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BASQUE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS,

A RICH PAST AND A BRIGHT FUTURE



SOS DEIAK, THE BASQUE EMERGENCY SERVICE, 25 YEARS LATER





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JANUARY

SUCCESSFUL SPEECH BY THE LEHENDAKARI IN BARCELONA

Basque President Juan José Ibarretxe traveled to Barcelona as a guest of the "Sobirania i Progrés" and "Pel dret de decidir" platforms and of the "Cercle d'Estudis Sobiranistes." During his visit, the Lehendakari took part in a lunch and colloquium organized by "Fundació Trias Fargas" and spoke with Catalan Prime Minister Artur Mas. The main focus of his visit, however, was a talk he delivered to an 800-person audience. In his talk, the Lehendakari warned that the Basque Country would not tolerate any more "door slamming," referring to the rejections of democratic agreements reached among Basques.

CITIZENS' PLATFORM ERABAKI – THE RIGHT TO DECIDE – PRESENTED IN BILBAO

Erabaki is endorsed by over 80 well-known figures from different sectors of society and culture in Euskadi. The goal of the platform is to "achieve the right to decide as a people and a society." The platform has drawn up a manifesto titled "Queremos decidir y vamos a decidir!" (We want to decide and we will decide!). The public is encouraged to join by logging on to www.erabaki.nireblog.com. Among the initiative's promoters are journalist Julio Ibarra, former director of Emakunde (Basque Institute for Women) Txaro Arteaga, Chairman of the Sabino Arana Foundation Juan María Atutxa, General Coordinator of Lokarri Paul

Ríos, and University of the Basque Country professor Ramón Zallo. Endorsers also include sculptor Néstor Basterretxea, author Toti Martínez de Lezea, bertsolari Andoni Egaña, stone-lifter Iñaki Perurena and journalists Xabier Euskitze and Josu Loroño.

FORMER SPEAKER OF THE BASQUE PARLIAMENT AND TWO BASQUE PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS SENTENCED BY SPANISH SUPREME COURT

Former Speaker of the Basque Parliament, Juan María Atutxa, and Committee members Kontxi Bilbao representing Ezker Batua, and Gorka Knörr from Eusko Alkartasuna, were charged with defiance of the law for refusing to break up the Sozialista Abertzaleak parliament group. In response to the conviction, the political parties comprising the Basque Government called for a public demonstration. The Basque Government and the Lehendakari himself took part in the march. The Lehendakari read an official announcement to the media, saying that: "The Spanish State, through its institutions is aware that it is constantly breaking down the pact for coexistence reached during the transition. It does not respect the rules of the game that this society agreed on."



The Lehendakari at the podium

FEBRUARY

THE LEHENDAKARI PRESIDES OVER THE PRESENTATION OF INNOBASQUE

Lehendakari Juan José Ibarretxe presided over the presentation of Innobasque, the Basque Agency for Innovation. During his presentation, the Lehendakari reminded the audience of the significance of the agency in terms of industrial representation. "95% of our country's GNP is represented here today," he said, "but that's not enough. We need to make sure that 95% of the population is behind the project of innovation." Innobasque is a private, non-profit association created to coordinate and promote innovation in all of its facets. A total of 417 people will take part in the various government structures involved in Innobasque.

EUDEL IMPLEMENTS ITS MASTER PLAN

The Association of Basque Municipalities (EUDEL) presents its Master Plan. The presentation was headed by Basque President Juan José Ibarretxe, who underlined the important role of local governments in achieving peace. "It is the perfect environment," he said "for reaching out to the public, for encouraging democratic participation, peace, reconciliation and political normalization, and for promoting sustainable human progress." He emphasized the



20th anniversary of Emakunde.

importance of local government. "We need our towns and cities," he said, "we need the people who head our local governments to work towards furthering coexistence and reconciliation among our people."

EMAKUNDE CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

The Basque Institute for Women-EMAKUNDE is celebrating its 20th birthday throughout 2008. One of the highlights was an event headed by Lehendakari Juan José Ibarretxe. The Lehendakari used the occasion to encourage men to become involved in moving toward full equality. "There is no turning back on the road to equality, embarked upon by Emakunde twenty years ago," he said. Emakunde was created twenty years ago to promote policies that strengthen gender equality in government and society alike.

THE BASQUE GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF NAVARRA HOLD HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON LINGUISTIC POLICY

The senior directors of linguistic policy met to foster collaboration among the two governments to promote Euskara. Taking part in the meeting were Miren Azkarate, Basque Minister of Culture; Carlos Pérez-Nievas from the Government of Navarra's Council on Education; Patxi Baztarrika, Basque Deputy Minister for Linguistic Policy; and Xabier Azanza, Director of the Institute of Navarre for Basque. After the meeting, Miren Azkarate made the following statement: "Today's meeting is a starting point, the first step as we move toward the future. It is clear that this type of thing has not been very common in the recent past, but this opens the door to the future."



BASQUE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, A RICH PAST AND A BRIGHT FUTURE

Euskal musika euskal kulturaren ardatzetariko bat da eta musikaren barruan, jakina denez, musika tresnek garrantzi handia dute. Euskal musika tradizionala eta bere tresnak bizirik diraute egungo gizartearen ohiko bizitzan eta batez ere ospakizunetan. Euskal musika tresnak gaur egungo garaietara egokitu dira, batez ere trikitixa.

In spite of having their own special character, Basque music and instruments have enjoyed a long history of intermingling with other musical cultures. The Way of Saint James, which runs through the Basque region, brought other cultures to the area and led to the exchange of rhythms and instruments. This is one of the many reasons why some types of Basque music, rhythms and instruments share a very close

similarity with other parts of Europe. Musical similarities can be seen between the western part of Euskal Herria and Portugal, Ireland, Scotland and Brittany, or between the eastern Basque Country and the music of Italy, Catalonia or Sardinia.

