Towards a Basque State

territory and socioeconomics

iparhegoa

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FOREWORD

Ipar Hegoa Fundazioa

One of the goals of the IPAR HEGOA Foundation is to carry out studies and analyses of political and social issues of interest for the Basque Country and to encourage discussion of such subjects. Therefore, at the present time when there is much debate about the viability of Euskal Herria, IPAR HEGOA Fundazioa wishes to contribute to the discussion by offering these documents. Some will argue that Euskal Herria is a tiny country, that fragmentation makes no sense in the present era of globalisation, that what is needed now is for all of us to work together and achieve a mutual understanding, that demands for independence lead to discrimination among the members of a community, and so on, and so forth. Many factors and countless arguments are cited as reasons today for *not* creating new states; some of them are coherent arguments that make a certain amount of sense. And yet, be that as it may, thousands upon thousands of Basque citizens are still insisting that they want a state of their own. What of *their* arguments? Are these not also coherent, equally important arguments?

Whether we like it or not, the fact is that in the world today the state continues to be the chief expression of comprehensive political decision-making power. Therefore, in the contemporary Basque Country, in the current political state of affairs, we believe it is both interesting and necessary to undertake a collective exercise of thinking through the benefits, options, risks and dangers that the construction of a Basque state in Europe would entail, on many levels, including the political, institutional, territorial, socio-economic, linguistic, cultural, and in terms of identity.

The IPAR HEGOA Foundation proposes to take a long look at all the circumstances and ask how feasible a Basque state is. Thus we have brought together on these pages the opinions of numerous academics and researchers who are familiar with this range of subjects. We are well aware that there are many other specialists, besides these, who have often made extremely interesting contributions to the field. IPAR HEGOA Fundazioa has not set itself the task of bringing together contributions from every single such expert, or to present in equal measure current opinions in every discipline, or to represent every single region of our country to the same degree. Instead, priority has been given to achieving a coherent picture subscribed to by a respectable number of experts, even at the risk of leaving some geographical areas, universities or perspectives out of the picture. But this does not mean we have striven to produce a single, monolithic viewpoint: that was not our purpose. Each author was free to give their own opinion, provided only that they focus on the overall idea of the necessity and viability of a Basque state; beyond that, it is recognised that there is room for a variety of points of view.

After all, the aim of the present study was not to create a constitution for the Basque state, nor to lay down rules for what a Basque state ought to be like. Ours is a less ambitious objective, yet quite a crucial one all the same. The question we wish to answer is this: Is a Basque state viable or not? Would it or would it not be worth the effort to create a Basque state? Would Basques be willing to embark on such a project? In the event that these questions find an answer and if that answer is in the affirmative, then, and only then, would it be time for us to turn to the next set of questions, questions about the direction and purpose of such a Basque state.

The IPAR HEGOA Foundation believes that the present study addresses this matter of great interest, and that it is able to play a useful part in bringing Euskal Herria into focus in the present international situation, by gathering together a range of views now current in a variety of disciplines; it may also help to establish the absolute and relative place of Euskal Herria within the domain of present-day states. We believe the interesting theoretical contributions

set down on these pages will contribute to endowing the demand for a Basque state with substance, while also proving useful in order to lay a sound material and ideological foundation such as is necessary in order to give form to that endeavour. IPAR HEGOA holds that this is the best option for everybody who lives and works in Euskal Herria and defends the premise that at this time the Basque Country possesses the basic potentialities needed to build a state that can take its place among the states of Europe.

Thus the IPAR HEGOA Fundazioa offers, in **Towards a Basque State**, a qualified contribution concerning the need for and feasibility of a newly created Basque state. The study consists of three parts covering different subject areas: **Nation-building and Institutions, Citizenship and Culture** and **Territory and Socioeconomics.**

This book is about the third of these areas.

In the section on **TERRITORY**, **Iñaki Antiguedad** begins to reflect on building a Basque state by discussing the justifications for studying the subject of territory from a variety of viewpoints. First of all he characterises the concept of territory: "Territory is not merely a geographical concept. it is also political, and social, and economic. It is the foundation of state building and its dynamic, physical medium. Without territory there is no territoriality. Territoriality implies territory, and territory implies land."

In Antiguedad's opinion, "if Basques wish to take the road and find our way to statehood, we must aspire to another kind of state addressing a different challenge: to favour world sustainability by ensuring that of our own house." Sustainability can be defined in umpteen ways but his favourite is as "the need to accept limits". This challenge inevitably entails many changes of numerous types, and a lot of rethinking too "all the way from concepts about development itself, sustainability, territorial organisation and management, physical borders, independence, socialism, factors of production or the economy to the new light of the growing, multifarious crises of recent years in north and south, east and west, and moving towards the creation of new paradigms."

As **Txomin Lorca** says in the section on **SOCIOECONOMICS**, economic policy defines the structuring of a country's economic system and its survival. Hence the organisation of any economic system requires an ability to make decisions to organise that system; moreover, it also requires the existence of institutional instruments making it possible to influence economic planning effectively. The highest expression of the feasibility of an autonomous socioeconomic project is the construction of one's own state.

This is the perspective from which the authors of this book develop their theses, in which they look at the building of a Basque state from a socioeconomic vantage point. Hence they also take into consideration the context of the present crisis in their studies, which situate the options for Euskal Herria to have its own state in the here and now, within the context of constructing Europe and the present economic crisis.

The chapters of this book are both interesting and necessary contributions which present, on the basis of socioeconomic policy, the real options facing Euskal Herria for building a state of its own within the European Union. Furthermore, as Lorca points out, the building of a Basque state emerges as a project of integration, since it is of interest in objective terms to transcend political and identity issues to address the needs of everybody who lives and works in the Basque Country.

Last but not least, the IPAR HEGOA Foundation hopes that this study will serve as a fruitful starting point for further studies on how to approach the building of the Basque state. We are extremely grateful for the interest and enthusiasm shown by those who have participated in this project and for their dedication and input. We sincerely thank the editor of this section, **Iñaki Antiguedad** and **Txomin Lorca**ri, and all its authors.

The Basque State and territory

Iñaki Antiguedad Auzmendi
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Introduction

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Territory is not merely a geographical concept. It is also political, and social, and economic. It is the foundation of state building and its dynamic, physical medium. Without territory there is no territoriality. Territoriality implies territory, and territory implies land. In terms of socioeconomics and the social landscape, the size of Euskal Herria is a good one for a state and for reaping the benefits of a small state. The territory is amenable to a harmonious relationship between social groups, for spatial democracy. A territorial culture should therefore be fostered.

This section about *Territory* fleshes out the present collection in concepts and content, helping us to understand the importance of territory in the articulation of a state. At a time when Euskal Herria is setting its sights on a state of its own, there is a need for those of us who support sovereignty to retrieve, further develop and connect to more familiar concepts many ideas that have often been relegated in the past. And one of the concepts that has tended to be relegated has been that of territory, despite frequent and vehement references to the notion of territoriality. But what matters is not just to recognise the importance of territory as an integral concept in building a country, for it is something more than that: for it must be realised that although, in the last resort, a wide range of areas (social, political, economic, cultural etc.) have to be developed in the unending process that turns a society into a people and a state, we must recognise that those areas unfold in specific physical spaces. And that space is the territory, a physical, dynamic and complex medium for all kinds of human activity. Thus it must of necessity be acknowledged that territory has this transversal dimension.

There is another very important point that needs to be clarified, especially in view of this collection's perspective. If we were to discuss how viable a new state is, we would probably talk about its social viability (i.e. the attitude of the majority of the territory's population), its political viability (the legal and political instruments for giving expression to that attitude) and its economic viability (the possession of adequate resources to allow that society to stand on its own two feet in the present globalising and globalised world — assessing that potential autonomy in terms of current macro-economic parameters), but we would not regard the territory itself as a criterion of viability, apart from perhaps remarking that the society in question which is seeking statehood occupies a particular geographical space.

In that case, what is the point of our emphasis on the relationship between territory and state? Well, the present drive for a state is taking place in the midst of a crisis situation in the regions of Euskal Herria, the states of Spain and France, across Europe and beyond; and this crisis adopts particular characteristics in each place where it occurs. Moreover, we are really in the midst of *several* crises, because the original financial and market crisis has spread out like an oil slick to accelerate crises in other domains (such as the crises of the real economy, the welfare state, public power and so on), overshadowing earlier crises (the energy crisis, food shortages, climate change, etc.). But those crises are all there, either on or beneath the surface, awaiting an integrated solution; in the last resort all the others may be considered the branches of one great crisis: the very system itself is in dire straits.

And herein lies the challenge: the route to statehood is already complicated and the journey time is already long, yet the travellers along this route are furthermore constrained to make sure that the route we adopt towards a future Basque state will not be a mere mirror image of the very states that find themselves unable to find a legitimate exit from

their present crisis. Hence while a Basque state may well be viable from the external perspective of the conventional criteria, we need to make it internally viable also by pursuing a harmonious and legitimate model of socioeconomic development throughout our territory, with sustainability as our goal, taking into account the four dimensions of this concept, one of which is that of territory. We must turn the perils inherent in these crises into opportunities for Euskal Herria to become the right kind of welfare state all over the Basque territories. The fundamental question is not how to get out of the crisis but where to go from here; therein lies the opportunity for change, for as Einstein said, "No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it." Therefore let us prepare for change on the way towards a Basque state, and the roadmap for those changes.

Since territory is the key issue in this section, let us begin with the definition in a 2007 report of Gaindegia (the Basque Observatory of Economic and Social Development):

The geographical area that pertains to a being, community, language or some other kind of physical or imaginary entity is called a territory. It may be the living space of a given vegetable or animal species, or the traditional or linguistic domain of a particular group of people. When it corresponds to a complex set of individuals, whether this be a people, a nation or a society, the territory originates a common project. From those viewpoints the territory is a medium and the fundamental resource and, at the same time, a living space, a native landscape and the core of individual and collective memory. That is, territory is the geographical area where the people live and which stands at the centre of their life experiences, and which is administered to support all people's sustenance and well-being.

The destination is territory, but the challenge is sustainability

For those of us all over the planet who wish and strive for a different kind of world, the biggest challenge is to move the present, unsustainable society (which, as becomes more and more obvious all the time, stumbles along from one crisis to the next) towards sustainability. And through one kind of transition or another, whatever the territory, whichever the state, this route will necessarily have three main components: a sociopolitical one (society), a socioeconomic one (the economy) and a socio-territorial one (the environment). However, although these three are often placed on the same level (as if that was where they belonged!), we would have to admit that they have really been on different levels if we ever broke free from the strong inertia of the past!

If the natural hierarchy determined the order, on the contrary, they would not be on the same level at all: the environment (territory, in its broadest sense) is the foundation (which offers us its resources and gratifications in fair measure); within that comes society, which occupies the territory and makes use of it in one way or another; while economy would come last, a circular economy geared to the ebbs and flows of nature, at the service of society. On the contrary, nowadays the all-powerful market forces have turned all this on its head, putting the economy, or an economicistic way of viewing this, at the top of the pyramid, and treating society and territory as subordinate, fluctuating items of merchandise. If Basques wish to take the road and find our way to statehood, we must aspire to another kind of state addressing a different challenge: to favour world sustainability by ensuring that of our own house. Another concept that would merit a discussion in its own right is that of *development*; in this chapter we have left this out of consideration, and where it does appear it should be understood in the most positive sense possible.

Sustainability can be defined in many ways, but here I will give one of my favourites, which is both as simple as could be and as profound; each of us can append our own

annotation to this central idea according to the time and place, but the idea is this: *sustainability is accepting limits.* Biophysical limits, fundamentally. Given that those limits can vary from one territory to another, so will the manner in which we understand and bring about sustainability: therefore, sustainability should not be viewed from a single perspective. The goal is for legitimate societies in each place to be sustainable over time. Sustainability is sometimes said to rest upon three pillars: a bearable environment, an equitable society and a viable (or healthy) economy; to this it would be well to add a fourth: a *territory*, i.e. a spatial domain in which to develop the other three pillars. This might be called the *territorialization* of development. To put it another way: as an old Basque adage says, *sutan jartzean probatzen da nolakoa den eltzea*, the test of the pot comes when it is placed on the fire. When the three pillars of sustainability are placed on a particular geographical territory, we shall test their strength.

When thinking about the organisation and management of a territory, sustainability has to be plotted along the two axes of time and space. As regards *time*, some changes need to be brought about short-term while other more profound, structural transformations will need a much longer period of time. With respect to *space*, some things need to change on a local, regional or national level whereas others need to apply on a much larger scale (such as Europe). So it is necessary to fit actions on a variety of spatial and temporal scales together into a *roadmap* that will lead towards sustainability and then understand each step in the appropriate context.

Social entities should put together such a road map, region by region and across Euskal Herria. To do this, the technique of the best Basque *bertsolariak* that consists of working from the ending to the beginning may serve as a good guide: the first thing the *bertsolari* needs to know is what the last line of the verse is going to say. Similarly, we need to start visualising a sustainable future today, in general terms at least, and to take that as our reference point so that our present direction is determined by our goal for tomorrow, rather than by the inertia of the past. As somebody put it: "A retrospect view from a sustainable future is better than a forecast from an unsustainable present."

Sustainability poses a challenge on local and state levels. It necessarily implies many changes of different kinds and a lot of rethinking, all the way from concepts about development itself, sustainability, territorial organisation and management, physical borders, independence, socialism, factors of production or the economy to the new light of the growing, multifarious crises of recent years in north and south, east and west, and moving towards the creation of new paradigms.

The studies in this section, *Territory*, aim to stimulate reflection about these things. The point is not to conclude the debate but to get it started, for there remain a great many questions to be answered. Take these contributions as starting points and then make your own contributions to the development of these ideas!

The territorial dimension of state building

There is a political concept of territory as the space defined by the geographical borders of a state. What is the ideal size? The economist **Oskar Arantzabal** offers an answer to this question by examining the advantages of small states. But what *is* the ideal size for something anyway? This is a question that was asked forty years ago, in 1973, by Schumacher in his famous book *Small Is Beautiful*. Is size really an issue, he asks? In the contemporary conventional theories large size was viewed as a virtue in itself, constantly contrasted with smallness, whether it was a matter of the size of nations, companies or markets. Whoever wanted to be successful must aim to be big. Schumacher compared those theories to what was shown by the *practical* realities of his time, demonstrating that there is no direct connection between size and effectiveness; he argued that many other

factors also came into play, and reached the conclusion that small is not only efficient and accessible but also beautiful… and most importantly, possible.

