city poets who defended the liberal cause and composed verses against the pretenders to the throne and their henchmen; among them was my grandfather, Serafín Baroja. The fight between the country and the city and their dominant ideologies thus had its corresponding poetical manifestation. In Donostia, Tolosa, Eibar, and elsewhere satirical pages called berso berriak (new verses) were published; these were writings of a Carlist tendency or a liberal one, nationalist, fundamentalist, and so on.

Printed materials with modern spelling finally marked the decline of the popular genre: they are something scholarly in reality, and related to the nationalist movement, which was so innovative in all ways.

Iparraguirre, for example, was simultaneously poet and musician (and a better musician than poet); in the past century there were a great number of authors who wrote careful compositions that used an old song as a melodic core. This makes it clear that the history of poetry is one thing and the history of music is another, despite the fact that we always find them associated. Speaking of Basque music is somewhat difficult for a layman, a simple fan of singing or playing an easy instrument. Those who have tried to define it are feeling their way along, and many years will yet pass without our being able to say anything certain or concrete about it. Aesthetic appraisals and technical appraisals mix viciously, in my opinion, in musical criticism. In any case, we can assign
these general characteristics to Basque song. One that quickly grabs the attention is its “syllablism”: Each musical note corresponds to a syllable. This is contrary in the extreme to that of the southern Spanish songs best known today. Another is the fact that happy songs are in a minor key, in contrast to what happened in other places, where a major key is typical of happiness and minor of sadness. A lively rhythm is not used other than in dance melodies. Lullabies, love songs, and even drinking songs evolve calmly, with neither effort nor frenzy.

From the comparative point of view (a point of view that lends itself to the usual false generalizations if one does not simply bear in mind the difference between the homologous and the analogous), the forms of Basque melodies generally show features that are very similar and even identical sometimes to Irish and English ones and those from some mountainous zones but very little relation to the Spanish, Andalusian, and eastern peninsular ones. One critic from the end of the past century and beginning of this one, F. Gáscue, thought that most Basque melodies were of Breton origin. He and other authors also pointed out the number of coincidences that there were between Basque melodies and those gathered on the Isle of Man, throwing themselves into a statistical task that was later not sufficiently expanded. Nevertheless, one can put forward the conclusion that these coincidences should correspond to cultural influences of the second half of the Middle Ages. Underneath them, or simultaneously, religious music must have exercised a notable influence through Gregorian chant. Seamen and churchmen are the ones who have given Basque music its most profound accents. Above these, the elegant infiltrations of eighteenth-century classicism are clearly perceived, and even easier to determine are those of the Italianizing period, which has its maximum expression in Iparraguirre. Questions of preference have slightly blurred the study of Basque music, which is carried out in our days by staunch Wagnerians or by passionate supporters of the post-Wagnerian French school; both declared enemies of all Italianism, they tried to erase the last chapter from the musical history of the country.

One must stray from this path; by following it, we have arrived at transcribing melodies in a way that sometimes leaves them inexpressive for the people themselves, because the Italian influence was at least as real as any other and should be taken into account by the folklorist.

Dance music deserves its own paragraph. It is shaped, in part at least, by the instrument with which it is played: the txistu, which is usually 43 centimeters long, with two holes in the upper part and one in the
lower. The mouthpiece, made of silver, is beak-shaped. Various rings, also of silver, protect the black and lustrous ebony or whitish boxwood. The txistu, which is played with the left hand, allows great variations to virtuosos. Also from the left arm there hangs a drum, which the musician beats rhythmically with a single drumstick that he carries in his right hand: most often, the txistulari is accompanied by a drummer. The notes come out of the txistu one by one, fluently, the opposite of what happens with other instruments. The rhythms of the dance music are rapid, broken, angular rather than curved. Many are of clear Spanish or peninsular origin, but among those that seem most typical of the country, those in 6/8 or 3/4 time attract the attention of the specialists (such as Father Donosti). We have saved the zortziko, the 5/8 meter, for last. It is as well known as it is characteristic of Basque music, and it appears above all in Gipuzkoan dances because of the popularity it won in the hands of certain composers, although in recent times there have been attempts to eliminate almost all its value, both from the historical point of view and from the aesthetic point of view.

The 5/8 meter is found already in collections of melodies from the first half of the nineteenth century. Some believe that these melodies would have been better transcribed in another meter. But there are not many reasons for defending the illegitimacy of its use, and all the more so because in old Spanish dances from very remote places, and in the music of quite primitive peoples, similar meters have been found. The 5/8 meter suits the character that informs Basque dances: angular and rectilinear rather than curvy or wavy in the movements of the arms and legs, and therefore opposite to the music itself, to the sensuality of Andalusian and southern dances.

I believe that the distinction between curved and straight rhythms can well characterize a country from the musical and choreographic points of view. The straight rhythm is associated with a regularity, uniformity, and symmetry of movement that agree with the spirit of the Basque fine arts but not with that of poetry. Almost all the dances spoken about in chapter 22 could be learned from very simple diagrams. This would be impossible with the Andalusian dances or others morphologically similar to them.6

In some, a sporty artistic conception seems to rule, in others a conception in which obscure feelings, erotic and passionate, play the strongest role. The acrobatic or athletic tendency typical of the Basque is also reflected in very curious pantomimes.
Between what is properly a game (yoku) and what is a dance, there are a number of actions that bear a particular name but are considered to be better classified in the second of the two categories. Father Donosti has recorded the existence of the katadera-dantza, zurrumedantza, almude dantza, trapatan (from Doneztebe), sagardantza, korrea-dantza (from Luzaide), zartain-dantza, itsas-dantza, and ipurdi-dantza (the last three from the Baztan Valley), typical of the Navarrese mountains. In Zuberoa there is also the katadera-dantza and others such as the godaleta-dantza, kilun-dantza, and Jean petit qui danse; in Lapurdi, that of the barber, or rather the beard (bizar-dantza), and some particular ones, such as the dance of the washerwomen, from Bidarte (Bidart), and the zapatain-dantza, from Ainhoa. Many of them tend to be defined based on occasions (as a txistu player did), such as irri-dantza (dances to make people laugh). We can place among this number the almude-dantza, which is usually done after a meal on holidays, inside the house and where there is little room, placing an almud, that is, a measure of one liter and seventy-six centiliters, on the floor: one dances on it to display balance and agility, there being a real tournament in this among the men. Of the same sort are the glass dance, godalet, gobalet-dantza, the Jean petit qui danse, and the dance of the beard, in which the character of a barber shaves his client, cuts his throat, and then brings him back to life by blowing on him with a bellows, all of which must be done without losing the beat. The ipurdi-dantza, that is, the dance of the butt, has a similar character, and the buru-dantza, dance of the head, from Labaien (Labayen; Navarre), which had to be danced with one’s head on the floor, also undoubtedly had it. Some of these pantomimes had words, such as the one from the Baztan Valley, which is performed in the kitchen or next to it, in the pale light of a candle, and which begins with these lines:

“Zikiro beltza ona dut bañan
obea buztan zuria.”

(“The black ram is good, but the one with the white tail is better.”)

Also funny is the zapatain-dantza from Ainhoa, which consists of imitating the labors of a shoemaker, the dance of the chair (katadera-dantza), and some other ones, such as the Gipuzkoan cider house dances, among which one that my uncle records in Zalacain el aventurero can serve as an example. It consisted of imitating the sound of the flute and the bass drum with the voice, and then as if one were eating in a casse-
role dish while having to take off half of one’s clothes, but always singing. Not all, but some, evolved in such a way that it is assumed that they were not at first mere burlesque pastimes.

On the other hand, a collective pantomime that is performed in Otzandio (Ochandiano; Bizkaia) is truly strange. This is the sorguïñ-dantz or sorguïñ-yantz, that is, the dance of the warlocks or of the warlock. It takes place on certain big holidays and unfolds as follows. A medium-sized number of participants pretend to be warlocks who are having their meeting or aquelarre. One that they call king presides over them. Arranged in a special way, they perform different choreographic figures, but suddenly they stop and fall silent. A pilgrim appears, recites pious verses in Basque, and exhorts the warlocks to abandon the error of their ways. Convinced by the pilgrim, the warlocks rebel against their king, who continues being the only follower of the devil. They tie him up, and suddenly the cock crows, and they all run away and disappear. Once the king is tied up, they play all sorts of bad tricks on him.

In this danza, the residents of the Bizkaian town echo known episodes from the history of the country, such as the collective witchcraft crises that took place primarily in the sixteenth century. In 1527, throughout nearby lands to the mountain ranges of Anboto and Gorbeia, there were preachers who were familiar with the Basque language, indoctrinating the natives with regard to witchcraft, and the most famous of them was Brother Juan de Zumárraga, the first archbishop of Mexico. This is testified to by Brother Jerónimo de Mendieta in his Historia eclesiástica indiana, begging the pardon of some critics.7

If we went one step further, we would be dealing with theatrical works strictly speaking. To find them, however, we must go to the extreme opposite, eastern side of the Basque-speaking territory.

In terms of customs, Zuberoa is very similar to Bearn and even to Upper Aragón. Thus, in Ribagorza, certain functions called pastoradas were known in another time, and today one can still see Zuberoan pastorales, which have no parallel in other zones of the Basque Country. These are performances with an archaic flavor that recall medieval theater; they may even be an uninterrupted continuation of it because, although we do not have texts of complete pastorals before the eighteenth century, there are references to other older ones, such as that of Clovis, which must have been performed around 1500. Their characteristic themes are taken from the cheap popular literature called colportage in French and de cordel in Spanish, translated into Basque. But
behind the diverse themes and plots there remain certain invariable elements that are worth underlining.

In each pastoral, in which the roles may be masculine or feminine but are always played by men, there are three acting parts: the good guys, who are the Christians; the bad guys, who are Turks or Moors; and the satans, who form the chorus and but have the opposite function to that assigned to the chorus in Greek tragedy. The Zuberoan chorus is always on the side of the bad guys. The satans, who are very numerous, dance, sing, and make a racket. In their hands they carry a small pole wrapped in ribbons, a marvelous pole with which they can do everything: kill, revive, or transform people. The set is very basic. It has two entrances: one on the left for the good guys and another on the right for the bad guys. Above the second there is a black wooden doll or a rag doll, called the idol or Mahomet, which is moved with strings. The bad guys, the good guys, and the chorus greet it, swear obedience to it, and say their lines to it every time they step onto the stage. On their way to the performance, they all form a curious procession in which, as in the masquerades, the good guys maintain order and the bad guys, behind them, make a ruckus. The pastoral, which lasts from six to ten hours, is performed on the occasion of a big holiday (e.g., Easter Monday, Whitsun, the Nativity of Mary). The good guys, the Christians, always win. Nebuchadnezzar, Vespasian, and William II (any hateful person from tradition or life) are Turks; Abraham and Jeremiah are Christians. The pastoral thus reflects, in an obvious way, the battle between good and evil in all its manifestations, whatever its origin may be.

There remains nothing more than brief reports on the liturgical theater of some Spanish Basque and Navarrese parishes, reports that indicate, in any case, that it developed in the Spanish language.

From music and poetry, we have passed to dance, and from this to mimicry and theater. To complete the overview of the aesthetic activities of the Basque people, a very important subject remains to be dealt with: sports. The Basques are very athletic people. It is not necessary to investigate here whether their particular physical characteristics are a product of the attention they have always given to what is now called physical education or whether their innate musculature naturally inclines them toward sports. What is certain is that the area where the language is conserved, where the most disseminated population is found, where one sees some of the best indicators of Spanish anthropometry (in stature, weight, and girth) is the same area in which athleticism is most developed, always in accordance with traditional forms.
Daily life provides opportunities for training. On certain dates there are occasions for exhibition and competition before a larger or smaller audience. Originally, it seems as if each region had its own athletic modalities; nevertheless, some of them have gone beyond not only their original limits but those of the country as a whole, at the same time acquiring aspects that they did not have before. Such is the case of the game of pelota.

In the eighteenth century, Father Larramendi said that within a province as small as Gipuzkoa, the residents of the part called Beterri were greater fans of pelota than those of the Goierri region, or interior highlands, and that the former held large competitions with the Navarrese and French Basques. The pelotas used weighed four, six, or eight ounces. The squares where they played would have been open and inside or outside of the town. But around that time, the game of pelota must have entered a renovation phase with respect to earlier periods, a phase that gave rise to very diverse modalities of play.

Medieval texts, documents, and tales by travelers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries prove that, by that time, the game of pelota already had numerous followers in Lapurdi, Gipuzkoa, and Navarre and that there were even “professionals,” villagers solicited here and there to play publicly on the occasion of a holiday. The types of game must have varied, but in the beginning they preferentially took on the features of those that in French at the end of the Middle Ages were called games of longue paume and courte paume. The one that the Spanish call largo and the Basques bota luzea is the game most similar to the medieval longue paume. Variations on it are the rebote and the latxua (a favorite of pelota players in the first half of the nineteenth century), in which it is necessary to have a wall, giving rise in its turn to the more modern pelota court. The short game, since the time at which arcades were beginning to be built onto the town halls and other public buildings in the country, is ascribed to them as a less spectacular pastime. Pasaka, mayaha, and bote-luria were variations on the short game that have either disappeared or are in decline. The mechanism or rules of the long games are not simple; it is necessary to make a certain effort to master them, and today most spectators neither understand them nor like them. The teams for the long game have four or five players; those for the short game, two. The pelotas weigh more in the short games, sometimes weighing up to 800 grams. Until the end of the eighteenth century, the pelota players wore a leather glove that was short and small and that later increased in length and changed function. The
scorekeeping of the old games was similar to that of tennis, and the short games, also like tennis, make use of a net.

The long game, which is hardly seen today, is different from rebote, which is more widespread in Lapurdi and the Bidasoa area. In the long game, the ball is served from one end of a field divided into two parts, whereas in rebote one serves from a point closer to the main wall of the two that line the field, a point indicated by the service stone or bota-arria. Initially, the one who serves attacks, those who respond defend themselves, with the five players of each team forming a sort of angle whose vertex is held by the best player.

Around 1860, in Senpere (Saint-Pée-sur-Nivelle), there was an innovator who had the crazy idea to make a glove of interwoven wicker fibers. This glove was imported to Gipuzkoa and enjoyed a success that similar devices did not achieve, nor did racquets, which were invented almost at the same time. From this arose the txistera or pelota basket, which is so well known today as sports equipment. The modifications introduced in the making of the pelotas and the construction of pelota courts with a left-side wall completely changed the concept of the sport in large areas of the country. First of all, the game played against a wall (ble or blaid) with the pelota basket evolved, as did the game played by hitting the ball against the wall with the bare hand, as an individual or in pairs. Modalities such as cesta-punta or “dirty game” spread later; in cesta-punta, the players used a deep basket with which the pelota was held a little. There were also remonte (typical of Navarrese and Gipuzkoan professionals), played with a straighter basket, the paddle game (cultivated mostly by Bizkaians), and the closed court game, in which in addition to the left-hand wall there is also a chamfered corner and other devices that change the direction of the pelota.

Modern professionalism in sports and the opportunities that pelota provides for fans to bet money have meant that these very recent modalities have become very widespread. Their simplicity and status as a source of entertainment have also brought about the fall of the old long games, slow and ceremonious, in which the judges could discuss a play at length and in which each point was announced in Basque according to a precise formula, presided over together by the local authorities and members of the holiday ritual.9

Also in decline are games such as perratxe and vilorta, which are similar to golf, and anikote, which is similar to cricket. The game of skittles for its part offered modalities that were distinctive with respect to
similar games of certain nearby zones on the peninsula, modalities that Aranzadi studied with his particular meticulousness. The Basque skittles ball has a handle, which is different from the Aragonese and Catalan ones, and is normally smooth and smaller; it is similar in this to those used in the Rhine and Switzerland in general. The number of skittles and combinations is large, even though whole areas of the country hardly take part in the game. Punching fights (mutur joka) to knock-down (azpiatzea) or with sticks were once very common between pairs or even rival gangs of boys who were residents of somewhat hostile areas or municipal districts. The makilla, the stick, always went with the villager on his roamings. But the love of competition (and of betting on competition) spread and still spreads, with the result that there are competitions of walkers, stick throwers, woodcutters, and flailers, and with so many tasks, they almost require effort or skill in the use of their muscles. The popular poets have sung the praises of the most famous athletes of every era, with varying degrees of inspiration. But the men of the day easily forget the names of the idols of past generations. The villager is a traditionalist, as we have said many times, but not a historicist. His ideas with respect to concrete events of the past are very limited, and it can be said that only with difficulty can people be found who remember famous people or events from the time of their grandparents. What happened when the men of the their generation were young is remembered without much certainty: behind it lies the myth, Napoleon, the Moors, the heathens, and the like.
I will now present some of the general, theoretical conclusions that I believe can be reached by reading this book. By throwing myself into such an abstract task I may perhaps come out worse than when I limit myself to gathering, ordering, and interpreting very concrete and defined facts. Nevertheless, to compensate for my lack of speculative experience, I was lucky to have as a guide a recognized authority in the field of ethnology, the famous American researcher Melville J. Herskovits, whose treatise, *Man and His Works*, is one of the best that can be used at present if one wants to see the full complexity of problems that is inherent in the analysis of human culture. Thus, in the statement and development of the theses that follow, I will testify that the study of that treatise was very fruitful for me and that, on many occasions, what is presented in it as a general proposition needed only to be stated in a particular way, illustrating it with examples relevant for our present purposes for whoever has had the patience to read the preceding chapters one by one.

I first maintain, then, that the culture of the Basque people (like all cultures) is found in a clear relationship of derivation with the components of biological, mesological, and psychological human existence. Given that the physical constitution of man shapes many of his fundamental interests, and given that the performance of the four great biological functional circles of which we spoke in the introduction dictates many of his acts, there is no need to go too far in the defense of the first part of this relationship. Until now, the action of the strictly biological on culture has been clear. But it is not so clear in other aspects in which it has been sought. In no way can we accept the racist theory, for example, according to which each physical human variation possesses its characteristic cultural forms, or the theory that maintains that there are races that monopolize each cultural creation and others that are mere depen-
dents. We know that culture is contagious, that it is diffused across the greatest borders, in accordance with different systems that have little to do with those that reign in the transmission of physical traits from generation to generation. We will speak a little more of such systems in the pages that follow. In short, all peoples show a certain cultural originality, but at the same time, they depend on others in this respect.

Nor should we deny the existence of a close relationship between culture and what is called the physical environment, although mesological determinism is as exaggerated and imprecise as raciological determinism. By observing the Basque people in particular, we note that there is a great opportunity to point out remarkable cultural variations within the seven provinces where they live, between areas that are differentiated from the climatic and geological points of view. On the other hand, within a very similar physical climatic environment, one can see notable cultural variations in the north of the peninsula from the Basque Country to Galicia. These two facts, which seem to be opposites at first glance, strongly suggest the very relative meaning that can be given to the term *physical environment*. It is wrong and not very useful to speak of it as something active and always the same. We have seen many times how the meaningful elements of a given environment, of a single natural counterstructure, change according to the technical resources and successive and different necessities created by cultures or social situations. The iron mountains near the present-day capital of Bizkaia had little cultural meaning until well into the Middle Ages; the Cantabrian Sea lacked great nautical movement for centuries. In contrast, mountain ranges and chains that at the beginning of medieval times had a fundamental defensive meaning have lost it today. The concept of land traffic changed many times from the Roman Empire to now, such that even the physical features and the landscape of the north have been modified by a specific series of techniques and discoveries throughout history. The biological functional circles never lose meaning, but they close in different ways and at different times. Nor is there variation in the psychological motives of the different generations; they are identical in all races and in all cultures. But although we may give all the value they have to the facts studied by general psychology (e.g., will, instincts, emotions), they are not sufficient in themselves to explain their inherent cultural complexity, even within the margins we will indicate later. We believe, then, that the importance of the biological, mesological, and psychological components in the constitution of any culture is something that should be
evaluated by the ethnologist, now that it is better defined, even while other realities are kept in mind.

One of the fundamentals must be that culture is learned. This proposition can be well defended, and with many examples, by anyone who has read my book. From the time that man is born until he dies, he acquires a set of knowledge, techniques, prejudices, conceptual limitations, and so on that constitute the greater part of his mental wealth of knowledge, similar to that of his neighbors and fellow countrymen. The process of cultural assimilation in the Basque Country, as in any other country, shows modalities among which one can distinguish two of maximum importance, the first according to which the elements of the culture are inculcated in the child in a way of which he or she is hardly aware, and the other in accordance with which the child, or adult, assimilates those elements more consciously, through instruction and learning. The most appropriate way to produce cultural changes is the second; in general, the first causes more conservative tendencies. In any case, both very often make individual behavior take on the form of an automatic response to given cultural stimuli. In other cases, however, the reaction of the individual or a group in opposition to its culture provokes changes and perturbations, such as some of those described when discussing religiosity.

The most efficient transmitter of culture is language, which is simultaneously offered to us as a sort of cultural index. It is forgivable to insist, in our particular case, on the importance of the Basque language in specifying many of the cultural characteristics of the people who speak it and in reconstructing their history. Any language is doomed to variations, similar in many respects to cultural variations in space and time, and it reflects them faithfully.

Through common words, it can be seen that concepts that hardly have meaning today in the daily life of a Basque speaker were meaningful at an earlier time. All people use today words that are quite unclear in their etymology for the uneducated, such as aizkor (ax), ortzegun (Thursday), and sorguiñ (warlock), or words with semantic variations as curious as those of the word zomorr, which, like Latin larva, means mask, ghost, or ugly creature. The historical-cultural importance of these and many other words is obvious. But sometimes the language has also lost words that reflect very common concepts and that seem to be absolutely necessary. Thus, only scholars now know the common name for “tree” in Basque before the spread of the Spanish borrowing, arbola. The same thing has happened with other very important nouns. Variations in the vocabulary and phonetic and syntactic nuances within
a single linguistic area sometimes correspond to cultural variations with a similar distribution, although the existence of an absolute correlation between a way of speaking and all the cultural traits of a country can never be defended. Sometimes the latter remain where, for the most part, the language retreats; other times, the language is conserved where the former are lost. Let us recall various significant examples.

In large areas of Araba and Navarre, where Basque was spoken for centuries, the language disappeared recently. With it, the set of idiomatic symbols of the inhabitants of those zones changed radically, and their mentality underwent a transformation: the modes of expression created by the Spanish culture, the clichés, the topics, and so on, force us to join the people of Araba and Navarre with their neighbors to the south if we consider the idiomatic cultural index, despite some Basqueisms that are used. Nevertheless, the house of the villager in Araba near Agurain, or of the Navarrese inhabitant from the Goñi Vally, is often the same as that lived in by his ancestors 150 years ago, who spoke Basque. Many of their activities have not changed much either from then to now, and this connects them to a great extent with their neighbors to the north. On the other hand, observe that whereas the Gipuzkoan, who is active and innovative in technical questions, maintains his old language, the residents of many Pyrenean and sub-Pyrenean valleys, which are much more culturally monotonous, have lost it.

In any of these cases, the awareness that the language unites or divides is alive, and through it the people define the position of all social units with respect to their own. Anyone who speaks Basque (euskaldun) is considered as belonging to the same unit; the other is composed of those who do not speak it (erdaldunak). But even within the Basque unit, in other times more than now, there was a certain caution against those who spoke a dialect very different from one’s own; and this caution is reflected in some existing superstitious beliefs. A great part of the phenomenon known as ethnocentrism, which is so common on all continents and in all ages, is based on the awareness of linguistic unity or diversity, to which other dividing or uniting touches are added, such as physical, ethical, and religious, true or false. The Basque people are reputed to be very ethnocentric by their neighbors. We must underline that, from a scientific point of view, such ethnocentrism is founded on facts that would be very worthwhile to study and that it is neither more nor less reprehensible than any other. The antiquity of their language, their greater physical vigor, a certain general level of economic prosperity, and their social sense are the arguments that the Basques put forth
to declare themselves superior to the neighboring peoples. The Spanish, for their part and for the same purpose, recall their literary, artistic, and wartime glories and their proven ability to create an important state. In seeing themselves as outstanding, the Basques are essentially the same as the rest of the inhabitants of the globe.

Their culture, like all cultures, has a special structure that can be deconstructed into different fractions to clarify many of the problems that arise in analyzing it.

The smallest fraction of these is the trait or cultural element. It is difficult to define such traits briefly and in general terms and quite easy to isolate them in reality. For now I will content myself with pointing out that, in numerous passages in this book, we have referred to many of those that can be found in the Basque territory; among them, the best defined are those concerning material culture, such as layas, plows, flails, yokes and other implements, tools, and articles of clothing, whose form and distribution were indicated through drawings and, on occasion, maps.

Above the cultural element is the sector. It is sometimes difficult to separate this unit from the previous one. But to give an idea of its reach, a set of rites will serve (e.g., baptismal, wedding or funeral, calendar-based ones, constructive ones); a myth; an agricultural, shepherding, industrial, or marine system; a hereditary, municipal, or other studied pattern.

The term cultural sector thus alludes more often to a group of functions than to a group of forms. However, once various studies have been carried out on the geographic distribution of elements and sectors, there emerges, quite distinctly and precisely, the notion of a cultural area, that is, a certain territory of varying size but always small, in which we see the greatest incidence of a variety of these types.

The similarity in the distribution of many of the sectors and elements that we have studied, the regularity with which the maps that illustrate this book indicate certain of their limits, can serve us better than a definition in attempting to understand the meaning of cultural area, which is much less absolute than that of the famous cycles of the German ethnological school of Graebner. Theoretically, every area has its climax or central point of more concentrated and typical forms, and its marginal zones, in which these (in a more or less regular way) are lost when mixed with ones that are also marginal but of another area. There is no doubt that, in our particular case, the center of Navarre
and a great part of Araba are today marginal zones, that the extreme south of these provinces is almost entirely within distinct cultural areas, Castilian–Aragonese ones, and that the west of Bizkaia seems to belong to another one, the Cantabrian–Asturian area. Some authors (e.g., Rodney Gallop, Montandon) maintain that the most concentrated forms of Basque culture are found not in Spain but in the French Basque Country. Personally, I do not agree with this point of view, and I maintain that the climax of such a culture must be sought in the parts of Gipuzkoa and oceanic Navarre that are still not completely industrialized. Zuberoa, which the same authors consider to be very traditional and conservative, is, in fact; but the elements and sectors that shape their culture in great proportions (e.g., housing, masquerades, pastorals) are notably different from the most typical ones of the rest of the country and connect with the high Pyrenean ones in a direct way. On the other hand, if factory industrialism is disfiguring much of the Spanish Basque culture in Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia, in the French Basque Country some special characters of the tourist industry are being exaggerated, such that in it “traditions” are fabricated for the use of foreigners. Furthermore, we must not forget that if, in agreement with the opinion of many of the most expert present-day ethnologists, determining the general configuration of cultures is as interesting as examining them in light of morphological and spatial concepts, there is no doubt that, within the set of European peoples, the personality of the Spanish Basque is more marked and characteristic than that of the French Basque. The same factors that today make it blur arose from this. The strength of the old marine, mining, and industrial enterprises born at the end of the Middle Ages and beginning of the Modern Age has been a large factor of disintegration. For example, it provoked the presence of great concentrations of workers consisting largely of foreigners and the development of the bureaucracy.

In every culture such disintegrating factors are found beside other opposing ones, that is, factors of integration, adjusted to permanent aspects, within the category of universals.

There is no report on human society that does not adjust itself to a cultural scheme in which we can distinguish, first of all, the material culture with all its economic and technological results; second, social institutions (organizations, education, political structure); third, the world of beliefs and the control of powers, the links between man and the universe; fourth, the aesthetic; and fifth, language. Studying these aspects in accordance with one category or another is a matter of preference and taste. In the preceding chapters we followed a method similar
to the one under discussion. But no sensible person believes today that priority of birth or greater original importance can be assigned to some of such aspects of culture over others. Nor is it of great interest to discuss old hypotheses, according to which the first human being was, above all, an economist, and then a theologian, or otherwise, first a theologian and then an economist, artist, or sociologist.