Perhaps one of the most interesting types of music is that associated with Basque dances, or *euskal dantzak*. The evolution of Basque music has followed the same pace as the dances.

In other words, the music accompanying ancient traditional dances has changed very little, if any, over time, the dances still accompanied by simple "orchestras" (usually a single person playing the *txistu* and the *danbolin*). In contrast, the dances that have had more social exposure have evolved the most in terms of the music itself as well as the instruments. Nevertheless, the traditional duos are still alive and well:



the *dultzaina* and the *atabal*; the *trikitixa* and the *pandero*...

TXISTU, A LONG-STANDING TRADITION. The *trikitixa* and the *txistu* are two of the best known Basque instruments. However, in recent years they have grown in opposite directions. The *txistu* has evolved while remaining faithful to its traditional formula. The *trikitixa*, on the other hand, has experienced a veritable revolution, casting all the traditional formulas aside.

The *txistu* is accompanied by the *danbolin*. The combination consists of a one-handed, vertical nose flute with three holes, and a small closed drum played with a single mallet. This duo is played throughout the Basque region, the only exception being in Zuberoa. Here we find a variation

called the *txirula-txuntxun*, which consists of a smaller flute from the same family and a long, thin psaltery for rhythmic accompaniment.

The Basque enlightenment of the eighteenth century was a cornerstone in the expansion of the *txistu*. With the Enlightenment in full swing, rural instruments in Provence were introduced into aristocratic environments. The close relationships between French encyclopedists and the Sociedad Vascongada de Amigos del País prompted some of the society's members to take interest in the phenomenon. Thus, the Conde de Peñaflorida, Ignacio Manuel Altuna, and a number of others, including musicians, went to work renovating both the instruments and the songs, creating the instrumental duo we know today.

«Trikitixa eta txistua
euskal musika tresna
ezagunenak dira. Baina
azkeneko garaietan
kontrako bideak
jarraitu dituzte.»



«90. hamarkadaren
erdialdean jaiotako
musika talde berriek,
soinu tradizionalak
baztertu zituzten eta beste
musika tresna batzuekin
nahastu zituzten.»

But in the nineteenth century the *txistu-danbolin* duo was in a crisis. The social breakdown between liberals and conservatives drove the *txistuto* to be associated with conservatism and later with nationalism. The resurgence began in 1928. That year the Euskal Herriko Txistularien Elkarte was created in Arrate (Eibar), an organization that has done much to promote the interests of the *txistu*.

Today it is common to find *txistularis* providing the musical accompaniment for the numerous groups of *euskal dantzak* and performing in chamber concerts.

TRIKITIXA, THE REVOLUTION OF TRADITIONAL INSTRUMENTS. The *trikitixa* is a diatonic accordion that is usually accompanied by a *pandero*, a small hand-held drum much like a tambourine but without metal jingles or bells. In very few years the *trikitixa* has experienced a huge revolution. The new bands that came along during the '90s decided to set aside

musical purism to create a fusion of traditional and modern musical instruments, including electric bass, drums, sample and others. Tapia ta Leturia, Kepa Junkera, Alaitz eta Maider, Etxakit, Gozategi and Gose all contributed to this change.

With this transformation the *trikitixa* started being heard in new places and environments. The sounds of the *trikitixa* could now be heard on city stages and at any virtually any dance hall or bar in Euskadi.

Many musicians specializing in this type of music, including Kepa Juntera and Maixa, are known around the world and now share billings with some of the top names in international folk music.

Traditional *trikitixa* music, on which this new movement is founded, is still very much alive and thriving. The new panorama has served to pack music schools, encourage instructors to continue teaching the basics, and in this way keep the sounds of this traditional instrument alive.



«Change is a good thing. It means that
Basque folklore is alive and well.»

Juan Mari Beltrán

MUSICOLOGIST

Juan Mari Beltrán is one of the foremost experts in traditional Basque instruments. Beltrán was born in Donostia and raised in Etxarri-Aranatz, Navarra. At the age of seven he took up the txistu and at eleven joined the local *txistulari* group. At 16 he extended his range of instruments to *alboka* and the *dultzaina*, and began to arrange music for the Argia dance group. In 1996 he started working in collaboration with the local government of Oiartzun on what would become one of his major projects - Musika Txokoa - which opened its doors in 2001. Today Beltrán divides his time between Musika Txokoa and teaching at the Hernani music school, in addition to his own personal music endeavors.

What is the most difficult Basque instrument to play and which is the easiest?

There's no straightforward answer to that question. The *txalaparta* may seem simple. Someone who takes a weekend workshop might learn a few basic notions and be able to play the *ttakun* (the part consisting of two strokes repeated over and over again). But it gets more complicated depending on what goals the students have and how far they want to go. For example, I've been teaching *txalaparta* classes at the school in Hernani for 23 years and I still have students with me who started in my third year. In other words, they've been at it for 20 years. It looks like a simple instrument but perhaps for that very reason, there are always new things to discover.



Basque traditional instruments are most commonly used to accompany dantzaris...

When I was 17 and studying with Isidro Ansorena, I began to play with Basque dance groups. A group of *txistularis* almost always provided the music for dance groups. It didn't matter whether the dances were supposed to be danced to the txistu music or any other type of instrument. Then the movement to bring back different instruments and dances began. The same thing happened with outfits - before that people would wear any kind of costume for whatever type of dance. With this new movement dancers were more concerned about wearing the outfits that went with the dance and having the right type of musical accompaniment. So we said "if we're going to play *Baile de la Era* from Lizarra, let's use the bagpipes or the *dultzaina*." The same thing went for the dances from Behenafarroa. We began playing them with instruments from the latter period and then began to throw in the violin, the clarinet

And then *albokaris* and *txalapartaris* began to make an appearance in dance groups. The *txalapartaris* actually played between the dance numbers to add variety to the performances. This made Basque folk dance performances richer and more appealing. But traditionally the most important thing was for there to be live musicians to

«*Hemendik atera eta horren*

beste kilometro egin ostean

badirudi etxean zaudela.