Size involves scale. The question is how to combine independence and interdependence without involving any form of dependence. I am reminded of the words of the well-known German sociologist Ulrich Beck (who coined the term "risk society"), to the effect that peoples and states need a *policy of internal globalisation*, autonomy to decide on their own internal affairs and manage them, and this must be combined with shared autonomy over external affairs. A country like Euskal Herria cannot solve the globalised world's (of the globalisers and the globalised) severe global problems, whether they be socioeconomic ones (such as famines, migratory movements, commercial abuses or depletion of resources) or their social and ecological consequences, which may include climate change. A Basque state will have to play its own part from its corner with strength and skill (not the same things!) to contribute to a lasting solution to such global problems, but inevitably it will need to do so jointly with other players. That is what is meant by a *policy of internal globalisation*. Food autonomy might be the most effective step within this complicated from-in-to-out framework. The thing is to go for sustainability, at home and elsewhere.

Territory as land: food sovereignty

Classical political theory considers that there are three components to the state: a) a territory, b) a population, and c) a sovereign power. Thus territory is a fundamental attribute of the state, a complete political concept over and above the incomplete perspective of it in territorial planning. Territory has three aspects: the physical, the legal and the economic. The third of these is discussed by the lawyer **Jabier Erize**. On the economic side, the basis of territory is land seen as a factor of production. He reminds us that classical economics distinguishes between three factors of production: land, capital and labour. Although the term *capital* can seemingly be taken in a neutral sense, the socioeconomic context should be taken into account. Thus Erice studies land in the context of the march towards a Basque state.

Erice calls for food sovereignty, not merely a formal concept but one with a material content, and a transforming one at that. Furthermore, it is an expansive concept which can serve as a model for the development and maturation of other concepts (e.g. energy). That of food sovereignty is general, more than just a particular expression of political sovereignty. Therefore he favours local agriculture, arguing that the current productivist model is not good for Basque farmers. He criticises the application of financial speculation to the food market… which brings us back to the point about policies of "internal globalisation".

Territorial organisation

We often play down the importance of territory when adopting a model of development. We need to aim at a horizontally integrated, balanced territorial organisation which recognises the particular role and function of each part of the territory. Therefore the regions, which for the most part coincide with river valleys, must have a special function in Euskal Herria; these valley systems are our basic territorial unit from an ecological perspective. Regions also represent territorial identities which are well suited to local production-transportation-consumption cycles, and hence constitute the ideal scale mediating between the municipal unit and the state. They should be accorded more importance in a state's legal structure than they currently have (something to be considered in the debate over the Law of Historical Territories).

A. Frias examines the deficit in democratic socioeconomic development of the current system of territorial organisation. Taking as his starting point globalisation understood as a complete ideology that goes beyond the evolution of the economic system, Frias profiles the present economic system, looking in particular at its impact on territory. The metropolis is seen as the core territorial model of present-day capitalism; this is the model that concentrates the activities of the service and financial sectors spatially, although productive activities are distributed according to their costs across space. It thinks of the rural domain as subordinate to a system that has been conceptualised and organised from the urban domain, which is preoccupied with its transportation needs and with energy consumption, and increasingly so; which helps us to understand better, among the different crises we face in today's world, the ecological crisis.

Frias also discusses competences in territorial organisation. Supposedly the Basque Autonomous Community has full competence over it. However, because no precise conceptual definition of such organisation appears in the basic regulations, it is doubtful how full that competence really is, since the Spanish Constitution gives the central state competence over activities that can take place in and have an impact on the same territorial space. Consequently, public initiatives have relativised the possibility of really organising territorial space. What is certain is that there is no true political power to organise the territory in the present territorial administration of Euskal Herria. There is therefore work to be done by a Basque state to understand and carry out the organisation of the territories under its auspices in a different way through political power, moving from an integrating perspective according to the new paradigm towards a new territorial culture, with a strengthening of local concerns.

The social aspect of territory

Any proposal for an internal restructuring of a Basque state must inevitably take into consideration the relations between civil society and governmental bodies. Beyond economics, then, territory is what leads to the cultural and social cohesion of the population. Here we are thinking about territory as a social concept. Human beings interact with their environment and our social relations are in constant flux within those spaces. This is the subject of the sociologist **Josu Larrinaga**'s contribution to this section, and he tables some very suggestive ideas such as spatial justice, the *spatial reflection of the need for social justice*.

Larrinaga points out that a weakness of many theories lies in the problem of how to bring about public participation in the decision process to make it democratic: who decides, and where and how? He has some interesting suggestions regarding this, which are useful for encouraging participation on the way to a Basque state. "Without standing by and waiting for the wonderful legal and political frameworks that Euskal Herria will need to acquire in the future, there is plenty that can be improved and much to be fought for day-by-day through the mechanisms of citizen participation." There have been many conflicts in Euskal Herria that were closely linked to all this, and Larrinaga has this to say about them: "Our political culture in this regard is very belligerent indeed: it is hard to find a space for consensus building here." Isn't the road to a state an excellent opportunity to start creating that space? He points to "community territory", in conclusion; the territory on which a community "lives and works, regulates its coexistence and its relationship with the territory, and constructs, deconstructs and reconstructs its own culture". Power is seen as a political architecture that is built and legitimised from the bottom up. When all is said and done, "territory is the house that we share".

For those of us who believe a different world is possible on this planet Earth and work towards it, the transition to a Basque state is a perfect opportunity, provided our goal really is to create a different kind of state… at least for as long as there are states in the world!

1. The territorial dimension of a state's structure.

Oskar Arantzabal Iraeta, Economist, Masters in International Marketing

This chapter reviews the historical development of statistical trends and the effect of the spread of democracy worldwide, whereby an increase in the number of states results in smaller states. There are few studies of what the ideal size for a state would be, but it might be set in the region of five or six million inhabitants. This issue revolves around the trade-off between population increases and heterogeneity in geographical, cultural, economic and ideological terms.

The chapter goes on to examine the advantages for small states, both regarding standard indicators (GNP, HDI, Gini coefficient, unemployment, transparency, solidarity, ratings) and more recent ones (negative growth, ecological footprint and GNH). The theoretical concepts used include internal cohesion, openness, competitive specialisation, flexibility, lower defence expenses, growth, and acting as an "experimental laboratory".

Several relevant European cases are reviewed: Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Slovenia, and (viewed as projects currently in progress) Scotland and Catalonia. Conclusions: economic integration is linked to political disintegration, separatism is in vogue, and interdependence for smaller states will eventually prevail in the newly emerging paradigm.

1. A LITTLE HISTORY

To put things into perspective, let's start with a few statistics:

- Population is the most widely used yardstick for measuring the size of states, but there are big differences: China has over a thousand million inhabitants, while Tuvalu only has eleven thosand.

- As for the trend over time: in 1900 there were fifty states in the world, in 1945 there were 74, and today there are almost two hundred. In the space of a century the number has quadrupled.

- Only four of the ten richest states in terms of their gross per capita domestic product in 2003 had more than a million inhabitants, and as measured on the Human Developent Index three have populations of under eight million (Switzerland, Norway and Singapore).

- In 1995, 87 countries had fewer than five million inhabitants, and 58 had fewer than two and a half million.

Besides being the title of Hobbes' famous book of political theory, the Leviathan is a Biblical beast, an authoritarian "eater of souls". Applied to the economy, it refers to the "income maximalist", who may be of many types. Throughout history there has been a prevalence over the democrats of what we may call the leviathanists, who favour homogenisation, and prefer the majority vote over equilibrium, though that is not always economically efficient. It is a known fact that there are countries that have achieved rapid economic growth even under a dictatorship.

It is also worth mentioning that on occasions the unwieldy size of imperialist dictatorships has resulted in their downfall, as in the case of the Ottomans. Democratization leads to a proliferation of states and, in consequence, to smaller size. So far in the twenty-first century four new states have come in to being — East Timor in 2002, Montenegro in 2006, Kosovo in 2008 and South Sudan in 2011 — but there are more on the waiting list including Palestine, Sahara and Kurdistan, to mention but a few of the best known. There is a need for supranational institutions, and these are often given limits (such as the international court or control of pollution, related to climate change, cf. the Kyoto Accord).

If we look back to history, the concept of the city-state or *polis* (whence the word *politics*) evolved in Ancient Greece. There were even wealthy city-states in medieval Europe such as Venice or Amsterdam with a population of just a hundred thousand or two. The big Leviathans of sixteenth-century absolutism won the day, and this had a lot to do with the high cost of war and tax-collecting capacity, as in the case of France. As Tilly puts it, states are built by the technology of war. Yet in France's case, excessive expansion hurt the economy; nor was France the only empire to suffer from this problem.

The late eighteenth century saw the birth of the *nation-state* in search of large, homogeneous markets. The German *Zollverein* or Customs Union of 1834 is one of the best known examples. States like Belgium or Portugal were a bit on the small side — meaning that their markets were too small, as explained by Garnier-Pagès' *Dictionnaire Politque* of 1843. Similar issues surface when we delve into the reasons behind the American Civil War.

Next came the protectionist colonial empires, such as India, until Churchill's statements favouring Indian independence — but not until the world war was over. On a theoretical

level Lenin's observations on autonomy in the USSR were also interesting, in another period. Then after 1945 came decolonisation, which brought to light the problems in Africa: too many countries, and too much heterogeneity in them.

In view of the figures for the period 1972-2001 published by the US lobby Freedom House, the conclusion that is reached is that the more states there are, the more democratic the world becomes, without even counting decentralisation processes in many states such as Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom.

The paradox of the European Union is its lack of democracy, being, as Newhouse says, both "too large and too small" at the same time. Colomer (2006) agrees: "European-type states are too small for international issues, such as security, commerce and communications; and for democratic autonomy they are too big. And the federal states among them are more democratic than the centralised ones" because they diffuse energy. Furthermore their varying sizes (with a long list of candidates for membership) make them incompatible with centralisation.

Possibly Belgium, one of the founders of the European Union, personifies its biggest paradox. Here is a state that has broken all records for going without a government, and it is divided into two nations, the French-speaking Wallons and Dutch-speaking Flanders. It has become European nationalism's laboratory, presenting a serious risk of bringing about changes in the union's internal borders.

In the opinions of Drèze and others, Catalonia and Scotland (neither of which perceive any economic advantage at present in their membership in their respective empires) could do worse than to constitute a confederation of European regions as "independent regions", so to speak, along lines suggested by Krutwig and Ohmae, as we shall see later. And finally, the dispute between Jefferson and Hamilton at the birth of the United States of America appears to have been revived: the cost of smallness is being minimised, politically, through economic integration.

Table 1 presents a picture in numbers of the road to independence around the world.

Table 1. World population and number of independent states (1871-2011)

Year	World population in millions	Number of states	Average inhabitants per state in millions
1871	1.416	64	22.1
1914	1.854	59	31.4
1920	1.946	69	28.2
1946	2.400	74	32.4
1950	2.478	89	27.8
1995	5.457	192	28.4
2011	6.881	196	35.1

2. IN SEARCH OF THE IDEAL SIZE

The meaning of the words *nation, state, country* and so on have been defined in many ways, ranging from Max Weber's "monopoly on the legitimate use of violence" to William Inge's "society united by a delusion about its ancestry and by a common hatred of its neighbours." In practice, the criterion we use is that of autonomous structure. It would be unreasonable to expect them all to be the same size, but let us perform the exercise of attempting to determine what the best size might be. There are not many theoretical precedents, but we do find a couple in Classical Greece. One comes from Plato, who says in the *Laws* that a state's families should be sufficient in number to defend themselves (a

number which he set at 5,040). Aristotle, on the other hand, argued for the evidence of experience. From there we come to the period preceding the French Revolution and Montesquieu, who emphasises the need for proximity to citizens, cf. the dispute in the United States of America between Madison and the anti-federalists.

More recently and closer to home, Federiko Krutwig, writing under the pen-name Fernando Sarrailh de Ihartza in 1960, said that "the economic well-being of peoples is rooted in an animic situation; it is psychological." Hence freedom is to be unerstood as an economic factor. He placed the ideal in the vicinity of four or five million inhabitants, without telling us how he arrived at that number, but in the sixties Scandinavian social democracy was in fashion and the size of their countries, and the average size of states in the USA and Germany, built as associative federations, was in the region five or six million.

Krutwig's German contemporary E.F. Schumacher also wrote about size in 1973. His suggestive ideas may be summed up as follows: German unity, to work, left out Switzerland and Austria; small states are free and rich, whereas large ones are regimented and poor; the ideal size for a city is 500,000 inhabitants, larger sizes leading to social exclusion; social creativity increases in small groups; balanced regional development is desirable, witness Switzerland's pluralistic system of twenty cantons; the bigger the state, the more decentralised it needs to be; there is no "ideal size", but small is possible, and usually better.

In our own time, the Japanese Ohmae (1995) says of the brand development:

> The market needs there to be between five and twenty million inhabitants, small enough for consumers to have shared proximity, but large enough to allow economies of scale in services.

More recently Ohmae (2005) wrote the following of regional states:

> Some old-style nation states are lucky and are small enough to be able to function as regional states: Ireland, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Singapore.

> Population size is important but not decisive. It is a flexible variable. In many ways, size is a mental state. An internal market of a million is desirable… and the upper limit is located at ten million inhabitants at the most.

> Once a region sets itself on the path to development, this may arouse envy in the centre or in other regions… which may manifest itself in malicious attempts to sabotage its success in the false guise of a benign policy of equality and national solidarity.