The classifications of the sciences of conceptual divisions of human activities made by philosophers and thinkers and popularized by pedagogues—despite the fact that we recognize the existence of the afore-mentioned aspects—have a very relative value; furthermore, one that is clearer for the researching ethnologist than for the subjects who form part of a society and who possess a culture that may not be a bookish and Euro-American universitarian one. Thus it turns out that, sometimes, certain classifications change the sense of an investigation, such that it becomes stagnant for many years. This type of hindering may survive, for example, if one takes as correct the radical division established by some between the ethnology of the so-called primitive peoples and that of the Europeans, or if one circumscribes the study of the latter to specific aspects, as many do when focusing only on the uses and customs of the peasants who seem the strangest and most archaic to the eyes of a city dweller. There is no reason why, when investigating the ethnological structure of a European people, we dispense in limine with the analysis of a series of aspects of culture, considering them outside the field of what is popularly called folkloric. No one has the right to limit our horizons through an initial discursive restriction, such as the one assumed by most of the definitions of folklore that allude to specific social classes as the sole object of investigation. In any case, each researcher would do well to expand his field of action to the fullest possible extent. It is not in vain that culture is something dynamic, both that of the people considered most primitive and that of the most civilized.

This means that it can and should be studied in light of the opposing principles of change and tradition, and insisting on only one of these leads to pernicious results, like those popularized in some works on Basque folklore in which a supposed secular inertia and a spirit of immobility are stressed too much. It is not possible to explain the present-day characteristics of the Basque people, nor those that they had in the period immediately preceding our own, by a phantasmagorical traditional spirit that would carry us back to a “native” age, as some Romantic writers such as Chaho, and also certain more severe researchers, influenced by the English doctrine of the “survivals,” have tried to do. The change
happens in various ways, never in agreement with a unilateral order, like that indicated by researchers of the English school of evolution, nor by a single system, like that of the German diffusionists. Consideration of the principles of change and tradition obliges us to carry out a series of complex historical investigations, to project diachronically everything observed in one area and in one moment. This diachronic projection allows us to indicate the different cultural foci in which many elements and many sectors originated and that are still in effect today but that have suffered successive reinterpretations.

From the strict point of view of the historian, the culture of the present-day Basque people can be considered to be the result of the following cultural cycles. Let us never consider these cycles as absolute, categorical, and hypothetical in their meaning as those of the historical-cultural schools of Graebner and Schmidt; their chronological and geographic meaning is also diverse:

1) Frankish–Cantabrian cycle of the hunter-gatherer peoples of the Upper Paleolithic period
2) coastal cycle of the hunter-gatherer peoples of the Epipaleolithic and Old Neolithic periods
3) Pyrenean cycle of the agricultural and shepherding peoples of the Modern Neolithic and Bronze Age
4) Vasconic cycle of the agricultural and shepherding peoples of the early Iron Age
5) Cantabrian–Aquitaine cycle of the early Christian Era
6) colonial Roman cycle, first to fifth centuries AD
7) primitive medieval Vasconic cycle, fifth to ninth centuries AD
8) middle medieval Vasconic cycle, ninth to thirteenth centuries AD
9) late medieval Vasconic cycle, fourteenth to fifteenth centuries AD
10) modern Hispano-French cycle, sixteenth to eighteenth centuries AD
11) contemporary cycle, nineteenth to twentieth centuries AD

The first four are known to us because of archaeological and linguistic research more than anything else, and the next five are known through the language, through written texts of various types, and through cultural and ethnological traits that remain in effect. The last two are the primary objects of our observation.
Today, a historical-cultural analysis should extend to the consideration of hundreds and even thousands of elements so that it will deserve the confidence of serious investigators. But with the object of giving the reader an idea of what it could result from, and of the enormous interest of such an enterprise, I have prepared the following charts, in which, in a synoptic way (sometimes also hypothetical), we underline some of the complexes that can be considered the most characteristic of various of the listed cycles. I begin now, for reasons of material abundance and certainty, with the fifth cycle, to which various very concrete sectors can be assigned and on which I did a particular study not long ago now that today would have to be somewhat modified.

First I will state, however, that we must place the beginning and development of very important sectors in the two previous cycles: nothing less than the introduction of the agricultural and shepherding economy, that of metallurgy and ceramics, and many beliefs linked to them. In earlier times, we could maintain that the so-called western Pyrenean race appears, closely related to the human type most common today in the country. It remains to be determined in what historical position we should place the introduction of the direct predecessor language of Basque, whether in the first, second, or third cycle.

5) Cantabrian–Aquitaine Cycle of the Early Christian Era

A) Social institutions: Family with a certain predominance of the woman in matters of inheritance of property. Enhancement of the relatives through the maternal line. Couvade. Larger social divisions than the family, in the form of three wider and wider units. Small settlements on high ground and concentrated in the north. Larger cities, with a certain political-economic importance in the south. Councils of elders. War leaders. Native gangs. Native justice also.

B) Economy: Agriculture carried out by the woman, with simpler implements than the plow. Little development of livestock and shepherding. Gathering of fruit and hunting as complementary bases of economic life. Scant development of navigation and commerce.

C) Technology: Houses built on a square plan, gabled roofs, and façade under one of the ridges. Granaries raised on pillars. Shoes of leather and fabrics of plant fibers. Developed knowledge of the toxic and medicinal properties of plants. Differentiated arms. Cavalry. Beer as a fermented drink.

E) *Art*: Epic poetry and war chants. Family and war dances to the sound of the flute. Fine arts little developed in permanent substances.

F) *Language*: Relationship of the language spoken in the Aquitaine zone with present-day Basque, reflected in inscriptions from the period immediately thereafter. Celtic influence on the Aquitaine language, related also to the Iberians of the eastern peninsula. Celtism in the southern areas.

6) **Colonial Roman Cycle, First to Fifth Centuries AD**

A) *Social institutions*: Reorganization of family and tribal life in accordance with Roman principles. Determination of a social stratification of a general economic and political type (from citizens to slaves). Development of urban nuclei with their corresponding institutions. Ethnic complexity.

B) *Economy*: Agriculture with a plow. Introduction of various species of tree and annually cultivatable crops. Development of livestock and shepherding and of mining. Foundation of towns and *fundis* in the locations of towns or present-day places on the plains. Substitution of local or tribal circulation for general, imperial circulation. Creation of commercial nuclei along the roads. Exploitation of forests.

C) *Technology*: New building techniques. Widespread use of draft animals.

D) *Religion and magic*: Urban cults and mythical Greco-Latin conceptions with a folkloric reflection (*lamiñak*). New magical practices, reflected perhaps in the vocabulary (*sorguiñ*).

E) *Art*: Development of certain decorative geometric motifs in stone carving, and of other symbolic ones with special religious meaning in the art of rural districts.

F) *Language*: Influx of the Latin vocabulary on the Vasconic language strictly speaking, reflected in the common words now in toponymy.

7) **Primitive Medieval Vasconic Cycle, Fifth to the Ninth Centuries AD**

A) *Social institutions*: Creation of small governing institutions that substitute for imperial power. Decline of the cities and their particular
institutions. Fight against external enemies. Closer stratification of rural society (from little war chiefs to servants and prisoners of war).

B) **Economy**: Greater development of agriculture and especially of stockbreeding and shepherding. Foundation of new towns and *fundí* like those of the preceding period, but with a greater defensive and warlike sense. Halt of great circulation and decline of commerce.

C) **Technology**: Introduction of some implements (flail?) and industrial equipment (water mills).


E) **Art**: Continuity and development of funerary art (steles and decorative motifs), scarcity of work in stone.

F) **Language**: Introduction of the first words referring to the Christian religion in the language. Fixing of many of its present-day characteristics.

8) **Middle Medieval Vasconic Cycle, Ninth to Thirteenth Centuries AD**

A) **Social institutions**: Installation of the Navarrese monarchy and other rival institutions (e.g., counties). Determination of the regions considered today. First development of new citizen social classes (industrial and commercial) and of the municipal system.

B) **Economy**: Foundation of new cities and towns in accordance with very concrete formal plans. Renaissance of some ancient ones and of commerce. Beginning of maritime enterprises. Development in the east and south of the country of general circulation with a primordial mystical meaning but with wide derivations (pilgrimages).

C) **Technology**: Development of the nautical arts (Norman influence).

D) **Religion**: Progress of Christianity toward the north. Diffusion of some devotions (in relation to the pilgrimage routes). Formation of ideas about the “heathens” and their particular characteristics (relation of these to dolmens and cromlechs). Religious pagan-Christian syncretism.

E) **Art**: Introduction of some styles (especially the Romanesque) and fusion of them with the old ones. Delay in the disappearance of the same.
F) Language: Total introduction of idiomatic symbols of Christianity in the Basque language. Development of pious toponymy on one hand and descriptive and strategic toponymy on the other. Innovations in the nautical, industrial, and commercial lexicon. Appearance of the oldest of the manuscripts of those known today with Basque words.

9) Late Medieval Vasconic Cycle, Fourteenth to Fifteenth Centuries AD

A) Social institutions: New urban institutions. Fight between the monarchic and municipal powers on one side and the rural nobility on the other. Gang wars and determination of still existing lineages. Fight of the bishopric against secular communities. Political-radical differentiation of the different regions of the Basque Country.

B) Economy: Development of general circulation by sea and land with a strictly commercial and industrial character. Increase in imports. Development of mining and metallurgy for the purpose of exportation.

C) Technology: Development of the arms industry in particular locations and of metallurgy in general.


E) Art: Introduction of new styles (Gothic) and partial fusion with the old ones. Delay in the disappearance of the same.

10) Modern Hispano-French Cycle, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries AD

A) Social institutions: Peak of the municipalities. Definitive incorporation of all of the Basque–Navarrese country into two rival Renaissance monarchies, Spain and France. Disappearance of the power of the old families as such. Birth of the concept of the original Basque democracy. Development of democratic racism (Bizkaian). First revolutionary perturbations in cities and the countryside. Development of professional institutions.

B) Economy: Introduction of new plant species of great economic importance. Development of great navigation and of the fishing industry. Peak of the relationship with the Indies and enrichment of the country as a consequence of it. Renovation of urban and rural constructions. Increase in the scattered population.
C) Technology: New procedures in the smelting of iron and in metallurgy. Development of naval architecture and arms. First appearance of certain technical professions (e.g., doctors) and then of pedagogical establishments and scientific societies.

D) Religion: Great activity in the battles against heresies and in the ones that arose within Christianity, in Spain and France (distinguished Basque personalities in Jesuitism and Jansenism). Violent repression of the collective, rural witchcraft movements and reinterpretation of them.


II) Contemporary Cycle, Nineteenth to Twentieth Centuries AD

A) Social institutions: Growth of the urban nuclei. Appearance in mass, within them, of foreign elements. Political battles, wars, and revolutions in the city and country. Loss of ancient charters and regional freedoms. Development of nationalism and of socialist tendencies. Greater and greater dependence on national and international situations. Decline of the old social classifications.

B) Economy: Creation of large factory and industrial nuclei. Modification of general circulation. Agricultural industrialization. Development of derivative industries of stockbreeding. Disappearance of old local and rural industries (e.g., fabrics, pottery) due to the commerce of national and international manufacturers.

C) Technology: Modification of technical procedures in general (in construction, agriculture, stockbreeding). Increase in cultural institutions with pedagogical and educational purposes and of professional specialization, regulated by the state.

D) Religion: Relative breaking of religious feeling, with the appearance of isolated individuals or groups hostile to Catholicism. Successive reorganizations of large groups of believers.
E) Art: Decline of the traditional fine arts. Rapid flowering and decline of regional poetry and music. Peak of certain sports that are industrialized and transformed at the same time.

F) Language: Retreat of Basque in a wave around the south and in industrial and urban centers. Scientific study of the language. Attempts at bringing it back to life.

* * *

Within these cycles, a great number of traits and complexes appear, and many others disappear, but it is rare that one would not have left its mark—that is, if it is not present in multiple reinterpretations. The fundamental mission of future ethnologists will be to specify with the greatest precision the different cultural centers from which such elements were diffused. This means casting a gaze across—at the very least—wide regions of the European continent. At the end of this task, one would be able to indicate clearly which are the cultural areas and succession of cycles typical of such continental areas that have the greatest relationship with the Basque area. I will provisionally suggest an answer, leaving aside the language for the moment. Overall, the Basque culture, considered both synchronically and diachronically, feels to me to be more similar to that of the mountainous regions of southern Germany, of the southern Rhine basin and Alpine or pre-Alpine territories in general, than to that of the closest Spanish plateau and Mediterranean zones, than to the western Atlantic, and than (of course) to those of the plains of northern Europe. An entire monograph would be needed to adequately justify this opinion. In it, one would have to examine everything from the cultural elements or complexes with the greatest spread on the continent (e.g., the holiday of Saint John) to those of a more particular nature (e.g., layak, kaikuak, weed dances), passing through others of medium diffusion. The variability of the Basque culture (like that of all cultures) adjusts itself to a sociological principle, according to which the smaller social units are less apt for variation than the bigger ones. The big city is always a center for revolutions and changes of all types. The town, in relation to it, is more conservative, even more so the rural neighborhood, and to an even greater degree the family that lives in an isolated farmhouse, like that of the villager about whom we spoke in the corresponding chapter. The folkloric fact must be sought in accordance with this order of greater or lesser variability. But one must
not take it so seriously that we radically limit our investigations, as some folklorists we have already mentioned do.

Thus, the analysis of Basque culture can be carried out using absolutely scientific methods because it shows numerous regularities, as all cultures do. We are far from the days in which the concepts of history and science opposed each other like utter antagonists. A single subject can be the object of historical research and of qualitative and quantitative and statistical analyses in general that, while they reflect the aforementioned regularities, also express variations and important limits of probabilities.
Notes

Introduction

1. A summary of von Uexküll’s research can be found in the book *Streifzüge durch die Umwelten von Tieren und Menschen* (Hamburg, 1956).


4. From the first edition of *Patterns of Culture* (Boston and New York, 1934).

5. Sometimes an apparent prelogism is the result of the failure of the observer to comprehend the line of thought of the observed individual or group.

Chapter I: Types of Town Typical of the Basque Country: Structure of the Settlements of the Basque-Speaking Region and of the Central and Southern Areas of Araba and Navarre

1. I will not try in the notes to do more than indicate the sources I have used most regularly to write this book. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to me, given the character of the work, to add to the dry enumeration of authors and titles a few considerations that perhaps, even if only as a reagent to my own ideas, may be of use to the reader. Thus, I pour out here some of the “bibliographic experiences” that I have had from the age of fifteen to the present, experiences that are not exempt from certain predilections.

The fundamental works consulted to gain a complete idea of the geography of the Basque Country for the present purposes are the following:

1) *Geografía general del país vasco navarro*. This work, published in installments from 1910 to 1921 by the publishing house Editorial Martin of Barcelona, was written by various authors. The two volumes on Navarre, for the most part, were written by Julio de Altadill; that on Gipuzkoa, by Serapio Múgica; that on Araba, by Vicente Vera, and that on Bizkaia, by Carmelo de Echegaray. In addition, there is a general volume written by various specialists in geology, anthropology, ethnography, and so on. Their contributions will be cited as necessary. The Geografía is an immense arsenal of facts, whose lack of unity sometimes makes it all the more interesting. Its illustrations are very good, and I have borrowed various figures from it.

2) *Diccionario geográfico-estadístico-histórico de España y sus posesiones de Ultramar*, by Pascual Madoz, 16 volumes (Madrid, 1845–1850). No praise is enough
for this work, which today is again appreciated as it should be, and whose sections on the Basque–Navarrese provinces and towns were written with particular affection.

3) *Diccionario geográfico-estadístico de España y Portugal*, 11 volumes (Madrid, 1826–1829), by Sebastián de Miñano. The articles are sometimes odd, but for the most part the information is taken from another, somewhat older work, the

4) *Diccionario geográfico-histórico de España por la Real Academia de la Historia. Sección I. Comprende el reyno de Navarra, señorío de Vizcaya y provincias de Alava y Guipúzcoa*, 2 volumes (Madrid, 1802). Also somewhat fundamental in its genre, though written perhaps for political purposes, like other works of the same era that we will see in later chapters. Written by various authors.

For the French Basque Country there are several curious old books and a multitude of smaller modern books that are less interesting and that will be cited in the next chapter and beyond. The geological structure and the morphology of the country were the object of particular attention for Ramón Adán de Yarza, who wrote the following:

5) “Descripción física y geológica de la provincia de Alava,” in *Memorias de la comisión del mapa geológico de España* (Madrid, 1885), from which fig. 20 was taken.

6) “Descripción física y geológica de la provincia de Guipúzcoa,” in the same *Memorias* (Madrid, 1884).

7) “Descripción física y geológica de la provincia de Vizcaya,” idem. (Madrid, 1892). In the general volume (p. 786) of the *Geografía general* cited above, there is a “Descripción físico-geológica” of the whole country, as part of the same summary as the preceding ones.

8) Subsequently, there were published a great number of geological and botanical investigations, as well as others in other fields, whose interest for us now is not very great. However, some modern articles are worth reading, such as that by F. Hernández Pacheco, “Rasgos fisiográficos y geológicos del suroeste y este de las tierras navarras,” in *Príncipe de Viana* viii, no. 26 (1947), pp. 73–86, which is beautifully illustrated. The explanatory reports on the geological map published to date are not all those that touch on the Spanish part of the country, which, in total, correspond to pages 37–41, 60–66, 86–91, 110–118, 137–144, 169–175, 204–208, 243–245, 281–283, and 320–321. It is worthwhile to remember the descriptions by Gómez de Arteche in his *Geografía histórico-militar de España y Portugal*, I (Madrid, 1859), pp. 172–204 and 357–426, in which the network of rivers is examined from a curious strategic point of view.

9) To get a good first ethnological view of the nuances observable in the different parts of the country, it is best to read various monographs, beginning with those that appeared in the *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* from 1925 to 1927:


   b) J. de Markiegi, “Lugar de Aprikoano (Kuartango)-Alaba,” op. cit., v, pp. 33–43 (Zone B), the monograph from which fig. 12 was taken.

   c) J. M. de Barandiarán, “Pueblo de Kortezubi (Bizcaya)-Barrios de Basondo y Térliz,” op. cit., v, pp. 45–67 (Zone A).


g) J. M. de Barandiarán, “Pueblo de Aurizperri (Espinal),” op. cit., vi, pp. 1–18 (Pyrenean Zone B).

h) Juan de Arín Dorronsoro, “Pueblo de Atáun,” op. cit., vi, pp. 17 bis, 69 (Zone A).


j) Juan de Esnaola, “Pueblo de Markiniz (Marquínez),” op. cit., vi, pp. 93–116. Southeastern mountains of Araba (Zone B).


10) The environment reflected in other monographs on towns in middle and pre-Pyrenean Navarre, like those of L. de Urabayen listed below, contrasts with that described in most of the above monographs.


11) As an introduction (particularly idyllic) to the French Basque Country, see Pierre Lhande, Autour d’un foyer basque. Récits et idées (Paris, 1907), which sometimes contradicts the following:


13) Very recently, Barandiarán published several substantial descriptions of rural life in French Basque towns in Ikuska (Instituto Vasco de Investigaciones): Sara, Lower Pyrenees.


c) As a guideline for research in the field, the “Cuestionario para un estudio etnográfico del pueblo vasco,” by the same author, in nos. 8–9, cit., pp. 25–36.

14) With respect to maps, we have the following:

a) The Mapa topográfico nacional en escala de 1:50.000, by the Dirección General del Instituto Geográfico y Catastral de Madrid, of which the following pages are of interest to us: 18, 35–41, 59–66, 85–91, 110–118, 137–143, 169–175, 204–207, 243–245, 281–283, 319–321, the last of which cover the southern extremes of Navarre. Almost all have been published.

b) Carte de l’Etat-Major, 1:80,000 or 1:50,080, French; pp. 226, 227, 238, 239, 250.
c) Carte de la France dressée par ordre du Ministre de l’Interieur, in color (as are the cited Spanish maps), scale of 1:100,000; pp. ix–34, x–34, viii–35, ix–35, ix–36, x–36, x–37. There are others at a scale of 1:200,000 (pp. 69, 70, 76), and 1:320,000 (p. 29).


c) For overall studies, the map of Colonel Prudent, 1:500,000 (pp. x and xiii) is very useful, as are the Michelin (1:200,000), Taride (1:250,000), and Campbell (1:320,000) tourist maps, also the one by the Touring Club of France.

f) The maps of the Spanish provinces, at a scale of 1:200,000, also published by the Instituto Geográfico, are very useful because they are drawn so clearly.

g) The Michelin and Taride maps of Spain (1:400,000) have had numerous imitators that are less than stellar in their precision.

h) Data on proper names are indicated well on the provincial maps, now a century old, of the Atlas del Diccionario Geográfico, by Madoz, made by Francisco Coello. There are a great number of later atlases inspired by Coello’s; Coello’s atlas is also very interesting because of its city maps and areas at a larger scale, which appear in the margins of the pages (and from which I have taken, for example, figs. 13 and 14).

i) Among smaller maps, the one by Chias (Barcelona) at a variable scale (Colección de cartas orográficas de las provincias de España) deserves mention.

j) The Sociedad de Estudios Vascos published a map of the whole country (1:200,000) on four pages, with the names in modern spelling, which would be useful if it weren’t blurry and printed on mediocre paper.

k) From the historical point of view, the maps of Tomás López, like the one of Navarre, dedicated to Miguel de Múzquiz (made following that by J. de Horta and others, and published in 1772), the one of Gipuzkoa, the one of Bizkaia (1769), and the one of Araba (1770) are valuable because they were made at the end of the old regime, before the simultaneously liberal and centralist reforms.

l) Those published earlier are of hardly any interest because they suffer from a serious lack of precision. Some of them can be seen in the Geografía general del país vasco-navarro, as can those by López.

m) Finally, it is worth remembering various provincial maps made by natives or residents of the country, such as that of Gipuzkoa by J. J. de Olazábal (1849), that of Bizkaia by T. de Loizaga (1846), and that of Araba by Martín Saracibar (1845).

15) There are several books that are fundamentally interesting because of their graphs; among these is the Album gráfico-descriptivo del país vascongado. Años 1914–1915.


4. I will soon publish a work on these issues.


7. Fredegar lxxviii.


9. Moret, *Annales del reyno de Navarra* (Pamplona, 1766), pp. 139–143. The *Diccionario* by the Academia de la Historia (see note 1, number 4) provides a graph of the 1366 census data.

10. From the point of view of road communications, the work by A. Sanjuán Cañete is interesting: *La frontera de los Pirineos occidentales* (Toledo, 1936), which includes abundant direct ethnographic observations and maps of the roads through the Pyrenees. Also useful is the *Itinerario descriptivo geográfico estadístico y mapa de Navarra por el brigadier de caballeria don Antonio Ramírez Arcas* (Pamplona, 1848) for the study of old road communications, which in the eighteenth century inspired more general maps, such as *Les monts Pyrénées, ou sont remarqués les passages de France en Espagne. Dressé sur les mémoires les plus nouveaux. Par le Sr. Sanson Géographe Ordinaire du Roy. Paris, 1719.* Commercial routes between neighboring zones will be dealt with later.


**Chapter 2: Roots of the Present Types of Town: Ancient Times**

1. The bibliography on Basque prehistory is very extensive. It includes a brief summary study by J. M. Barandiarán, *El hombre primitivo en el país vasco* (San Sebastián & Zarauz, no date given). There is also a more modern edition. The data gathered there synthetically are supplemented by the corresponding bibliography by the same author, in “Catalogue des stations préhistoriques des Pyrénées basques,” in *Ikuska*, no. 1 (November–December, 1946), pp. 24–40.

Many years earlier, Arturo Campión published his *Orígenes del pueblo euskaldun. Celtas, iberos y euskaros* (San Sebastián, 1897), a vast arsenal of data and observations on the protohistory of the country, of which a large part is devoted to reconstruction in light of linguistics. I did not mention this work, later revised by its author, in the first edition of this book, perhaps in error on my part. But I think anyone who compares it with the present work will be able to see how different their proposals are.

Figure 21 was made in light of the data presented by L. Urabayen in *La casa navarra* (Madrid, 1929), pp. 110–112, on man-made caves, and fig. 22 is based on Barandiarán’s sketch in “Contribución al estudio de los establecimientos humanos y zonas pastoriles del país vasco,” in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* vii (1927), pp. 137–141, to which some references to more recently discovered establishments have been added. Also see J. Caro Baroja, “Observaciones generales sobre el estudio del país
vasco desde los puntos de vista lingüístico, etnográfico y antropológico,” in Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País i, 3 (1945), pp. 225–236.

2. After the research by Bosch-Gimpera and other authors, to which Barandiarán refers in the book cited in note 1, various pieces of basic, strictly archeological research were carried out on the protohistory in the marginal areas of the country, in southern Navarre. There have been several new investigations, but the fruits of the excavation campaigns of this type, sponsored by the Institución Príncipe de Viana, are found in Blas Taracena and Luis Vázquez de Parga, Excavaciones en Navarra, I (1942–1946) (Pamplona, 1947), pp. 1–94, where there is also a long discussion of the affiliation of the first Indo-European invaders and the particular culture of the Navarre–Araba territory at the beginning of the Iron Age. Following a historical-cultural method based on Greek and Latin textual data, I tried to clarify some aspects of life in the north of Spain in pre-Roman times in Los pueblos del norte de la península ibérica (análisis histórico-cultural) (Madrid, 1943), of which there will soon be a second edition that has been revised and expanded. A summary of this book (not without modifications) can also be found in my later work, Los pueblos de España. Ensayo de etnología (Barcelona, 1946), pp. 209–227.

3. A bibliography and summary of the Romanization of the Basque provinces and neighboring lands appear in Los pueblos del norte, pp. 75–102, and in a more concise way in Los pueblos de España, pp. 233–241. But I have brought together a greater collection of data on this matter in Materiales para una historia de la lengua vasca en su relación con la latina (Salamanca, 1945). However, in these three works it was not possible to use the results of the excavations and searches carried out in Navarre by Taracena and Vázquez de Parga, Excavaciones en Navarra, I, pp. 95–151. Figure 21 is taken from my Materiales with a few corrections (see the review of my book, pp. 413–415, by A. Yrigaray in the Boletín de la Real Sociedad Económica Vascongada iii, 3 (1947), in which certain real errors in detail are pointed out, as well as a few considered as such in the text).

4. A systematization of everything known to date with respect to toponymy can be found in Achîlle Luchaire, Études sus les idiomes pyrénéens de la région française (Paris, 1879).


In any case, I will soon outline them in a study on “La tierra de Alava,” to which I refer to answer some objections, such as that of Hubschmid, who denies the relationship between the suffixes -ain and -anu. Nevertheless, I wish to point out here the importance of a study published after the first edition of this book came out by Luis Michelsen and Ángel Irigaray, “Nombres vascos de personas,” in Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País xi, 3–4 (1955), pp. 405–425.

6. I outlined the theory about the personal nature of much of Basque toponymy in “Algunas notas sobre onomástica antigua medieval,” in Hispania iii, 13 (1943), pp. 1–30, and developed it as much as I could in the aforementioned Materiales, pp.

7. Figure 24 is based on the following documents: Ptolemy, *Geographia*, ed. C. Müller, i (Paris, 1883); ii, 6, 7–10 (pp. 147–149); ii, 6, 52 (pp. 170–171); ii, 6, 54 (p. 172); ii, 6, 64–66 (pp. 188–191). The theory followed in the compilation of the tables is explained by A. Berthelot, “La carte de la Gaule de Ptolémée,” 2, in *Revue d’études anciennes*, xxxvi (1934), pp. 54–55; “Itineraria romana,” ed. Otto Cuntz, 1 (Leipzig, 1929), 450 (p. 69), 454–455 (p. 70a); Konrad Miller, *Die Peutingersche Tafel oder Weltkarte des Castorius* (Stuttgart, 1929), pp. 7–8, map iii, and a segment reconstructed based on the work of an anonymous author from Ravena. The lines on the name Fortunatus and its possible relationship with Navarrese Fortunes are based on the discovery in Ledea of a gravestone, discussed by Taracena and Vázquez de Parga, *Excavaciones en Navarra...*, pp. 138–139 (nos. 36–37). With respect to the inscription from Hazparne, see *Materiales*, pp. 178–179.

**CHAPTER 3: Roots of the Present Types of Town: The Middle Ages in Araba and Navarre**

1. For the study of the ecclesiastical geography and history of the Basque provinces and Navarre in the most distant times, the following works are useful:

   M. Risco, *España Sagrada*, xxxii (ed. Madrid, 1878), which is a preliminary treatise on the churches of Calahorra and Iruña; and xxxiii (ed. Madrid, 1907), on the church of Calahorra.

   R. Floranes, *La supresión del obispado de Alava y sus derivaciones en la historia del país vasco*, Segundo de Ispízua edition, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1919–1920); it includes six studies by the historian from Santander, later surpassed in general historical works.

   G. Fernández Pérez, *Historia de la iglesia y obispos de Pamplona*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1820). It received strong criticism but provides data.