Hori sorpresa handia da»

accompany the dancers. In Argia we began to play dances from Otsagabia using clarinets because the last local dance musicians were in fact clarinet players. When they disappeared the dancers began to bring in bagpipe players from Pamplona. And we started to revive these traditions. Before the clarinets the dances may have been played by other instruments. These types of changes are logical, and they're a good thing. It means that Basque folklore is alive and well. When a tradition dies that's when people want to preserve it, keep it static, not allow it to change. In the regions where dance music has been kept alive, it's changed. For example, the Bidasoa area, where they went from the *txistu* to the accordion, and where lantzi and his accordion became popular.

I think that dances can be done to whatever instrument you have available; a historically accurate performance is another thing. But if the dances are still alive, why not use a few violins for instance?

Could a Basque person living in another part of the world make himself an instrument such as a txalaparta?

Yes, a person could make his or her own instrument. I made my first alboka in my kitchen. I found the horn at the slaughterhouse in Sagües and a piece of wood at a wood shop. Then I bought a cane reed. I think you can find all of those things anywhere. You can usually find drawings and a lathe anywhere, so you can make an instrument.

Take the *txalaparta* for example. I know people who are making them. They ask me for a file I have with different models of txalapartas. It's not at all complicated.

What was it like to go on tour to the different Euskal Etxeak?

It was a really nice experience. It was a pleasant surprise to find that I could leave home, travel so far away and then practically feel like I was at home. You know that the Basque

people there are a minority but since those were the people I was with all the time, they seemed like a majority. To me, most of the people in San Francisco speak Euskara ... because the people I was with spoke Euskara. It was surprising and funny to find people born there who speak Basque. You identify with them as if you were here - this guy's from Baztan, that one's from the Txorierri area And it's exciting because for them it's like a transfusion, as if they were being infused with something special. Every time you perform and play their music, you can feel it.

I also had some unique experiences. In one concert I said "we're going to play a song by my great maestro, Mauricio Elizalde," and all of a sudden I hear someone start to cry. It turns out that his daughter, Maria Elizalde, was in the audience. And Elizalde's son, Antonio Elizalde, was at the San Francisco and the Chino, California, *Euskal Etxeak*.

After the concerts people would come up to me and tell me that I'd played something from their region they were familiar with and used to dance to. That's very rewarding.

How do you see the importance of music and traditional instruments within our culture?

Basque culture is the sum total of different fields. Basque culture is painting, language, architecture ... and Basque music.

What should be made clear is that in order for something to be called "Basque culture," it should have certain characteristics. There can be different kinds of music, but if we're talking about Basque culture, it has to incorporate those specific features. And Basque music does. There may be many different kinds but it shares specific characteristics. There are tambourines on all seven continents and even though they have things in common, a tambourine player from Papantla, Mexico, and a Basque tambourine player each have their own peculiarities. They don't share the same musical language.

Basque music is the product of its instruments. Instruments such as the *alboka* have determined a style, timbre, texture and acoustic characteristics that have had an influence on Basque music. The same holds true for the *txistu* and the *dultzaina*.

And what about the *txalaparta*? How many groups have wanted to use this instrument? And when they use the instrument they're influenced by it. Music isn't just one note after another. Timbre also plays an important role. That's why the accordion is important. We don't know where it came from but it's had an enormous influence on the creativity of Basque music in recent years.



HERRI MUSIKAREN TXOKOA, AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT BASQUE INSTRUMENTS

Herri Musikaren Txokoa, a documentation centre for folk music, opened its doors to the public in March 2002, with Juan Mari Beltrán as one of its main promoters. Over 400 folk instruments are on display - and another 700 in storage - from the Basque Country and around the world. In addition to seeing the instruments, visitors are also invited to listen via a special sound system.

The documentation center/museum is located in Gipuzkoa in the town of Oiartzun in the Ergoien neighborhood. For more information visit the center's website at www.herrimusika.org.

«Nik bere kabuz txalapartak

egiten ari den jendea ezagutzen

dut. Txalaparta ezberdinak

egiteko dudan artxibo bat eskatu

didate. Ez da batere zaila»



THE BASQUE EMERGENCY SERVICE, SOS DEIAK, 25 YEARS LATER

2008an hainbat erakunde publikoek urteurrena ospatzen dute: Emakundek 20 urte betetzen ditu, IVAPek 25... SOS Deiakek ere berea ospatzen du. Urte hauetan zehar aldaketak sakonak izan dira. 088tik 112ra pasa gara eta teknologiari dagokionez berripenak itzelak izan dira. Aldaketak egon arren, SOS Deiakek hiritarrei larrialditarako zerbitzua ematen jarraitu du.

Twenty-five years ago the Basque Department of the Interior set into motion a Basque emergency service organization. Many aspects of the service have changed since that time, particularly with regard to technology. Today 70% of the calls that come into the SOS Deiak call center are placed from cell phones. Twenty-five years ago it was impossible to think that virtually everyone would have one. In the early years, radios and landline telephones were used to communicate with the various institutions, whereas now communications take place with a single click from the Internet.

In 1983 the Basque Government decided to set up an emergency assistance service. The goal was for the

public to be able to pick up their phone in case of an emergency and dial a single emergency phone number. This is how SOS Deiak was born.

However, the idea was not only to serve as a single phone number, but also as the overall coordinator for all Basque public assistance service agencies. This includes provincial governments and municipal associations in charge of fire departments and other emergency resources, the Department of the Interior, responsible for the Ertzaintza (Basque police), city governments and their local police forces, and last but not least, the Basque health service, Osakidetza.

The purpose of Sos Deiak, which coincided with the deployment of the Ertzaintza, was not to create new resources but rather to work with those being developed



at the time as well as the resources already in existence. One of the defining moments in its history was the creation three years later of the number 088. The Basque Government's intention was to generate cohesion in society by making it possible for any citizen to request assistance from anywhere within the Basque Autonomous Community by dialing a single phone number. In other words, to reinforce and integrate public security in the broadest sense. The number would be available to the public regardless of the severity of the incident.