Finally, an initial analysis by Alesina & Spolaore (2003) of the organisation and fragmentation of states titled *The size of nations* (mimicking the classic *Wealth of nations* by the father of economics, the Scot Adam Smith), takes it as a basic principle that there is a trade-off between the benefits of size and the costs of heterogeneity. The state is seen as poised between good and bad management, in the manner of a giant company. If we look within the state, it is the goal of any state to achieve the greatest possible well-being; wherever there is a belief in social justice, this should be as spread out as possible among its citizens, for policies of redistribution also have a bearing on the level of development. The organisation of a state is typically a pyramid so that the costs of public welfare (such as health services, education and so on) can be shared out better and kept cheaper as a result; it is an economy of scale.

However, the benefits of size must be weighed up against various dimensions of heterogeneity:

– *Geographical.* Many states throughout history have had to adopt a centralist solution to compensate for distances, e.g. Potomac (the first capital of the United States), Canberra or Braslia. On the other hand, non-democratic states such as France and Russia tended to opt for larger capital cities (such as Paris and Moscow, respectively).

– *Cultural.* Multilingualism can, depending on the situation, turn out to be either beneficial or an impediment; consider the example of Belgium.

– *Income-related.* Italy and Bolivia are examples of states illustrating the consequences of a pronounced imbalance between regions.

– *Ideological.* Linked to political priorities, whether left- or right-leaning.

There are often hidden transaction costs between larger and smaller areas. Devolution has taken place frequently, to the point of becoming fashionable, as a halfway house between dictatorship and democracy. An example is proided by Iraq with its ethnic groups, particularly the Kurds; and of course by transitional economies such as the USSR and China. The context may also be a conditioning factor: federalism in America and in Europe takes different forms, the first being associative, the second dissociative. Priorities for proximity may also result in fiscal disequilibria: Panizza has performed a correlation analysis between fiscal devolution and democracy.

3. THE ADVANTAGES OF SMALL STATES: THEORY AND PRACTICE. SOME ECONOMIC INDICATORS

3.1. What is a small state?

It is of course debatable how to define "*small* state", but roughly speaking we may go by population size as usual and as in the first part of this chapter; in a worldwide perspective, with some rounding off we may say that a small state is one with fewer than thirty million inhabitants (see Table 1 but in the context of the European Union (in which there are now 500 million inhabitants in 27 countries, which gives an average population of 18.5 million), we could adopt a three-way distinction as follows:

– *Small* states, with a population of less than six million, include eleven states in the EU, namely Denmark, Slovakia, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia, Estonia, Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta. Taken together these make up 5% of the Union's population. The last six mentioned are states with populations smaller than that of Euskal Herria, of which there are about sixty worldwide.
– *Medium-sized* states of between eight and twenty-two million inhabitants each; there are ten of these in the EU: Romania, Netherlands, Greece, Portugal, Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary, Sweden, Austria and Bulgaria. They acount for 25% of the population of the EU.
– *Large* states with over forty million inhabitants, of which there are six in the EU: Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and Poland. Jointly they make up 70% of the EU's population.

3.2 Theoretical foundations

But what are the advantages, from our point of view, of being a small state? In normal economic circumstances, a rough list might include the following positive points:

1. Internal cohesion. More homogeneous societies that are more thoroughly founded on equality and more deeply rooted in the values of solidarity tend to be more governable and, consequently, capable of responding to challenges with greater unity. It is thought to help to have common interests concerning children's education; on average they tend to stay at school longer than in large states. Later we will study the case of Iceland. Collective action is said to be less effective in large states.

2. Openness of markets. The small size of the internal market inevitably encourages internationalisation. The more open economies are, the broader the opportunities for small states (openness is calculated by the ratio of imports + exports / gross domestic product). According to J. Dunning (2001), in 1995 the ratio for small states with under ten million inhabitants was 111%, with all the benefits of this, while for medium and large ones it was only 62%. Price & Levinger (2011) find that European states with under fifteen million inhabitants grew by 50% in exports per capita between 2000 and 2008, large states only by 35%. A few thoughts about the openness and integration of economies are in order. It is estimated that borders reduce commerce by 30%. Well-being itself is a consequence of integration with others. In periods of self-sufficiency, market size and the size of the state are confused; from here we have moved to globalisation. The exporting nationalism of Japan and Germany, defeated in the World Wars, is summed up in the words of Keynes, now revived in this era of meltdown, to the effect that men prefer collective animosities to individual happiness. Small states also have a more proportionally representative electoral system, and in general their public administrations are larger than those of large states, which brings stability. Great Britain and Scotland illustrate this. Contrary to what "functionalist" theories claim, economic integration and political disintegration go hand in hand. For example:

– Quebec and NAFTA: The North American Free Trade Agreement which the USA and Canada signed in 1989 (with Mexico becoming a member three years later) contributed to an increase in the pro-independence vote in Quebec's second referendum, which only missed being approved by 54,000 votes.
– Fluctuating local boundaries in the USA. Below the level of the county there are municipalities, special districts and school districts which are easily altered. Historically the quest for homogeneity dates back to phenomena such as the Great Migration.
– Statistical correlation analyses are positive in the case of small states, which gain more when they open up, and negative in the largest states, which are less open.
– The economic weakness of political integration: of 132 hypothetical state fusions, only seventeen would be beneficial for both sides.

3. Competitivity through specialisation: A prediction of Adam Smith's theory seems to be confirmed: working in specific sectors with competitive advantages gives a competitive edge internationally. An effective strategy makes it more difficult for large states to vie for niche markets (Becker, 1994), as Basques well know in the case of machine tools, for example.

4. Flexibility, which permits faster adaptation in periods of continuous change such as the present. Because small states are more sensitive to crises originating elsewhere, they handle structural reforms better. This has been discussed by Frenkel (2010) in his study of small states as global innovators, in science and technology as well. According to the IMF the world's most competitive state is Switzerland.

5. Less defence spending, especially in strategic locations. France spends 2.4% of its GDP on defence; Belgium only 1.4%; Luxembourg a mere 0.8%. Another observation here concerning the consequence of conflict or peace in the world. Defence spending may be assigned a place in the organisational pyramid referred to earlier: the larger the state, the more it will endeavour to achieve better defence at a lower price. It is not then surprising that federation-republics such as Switzerland and the USA emerged from threats. In the case of the latter, defence spending represents 6% of the GDP, and in the case of the European Union 3%. Pacification leads to reduction in size, although changes in borders is more expensive and produces local conflicts, as has happened in the Soviet Union, and also in Yugoslavia where it is clear that civil wars are the result of great heterogeneities. International supranational legislation is needed to handle such situations of conflict as these.

6. A "laboratory" for experimentation. The present general crisis calls for creative thinking. Austria has developed the idea of a workers' salary guarantee fund; Denmark has come up with a "flexible insurance" fund in relations with companies, and the division of profits into three parts (for capital gains, distribution among workers and reinvestment). For Basques the latter is reminiscent of our cooperative phenomenon. A number of small political innovations could be added to the list, such as inflation objectives (New Zealand, 1990), private pensions (Chile, 1990), pollution taxes (Singapore, 1975), flat taxes (Estonia, 1994), and abolition of compulsory military service (Costa Rica, 1948).

7. Growth. For the past thirty years small size has been linked to economic growth in Europe. The new French school of geo-economists (led by J.P. Fitoussi under the aegis of the ANR), after five years of research concluded that small-scale leaders such as Finland or Ireland have overtaken large economies such as Germany and France. Further examples of this are to be seen in the early days of European unity: one of the founders of the European Coal and Steel Community was Luxembourg! Germany's Saarland decided against entering the union as a state in 1955. But time has treated those who opted for independence better than those who decided to remain as a region of another state.

3.3. Successful practices of the small in the world

We are all familiar with the classical ranking of countries in terms of economic indicators dating from the 1930s, known as per capita gross domestic product, or GDP. Basically, this is a measure of the amount of wealth produced in a year divided by the number of people in the country concerned. Although the theoretical average obtained from this statistical calculation is very approximate, it has frequently been used as a rough guide, even though there are many things it fails to measure such as the impact of pollution, for example, or the value of housework. In any case, the top ten countries according to the figures for 2010 are Qatar, Luxembourg, Singapore, Norway, Brunei, USA, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Netherlands and Australia. The first five of these are small or very small states. But let us be critical. Notice that three of them are micro-states, two of which, Qatar and Brunei, are oil-rich countries with a very uneven distribution of wealth, no doubt, while other states listed (Luxembourg and Hong Kong) are not quite "real" because they are tax havens.

To achieve a more accurate view, in the 1970s the Human Development Index (HDI) was created which takes into account more qualitative factors such as education, health etc. This index yields a different top-ten list (here given with an indication in parentheses of their present populations): Norway (4.9), Australia (22.5), New Zealand (4.3), USA (310.7), Ireland (4.4), Liechtenstein (0.03), Netherlands (16.6), Canada (34.3), Sweden (9.4) and Germany (81.5). There are eight small states on this list and two large federations: the USA which is made up of fifty states with an average population of 6.21 million each, and Germany which consists of 16 *Länder* with an average of 5.09 inhabitants each. Comparing

the two lists, four states are on both, one of which is a small state (Norway), two medium-sized (Australia and the Netherlands) and one is large (the USA).

At the present time, the most reliable index of balance in the distribution of wealth is the Gini coefficient, technically a measure of statistical dispersion (on a scale of zero to one; the lower the score the better). It has received criticisms for not taking absolute values into account (the same coefficient is assigned to different levels of wealth); it fails to explain reasons or to take age pyramids into account; and it favours small territories, assigning higher coefficients to units with large areas. The last point is debatable given Canada's score: it is larger than the USA and Mexico yet unlike them its index is in the same range as European countries (between 0.24 and 0.36), while theirs are over 0.40. This index is useful for analysing differences in well-being as a basis for compensatory policies. Sociological studies show that the more trade-union activity there is, the larger the middle class, and the larger the middle class the more democracy there is. According to the United Nations' figures for 2008, the top ten countries, with their ratings, are Denmark (24.7), Japan (24.9), Sweden (25), the Czech Republic (25.8), Norway and Slovakia (both 25.8) Finland and Hungary (26.9), Germany (28.3), Slovenia (28.4) and Austria (29.1). Japan, which seem to be a possible exception to the pattern, may be considered the world's only culturally homogeneous large state. Only three states are repeated from the previous list, and they occupy the first positions, except for Denmark.

Looking at *unemployment*, which is a major concern for western societies, gives comparable results. Although there are fluctuations, the EU states with the lowest unemployment indices as a percentage of the active population according to 2010 statistics rank as follows: Netherlands (4.1%), Austria (4.9%), Luxembourg (5.4%), Slovenia (6.3%), Cyprus (6.8%), Denmark and Malta (7.0). Six of the sixteen states that fall below the average of 9.7% for the 27 member states are small states, while eight of them are medium in size.

Some less well-known economic indicators confirm the successful practices of small states:

– *Transparency*. According to Transparency International's profile of corruption in 178 countries (in their index the closer a country's score is to ten, the better), the top-ranking states are New Zealand, Singapore and Denmark (9.3), Finland and Sweden (9.2), Canada (8.9), Netherlands (8.8), Australia (8.7), Hong Kong (8.4). The first four of these are small states, the others listed are medium-sized. As the economic historian Joel Mokyr puts it, corruption is the worst enemy of development.

– *Solidarity*, measured as aid for development as a percentage of each state's GDP. The states that met the accorded rate of 0.7% in 2010 are Sweden, Norway and Luxembourg (1%), Denmark and Netherlands (0.8%), Belgium and Finland (0.7%). Thus we see that small and medium-sized states show more solidarity than the large ones.

We could go on, adding in other variables such as flexibility, solvency, competitivity, innovation etc. Later we will discuss another index now in vogue, gross national happiness (GNH). And given their recent presence in the news, perhaps we should note that rating agencies' own classifications point in the same direction: the short list of countries with the highest possible economic score, triple-A, is as follows according to Standard and Poors, the market leader:

– Tax havens: Isle of Man, Guernsey and Liechtenstein (all three of which are very small, obviously).

- Members of the eurozone: Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Four of the six are small to medium in size.
- Members of the EU but not in the eurozone: Sweden, United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway. Three of the four are small or medium.
- Others: Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Singapore. No large states in this category.

Although not the most important one, let us take the fourteen states in this last classification, believed to be the most solvent, which also figure in the previous lists and set them out in order, as a rough summary of sorts of model states.

2. taula. Adierazle ekonomikoen hurrenkeren laburpena (2008-2011).

Country	GDP	HDI	Gini	Unemp.	Transp.	Solid.	GNH	Population (m)
Luxembourg	2			3		1		0.5
Singapore	3				1			4.6
Norway	4	1	5			1		4.9
Hong Kong	7				9			7
Switzerland	8						2	7.8
Netherlands	9	7		1	7			16.6
Australia	10	2			8	4		22.5
New Zealand		3			1			4.3
Liechtenshtein		6						0.03
Canada		8			6		10	34.3
Sweden		9	2	6	4	1	7	9.4
Denmark			1		1	4	1	5.5
Austria				2			3	8.3
Finland					4	6	6	5.3

Theoretically, then, we might calculate that the ideal population size is less than ten million: 9.3 million to be precise. This is an interesting benchmark to take into consideration when comparing countries.

3.4. Consequences of the crisis: updating the metrics

If the bursting of the world property bubble in 2008 and the ensuing economic crisis have taught us anything, it is to distinguish between the world of finance and the tangible world of the real economy. So, hit by the ills of globalisation, the importance of qualitative factors has begun to acquire importance: ecology, for example, asks difficult questions about many of the earlier quantitative indicators and agrees with the theories of *degrowth* (a well-known example of which is given by the *slow food* movement). The point is that the planet's limited resources need to be developed in a sustainable manner. The French scholars Latouche & Harpagès (2010) define the "bio- or ecoregion" either in a rural or an urban setting as a coherent spatial entity linked to a geographical, social and historical reality. They consider that the largest size it admits is a million people.

Of particular interest is the criterion of the *ecological footprint*, that is, how many hectares are needed per inhabitant (nine in the case of the United States according to 2006 data). Or to put it another way, how many planets would we need in order to maintain our present standard of living as consumers? All calculations suggest we would need more than one, which is not physically feasible. This is closely related to the Happy Planet index,

measured in terms of relations with nature: surprising though it may seem, the leader of this index is Costa Rica, a small state with 4.6 million inhabitants.