   V. Dubarat, *Le missel de Bayonne de 1543* (Pau, Paris, and Toulouse, 1901), essential. With respect to documentation, one must consult various Spanish cartularies that have not been widely published, in addition to some other texts. Cartularies that are easy to use include the following:

   *Cartulario de San Millán de la Cogolla*, edited by Luciano Serrano (Madrid, 1930), the most extensive one.


   The “Cartulario de Leyre” will be published soon, in accordance with the demands of modern criticism.
2. Livy, Sallust, and others speak of *turres* and *castella* scattered throughout Lusitania (Sallust, “Hist.,” i, 112) and Celtiberia (Livy, XL, 33, 47). Other Greek authors, such as Strabo, also recall the small fortifications of the Spanish countryside (iii, 4, 5, 163), and even later there are allusions to those that had served as refuges for chiefs and leaders (thus, Appian, “Ilber,” 65, in his paraphrase of Polybius, etc.). Based on a few texts, it appears that the Romans tended to dismantle such fortifications on principle. But either they were not destroyed completely or they were raised anew under the Empire because, at the time of the Germanic invasions, the Hispano-Romans had to take refuge in them, as Hydatius (ed. Flórez, *España Sagrada*, iv, pp. 352–353) and other authors of chronicles recall. Perhaps also it was from such fortifications that the Hispano-Roman nobility organized its subversive movements against the Visigoths.

3. The vicissitudes of the Basque territory in the early years of the Reconquest are told in a number of chronicles that indicate (1) dismantling of the southernmost cities of the Basque territory of southern Araba and resettling or settling of territories more to the north by people from those cities; (2) construction of various basilicas in this period, during the reign of Alfonso i (739–756); (3) uprisings of the Basques against the Asturian monarchs; and (4) theincursion of the Muslims into areas of Araba and Navarre held by the Basques. Everything of interest to us here from such chronicles was copied and discussed in the first volume of the *Historia crítica de Vizcaya*, by Gregorio de Balparda, which is cited at the end of note 4. The primary source is the *Crónica de Alfonso III* (original version), 14 (events that happened in the time of Alfonso i), 16 (Fruela, 756–768), and 19 (seizure of Mauregato). For the ninth century, there are more abundant sources that deal with uprisings.

4. To carry out a historical investigation, whether regional or local, it remains essential to consult the book by Tomás Muñoz y Romero, *Diccionario bibliográfico-histórico de los antiguos reinos, provincias, ciudades, villas, iglesias y santuarios de España* (Madrid, 1858), which should be expanded or revised. One need not ponder the usefulness of B. Sánchez Alonso’s work, *Fuentes de la historia española e hispano-americana*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1927 and 1946), although it deals with political history. Both of these there include bibliographic entries that are organized in a very useful way on old local or regional (in the second) chronicles.

Nevertheless, it is worth dedicating a note, a long one, to the examination of Basque historiography and the criteria that have defined it from medieval times to the present. For reasons of clarity we will speak here only of published and sufficiently distributed works.

We can open our discussion with the book *Las bienandanzas e fortunas*, by Lope García de Salazar, of which there is a partial and mediocre edition (Madrid, 1884) and another very meticulous one by Angel Rodríguez Herrero (Las bienandanzas e fortunas. Códice del siglo XV. Bilbao, 1955). Written between 1471 and 1475, when the great wars between factions were not yet over, it is interesting because of its point of view, which is quite hostile to the real and exterior pretensions of imposing a distinct order on the life of the country and above all on the feudal lords. The idea of the original Basque sovereign freedom, represented by those pretensions, came to a large extent from García de Salazar. It is an idea adopted by many later authors, among whom we will cite Esteban de Garibay in his extensive work, *Los XL libros del compendio histórico de las crónicas y universal historia de todos los reynos de España,* 1 (Antwerp, 1571), and especially a number of local authors cited by Muñoz Romero, whose books
circulated in the country, either printed or in manuscript form, such as Ibargüen, Cachopín, Brother Miguel de Alonsótegui, Coscojales, and Mendieta among the Bizkaians; Diego de Salvatierra among the inhabitants Araba; and Zaldivia and Echave among the Gipuzkoans. But beginning in the seventeenth century, at least two tendencies are found in historians of this type, still rarely refuted by outsiders. One represents the democratic spirit, and the other, the feudal spirit. It is in Gipuzkoa where they can best be studied. The aspirations of the feudal lords gave the towns much to do. Then against them arose the voice of academic Juan Martínez de Zaldivia, author of *Suma de las cosas cantábricas y guipuzcoanas*, published in modern times with an introduction and very careful notes by Fausto Arocena (San Sebastián, 1945). Zaldivia died in 1575 and around 1516 lived in Hondarribia, apparently as an adult, or at least old enough to be capable of observation. His history is partly heroic fantasy but very interesting from the sociological point of view because it allows us to see some of the ideas that were common in Gipuzkoa about the bad effects of the factions, the powers of the monarchy, and the enmity toward Navarre. Sometimes there is a contrast between Zaldivia’s ideas and those of Lope Martínez de Isasti, author of a *Compendio historial de la M. N. y M. L. provincia de Gipuzkoa*, written in 1625 and published in San Sebastián in 1850. This work, divided into six books, contains a multitude of curious details on Gipuzkoan life in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Isasti was not too critical, and his opinions on distant times were frankly erroneous. But we must call attention to his tendency to consider the so-called feudal lords as indisputable leaders in medieval Gipuzkoan society and to establish very marked hierarchies of the nobility.

This tendency, which runs contrary to the general spirit of the province, also contrasts with that of other, somewhat more modern authors of the country. For example, the famous Father Larramendi, author of a curious *Corografía o descripción general de la muy noble y muy leal provincia de Guipúzcoa*, written around 1756 and first published in Barcelona in 1882 by Father Fita. As I have stated elsewhere, Larramendi supported the theory of “nobility of blood” in such a form that he could be taken to be a forerunner of modern racists. The Basques are free and noble, according to him, because they were not contaminated by the successive invaders of the peninsula, creators of servitude and contrived honors. But his works are not historical, strictly speaking. The author who in the second half of the eighteenth century worked to spread the idea of the inherent liberty and nobility of the Basques was Joaquín José de Landazuri y Romarate, from Araba, author of the following works in addition to others that will be cited later:

*Historia civil de la M. N. y M. L. provincia de Alava*, 2 vols. (Vitoria, 1798); there is also another Vitoria edition, 1926–1927.

*Historia eclesiástica de la M. N. y M. L. provincia de Alava* (Pamplona, 1797); there is also a Vitoria edition, 1928. The set is completed by *Los compendios de la ciudad y villas de la M. N. y M. L. provincia de Alava* (Vitoria, Pamplona, 1798 and 1928), *Los varones ilustres alaveses* . . . (Vitoria, Pamplona, 1799 and 1929), *Suplemento a los cuatro tomos de la historia de Alava* (Vitoria, Pamplona, 1799 and 1928), and the history of Vitoria-Gasteiz cited in note 10.


Landazuri is not really very critical, nor are his contemporaries, although he never reaches the level of ignorance of Juan de Perochegui, nor is he guilty of falsification,
like Bernardo Ibáñez de Echávarri, author of *Vida de S. Prudencio, obispo de Tarazona* (Vitoria, 1753), in which he takes considerable liberties with the facts. Around the same time, there lived two Bizkaian authors who have been very much read and cited by modern autonomists and who provided works of unequal value: Iturriza and Zamacona, the latter dating from later, in any case.

Juan Ramón de Iturriza y Zabala is the most interesting for our purposes. His *Historia general de Vizcaya y epitome de Las Encartaciones* was published recently by Angel Rodríguez y Herrero (Bilbao, 1938) with great care. Iturriza was a man of scant training, but he gathered an enormous quantity of meticulous ethnological and cultural data. His autonomist bent is clear, and he used with inconsistent skill the old chronicles, such as the aforementioned one by Ibargüen, which, to the concern of historians, remains unpublished.

J. A. de Zamacola, whose life was considerably busier, is the author of a work with more combinatorial pretensions titled *Historia de las naciones bascas de una y otra parte del Pirineo septentrional*, 3 vols. (Auch, 1818), of which there is a later edition (Bilbao, 1898) that, without a doubt, reflects a state of being that alarmed the governors of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, who saw an increase in local claims together with a notable economic advances in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa. They undoubtedly believed that it was necessary to curb this autonomist impetus and gain greater financial benefits, and to lay the groundwork for future reforms they entrusted to non-Basque researchers and scholars an examination of the history of the country that would establish its continuing dependence on the monarchy, either Asturian-Leonese, Navarrese, or Castilian. Thus came, first of all, the *Diccionario*, by the Academia de la Historia, cited in note 1 of chapter 1, with attitudes hostile to all the mentioned Basque historians.

Two more official publications, also of great importance and written for the same purpose, followed the *Diccionario*. The first is by Juan Antonio Llorente, *Noticias históricas de las tres provincias vascongadas, en que se procura investigar el estado civil antiguo de Alava, Guipúscoa y Vizcaya, el origen de sus fueros*, 5 vols. (Madrid, 1806–1808). The author has been much insulted in modern times by rightists, territorialists, and nationalists, although he displayed great knowledge in this work, as in his others. Commissioned by the government to write it in order to justify the suppression of certain charters and economic privileges of the country, he was unable to publish it in its entirety, but the volumes that did come out are, despite their purpose, undoubtedly of great use to historians because of the quality of the copied documents and also because of Llorente’s comments, although at times he allows himself to be led too much by his legalist spirit. Many years later, Canon T. González tried to reach the top of government enterprise in his *Colección de cédulas, cartas-patentes, provisiones, reales órdenes y otros documentos concernientes a las provincias vascongadas . . .*, 4 vols. (Madrid, 1829–1830), which is fundamental for economic history, particularly that beginning in the fourteenth century.

The descriptive history, informed by rather vague geographic, linguistic, and ethnological criteria from Basque authors, was opposed by a documentary history created by competent scholars and paleographers, with a few bureaucrats. It must be confessed that Llorente, especially as a critic, is terribly efficient, although his monarchist point of view as a servant of the central power above all else causes him to view the documents of the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries with a spirit that would be inadmis-
sible today. Between the illustrated point of view of the partisan of despotism (which he was) and that of mystic autonomist lies pure research. But it is sad that nobody has wanted to enter it. Civil wars exacerbated passions and so, in the nineteenth century, Basque historiography reached new lows.

There are few works written in that century that plumb the depths of the issue at stake. Most authors are affiliated with one side or the other without much thought. Nevertheless, it is worth recalling some autonomist books and other works, such as the *Historia general del señorío de Vizcaya*, by Estanislao Jaime de Labayru, a monumental work in 6 volumes (Bilbao, 1895–1901), of which there is summary, *Epitome*, by F. Herrán, in 2 volumes (Bilbao, 1898). It has copious data but lacks critical analysis. The small *Historia de la M. N. y M. L. provincia de Guipúzcoa*, by Nicolás de Soraluce (Madrid, 1864), is also short on critical thought. The book by Sabino Arana Goiri, *Bizkaya por su independencia* (Bilbao, 1892), is the first frankly nationalist work that exists, and many others followed it that need not be reviewed here. The Bizkaians of the beginning of this century again approached history from a largely political point of view, and Arana’s notorious exaggerations were answered with others.

The centralist spirit culminates in Gregorio de Balparda. His *Historia crítica de Vizcaya y de sus fueros*, in 3 volumes (Madrid, 1924; Bilbao, 1933–1934, 1945), is a considerable effort that was lamentably interrupted to defend a thesis along the same lines as that of Llorente and the authors of the *Diccionario de la Academia*. It cannot be said that his was a history of Bizkaia, in the sense that the word *history* should have, since he barely touches on economic and cultural problems, and on social ones only if they have a possible political interpretation to his taste. But neither is there any doubt that Balparda’s work was of maximum utility from the documentary point of view, not only with respect to Bizkaia but also with respect to Araba and Gipuzkoa, in their most obscure periods. Alongside this, more hasty works, such as the *Historia del país basko* by Bernardo Estornés Lasa (Zarauz, 1933), a follower of Arana, appear inelegant in their defense of the opposing thesis. But to do anything worthwhile, in addition to working hard and having a wide base of knowledge, one must think straightforwardly, with no dogmatic spirit of political affiliation, and from Lope García de Salazar to Balparda there have been very few Basque-Spanish historians who did not write *ad probandum*.

With respect to the French Basque Country (Navarre is discussed in note 7), we can say that something similar happens, although the group of historians born there includes some very notable figures.

Leaving aside uncritical historians such as A. Favyn, *Histoire de Navarre* (Paris, 1612), and earlier ones (G. Chappuys), in the seventeenth century we should remember, first of all, A. Ohienart, author of *Notitia utriusque Vasconiae, tum ibericae, tum aquitanicae* (Paris, 1638; with a better-known edition in 1656), a work of great worth of which a translation into Spanish was made by Father J. Gorosterratzu, published by the Sociedad de Estudios Vascos (San Sebastián, 1929). Also important, though written from the diplomatic point of view of a courtier, are some works by Pierre de Marca, especially *Marca hispánica, sive limes hispanicus* (Paris, 1688). Less officious is the *Histoire de Béarn, contenant l’origine des roys de Navarre, etc.* (Paris, 1640), written by the same author before he gained his highest ranks. In the eighteenth century, there were some extravagant works, such as the *Dissertation sur les basques*, by Mr. de Labastide (Paris, 1785), full of linguistic fantasy and a worthy antecedent of the *His-
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toire des cantabres ou des premiers colons de toute l’Europe avec celle des basques, by D’Iharce de Bidassouet (Paris, 1825). Somewhat later is the Histoire des basques by the viscount of Belzunce, 3 vols. (Bayonne, 1847), which prompted A. Chaho to write his Histoire primitive des euskariens-basques, langue, poésie, moeurs et caractère de ce peuple, introduction à son histoire ancienne et moderne (Bayonne, 1847), in which he insists on an ethnographic interpretation of Basque history, seeking the origin of the Basques arbitrarily in towns where Sanskrit is spoken. These histories, “original” on two counts, almost always lack any basis.

Justo Gárate, a scholar appreciated by all, upon writing in Argentina a criticism of the first edition of this book (of which I have no more than an offprint in the form of a leaflet, with a printer’s stamp of Buenos Aires, 1950) said that he believed that he perceived a “political stink” in what I had written. Because this and other judgments by the same author are not very pleasant for me, and the praise that he may have offered does not invalidate a certain general acrimony, I would like to warn the reader that in that criticism private opinions are attributed to me with surprising imagination. I thank Gárate, whom I do not know personally, for having pointed out certain errors. But to other points that he also considers errors, I will respond in the notes that follow.

5. The paragraphs on the situation of Araba from the end of the ninth to the eleventh centuries as a whole were written bearing in mind the documents of the Cartulario de S. Millán, ed. cit., referring to the county and regions that lie within the province today. They are the following:

Donation by Count Diego, year 863, in which San Vicente de Añez is mentioned, which was outside Araba, op. cit., p. 13 (no. 9).

Aggregation of various churches in Araba to the monasterial church of Ocoizta (Acosta), year 871, with additions dating from 971, 995, and 1034, op. cit., pp. 17–19 (no. 12).

Aggregation of four churches of Kuartango, recently constructed, to San Millan, year 873, op. cit. 19 (no. 13).

Transfer of territory to San Esteban de Salcedo, year 937, op. cit., pp. 36–37 (no. 29).

Founding of the monastery of Villa de Pun in Gaubea, year 948, op. cit., pp. 55–56 (no. 45). This was outside Araba.

Donation to San Esteban de Salcedo, year 950, op. cit., p. 57 (no. 47).

Donations to the same monastery, year 956, op. cit., pp. 61–62 (no. 50).

8) Donations to San Millán dating from the years 952, pp. 58–59 (no. 48); 956, p. 61 (no. 50); 1043, pp. 131–132 (no. 121); 1049, p. 146 (no. 137); 1050, p. 159 (no. 148); 1051, pp. 160–161 (no. 150); 1060, pp. 175–176 (no. 175); 1068, p. 159 (no. 148); 1070, pp. 206–207 (no. 199); 1074, pp. 218–219 (no. 212); 1075, pp. 224–225 (no. 218); 1076, pp. 236–237 (no. 229); 237–238 (no. 230); 243–244 (no. 237); 1080, p. 250 (no. 244 bis); 1083, p. 257 (no. 254); 1087, pp. 268–269 (no. 265), 273–274 (no. 271); 1089, pp. 278–279 (no. 276).

To these documents and a few others that are not cited we must add those by S. Juan de la Peña, which Llorente also published (with almost all the previous ones) in his work: op. cit., III, pp. 365–366 (year 1040); 399 (1060); 406–407 (1071); 407–408 (1071); 444–445 (1085); 445–446 (1086).

7. The history of Navarre has been written from various points of view over time. First of all, we have a set of ancient chronicles of varying merit, first listed by Muñoz Romero, then by Sánchez Alonso, in which there is a narration of the deeds of its kings, beginning with the fabulous early ones. The Crónica de los reyes de Navarra escrita por D. Carlos, Príncipe de Viana, edited by J. Yanguas y Miranda (Pamplona, 1843), deserves special mention. Others from the same time or later are less interesting. The person who then established history properly, following some authors previously cited (Garibay, Ohienart), is Father J. Moret, who wrote the following:

Anales del reyno de Navarra. There is an edition from 1684, and another good one from Iruñea, 1766, in 5 volumes, of which the final two are of inferior quality, is by Father Francisco Alesón. It was reprinted later (Tolosa, 1890–1892).

Investigaciones históricas de las antigüedades del reyno de Navarra (Pamplona, 1665 and 1766).

Congressiones apologéticas sobre la verdad de las investigaciones históricas de las antigüedades del reyno de Navarra (Pamplona, 1678 and 1766).

Moret is the author of the “official history” of Navarre that was accepted almost up until our times. Alesón summarized it (Pamplona, 1709–1715), as did Father Elizondo (Pamplona, 1732). Another more modern one is by D. José de Yanguas y Miranda, Compendio de la historia de Navarra (San Sebastián, 1832), in which he sometimes departs from his own point of view. In the second half of the nineteenth century, an Aragonese scholar, Tomás Ximénez de Embún, published Ensayo histórico acerca de los orígenes de Aragón y Navarra (Zaragoza, 1878), in which a great deal of what had been said until then about the matter is thrown out, and with that, it can be said that a new era began for the study of medieval Navarrese life. To go deeper into his analysis it is necessary to examine a great number of different sources. In addition to the histories of the kingdom already cited, there are some general old works of importance, such as the following:

J. M. de Zuaznavar, Ensayo histórico-critico sobre la legislación de Navarra, 3 parts (San Sebastián, 1827–1829). It has many charters and related documents, though it is a rambling work, amusingly criticized by Yanguas.

J. Yanguas y Miranda, Diccionario de antigüedades del reino de Navarra, 4 vols. (Pamplona, 1840–1843); essential.
Fuero general de Navarra. Edición acordada por la Excma. Diputación provincial, dirigida y confrontada con el original que existe en el archivo de Comptos, por don Pablo Illarregui y don Segundo Lapuerta (Pamplona, 1869). This work can be used with more familiarity if one first uses the Diccionario de los fueros and the one on the laws of Navarre, by Yanguas (San Sebastián, 1828), and the studies by Illarregui and some legal consultants and historians: J. M. Lacarra in “Notas para la formación de las familias de fueros navarros,” in Anuario de historia del derecho español x (1933), pp. 203–272; “Sobre el fuero general y sus fuentes,” in Boletín de la Comisión de Monumentos de Navarra, 3rd volume, ii (1928), pp. 302–306; “¿El fuero general de Navarra traducido al euskera?,” in Anuario de historia del derecho español xii (1935), pp. 439–441; “Sobre la recepción del derecho romano en Navarra,” in the same Anuario xi (1934), pp. 457–467; and more recently, Vasconia medieval, historia y filología (San Sebastián, 1957).

8. With respect to the social classes of Navarre, in addition to the articles in the Diccionarios by the Academia de la Historia and Yanguas (the latter, in particular, contains very good documentation with respect to the residents of Iruñea), a few monographs are worth keeping in mind. For example:


On the Jews, Mariano Arigita y Lasa, Los judíos en el país vasco. Su influencia social, religiosa y política (Pamplona, 1908). It states that in Iruñea there was a Jewish quarter around the year 905, and in Tutera, in 1033. Those of Lizarra, Viana, Funes, San Adrián, Lerín, Martzella, Kaseda, Nájera, Zarrakaztelu, Peña, Marañon, Ablitas, and Fustiñana were also famous, all towns in Zone C in fig. 19. The transcription, publication, and study of the Libro de los fuegos de Navarra en 1366, which is being prepared by José Javier Uranga Santesteban and to which old publications always make incomplete allusions, will shed great light on Navarrese life in the fourteenth century. Uranga has already published some of the first fruits of his work. For example, “Fuegos de la merindad de las Montañas en 1350,” in Príncipe de Viana xv (1954), pp. 251–294.

9. With respect to medieval road communications, a fundamental work is that written by Misters Lacarra, Uriá Riu, and Vázquez de Parga and published in 1948 under the title Las peregrinaciones a Santiago de Compostela. The transformations of the
networks of roads of Navarre were studied by Leoncio Urabayen, “Estudios de geografia humana. Una interpretación de las comunicaciones en Navarra,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xvii (1926), pp. 289–328, 529–564, with very illustrative charts (especially no. 9) and photographs of the most difficult points in which roads are seen. With respect to the dangerous zones, Arturo Campión, “Gacetilla de la historia de Nabarra. La frontera de los malhechores; el bandolerismo de 1261 a 1332: la ‘facienda’ de Beotibar; la toma de Ernani,” in Boletín de la Comisión de Monumentos de Navarra, 1911, ii, pp. 67–75, 127–134, 187–193; 1912, iii, pp. 337–340; 1913, iv, pp. 139–147, 189–197. Many interesting medieval documents have been published by Misters Arigita, Marichalar, Sitges, Huarte, Altadill, etc. in this Boletín.

10. The much-cited Diccionario by the Academia de la Historia, ii, pp. 464b–482b, includes an excellent article on the history and development of Vitoria-Gasteiz. The documented data that justify it were collected by R. Floranes in Memorias y privilegios de la M. N. y M. L. ciudad de Vitoria (ed. Madrid, 1922), in which an accusation of plagiarism is directed at J. Landazuri, Historia civil, eclesiástica, política y legislativa de la M. N. y M. L. ciudad de Vitoria (Madrid, 1780; new ed. Vitoria, 1928). To orient oneself with respect to the old appearance of the city and country in Araba, it is useful to consult the catalog of the Exposición de estampas de la provincia de Alava y cuadros de rincones vitorianos, celebrada en Vitoria del 28 de abril al 10 de mayo de 1946 (Vitoria, 1946). Figure 19 is taken from the map of Vitoria-Gasteiz that is on the Araba page of Coello’s atlas.

In modern times, E. Serdán has published a history of Vitoria-Gasteiz that I have not consulted. With respect to Agurain, see the Diccionario, cit. ii, pp. 290b–291b, and Fortunato Grandes, Apuntes históricos de Salvatierra (Vitoria, 1905). On Guardia, see the Diccionario, i, pp. 404a–407a. There is also a local history. In general, consult Carmelo de Echegaray, Las provincias vascongadas a fines de la Edad Media (San Sebastián, 1895), also very useful for understanding the following chapter.

11. The bands of the north have not been studied from an appropriate sociological point of view. In speaking of them, no one has examined more than trivial issues of genealogy. D. Ricardo Becerro de Bengoa outlined a hypothesis about their origins in Araba that remains interesting. But he did not fully develop it. The following chapter provides the most common bibliography on them. With respect to the towers of Mendoza, see Becerro de Bengoa, “Antigüedades históricas y literarias de Alaba,” a supplement to Euskal-Erria (San Sebastián, 1882); by the same author, Descripciones de Alava, libro mérito, prólogo e indices por Angel de Apraiz (Vitoria, 1918), pp. 135–137 (castle of Guevara).

CHAPTER 4: Roots of the Present Types of Town: The Middle Ages in Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, and the French Basque Country

1. There are various interesting publications on the history of the French Basque Country. Among them, we will cite the following (as well as those in note 4 of the preceding chapter):

M. G. B. de La Grèze, La Navarre française, 2 vols. (Paris, 1881). Despite its title, it has more to do with general sources and with Spanish Navarre.
P. Haristoy, *Recherches historiques sur le Pays Basque*, 2 vols. (Bayonne & Paris, 1883–1884). It includes research of various types. The most useful part is the last, in which the charters and customs of Lapurdi, Zuberoa, and Lower Navarre are transcribed.

P. Haristoy, *Les paroisses du pays basque pendant la période révolutionnaire*, 2 vols. (Pau, 1893–1895). It provides much more data than its title suggests. From the point of view of proper names, it is fundamental because it sometimes gives the French or Gascon forms as well as the Basque forms.

J. de Jaurgain, *La Vasconie. Étude historique sur les origins du royaume de Navarre, du duché de Gascogne, des comtés de Comminges, d’Aragon, de Foix, de Bigorre, d’Alava et de Biscaye, de la Vicomté de Béarn et des grands fiefs du duché de Gascogne* (Pau, 1898–1902), a type of genealogical history with considerable data but extremely rambling and sometimes arbitrary. The part on France is more useful than that on Spain.

There are also small but sufficient histories, such as those of P. Yturbide, *Petite histoire du Labourd* (Pau, 1914), and J. Nogaret, *Petite histoire du pays basque français* (Bayonne, 1923).

Curious data can also be found in the old “statistics” publications, in some old guides, and in other books of various types:


Among the old guides, it is worth remembering A. Joanne’s *Itinéraire général de la France. Les Pyrénées* (Paris, 1868), valid for the whole country with later, divided editions (1907).

2. The bibliography on Baiona is excellent. In addition to the aforementioned books by Dubarat and Haristoy, two others are worth mention:

Jules Balasque, *Études historiques sur la ville de Bayonne*, 3 vols. (Bayonne, 1862–1875). It has meticulous research on the life of the city in the Middle Ages and is fundamental for an understanding of the social and economic history of the Basque Country.


Of continuing interest is the old book by F. Morel, *Bayonne, vues historiques et descriptives* (Bayonne, 1846); the one by Henry Poydenot is faster to read, *Recits et légendes relatifs a l’histoire de Bayonne* (Bayonne, 1875), but not very reliable at times. Also see C. Petit-Dutaillis, *Les communes françaises* (Paris, 1947), pp. 161–164. Some old monographs on other towns are also worth consulting. For example: Leonce Goyetche, *Saint-Jean de Luz historique et pittoresque* (Bayonne & Saint Jean de Luz, 1856).


3. The oldest documents on Gipuzkoa were collected by Llorente in his much-cited work. Modern criticism debunks the authenticity of some of these documents, such that today the one considered most authentic is the documentation of a donation to San Juan de la Peña, from the monastery of Olazabal (1025), which the author already published (op. cit., iii), pp. 352–355 (no. 32), and which has been studied by S. Múgica and F. Arocena (*Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xxii, pp. 366–371). The demarcation of the bishopric of Iruñea that is held to date from 1027 and the false document of Arsio, bishop of Baiona, which was attributed to the year 980 (Llorente, op. cit., ii), pp. 32–366).
cit., iii, pp. 336–338 [no. 28]; 335–360 [no. 33]), speak of the Gipuzkoan “valleys,” as do other later letters of donation (year 1050); Llorente, op. cit., iii, pp. 371–372 (no. 39); 1081, pp. 434–435 (no. 65); 1087, pp. 449–450 that mention lands, monasteries, and servants of zones that are today located in Gipuzkoa but that were not yet considered to belong to it when that name was first used. The documentation from the twelfth century and later gets more and more expansive and was summarized by Pablo de Gorosábel in his Diccionario histórico-geográfico-descriptivo de los pueblos, valles, partidos, alcaldías y unions de Guipúzcoa con un apéndice de las cartas, pueblos y otros documentos importantes (Tolosa, 1862) and in the works cited in note 4 of chapter 3 concerning the province. Gorosábel is also the author of the voluminous Noticia de las cosas memorables de Guipúzcoa, 5 vols. (Tolosa, 1899–1901), with an appendix by Carmelo Echegaray. The Gascon influence on the ports is reflected in studies such as that by S. Múgica, “Los gascones en Guipúzcoa,” in Homenaje a D. Carmelo de Echegaray, pp. 31–40.