FROM 088 TO 112. Convergence between Euskadi and Europe also had its effects on Sos Deiak. In 1997 the single European emergency number came into effect, whereby people could dial 112 for emergency services anywhere in the European Union. Thus, the previously indispensable 088 was replaced.

The ultimate emergency service, 112, requires a huge amount of coordination. When we dial 112 we get is a quick response but we often stop to think about the infrastructure and knowledge that supports the system. What we experience when we make the call is a group of skilled professionals who perform their jobs quickly and efficiently. These are the people that coordinate the

agencies and provide the volunteer services that make the system work. But the structure coordinated by Sos Deiak is completely decentralized to provide fast and efficient service. Sos Deiak coordinates the entire process, from the neighborhood Ertzaintza patrol car, to the city fire department, to ambulances, hospitals and any other emergency resources.

120 SECONDS. The average amount of time from when a call comes into the Sos Deiak call center to the time the various emergency agencies are notified is 120 seconds. One of the greatest concerns in providing better services is the question of time: "saving time saves lives." Sos Deiak strives to maintain readiness to respond to the nearly one and a half million calls per year.

In order to remain on the cutting edge of emergency services, the professionals at Sos Deiak know how important it is to incorporate new technology. They are already working on a program to enhance the automatic location of incoming calls.

But without question, its most valuable assets are its human resources. After all, no matter how great the advances in technology, there is no substitute for human diligence. Information, skill and competence are the cornerstones of success.



Jokin Bildarratz, President of EUDEL

Born in Tolosa, Gipuzkoa, in 1963

Member of the Basque Nationalist Party

Mayor of Tolosa and President of the Association of Basque Municipalities, EUDEL

We see the needs of our residents, without any middlemen

At EUDEL we have been working for 25 years to give local Basque governments the important place they deserve. It is local-level governments that protect the interests and work to enhance the quality of life of Basque citizens. And with necessary tools we want to be able to continue to do so. That is the reason behind the push for to define the emerging role of city governments and clearly define local powers.

We see the needs of our residents, without any middlemen. We are direct witnesses; they knock on our doors every day to ask us for solutions to everyday problems. The quality of life we enjoy in

Euskadi today is the result of hard work by a lot of people and by the Basque institutions. To a large extent, EUDEL has contributed significantly towards ensuring that our local governments provide greater services for their citizens.

At EUDEL we have also undertaken other responsibilities, such as promoting the Konpondu project, which some of the Euskal Etxeak readership is familiar with. The project aims to put the word PEACE - in capital letters - on the table and make all of our voices heard on the issue of peace and coexistence using another essential tool for democracy: GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION



David H. Bieter, Mayor of Boise

Born in Boise, Idaho, in 1960

Member of the Democratic Party

Mayor of Boise since 2004 and re-elected in 2007

The greatest honor of my life is serving as Mayor of my hometown

The greatest honor of my life is serving as Mayor of my hometown I'm doubly honored to be Boise's first Basque mayor because I'm tremendously proud of my Basque heritage and of the many positive contributions the Basques have made to the culture and livability of this city. Of the many things we've accomplished in my first term as Mayor, several stand out in particular. We established the first municipal ethics commission in the state of Idaho and restored citizen confidence

in City Hall. We've brought structural balance to the budget and now tie our spending decisions to our citizens' priorities. We've added 100 acres of new and developed parks in one year alone, and in just the past month we've opened two new neighborhood libraries. My goal is to give the children of Boise today and tomorrow all of the advantages and opportunities that my brothers and sister and I enjoyed growing up here, and I think we're on our way toward achieving that.

PEDRO LUÍS URIARTE 64 urteko bilbotarra da. Gaur egun Innobasqueko, Garapenerako Euskal Agentzia, lehendakaria da. Baina bere bizitza interesgarria bezain zabala da eta negoziaketa garrantzitsuetan parte hartu du. Garrantzitsuena Euskal Kontzertu Ekonomikoarena da, garai horretan Garaikoetxea Lehendakariaren gobernuaren Industri Kontseilaria zen.

«The Economic Agreement is the backbone of the well-being we now enjoy»



The Basque Government to Innobasque, by way of BBVA. What has the progression been like?

Enriching, that's for certain. Although the picture is a bit more complex, since when I had the honor of serving as Treasury Minister for the first Basque Government, I was already well into my career with the bank. My experience of taking responsibility for that public position was an indispensable lesson for me. At that time we had the opportunity to implement major projects, ideas and initiatives which in the long-term have turned out to be of vital importance in shaping the country we now have and enjoy. The most obvious example is the Economic Agreement. After that period in my career, I went back to the bank. And during those years I was also involved in launching what would be an ambitious project with major repercussions, one which I did my best to develop with the highest level of commitment. Following my early retirement, I created a strategic consulting firm and began teaching at the university level. And since July 5th 2007, as you mentioned in your question, I've served as chairman of the Basque Agency for Innovation. It is a private project, very intelligently supported by public authorities who, much like myself, understand how important it is to approach major projects with a positive attitude and high hopes. In this particular case the challenge we have set is tremendously ambitious: to make Euskadi THE leading point of reference for innovation in Europe.

You were a key figure in negotiating the Economic Agreement. What do you remember about the actual negotiation process?

Needless to say, it was arduous and extremely complicated.



I remember the huge efforts we all had to make, how adamantly we negotiated, and the determination we felt to do something so important. That was the guiding force behind the work of the entire Basque delegation. And I remember that even then, as president of the Basque Negotiating Committee, I was fully aware of the fact that at that negotiating table we were hammering out the foundations for institutional development and for Basque public administration as a whole.

What is the importance of the Economic Agreement in our economy today?