But without a doubt, the most fashionable index in recent years, which is being talked about everywhere, is the gross national happiness index or GNH. This idea was started by the micro-state of Bhutan in the 1970s. Defying western materialism, the Bhutanese monarchy proposed to measure happiness in special conditions, under Buddhist influence and in a hitherto rather closed society: television only reached the country in 1999. They had four basic principles: sustainable development, protection and promotion of cultural values, care for the environment and good government. M. Pennock and other Canadian experts tried to adapt the same idea to western culture. Recently both the United Kingdom and France asked the Nobel economics prize-winner J. Stiglitze to provide assessment to start measuring GNH through surveys in their national statistics institutions. Thus we will begin measuring "priceless" assets such as income distribution, quality of education, leisure, culture, housework, inheritance biodiversity and peaceful coexistence, and individuals' ability to have a say in local and national political issues: or *ability to decide*, as it be called.

4. SOME MODERN EUROPEAN EXAMPLES

4.1. Iceland

If one example is worthy of our attention, that example is perhaps Iceland. Claimed to be the "happiest country in the world" in spring, 2008, Iceland held first place in the human development index according to qualitative criteria. It was the prime example of a state of well-being, with a good balance between work and family. But then came the autumn crash of the three largest banks in what had been the "happy island" of the North Atlantic, triggered by the financial excesses of the private banks, particularly overseas expansion through Icesave, with the UK even applying the anti-terrorist law. The attempt to turn what had been private debts into public ones of all the country's citizens led to what has been called a democratic revolution: the three main banks (Landsbanki, Kaupthing and Glitnir) were nationalised; the bankers and politicians responsible were arrested, taken to court and called to account; there was a change of government; and two referendums were held on whether or not to pay the accumumulated foreign debt (both were rejected, but the second by a narrower margin, with the two main creditor countries, Netherlands and the UK, putting on pressure after application to join the European Union); then came the participatory rewriting of the constitution and a legislative bill, the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative, which calls for transparent investigative journalism. This country of around three hundred thousand inhabitants with a small economy based on fishing (40%) and geothermal energy had been a quiet backwater since it won independence in 1904. Its legal system, modelled on Denmark's, had undergone little change since 1945; the people had traditionally long believed in "natural" democracy. It boasted the oldest parliament in the world, nestled among its hills: the 930-year-old Althing, until its incorporation into Norway in 1262. So what had gone wrong? According to Gylfason (2010), many lessons may be learnt but one in particular: the need for checks and balances. Iceland is self-governing, notwithstanding aid given by the IMF and Scandinavian countries. Therefore, unlike Greece, Ireland and Portugal — the other small European countries that have had to accept bailouts — Iceland remains in a position to make its own decisions without surrendering control of its economy.

4.2. Denmark, Norway and Slovenia

We have chosen to discuss Denmark, Norway and Slovenia as examples of successful countries that have achieved independence at different times in European history. We shall take them in chronological order.

The happiness index mentioned above yielded the following top-ten world ranking in 2008: Denmark (with a population of five million), Switzerland, Austria, Iceland, Bahamas, Finland, Sweden, Bhutan, Brunei and Canada. Obviously some are micro-states, others small or, at the most, medium in size; there are no large states on the list. This is something worth thinking about in connection with Basque independence, since in this case qualitative and quantitative criteria converge to make the concept itself more plausible. In 1864, in the era of Bismarck, Denmark had an opportunity to fuse with Germany. What would have been its fate as a part of Germany?

Since there is nothing like immersing oneself in history and learning the lessons of the past in order to predict the future, Norway is a fine example to look at in this sense, with a population of almost five million: having been under the Danish and Swedish crowns for five hundred years, it decided unilaterally at the beginning of the twentieth century to go it alone as a sovereign state, and a century later it holds first place in the Human Development Index. So it was worth it — although Denmark and Sweden are admittedly top-ranking states too.

Now we come to the most recent case, Slovenia, which has just finished celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its independence, gained in June, 1991. At first everything appeared to be going against Slovenia: the EU and the United States backed the unity of Yugoslavia, while Serbia, the main customer for Slovenia's exports, announced a boycott. Nevertheless, Slovenia made the unilateral decision to hold a referendum on independence, and eventually was supported by Germany (Slovenia had close links with Austria, in terms of land startegy). Today the Slovenians are doing very well for themselves (ranking 29 among the world's states on the HDI scale), close to the EU average, and with a lower unemployment rate (with a higher proportion of industry in its economy). The Slovene language is official in the EU, Slovenia held the presidency in 2008, and with a population of two million the Slovenians live with dignity.

4.3. On their way: Scotland and Catalonia

Scotland is a country with a population of just over five million and a homogeneous territory. Historically its borders have been clearly defined. In the second century (122-124 AD) the Roman Empire built Hadrian's Wall, 118 kilometres long and 6.5 metres high, as a defence against the Picts. It was followed by the Antonine Wall in 140. One of modern Scotland's 32 council areas is still named Borders.

This is not the place to review the elaborate history of this traditionally poor country (in 1867 the income of Scottish people was less than a third of that of the English), but at the beginning of 2011 *Time* magazine listed Scotland in first place in a list of ten candidates for independence. In the May elections, this was borne out by an absolute majority for the Scottish Nationalist Party, which was calling for a referendum on independence. 80% of Scots support such a move. Its leader, Alex Salmond, said in 2010: "We are aware - as we will always be - of the sovereignty of our people, that the decisions on Scotland's future lie ultimately with those living and working in Scotland - and with no-one else." Back in 1979, following a defeat orchestrated from London and the inception of its *devolution* policy, a Scottish parliament was created with limited powers, unable to collect taxes except for a limited tax-varying capability, but which has nonetheless made headway. With a complicated identity situation (the precarious situation of the Gaelic language contrasts with the strength of Scotland's sports teams), economics has been given priority. In the 2007 elections a hundred companies started a pro-independence platform. The government's modest but effective management has served Scots' standard of living well, with improvements in education (university is free and classroom sizes are limited), health care (with free care for the elderly including house visits and free prescriptions), the burden of minor taxes was lightened (local tax rates were frozen for a four-year period and toll

charges on bridges abolished), putting an end to civil service redundancies, lowering the unemployment rate to under 7%, and so on.

In underlying issues pertaining to the as yet undevolved powers over general policies such as foreign affairs, defence, energy, social security etc., policies differentiating Scotland from the United Kingdom are being made the subject of public debate. The independence party opposed the war in Iraq, supported the Kyoto Protocol on reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, opposes nuclear power and supports renewables (note the relations between Iberdrola and Scottish Power). It adheres to a social-democratic model; the prevalent Presbyterian religion is egalitarian in contrast to classist Anglicanism. Overall, public spending is 16-20% higher per capita than in England and it aspires to enter into an "axis of wealth" which includes Ireland, Iceland, Norway and Denmark. The first two of these have had problems in the present economic crisis (from which they are now recovering), but the others have fared better. Let us recall that management of the North Sea oil and gas reserves and of taxes continues to be controlled by London; to some extent, "black gold" may be covering up the black holes of an economy based on finance and property. The metropolis covered up a 1974 economic report making a very good argument for the viability of Scottish independence.

By way of contrast, Catalonia has a more heterogeneous territorial situation. Culturally it forms part of the *Països Catalans*; politically, it is divided between two highly centralist states, Spain and France. It is therefore more difficult to arrive at a single solution. The sociological rise in pro-indepence feelings in recent years is unsurprising, given the failure of political efforts over the preceding thirty. Because of taxation issues, Catalonia is estimated to have an all-round deficit in favour of Spain representing 10% of its GDP. This circumstance has resulted in the *Soberania i progrés* platform and the pro-independence business group *Cercle Català de Negocis*.

Aside from the issue of an unofficial referendum on sovereignty, unlike Scotland, the main worry is about the threat of a boycott. Let us recall that sales of cava (the Catalan "champagne") dropped by 6% during negotiations for a new *Estatut* for Catalonia and faced closed doors subsequently. However, studies have shown that any possible commercial losses would be more than made up for by the gains from an independent tax regime.

Thus while questions about economic viability cannot be denied, the real issues surrounding an independent state for Catalonia are political, mostly having to do with the attitudes of the two states on either side of it.

5. CONCLUSIONS

– World peace, democratisation and open economies are favourable to small states.
– Economic integration is linked to political disintegration. The number of states worldwide has tripled since 1945.
– Remaining questions which call for further study include civil wars, Kosovo's unilateral decision for discretional change by referendum, mobility, minorities, military and economic blocs, practical examples and history itself. Then there are matters relating to viability and living standards or instances of boycotts such as were imposed on Slovenia, Lithuania and others.
– Separatist tendencies will become stronger in the immediate future. It is getting cheaper to achieve political freedom. According to a 2006 report in *The Economist*, considered the bible of liberalism, "the fashion for statehood will be a force to be reckoned with in the next 20 years, as it has been in the past two decades."

- The time has come for a leap from localism to supranationalism; the former is based on political legitimisation, the latter on avoiding "tiling".
- We need to move towards a flexible system of political domains. Swiss cantons are an example, but so is the Maastricht Treaty itself which acknowledges the right of states to leave the union.
- Both old and new economic indicators seem to suggest that small states are better than big ones, and this can also be argued for on theoretical grounds.
- We are said to be on the threshold of a fourth wave of independent state creation. Scotland may be the first country to set this going, having fared better in the economic crisis and timed the referendum well, but above all owing to its northern European culture and democratic maturity. Other places to keep an eye on are Northern Ireland, Greenland and Flanders.
- In the new world economic paradigm, the interdependence between small and medium-sized states will hold the key.

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2. Territory and economics. Territory as a political concept.

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This chapter looks at the economic facet of the political concept of territory. Land is the most basic of the three economic factors. The availability, control, distribution and management of natural resources is a long-term, historical matter. In our globalized world the unregulated or under-regulated markets act as de facto managers of our natural resources. The notion of "food sovereignty", which emerged to address the wrongs arising from this, is an innovative, universal (i.e. valid for both North and South), expansive and empowering idea.

Food sovereignty is viewed as a right of peoples. The big question is how countries are to avail themselves of this right, and the answer is: via the state. Notwithstanding the crisis of the nation-state, no other institution besides it has emerged that is capable of challenging the hegemony of the markets. It is therefore time for Basques, already involved in building their nation, to start to address the construction of statehood.

INTRODUCTION

Territory is not only a geographical concept, it is a political concept too. According to classical political theory, the state is made up of three things: a) a territory, b) a population, and c) sovereignty (or sovereign power). Thus territory is one of the three fundamental attributes or component parts of a state. That is the political concept of territory.

Concerning the state

Let us then consider the essential link between the political concept of territory and the state. It is true that the term *territory* is also used, in a political sense, of political entities that are not states (indeed, present-day legislation stipulates, for example, that a territory is one of the components of a town or municipality). But in such cases we are using an incomplete political concept of territory, so to speak. A complete political concept of territory might be said to be necessarily linked or associated with a state. That link need not be an effective one: for the purpose of analysis, a hypothetical or imaginary link is enough, and so we are able to talk of the territory of Kurdistan or Euskal Herria in the full political sense of *territory* even though no Basque or Kurdish state exists at the time of writing. It is important to understand that in such cases we are implicitly *assuming* such a state.

The political concept of territory (which has just been referred to as a complete political concept) is a conjunction of three different aspects: a physical aspect, an economic aspect and a legal aspect.

a) Physical aspect: the location, the material ground or area where the population is established.

b) Legal aspect: the territory is the particular area where the law holds and sovereign power applies.

c) Economic aspect: the land as a factor of production or an economic factor. Recall that classical economics recognises three factors of production: land, capital and labour. Nowadays the broader term *natural resources* is used in place of "land", however.

1. LAND AS A FACTOR OF PRODUCTION

Leaving aside the physical and legal aspects of the political concept of territory for now, let us consider the economic aspect.

1.1. What are the factors of production?

We have seen that land, capital and work are the three factors of production according to classical economic theory. This three-way division has basically been accepted in economics until now. However, it has been found indequate for the analysis of economic development and there have been suggestions that this view needs to be filled out (Cameron,1998: 31).

At least two other factors, it has been claimed, need to be added: technology and institutions. Some writers emphasise the former, considering that technological progress has been one of the most significant features of modern economic growth (Maddison, 1991: 55; Cameron, 1998: 32). But the institutional factor is also an important variable, i.e. such things as the kind of state, the political regime, a variety of particular organisations and associations, the education system, and even the ideologies and social values.

Both technology and the so-called instutional matrix have been very influential in the history of economic development. We are often reminded of the importance of technology when new energy resources are found and tapped, and of course the creation of new institutions (such as an organised market) can have far-reaching consequences.

But these proposals (and others) to correct or expand the classical classification of the three economic factors are neither absolute nor permanent. Sometimes new factors that have not yet been mentioned are brought into the analysis. Other times, some of the newly proposed factors seem to disappear or dissolve into one of the three original ones; for example, some think that technological progress is "realized" as capital (Maddison, 1991: 25). Simplification can be taken to an extreme, intimating either deliberately or unintentionally that the single umbrella of "capital" is sufficient to cover all the other terms. Thereby land or natural resources are often turned into "natural capital", while work is replaced by "human capital".

Before turning to our next subject, a little note here: what has been said up to here is in line with a fairly orthodox view of economics. In Marxist analysis, the factors of production are not all analysed on the same plane; the central concept is capital, which is the product of accumulated surplus value, once labour has been converted into a perfectly differentiated merchandise. Likewise, in historical materialism insititutional elements are never considered factors of production but are seen instead as a *superstructure* above the structure of production.

1.2. Land or natural resources

But for the purposes of the present chapter, the foregoing discussion of economic factors is of very little relevance. For our purposes, the consideration of land as a factor of production provides a good, useful and valuable analytical distinction. What we are interested in, fundamentally, is the following: the political concept of territory has an economic aspect, which we can talk about as *land*, in the sense of classical economics, and can also use *natural resources* as its effective synonym.

What are natural resources? They are the materials or elements provided by nature herself, prior to human intervention, for production (that is, to meet people's needs). So we are talking about the raw materials as they present themselves to us, without regard for the improvements made to them by human labour, capital or technology.