4. Fausto Arocena provides a very clear and interesting summary of the internal history of Gipuzkoa. For his part, M. Ciriquiain Gaiztarrro has written a very well-crafted essay, “La formación de las villas en Guipúzcoa” (supplement of the Revista de estudios de la vida local vi, nos. 31, 32, 33). From Isasti to Gorosábal y Echegaray, the historians of the province have gathered a great amount of data on every village. For example, in the Compendio historial, pp. 28–30, Arocena lists the towns, valleys, neighborhoods, and municipal districts of Gipuzkoa in 1625. On p. 150, he alludes to the good design of most towns, which were usually walled. He also indicates that the “ancient” buildings were made of sticks, unlike the modern ones. A list of the municipal districts and individual parishes and hermitages appears on pp. 212–223.

Mention of the walls (with five gates) of Hernani, p. 525; walls of Segura, p. 563; of Mutriku, p. 594. But also there are a number of detailed monographs such as the following:

I. Belaustegui, Noticia histórica de la villa de Zumárraga (Tolosa, 1900).
J. A. de Camino y Orella, Historia civil, diplomática, eclesiástica, antigua y moderna de la ciudad de San Sebastián, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1923) from the eighteenth century.
J. I. Gamón, Noticias históricas de Rentería (San Sebastián, 1930), a work from the early nineteenth century.
S. Gastaminza, Apuntes para una historia de la noble, leal e invicta villa de Her
nani (San Sebastián, 1913).
P. de Gorosábel, Bosquejo de las antigüedades, gobierno, administración y otras cosas notables de la villa de Tolosa (Tolosa, 1853).
L. Martinez Kleiser, La villa de Villagran de Zumaya (Madrid, 1923).
S. Múgica, Monografía histórica de la villa de Irún (Irun, 1903).
The old Historia de la Universidad de Irún Uranzu, by F. de Gainza (Pamplona, 1738) is worthless.
G. Múgica, Monografía histórica de la villa de Eibar (Irun, 1912).
P. Sarasqueta, Eibar. Monografía descriptiva de esta noble y leal villa de Guipúzcoa (Eibar, 1909).
E. Urroz, Compendio historial de la villa de Tolosa (Tolosa, 1913).
And there are others published in journals, such as that by G. Múgica, “La villa de Zarauz,” in *Euskalerriaren alde II*, 41–42 (1912), pp. 513–528.

The monographs on Bizkaian towns are also abundant. Let us cite first of all the well-documented *Historia de la noble villa de Bilbao* (1300–1836), 4 vols. (Bilbao, 1905–1912), by T. Guiard Larrauri.

An excellent work written in the nineteenth century, of which there is a good summary in Madoz’s dictionary, is that by D. Martín de los Heros, *Historia de Valmaseda* (Bilbao, 1926).

The work by Gonzalo Otalora, *Micrología geográfica del asiento de la noble merindad de Durango* (Sevilla, 1634), which has been much discussed by archeologists, is of rare quality. Less well known is the book by F. A. de Beitia and R. de Echezarreta, *Noticias históricas de la noble y leal villa de Tauvi de Durango* (Bilbao, 1868).

Works that are already old also refer to other settlements. For example, *Historia de la ciudad de Orduña, en el M. N. y L. Señorío de Vizcaya* (“Historia critico-geográfica de la antigüedad, nombre, situación, fueros y privilegios de las principales ciudades de España, por C. R.”), 1 (Madrid, 1828), pp. 1–176.

With respect to seigniories, Iturriza, *Historia de Vizcaya*, p. 3, says that in his time there were 87 municipal districts, 21 villages, 20 towns, and a city, as well as 49 parishes in Enkarterri-Las Encartaciones, with a total of 13,620 houses (p. 26) or 31,610 (p. 69); of these, 3,610 belonged to the towns. On pp. 188–193, he lists the churches of royal patronage and territorial divisions of the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

5. The laws of Gipuzkoa have been studied and discussed by many of the cited authors. But to delve into their spirit it is recommended to have on hand the *Nueva recopilación de los fueros, privilegios, leyes y ordenanzas de la provincia de Guipúzcoa*, which bears the printer’s stamp of “Tolosa: Bernardo de Ugarte, 1697.” It has xli titles and consists of very useful indexes. From a chronological point of view, the *Historia de Guipúzcoa* by Landazuri, ed. cit., i, pp. 101–346 (Book ii) makes it easier to understand. Gorosábal in his *Noticia*, op. cit. is the highest authority on the agreements of the assemblies. There is also C. de Echegaray’s guide, *Compendio de las instituciones forales de Guipúzcoa* (San Sebastián, 1924).


To work with the book by Lope García de Salazar cited in note 4 of chapter 3, the index by Juan Carlos de Guerra, *Oñacinos y gamboinos. Rol de los banderizos vascos, con la mención de las familias pobladoras de Bilbao en los siglos XIV y XV* (San Sebastián, 1930) can be used in advance; although the author is overcome by genealogical concerns, he nevertheless summarizes certain data of other types that I mention here.
In note 4 of chapter 3, a bibliography is given on the frontier of evildoers. There are still memories of the acts committed there, as in the “Bienandanzas,” where it is stated that in 1330, the bandits of Lazkao carried out great robberies in the Navarrese valley of Burunda (Guerra, op. cit., p. 137). A while later we see that the strong families of Bizkaia devoted themselves to a more fruitful theft of another type. Anucibay’s lackeys “invited” the muleteers who perpetrated violence in their territory. A certain Diego Fernández Ospina de Ugarte wore a “white cloak over his head” and, with another twenty men, pretended he was a muleteer to surprise them (op. cit., p. 152). For his part, Juan de Salcedo robbed the merchants of Burgos, giving a third of the stolen goods to Lope Furtado de Salcedo; he was aided by Ochoa de Murga and the Marroquines. In 1469, at the request of the merchants and other people, Pedro de Velasco, count of Haro, entered Bizkaia to bring to an end the thefts of the Muxicas, Abendaños, Salcedos, Murgas, and Marroquines. But their rivalry with Trebiñu prevented his justice from becoming all it was intended to be. See also Julio Caro Baroja, in Vasconiana (Madrid, 1957).

6. There have been a great many editions of the charter of Bizkaia since 1528. There are manuals such as Fueros, privilegios, franquezas y libertades del M. N. y M. L. señorío de Vizcaya (Bilbao, 1897).

To study the different districts, the work by C. de la Plaza Salazar is useful: Territorios sometidos al fuero de Vizcaya en lo civil, dentro y fuera del señorío de aquel nombre, 2 vols. (Bilbao, 1899).

CHAPTER 5: The Development of the Basque Town in the Modern Age

1. There are references to lawsuits concerning the seigniories in the articles of the much-cited Diccionario by the Academia de la Historia (chapter 1, note 1) and of those in Araba in particular in Landazuri’s Historia (chapter 3, note 4).

The significance of the town square in Spanish city life has been highlighted by various authors, but there has been no study to date that considers all aspects of the topic or in which the various types and functions of town squares are studied. Of course, most in the country are small and stifling (like the one in Guardia). In the capital cities, their monumental nature and general plan appear to have come about by imitation of the most famous major cities of Spain (Madrid, Salamanca).

The Plaza del Castillo in Iruñea was built where before there was merely a sort of open space in which markets were held (and onto which Chapitela Street gave). In Vitoria-Gasteiz, the great planned plaza was constructed from 1781 to 1791. See the “Guía de forasteros en Vitoria por lo respectivo a las tres bellas artes de Pintura, Escultura y Arquitectura, con otras noticias curiosas que nacen de ellas,” in Extractos de las juntas generales celebradas por la Real Sociedad Económica Vascongada (Vitoria, 1792), pp. 93–95.

2. Various publications attest to the general nobility of the residents of certain valleys, written for similar reasons as the published decrees of nobility, such as Executoria de la antigüedad, nobleza y blasones del valle de Baztán, que dedica a sus hijos Juan de Goyeneche (Madrid, 1685).

3. The increase in traffic along new networks beginning in the sixteenth century is highlighted by histories such as that of Isasti, Compendio historial, p. 526, which
states that even in his time tollhouses (such as the Portua house in Hernani on the Urumea River) were often located on rivers in order to charge tolls not only on wood but also on other products. Larramendi, *Corografía*, pp. 48–49, praises the excellence of Gipuzkoan roads, and Iturriza, *Historia de Vizcaya*, pp. 175–178, presents many facts about those of Bizkaia, among which he particularly mentions the great Bilbao road that dates from the time of Charles I. The history of the roads of Gipuzkoa has been written several times, including recently by J. de Irizar, “El camino de San Adrián y los dos mares,” in *Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País*, II (1947), pp. 516–523. In the “Colección de cédulas” cited in chapter 3, note 4, there are a number of documents concerning Basque roads and their maintenance.

A lovely piece of research that I bore in mind when speaking of markets in general is that by José Manuel Casas Torres and Angel Abascal Garayoa, *Mercados geográficos y ferias de Navarra* (Zaragoza, 1948).

On the creation of mayoralties by people who had returned from the Americas and the nouveau riche, see Larramendi, *Corografía*, p. 167. He also notes some of the innovations that were seen around that time in Basque towns, such as an increase in the number of bars (p. 166). For his part, Isasti, *Compendio historial*, p. 630, states that doctors had been unknown until one hundred years before the time of writing, the early sixteenth century.

Very illustrative is the curious article by G. Manso de Zúñiga, “San Sebastián en 1552,” in *Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País*, IV, 2 (1948), pp. 135–143, a study on a city plan of that time, which is held in Simancas.

On three- and four-story houses in Bilbao in the eighteenth century, see Iturriza, *Historia de Vizcaya*, p. 382 (and p. 370, on the streets of Durango). Mr. Gárate (p. 6 of his review) reproaches me for using the form kontia jauna and says that it should be konte jauna. The truth is that I did not make up this popular verse myself in the form in which I give it. It is like that in the text, and I should be spared such personal comments.

4. The economic battles and subversive movements of this type in the Basque Country have not yet been fully studied. However, there are various books and articles on both. Teófilo Guiard, in the part on Bilbao of his tome, *Vizcaya*, in the *Geografía general*, pp. 438–455, 484–492, summarizes the struggles that involved that capital city and, to a great extent, follows Camilo de Villabaso, *La cuestión del Puerto de la Paz y la Zamacolada* (Bilbao, 1887). With respect to the uprising of some Gipuzkoan towns, Camino y Orell offers first-hand data in the *Historia civil . . . de San Sebastián*, i, pp. 309–320.

In modern times, much has been written about the economic history of Bizkaia, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For the critical historian, however, reports on that time, such as that published by J. M. de Areilza, “La economía vizcaína del siglo xviii,” in *Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País*, II, 2 (1946), pp. 131–147, are more interesting than current political statements. See also chapter 14 in this book, which I wrote ex profeso.

**CHAPTER 6: Internal Analysis of Basque Towns: Types of Houses and Types of Settlement**

1. General works are Alfredo Baeschlin, *La arquitectura del caserío vasco* (Barcelona, 1930), 221, with excellent illustrations. By J. Yrizar, *Las casas vascas* (San Sebastián, 1930). There is also an article by the same author, “Arquitectura popular vasca,” in
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Quinto Congreso de Estudios Vascos. Vergara, 1930. Arte popular vasco (San Sebastián, 1934), pp. 79–91. Other studies were published earlier, also by architects, such as that by Guimón, “El caserío basco” [sic], in Arquitectura 13 (1919), pp. 120–124, and that by Muguruza, “La casa rural en el país vasco,” in Arquitectura 17 (1919), pp. 244–248. In France, even earlier, a book was published by O’Shea, La maison basque (Bayonne, 1897). More recent is the album by J. and J. Soupre, Maisons du pays basque (Paris, 1928), a text by E. Lambert, and other works that I have not had occasion to consult.

For his part, Colas edited “L’habitation basque” (Paris, no year given), a work of little interest because its illustrations are of modern chalets. From my point of view, some monographic studies by geographers and folklorists may be more interesting. Let me first cite that by Leoncio Urabayen, La casa navarra (Madrid, 1929), to which I owe the classification given in the text. The local studies by Barandiarán, Arín, Lecuona, and others, cited in paragraph 9 of note 1, chapter 1, and those mentioned later, are of the greatest use for classifying the different types of Basque construction.

2. With respect to the construction in wood of past epochs, see Yanguas y Miranda, Diccionario de antigüedades, cit. II (Pamplona, 1840), p. 514. Carmelo de Echegaray, Investigaciones históricas referentes a Guipúzcoa (San Sebastián, 1893), pp. 336–337, 340–341 (chapters on the 1489 regulations of Donostia governing rebuilding and defining the privileges granted to those who built houses of stone). Espeban de Garibay, “Memorias,” in Memorial histórico español VII, p. 327. See also Lope Martínez de Iasísti, Compendio historial, p. 150; Larramendi, Corografía, p. 78 (“The farmhouses are commonly made of stone from the foundations to the first floor, and then of brick or of planks overlaid one on another up to the roof”); he also states that they lacked chimneys, and “most are one story high with an attic to save the fruits of their labors.” Iturriza, Historia, pp. 68–70, states that the farmhouses of other times made of wood were smaller than those of his time, which were made of other materials.

On the other hand, in the charter of Vitoria there is mention of the wood necessary to build houses (maderam pro facere domos) (Landazuri: Historia . . ., on Vitoria, p. 465). The same is found in the charter of Bernedo, which dates from one year later (1182) as well as in that of Antoñana (1182) (Diccionario . . ., by the Academia de la Historia, I, pp. 493 and 495).

3. An excellent study on a specific place and the variations in the frame was done by Juan de Arín Dorronsoro, “Ataun. El maderamen en las construcciones antiguas,” in Anuario de Eusko-Folklore XII (1932), pp. 77–97. With respect to additions to buildings, types of roofing, and other more general issues, see J. de Aguirre, “Casas de labranza. Techumbres,” in Anuario V (1925), pp. 141–150; and by the same author, “Casas de labranza. Escape de humos y algunos de sus tipos,” in Anuario VII (1927), pp. 113–125; and “La ampliación en la casa de labranza. Algunas formas,” in Anuario VIII (1928), pp. 51–54. On the houses of the Bidasoa, concrete historical data are given in J. Caro Baroja, La vida rural en Vera de Bidasoa, pp. 9–32.

4. The border of the area in which the Basque house is found with those of the Bearnaise and Pyrenean types has been examined by Pierre Defontaines, to whom we owe the map in Brunhes: La géographie humaine, 4th ed., I (Paris, 1934), p. 196.

The names of the rooms that make up the classical type of Lapurdian house, from the structural point of view, have been gathered by J. Bilbao, “Lexicographic de la maison à Sare (Labourd),” in Ikuska, nos. 4–5, (1947), pp. 132–133.


5. My views on the relationship between the different types of Basque houses and other houses in different areas of Europe have also been presented in Los pueblos del norte, pp. 193–197; Los pueblos de España, pp. 276–278; and Materiales, pp. 90–91, where I also list the texts and archeological monuments that form the basis of my opinions.

CHAPTER 7: Internal Analysis of Basque Towns: Names and Functions of Houses

1. To date, there has been no overall study of ancient Basque seignorial architecture, although there are many articles and references in various of the previously cited books. There is also no good general work on the peninsula.

To compare typical aspects of border zones, Elías Ortiz de la Torre’s book is useful: Arquitectura civil de la montaña (Santander, 1927). It deals not only with seignorial architecture but also with humbler types of architecture.

2. The book written by Javier de Ibarra in collaboration with my late friend Pedro de Garmendia, Torres de Vizcaya, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1946), is of great historical-cultural value because of the amount of data and number of graphs it contains. There is nothing similar for the rest of the country. Construction in wood hardly appears in this work, but Lope García de Salazar frequently alludes to it. According to him, the tower of Bertiques was built primarily of wood (Guerra, Oñacinos y gamboinos, p. 11), as was the “palace” of a house belonging to Diego Sánchez de Basurto that was destroyed by the people of Bilbao after 1468 (Guerra, op. cit., p. 54) and the house of Unzueta, burned by Fernando de Gamboa in 1420 (op. cit., pp. 83 and 176). In 1468, J. Alonso Muxica, who robbed the merchants of Burgos, burned the cadalsos (wooden fortifications) of Basotoechea, Ibaizabal, and Albia (op. cit., p. 139). In “La casa solar de Legazpi,” in Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País ii, 3 (1946), pp. 299–309, Joaquín de Yrízar examines the vicissitudes of the house of Legazpi.

3. Many house names have been collected in the monographs cited in chapter 1, note 1. In addition, there are some systematic studies, which are not very trustworthy, on Basque proper names in general. Since the time of the genealogists, proper names have been handled with little critical thought by historians and linguists, with the result that works such as those cited earlier by Garibay, Larramendi, Iturriza, and so on are full of etymologies in need of reanalysis and many others that are simply flights of fancy. In our times, the special treatises by S. Arana Goiri, L. de Eleizalde, E. de Echalar, and others show the same irregularity. A useful orientation can be found in two articles by J. Gárate, “Sufijos locativos,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xxvi (1930), pp. 441–448, and “Interpretación de la toponimia vasca,” in the same Revista xxii (1931), pp. 588–601, which has an extensive bibliography and a list of elements common in toponymy and surnames.
Allow me to indicate that *sala* with the meaning I give it is somewhat known in medieval Latin; it even means “land of lesser importance” among Germanic peoples such as the Lombards. See Alfons Dopsch, *Fundamentos económicos y sociales de la cultura europea* (Mexico, Buenos Aires, 1951), p. 96 (on *curti*; pp. 115–116).

In general, the old historians such as Landazuri, in *Historia de Guipúzcoa*, i, pp. 39–44, tend to think that the original type of town was one of scattered houses.

4. With respect to the words *borda*, *corta*, and *baita* and their distribution, the following studies can be consulted:


Chandos Herald, in his poem “Le prince noir” (“The Black Prince”), published by F. Michel (London, Paris, 1873), in verses 2677–2681 (p. 182), alludes to the houses and *bordas* that existed on the plains near Vitoria-Gasteiz, where the Black Prince’s troops set up camp, probably one of the oldest of such references.

**CHAPTER 8: The Agricultural Sector: Types of Crops**

1. To understand the vicissitudes that the country experienced with respect to cultivated species and agricultural technology, it is useful to keep in mind the usual histories by Lope Martinez de Isasti, *Compendio historial*, pp. 151 (apple trees and other fruits) and 152 (grains). Larramendi, *Corografía*, pp. 55–62 (agriculture in general), and especially Iturriza, *Historia de Vizcaya*, pp. 26 (where he states that beans were introduced in the sixteenth century and became widespread in the eighteenth century, notes the beginning of the decline of flax, and discusses the cultivation of grapes and potatoes), 60 (cereals), and 61 (apples and cider). The “Reflexiones sobre el sistema agricultor del país bascongado,” in *Extractos de las juntas generales celebradas por la Real Sociedad Bascongada de los Amigos del País en la ciudad de Vitoria por septiembre de 1777* (Vitoria), pp. 19–25 is written from a technical point of view. There are some other agricultural publications from the same period that are of historical interest today, although they were utilitarian in their time.

In general, see the essay by Vicente Laffite on “Agricultura y ganadería vascongadas,” in the first volume of the *Geografía general del país vasco-navarro*, pp. 569–646, and the studies on “Explotación del suelo. El caserio” and “Arboricultura frutal” by the same author, in *Primer Congreso de Estudios Vascos*. Oñate, 1919 (Bilbao, 1919–1920), pp. 219–236 and 259–278.

Legislation on woodlands is found in laws 4 and 5 (Title 25), 15 (Title 34), 16 (Title 34), pp. 178–179 and 233–255 of the ed. cit. of the *Fuero de Vizcaya*, and in Title 38, chapters i–viii of the *Ordenanzas* of Gipuzkoa, pp. 316–320. With respect to apple trees, laws 2 and 3 (Title 25), pp. 176–178 of the Bizkaian charter. Navarrese legislation is summarized in the *Diccionario de los fueros*, by Yanguas passim.

From the modern point of view, there is a general work that is especially recommended for anyone who wants to delve deeper into the study of agriculture, ranching, and other uses of land in the Basque region. I refer to the work by T. Lefébure, *Les

2. A list of the livestock owned by a Bizkaian farmer in the early nineteenth century can be found in a curious work by Juan Antonio Moguel, Peru Abarka, Basarteko Ikastetse andiko Euskal-irakaslea (catedrático de lengua bascongada en la Universidad de Basarte), 2nd ed. (Bilbao, 1899), pp. 59–60, and on pp. 93–95 it has curious data on agriculture in general. A new edition of this work recently came out, with a prologue by Antonio Arrúe (Zarautz, 1956).

3. The systems of rotation and the present state of agriculture are conveniently defined in a pamphlet that was published for the Certamen agropecuario de Guipúzcoa. Tolosa, 1942, which includes a set of interesting graphs on the most appropriate crops and the amount of land that must be dedicated to each.

There is mention of the cultivation of spelt wheat and similar cereals in almost all the publications on Navarre and Araba from a century ago or more (e.g., Miñano, Madoz). See Ramírez Arcas, Itinerario descriptivo, pp. 45–46. Iturriza, Historia de Vizcaya, p. 69, states that in his time the Bizkaian farmhouses generally had 50 or 60 fanegas (1 fanega = 0.66 hectares) of wheat and 90 of corn, but the properties worked by the serfs of the king were larger at 120 fanegas of corn, 100 of wheat, 100 of chestnuts, 50 baskets of apples, and 200 loads of coal. Many of the common ones were round fields as if based on sels [a type of seasonal pasture—trans.]. On the apple orchards, oak groves, and chestnut stands, pp. 100–104. On the census of the serfs, pp. 159–163.

4. Daniel Nagore’s work, Las posibilidades agrícolas de Navarra (Pamplona, 1932), p. 54, was the source of part of the chart shown in fig. 52. By the same author, “Geografía botánica de Navarra,” in Estudios geográficos, 19 (1945), pp. 241–259. The data on the Ezekabarte Valley and Orotz-Betelu were taken from the monographs by C. Urabayen cited in chapter 1, note 1, paragraph 10.

CHAPTER 9: The Agricultural Sector: Implements and Ergology

1. With respect to farming implements characteristic of the Basques, the person who made the most observations (although he never collected them in a systematic way) was Aranzadi, whose works include “Etnología,” in the general volume of the Geografía general del país vasco-navarro, pp. 143–152; “Aperos de labranza y sus aledaños textiles y pastoriles,” in Folklore y costumbres de España, 1 (Barcelona, 1931), pp. 289–376 (for all of Spain and with chapters on the textile arts); “Explicación de los aperos de labranza de la exposición,” in Quinto congreso de estudios vascos. Vergara, 1930. Arte popular vasco (San Sebastián, 1934), pp. 18–36, with his oldest biography. In all these works, Aranzadi mentions the laya. For more on the laya, see also J. Caro Baroja, Los pueblos del norte de la península ibérica, pp. 114–116. There is a


3. With respect to most of the farming implements listed, there is a description that focuses on a single town and its surroundings in my work *La vida rural en Vera de Bidasoa*, pp. 41–67. It would be beneficial to compare what is said there with what Aranzadi says in his studies cited in note 1. With respect to the flails and other forms of threshing today, there is a general study of great importance written by Swedish researcher Dag Trotzig, *Slagan och andra tröskredskap en etnologisk undersökning med utgänspunkt från svenskt material* (Stockholm, 1943), pp. 13 and 34, and especially pp. 56–57. Also F. Krüger, *Die Hochpyrenäen C.*, pp. 264–269, with the preceding bibliography. There are no illustrations of Basque flails in any known work, although dictionaries have collected almost all the listed names. Aranzadi also discusses scarecrows and similar rural artifacts in an article titled “Espantajos de ingenio y monigotes de superstición,” in *Homenaje a don Carmelo de Echegaray*, pp. 31–40.

4. Much has been written about Basque raised granaries. In his history, Iturriza (pp. 69–70) discusses the Bizkaian ones at length. In our time, Frankowski, *Hórreos y palafitos de la península ibérica* (Madrid, 1918), pp. 27–32, again called attention to them. Later, J. Larrea discovered new examples: “El ’garaixe’ (hórreo) agregado al caserío,” in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* vi (1926), pp. 137–145; “Garaixe’ (= hórreo) agregado al caserío,” in the same publication, vii (1927), pp. 127–136 and ix (1929), pp. 63–66. Barandiarán in his monograph on the “Pueblo de Aurizperri,” in *Anuario* vi, p. 9 (fig. 4) also notes the existence of a Pyrenean raised granary.

**CHAPTER 10: The Agricultural Sector: Draft Animals and Special Crops**

1. On the task of reaping and the implements related to it, I have published some observations in an article titled “Arte e historia social y económica,” in *Príncipe de Viana* 32 (1948), pp. 339–358, in which the reliefs of Izaba are examined.

2. There are many important monographs on the cow, draft animals, and types of yokes. Adolf Staffé states that the Basque cow is the same type that in another time ran wild in the Pyrenees, “Beiträge zur Monographie des Baskenrindes,” in *Revista inter-
3. The bibliography on the Basque cart is extensive. In addition to the works of Aranzadi cited in note 1 of chapter 9, there are other previous works in which he speaks on the same topic: *Etnografía, sus bases*, etc., pp. 21–31; “Der ächzende Wagen und anderes aus Spanien,” in *Archiv für Anthropologie* xxiv (1897), pp. 213–225. This article is the basis of the rest of the publications by the same author and even of what he says in his *Etnología* (Madrid, 1899), pp. 248–256. See also J. Caro Baroja, *Los pueblos del norte*, pp. 143–149, where it is studied together with other models, and *Analíisis de la cultura*, pp. 176–181, as well as the works by the same author cited in note 2 of chapter 9. The solid wheel is also found on the peninsula in Asturias and, more densely, in Portugal: Vergilio Correia, “O carro rural português,” in *Terra portuguesa*, ii (1917), pp. 21–23, 193–203; iii (1918–1919), pp. 29–30, 90–93.


All of this is useful in gaining an idea of the present-day conditions of the shepherding life. For linguistic observations, see Barandiarán’s text, *El hombre primitivo en el país vasco*, pp. 66–70.

2. The life of the medieval shepherd could be the subject of a very detailed study because there is extensive documentation. The reconnaissance carried out by Sancho of Navarre to allow the herds of San Millán to graze throughout his land, enjoying the same privileges as the royal herds, is reported in the *Cartulario de San Millán*,
pp. 89–90 (no. 79), where there are also other interesting documents on shepherding in Araba and La Rioja. To study shepherding in Navarre, one must carefully read various articles by Yanguas and the Diccionario de la Academia de la Historia, ii, pp. 276–278 (article on the Erronkari Valley), concerning Erronkari shepherding. See also B. Estornés Lasa, Erronkari (“El valle del Roncal”) (Zaragoza, 1927), pp. 95–105 and pp. 209, 215, 223–224, 241, 271 (documents).

Thefts of livestock carried out by the Navarrese in Castile are reflected in the Poema de Fernán González, Stanza 280c (ed. Alonso Zamora, p. 84), 281c–d (p. 85), 738–739, and 741 (pp. 221–222), the last of which says,

Quando ovo el Rey García el condado robado,  
leuaron mucha prea y mucho de ganado  
con muy fuerte ganancia tornos’ a su Reinado,  
mas fue a poco tiempo caramiente conprado.

On grazing lands, Yanguas y Miranda, Diccionario de antigüedades, i, p. 152.

3. There is abundant legislation on grazing land. For Gipuzkoa, Ordenanzas, dated 1697, cit. Title xi, chapters i–iv, pp. 322–325. For Bizkaia, Fuero, ed. cit., Title xxxiv, Laws i, vii, pp. 243–249. With respect to Navarre, in the Diccionario de los fueros by Yanguas, the words pastores (shepherds) and pastos (pasture), pp. 92–97, as well as daños (damages) (pp. 13–15), eras (yards) (pp. 30–31), and hurtos (thefts) (pp. 62–66). For French Basque legislation, see Haristoy, Recherches historiques sur le pays basque, ii.