The Economic Agreement is the backbone of the well-being we now enjoy. It gave us the ability to manage our own resources and I think we've successfully taken advantage of that. For the general public it is now absolutely normal for them to file their tax returns with the Basque revenue service. But in fact, the system is truly unique in that taxes are collected at a lower-ranking tier of government than the national level, and the economic relationship with Spain is determined by a quota system whereby the central

government provides funding for the competences not conferred on the Autonomous Community. It's an absolutely innovative concept. This way of expanding and strengthening our own internal powers has been a key aspect of our recent economic history.

And now you're working with Innobasque. How would you explain to a Basque living abroad what the basis is for this second major economic change we're experiencing?

We are in a process of intensive change that is altering the economic, scientific-technological and social stage around the world. As a result, new countries are emerging that didn't use to "exist" economically and which are drastically escalating competition in all sectors. It is a phenomenon that affects us directly and clouds our economic prospects with uncertainty.

Unlike what happened in the previous phase of transformation in the 1980s, the current process of intense global change does not present us with a sudden challenge for survival. Now the global change presents us with a new challenge – competition. And this can translate into decline,



because since becoming a rich country we've lost some of the competitive advantages of the past, most of which were based on lower costs than the surrounding areas.

Is the need for transformation perceivable?

Compared to what happened in the previous phase, today the need for change is more subtle and harder to apprehend. Nowadays we don't feel like the future is at stake, simply because the present is so incredibly benevolent. Crisis? We're one of the richest countries on the planet, ranking third in the Human Development Index (indicator of the quality of life of a country). Yes, we've achieved an enviable position in the international context and we've managed to do so through enormous collective efforts, both public and private, which is what enabled us to face the challenge for survival of the previous phase and come out ahead of the game. Today things are radically different.

But the excellent position we carved out for ourselves does not ensure our future. To maintain it we must confront a second transformation. Lehendakari Ibarretxe, his government and now Innobasque have very wisely decided to stress the importance of this challenge.

Basque companies in China, South America ... What importance does this globalization we're witnessing have on the Basque economy?

It is of critical importance. The issues that determine our future are essentially global, and one of them is globalization. This phenomenon, as well as other associated events, are giving rise to a more prosperous world, but at

the same time a more unjust one. For instance 2.3 billion people are technologically excluded from participating in the so-called Information Age.

It is precisely in the shadow of this globalization that the enormous challenge before us becomes more evident: to clearly position ourselves in a context of rapid and profound change. It is a matter of ensuring the well-being of future generations and to do so in a purposeful, well-structured manner. And that is what our companies are doing and will continue to do.

There are warnings of a worldwide recession but the Basque economy seems to continue growing.

I don't see at this time a risk of recession. I do, however, foresee a deceleration, which is not the same, owing to the slowdown of the U.S. economy. In this global context, in which the emerging countries will continue to grow strongly, the Basque economy will maintain its current pace of growth and job creation, both of which are more robust than in Spain and the rest of the European Union countries.

So, how will the Basque Country compete from now on?

Over the last three decades the world economy has built up considerable momentum, the international GDP figure now at 48.2 billion dollars. Thirty years in which the Basque economy made it through the First Transformation with flying colors, completing an unprecedented growth cycle and maintaining a notable industrial capacity, which contributes to 30% of the Basque GNP. We took a great leap forward, even when the conditions at the beginning were anything but encouraging.

But times have changed. Today the scenario we have moved so comfortable in so far presents new challenges that we have to address and be able to turn into opportunities. In a context of globalized, interconnected economies and sectors, and with the inclusion of new countries which contribute a greater amount of low-cost production to the world market, the only solution is to create value by increasing productivity. Of course we mustn't forget the ongoing commitment to maximum efficiency. Companies that operate in developed economic environments, such as the Basque economy, have to reorient their production, management and marketing systems to create much greater added value.

Therefore, we have to accept the fact that the main basis for increasing income and prosperity in the Basque

Country in a sustainable way is to increase productivity. This will be very hard to achieve if we count on cost-based policies because we've lost competitive advantages in this area. So, how do we compete? We already know some of the keys: improve the already good levels we've attained in areas such as education, infrastructures, employment, quality and internationalization; make a strong commitment to enhance the efficiency and size of our companies, and with all of this, prioritize activities that will position us in the added value economy, i.e. science, basic and applied research, technology and innovation.

And how would you explain what Innobasque is and what purpose it's designed to serve?

Innobasque was created to spearhead the so-called Second Transformation. All of us, government, business and society, have to join forces to meet this major challenge, guided by a commitment to mutual collaboration. The Basque Agency for Innovation is the network for developing the enormous capabilities we have in our society in a coordination fashion.

The goal is for the Basque Country to become the benchmark for innovation in Europe in the span of one generation. Right now we rank second in Spain and the 55th among 250 European regions. Therefore we are at a good starting point for reaching the top step of the European podium, but there is still a lot of work ahead.

So, how do you plan to move forward?

Innobasque's specific actions are laid down in a series of short-, medium- and long-terms plans. The 2008-2009 lines of innovation, with 100 different programs, have already been approved. The 2008-2012 Plan will be approved in June, and the 2009-2018 Plan at the end of this year.

How are you going to implement the transformation Innobasque is after?

By using six major levers for change: first, government bodies comprising more than 400 Basque leaders from all fields; second, a group of partners who are major players and stakeholders; third, the creation of a "Basque Community of Innovators"; fourth, a powerful Basque Virtual Agency of Innovation; fifth, a set of highly competent, international and Basque consulting bodies; and, sixth, by developing the plans I mentioned earlier.

How many members are there?

Right now Innobasque consists of more than 450 members whose governing bodies are comprised of the leaders of

the foremost Basque companies, institutions and organizations.

In 2008 we hope to bring the number up to 1,001 members. As I said before, we're also working to create a Basque Community of Innovators, which in 2009 we expect will have 5,005 members.

Who is on the management team?