Without trying too hard to be rigorously systematic, let us attempt to say what things are included within natural resources. In the first place, we should say that there are four parts: a) the land surface, b) whatever is is underground, c) the air space, and d) the sea. All the components of each of these parts need to be taken into account. First of all, land surface includes not just agricultural land but also forests, water bodies, flora and fauna. Besides these things, other components should also be listed such as opportunities or capacities, so for example, a certain kind of topology may favour certain sorts of communications; a certain geographical location may provide a potential source of solar power or some other kind of energy resource, and so on. The same applies to other parts of the territory. Underground, for instance, there might be fossil fuels and other (geothermic) energy sources; then there will be mines and underground water deposits. Besides fish stocks, the sea can also offer many other kinds of resources.

The range of resources is not a closed list; at each point in history it varies. Something that is not considered a natural resource at one time may become a fundamentally important resource at another. Take coal, which it became essential when the Industrial

Revolution came along (Cameron, 1998: 232). The technology of each period is often the key that opens the door to new natural resources.

Although resources can be classified in many ways, one particular distinction is of special importance: that between renewal and non-renewal resources. These terms are well known, yet it may not be a bad idea to spell out what they mean: *renewable* does not mean *inexhaustible*. Exploitation at an excessive pace can lead to the impoverishment of a renewable resource, the reduction of its quantity, and if taken to extremes, its complete disappearance.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

2.1. The land as a determining factor for population and sovereignty

The most developed and contemporary form of political organisation of a community known today is the state. The world is made up of states, and the planet earth is divided up into different parts each of which is the territory of a state. Thus every state has its own bit of land surface, its own underground, its own air space and, in some cases, its own section of ocean.

At this point we can establish a link between two ends of the thread: on the one hand, a) the economic aspect of the political concept of territory, namely the land or natural resources, and b) the state's other two components besides territory, namely population and sovereignty.

The land (aka natural resources) is a decisive factor in determining population and sovereignty, because:

a) In the first instance at least, the maintenance of the state's population has to come from its natural resources. In this sense, the land is the factor determining the population's existence.

b) The sovereign power of the state serves (or should serve) to control precisely those resources, deciding how they are to be exploited, the distribution of wealth etc. In this sense, the land is a condition for the exercise of sovereignty given that it is its essential object.

2.2. Historical reality

What has been said refers to the theoretical importance of natural resources in a world divided into states of the kind we currently have. But in reality things are not quite so simple. To start with, natural resources are not naturally divided equally among states, since states are themselves historically artificial creations. What is more, historically there is no peaceful coexistence among states where, for instance, benevolent and fair exchange prevails. The distribution, availability and consumption of resources has not been, and is not, distributed according to principles of equality and fairness, either between states or within individual states.

No one can deny the tragic significance natural resources have had in political history. Clearly they have been at the origin and the heart of many a contention, conflict or bloody war. Possession of land, control over mines, access to water or the extraction of precious metals have, together with similar issues, stood at the centre of human catastrophes from

the earliest days of humankind until today, whether they took the form of fights between warring states or civil wars.

There is a curious way in which orthodox economic history accounts for this. It is acknowledged, on the one hand, that at certain points in history a particular natural resource has been the key factor in a state's economic development (Foreman-Peck, 1985: 67; Maddison, 1991: 47; Cameron, 1998: 232). Yet at the same time it is claimed that the wealth of present-day states has practically nothing to do with the their provisions of natural resources (Maddison, 1991: 48). It is as if there were an attempt to make us forget that the entirety of political history has been built upon the quest for plunder and booty. But we must not forget that fact, just as we should not forget the greatest injustice of all, ever: the fact that over one quarter of the world's population is, quite literally, starving to death.

And if that is the way things have been until now, there is good reason to believe that in the future it is only going to get worse. Of the different factors responsible for that worsening of the situation, two deserve to be singled out: a) the depletion of resources, and b) changes in the network of resources brought about by climate change. Let us consider each in turn.

2.3. Resource depletion

This is not a new subject. Long ago, Malthus became famous for his dire forecast of catastrophe if the world's population continued to grow and the world's resources got used up. Much more recently, in 1972, the Massachussetts Institute of Technology published its well-known report *The limits to growth*, and other reports along similar lines have also been commissioned by the Club of Rome.

Nevertheless, the rich countries still maintain a level of consumption that is frankly alarming and which just seems to carry on growing and growing. Even official entities admit that to maintain in a balanced way the consumption of the developed countries would take more than one whole planet. The trouble is that the world population keeps increasing, and more and more countries are trying to follow our own terrible example in the way and amount they consume, at the same time as many others in the world are starving. What will happen if this carries on unabated?

As if that were not enough, we also need to do something about the fact that energy sources are running out. Everyone knows and recognises that the energy system based on fossil fuels has its days numbered, for its sources are near depletion just at the time when energy consumption is sky-rocketing (Roberts, 2010).

The irresponsible response of mainstream economic historians is to laugh this off; they quip that we have exhausted other energy sources before now and we are none the worse for it. New technologies, they say, will surely come up with something and provide a way to exploit new sources of energy. What is more, they argue, this is actually the motor and stimulus that has historically driven economic growth forward (Cameron, 1998: 460; Maddison, 1991: 49).

Such optimism seems to be unfounded. Perhaps the downfall of the economic system will not come about, thanks to its mechanisms of regeneration, but surely the passage from one phase to the next will not be smooth sailing. Even in the best of scenarios there will be a traumatic rupture which will result in increased conflicts and suffering, especially for those who always get it worst. Even some of those who proclaim themselves optimists are giving

strident warnings of the need to transform the present energy system radically, and to start doing so immediately (Roberts, 2010).

2.4. Climate change

Although we are still being told otherwise in some quarters, two things seem certain: a) the earth's climate system is getting warmer; b) human activity is the main cause of this warming, in the shape of gas emissions (Dessler & Parson, 2009).

The exact repercussions to be expected from warming, the extent of those repercussions and when this is all going to happen may remain unknown, of course, but the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has carried out estimates, and it is talking about things like the melting of the ice caps and glaciers, a rise in the sea level, doughts, widespread species extinctions, poor harvests and the shortage of drinking water (Sinaï, 2009).

We do not yet know what will come of attempts to reduce gas emissions or how climate change will develop in the future. But there is good reason for concern, and in any case one thing is clear: its present and future effects will have a direct impact on the availability of natural resources. We can expect changes in the distribution, quality, frequency, form and equilibrium of basic resources as a result. Everything suggests that, once more, the poorest parts of the world's population will be the hardest hit. Some specialists have gone so far as to predict "climate wars" unless urgent measures are taken (Ramonet, 2011a).

2.5. Two problems that lie ahead: energy and food

Thus it is not hard to see that if there have been upheavals centred around natural resources throughout history, there may be even greater upheavals in coming years. As much can be taken for granted, even if we accept the most optimistic estimates being made.

Two resources of special concern are of course food and energy. First, a word about energy. Practically everybody agrees that there is an energy crisis, but not everybody sees it in the same way. While for some this is just a matter of some sources running out and being replaced by new sources (which they fully trust scientists to discover), other people are convinced that the fundamental issue here is not about science: for the answers that new technologies may give will in any case certainly be partial and belated (Dessus, 2011). The real problem is the exponential growth of energy consumption that is part and parcel of the current system, to such a degree that some experts refer to the logic of capitalism as *energivorous* (Harribey, 2009). So the real issue is not about new sources of energy, it is about questioning the model of energy use itself (Barcena, 2004: 120); and that surely raises doubts about the kind of society we want to have, lifestyles and patterns of consumption.

We now turn to the other big problem: food.

3. FOOD SOVEREIGNTY. A NEW ANSWER ON AN OLD ISSUE

3.1. Food and hunger

They say that Marx used to say that the stomach is the first lamp that needs to be oiled. That is true. We can survive without telephones or cars, but not without eating. Hence the

importance of natural resources that can be used to produce food; hence also the special status of food-producing activity, which cannot be equated to or put on the same level as any other kind of human activity.

If energy issues are such as to force us to focus on the structural problems in the present system, that is at the very least equally true of food and the food industry. To start with, the facts and figures about hunger in the world are atrocious and appalling. Thirty million people die of hunger each year; according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the number of undernourished people in the world has become higher and higher since 1995, reaching 1,023 million in 2009, for example. That time-frame coincides with the period of greatest growth around the world of neo-liberalism (Ordoñez, 2011). Yet the problem is not, principally, that there is not enough food in the world to go round. In fact the food products that exist in the world would be sufficient to give every inhabitant on the planet the 2,000 calories a day they need (Ramonet, 2011b). So the inevitable questions must be asked: How is it that natural resources for the production of food are unavailable to so many? How is the system of international relations organised with regard to food? What is the role in this of the market? Is food just another merchandise? Or is it a necessary means of fulfilling a fundamental human right?

3.2. The origin of the concept of food sovereignty

The term *food sovereignty* was coined by Via Campesina, an international peasant-based organisation, and first used in a public debate in 1996 on the occasion of the World Food Summit. The concept has subsequently appeared repeatedly in NGO fora held in parallel with such FAO summits. Basically, in its initial formulation, it is a very simple concept which refers to the right of peoples to define and develop their own farming and food policies without being subject to dumping from other countries or states (La Via Campesina, 2003).

In its origin, chiefly the concept was a bid to address a particular problem faced by developing countries. Foodstuffs and farm products from rich countries are sent to developing countries at prices below their production costs (a practice known as *dumping*) on account of export subsidies provided by affluent states. The low prices destroy the poor countries' productive capacity: cultivation of their farmlands to produce food for the local population ceases (a tragic irony) and instead the land is devoted to single-crop agriculture aimed at selling some product or other on the international market while, all too often, the local population is starving.

It is possible for this to happen because the system of the international food industry is market-driven. The goal of agricultural and food policies is not to feed people, but international trade, profit, with food as a mere merchandise.

The injustice of this is self-evident. So the main idea associated with the concept of food sovereignty is that people have a right to defend themselves through the necessary protectionist measures against all kinds of dumping where food imports are concerned (La Via Campesina, 2003).

3.3. Extension of the concept. Relevance to both the South and the North

As we have seen, the concept of food sovereignty was originally closely linked to a response to an urgent need of developing countries, but in fact from the very beginning it had a vocation to achieve broader and more far-reaching applications.

As the debates unfolded and documents were written, more sophisticated ideas and additional elements were brought in: in connection with the idea of a right to take protectionist measures against dumping, it was pointed out that farmers' real problem was the inaccessibility of local markets and that the priority for agriculture should not be to produce for the international market but to feed the local population (La Via Campesina, 2003). Thus the concept of food sovereignty places the farmer and the consumer at the heart of the debate. And it did something even more important: it made the concept relevant to both the South and the North. For whether in the South or the North, it spelt out the preference for local small-scale agriculture over industrial farming (La Via Campesina, 2003). In this way food sovereignty became a flag that could be flown by both poor and rich countries. To put it another way, the call for food sovereignty is not merely a position we should adopt out of humanism and solidarity because we reject the damage done to developing countries by the system of the worldwide food industry (which would be a good enough reason), but because we also refuse to accept the harm it does directly to *us*.

3.4. Small farm agriculture versus industrial farming

But why do we say that the system of the food industry is harmful to us? Why ought we give preference in our own country to local family-run small farms over industrial farming geared to the international market? Let us list the reasons:

a) Industrial farming not only uses up a lot of energy in production, but once produced, the products will enter the worldwide market. That implies a massive need for (and dependency on) transportation. Everyone knows that transportation is one of the biggest culprits for global energy consumption; it is also the chief source of CO_2 emissions (Harribey, 2009). Local production linked to traditional farming methods requires less energy, and because the place of consumption is closer to the place of production, the issues relating to transportation are avoided by giving priority to local markets and short distribution circuits.

b) Besides consuming energy, industrial farming is also wasteful of other resources (such as water) and seriously damages other basic resources. Massive use of pesticides and other chemicals causes pollution of the water and the land, which even reaches the sea. Furthermore, intensive production and the focus on big profits leads to drastic impoverishment of the land. Half of all cultivated land in the world today has been degraded (Rap, 2008). In the opinion of some experts, the main ecological issue facing the Spanish state is land loss due to erosion because of an insufficient content of organic matter (Del Val, 2011). Traditional small farms do not use chemicals (or if they do, much less of them); they do not engage in single-crop farming over huge areas, but usually raise a variety of crops and work cyclically, for example by combining vegetable farming with cattle raising and using organic fertilizers, thereby minimising the problem of land erosion.

c) Industrial farming is socially harmful, for it takes away jobs. We only need to look around us to see how drastic the loss of traditional agricultural employment has been in recent years; this is so obvious that we don't even need to provide statistics. This is one of the best-known consequences of the now-prevalent farming practices. The effect has been so extreme that some have gone as far as to say that this newly imposed model amounts to farming without farmers. And so it is. This new, modern kind of farming has no need for farmers. Most manual labour is replaced by robots and machines, and the part that remains is performed by farmworkers in conditions of dependency which come close to slavery, or in the best of cases, brings about the *proletarization* of the traditional self-employed farmer. This means in reality that the apparently self-employed farmers themselves no longer make decisions concerning production: now it is the industry, buying the produce

before it is made, which determines what will be produced, how, using what chemicals, what will be fed to the animals and so on. Here at home this kind of cattle raising set in long ago (Langreo, 1988), through a phenomenon that was called *integration*. Today the severest form of integration has completely penetrated virtually every sector of farming. Self-standing, small-scale farming is, in that sense, one of the key, central objectives of the present farm union movement (Berhokoirigoin, 2010). This proletarization of farmers is a phenomenon that has spread all over the world (Ordoñez, 2011).

d) The prevalent system of industrial agriculture does not feed people. As we have already observed, it is a direct cause of hunger in many countries, besides which, in the so-called developed world, it is responsible for another grave health-related issue. First of all there is obesity and overweight, which affects 10% of the world's population and is turning into a pandemic linked to diabetes and heart disease (Ordoñez, 2011). Contrary to what is widely believed, obesity is not a rich people's problem since it comes from eating fattening foods. The problem lies elsewhere: it has to do with the kind of diet promoted by the present-day system of industrial farming, in which processed foods and animal derivatives predominate which are full of all sorts of additives; actually it is not really about the food but more about facilitating conservation, storage and transportation (Ordoñez, 2011). The foods that make up this diet have a higher and higher percentage of animal products, less and less fruit, vegetables or cereals. The animal source of the protein component has been increased greatly by the industrial farming system, which apart from being a cause of health issues in its own right is the source of other worrying consequences, since a much larger area of land is needed to produce a given amount of animal protein than to create a similar quantity of protein of vegetable origin (Aubert, 2008).