4. With respect to sels, the oldest document I know of is not from the Basque Country but is a document from the year 853, in which bishops Severino and Ariulfo donate goods to the monastery of Santa María del Yermo (España Sagrada, xxxvii; Madrid, 1789), p. 321. Quite old Basque documents are used by Iturriza, Historia de Vizcaya, pp. 236–237 (sels in Cenarruza [today, Ziortza-Bolibar] in 1388), a work that presents many curious details about them (pp. 91–92). According to a regulation dated 1583 (Title xx, chapter 3, p. 268 of the Ordenanzas of 1697), the Gipuzkoan sels had to have “in the remate and in the circumference 72 goravillas, each measuring up to seven estados or brazadas to be measured with a string 12 goravillas long, pulled around using the marking stone as the center.” In the book by Villareal de Bérriz, Máquinas hidráulicas de molinos y ferrerías, y gobierno de los árboles de Vizcaya (Bilbao, 1736), about which we will speak again in chapter 13, note 4, the following description of a sel appears (p. 118): “It is a scrubland in a perfect circle, that has only a marking stone at its center, which is called piedra cenizal (ash stone). There are many in Bizkaia, some are called winter quarters and others summer quarters. In the Basque language the winter one is called cortaosoa, and the summer one cortaerdia; corta is the same as cortijo (country house) in Spanish. The ash stone in Basque is called Austarria, and in both languages it seems to mean rock of ash, undoubtedly because our forefathers made fire on it when they grazed their livestock, and it would have been the law or custom that none other would come within a certain distance. The winter sel has as its radius, that is, from the ash stone to any part of the circumference, 126 estados or fathoms, and the summer one, 84.” One estadio is 7 common feet. For a study of sels in Navarre, see Yanguas, Diccionario de antigüedades, iii, pp. 326–327, as well as some local publications, such as the Nuevas ordenanzas, cotos y paramentos del

6. The charcoal burners have some instruments used solely by them, studied by J. de Aguirre, “Avance a un catálogo de etnografía,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xviii (1927), pp. 714–722.

**CHAPTER 12: The Nautical and Fishing Sector**

1. Almost all the old histories of the country (by Isasti, Iturriza, Landázuri) usually have a list at the beginning of the species of animals that lived there. Nevertheless, there has been no modern study among those cited in the text that has determined when the best-known animals disappeared. Some individual works shed light on the matter. For example, Serapio Múgica, “La caza del oso en Guipúzcoa,” in *Euskalerriaren alde* i (1911), pp. 53–58, tells how the bear was extinguished from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The same author, in the “Guipúzcoa” volume of the *Geografía general del país vasco-navarro*, pp. 202–212, provides details on the appearance and capture of harmful animals in more recent times. In the *Fuero de Vizcaya*, ed. cit., Title xxxi, pp. 215–216, there is a law about big game hunting. In the *Diccionario de los fueros*, pp. 9–11, Yanguas summarizes the severe and aristocratic Navarrese legislation on this issue. In the *Diccionario de antigüedades*, ii, pp. 621–622 (article on “tributes”), he mentions the hunters of Gurbindo. In the ethnographic museums of Donostia and Bilbao there is some equipment for vermin hunting that deserves a small study.

2. The literature on the history of Basque fishing and navigation is extensive. Above all, C. Fernández Duro, “La pesca de los vascongados y el descubrimiento de Terranova,” in *Arca de Noé* (Madrid, 1881), pp. 273–384, and “Disertación sobre el descubrimiento de Terranova,” pp. 385–427. R. de Berraondo, “Motivos vascos. Los pescadores ante la historia,” in *Euskalerriaren alde* xi (1921), pp. 241–248. The text of the old charter of San Sebastián, in Camino y Orella, *Historia civil y diplomática*, i, pp. 61–63, or in the *Diccionario* by the Academia de la Historia, ii, pp. 541–557. There is good documentation on the associations of towns of the Cantabrian coast in medieval times, beginning with that gathered by A. Benavides in his edition of the *Memorias de Fernando IV de Castilla* (Madrid, 1860), in vol. ii. Gorosábel, *Memoria sobre las guerras y tratados de Guipúzcoa con Inglaterra en los siglos XIV y XV* (Tolosa, 1865), reveals a close (though hostile) relationship between English and Basque sailors; this work is very important for anyone who wants to study changes...
in naval techniques. The much-cited works of Isasti present a number of curious and firsthand historical data. Thus, for example, in the *Compendio historial*, pp. 153–154, Isasti states that, in his time, those who went to Newfoundland to fish for cod left in the month of March or April, returning in September or October. On pp. 154–156, he gives curious details on whaling, which might conflict with Larramendi’s observations, *Corografía*, pp. 38–40, and Landázuri’s, *Historia de Guipúzcoa*, i, pp. 95–100. The French Basque colonies in Newfoundland have been the subject of many investigations since F. Michel, *Le pays basque* (Paris, 1857), pp. 187–191, collected the most important general data. L. Goyetche, in *Saint Jean de Luz*, pp. 69–73, presents a curious and specific study of some of the data on the colonies. With respect to lawsuits due to whaling, see the article by D. de Areitio, “La pesca de la ballena. Notas de un pleito de principios del siglo xvii,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos xvii* (1926), pp. 194–200. The importance of cod fishing is very well reflected in the collection of documents published by José Manuel Imaz, *La industria pesquera en Guipúzcoa al final del siglo XVI* (San Sebastián, 1944). On specific aspects of cod fishing, J. J. de Mugartegui, “Cómo se reclutaba en el siglo xvi, en nuestras costas, una tripulación para la pesca del bacalao en Terranova,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos xix* (1928), pp. 632–636 (document from Lekeitio, dated 1583).

In some ports, even women devoted themselves to small maritime activities, such as the famous female skiff sailors of Pasaia who so enchanted Felipe IV (Serapio Múgica, “Las bateleras de Pasajes,” in *Euskalerriaren alde* ii (1912), pp. 174–179), and those about whom Lope de Vega says in “Los ramilletes de Madrid,” Act iii,

“¿Hay cosa como ver cuán ligeras conducen a la orilla venturosa sus popas enramadas de laureles flores coronadas?”

(“Is there anything like seeing how lightly they go to the happy shore, sterns covered with laurels, crowned with flowers?”)


3. To study the vicissitudes of the construction techniques for fishing boats and other types of boat, we first have a collection of medieval seals in which they are schematically represented. R. de Berraondo presents a collection of them in “Sellos medievales de tipo naval,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos xxvi* (1935), pp. 5–43, 423–480. There are monographic articles, such as that by V. Vignau, “Sello del consejo de Fuenterrabía,” in *Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos* x (1904), pp. 302–307. Second, a certain amount of data primarily on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been gathered by various local authors (e.g., Iradi, in Bermeo; Cavanilles, in Lekeitio), synthesized by C. de Echegaray in *Vizcaya*, pp. 292–308, treating mostly the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Regarding contemporary boats (before steamers), see Aranzadi, “Etnología,” in the general volume of the *Geografía general del*
To understand what has been said with respect to influences (Mediterranean and Nordic) on the types of boat, modern studies, such as that by James Hornell, “The significance of the dual element in British fishing boat construction,” in *Folk-Liv* X (1946), pp. 113–126, are worth bearing in mind. Some small articles on particular topics could also be mentioned, such as B. de Arregui, “La pesca en Guipúzcoa. Las redes de pescar,” in *Euskalerriaren alde* VIII (1918), pp. 290–295. The same author wrote “Disquisiciones lingüísticas. ‘Ontzi’ = ‘nave,’” in the same publication, III (1913), pp. 679–681.


5. Humboldt’s description of the customs of Lekeitio was the basis for Aranzadi’s short note, “Una urna (atabaka) de votaciones de los pescadores lequeitianos,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xviii (1927), pp. 160–161. Details on the auctions are in Serapio Múgica, “Guipúzcoa,” pp. 315–323. In the *Colección*, by T. Gonzales, there is a “Provisión para que el corregidor de Vizcaya examine e informe sobre las ordenanzas de la cofradía de San Pedro de los marineros de Lequeitio” (I, pp. 88–90), dated October 15, 1488, and an approval of the regulations of the fishermen from Bermeo, from 1527 (pp. 57–65).

6. In his summary of the first edition of this book, Mr. Gáraste attributes to me some etymologies of fish names that do not appear in the book, as the reader can see.

**CHAPTER 13: Miners and Ironmongers**

1. On the names of metals, see the brief notes by Barandiarán in *El hombre primitivo en el país vasco*, pp. 76–78. With respect to ancient mining operations, J. G. Thalacker, “Descripción de unas antiguas minas situadas al pie de los Pirineos en la provincia de Guipúzcoa,” in *Variedades de ciencias, literatura y artes*, iv (Madrid, 1894), pp. 201–215, 256–273, an article that inspired many later authors, who have not added much. In general, as an introduction, it is useful to read what A. Grenier says on metallurgy and mining in his “Archéologie gallo-romaine” (iv of the *Manuel d’Archéologie*, begun by Dechelette), second part (Paris, 1934), pp. 942–1017, given that he frequently alludes to the ancient Pyrenean metallurgical complex.
2. There is no complete historical and technical study on Basque foundries. Sera-pio Múgica, in the much-cited “Guipúzcoa” volume, pp. 488–494, of the *Geografía general*, mentions a number of quite respectable facts without claiming to have exhausted the topic. To prove what is said about the form of the “Bizkaian” iron, that is, Basque iron in general, it is sufficient to remember a few texts:

Camoens mentions the Gipuzkoan iron mines (*Os Lusiadas*, Lisbon, 1943, Folio 64, Stanza 373, in Canto iv). And Francisco Manuel de Melo, in the *Relogios falantes*, ed. Correia de A. Oliveira (Lisbon, 1942), p. 56, has a belfower clock in a Portuguese village say, “Que descendo de mui nobre ferro, fidalgo biscainho com suas misturas de aço de Milao, cavaleiro lombardo.” For his part, Tirso de Molina, in “La prudencia en la mujer,” puts these verses in the mouth of the don Diego (López) de Haro:

“El hierro es vizcaíno, que os encargo,  
corto en palabras, pero en obras largo.”

(“The iron is Bizkaian that I entrust to you,  
short on words but long on works.”)

*(Biblioteca de autores españoles, v, p. 287*. The “iron” in this case is a sword). In the *Poema de Fernán González*, ed. cit., Stanzas 63–64 (pp. 16–17), these words are put in the mouth of King Roderick, who has faith in Count Julian and speaks to his vassals:

“Lorygas, capellinas a todas bragoneras,  
las lanças e cochyellas, fierros e espalderas,  
espas e ballestas e asconas monteras,  
metet las en el fuego, et fet grandes fogueras.  
Faredes dellas fierros, e de sus guarniciones  
rejas e açadas pycos e açadones  
destrales e fachas, segures e fachones  
estas cosas atales con que labran peones.”

Here we see the cyclic use of iron that was mentioned in the text. Perhaps the oldest document that mentions smithies in the Basque territory is the donation of Arroncio to the church of Okoitza (Acosta) in Araba, dated in the year 871, “*Cartulario de San Millán*,” p. 17 (no. 12), with reference to some donations of Estavillo. In the *Colección de cédulas* by T. González, i, pp. 28–30, is a letter from John II, dated February 16, 1439, granting Lope García de Salazar the right to the extraction of iron from Somorrostro, and another from July 12, 1475, in a similar vein for Pedro de Salazar (pp. 47–49). In the same volume, having to do with Bizkaia, there is a royal provision from March 23, 1487 (pp. 153–156), declaring the same use of Somorrostro to be free and general against the aspirations of Juan de Salazar. The battle against the iron monopolies is reflected in later documents, such as one from November 4, 1491 (pp. 253–255). In 1499, on April 6, the extraction of the seam of iron was prohibited outside the kingdom (pp. 301–303), something that happened again in 1503 (pp. 363–364) and in 1514 (ii, pp. 42–44), against what the provost of Portugalete, Ochoa de Salazar, a grandson of Lope, I believe, was applying for.

The text of “Las harpías de Madrid” is found in the *Colección selecta de antiguas novelas españolas*, vii (Madrid, 1907), p. 44.


4. The date of the introduction of hydraulic machines seems to be given by documents studied by my friend A. Rodríguez y Herrero in his painstaking edition of Iturriza’s *Historia de Vizcaya*, pp. 94–98. The definition of the foundry in the Gipuzkoan *Ordenanzas* of 1697 is on a par with the summary in Alvaro Alonso Barba, *Arte de los metales*, en que se enseña el verdadero beneficio de los de oro y plata por azogue. El modo de fundirlos todos, y cómo se han de refinar, y apartar unos de otros (Madrid, 1640), where, in the brief chapter devoted to iron (Book iv, c. xxi), p. 168, it says, “It is given very strong fire with a large bellows moved by the wheels that bring the water,” and later, p. 169, “It is cut into pieces with blades, then returned to the heat with a large hammer, which also brings water, then the pieces are rolled and formed into bars or sheets.” Somewhat before Barba’s book was published, Lope de Isasti gathered various data on the Gipuzkoan iron industry and the mines known in his time (pp. 158–159, 232–233 of the *Compendio historial*), and he lists the large smithies (pp. 234–238), of which there were eighty, plus two being repaired, and the drop hammers, of which there were no more than thirty-seven, plus two made of steel. Iturriza, *Historia de Vizcaya*, pp. 93–99, says that in 1792 there were in the seigniory 154 foundries, of which 7 or 8 made frying pans. Landázuri, *Historia de Guipúzcoa*, i, pp. 85–86, provides more data. But from the technical and statistical point of view, there are two publications of greater interest written in the eighteenth century. One is a work by Pedro Bernardo Villarreal de Bérriz, alderman of Lekeitio, elder and gentleman of Santiago (see G. Manso de Zúñiga, “Cartas de Bilbao,” in Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País v [1949], pp. 15–45), section titled “Máquinas hidráulicas de molinos y ferrerías, y gobierno de los árboles de Vizcaya” (Madrid, 1736), which is difficult to find. The other is in the *Extractos de las juntas generales celebradas por la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País* (Vitoria, 1776), pp. 67–70, where it is stated that around that time, there were ninety-four foundries in Gipuzkoa and eighteen in Araba. Villarreal states (p. 44) that 150 years before the time of writing (that is, at the end of the sixteenth century) iron was still worked by hand in various places in Gipuzkoa. To understand the technique of the ironmongers, it is recommended to read *Curso de metalurgia especial*, by L. Barinaga y Corradi (Madrid, 1879), pp. 700–715, or the *Tratado de siderurgia*, by J. Rodriguez Alonso (Madrid, 1884), pp. 125 and 134. Both mention the Catalan forge and describe the oven with a tube rather than with a bellows. Jerónimo Ibrán, *Album de metalurgia general*, text and atlas (Madrid, 1872), bellows, Plate lxx, figs. 583–584 (text, pp. 485–487); tube, Plate lxxii, fig. 607 (text, pp. 488–489). Also G. Henao, *Averiguaciones de las antigüedades de Cantabria*, ii (Salamanca, 1691), chapter iii (cited by Múgica). For earlier techniques, *Opera di Giorgio Africola de l’arte de metalli partita in XII libri* (Basilea. Frobenius, 1563), pp. 183–184, and the previously cited book by Grenier. Also, the monograph by Mariano Zuagnarar.

5. Lively descriptions of the lives of the ironmongers are given by Larramendi in his *Corografía*, pp. 62–74, and by Moguel in *Peru Abarka*, ed. cit., pp. 72–83. Moguel’s text on the foundries was also published by Pedro Miguel de Artiñano in the catalog
of the Exposición de hierros antiguos españoles (Madrid, 1919), pp. LXXXII–LXXXIX, where it deals with them extensively. The Ordenanzas of Gipuzkoa include an entire title (xxxvii) on forges, with four chapters that summarize the legislation mentioned earlier and that bear these titles: “i. De la pena de los oficiales de las ferrerías, que aviendose concertado con los ferrones o recevido de ellos dinero adelantado se ausentaren” (p. 312), “ii. De la pena del que cortare barquines de qualquier herrería” (pp. 312–313), “iii. De la pena del que desafiere a ferrería, o a mazeros, oficiales, y brazeros de ella” (pp. 313–314), and “iv. Que no se pueda sacar, ni llevar, la vena de fierro para Francia” (p. 314). The inscription of the pagani ferrarienses from Asque or Asté, in C. I. L. [sic] xiii, 384. My previous considerations to which I allude in Los pueblos de España, p. 293. With respect to the royal foundries of Navarre, Yanguas, and Miranda, Diccionario de antigüedades, i (Pamplona, 1840), p. 499, where it is stated that in 1388, there were twenty-eight of this type, and “Adiciones,” pp. 134–137. The vocabulary of the ironmonger is presented in some documents, such as J. Caro Baroja, La vida rural en Vera de Bidasoa, pp. 105–112, and Eladio Esparza, “Las ferrerías de Navarra,” an article in a special issue of the Diario de Navarra of July 7, 1930 (no. 8,807).

6. In Basque, the mill has two names of Romance origin. One is bolu, bolin, or borin (related to Spanish molino), and the other is errota (from rota, wheel in Latin). Iturriza, Historia de Vizcaya, pp. 99–100, speaks of boluak or bolintxuak, which consist of “a millstone that went around with the aid of a large wooden wheel bearing the weight of the waters that poured quickly from the wooden canal of the waterwheel.” Even in our day the existence of old mills turned by seawater has been suggested: J. de Aguirre, “Errota txiki. Molino movido por agua de mar,” in Euskalerriaren alde xvi (1926), pp. 441–446. The Fuero de Vizcaya includes a title (xxiv, ed. cit., pp. 165–174) in which there are ten laws that refer almost as much to mills as to smithies, with respect to construction, water use, and the like.

7. Beginning with the demographics that appear in the San Millán Codex (pp. 102–103), one can establish the development of the population of Araba based on the data given by Landázuri (Historia de Alava, i, pp. 112–114) and Madoz (i, p. 224) and more recent statistics. On the development of the Gipuzkoan population, see Madoz (ix, pp. 120–121) and S. Múgica, “Guipúzcoa,” pp. 233–241. On that of Bizkaia, Madoz (xvi, pp. 402–404) and modern statistics; all are approximate.

CHAPTER 14: Navigation, Commerce, and Industry

1. Most of this chapter, which was written for the second edition, was inspired by “La tradición técnica del pueblo vasco o una interpretación ecológica de su Historia,” in Vasconiana, Ediciones Minotauro (Madrid, 1957), pp. 103–177. It did not seem appropriate to me to delete all the references that I give here, although I give only select ones.


3. Arte para fabricar, fortificar, y apareiar naos de guerra, y marchante, by Thome Cano (Sevilla, 1611), Folios 2 verso 6 recto. This is an extremely important text for anyone who wants to examine the naval problems of that time.

4. Julio Caro Baroja, “La creencia en hombres marino,” in Algunos mitos españoles, 2nd ed. (Madrid, 1944), especially pp. 137–143. The figure of Elcano is not very
clear in the accounts published by Martin Fernández de Navarrete, whose works have recently been reprinted in the continuation of the Biblioteca de autores españoles, by Rivadeneira, lxv–lxvii (Madrid, 1954–1955). It is no surprise, then, that authors such as Oliveira Martins, in his study on Magellan (Portugal nos mares, i (Guimaraes, 1954), pp. 139–173), hardly mention him.

5. On the medieval Basque navy, there is still no better book than that by Cesáreo Fernández Duro, La marina de Castilla desde su origen y pugna con la de Inglaterra hasta la refundición de la armada española (Madrid, no year given). Less informative is the work by F. Javier de Salar, Marina española de la Edad Media, 2 vols. (2nd ed., Madrid, 1925). Texts on the actions of Basque sailors in the conquest of Granada can be seen in Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España, xi (Madrid, 1847), pp. 509–510, 529–532 and those that follow up to 558; xiv (Madrid, 1849), pp. 462–475.

6. See the “Crónica de Enrique III,” in Biblioteca de autores españoles, lxviii, p. 23. In the letter from the cardinal of Spain to the king of France that Fernando del Pulgar presents in his Crónica de los Reyes Católicos, i (Madrid, 1943), p. 252, one reads the following: “The Spaniards, especially those from the provinces of Gipuzkoa and Bizkaia, always had war by sea and by land with the English, your ancient enemies; and against their allies, the Portuguese; and they spilled their blood to preserve the royal crown of France.”

7. See the references given in Vasconiana, pp. 112–113 and 152–153.


9. Sometimes, Gipuzkoans and Bizkaians received poorly the royal emissaries who wanted to requisition their boats for purposes of war. For example, this happened in 1481, when Alonso de Quintanilla and others tried to form a navy against the Turks by order of the Catholic monarchs. Fernando del Pulgar says that the Basques were “suspicious people,” that is, distrustful, but that in naval construction, the art of navigation, and maritime war they were also “more knowledgeable than any other nation in the world,” that they were easily agitated, but when persuaded by good reasons, they changed their “suspicion” into “pride” and armed fifty ships, out of a navy of no more than seventy, with La Montaña, Galicia, and Andalucia providing the rest. The proportion is significant. Crónica de los Reyes Católicos, i, pp. 435–438.

10. The basic books on naval construction are those by Cesáreo Fernández Duro, A la mar, madera. Libro quinto de las disquisiciones náuticas (Madrid, 1880) and Arca de Noé. Libro sexto de las disquisiciones náuticas (Madrid, 1881). More recent is the very luxurious book by Gervasio de Artiñano, La arquitectura naval española (en madera), bosquejo de sus condiciones, rasgos de su evolución (Madrid, 1924). There is also a well-respected monograph by Teófilo Guiard, which I was not able to use.


12. The following was said by a great engineer of the time, J. de Escalante de Mendoza, in his “Itinerario de navegación de los mares y tierras occidentales,” written in 1575 and published in A la mar, madera, p. 450: “But, nevertheless, of the opinions mentioned, it has been shown that the best ships that were built in ancient times, most
often in the canal of Bilbao, which is in the province of Bizkaia, although I believe that it is now somewhat ruined because there they have taken it as a job and source of income, and they make them, not to navigate in themselves, but with the intent of turning them later to sell for this navigation in the western seas, they tend to make them sometimes weak and feeble.”


14. Isasti, in his much-cited *Compendio historial*, p. 23, alludes to them and reexamines the entry made in 1618. Each of these squadrons had its own general and admiral. The Bizkaian squadron, which went to sea in 1619, included ten galleons and two *pataches*, and the Gipuzkoan one, which set out later, had seven galleons and two *pataches*.


16. *Arte para fabricar, fortificar y apareiar naos*, Folios 44 verso, 45 verso. Conde de Polentinos, *Epistolario del general Zubiaur* (1568–1605) (Madrid, 1946), p. 69. This text from a letter written on October, 19, 1601, is a good example: “Since Your Majesty has so many Kingdoms, we must begin to have good ships like these of the Queen [of England] as we are lost in all things of the sea.”

17. *Arte para fabricar, fortificar y apareiar naos*, Folios 42 recto, 42 verso. On the difference between what was done in Andalusia and Portugal on one hand and Bizkaia on the other, Folios 41 recto, 41 verso, and, from 51 verso to 56 recto, a curious vocabulary with words of triple origin.

18. See the “Discurso sobre la construcción naval comparada,” by General Jacinto Antonio de Echevarri, or attributed to him, in *Arca de Noé*, pp. 231–241, which comments on construction regulations dating from 1611, 1613, and 1649. The harm done by the forecastle is highlighted in the “Diálogo entre un vizcaíno y un montañés, sobre construcción de naves,” in the same work, p. 142. During this period and the previous one, manuscripts and other printed material on naval construction circulated, in which there are abundant references to construction in the Basque Country. There are also allusions to it in accounts of voyages.

19. A first-rate Portuguese author, Francisco Manuel de Melo, gave us an account of the Battle of the Dunes, whose main character is Antonio de Oquendo, that could be assigned to this type of genre. According to Melo, Oquendo was very conceited and daring: *Epanaphoras de varia História Portugueza* (Coimbra, 1931), “La Epanaphora bélica.” Edgar Prestage, *D. Francisco Manuel de Melo* (Coimbra, 1933), p. 36.

20. One provincial register can be seen in the book by Ramón Seoane y Ferrer, *Navegantes guipúzcoanos* (Madrid, 1908). There also exist monographs on each of these personages. The monograph dedicated by Fernández Duro to Mateo de Laya as his inaugural address for the Academia de la Historia (Madrid, 1881) is interesting and not well known.
21. Among other works listed by Martín Fernández de Navarrete in the Biblioteca marítima española, I (Madrid, 1851), p. 134, we owe to Gastañeta the Proporciones de las medidas más esenciales, dadas por el Teniente General de la Armada Real del Mar Occéano Don Antonio de Gastañeta, de Orden del Rey nuestro Señor, para la Fabriza de Navios, y Fragatas de Guerra, que puedan montar desde ochenta Cañones hasta diez (Madrid, 1720).

22. The “Estudios históricos de la marina española en el siglo xviii,” by Admiral Vigodet, published in A la mar, madera, pp. 166–206, clarifies the changes that occurred in that century.

See in Jovellanos’s “Diarios” the entry written on August 18, 1791, during his stay in Bilbao, Biblioteca de autores españoles, lxxxv, p. 27.

23. Twice the word bilbo appears in “The Merry Wives of Windsor”: i, 1, 158, “I combat challenge of his latten bilbo” (Pistol), and iii, 5, 109, “next, to be compassed, like a good bilbo” (Falstaff), The Comedies of Shakespeare (Frow-de-Oxford, 1911), pp. 147 and 190. The bilbo is a Bizkaian sword that went from Bilbao to England.

24. See Alfonso Martínez de Espiner, Arte de ballestería y montería, published first in Madrid (1644) and reprinted in Madrid (1946), pp. 20–21, 32, and with respect to firearms, pp. 35 and 71. The name of Basque weapons (including harquebuses) is reflected in books such as that by Rodrigo Méndez Silva, Población general de España (Madrid, 1645), from which I have gathered many references: Vasconiana, pp. 141–142 and 175.

25. Discursos de don Antonio de Mendoza, secretario de la cámara de Felipe IV (Madrid, 1911), pp. 125–135 (“Relación del Señorío de Vizcaya”) and pp. 137–148 (letter written to the Count-Duke of Olivares), from which we have the following (p. 143): “And the riches that these families (the old families) usually had turned in Bilbao to other less lustrous ones, brought about by the estate and its luster through deals and marriages in the Indies and with the daughters and granddaughters of the English and the French.” And further on, referring to the changes and disturbances (p. 145), “Those who have caused the present suffering are the social climbers, whose fathers and grandfathers were not born in Bizkaia nor bear its blood, sons of foreigners and merchants cozy with daring clergymen and the lowest rabble.”

26. It is known that Menéndez Pelayo numbered the so-called caballeritos (little gentlemen) of Azkoitia among those with heterodox tendencies in the eighteenth century. Julio de Urquijo refuted his arguments. However, it is clear that various members of the Basque high society of the time were hardly believers, such as the fabulist Samaniego, who was subjected to an inquisitorial trial.

27. The most revealing text on this belief is presented by R. H. Tawney in his classic work Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (West Drayton, 1948), p. 206, a book that would require comment from the southern European countries.

28. However, we must not forget that in the time of the Hapsburgs and even before, the Basques had already distinguished themselves in administrative careers, giving the country a great number of secretaries and technicians in matters of treasury and administration.
29. Attempts of this sort are symbolized in the figure of Father Vieira, about whom there is an enormous literature. See the recent study by C. R. Boxer, *A Great Lusobrazilian Figure. Padre Antonio Vieira (1608–1697)* (London, 1957).

30. I will soon present my work on this topic, with more supporting documents.

**CHAPTER 15: Family and Family Relations: Social Strata**

1. The study of the private institutions of the Basque people, the family institutions particularly, that are analyzed in this chapter has been carried out by a group of competent lawyers and sociologists. Leaving aside for the moment the comments on the customs and charters of the country made by writers in the mid-nineteenth century, we will begin our list with two works by E. Cordier, *Le droit de famille aux Pyrénées: Barèges, Lavedan, Béarn et Pays Basque* (Paris, 1860) and *De l’organisation de la famille chez les basques* (Paris, 1869). These two books were known to Bachofen (see the anthology of his writings compiled by C. A. Bernouilli, *Urreligion und antike Symbole*, II [Leipzig, 1926], pp. 515–517), and, later, to all those who have spoken of “maternal right” in general. Le Play provides a point of departure for investigations of a very different sort in *L’organisation de la famille selon le vrai modèle* (Paris, 1871), pp. 39–44. By the same author, there is also *La reforme sociale en France, déduite de l’observation comparée des peuples européens*, i (Paris, 1866), pp. 249–250. At about the same time, the *Bosquejo de la organización social de Vizcaya* (Bilbao, 1870) was published in Spain, a volume that contains a report by Antonio de Trueba and some more documents of interest describing certain traits of family life in the seigniory.