We've put together a powerful executive team which will work in six basic areas: technological innovation, social innovation, corporate transformation, internationalization of the Basque innovation system, advanced entrepreneurship, and promotion and communication.

What is the Basque Virtual Agency of Innovation you mentioned?

We've moved forward considerably in the design and implementation of what the Basque Virtual Agency of Innovation, a robust network of 101 public and private "agents for transformation" linked to Innobasque via five different ways: Integration, Federation, Strategic Alliance, Cooperation and Collaboration. The objective is to network, coordinate programs, multiply capabilities and align projects and goals.

What specific short-term goals do you have?

Several very important ones. First, we are helping to design and set into motion an initiative launched by the Lehendakari to make 2008 the Year of Innovation in the Basque Country. Our aim is to capture public interest on a mass scale. Secondly, we are going to contribute to building wide-spread support for the Manifesto for Innovation, also put forward by the Lehendakari. Thirdly, we want to have successfully accomplished 300,000 innovation actions by the year 2010. And fourth, by that same year we also want to be seen in Europe as an example of how to create a project for the transformation of a rich yet traditional and innovative society.

One last question: Can the global Basque community take part in this Second Major Basque Transformation?

Of course it can. If people want to become involved in the area of innovation, we will gladly accept any support from Basques living abroad with open arms. I invite them to visit the Basque Agency for Innovation website (www.innobasque.com), where they'll find a lot more information. They'll also find more specific ways to get involved in this major project which we hope will make Euskadi a benchmark for transformation in Europe.

The Lehendakari visits the United States

Lehendakari Juan José Ibarretxe visited California from February 14th to 17th during his official visit to the United States. He was received by a number of local authorities and Basques residents.

Lieutenant Governor of California John Garamendi, of Basque origin, organized an official reception at the California State Capitol building in Sacramento. Following the gathering, which lasted about an hour, both leaders spoke to the audience. Garamendi told the participants that the purpose of the visit was to exchange information on climate-related matters and to look into ways in which California could work in collaboration with Basque institutions. The Lehendakari expressed his satisfaction at "seeing a Basque in one of the highest positions of authority," and made a commitment to collaborate actively in areas of mutual interest to Euskadi and California, including nanotechnology, social innovation and policies to fight climate change.

South San Francisco Mayor Pedro Gonzalez also welcomed the Basque President at the City Hall. The Ikurriña was hoisted for the occasion on the front of the City Hall building. Gonzalez underscored the Basque community's role in the cultural and social life of the city.

The Lehendakari took advantage of the occasion to meet with Basque residents in this part of the United States. The Basque Cultural Center of San Francisco included Ibarretxe's visit as part of the events celebrating the center's 26th anniversary. Juan



Ibarretxe speaking at the University of Stanford



The Lehendakari with a group of young *dantzaris*.

José Ibarretxe spoke at the event, saying: "All of the Basque people here in California live in harmony – men and women from Baxenafarroa, Lapurdi, Zuberoa, Bizkaia, Araba, Gipuzkoa and Nafarroa. I would even go so far as to say, on behalf of our society, that you are a shining example of peaceful coexistence."

Perhaps the leg of the Lehendakari's visit that raised the greatest expectation was his talk at the prestigious University of Stanford. Before a full house, the Lehendakari presented his "Proposal to bring an end to the Basque conflict," in which he explained his road map to peace. He also described a series of social and economic measures for Basque society.



Advisory Council

The Advisory Council for Relations with Basque Communities met on March 4th. Under article 12 of the Law of Relations with Basque Communities and Centers Abroad, the Advisory Council is responsible for drawing up, implementing and following up on the four-year plan. The plan is based on the conclusions from the World Congress of Basque Communities held last summer under the motto Zubigintzan.

It is worth pointing out that for the first time since its conception, council had direct support from members of the Basque centers. These members were Carlos Sosa Azpeitia from Argentina and Jon Zaballa de Uraga from Madrid.

In addition to the four-year plan, the council also addressed other matters, such as the presence of Euskara in the Euskal Etxeak. Joseba

Erkizia, Director of HABE, Institute for Basque Culture, Language and Adult Literacy, took part in the meeting. He presented the program aimed at teaching Euskara at Basque centers and explained the different agreements signed with universities around the world. Andoni Martín, technical expert for the Department of Relations with Basque Communities, presented a project agreed upon by Federations of Basque Centers to create an online community.

Before moving on to questions and concerns, the company Xabide presented its feasibility study on the "Museum of Basque Emigration." The study provides broad information on the current situation, reference models, project opportunities, strategic framework, business definition and possible location.

ARGENTINA

Felipe Eyheragibel, new president of FEVA

Felipe Eyheragibel became the president of the Federation of Basque organizations in Argentina, FEVA, following elections held on March 15th. Eyheragibel, and his campaign "Por una FEVA para todos" (FEVA for all), beat Alejo Martín in a 26 to 23 vote. "Centros Vascos por la alternativa" (Basque centers for change) was the campaign slogan used by Martín, president of the Basque Club in the city of Córdoba. The new president is a member of the 'Zazpirak Bat' Basque club of Rosario.

New Euskal Etxea in Rio Gallegos, Argentina

The Basque Cabinet of Ministers accepted the application submitted by the Euskal Etxea "Centro Vasco de Santa Cruz - Hegoalde argentinarra" located in the city of Rio Gallegos, Argentina. On the other hand, at the same Cabinet meeting the official status of the following Basque centers was revoked: Centro Euskaro (Uruguay), Instituto Vasco Argentino de Cooperación y Desarrollo (IVACD) of Buenos Aires and Olavarria (Argentina).

Francois Pedeflous goian bego

Former NABO president, Francois Pedeflous, recently passed away at the age of 78. Pedeflous served as president from 1981 to 1983.