The health issues do not end at obesity. The next problem is pollution. The food industry has filled the things we eat with chemicals and antibiotics, leading to worrisome consequences for health (Brea, 2011), not to mention its use of some technologies in ways that may be dangerous (e.g. genetic modification).

e) Lastly, the present system of industrial farming leaves us unprotected. It increases our dependency on markets, thereby diminishing the authority of public institutions and eroding the autonomy of developed countries. Since the fabric of the food-producing capacity of first-world countries is also hit, the question may be asked: who are we being fed by? By the markets that are controlled by the transnational companies?

3.5. Rising food prices

Food prices are determined by the international markets. Prices rose enormously between 2005 and 2008, and in 2008 there were uprisings and protests over high food prices in nearly forty countries. They have been called "the hunger revolts" (Ramonet, 2011c). More recently, far from improving, the situation has got even worse. In 2011, prices broke a new world record (Ordoñez, 2011). The World Bank (which shares at least part of the responsibility for this) has admitted that rising food prices drove about seventy million people to extreme poverty between 2010 and 2011 alone (FAO, 2011). Quite a record! Traditionally the food market has been a stable one, but according to the FAO's own forecast, fluctuations in that market will be permanent from now on (FAO, 2011).

So what are the reasons for the rises in food prices? To put it briefly four reasons can be singled out (Ramonet, 2011c) and all four of them are clearly related to the model of the present industrial agriculture system. Is that a coincidence? Here are the four reasons:

a) The standard of living in some countries (China, India, Brazil) has improved and their eating habits are changing, leading to a considerable rise in the consumption of meat; thus more cattle needs to be raised which means that more cereals need to be grown.

b) Rising oil prices lead to rising transportation costs. Given that the present system of the food industry has the whole world as its market, it is largely dependent on transportation.

c) A part of the entire production of foodstuffs (sugarcane, sunflower, rapeseed, wheat, beets) is being produced to provide biofuels. This is a fairly new development. It is not true, as has sometimes been suggested, that this is the only thing to blame for rising food prices, for there are other more important reasons. However, this factor is not negligible. Many developed countries are deciding that a substantial proportion of the hydrocarbons they consume in the future will have to be biofuels. As a result of this, some countries that are short of food have decided to produce biofuels instead of edible cereals (Ramonet, 2011c). This is inadmissible. It is disgraceful that biofuel production should have to compete with food production. Moreover, biofuels are a false alternative. Even by the best of estimates, they will only ever satisfy a small fraction of the demand of present-day energy consumption. What is more, the only way to cover the world demand for energy and food at the same time is through deforestation. And last but not least, a system for producing biofuels on a large scale (as is being done) requires the use of a great deal of energy in the process (i.e. oil), which means continuing to emit greenhouse gases. That is why some people have said that as far as biofuels are concerned the cure is worse than the sickness (Vilain, 2008). However, on the other side of the coin, it needs to be said that on a small scale, for the individual small farm, biofuels can provide a valid way to increase the energy autonomy of agricultural enterprises (Berhokoirigoin, 2010; La Via Campesina, 2010).

d) Following the 2007 subprime mortgage crisis, financial speculation turned to raw materials and foodstuffs including rice, maize, wheat and other products considered to be "safe investments". So speculators buy up financial derivatives from foods. A rather large proportion of the rise in food prices is the direct result of such speculative trends (Ramonet, 2011c).

3.6. Land grabbing

Special mention must be made here of certain forms of speculation which consist of buying up land, since speculators — some of them perfectly well known — view agricultural lands all over the world as safe investments (Ramonet, 2011d; Liberti 2011). Not that they are worried about being woken by a goat's cough in the middle of the night! We are talking here about pension funds in farm lands making investments worth thousands of millions of dollars, many of them in poor countries. According to accusations by GRAIN and other entities, such operations are acts of daylight robbery which hurt poor rural communities in direct, tangible ways (Zubiria, 2011).

Purchases of agricultural land have escalated tremendously all over the world in recent years. This goes beyond simple financial speculation; something is emerging that looks like a new expression of the age-old warring over natural resources. The major actors in the macabre story of this new phenomenon of taking over the lands of small farm holdings, or land grabbing as it is called, are not limited to speculators and pension funds: they are actual states. Which are the states who are buying up foreign lands? On the one hand, we find some rich countries that lack productive land and water resources or their own such as the Gulf states (Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia); then there are states with an excess of currency such as South Korea, and particularly China, which needs to find a way to feed its 1,400 million inhabitants with only 7% of its own territory fertile land.

It is hardly surprising, then, that some people have started talking about agricultural neocolonialism (Ramonet, 2011d; Liberti, 2011). The new context for the historical contention for access to natural resources is extremely worrying. It leaves us in little doubt that the fight for food will be one of the major battles of the twenty-first century.

3.7. Espousing the demand for food sovereignty

Let us now go back to the initial meaning of food sovereignty. Every country should have the right to defend itself against the dumping of imported food. But it is more than a right, it is a duty. No country must be given the right to hurt the agricultural and food economy of another country. This does not amount to a call for self-sufficiency or the closing of borders. Each country has its special products which it may sell; but food security is too high a stake to put it at risk by becoming dependent on imports.

Besides, it is high time the whole truth about protectionism were told and its fallacies exposed. A serious examination of economic history shows that it is a myth and an outright lie, an idea that is repeated to us again and again, which claims that periods of economic success are linked to free trade, and that failure is associated with protectionism. The real story demonstrates that practically the exact opposite is the case (Halami, 2009; Samary, 2005).

In the second place, the ability to have access to its natural resources should be understood as one of a country's rights. Land grabbing and comparable practices must be resisted. Land, water, seeds, animal species, forests and the like belong to everyone; access to these things should not be subject to markets or capitalist interests.

But as we mentioned above, the idea of food sovereignty and the fight for it is directly valid for the countries of the North too. An important episode of that fight recently occurred, in August 2011, in the Austrian town of Krems at the first European Forum for Food Sovereignty, which brought together some four hundred representatives from 34 European states. The title of the Forum's final declaration is eloquent enough: *Food Sovereignty in Europe Now* (La Vía Campesina, 2011). Here are some of the relevant ideas put forward in this declaration and in the forum's proceedings:

– We call for food sovereignty in Europe.

– European production must be controlled.

– The basis of the European food system should be European agricultural production through small-scale farming; Europe needs more small farms.

– The present food system must change: local products should be the basis of the food system; seasonal products should be prioritised and fewer animal-derived products should be consumed.

– Food processing and distribution structures should be decentralised, giving preference to short, local circuits; health regulations should be geared to these local structures.

– Social and working conditions throughout the food industry must be reappraised and improved.

– There should be community control over common resources such as land, water, seeds etc.

– Changes are needed in public policies that structure and regulate the food system on local, national, European and global levels, de-legitimizing corporate control.

– The European Biofuels Directive should be abolished.

4. LAST THOUGHTS: THE MARKET, THE STATE AND US

In these lines we have tried to show the importance of the economic aspect of territory, emphasising some of the so-called "natural resources" (namely, those associated with food production); we have also attempted to piece together a criticism of the current system taking food sovereignty as our central, guiding concept.

We have seen that this is not merely a formal notion but is full of material content; it is a transforming, revolutionary idea. Furthermore, it is a concept with broad appeal, which may serve as a model for the development of other ideas (we are thinking particularly of energy sovereignty). Food sovereignty sees itself as a right of peoples. And those of us who think of the issue of our collective identity in terms of Basque citizenship hold that we too are a people.

In any case, it is not hard to see that food sovereignty, in the last resort, boils down to general or political sovereignty, though it is no doubt something more than just a plain expression of political sovereignty. It is taken for granted that sovereignty is an attribute of a state. So the question is: is it possible to avail oneself of sovereignty outside the structure or institution of the state? To begin to answer that, notice where the crux of the matter lies: it is all about the rivalry and choice between *economic* power and *political* power; we take the stand that there are some things that should not be subject to the dictatorship of the markets.

That granted, perhaps we can all agree about one thing: the best chance we have today to resist the omnipotence of the market and bring down its rule is to do so through the state. For all its faults, it is hard to see what other tool could be stronger or more effective.

Volumes have been spoken and written about the present crisis of the national state, but for now at least there doesn't seem to be any replacement for it on its way, anything else that is able to wield true political power, either below the level of the state or above it.

Some highly respected contemporary thinkers have reminded us of the need for a state. Pierre Bourdieu described the state as the primary collective institution capable of counteracting the effects of the infernal machine that is the embodiment of the neoliberal utopia; for the state is the "repository of all of the universal values associated with the idea of the public realm" (Bourdieu, 2011). He goes on to observe with irony that if we are to have any reasonable hope at all of resisting the new order that has been set up, it is only because of the continued existence of state institutions. Bourdieu wrote these things in 1998. More recently, the renowned philosopher Slavoj Žižek has expressed similar views, describing the state as a large-scale coordinating mechanism and reaffirming the necessity of the state and its functionality (Žižek, 2011). Perhaps the time has come for Basques to talk not only of nation-building but of state-building, and to get started on this construction work which will serve a double purpose.

In his most recent essay, Joseba Sarrionandia tells us that, from one point of view, it is a privilege for the Basques not to have a state. He reminds us of the negative side of the state: it holds the monopoly over violence. He suggests that we should carry on building a community while free from these bad things: an army, laws. police, borders and the rest of it: we should build a Basque nation as a way to organise Basques' freedom (Sarrionandia, 2010).

This proposal is not incompatible with the state-building defended here. Let us build the good things that a state has, creating a political institution that serves as a counterbalance in order to rein in the market and put a stop to its excesses. We can

emulate or play-act a state. We are not quite strangers to this path: we already have experience setting up para-state institutions, parallel institutions; we have some examples to follow. Think of the short but fruitful process of Udalbiltza; or think of the fine example of the Iparralde chamber of commerce. And then, we can create social networks, and they will be the foundation for para-institutions and provide them with legitimization.

When we do these things, perhaps we will be building the Basque state, or perhaps we shall be building something else. Maybe that won't be terribly important. But one thing is for sure: we will be taking steps towards our collective emancipation, steps towards a fairer world for all. And that will have been worth the effort.

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3. Territory, function and the community and/or state.

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Just like other living species, humans relate to their surroundings, and in so doing, classify space into an area with which we are familiar and others areas that are unknown to us, or where we may feel uncomfortable or awkward, or even think of them as places of the enemy, and themselves our enemies. Whether a cave or an 'intelligent building', a palace or a shelter under a bridge, there are spaces that we call 'home' and spaces we view as 'foreign'. As members of a society we make great efforts to build our society and transform our surroundings, adapting and reshaping nature to our needs. In that ongoing process, countless cultures and civilizations throughout the history of humankind have succeeded at times in creating structures that are sustainable and compatible with our fellow species and with the land itself; in other cases, people have instead developed relationships of plunder and destruction.

INTRODUCTION

Like any other species, human beings relate to our surroundings; in so doing, we classify spaces, distinguishing between the familiar and the unfamiliar where we may feel uneasy or timid; whether a cave or an 'intelligent building', a palace or a shelter under a bridge, there are spaces that we call 'home' and spaces we view as 'foreign'. What humans do with spaces, we also do with people: as social beings, we relate to them and classy them into close family or distant family, friends and neighbours, people from our town or resident in our area, and so on and so forth, with plenty of subtle subtypes in each of these categories.

All the classifications are relative: distinctions may or may not be made, and they can be changed — in fact, we change them often; subcategories may be reclassified and the categories themselves are not rigid but variable.

In our constant activity creating and recreating our society, human beings, who are never happy with what we have done and are forever working, carrying on or starting all over again in an unending quest for the elusive Good Life, transform our surroundings, adapt or dominate nature (or tell ourselves that that is what we are doing), and build, tear down and rebuild spaces. And we ceaselessly articulate, question and modify our social relations in those spaces (often convincing ourselves that there are structures that dominate us, in order to make ourselves feel more comfortable or else to perceive more clearly and resist more easily the realities that we objectify). And because we do these things, as the social beings that we are, out of "us-ness", i.e. understanding the building of our spatial world as a collective task, so we tend to try to define *our* land or *our* territory. We have managed (and this *we* is extremely symbolic, we the human species throughout history) to establish (more or less) harmonious or tolerable relations with other species that inhabit a given territory, and with the land itself, in many cultures and civilisations which we have known during human history in the course of this constant endeavour, and have developed (more or less) rapacious and destructive relations in other cultures and civilisations. Similarly, in organising relations among ourselves, our sense of hierarchy and competition has driven us to establish authoritarian, indirect and even genocidal political, economic and cultural forms of organisation, while our cooperative, mutually supportive instinct has led us to set up democratic, direct and free forms of organisation (the reader will notice that in this sentence there are a few *more or lesses* missing, which I might have placed here and there between parenthesis as in the previous sentence).

In this article, I have immodestly taken it upon myself to attempt to discover the ideal intersection between these two types of relation, asking how we Basques can organise a democratic, direct and free social model on the territory we consider ours and call Euskal Herria, and how we can articulate here a harmonious, bearable relationship with other species and with the land itself. The *more or lesses* mentioned here are absolutely necessary, and the concepts of *Basques* and *Euskal Herria* are contingent and arbitrary, as arbitrary and contingent as any other ethnic identity, people, nation or state whose name might have figured in their place. But that is what we are and that is the way we think of our identity and our territory. True, it must be admitted that the boundaries of the land are defined by us — arbitrarily and contingently — but since we cannot define and dominate the land itself, we shall attempt to delve into the concept of Mother Earth — a slippery yet prolific concept invented by the Basques of old.