More modern are the thesis by E. Ritou, *De la condition des personnes chez les basques français jusqu’en 1789* (Bayonne, 1897), which devotes a lot of space (pp. 66–81) to the law of the free election of heirs, and the short works of M. Berdeco (“Coutumes morales du pays basque”) and Louis Etchevery (“Les coutumes successorales du pays basque”), in *La tradition au pays basque* (Paris, 1899), pp. 167–176 and 179–190. At the beginning of the century an important work came out, that by Nicolás Vicario y de la Peña, *Derecho consuetudinario de Vizcaya* (Madrid, 1901), which will be used many times, and which deals with various topics in addition to family structure. The monograph by Hilario Yaben y Yaben, *Los contratos matrimoniales en Navarra y su influencia en la estabilidad de la familia* (Madrid, 1916), tends to be apologist in nature. From political sectors that are simultaneously conservative and autonomist come other documents with the same sense most of the time, such as that by Luis Chalbaut, “La familia como forma típica y transcendental de la constitución social vasca,” in *Primer Congreso de Estudios Vascos*, pp. 43–64. And in more ancient times, authors such as Moguel, in *Peru Abarka*, pp. 56–59, praised the Basque customs concerning inheritance.

But they did not seem acceptable to everyone. The “Floreto,” a collection made in the sixteenth century and published by F. Javier Sánchez Cantón in *Memorial histórico español*, xlviii (Madrid, 1948), p. 272, says, “The Bizkaians have a terrible charter that allows a father who has many children to leave his estate to whomever of them he desires, and by giving to each of the others a tree rooted in the ground, he fulfills his duties; and for this reason they leave to go all over the world.” Although there may be exaggeration in the manner in which it is expressed, the fact is correct. From Azkue, *Diccionario*, ii, p. 234, col. 3, copy of a document from the early nineteenth century
(Euskal-errijetaco olgueeta, ta dantzteen neusrizco-gatz-ozpinduba [Bartolomé, Pamplona, 1816, i, p. 205]) we have the following: “Are there not many old parents who are unwanted in their own house, not daring to say a word, in the corner, reduced to silence, trembling, with the son or daughter or son-in-law or daughter-in-law or all of them ordering them around scowling and with harsh words?”

2. Aranzadi spoke about some systems of choosing spouses and of nuptial and matrimonial customs in “Problemas de etnografía de los vascos,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos i (1907), pp. 565–608, and especially in the postscript. Figure 68 is taken from a photograph published in the book by Paul Lafond, Le pays basque (Bordeaux, 1913), p. 16. Edward Spencer Dodgson wrote a heterogeneous account of Basque inscriptions, Inscriptions basques (Madrid, 1896), in which he recalls (p. 28) the inscription of the house in Bidarrai cited in the text.


4. Various authors have dealt with kinship terms and with the most primitive forms of family structure that can be inferred from their examination. In addition to the prudent overview in an essay written by G. Bähr, Los nombres de parentesco en vasconce (Bermeo, 1935), one must bear in mind the articles by H. Schuchardt, Vinson, and other linguists mentioned by Bähr. Aranzadi vigorously fought Vinson’s ideas from an ethnological point of view, “De la familia vasca primitiva inventada por Mr. Vinson,” in Euskalerriaren alde i (1911), pp. 453–458, and “Vuelta a la supuesta primitiva familia vasca,” in the same journal, vol. i, pp. 727–734. See also J. Caro Baroja, Los pueblos del norte de la península ibérica, pp. 163–166 and, more recently, a short note, “Sobre los nombres de parentesco en vasco,” in Homenaje a D. Joaquín Mendizábal Gortazar (San Sebastián, 1956), pp. 91–97.

5. To understand the notion of nobility typical of the Basques, the best text is that by Larramendi in his much-cited Corografía, pp. 121–133, where the differences that existed in comparison to Castile are clearly presented, though in a text that is typically racist.

There are many documents that make fun of the airs of nobility of the Bizkaians in addition to the well-known passage by Cervantes. I recall now that Cristóbal de Villalón, in the Viaje de Turquía (ed. Buenos Aires, 1948), p. 45, speaking of how the Spanish soldiers show off in Italy, says, “The other, who, throwing straw on the counter in his father’s bar for the muleteers’ billy goats, learned bai (yes), galagarre (barley) and goña (gonga [?], theft, measurement), then Machín Artiaga de Mendorozqueta appeared and said that on the east side he is a relative of the king of France, Louis, and on the west, of Count Fernán González y Acota, with another, his cousin Ochoa de Galarreta, and other such names typical for the books of Amadis.” It generally surprised the Spaniards that people with common trades claimed nobility.

6. There is no medium-sized history of medieval Navarre written from the social and economic points of view. E. Hinojosa in El regimen señorial y la cuestión agraria en Cataluña durante la Edad Media (Madrid, 1906), notes something with respect to the legal principle of servanthood in Navarre, and other authors have gathered valuable data on other topics, but without organizing them. What the text says about the complaint of the people from Auza in 1418 was taken from Yanguas y Miranda, Diccionario de antigüedades, cit., i, p. 75. Just as the loss of the Basque language in
central Navarre has given rise to many very tearful and sentimental literary narrations written by authors with a regional bent (for example, *El último tamborilero de Erraondo* by Arturo Campión), the ruin of the old Navarrese seigniories in the second half of the nineteenth century served as a plot for certain traditionalist writers and led to an aristocratic tendency to compose other, equally plaintive ones. See “Los últimos,” by Joaquín Argamasilla, in *De tierras altas. Bocetos de paisajes y novelas* (Madrid, 1907), pp. 207–306. I obtained the data on the tributes of the Agotes and the houses of Oitz from Dr. D. Guillermo Balda, from Elizondo, the late Isidora Echegaray from Oitz, and other people.

7. The word *bordari* allows us to see clearly that the suffix *-arii*, not only in this but in other cases as well, comes from Latin *-arius*, *-arii*, as Schuchardt thought. With respect to the word *millarista*, Landazuri, in his *Historia de Guipúzcoa*, i, p. 82, says that the owners were called by this term “because with the value of their farmhouses (or likewise of houses on the streets) they verify the possession of the profitable quantity of maravedis [a type of coin —trans.] that the municipal laws of each town require for them to be able to obtain the honorific offices of it.” Title xx of the customs of Zuberoa in three articles (Haristoy, *Recherches historiques sur le pays basque*, ii, pp. 415–416), deals with the *cheptel*, and in general, for the issues dealt with in the last pages of this chapter, see the works cited in note 1.

CHAPTER 16: The Neighborhood: Higher Social Entities and Their Relationship to Road Communications

1. From a common-law point of view, the neighborhood has been studied in a relevant way by B. de Echegaray, “La vecindad. Relaciones que engendra en el país vasco,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xxiii (1932), pp. 4–26, 376–405, and 546–564, where he uses in part many of the works listed in note 1 of the previous chapter, personal observations, and some monographic studies not yet cited here, such as that by Miguel de Unamuno, “Vizcaya (aprovechamientos comunes; lorra, seguro mutuo para el ganado),” in *Derecho consuetudinario y economía popular de España*, ii (Barcelona, 1902), pp. 35–66. See also those reviewed in chapter 1, note 1, paragraph 9.

2. The traditional divisions of the Basque–Navarrese ancestral home have not been found worthy of systematic study. Nevertheless, there may be no more necessary work, both from the point of view of ethnology and from that of physical anthropology. The modern municipalities and administrative districts have been established over old divisions that remain in effect in some senses. What we call a valley in the Basque–Navarrese country corresponds to what in Merovingian documents is often called *pagus*. The Frankish influence is seen, no doubt, in the city councils, of which there are five: Antsoain, Galar, Irza, Oltza, and Zizur (compare these denominations with those of *centena Alaucionensis*, *centena Carbonensis*, and the like). To the best of my knowledge, there remains no trace of the *centenarii*. In contrast, in Araba, a resident of a small town who takes a turn for free as a field guard is called a *burgari* (F. de Baraíbar, *Vocabulario de palabras usadas en Alava* [Madrid, 1903], p. 58); this word seems to be related to Latin *burgarii*, castle guards in the Lower Roman Empire, or residents of the burgs (Saint Isidore, *Etim*, ix, 4, 28). With respect to rural guard duty, Luis Redonety López Dóriga, *Policía rural en España*, ii (Madrid, 1928); see also the review by D.

3. Pimpedunii is the name that Pliny (H. N., vi, 108) gives to an Aquitaine town, in fact; however, I do not recall which author was the first to claim the five towns for France, assimilating them into Pimpedunii.

4. See chapters 2–5. The fame of Saint Adrian’s Way is reflected in some literary texts and in songs by French pilgrims, one of which says,

“Quand nous fumes à la montagne,  
Saint Adrien,  
Un reste de vin de Champagne  
Nous fit bien,  
Nous avions souffert le chaleur  
Dans le voyage,  
Nous fortifîâmes notre coeur  
Pour ce pélérinage.”

J. B. Daranatz, Chansons des pélerins de Saint Jacques (Bayonne, 1917), pp. 22–23. These verses date from the sixteenth century. In the second letter of the Relation du voyage en Espagne by Madame D’Aulnoy, i (Paris, 1691), pp. 71–83, there is a lively description of a trip from Donostia to Vitoria-Gasteiz and of Saint Adrian’s Way. Compare that with what is said in the Voyage d’Espagne (Cologne, 1667), pp. 11–16, attributed to R. R. de Bonnecase. The passage through the Basque Country was still dangerous at the end of the preceding century. See, for example, the texts collected by J. Gárate in “Euskaria a fines del medioevo,” in Ensayos euskarianos, i (Bilbao, 1935), pp. 93–111. The contrast between what travelers of that time say and what nineteenth-century travelers express is sufficient indication of the social transformation that took place between 1500 and 1800. After the dark medieval descriptions, read the first impressions of T. Gautier, Voyage en Espagne (ed. Paris, 1914), pp. 21–23, upon entering Spain by way of Irun, or those of Alejandro Dumas, Impresions de voyage, de Paris a Cadix, i (Paris, 1883), pp. 45–46.

CHAPTER 17: Aspects of Social Life: From Childhood to Marriage

1. The bibliography on magical and superstitious beliefs in particular will be given further on. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to list now several works to which we will frequently refer in this and the following chapters. One is the first volume of Euskalerriaren yakintza (popular literature of the Basque Country) (Madrid, 1935), whose author is R. M. de Azkue and which contains extremely abundant material on various aspects of Basque folklore. Another is the monthly pages of Eusko-Folklore. Materiales y cuestionarios, published by Barandiarán from 1921 to 1936 in Vitoria-Gasteiz and later in France. This collection of materials of different types is highly recommended for the precision, the critical thought, and the solidity of judgment Barandiarán reveals, as is, in general, everything that comes from the hands of the same author, by whom there is also an essay closely associated with the topics dealt with in the text: “Nacimiento y expansion de los fenómenos sociales,” in Anuario
I would like the reader to observe that, first, my point of view in the ethnological research on the country was very close to that of the “historical-cultural” of the school of Graebner but that later readings of functionalist English researchers, North American historicists, and French sociologists (with Durkheim at the helm) have helped me develop greatly, particularly in my study of spiritual life.

2. There is an abundant literature on the couvade. It is analyzed in my book Los pueblos del norte, pp. 171–181, where I comment on the famous text by Strabo iii, 4, 17 (165) and J. A. Zamácola’s gloss in his Historia de las naciones bascas (ed. 1898, see p. 99), p. 422, the basis for everything written later. If Gárate had kept this reference in mind on its own merits, he would have been able to seek in my other book what I know and what I do not know with respect to the couvade in Spain. With respect to other customs still in effect that are typical of the moment of birth, see Azkue, Euskalerriaren yakintza, i, pp. 341–350 and 183–192 (baptism). On burials outside the church, Eusk-Folklore. Materiales y cuestionarios, lxix (September 1926), p. 36; lxx (October 1926), pp. 36–38.

3. To study children’s language, see the collection by M. Lecuona in Anuario de Eusk-Folklore i (1921), pp. 31–37. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, education in the villages of various regions of the country was in the hands of clergymen, who appointed a teacher for the boys and who entrusted the education of the girls to seroras [female sacristans—trans.]; Dubarat, Le missel de Bayonne de 1543, p. cccxl-vii. The repression of the use of Basque and the way in which it was done by some of the teachers of boys has been condemned by various authors. According to Aranzadi, “Etnografía,” in Primer Congreso de Estudios Vascos, pp. 375–376, there was a ring in the school that was passed from hand to hand as the boys heard each other speaking their native language. This ring was considered a sign of punishment, such that the boy who had it became the policeman of his classmates and even an instigator.


In studying the most well-known games, there has been a fundamental interest in finding their exact affiliation and their similarity with those of other peoples but less interest in determining when they are played or in what area of the country. Let us mention, finally, other articles by Urquijo and Aranzadi. Julio de Urquijo, “¿El golf es un juego vasco?,” in Euskalerriaren alde i (1911), pp. 389–395. T. de Aranzadi,

5. Report on the “Mocendad de Pipaón (Alava),” by Ignacio Moraza, in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* xiii (1933), pp. 3–7. In the southern part of Araba there are other rites similar to those that exist in Old Castile and León. In eastern and southern Navarre they also exist, with traits similar to the Aragonese ones. In modern times, the true Basque seems to have preferred to organize associations of a strictly religious, professional, or economic type.

In the nineteenth century, Basque poetry produced excellent love songs, among which the following stand out: “Nere maitiarentzat,” by Iparraguirre; “Andre-gueya,” by Edmond de Guibert; “Juramentuba,” by Bilintx; and “Gabazko kantua,” by the viscount of Belsuance. Inspired verses were composed earlier by Iztueta with “Kontzetziri,” and even earlier, by Ohienart in “Arguia darizanari,” but almost always within general formulas, like those presented in the text, also followed by anonymous bards.

6. François Fouquet, brother of the famous superintendent, was consecrated bishop of Baiona on March 15, 1639, and was in that city until 1643, where, according to the *Gallia Christiana*, i (Paris, 1715), Col. 1322 E, he fought against the premarital tests common among the diocesans: “Ad tollendam, quæ tamdiu grassabatur, morum corruptelam, maxime cohabitationem virorum cum mulieribus, post datam de contra-hendo matrimonio fidem, plurimum laboravit” (J. Vinson, *Essai d’une bibliographie de la langue basque*, i (Paris, 1891), p. 119). See also Dubarat, *Le missel de Bayonne de 1543*, pp. ccxcii–ccxciii. See also Yanguas y Miranda, *Diccionario de antigüedades*, ii, pp. 309–310 (“matrimonio”), for various medieval Navarrese customs.

At the end of the Middle Ages, the monarchs had to intervene even to deal with the results of cohabitation by clergymen, which was slowing down little by little and finally almost disappeared in the eighteenth century. Among many documents that discuss this process, the “Provisión real del consejo sobre las mancebas de los clérigos de Guipúzcoa,” in the *Colección*, by T. González, iii, p. 113 (August 1490).

7. Details on old Bizkaian marital customs are given by Iturriza, pp. 65–66; on those of Araba, the *Diccionario*, by the Academia de la Historia, i, p. 52 (“The natives of the towns on the plains of Araba often celebrate their marriages by firing shotguns, and sometimes requiring the bride to do the same when she enters or exits the church”). On the entourage in Bizkaia, J. Larrea, “Costumbres populares. Eztegua (la boda),” in *Tierra vasca* 1, no. 3 (January 26, 1928), pp. 3–6 (e.g., decorated yokes, carts with hope chests). On wedding customs in general, Azkue, *Euskalerriaren yakintza*, i, pp. 269–285. F. Michel, *Le pays basque*, pp. 199–203.


CHAPTER 18: Aspects of Social Life: From Marriage to Death

1. One must go to two types of sources to carry out a historical study of Basque clothes through the ages. The oldest ones are written; the more modern ones are graphic. Apart from a few classical texts that refer to clothes or special articles of clothing of various towns in the north of the peninsula in general (e.g., Strabo, iii, 3, 7 [155]; Seneca, *Consolatio ad Helviam*, vii, 9), the first description of Basque men’s clothing (or rather that of young men) is found in the life of Ludovico Pío (Risco, *España Sagrada* xxxii, p. 286), followed by that of the much-cited Aymeric Picaud, in which a curious relationship is established between Basque and Scottish men’s clothing. In the sixteenth century, works in which Basque clothing is illustrated increased in number. Nevertheless, the first and most important collection from that time was not published until recently; it is *Das Trachtenbuch des Christoph Weiditz von seinem reisen nach Spanien* (1529) und den Niederlanden (1531–1532) (Berlin and Leipzig, 1927); from it P. Garmendia took the parts about the Basques: “Trajes vascos del siglo XVI,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xxv (1934), pp. 274–282, 521–524; xxvi (1935), pp. 151–154; xxvii (1936), pp. 122–129. According to Weiditz’s publisher, Heldt’s drawings depend on his first, and then on those of the album by Hans Weigel (*Habitus praeципuorum populiorum tam virorum quam foeminarum singulari arte depicti* [Nuremberg, 1577]). These are by J. Amman, who also drew the *Gynaeceum sive Theatrum mulierum* (Frankfurt, 1586). Braun, Hogenberg, Grassi (1585), and Vecellio (1589) were also inspired, in part at least, by Weiditz. Vecellio is the author of the famous album titled *Degli abiti antichi e moderni di diverse parti del mondo, de Vecellio Cesare* (Venice, 1590), of which many editions were printed before that by Didot (Paris, 1860), ii (figs. 268, 269, 270, 279, and 280). By the seventeenth century, there were no similar sources, although there were paintings by local masters of great interest. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Juan de la Cruz made a collection of Spanish clothes, and later the graphic documents on the topic become very abundant, as can be seen by reviewing the bibliography at the end of the book by B. Estornés Lasa, *Indumentaria baska* (San Sebastián, no year given), pp. 135–146. Among texts, it is useful to remember, in addition to those that explain the engravings in the cited works by Weiditz, Vecellio, and so on, those by Larramendi, *Corografía*, pp. 179–187; Iturriza, *Historia de Vizcaya*, pp. 61–63 and 76 (where he states that in the Middle Ages, the men were buried all dressed up in their military dress, and the women were buried with the spinning wheel); and the *Diccionario* by the Academia de la Historia, i, p. 52 (curious because it states that in Araba, men’s clothing in the late eighteenth century was like that of the Bizkaians and Gipuzkoans, whereas that of the women was entirely different and similar to that of the Pasiegos and highlanders of Reinosa and the Mena Valley), ii, p. 277 (Erronkari). From 1800 to 1900, the transformations in clothing are as great as they were from 1600 to 1700.


5. There is no good overall study on Basque traditional medicine. Some notes on what has been written on it (and on medicine in general) can be found in J. Gárate, “Los estudios de medicina en el país vasco,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xx (1929), pp. 378–396. Some isolated facts on traditional medicine are found in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* i (1921), pp. 119–120. The bibliography on folk healers and medicine men is likewise scattered. In the *Historia de Valmaseda* by Martín de los Heros, pp. 381–391, there are curious data on storm conjurers and medicine men employed by the city in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The custom is found in other towns; F. Grandes, “Vividores de antaño. Los saludadores,” in *Euskalerriaren alde* xviii (1928), pp. 380–383, the record in Agurain. More recently there have been numerous cases of folk healers; it is said that Petriquillo was one of the most famous, a folk healer of the first half of the nineteenth century, who intervened in an unfortunate way at the moment when Zumalacárregui fell wounded before Bilbao. His father was also known by the same name. F. de P. Madrazo, *Historia military y política de Zumalacárregui* (Madrid, 1844), pp. 331–354 and i–xi. An edict issued in Logroño in 1725 by the Inquisition in which various methods of curing by incantation and folk healer practices of the Basque–Navarrese lands are described was first published by Tomás Ascárate Pardo in the journal of Tafalla, *Juventud católica obrera* ii, no. 18–29 (June 1924). Azkue, *Euskalerriaren yakintza*, i, pp. 420–423.

6. Funeral rites can be studied in light of numerous reports. Among the oldest are those gathered by Lope Martínez de Isasti in his *Compendio historial*, pp. 201–205; then follow those by Larramendi, *Corografía*, pp. 187–194. Both speak of hired mourners (*aldiaguilleak*, *adiaguilleac*, *erostariak*), as in the lines that Iturriza devotes to the same topic, pp. 66–67. There are also a number of old laws against the gastronomic abuses that took place at funerals. See Yanguas y Miranda, *Diccionario de antigüedades*, i, p. 382; the “Provisión para que el juez de residencia en Vitoria informe sobre las comidas, bebidas y gastos excesivos que se hacían en los entierros,” dated September 19, 1539 (*Colección*, by T. González, iv, pp. 202–203); some historical articles such as that by F. Grandes, “Historia alavesa. Bodas, funerales, pleitos y cha-
bergos,” in *Euskalerriaren alde xviii* (1928), pp. 416–420; and a chapter of the *Noticia de las casas memorables de Guipúzcoa*, by Gorosábel, iv, pp. 296–311.


For funerary poetic compositions, see chapter 25.

For the modern ages we must count above all on the *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* iii (1923), dedicated to “funerary beliefs and rites”; the excellent study by B. de Echegaray, “Significación jurídica de algunos ritos funerarios del país vasco,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xvi (1925), pp. 94–118, 184–222; and Azkue, *Euskalerriaren yakintza*, i, pp. 213–235.

7. With respect to beliefs about souls and life beyond the grave, *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* xvi (April 1922), pp. 13–16 (apparitions); lxxi (November 1926), pp. 41–43 (need for material light felt by the dead, detours, and processions of the dead); lxvii (May 1927), pp. 18–20 (cemeteries); Azkue, *Euskalerriaren yakintza*, i, pp. 179–183.

CHAPTER 19: Observations on the Mentality of the Basque Peasant

1. Documents that reflect the animosity between Castilians and Basques, or more generally between the natives of the different regions of the peninsula, began to be published in a very distant time, increasing in number at specific times of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The *Historia del búho gallego, con las demás aues de España* (no place, year, or publisher given), a pamphlet with nine pages, divided into two parts and attributed to the Count of Lemos, appeared in the first half of the seventeenth century. It is a defense of the Galicians and their land in which the natives of the other regions of Spain are harshly attacked, especially the Bizkaians (represented by a thrush), whom he accuses of descending from Jews (Folio 4 verso, 6 recto), for quite laughable reasons. Another anonymous author responded to this document, one of an erudition similar in quality to that of the chronicler Garibay, for which reason, and because of certain allusions in *El búho gallego*, some attributed it to him, mistakenly in my opinion. The manuscript titled *Tratado breve de una disputa y diferencia que hubo entre dos amigos, el uno castellano de Burgos y el otro vascongado, en la villa de Potosí, reino del Perú* must have circulated through all of the Americas. It is dated in 1624 and written, undoubtedly, by a Castilian as a result of the wars between the different clans that there were in that city. It was published by a scholar (Justo Zaragoza) under the title *Castellanos y vascongados* (Madrid, 1876) and with very strange additions, but there remained a spirit as hostile toward the Basques as that of the anonymous author of the seventeenth century, who accuses them of being quick to anger (p. 17), disobedient to the royal authority (pp. 18–28), smugglers, friends and allies of the French (that is, the French Basques, of whom many went to South America at that time) (p. 27), and given to witchcraft (p. 53). He denies their nobility of blood (pp. 31–45, 47–61) and attributes Jewish ancestry to them, as did the author of *El búho gallego* (pp. 34–36), a little work that was also published in *Castellanos y vascongados*, pp. 234–262. The 1876 publisher recalls that in 1654 Alvaro Cubillo de Aragón published “El enano
de las musas,” a forty-page poem on a topic similar to that of El búho that the war of Catalonia and the emancipation of Portugal had brought up to date. Another low moment was the French Revolution. In modern times, the characterizations are not very apt because of the obsession with indicating the existence of a Basque “type” rather than various Basque types, in both physical and psychic aspects. Good examples of “interpretations” of the Basque character are found in José Ortega y Gasset, “Los hermanos Zubiaurre,” in Works (ed. Madrid, 1932), pp. 334–337. By the same author, “Para una topografía de la soberbia española,” in the volume, Goethe desde dentro (Madrid, 1933), pp. 127–143.

2. The beliefs about the character of the Basques in the seventeenth century have been studied, as stated in the text, by M. Herrero García, in the light of the literary texts, in his scholarly article, “Ideología española del siglo xvii. Concepto de los vascos,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xviii (1927), pp. 549–569. Camoens, in Os Lusiadas, Stanza 373 (in Canto iv) echoes the general opinion when he says,

“Também movem da guerra as negras furias,
A gente Bizcainha, que careçe
De polidas razoes, e que as injurias
Muito mal dos estranhos compadeço.”

See the facsimile edition of the former, with a preface by Claudio Basto (Lisbon, 1943), Folio 63 verso. In the “Floreto,” previously cited in chapter 15, note 1, it is written that the Bizkaians “for the most part do not have a perfect understanding for governing, but only sharpness of wit and diligence, and thus they are good for war, for the sea, and for serving” (p. 272). Quite a few years later, political writer and historian Juan Alfonso de Lancina, in his Commentarios políticos a los annales de Cayo Cornelio Tácito (Madrid, 1687), p. 104, draws a notable distinction between the educated Basque and the mountain man: “The mountains, and seignories of Bizkaia are large and strong provinces, and enjoyable, but their residents are poor: in the woods, they are weeds, but pull them out and they wake up to all the arts; on land they are very hard-working, at sea very able and scornful of dangers: their principle application is in the Navy, because they have good ports, and forests, are capable of all the sciences, and from childhood have great instruction in measuring, and in writing: they rise to great duties, because in their ascent and in serving they show themselves to be humble and punctual; friends of liberty, and tenacious in whatever they undertake. And because the Bizkaians are the defense against France, many honors are done unto them.” About the Navarrese he says that they are similar. Act i, Scene 1 of “La prudencia en la mujer,” by Tirso de Molina (“Comedias escogidas”), Biblioteca de autores españoles, v (Madrid, 1850), p. 287, paints an apologist picture of their condition. In the Floresta española, by Melchor de Santa Cruz, i (ed. Madrid, 1790), pp. 181–193, there is, in contrast, a whole chapter with ridiculous anecdotes about “Bizkaians,” and in its sequel, done by Francisco Asensio, ed. cit., ii, pp. 140–144; iii, pp. 116–118, another two in which they are always portrayed with the usual characteristics of simplicity, pride, and violence, which Cervantes, following the cliché, assigned to Sancho de Azpeitia in a well-known passage of Don Quijote. For the French of the seventeenth century also, the Basques were a people of strange character, to such an extent that Cardinal Richelieu apparently gave, on a certain occasion, a race-based explanation of the personality of the abbé of Saint Cyran, whom, as a Basque, he considered a man of “hot and burning entrails by
temperament” (R. Rapin, *Histoire du Jansenisme depuis son origine jusqu’en 1644* [Paris, 1860], p. 344). Various French authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries insisted on this turbulence of spirit and on assigning various defects to them, inspiring angry protests from modern investigators and scholars of the country. Among the documents that reflect various general impressions, unchanged by excessive rancor or love, we can cite one by E. Jouy, “L’ermite en provinces” (*Œuvres complètes*, VIII [Paris, 1823], pp. 164–166, parallel between Basques and Bearnese). A psychological profile of Spanish Basques and French Basques, excellent in my opinion, is that by Wilhelm von Humboldt, “Los vascos o apuntaciones sobre un viaje por el país vasco en primavera del año 1801” (trans. Aranzadi), in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xv (1924), pp. 427–431. After the squalidness of the romantic age and characterizations made by impassioned politicians, we have arrived at an era in which the Basque is presented by his defenders as a pacific and idyllic being; this characterization is the most useful for attracting tourists. Some French novelists who appeared after Pierre Loti’s *Ramuntxo* have popularized this characterization not only in France but also in other countries where the strongest and most complex portrayals by Spanish authors are hardly known. A conscientious folklorist, Rodney Gallop, wrote *A Book of the Basques* (London, 1930), pp. 44–68. Loti, speaking of the Basque character, cites (certainly to praise their descriptions and scorn their portraits), Francis Jammes, Pierre Lhande, André Geiger, Canon Dibildos, and Vinson, L. Apezteguy—not a single Spanish writer.