© Kezka dantza taldea

Dance troupe visits Euskadi

A group of ballet students from the prestigious University of Utah visited Euskadi for ten days to learn more about traditional Basque dance. The seventeen visiting students belong to the Character Dance Ensemble directed by Richard Wacko. The ensemble contacted the Kezka Basque dance group through the www.dantzan.com website.

The University of Utah has a Ballet Department was founded in 1951 and which offers different types of degrees in areas including Teaching and Choreography, Character Dance (folkdance), and Scholarly Research. Before coming

to Euskal Herria, the group had made previous trips to London, Beijing and Saint Petersburg with the same goals.

The entire project was coordinated by the group *Kezka euskal dantzak*, although the actual classes were organized and taught by the Donostia-based dance association Ikerfolk. The material taught focused on traditional folk dances from Gipuzkoa and Zuberoa. The dances from these two provinces are the oldest known Basque dances, involving very special techniques and dating back to pre-classical times.

The young North American visitors also came as observers. During their stay they visited the towns of Arrokiaga, Aloze and Atharratze in Zuberoa to see various live performances and the traditional Maskarada. In the group's host town of Eibar they also saw a number of performances by the Kezka dance group and by Haritz in the neighboring town of Elgoibar. In addition to the University of Utah's Department of Ballet, the state also boasts another group of *dantzaris*. The Utah'ko Triskalariak Basque Dancers represent one of the Utah Basque Club's most popular activities.

Bizkai Euskal Folklor Elkarteak releases a DVD

Bizkai Folklor Elkarteak, association for the promotion of Basque dance in Bizkaia, has released a DVD titled "Berrizko Folklore, dantzari-dantza eta soka dantza". The DVD feature some twenty different different Basque dances. Anyone interested in purchasing the new release can find it at www.bizkai-elkartea.net.





[1]



[2]



[3]



[4]

AUTHOR KEN FOLLET PRESENTED HIS NEW BOOK IN VITORIA-GASTEIZ [1]

Welsh-born writer, Ken Follet, presented his latest novel, *World Without End* in Vitoria-Gasteiz. The novel, the sequel to the author's bestselling *The Pillars of the Earth*, took its inspiration from the Cathedral of Santa María located in Vitoria's old town quarter. During his visit, Follet unveiled a statue erected in his honor, saying he felt both "flattered" and "delighted."

BERTSO EGUNA

The Kursaal Convention Center in Donostia was packed full of people at this year's edition of the classic Bertso Eguna. *Bertsolaris* spanning different generations took part in an event full of surprises. From old-timers Anjel Mari Peñagarikano and

Andoni Egaña, to the up-and-coming young Uxue Alberdi, to seasoned *bertsolaris* including Jexux Mari Irazu, Unai Iturriaga and Maialen Lujanbio. The fiesta continued into the wee hours of the morning at Martín Berasategi's well-known restaurant.

OFFICIAL OPENING FOR SUKAL LEKU [2]

Sukal Leku, Euskadi's leading center for R+D in gastronomy, was inaugurated by Lehendakari Juan José Ibarretxe. Juan Mari Arzak and Germán Muruamendiaraz will serve respectively as the chairman and director of the center, located in the Intxaurrondo neighborhood in Donostia. Among the center's goals are to spread an understanding of Basque cuisine, create a specialized library, offer a module for university-level education and build relationships with

technology centers, universities and businesses to apply new technologies to the kitchen. During his presentation, the Lehendakari said that "only cuisine with its own special personality can reach out to the world."

NO OSCAR FOR DONOSTIA COMPOSER ALBERTO IGLESIAS [3]

Composer Alberto Iglesias didn't walk away with the Oscar for Best Soundtrack for his film *The Kite Runner*. It was his second nomination after *The Constant Gardener* earned him his first Academy Award nomination in 2006.

COMPOSER MIKE OLDFIELD PRESENTS HIS CD IN BILBAO

British musician Mike Oldfield presented the international release of

his new CD, *Music of the Spheres*, at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. Mike Oldfield has dedicated 35 years of his life to music and has 24 records to show for it. Oldfield is perhaps best known for his album *Tubular Bells*. Taking part in his Bilbao performance was the Basque National Orchestra together with 40 female voices from the Bilbao Choir.

IRUN PAINTER MENCHU GAL DIES [4]

Born in Irun, artist Menchu Gal has passed away at the age of 90. Menchu Gal revolutionized post-war painting with her artwork and by the fact that she was one of the few women painters at the time. As a tribute to Gal, the Museum of Bidasoa Painters will bear her name. Menchu Gal received a number of awards during her lifetime.



BASQUE MUSEUM OF BOISE, PRESERVING BASQUE CULTURE IN IDAHO

The Basque Museum and Cultural Center opened its doors in 1985 in the historic Cyrus Jacobs-Uberuaga House at 607 Grove Street in Boise, Idaho.

The main purpose of the institution is to preserve the cultural roots of the Basque residents in Idaho and surrounding states. The center's focus is on the future generations. This explains why it was one of the driving forces behind the creation of Boiseko Ikastola, the first (and so far

the only) ikastola to open its doors in the United States.

Since its opening in 1985, the Museum and Cultural Center has grown at a staggering pace thanks to support from a number of institutions, foundations and, most particularly, its backers, movers and shakers and Basque residents in Idaho. The museum provides an opportunity to learn about the rich and colorful Basque culture and its origins, and about the new life so many

Basque people embarked on in America.

Over the course of the museum's twenty-year history, it has compiled an extensive collection of materials, including important manuscripts, numerous audio archives and photographs. The Basque Museum and Cultural Center has become a place of reference for students and scholars of the Basque phenomenon and its particular relationship with the United States.



BASQUE WHALING AND THE CYRUS JACOBS-UBERUAGA HOUSE

Today the museum features two permanent exhibits: Basque Whaling - Danger & Daring on a Distant Shore and the Cyrus Jacobs-Uberuaga Boarding House.