And given that this is my goal, let it be said before I begin that I accept defeat: all the attentive reader can hope to find in the lines that follow, if he or she is lucky, will be a few modest thoughts on the subject. Beyond that it will be everybody's job to grope our way forward, by trial and error, hoping that we can manage to hand over to successive generations a map that is at least as good as the one we received from those who came before us.

1. TERRITORY VERSUS FUNCTION

People often talk nowadays about participatory democracy, the need to improve democracy or the shortcomings of democracy, and these questions have acquired special significance in Euskal Herria on account of the particular situation it has been subjected to in recent years. As anyone who lived through the period will recall, this issue started to be discussed here in the eighties and nineties of the past century, and particularly in connection with one very important affair: the strong opposition aroused, by a plan to build a motorway connecting Irurtzun and Andoain, in the villages and the countryside it was going to cut across. The protests grew into a broad movement with two fronts: for one thing there was the negative aspect of the damages that would be suffered by the inhabiatants in the area while obtaining no benefit from it (the building of the road, with the ensuing noise, visual and physical pollution); but also, many were angry about the fact that it meant destroying the Leitzaran valley, the last remaining, almost completely unpopulated nature reserve in Gipuzkoa and Navarre. Many people voiced concern about the native animal and plant species, even though it was not quite true to say that Leitzaran was virgin land; but there was a wish to preserve the natural values and keep them alive for the benefit and enjoyment of the local population.

Opposition to the project was articulatetd through different groups with diverse feelings on the matter, and the eventual outcome of the struggle was bittersweet: bitter, because from the very start the institutional response to this resistance was to reject and deal heavy-handedly with the project's opponents, through democratic authoritarianism (arguing that the project had been decided on by parliament and declared of public interest), and because eventually the armed organisation ETA decided to get involved in the fight and this resulted in people dying, getting hurt and going to prison; and somewhat sweet, because at last an agreement was struck between some of the institutions involved and certain social movements, and in the end Leitzaran was left untouched. The motorway was built, and for some ecologist groups this meant that they had lost their fight. The shock waves from this story travelled far; but for our present purposes, the point is this: the project in question was a "global" one (it made sense in a market that was becoming more and more global, and was backed by all the institutions, on state, autonomous community and local levels, who stood to benefit within logic of that market); whereas the opposition was local: the people and their closest political representatives stood outside that logic and defended their own right to discuss and decide on their own account something that would have a big impact on the territory that they inhabited. But they also argued that there are some values that benefit all human beings, such as the protection of nature, biodiversity and respect for local cultures, and that they were also fighting to defend those values against a project which, when all was said and done, would only benefit certain individuals. Of the different groups that made up that opposition movement, the most notable one was a grouping called Lurraldea [= "Territory"]. We are not here to pass judgment on this organisation's strategy and path of action, but only to point out that its name reflected its nature in the clearest way possible. So here we have two kinds of argument, two perspectives, in mutual confronatation:

– One of these viewpoints has been considered pro-development, but could also be called modernist or globalist: this is the logic that loves progress and views history as an advancing line that is only able either to move backwards (or stand still) or forwards; thinks that the rate of progress has accelerated greatly and that any country should be in touch with it, and that a town or a region can be left behind if it misses its chances; believes that technology is more and more perfect and should be taken advantage of; measures well-being chiefly in terms of economic growth and thinks that by generating wealth, there will be more for everyone. For people who think and feel this way, space is global and time, which moves faster and faster, must not be wasted. According to Friedmann & Weaver (1981: 309), from the perspective of territorial organisation this

logic would require planning of functional and spatial development which "emphasizes localization of economic activities… From the perspective of the local economy, decisions are made exogenously, by business companies which seek the best localization, or else the state pursuing it own interests."

– The other way of thinking has been called that of the ecologists, but also localist, and it may be linked to nationalism, and recently to the alter-globalisation movement, while some have labelled it as conservativism or anti-modernism. This current has been belittled or dismissed in the West in modern history (which is naturally a *modernist* history), and is therefore very much associated with terms beginning with *anti-* and *contra-*. This point of view holds that people know what is best for themselves, what lifestyle they want, and local identities play a large part in defining that. No impositions from outside are acceptable and the speed of change is to be determined by the people, locally. What is good in one place is good in another (provided the people in each place agree), and the decisions of each place are to be respected. A connection to nature is valued more than subordination to technology. The space of people who adopt this perspective is local; time is glacial, i.e. moving extremely slowly whether looking backwards (because it extols the achievements of one's forefathers) or forwards (because it thinks that the good of future generations should be taken into consideration). To quote Friedmann & Weaver again, this is "territorial planning that takes into account historically defined populations that live in specific places… Therefore territorial planning is an endogenous activity. It seeks historical continuity and aspires to a better life for all the inhabitants of a region… Its method is holistic, complex, interdisciplinary" (1991: 328).

Here I have tried to profile two ideal types, and probably there is an ideal position somewhere in between the two extremes at a point of balance (but balanced in which direction?). We should recognise, however, that many a conflict that we have seen in our country has consisted of a clash between those two viewpoints, where an argument has arisen over how to articulate the relationship between people's lifestyle and the land. To mention a few cases that have had broad repercussions, there was the fight over the nuclear power plant at Lemoiz; the Itoiz reservoir project; waste dumping in the River Ebro; waste incinerator plants and large-scale port complexes in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa; or the high-speed rail project (the so-called Basque Y, the Navarre corridor and the Lapurdi section). On the local level the list can be greatly lengthened with disputes over stone quarries, refineries, power plants, factories that pollute the environment, and so on and so forth. Wherever a project is announced, one can count on the emergence of an *X Bizirik!* ["Keep (name-of-place-here) Alive!"] movement. This has become a habitual thing all over our territory. On the positive side, it shows that the Basque population is active, involved and alert, with an eye on public and collective concerns, and strongly committed to the land and territory. On the negative side of the coin, it implies constant political confrontation, a dynamic of imposition versus opposition, and zero-sum situations in which, in order for *us* to win, *they* need to lose outright. Recent years have witnessed numerous examples of taking this tendency to extreme consequences. Rather than consensus building, a warring mentality has predominated: you win or you lose, with no contemplation of a halfway outcome. If we ask whose fault this is, there will no doubt be many competing assessments, but suffice it to say that our political culture in this sense is very belligerent indeed. It is hard to find a space for consensus building here.

In many cases projects are eventually imposed but are always improved when there is public opposition; sometimes they are stopped because the objectors carry the day; and quite often there ensue public debates, referendums and compromise agreements. Some outcomes are traumatic for many people, mostly when the imposition of a project is successful and results in a degradation of democracy and peaceful coexistence. Pacted solutions always result in someone's interests being hurt, but most people tend to think

that since there are concessions all rounds, the benefits for (almost) everybody are more significant. The very act of seeking agreeent often serves to soften differences and re-evaluate possible solutions.

I am not going to deny my own preference for the territorial perspective; I situate myself within the parameters of the *small is beautiful* notion, so popular in the ecologist camp; because I truly believe that on a small scale, in face-to-face situations, it is much easier to achieve democracy and mutual agreement, and also because it is in practice harder, within this scope, for those with hidden interests and ambitions of grandeur to force their will on others. Democracy and justic coalesce in small-scale situations, where discussion can take place and a synthesis achieved between equals. But this must then be carried over to higher levels, building that democracy and that justice on a larger scale, and there are theories and practical guidelines for achieving that. That is what I am going to talk about here.

2. IN SEARCH OF SPATIAL JUSTICE

We owe the concept of spatial justice to the American urban planner Edward Soja (2008: 559-570). This idea links social justice with space: social justice needs to have a spatial dimension built into it; spaces cannot be created in isolation; harmful infrastructures and equipment cannot be accumulated in a specific space while other spaces lack these completely. But although Soja's proposal is somewhat modern, the same concern of territorial planning has always been present, and the discipline flourished and evolved most in the United States.

Interest in this subject goes back to the work of Lewis Munford, the anti-urban writer who produced the best analysis of the phenomenon of the city and who was interested in the development of rural spaces, which provides the link between his work with the proposals of the sociologist Odum who, starting out from the perspective of the economically backwards, underdeveloped situation of the American South, encouraged regional planning. These ideas held sway in local and international debates throughout the first five or six decades of the twentieth century, giving birth to the theoretical movement or school known as regionalism. Following the Great Depression of 1929, Roosevelt's global policy initiative known as the New Deal aimed to reboot the American economy and democracy from an quasi-social-democratic perspective. It was a goldern opportunity for the regionalists to set up the Tennessee Valley Authority, an autonomous entity that covering the rural district after which it is named, whose comprehensive, harmonious development was its objective (Friedmann & Weaver, 1981: 33-131).

The regionalists' hopes were swept away by the tide of capitalist economic growth, and the fate of most of the water in the Tennessee River was eventually gathered in large-scale reservoirs, or used to produce electric power and irrigate fields in single-crop farms. Function was put first; the interests of the territory and its inhabitants, last. Nevertheless, regionalism has survived as a theory and has even been born again, relabelled this time as bioregionalism. The concepts of habitat and ecosystem are now emphasised, and the bottom line is no longer development but nature conservation. Today, the perspective of bioregionalism has a high profile, and not just in North America. It is being developed in South America, principally these days in countries with left-wing governments; this is unsurprising, considering the important place of indigenous people's interests and social movements for the protection of local natural resources in the makeup of many such governments (Gudynas, 2002 eta McGinnis, 1999).[1]

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[1] The river valley concept continues to play an important role in the approach of bioregionalists to defining geographical limits with regard to exploitation and political debate. This makes sense from a biological angle, but politically there has been a substantial change or perspective: for instance, in our own case a large part of the Basque population, including the inhabitants of the metropolitan area of Bilbao

The phenomenon of national liberation movements has been around since the sixties of the last century and has had a particularly strong impact in the Basque Country. But at that time there was a big debate going on in the Third (or Underdeveloped) World world over endogenous growth. Some theorists, chiefly South Americans, developed the idea that development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin; then certain politicians, in Africa in particular, such as Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, endeavoured to show that newly decolonised countries could achieve their own alternative road to development. In all those projects popular participation was considered of fundamental importance but the ideological perspective of the national liberation movements was excessively tied to classical Marxism (which is by nature modernistic, pro-development and authoritarian), and in practice those movements were very dependent on the Soviet Union. Those aspirations came to grief on account of the international situation and the global success of capitalism, but nonetheless they have left behind vestiges in the form of a number of experiences and institutions of the alter-globalisation movement, particularly among those who opt for local responses to capitalist globalisation. At present there are also dependencies and other considerations brought about by economistic ideas about development and growth which run counter to theories of degrowth, and a new model of the Good Life is emerging (see Rist, 2002 or Silence Group, 2006).

But it is probable that in all these theories and initiatives, ranging from regionalism to degrowth and everything in between, the main weakness lies in trying to work out precisely how to incorporate people's participation: when the leader grows tired, weak or corrupt, or passes away, they evolve into authoritatian ideologies. Murray Bookchin's (1998) libertarian municipalism offers a fairly well-rounded proposal to overcome this chalenge. This American anarchist developed a very elaborate model for how to make way from the municipal level up through a system of participatory confederations involving provisional, revokable representation. Other interesting and potentially realizable theories include David Harvey's utopian *pradash* (2003: 293-319) or Fotopoulos' (2007) inclusive democracy, which barely differ from each other.

Turning to practical experiments, in recent times there is the strategy of the Zapatistas in Mexico. Having attempted somehow to *revolutionize* the classical revolutionary model (having appeared to carry out an almost bloodless revolution the fame of which spread beyond Chipas, they went on to try to spread their mass movement to the rest of Mexico — and that is where things started to go wrong), they have remained strong on their own native territory and appear to be making good progress with their own alternative *silent* political organisation. Councils of Good Government, called *caracols*, are based on discussion, and their discussions, in accordance with indigenous customs, often involve sitting in silent reflection.

There was also an initiative worthy of mention here in the Basque Country a few years ago, although it attracted little attention at the time. Occasionally ideas of this kind attain influence or political power at the local level, as occurred in this case in the early 1990s in the Navarrese valley of Aezkoa where, in a period when motions for self-determination were being tabled in town councils throughout Euskal Herria, the Council of Orbaitze issued the following statement of particular interest, although it is written in somewhat radical and unpolished terms (Estebaranz, 2000: 40):

1. We, as free people, favour a configuration of free peoples, within an independent Euskal Herria out of the reach of oppression from the Spanish and French states.
2. In addition to political independence for the Basque peoples, we call for economic, social and individual independence, that is, complete independence.

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and Gasteiz, get their drinking water from the Ebro river valley system; yet the Ebro river flows through territories of Castile, Euskal Herria, Aragon and Catalonia.

3. We oppose any kind of state, and declare the Assembly the single sovereign organ of government; we opt for a Confederation of individuals, towns, valleys, districts and regions over reunification; not centralization but self-government; not a state but autonomy; not productivism but radical ecologism; no bureaucratic elite, but an assembly.

4. We call on the people of the Basque Peoples in particular and to all towns and peoples on the Earth in general to defend their autonomy and stand up for complete independence.

In the present-day context of global economic crisis, the concept of communal work is gaining a new impetus in Euskal Herria as it emerges in villages and neighbourhoods as a power to improve reality; it is essential to have people's participation or approval of the idea before undertaking work (Gorostidi, 2011; Mitxeltorena, 2011). In a slightly more technical sense this strategy is referred to as community development, and as such it is reminiscent of communitarian proposals that have spread in academic circles in the United States (Putnam, 2002; Etzioni, 1999). According to this perspective there is a need to aim for, and win back, the structure of small communities; only in such a context can people make sense of life and achieve full political participation (and it is a curious thing that while the proposal of developing the community work model is today mainly defended in circles of the Basque nationalist Left, it is nonetheless often considered a conservative trend by theorists in political science).