3. The preceding lines were inspired by an article I published in collaboration with A. Irigaray (for the linguistic part), “Datos para el estudio de la mentalidad del campesino vasco,” in *Boletín de la Real Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País* ii, 1 (1946), pp. 9–45, in which the extreme case of “Fillipo” is examined. It would be worth carrying out other investigations on the personalities of different types of villagers to see how far the “prelogismo” can go because we almost always study it as it is expressed in ideas and not in people. “Beliefs” that illustrate this mental concept of the world, in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* 1 (1921), pp. 81–87, and in the works cited in the notes to chapters 16 and 17. The person I studied in the article cited above inspired my uncle, Pío Baroja, to portray a certain figure in *El cura de Monleón* (Madrid, 1936), pp. 108–114. Other characters that I could identify in his novels and books must be considered curious cases, hence the indifferent and mocking Basque in *Zalacain el aventurero* (Barcelona, 1909), pp. 21–31 (Tellagorri), and the disturbed people in *Las mascaradas sangrientas* (Madrid, 1927), pp. 67–77, and of *Intermedios* (Madrid, 1931), pp. 261–269. These portraits are far from a pastiche for use by tourists or lecturers and clearly will not please many, but to what works, if not to these, can one turn if he wants to know something of the village personalities, sometimes Rabelaisian, sometimes fantastic, often violent and impassioned, and on many occasions incoherent or closed within themselves? The malice of the psychological characterizations of most authors who have spoken of the country is incredible, and I sincerely believe that in this respect, one of the greatest merits of my uncle has been that he broke the tradition of the regional “puppet” roughly characterized sociologically and historically.

4. On the Golden Age, the old animism (or animatism), see Barandiarán, *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* no. 1 (January 1921), pp. 2–3; xv (March 1922), p. 9 (the echo). Also Azkue, *Euskalerriaren yakinza*, i, pp. 86 (speaking grasses), 91 (the forest), et passim. Within the Basque Country there seem to be notable variations between the concept
of the world typical of the residents of some regions and that of those born in other places. A quantitative and qualitative analysis would be able to differentiate them more clearly. Judging from what I have been able to observe, I believe that it would be worthwhile to bear in mind five types of “surrounding worlds” when carrying out this task: (1) the world of the resident of the sea ports and the coast; (2) the world of the peasant of the zone that is lowest and closest to the first, of Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Navarre, and the French Basque Country; (3) the world of the peasant of the highest zones of these same regions; (4) the world of the peasant in the valleys of Araba and Navarre; and (5) the world of the peasant of the plains and more southern lands of the country. The most curious data with which to characterize the Basque should be sought in areas (2) and (3), which are precisely those in which Barandiarán found (discovered, we could say) the most attractive materials of his collection, but it is necessary to use the others also in a systematic way. Some existing publications can serve as an orientation for the reader interested in this task. Especially recommendable are the books by J. M. Iribarren, Retablo de curiosidades (Zaragoza, 1940); Batiburrillo navarro (Zaragoza, 1943); and Navarrerías (Pamplona, 1944), which offer a great quantity of folkloric material, to begin to establish definitively the differences between Basque Navarre and southern and central Navarre. See also Pedro Arellano, “Folklore de la merindad de Tudela (Navarra),” in Anuario de Eusko-Folklore xiii (1933), pp. 137–218.

CHAPTER 20: Religiosity

1. If the Catholic writers have brought out their best arguments to extol the Basques for their religious ideas, the Protestants and Freethinkers believe such religiosity to be a less than attractive trait. H. S. Chamberlain, La genèse du XIXme siècle” i (Paris, 1913), pp. 709–712, 720–721, presents a sort of equation: Germanic = Reformist Protestant, as opposed to anti-Germanic = anti-Reformist and Catholic. According to him, Saint Ignatius is the pure representative of anti-Germanism, just like the Basques, for radical French people such as J. Vinson are behind the times because of their hostility to free thinking. These interpretations, which are essentially the opposite of those of the defenders of the country, are of little use to us. It is completely inadequate to try to explain a religious or antireligious tendency by race. It is other sociological and historical-cultural schools criteria that perhaps will clarify for us why peoples such as the Irish, the Bretons, and the Basques, specifically, considered the most Catholic of the West, are also the ones in which it is a given to find a more abundant mythological folklore and a very marked tendency until recently to use special magical knowledge. Furthermore, the Basques have had this reputation as Catholics since only recently. To demonstrate it, a fragment of a certain epistle that Hernando del Pulgar, apparently a convert of the Hebrew race, wrote to Cardinal González de Mendoza and that Américo Castro highlights in La realidad histórica de España (Mexico, 1954), p. 505, is sufficient: “Your Holiness must know about the new statute in Gipuzkoa, in which they ordered that we go there neither to marry nor to live . . . It is not laughable that all, or most, send their sons there to serve us and many of them as footmen, and that they do not want to be the father- or mother-in-law of those who want to be servants? Now they (the Jews) are paying for the prohibition that Moses made to his people that they not marry Gentiles.”
2. On Christianization, there is a work that is neither very modern nor very trustworthy, by E. Urroz, “Historia religiosa,” in Primer congreso de estudios vascos, of Oñati, pp. 501–568. For my point of view on the time of the introduction of Christianity in the central Basque areas, see Los pueblos del norte, pp. 105–108. The date of the tombs of Arguineta was determined by M. Gómez Moreno, “De epigrafía medieval. Los epitafios de Arguineta,” in Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia cxv (1944), pp. 189–192. The “great legend” of Saint Leo, in Dubarat, Le missel de Bayonne, pp. xlvi–xlviii. García Villada’s opinión in Organización y fisonomía de la Iglesia española desde la caída del Imperio visigodo, en 711, hasta la toma de Toledo, en 1085 (Madrid, 1935), p. 18. If what this historian wrote had been read by Isasti, or later by the abbé D’Iharce de Bidassouet, they would have hit the ceiling. The second, in the Histoire des cantabres ou des premiers colons de toute l’Europe, avec celle des basques, leurs descendants directs, qui existent encore, et leur langue asiatique basque, t (Paris, 1825), pp. 73–79, “proves” (1) that the Basque–Cantabrians were always monotheistic (“ils n’ont jamais été idolâtres”) and (2) that they were Christians since the third century. But there were still those who were ahead of D’Iharce.

3. The word gentilis is used from a certain time on to refer to barbarians or foreigners (Cod. Theod. xvi, 5, 46), as well as to allude to pagans. Gentilitas, first and foremost, is the family but later also the gentilidad in the same sense that churchmen give to that word today. Thus, the gentil can be (1) a man of a different race, a foreigner; or (2) a man of a different religion. In the fourth and fifth centuries, Latin writers considered the Basques to be gentiles, that is, pagans. Thus, in the hymn to Saints Emeterius and Prudence speaks of the Vasconum gentilitas (España Sagrada, xxxiii, p. 423). The notion that within the country there were heathens and Christians must date from later, and it was linked with the idea that the gentil was different not only in terms of religion but also in terms of race. The most meaningful legends about the gentiles were collected by Barandiarán, Eusko folklore. Materiales y cuestionarios, 6 (June 1921), pp. 23–24; 7 (July 1921), pp. 25–29; 9 (September 1921), pp. 33–35; and Mitología del pueblo vasco, ii, pp. 9–12 (stones of the heathens), pp. 70–71 (gentil baratzak), pp. 74–77 (dolmens as houses of the heathens). According to what Barandián told me himself in conversation on September 11, 1949, there are still towns around the Borunda Valley that make fun of the residents of other towns (such as those of Urdiain) by calling them gentiles.

4. The most perceptible formal (ritual) aspects of Basque life should be analyzed, beginning by reading the Anuario de Eusko-Folklore, IV. La religiosidad del pueblo (1924), where, in addition to reports from Oiaritzun (pp. 1–47), Andoain (pp. 48–78), Bidania (pp. 79–86), Deba (pp. 87–89), Oñati (pp. 90–101), Zegama (pp. 102–109), Meñaca (pp. 110–117), Zeanuri (pp. 118–133), and Gauna (pp. 134–149), there is an important study by Barandiarán, “Nacimiento y expansión de los fenómenos sociales,” pp. 151–229, which also examines some heresies that will be discussed at the end of this chapter (the prophet from Mendata, etc., pp. 177–185). With respect to narrative aspects, we must first rely on the legends and traditions surrounding the churches that were gathered by Barandiarán in Eusko-Folklore. In nos. xl (January 1925), pp. 1–4; L (February 1925), pp. 5–8; LI (March 1925), pp. 9–12; LII (April 1925), pp. 13–16; LIII (May 1925), pp. 17–20; LV (June 1925), pp. 21–28; LVII (July 1925), pp. 29–32; LVIII (August 1925), pp. 33–36; LIX (September 1925), pp. 37–40; LX (October 1925), pp. 41–44; and LXI (November 1925), pp. 47–48, there are numerous legends about
the origins of the churches, the dissents and disputes that existed before their sitting, and the supernatural signs that preceded their erection. Chapels with medicinal waters and chapels in caves are discussed in the same monthly publication: LXIV (April 1926), pp. 14–16; LXV (May 1926), pp. 17–20; LXVI (June 1926), pp. 21–24. According to many legends, beings such as heathens and Moors built certain temples in a short time and under strange circumstances. Also, Barandiarán has also collected many of these legends: Eusko-Folklore, LXVII (July 1926), pp. 25–28; LXVIII (August 1926), p. 29. Traditions concerning campaigns, in the same issue, pp. 29–32; LXIX (September 1926), pp. 33–36, and on pp. 35–36, the processions around churches, as well as in LXX (October 1926), pp. 37–40; LXXI (November 1926), pp. 41–43; for ancient rites and traditional practices in the churches and on the power of some (animated) statues, see the following issues: LXXII (December 1926), pp. 45–48; LXXIII (January 1927), pp. 1–4. In addition to the materials in this collection, see also Azkue, Euskalerriaren yakintza, i, pp. 177–211.

5. On the devil and related evil beings, see Hugo Schuchardt, “Tusuri, Teufel,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos VII (1914–1917), p. 324, and Julio de Urquijo, “¿Existen juramentos y maldiciones en vascuence?,” in the same publication, XI (1920), p. 111. The word Tusuria is given by Ohienart, Proverbes basques, ed. F. Michel (Bordeaux, 1847), p. 33 (no. 208). On Mekolats, Barandiarán, in the work cited in the previous note (p. 169 of vol. IV of the Anuario). Elliptical and burlesque names for the devil in Azkue, Euskalerriaren yakintza, i, pp. 358–360. Some stories in which the devil appears, in Eusko-Folklore, CXII (April 1930), pp. 13–16; CXIII (May 1930), pp. 17–20; CXIV (June 1930), pp. 21–23. Sometimes topics from the Spanish folklore of the interior of the peninsula concerning the spirit of evil reached as far as the French Basque Country. Thus, narrations have been collected about the cave in Sala-manca where the diabolical arts were taught (J. Vinson, Le folk-lore du pays basque, pp. 6–7; on pp. 11–14, a Zuberoan tale in which iaunagorri (the red man) appears.

6. The use of dominus instead of sanctus is reflected in the French toponymy of other very limited areas; thus in Vosges, we find Domremy, in Allier, Dompierre, and so on. With respect to the spread of the worship of certain saints, see Bonifacio de Echgaray, “La devoción a algunos santos y las vías de peregrinación,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos XXIII (1932), pp. 26–29. D. de Irigoien, “Ermitas e iglesias de Guipúzcoa (ensayo de catalogación),” in Anuario de Eusko-Folklore X (1934), pp. 7–92, also provides an account worthy of consideration, a task that had already been done by Isasti in the seventeenth century, Compendio, pp. 208–223, for the same province. Other figures that I give in the text were taken from an examination of Madoz’s dictionary, which would have to be checked. The example of the legend of the saint as a civilizing hero is taken from Eusko-Folklore XIV (February 1922), pp. 7–8; variation in XV (March 1922), p. 9 (Kortezubi, Bizkaia).

7. Almost all of the best-known sanctuaries have been the subject of better or worse monographs, or of books of propaganda. There is a modest amount of information on Bizkaian sanctuaries in J. E. Delmas, Guía histórico-descriptiva del viajero en el señorío de Vizcaya (Bilbao, 1864), by whom there is also a small work titled Gaztelugach con su historia y tradiciones (Bilbao, 1888). Much has been written about Gipuzkoan sanctuaries; Angel Piralá, in his book Santuarios guipuzcoanos (Madrid,
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1895), pp. 115–117, provides the most famous old bibliography. On footprints of the saints, Barandiarán, Mitologia del pueblo vaso, ii, pp. 27–34.

8. The old military reviews, which Martínez de Isasti discusses, p. 474, as does Larramendi, Corografía, p. 8, are different today; the ones of Irun and Hondarribia are very famous among such reviews. However, there are lesser known but very interesting festivals of this type, such as that of the errebómbilos in Elorrio (N. de Lazcano, “Los errebómbilos de Elorrio,” in Euskalerriaren alde xvi (1926), pp. 381–383).

9. The text by Martín de Arles has been published by various authors of works more accessible than his own. For example, P. Le Brun, Histoire critique des pratiques superstitieuses, qui ont seduit les peuples (Paris, 1702), p. 352. See also F. Torreblanca, Iuris spiritualis practicabilium, libri XV (Cordoba, 1635), Folio 226 recto. For modern Basque cases, see Barandiarán, “Contribución al estudio paleontológico del pueblo vaso. El magismo,” in Asociación para el progreso de las ciencias. Congreso de Bilbao. Tomo VI, Sección 4. Ciencias naturales (first part; Madrid, 1920), pp. 42–43, and Eusko-Folklore lxxiii (January 1927), p. 3. The verse from Guadalajara collected by G. M. Vergara, “Apodos que se aplican a los habitantes de algunas localidades españolas por los pueblos próximos a ellas,” in Boletín de la Real Sociedad Geográfica xv (1918), p. 102.

10. On abuses and irregularities, see what fifteenth-century travelers have said, Tetzel particularly, in the translation given by Gárate in his Ensayos euskarianos, i, pp. 106–110; the text by El Gerundense (Paralipomenon Hispaniae, 1545), Folio XXIV verso, book ii, chapter vii), in R. Chabás, “Estudio sobre los sermones valencianos de San Vicente Ferrer,” in Revista de archivos, bibliotecas y museos, year vi, i (January 1902), p. 5. On performances, Julio de Urquijo, “Del teatro litúrgico en el país vasco,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xxii (1931), p. 161, and Eusko-Folklore lxxiv (February 1927), pp. 5–6. See also Dubarat, Le missel de Bayonne, pp. cccxxi–cccxvi. It can be said that almost all works published in Basque from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries are eminently propagandistic with respect to the Catholic faith and morals.

11. The institution of the seroras, which was abominable in the opinion of the Lapurdian judge of witches and wizards, Pierre de Lancre, was lovingly defended and studied by Larramendi, Corografía, pp. 113–117. J. A. de Lizarralde, in “Orígenes de la vida claustral del país vaso,” in Primer congreso de estudios vascos, from Oñati, p. 595, also deals with this institution, and before him, W. Webster, “Seroras, freyras, benitas, benedictæ entre los vascos,” in Euskalerriaren alde i (1911), pp. 139–151, 166–168.

The best study on the heretics was written by J. de M. Carriazo, “Precursores españoles de la Reforma. Los herejes de Durango, 1442–1445,” supplement of the Actas y memorias de la Sociedad Española de Antropología, Etnografía y Prehistoria (1925), report xxxv, p. 69. Also J. Gárate, Ensayos euskarianos, i, pp. 114–121.

Modern heresies were studied by Barandiarán, in the work cited in note 4 of this chapter. In the French Basque Country there have also been manifestations of a sort of collective mysticism surrounding certain people. One of them was fought by Father Clemente de Azcaín, according to Jouy, “L’ermite en province,” in Oeuvres complètes, viii (Paris, 1823), pp. 127–128.

CHAPTER 21: The Mythical World

1. Philological and other data more substantial for reconstructing the ancient religion and mythology of the Basques were gathered previously by Barandiarán in “La religion des anciens basques” (extract from the analytical report of the 3rd session of the Semaine d’Enthnologie religieuse. Enghien. Belgium, 1923), pp. 156–168. The old texts, in A. Campión, Euskariana . . . Navarra en su vida histórica (Pamplona, 1929), pp. 8–11, and in the authors cited on p. 96. I recently dealt again with the same issue in a study titled “Sobre la religión antigua y el calendario del pueblo vasco,” in Trabajos del Instituto Bernardino de Sahagún de Anthropología and Etnología, vi (1948), pp. 13–94, divided into six chapters. In his report on the first edition of this book (p. 7), Gárate speaks about what I say with respect to the name of the sky in Basque as if it were something that does not have much support. In any case, his negative opinion is no more or less defensible than the opinion defended by Sabino Arana, my uncle Pío Baroja, and me. Barandiarán also supports it, as do other earlier eminent authors.

Interest in Basque oral traditions and specifically in myths began at the end of the eighteenth century, had some romantic manifestations in the nineteenth, and then freed itself of subjective, literary, and political tendencies; Wilhelm von Humboldt (“Diario del viaje vasco, 1801,” translated by Aranzadi in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xiv (1923), pp. 229–230) noted a curiosity that, unfortunately, he was unable to satisfy about certain myths and legends, as indicated in some lines of this chapter. Years later, a French writer of whom I have spoken before, and by whom I have cited at least one work, J. A. Chaho, understood the charm that they had, but in his works he mixed inquisitive, concrete observation with strange fantasies. In his Voyage en Navarre pendant l’insurrection des basques (1830–1835) (1st ed. of 1836, citation from the Bayonne edition, 1865), there are references to myths such as that of Tartaro (pp. 76–77), which Humboldt learned of in Bizkaia; Maïthagarry (pp. 216–218), Leheren (pp. 227–232), and the Basojaun (pp. 260–263), as well as lively descriptions of pelota matches (pp. 167–171, in Lesaka), pigeon hunting (pp. 256–258), and pasturals (pp. 333–335). Chaho’s works guided many serious authors (e.g., F. Michel) and disoriented others, who fabricated types of “legends” and “traditions” that hardly have anything usable. The book by José María Goizueta, Leyendas vascongadas (3rd ed., Madrid, 1856), is little know inside or outside the country. J. V. Araquistain achieved greater renown with his Tradiciones vasco-cántabras (Tolosa, 1866), in which the “traditional” is really not very traditional; the same author also wrote a novel of scant interest, El baso-jaun de Etumeta (Tolosa, no year given). Vicente de Arana wrote Los últimos iberos. Leyendas de Euskaria (Madrid, 1882) and the Leyendas del norte
(Vitoria, 1890) with a similar orientation. Some narrations by Campión and part of the “Cuentos, leyendas y descripciones euskaras,” collected in vol. i of the works of J. Iturralde y Suit (Pamplona, 1912), follow the same line. But objective interest is already obvious in publications by pure folklorists from that time. The French Basque collections led the way. The one by Cerquand is of great importance: *Légendes et récits populaires du pays basque*, 4 vols. (Pau, 1875–1882), difficult to find. The work by W. Webster is more accessible: *Basque Legends: Collected, Chiefly in the Labourd* (London, 1879), which is closely related to Vinson’s work in *Le folklore du pays basque*, pp. 1–116, which has been cited various times. Different journals, little read in Spain, have published more and more stories and legends. See, finally, Mayi Aritzia, “Leyendas laburdinas,” in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* xiv (1934), pp. 93–129; J. Barbier, *Légendes du pays basque d’après la tradition* (Paris, 1931); and Gil G. Reicher, *Les légendes basques dans la tradition humaine* (Paris, 1946). In the Spanish Basque Country, apart from things gathered here and there, we must cite again, with the highest praise, *Euskalerriaren yakintza* (Literatura popular del país vasco) by R. M. de Azkue, 4 vols. (Madrid, 1935–1947), of which the first two are particularly interesting for our purposes, and above all, the monthly papers of *Eusko-Folklore. Materiales y cuestionarios*, also previously mentioned. Barandiarán has published various pages of these, in the form of small volumes, such as that titled *Mitología del pueblo vasco*, ii (“Las piedras y los monumentos prehistóricos”) (Vitoria, 1928), which consists of the materials published from 1923 to 1924.


5. The most curious legends on *basá-jaunak* were collected by Barandiarán, *Euskofolklore. Materiales y cuestionarios* xiv (February 1922), pp. 5–8. The area of the spread of the belief in them is limited, apparently, to the most mountainous zone of Bizkaia (Zeanuri), Gipuzkoa (Ataun), and Zuberoa, where there also appears a *basá-andere* (Vinson, *Le folk-lore du pays basque*, pp. 10–11 [no. 1]; 42–45 [nos. ix–x]).

7. On the mairuak (Moors), Eusko-Folklore XV (March 1922), pp. 11–12; Mitología del pueblo vasco, ii, pp. 69–70; Vinson, Le folk-lore du pays basque, pp. 36–42 (speaking of the lamiak).


10. J. Caro Baroja, “Los duendes en la literatura clásica española,” in Algunos mitos españoles, pp. 145–182, provides some data on Basque imps (pp. 169–170), following Larramendi, Humboldt, and Azkue especially. With respect to the other cited beings, see the study by Barandiarán listed at the beginning of note 1.

CHAPTER 22: The Ritual World

1. The Basque calendar was the subject of a famous study by P. P. de Astarloa, in his Apología de la lengua bascongada (Madrid, 1803), pp. 317–399, usable for the most part, which was followed by the fantasies of Sorreguieta, Erro, and others. More recently, Vinson, Aranzadi, and others have followed Astarloa in the translations of names but not in the historical aspect. (See T. de Aranzadi, “Del calendario vasco y del cuento de los dos jibosos,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos IV [1910], pp. 217–219; P. A. Ormetxea, “Egunen izenak,” in Euskal-Esnalea ii [1912], pp. 6972; and “Illen izenak,” pp. 69–72). I recently reexamined the names of the days of the week, the months, the seasons, and so on, with a historical view, in the work cited in note 1 of chapter 21. The holidays of the year must be studied beginning with an examination of the reports collected in the Anuario de Eusko-Folklore ii (1922), dedicated to “Fiestas populares,” and of what Azkue says in Euskalerriaren yakintza, i, pp. 317–340 (and before, 285, 315, calendar of saints’ days). For Navarre specifically, see also J. M. Iribarren, De Pascuas a Ramos, galería religioso-popular-pintoresca (Pamplona, 1946), with abundant data. It would be worthwhile to carry out a study on the areas of distribution of the different holidays to see which have the smallest number of very widespread ritual forms in Europe and, at the same time, are conservative or archaic with respect to their customs. It is likely that the eastern part of the Gipuzkoan Goierri would be one of the most isolated zones.

2. The Zuberoan masquerades were described in detail by A. Chaho, in Biarritz entre les Pyrénées et l’océan. Itinéraire pittoresque. Deuxième partie (Bayonne, no year given), pp. 84–121 (where he also speaks of the “pastorals,” pp. 122–131). There is then a good study by J. D. J. Sallaberry, “Les mascarades souletines,” in La tradition au pays basque (Paris, 1899), pp. 263–280 (with music), and more recent still is the meticulous work by G. Hérelle, “Les mascarades souletines,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos VIII (1914), pp. 368–385; XIV (1923), pp. 159–190. Finally, an English folklorist, Violet Alford, published an “Ensayo sobre los orígenes de las mascaradas de Zuberoa” in the same journal, xxii (1931), pp. 373–396, following the theories of Frazer in general lines (see also Rodney Gallop, A Book of the Basques, pp. 194–202). I have published a book in which I deal with them, moving away from the “plant”
interpretation based on the works of the famous English author and comparing them with those of different parts of Europe. [The “plant” interpretation is a reference to the theory of traditional dances as spring rites celebrating the divinity of vegetation and death of the “plant spirit.” —Ed.]

3. "El carnaval de Lanz" is very well described by J. M. Iribarren in Historias y costumbres (colección de ensayos) (Pamplona, 1949), pp. 191–202; and by Valcarlos in "Costumbres de Valcarlos," in the same work, pp. 245–258 (pp. 252–254 particularly). Dispensing with references to specific places in the general works mentioned in note 1, I have here a few more bibliographic references, separate but of interest: M. Lecuona, “Mozorros y lupercos. Ensayo de cotejo entre el carnaval vasco y el romano," in Euskalerriaren alde xvii (1927), pp. 50–56. Other Carnival celebrations mentioned are described by Iztueta in the book cited in note 8 of this chapter. For the Otsabilko festival, Barandiarán, “Esquema de distribución geográfica de algunas creencias y ceremonias relacionadas con las fiestas populares,” in Anuario de Eusko-Folklore ii, p. 136, and S. Múgica, in the volume “Guipuzcoa,” of the Geografía general del país vasco navarro, pp. 206–207.


6. For a clear summary of the solstice holiday, see Barandiarán, El hombre primitivo en el país vasco, pp. 83–84, and an abundance of particular data; as a synthesis, see also J. M. Iribarren, “El folklore del día de San Juan,” in Historias y costumbres, pp. 133–155. On bonfires for Saint John’s Day, Anuario de Eusko-Folklore ii, pp. 30 (Oiartzun), 52 (Zegama), and 92 (Amorebieta). Azkue, Euskalerriaren yakintza, i, pp. 294–296 (e.g., Larraun, Valcarlos), with the spells said when jumping over the bonfires. On springs, the Anuario de Eusko-Folklore i, p. 84 (Itsasondo) and Azkue, op. cit., i, pp. 305–306 (springs in various towns of Navarre) and with respect to waters, Anuario, cit., ii, p. 93 (Amorebieta); Azkue, op. cit., i, pp. 293, 302–303, among many other scattered texts. On the tree, Anuario, cit., ii, pp. 32 (Oiartzun), 52 (Zegama); intertwined branches, idem, ii, pp. 101 (western Bizkaia), not to mention data collected directly by me in the Navarrese Bidasoa. In some parts, the fires of Saint John are called alamartsua (possibly “alarm fires,” relating them to the ancient bonfires that were lit as a warning in the mountains in times of war); G. de Miona, “Las hogueras de San Juan,” in Euskalerriaren alde ii (1912), pp. 375–376. The same author, “El árbol de San Juan," in the same journal and volume, pp. 382–384, states that at the time of writing the tree had been abolished in Donostia. Reports on Saint John’s grass abound in the usual publications: Anuario ii, pp. 32 (Oiartzun), 53 (Zegama), and 93 (Amorebieta). Azkue, op. cit., i, pp. 302–304. On plants grown especially for the purpose, Anuario, cit., ii, pp. 30 (Oiartzun) and 93 (Amorebieta). There are also some reports in
the Anuario 1, pp. 82, 115. For southern Navarre, Eugenio Salamero Resa, “Las fiestas de San Juan,” in Estampas de mi tierra (Madrid, 1930), pp. 239–251. With respect to the medical rite of stepping under the broken branches, Azkue, op. cit., i, pp. 298–301.

7. J. Caro Baroja, “Mascaradas y ‘alardes’ de San Juan,” in Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares iv (1948), pp. 499–517, with Basque, old Castilian, and Aragonese data. The festival of Corpus Christi, here, as in other places, seems to have taken quite a few formal elements from many ancient spring festivals, being characterized by the intertwined branches, dances, and musical groups that can be observed in its celebration.

Certain dances by fishermen, such as the Kaxarranka dance (J. de Irigoyen, “El baile de la Caxarranca,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xviii (1927), pp. 152–159, and “Eguskitza,” “Kaxarenkaren goraberak eta aurriako jayak,” in the same journal and year, pp. 422–436), involve a ritual specialization, as do those of other professionals, organized by trade, who also take part Corpus Christi in the processions of the towns of a certain size. On the relationship between the dances and ceremonies of the Church, see Barandiarán, Eusko-Folklore lxxiv (February 1927), pp. 5–8; lxxv (March 1927), pp. 9–12; lxxvi (April 1927), pp. 13–16; and lxxvii (May 1927), pp. 17–20.

8. The Basque dances have been the subject of a great number of publications, and references are made to them in works that are now quite old. The descriptive set can be opened with the lively words of Larramendi, Corografía, pp. 199–245, great defender of those of his native province, against other religious men, such as Brother Bartolomé de Santa Teresa, a Carmelite of the monastery at Markina, who condemns all of them in his strange book Euscal-errijetaco olgueeta, ta danzeen neurrizco-gatz-ozpinduba (Pamplona, 1816); Iturriza, pp. 63–65, describes some Bizkaian ones. But the most important work from this point of view is that by J. I. de Iztueta, Guipuzcoaco dantza gogoangarrien condair edo historia beren soñu zar, eta itz neurtu edo versoaquin (San Sebastián, 1824), written with much good humor and awaiting a good translation. Whoever is not familiar with the Basque language can use other works. Thus, for example, for the aurresku, the best is F. Gascue, “El aurresku en Guipúzcoa a fines del siglo xviii, según Iztueta,” in Euskalerriaren alde v (1915), pp. 659–668, 680–693, 715–728, 743–759 (based on what the op. cit. contains on pp. 73–89).