The first one explores the efforts of Basque whalers off the east coast of North America. Included in the display are whaling tools, artifacts and gear, in addition to clothing and whaling vessels. The exhibit is meant to pay tribute to the men who set out from Euskadi to cross the Atlantic in the sixteenth century to hunt whales.

The second exhibit is the Cyrus Jacobs-Uberuaga House. This house, in operation from 1910-1969, was where Basque immigrants would stay when



they came to Idaho. It also served as a social and cultural center, where Idaho Basques could get together and keep their traditions and native language alive.



GUERE TXOKOA



//////////////// San Juan de Gaztelugatxe, Bermeo, Bizkaia.





Luis Foncillas, from Pamplona, has been living in New York since 1994. He has held a number of positions at the New York Euskal Etxea, including president from 2001 to 2004. He is currently the New York correspondent for Radio Euskadi.



Luis Foncillas,

In early March one of the chapters in my life came to an end, one which only a few years ago would have been impossible for me to conceive of. I came to New York over 13 years ago with a duffle bag and a head full of dreams. I've never been a great planner, so I had no preconceived idea of how long I would stay here. Improve my English and learn a few tricks of the trade: those were my main goals.

In a lot of ways my life in New York is like it was when I lived in Iruña, Donostia, Vitoria-Gasteiz or Madrid. I spend a lot of time working, rushing from one place to another, and I still have the feeling that the day isn't long enough to do what I have to do. But in New York I've found myself and have learned to accept myself for what I am. I've even found a reasonable amount of happiness, but not the kind we see in Hollywood movies.

Generally speaking, I think the Basques are noble, hard-working people, people who in some way are obsessed with their identity. As the Irish author Paddy Woodworth says in his book "The Basque Country," we are fascinated with the past but at the same time form part of a vibrant, modern society. Maybe these are some of the reasons why Basques fit in so well in New York, a society which, like the Basque society, is largely obsessed with this kind of values.



a Basque in the Big Apple

Pretty much ever since I've been in this city I've worked in the area of audiovisuals and the media. I work for one of the world's major media corporations, MTV Networks (Viacom), and am the U.S. correspondent for Radio Euskadi (EiTB), which allows me to be in contact with two worlds that both very different and very much alike at the same time.

I'm comfortable in New York even though sometimes I do miss the Basque Country. It took me five years to connect with the New York Euskal Etxea because at first I didn't feel the need to be with other Basque people. Now without really realizing it, I think I've managed to find a balance in my private life between my Basque and U.S. identities. I have American friends and Basque friends. I feel comfortable among all of them and there's a good rapport between the two.

I said in the first paragraph that in early March a very special chapter in my life came to a close. My Basque identity and my American experience – the latter learned from an early age through movies and TV series and absorbed perfectly over these years living in New York – have come together naturally. On March 7th I myself became the person I've talked about so many times on the radio. Taking on U.S. citizenship, I have become yet another "vascoamericano."

«Gaur egun lanean
eta bizitzan alde
estatubatuarra eta
euskalduna batzea lortu
dut, konturatu gabe
izan bada ere.»

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EUSKO JAURLARITZA



GOBIERNO VASCO



Restaurante Kokotxa

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Telephone and fax: 943421904 Closed Sunday evening and Monday



You can smell the salt air wafting up from the fishing port just a few blocks away from this attractive restaurant. Kokotxa is located beside the church of Santa María in the heart of Donostia's old town, just opposite the legendary Gaztelubide gastronomic society. Restaurante Kokotxa has been in the same location for a long time, but five years ago the kitchen and dining room were completely renovated to give the establishment a modern design and a light and airy feel.

Heading up the kitchen is a young and talented, 32-year-old chef, Daniel López, disciple of Luis Irizar, one of the masters of Basque cuisine. López has not only managed to put the Kokotxa high on the list of the best places to eat in the city. He has also brought a special sensibility and a vast knowledge of new techniques in elaborating and creating highly successful dishes.

BAKED PRAWNS WITH 'MARMITAKO' VEGETABLE BRUNOISE ON A WAFER OF SAFFRON POLENTA

PREPARATION:

1 - MARMITAKO BRUNOISE

Dice the vegetables into small, even cubes. Fry the vegetables in hot olive oil until lightly browned, turn down heat and continue cooking. When the vegetables are halfway done, add the diced potatoes. Add the white wine and reduce until nearly dry. Stir in the prawn broth and simmer until the potatoes are tender but do not fall apart.

2 - POLENTA WAFER

Heat water and milk in a sauce pan. Bring to a boil and add polenta. Lower heat and cook for 20 minutes, stirring constantly. Add butter and salt. Spread the polenta mixture about two centimeters thick on an oiled baking sheet or tray. Use a cookie cutter or cut rounds out of the polenta. Put in refrigerator.



3 - FINISHING TOUCHES

Heat the marmitako brunoise with the saffron essence and set aside. Peel the prawns, remove the heads, sprinkle with salt and oil, and bake for four minutes at 180°C. Place a few spoonfuls of the marmitako brunoise on a preheated plate. Put two prawns, one looped around the other, over the marmitako. Decorate with the two fried chive and one raw chive sprigs.

INGREDIENTS

MARMITAKO BRUNOISE:

2 onions, 4 green peppers,
1 red pepper, 2 cloves
garlic, 3 medium-sized
potatoes, 1.5 l. prawn
broth, 1 glass white wine

POLENTA:

100 gr. polenta, 400 ml.
water, 400 ml. milk, 50
gr. butter, a pinch of salt.

FINISH:

4 large prawns, fried chive
or other type of fresh herb
sprigs, concentrated
saffron essence, 1 sprig
fresh chive.



"The first Basque expedition to Venezuela in 1939"

My aita Antonio María Urruzuno and his brother Tomás Urruzuno were part of this expedition."

Karmele Urruzuno

DO YOU HAVE A PICTURE TO ADD TO THE ALBUM?

If you do, and would like to see it published here,
send it by e-mail to: **ji-arregui@ej-gv.es**

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