9. The highly educational meaning of certain social instincts that the diversions typical of the Basques undoubtedly have, and above all had, was highlighted by Jovellanos in his famous “Memoria para el arreglo de la policía de los espectáculos y diversiones públicas, y sobre su origen en España” (Obras escogidas, i, Barcelona, 1884), p. 298 (notes 20 and 22). This meaning is even in ancient dances, which were very ceremonious, and which began to decline in the eighteenth century. It is told that the famous Father Clemente of Azkaine (1696–1781) had to preach to his countrymen so that they would again dance the dantza-soka, which had fallen into disuse, and that it happened thus according to these verses by Father Hiribarren (died 1866):

“Paristik landa zuen minekin ikusi
Dantza soka zutela Azkainen ihesi:
Han arte igandetan, lerroan guziak,
Estaltzen zituztela plazazo heguiak,
Ematen ziren txutik, bozkario yari,
Mokanesak hedatuz zaharrek gazteri,
Agure zaharrena yatzen zen buruan,
Erramuzko adar bat zuela eskuan;
Hark zuen lehenari mokanes hedatzen
Eta guziak ziren saltoka seguitzen.”

(“When he left Paris he saw with pain
that Azkaine had abandoned the dantza-soka.
Until then, on Sundays, the whole neighborhood
filled the town square all around,
all giving in to happiness,
the old people holding out their scarves to the young,
the oldest on his head
holding a branch with one hand
and with the other offering the scarf to his neighbor
and all leaping after him.”)

P. Haristoy, Le père Clement d’Ascain, capucin et prédicateur célèbre (Pau, 1894), p. 9. Jouy describes the mutxiko in “L’ermite en province,” op. cit., i, pp. 135–137. Hilario of Estella has published Euskalerriaren dantzak. Danzas de Vasconia I. Mutil dantzak (Barcelona, no year given), with an interesting introduction. He has also published Ingurutxo, danza baska popular de Leiza (Nabarra) (Pamplona-San Sebastián, no year given), in which he insists on the choosing rite alluded to, and about which Orixe (N. Ormaechea) also writes, in “Lo que nos legó el pasado. Las viejas danzas vascas. Examen de los danzantes,” in Txistulari vii, 7 (May–June, 1943), pp. 4–5. On the rite of the bridge, see also Iztueta, op. cit., p. 78.

10. Texts from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries speak of the armed Basque dances, and later ones refer to dances that were organized in towns of the country on special solemn occasions. In the Diccionario by the Academia de la Historia, i, p. 327, there is mention of a sword dance performed in Donostia on Corpus Christi of 1660, with Philip IV attending the procession, and in Isasti (Compendio historial, pp. 272–273) it discusses the Tolosan pordon dantzak, considered to be commemorative of the Battle of Beotibar. See also Pablo de Gorosábel, Diccionario histórico geográfico, cit., p. 544. Iztueta remains the best authority: “Guipuzcoaco dantza,” pp. 89–96 (Gipuzkoan ezpata dantzak), 97–101 (brokel dantzak), and 101–104 (Tolosan pordon dantzak). On pp. 105–106, the very interesting jorrai dantzak and aceri dantzak [sic]. Some Bizkaian dances observed by Humboldt on his journey are described in the “Diario del viaje vasco, 1801,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xiv (1923), p. 215. On “El dominguillo,” an article by F. de Uriarte, in Txistulari v, 19 (March–April, 1931), p. 11. The Basque sword dances are significantly different from the Castilian ones and those from other regions of Spain, as well as from those that are or were performed in England, Germany, and elsewhere. For comparisons, T. de Aranzadi, “Acerca de la danza de las espadas en Inglaterra,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos vii (1913), pp. 175–181.

11. I have published a work on the dance of Otsagabia and other similar ones: “La significación de algunas danzas vasco-navarras,” supplement of Príncipe de Viana, 18 (Pamplona, no year given). Unfortunately, it was published quite full of errata and perhaps was influenced too much by the ideas of Mannhardt and Frazer, which were the subject of severe criticism by Swedish and Scandinavian ethnologists in general,
who again deal with the facts that those two researchers studied. Von Sydow, Erixon, and other younger writers under their direction have fully decomposed the old associationist and evolutionary panorama, seeking the particular causes of each concrete event within a more limited and precise social and geographic environment. However, I believe that in our country the problems of “historical reason” should be studied carefully, bearing cultural cycles of wider proportions in mind.

12. Larramendi, *Corografía*, pp. 195–196, considers the bulls, the ring game, and goose fights on horseback and the carnivalesque *zomorros* or *mozorros* to be very common Gipuzkoan entertainments. The goose games (*antzara yokuak*) and cock games take place either on patron saint holidays (ancient harvest feasts, probably) or during Carnival. From 1915 to the present, they have been in greater and greater decline, and there are even laws against them.

An author who signs his name Mendizale discusses the game of the cock in *Euskalerriaren alde II* (1912), p. 211 (photograph on p. 210). See also (for comparison) T. de Aranzadi: “El juego del ganso en Alemania,” in the same journal, xv (1925), pp. 81-83, and a photograph taken inOiartzun in the “Album gráfico descriptivo del país vascongado,” volume on Gipuzkoa, Fol. 16.

With respect to the “fire bulls,” there are references in various works by travelers. For example, Xavier de Cardaillac: *Promenades artistiques, Fontarabie* (Paris-Bordeaux, 1896), pp. 101-104. Paul Arène and Albert Tournier: *Des Alpes aux Pyrénées* (Paris, 1891), pp. 109-115 (fire bull in Donostia, about which there is a poem in Basque by my grandfather, Serafín Baroja).


**CHAPTER 23: The Problem of Witchcraft**


2. The references to poisonings with herbs are quite common in texts from the late Middle Ages. Lope García de Salazar says that Martin Ruiz de Arancibia was killed with herbs by his relatives (Guerra, Onacinos y gamboinos, p. 29). He would not have suspected that he would die in the same way at the hands of his son Juan: Dario de Areitio, “De la prisión y muerte de Lope García de Salazar,” in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xvii (1926), pp. 9–16. As in many other cases, these obscure relationships between rural lords and old sorcerers within the old Basque society have been better determined by novelists than by historians in the strict sense of the word. My uncle, Pío Baroja, in La dama de Urtubi and in La leyenda de Juan de Alzate, powerfully reconstructed the environment in which the witchcraft of the Bidasoa evolved.

The sources for carrying out a historical study of Basque witchcraft are quite abundant. The reference to the oldest date that I know of comes from Gorosábel, in his Noticia de las cosas memorables de Guipúzcoa,1 (Tolosa, 1899), pp. 353–354.

Fausto Arocena provided me with a copy of the document cited by this author and analyzed in the text, which is held in the provincial archives of Tolosa (Section 3, Department 8, Bundle 3), with the heading “Real cédula, dada en Valladolid a 15 de agosto de 1466, relativa a que los alcaldes de la hermandad puedan conocer en todos los asuntos concernientes a brujas.” It says the following: “That some evil curses have been used and frequented by some people, whether they be men or women, of said province . . . as of witchcraft and those that do them are called in the said province bruxos and xorguiños . . . public word and fame and their own confessions of some of them that did and have done much evil and harm to properties and men and women that have not done any harm between them and doing other very bad and harmful things like . . . and grapevines . . . and other fruits of the earth that our Lord gives and . . . people and goods . . . the said evil spells and harms and other greater and lesser ones similar to them and they have been given and . . . to the devil denying our Lord and his mother and his holy faith which says all that it is in disservice to God and mine and that because of it the said mayors of the said association of your office and others by your order began to do inquiries about it and to administer justice against the said bruxas and xorguñas and that some people have opposed and oppose against it, declining your jurisdiction saying that the said evil spells, xorguñas and bruxas are not named nor contained in the chapters and ordinances and notebooks . . . and because the ordinary mayors that are in this province are commonly negligent and remiss in what touches on the said matter and have not done nor do compliment of justice on their neighbors each one in his jurisdiction some because of shame and fear and others because of kinship and friendships and likings and other reasons because they did not want to proceed without complainants and because the form and order in which the said ordinary mayors tend to proceed is very long and the said evil spells are of such quality and are done at night and in isolated places and very hidden and under cover and because the proof of it is very difficult, and no one can know completely except the same xorguinos and bruxos, complete justice has not been done up to now and only . . . and without complaint . . . many evils and harms would follow if in it there were no benefit and they asked and asked and asked for a favor that would give power and jurisdiction to you the mayors of said association and lawyers of it . . . from now
on and each one of you for your office . . . doing inquisition and investigation about it as you do of crimes.”

3. Thirty-four years after the publication of the ordinance of 1466, in 1500, the witches of the Anboto mountain range appeared, about whom the following authors speak: Pedro Fernández de Villegas, in his commentary on Dante’s Inferno (cited by Menéndez Pelayo, Historia de los heterodoxos españoles [Madrid, 1880], p. 620), and El Cartujano, in his poem “Los doce triunfos de los doce apóstoles” (“Cancionero del siglo xv,” ed. Foulché Delbosc, Nueva biblioteca de autores españoles, xix, p. 306, “durangas de embote nombradas”). About the same time, or a little before, a canon of Irún, Martín de Arles, wrote a Tractatus de superstitionibus (printed in 1509) in which the acts attributed to witches are analyzed. H. C. Lea, A History of the Inquisition of Spain, iv (London, 1907), pp. 210–211, alludes to it and to some trials carried out by the Inquisition of Calahorra in 1507, also known to Llorente, Histoire critique de l’Inquisition d’Espagne, iii (Paris, 1918), pp. 453–454.

The great trial of the witches and warlocks of Pyrenean Navarre followed these, in 1527; there is a long letter about them that I published in “Cuatro relaciones sobre la hechicería vasca,” in Anuario de Eusko-Folklore xiii (1933), pp. 89–100. Brother Prudencio de Sandóval had already spoken about it in his Historia del emperador Carlos V, v (Madrid, 1847), pp. 53–57 (book xvi, chapter v), and almost all modern historians of the Inquisition and of heterodoxies remember it. The “Crotalón,” in the Nueva biblioteca de autores españoles, vii, p. 147, also refers somewhat to Navarrese witchcraft; see also Fernández de Oviedo, in Las Quinquagenas, i (Madrid, 1880), pp. 473–474, speaking mostly of women. Around the same period of time as the Navarrese trial, Brother Juan de Zumárraga was commissioned in Bizkaia to fight witchcraft (Jerónimo de Mendieta, Historia eclesiástica indiana [Mexico, 1870], p. 629). Lea, op. cit., iv, pp. 215, 219, 221–222, using documents from the Simancas archives, recalls the steps taken in 1528 (Bizkaia), 1538 (Navarre), and 1555 and 1556 (Gipuzkoa), and Gorosábel, op. cit., i, pp. 355–356, mentions general agreements of Gipuzkoa that date from 1538 and 1539.

The trial of “the witches of Ceberio” took place between 1555 and 1558 and was made known by Darío de Areitio in Revista internacional de estudios vascos xviii (1927), pp. 654–665. In 1575 there was another trial in Navarre (Lea, op. cit., iv, pp. 222–223), and even in 1595, the Gipuzkoan committees, upon the vote of the representatives from Tolosa, returned to the issue of the repression of witchcraft (Gorosábel, op. cit., i, p. 356).

4. The bibliography concerning the trial of the witches in Zugarramurdi in 1610 is lush. First, there is a Relación de las personas que salieron al Auto de la Fee que los señores Doctor Alonso Bezerra Holguín del abito de Alcántara: Licenciado Juan de Valle Alvarado: Licenciado Alonso de Salazar Frías. Inquisidores Apostólicos, del Reyno de Navarra y su distrito, celebraron en la Ciudad de Logroño, en siete, y en ocho días del mes de Noviembre, de 1610 años. Y de las cosas y delitos porque fueron castigados (Logroño, Juan de Mongastón, 1610–1611). This edition is very rare, but it was reprinted with Voltairean notes by Moratin (Madrid, 1820), an edition of which there were many popular later editions. The bibliography on the trial in general is given by A. González de Amezúa in his edition of El casamiento engañoso y el coloquio de los perros, by Cervantes (Madrid, 1912), pp. 155–157 (and other references). The first reaction against recounting the trial of Logroño is found in the discourses of Pedro de

Together with our Spanish accounts go the books by Pierre de Lancre, which are more often cited than read: Tableau de l’inconstance des mauvais anges et demons. Ou il est amplement traité de la Sorcelerie et Sorciers (Paris, 1612), where there is an interesting but malicious description of the Basque character (pp. 29–47 and 59–60), and L’incredulité et mescreance du sortilege plainement convaincue (Paris, 1622). He also published more, but the first of these two is his most interesting work. J. Bernou did an extract of De Lancre, titled La chasse aux sorcières dans le Labourd (1609) (Agen, 1897), serious and thorough. In contrast, Michelet, La sorcière (ed. Paris, 1867), pp. 201–221, about the judge and his personality is quite light and exaggerated.

A credulity similar to that of De Lancre appears a certain report by Dr. Lope Martínez de Isasti, which I published in “Cuatro relaciones sobre la hechicería vasca,” in Anuario, cit., pp. 131–145. But by the time it was written, inquiries were already being conducted by one of the judges, who in the Logroño trial maintained a different point of view from the other two, inquiries that discredited almost completely the traditional ways of thinking about the matter and that are summarized in another report that I also published in the Anuario, pp. 115–130, and that are undoubtedly the most curious piece of the four with respect to Basque witchcraft in general. The influence of this judge, Alonso de Salazar y Frías, was felt already in the outcome of the Hondarribia witch trial, studied by J. A. de Arzadun, “Las brujas de Hondarribia,” in a supplement of the Revista internacional de estudios vascos iii (1909), pp. 172–173, 357–358, and by me in an article that I published under the same title in Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares iii (1947), pp. 189–204. Nevertheless, Gorosábel, op. cit., i, pp. 356–357, recounts an attempt at persecution planned in 1621 by the Gipuzkoan deputies, and in 1617 in Durango, similar agreements were made (Archivo de la Tenencia de Corregimiento de la Merindad de Durango. Catálogo de los manuscritos, lista de los tenientes y monografía de la Merindad, por Florencio Amador Carrandi [Bilbao, 1922], pp. 66–70).

Beginning with these dates, the problem ceased to interest government agencies and officials. The reputation of the Basque aquelarres nevertheless came to be reflected in famous works of Spanish literature, such as El Diablo cojuelo (ed. Vigo, 1902), pp. 18–19.

5. The legends, traditions, and events referring to witches, gathered by Barandiarán, are abundant; see Eusko-Folklore xviii (June 1922), pp. 21–24; xix (July 1922), pp. 25–28; xx (August 1922), pp. 29–32; xxxi (September 1922), pp. 33–36; xiii (October 1922), pp. 37–40; and xxiii (November 1922), pp. 41–44. Based on this gathered material, we see (1) that the common people, as did the more cultured people in other eras, raised the question of whether witches exist and resolved the problem in various ways; (2) that there are places that are considered to be especially frequented by witches; (3) that there are days that are more typical for their meetings; and (4) that there are very detailed stories in which they appear as protagonists. To the materials gathered by Barandiarán, we must add those gathered by Azkue, Euskalerriaren yakintza, i, pp. 373–390.
CHAPTER 2.4: Fine Arts


3. Some stylistic antecedents of Basque art were suggested in passing by A. de Apraiz, “El arte popular en la vida vasca,” in Quinto congreso de estudios vascos, cit., pp. 107–117. Possible connections with something earlier than the Roman (object of Apraiz’s attention), in Barandiarán, “Algunos casos de arte rudimentario en la etnografía actual del país vasco,” in the same publication, pp. 37–47.


5. Carmelo de Echegaray, in La tradición artística del pueblo vasco (Bilbao, 1919), 66 pp., gathered much documentation on the first figures of the country (in the field of plastic fine arts) of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But there has been no study from the sociological point of view on the organization of the old teams of stonemasons and the like. It is a pity that the treatise cited by Lope Martínez de Isasti in his work, p. 650, written by himself, on Gipuzkoan architects (in which he remembered up to eighty of them) has been lost, because it would have shed light on their customs. The notes collected by Vargas Ponce, for Ceán Bermúdez, during his stay in Gipuzkoa, are useful as a guide because they allude constantly to very interesting documents from our point of view (e.g., learners’ contracts, valuations, examinations of works, receipts): Correspondencia epistolar de D. José de Vargas Ponce y otros en...
men of letters of the nineteenth century, at the head of which we must place F. Michel, sixteenth-century authors, such as Garibay, and attracted the attention of scholars and for the most part. Many of the Spanish Basque ones had already been collected by tradition au pays basque.

6. The preceding considerations were suggested to me by the curious pamphlet by General F. de Sojo, La pantoja, jerga de los maestros canteros de Trasmiera (Santander, 1947), which contains materials on the speech of stonemasons, nineteenth-century Galicians, and people from the area of Santander indicated in the title of the pamphlet, which dates from this century. Both in the Galician mountain pantoja and latin dos canteiros, there are words such as bateti (two), iro (three), lao (four), bosto (five, pp. 20–21), andio (large, p. 25), araguia (meat, p. 26), artoa (wine, p. 27), arguizaiolak (to eat, p. 37), mandoa (donkey or horse, p. 59 and 69), ardoco, urdio (pig, pp. 59 and 69), bardoc (cow, p. 59), orzal (cold, p. 60), zorrios (lice, p. 71), and zustiagana (wood, p. 75). When they change something, phonetically or semantically, from the Basque model, it is never so much that they cannot be identified. I must note here that other special languages of different areas or corresponding to different trades also have a moderate number of Basque words. See for example, I(gnacio) C(arral), “Un pueblo de Castilla la Vieja que tiene un idioma para su uso particular,” in Estampa, no. 95 (November 5, 1929); María Angeles Gómez Pascual, “La Gacería,” in Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares II (1946), pp. 648–653. On the “language of witches” or of “toads,” Azkue, Euskalkerriaren yakintza, 1.


CHAPTER 25: Music, Poetry, Dance, Theater, Sports

1. The oldest Basque poetic texts have been collected and commented on by genealogist Juan Carlos de Guerra, in Cantares antiguos del euskera referentes a banderizos and in Onacinos y gamboinos, pp. 203–234. Also J. de Jauregain gathered some of great value and great antiquity: “Quelques légendes poétiques du pays de Soule,” in La tradition au pays basque, pp. 359–409. They are elegies, laments, and wedding songs for the most part. Many of the Spanish Basque ones had already been collected by sixteenth-century authors, such as Garibay, and attracted the attention of scholars and men of letters of the nineteenth century, at the head of which we must place F. Michel,
who in *Le pays basque*, pp. 209–434, presents a good anthological study of Basque poetry, dividing it into (a) historical songs, (b) political songs, (c) poetic legends, (d) funerary songs, (e) love songs, (f) autobiographical songs of various types, (g) “ethics,” (h) satires, and (i) other songs. Music and poetry go together. Therefore, when we present the musical bibliography, a great part of the poetic one will also be given, but here is it useful to remember some important studies for whoever may want to delve deeper into the technical and thematic analysis of traditional and popular poetry, as well as some collections. For example, there is “Cantares populares recogidos en Zeanuri (Vizcaya)” by E. de Gorostiaga, in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* X (1930), pp. 8–33 (choreographic songs, lullabies, children’s songs, holiday songs), or that gathered in Oiartzun by Manuel Lecuona, in the same *Anuario*, pp. 35–80 (choreographic songs, lullabies, children’s dance songs, educational songs, children’s games, holiday songs, burlesque songs, other songs) with a musical appendix. A collection of songs for Christmas, the New Year, and other holidays appears in *Anuario de Eusko-Folklore* XIII (1933), pp. 9–86, collected by A. Irigaray, Lecuona, and others.


After the first edition of this book was published, I saw two very interesting works for whoever studies Basque poetry. One of them is that by P. Jorge de Riezu, *Flor de canciones populares vascas* (Buenos Aires, 1948). The same publishing house (Ekin) also published a book by J. M. de Leizaola, *Estudios sobre la poesía vasca* (Buenos Aires, 1951), with very good analyses.

2. We also spoke of the “Canto de Lelo” in chapter 21, in whose note 3 I provide some bibliographic references on it. More recently, Philippe Veyrin, “A propos du chant de Lelo,” in *Homenaje a D. Julio de Urquijo e Ibarra*, i (San Sebastián, 1949), pp. 341–349, again defends the “decorative” nature of the refrain against my point of view, which, despite this, I continue to maintain.

3. All of the preceding basically follows Lecuona. On the *versolaris*, see also Iztueta, *Guipuzcoaco dantzak*, pp. 168–179; with very typical texts.

4. Many collections of Basque music have come to light since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Juan Ignacio de Iztueta was the first to publish an important one, under the title *Euscallun anciña anciñaco ta ere lendabicico etorquien dantza on iritei pozcarri gaitzic gabecoen soñu gogoangarriac beren itz neurtu edo versoaquin* (San Sebastián, 1826). Later, French Basque lawyer J. D. J. Sallaberry published some *Chants populaires du pays basque* (Bayonne, 1876), mostly Zuberoan and Lower Navarrese. Around the same time, or a little earlier, the musician from Donostia, Santesteban, presented his *Colección de aires vascongados para canto y piano*, consisting of various songs first published separately (beginning in 1864); another, *Cantos y bailes tradicionales vascongados* and a “Colección de marchas, bailes y cantos vascongados” for piano. Vinson, in *Le folk-lore du pays basque*, pp. 117–197, devotes an entire chapter to music, in which there are (as in the Santesteban collections) works by well-known composers (e.g., Iparraguirre). The *Cancionero vasco*, in José Manterola,
3 vols. (San Sebastián, 1877–1878) has even more devoted to compositions by non-anonymous composers.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Charles Bordes gathered quite a few more popular songs, publishing an important study on “La musique populaire des basques,” in *La tradition au pays basque*, pp. 297–358 (with examples and a bibliography). Our era opens with the compilation of two large collections: one by R. M. de Azkue, the other by J. A. de Donosti. Of the first, they have published the *Cancionero popular vasco*, a handbook edition without accompaniment (Barcelona), I (love songs), II (drinking songs and lullabies), III (dances), IV (dances without words), V (laments and elegies), and another work with the same title, with selected harmonized songs (Barcelona, no date given), as well as two studies titled *Música popular baskongada* (Bilbao, 1901) and *Música popular vasca* (Bilbao, 1919). From the second there is a great number of pamphlets and monographs, as well as the *Euskal Eres-Sorta* (cancionero vasco) (Madrid), with 392 numbers classified by genre.

5. Some forty years ago, F. Gáscue published his famous lectures on *Música popular vascongada* (San Sebastián, 1906) in which he denied the antiquity of the zortziko beat popularized by Iparraguirre and others in the nineteenth century. This denial led to a long polemic involving first T. de Aranzadi, “Sobre el origen del 5 por 8,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* v (1911), pp. 270–275, and “A propósito de los 5 por 8 castellanos,” in the same journal and volume, pp. 276–281. Gáscue answered Aranzadi and others in “De música vasca. El compass de zortziko,” in *Euskalerriaren alde* v (1915), pp. 515–518, and with him, Ignacio de Zubialde then got involved, “De música vasca. El compas de zortziko,” in the same journal and volume, pp. 579–584 and 739–741; Aranzadi again had his say (pp. 675–679), replying anew to Gáscue, “De música vasca. La simetría y el compas 5 por 8,” in *Euskalerriaran alde* vi (1916), pp. 85–90, 100–105, 133–145. It seems to have been demonstrated that, by the eighteenth century at least, this beat was known (J. A. de Donosti, “Notas de musicología vasca. Dos zorzicos del siglo xviii en 5 por 8,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* xix (1928), pp. 333–345).

Gáscue also posed the aforementioned question about the origins of certain old Basque melodies, defending their Breton origin and pointing out the similarity of others with Norman, Gaelic, and Flamenco melodies especially, which he explained based on the historical contacts at the end of the Middle Ages and beginning of the Modern Age; see his book *Origen de la música popular vascongada* (San Sebastián, 1913) and his article “Nuestra música popular,” in *Revista internacional de estudios vascos* x (1919), pp. 28–38, with clarifications inspired by C. de Echegaray’s study, “Orígenes de nuestra música popular y sus relaciones con la métrica,” in the same journal and volume, pp. 1–27. J. A. de Donosti and others have cast doubt on the dependencies proposed by Gáscue, probably thinking about the existence of a common branch. The more technical observations in the text have been taken from Donosti’s lecture “La canción vasca,” in *Quinto congreso de estudios vascos*, cit., pp. 118–131; see also Rodney Gallop, *A Book of the Basques*, pp. 138–159.

6. On the txistu, see first of all Iztueta, *Guipuzcoako dantza*, pp. 2–19, with interesting information on players, modes, and vicissitudes, and above all, Hilario de Estella, “El txistu, lo que es y cómo se toca,” in *Euskalerriaren alde* xviii (1928), pp. 456–465. Also, J. A. de Donosti, *Notas breves acerca del txistu y de las danzas vascas* (Bilbao, 1933), from which the list of dance games later in the text was taken. To point out its
ancient area of diffusion, it is worth bearing in mind this text from the *Diccionario*, by the Academia de la Historia, 1, p. 52 (article on Araba): “On holidays they regularly spend the afternoons bowling or playing cards or dancing to the sound of the tambourine, and sometimes of the small drum: this instrument, although very common in the Basque Country, is unknown in some town councils on the edges of the province and in them they make up for the lack of this music with that of the Galician *gayta* (bagpipe).” Today, in Araba, the *dulzaina* (a double-reed instrument) is played a lot (J. J. de Belaustegui, “La dulzaina,” in *Euskarriaren alde* xx [1930], pp. 373–375). The Bizkaian and western Gipuzkoan *alboque* (a double hornpipe), above all, also has limited expansion (J. Larrea, “La ‘alboka,’” in the same journal, xx [1930], pp. 173–179) as does the string drum, typical of the eastern French Basque zone, of Zuberoa, although Larramendi, *Corografía*, p. 203, extends it as far as Lapurdi. It is also found more toward the cast in the Spanish and French High Pyrenees (A. de Apraiz, “Instrum-
much more widespread the hand game is than the game played with a racket and the
greater love of the game among Gipuzkoans of the Beterri than those of the Goierri.
He also provides other details on bets, the weight of the pelotas, and so on. See also
Iturriza, p. 68 (bulls and pelota), and Iztueta, Guipuzcoaco dantza, pp. 162–168. E.
Michel, in Le pays basque, pp. 101–107, devotes some space to the game. For technical
details on the changes that have happened since the end of the eighteenth century, A.
Peña y Goñi, La pelota y los pelotaris, 2 vols. (San Sebastián, 1894) and the guidebook,
Le pays basque-français et espagnol (Paris, 1926), pp. 54–66. Local and technical
details in A. de Huarte, “El deporte vasco. La pelota en Navarra,” in Euskalerriaren
alde XVI (1926), pp. 121–128. M. Imboluzqueta, “La pelota, el juego a guante,” in

10. Iztueta, Guipuzcoaco dantza, believes the following games and sports to be the
most typical of his land: betting on oxen (idiapustuak), pp. 179–180; betting on rams
(ari apustuak), p. 180; stick throwing and long jumping contests, pp. 180–181; and
metal bar throwing (palankariak), pp. 182–183. Other short articles give details of
moderate interest, such as J. Mendiazale, “Los pulsolaris,” in Euskalerriaren alde II
(1912), p. 705.
Further Readings

This list of suggested reading is intended to orient the nonspecialist reader to Caro Baroja’s major monographs and to scholarship that influenced his thinking. The list consists of four sections: selected works by Caro Baroja, selected works that shaped his arguments in *The Basques*, an abbreviated general bibliography on Caro Baroja, and an introductory list of mostly contemporary, English-language works on Basque history and culture that relates to the broad themes discussed in the present work.

**Selected Bibliography of Julio Caro Baroja**


*Análisis de la cultura (etnología, historia, folklore)*. Barcelona, 1949.


*La vida rural en Vera de Bidasoa*. Madrid, 1944.

Selected Bibliography of The Basques

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*Ikuska*. Journal.
Iribarren, José María. *Historias y costumbres (colección de ensayos)*. Pamplona, 1949.
Iturriza, Juan Ramón de. *Historia general de Vizcaya y epitome de Las Encartaciones*. Bilbao, 1938.
Iztueta, Juan Ignacio de. *Guipuzcoaco dantza gogoangarrien condaira edo historia beren soñu zar, eta itz neurtu edo versoaoquin*. San Sebastián, 1824.


*Nueva recopilación de los fueros, privilegios, leyes y ordenanzas de la provincia de Guipuzcoa*. Tolosa, 1697.


*Prínçipe de Viana*. Journal.


**Selected Bibliography on Julio Caro Baroja**


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Select Bibliography on Basque History and Culture


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