The declaration of the Council of Aezkoa gave a central place to the figure of the assembly, and it is well-known that such assemblies of neighbours played an important part in local tradition; they have also acquired something of a mystical aura. In the towns and valleys of Euskal Herria, as in any traditional European society, local assemblies, committees or councils, depending on geographical scope, were formed to resolve issues of local concern (Martínez Montoya, 1999: 79-84). But in the southern Basque Country, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, through the operation of the legal regimes of the *fueros*, regional assemblies and authorities represented a rival power of sorts, albeit a very ambiguous one, to the governments of Castile or Spain with their imperial, centralist aspirations. Today the *fuero* authorities (in the guise of provincial governments) play an important part in our lives, with a powerful and highly autonomous system of financing resulting from legislative pacts. The parliamentary structure underpinning this power is extremely flimsy, especially in the case of the General Assemblies of Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa: it is based on an inherently rather flawed form of representative democracy (for example, the electoral districts reflect very poorly the present-day geographical distribution of the population) and there are hardly any mechanisms in place for debate and popular participation. Without standing by and waiting for the wonderful legal and political frameworks that Euskal Herria will need to acquire in the future, there is plenty that can be improved and much to be fought for day-by-day through the mechanisms of citizen participation.

3. THE STATE AS A BRAND NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT

But since the real purpose of this article is to explore ways for a hypothetical Basque state to set up and maintain democratic and participatory procedures to deal with the questions raised here, let us now address this question. First of all let it be said that the word *state* itself suggests territory and precise territorial borders. Yet at the same time, when we mention territoriality we are in a way already painting a picture of a periphery and a centre (geographic or geopolitical) of that territory: is a state without a capital possible? Here the ideas from confederalism, not to mention libertarian municipal trends, are all pertinent to the issue, but we are unlikely to get away with sidestepping the core question: is it possible to have a political power without devising, discussing, deciding, planning and

implementing policies from a specific territory, and will not that place, or rather that position, have a say in how territory is viewed, from the centre to the periphery, giving territorial policies a particular twist? Is this not what always happens?

Every state has — indeed, must have, for what would it otherwise be? — the power to define the good of its citizens. A democratic state must define that good in a horizontal, participatory manner that does not entail oppressing minorities, but once defined, it must be distributed with equality throughout the territory. That is the way *general interest* and *public interest* are defined. And here is the rub. In developing territorial policies, in particular when implementing infrastructures — especially lines of communication such as railways, motorways, canals etc. but also others such as electrical energy production plants, or waste and residue management centres — the general or public interest and local interests can, and often will, come to loggerheads. The only position we can take on this is the idea that such conflicts should be handled creatively and that the problem, even if not solved, can be mitigated. The true general interest will appear when it conflicts with local interests, it will arise from discussion and the exchange of ideas, and nobody will be completely satisfied. We will have to return to this subject.

Recently there has been a worldwide tendency to reduce the domain of the state and limit it to specific parameters on account of neoliberalism's doctrine of globalisation: the modern state is to be one that performs a policing function, does not stand in the way of the free circulation of financial capital, and uses taxation and public works to channel resources away from ordinary citizens into the hands of those with big economic interests. The counter-current has come from the alter-globalisation movement, strongly influenced by the writings of the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos, someone closely connected to Brazilian social movements and the World Social Forum, whose theses include one that is particularly pertinent to this discussion: that we must turn the state into a brand-new[2] social movement (2005: 311-338). Unfortunately he does not develop the idea at length in his work (or we have not found or understood where he does so), but he clearly has in mind, for example, the participation of open assemblies in decisions on the town's budget in Porto Alegre (Brazil) and in general the various political intiatives set going there in areas governed by the Partido dos Trabalhadores. At the present time when neoliberalism is endeavouring to reduce the structure of the state while there are many people working in state bureaucracies who are affiliated to trade unions and linked to left-wing ideologies, it is fairly easy to see how, when left-wing movements take over, it would be easy for the state itself to become a motor for change, i.e. a brand new social movement. This trend can be seen above all in some of the political processes developing in various places in South America. The South American continent is one of the areas where neoliberalism has managed to impose its political agenda in its crudest form, and the state's welfare and redistributive functions were relegated completely.

But citizen participation has become a great challenge today for anyone concerned about the quality of democracy, and has often even become fashionable for many politicians who wish to maintain or improve their political support, and technocrats seeking to facilitate their administrative results. Likewise in the Basque Country there are a variety of examples ranging from good pracices to the not so good, as well as some that are little more than cosmetic (Blas & Martinez, 2008; Barcena & Encina, 2004).

But we also see examples in Euskal Herria of the state, or parts of the public administration at least, using it as a social movement, such as in the creation (and truncated life) of Udalbiltza. In that process one or more areas of the administration, those closest to the public, were placed at the service of a movement to create a new political framework, taking advantage of the legitimacy obtained through elections. A ruling of the Spanish Supreme Court banning the Udalbiltza movement did not allow much time for this brand new social

[2] The Spanish translators of Santos' work, Diego Palacio and Javier Eraso, retain the term *novísimo*.

movement to bear fruits, but even so we may observe, for our present purposes, some grave design flaws in its short lifespan: an assembly of municipalities was created and from this there was a leap to the appointment of a national council to which all the functions of representation, work and responsibility were delegated. Thenceforth it was this cupula which decided what was best for Euskal Herria and for any place in Euskal Herria, whether it be Zuberoa or anywhere else. It may have been a beautiful dream squashed by the verdict of *Audiencia Nacional* judge Baltasar Garzón; it was also, hoewever, a lost opportunity to learn from our own mistakes.

4. THE TERRITORY OF COMMUNITIES

The time has come for us to sketch some tentative conclusions concerning the questions we have discussed. In this period of all-round crisis, there exists in Euskal Herria a sound social movement which views a Basque nation-state as the key to a way out from the crisis. Time will tell whether there is going to be such an opportunity, and if so, whether or not the call for a state is really part of the solution, but let us suggest what might be some ideas for building direct relationships between people, territory and political power based upon equality in that hypothetical new structure, or along the path leading towards it:

Community first. *Community* means a group of people historically bound to a particular territory which lives and works, regulates its coexistence and its relationship with the territory, and constructs, deconstructs and reconstructs its own culture, and we might as well admit straight away that it seems easier to visualise something fitting this description happening in rural areas than in a city. The communitarian approach discussed above makes a political offer and demand to find the characteristics of a community in any habitat. In the economically uncertain future facing us today, it will be increasingly necessary to live in a community, and that model may sprout up in any setting, urban or rural; is not the cooperative system, after all, in some sense an application of the community concept to the domain of a capitalist undertaking, whereby it is to be transformed in the process? Is it to be all power to the community, then? It is more precise to say that all power receives its legitimisation from the community, in a political architecture that is built, and legitimised, from the bottom up. And decisions about the territory are always for the community of people who live on that particular territory to make, including the power of veto. We have seen that there are problems with this in some political areas, such as equipment that is detrimental yet necessary, lines of communication and so on. As the opposite of veto, but in a complementary sense, we have consensus. The big challenge is to achieve a consensus in a direct, deliberative democracy, over and above voting and playing the majorities game. Time tends to be the main enemy for such processes: from the viewpoint of modernity, history marches on and whoever misses the train is lost — a metaphor often quoted in the face of such difficult decisions. In our model there is all the time in the world to achieve a consensus; if it isn't possible today, there is always tomorrow. The key is not just to hold referendums or give people a chance to make themselves heard. A cultural change is needed in the logic of administration, that is, the dichotomic logic between the administrator (whether a politician or a technocrat) and the administered. Most important of all is the tempo, the interplay of rhythms and deadlines. Administration normally situates itself at the speed dictated by economic considerations, whereas people who mean to resist follow a more relaxed pace and may often get lost in administrative deadlines for objections, the more so, of course, if they try to appeal through the law. The easygoing pace of the Zapatistas' *caracol* may be preferable to the high speed of capitalism. Here there is much to be learnt from the notions of communal property that evolved in the past and are still maintained today. I am not referring to property in public ownership, which actually means nowadays that the mayor and

members of the council, or of the *fuero* authority, can use such property in practically any way they see fit. But in many places in Euskal Herria, the communal management of forests is still practised today, and that model is defended, for instance, for the exploitation of cultural property (the term *commons* refers to material or immaterial community property) in the case of social movements that have sprung up in connection with intellectual property. This does not mean that private property is to be ruled out completely. In our tradition, land, house, sibling and identity were closely linked concepts, which may be considered something positive inasmuch as it has been useful, and will be again, for protection and maintenance of the territory. And a number of concepts incorporated into our ancient legal frameworks (such as *retracto*, which always gives prioritiy to the owner of an adjacent property when lands are bought and sold) may play a positive, protective part favouring community ownership: as in Zuberoa today, for instance, where lands and homes are placed on the international market for the benefit of the wealthy.

Territory is the house that we share. And we are tenants in it, and not the only ones. The community is a group of people who have made their home on a specific territory, but that doesn't make the land ours. We are tenants in the house of Mother Earth, sharing our habitat with other species. Therefore there are some decisions that are not ours to make, because they do not affect us alone but also the generations who will come after us, not to mention other living communities that are here at present or will be here in the future. So we need to change our way of seeing things from an anthropocentric perspective to a biocentric one. This is not easy, but it is a goal towards which we need to work today, and we must learn to think in such terms. This is not just an idea for a handful of hard-core "deep ecologists". There is an interesting experiment going on in Bizkaia at present, inspired by UNESCO, that is attempting to explore this avenue: it is called the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve. The Urdaibai Valley is a biosphere reserve on account of its ecological value, despite the fact that it is a densely populated area, and should be exploited in accordance with criteria of sustainability, under the supervision of a board of trustees in charge of the territory which includes local municipal bodies, the provincial government and the Basque Government, but also active members of the community such as trade unions and ecologist groups. This is an arrangement that has often led to frustration and failure in the past given that the dark forces of property speculation will not give up their grasp on such a lucrative territory without a fight, but nobody denies that this is the way to go.

Saying no = a future for people. In recent times, movements of resistance are resurfacing in strength not only in Euskal Herria but all over the world, and fitting in quite naturally in the renewed system of "anti-globalisation" movements. Time will tell whether this amounts to a new political subject that is at the same time a subject of resistance and of creation, both fighting and building as it designs a new world. One thing is certain: the effect of such movements will be a new questioning of our concepts of "progress" and "development" in the years to come.

And as other avenues are closed, so the strength of these subjects will be measured in their capacity for resistance, perhaps for a long time to come. If the procedures for deepening democracy discussed above are not implemented, people's power will take the form of saying no. But today, what is expressed in that resistance is the choice of global democracy, the call for a juster world and the project to build it. People's future will be created by the accumulation of local losses, frustrations and victories. And in Euskal Herria, as elsewhere, any political power that is created will often have to confront the power of saying no. And if it knows how to feed of that, it will acquire legitimacy and strength.

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4. How should Euskal Herria respond to the present lack of political power over territorial organisation to achieve democratic socioeconomic development?.

Alberto Frias Gil, Member of the EGUZKI ecologist group

With globalisation and the removal of impediments to the mobility of capital, governments are being left with fewer options for developing policies of income redistribution. Labour, which is a less mobile productive factor, is the great loser and now bears the main fiscal burden in order to maintain public spending on the creation of material conditions which, in turn, accelerate the process.

The territorial model corresponding to this phase of capitalism is the metropolitan region. In the present context, territorial organisation has been turned into an instrument facilitating the decisions of international capital at the local level, at whose service it places transport and telecommunications infrastructure and huge amounts of land at bargain prices. This is an unsustainable model entailing vast increases in transportation needs and energy consumption.

In the Basque Country, on account of the lack of decision-making power, the new ways of handling territory are being blindly copied in blatant contradiction to the drive to achieve democratic management of the country's ecosystem.

1. GLOBALISATION AND THE MOBILITY OF FACTORS

The term *globalisation* has become so popular, not just in economics but in every part of life, that we find quaint uses of it, such as when the 2002 World Cup was described as *el mundial de la globalización* because the four teams that reached the finals were all from different continents. The way the term has been bandied about in the mass media is no product of chance; the media are here fulfilling their mission of "fabricating a virtual reality as a means of artificially constructing social reality" (Baudrillard, 1993).

Globalisation is not a term with a precise meaning: the same word may refer to an objective reality, a direction of development in the economic system, and above all, a certain ideology. Lest we turn economic policy into a self-sustaining mirage that invades everything everywhere, or fall into the trap of adopting a reductionist interpretation of economics that overlooks the social dimension or ignores the interaction between ecology and politics, before entering into specific issues such as the function and size of a state or the spatial repercussions of restructuring it will be advisable to establish a set of indicators providing data about the integration of the economy into the international domain. The indicators chosen for this purpose will be transport and communication, migration, finances, trade and production.

– Transport and communication: one of the basic components of the globalisation process is the fact that the world is shrinking in time and space as a result of the development of physical infrastructure and communicative power, which allow the flow of material goods and information at rates, intensities, volumes and low costs unheard of in all the history of mankind, giving rise to a world that is not only more global but smaller.

– Migration: unlike other periods of history when there were great migrations of work forces, at the present time labour is the least mobile of the factors of production. Between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries there was a slave trade between Africa and the Americas; this was followed by a flow of workers from India and China as seasonal labourers, while between 1815 and 1914 sixty million Europeans moved to America or Australia. In the second half of the twentieth century migration changed directions and the flow was now from the periphery to the centre, whereupon laws started to be passed to block movement from impoverished countries to those that had acquired wealth.

– Finance: what really drives globalisation forward is money; the growth of foreign portfolio investments is greater than the growth of trade, direct foreign investment and production. International money comes out of national currencies, their convertibility and exchange rates. More than ever before, the relative prices of currencies (i.e. exchange rates) are determined by financial factors more than by elements originating from the real economy. Neither the profitability of money (i.e. interest rates) nor the price of financial products show complete uniformity in the world economy. Real interest rate parity is far from being ensured. What cannot be denied is the spectacular growth of the international financial flow and the diminishing regulatory capacity of governments and central banks.

– Trade: the relative proportion of foreign trade to domestic production may be lower today than in the embryonic capitalism of the city-states (Lipietz, 1997). Analysis at present should focus on obstacles to trade, the openness of markets and the structure and types of business transactions. Customs duties are being lowered today, but let us recall that the United States built its industry with help from ever greater customs barriers, and that the open markets of the main developed countries did not reach the level they had had in 1913 until the nineteen-seventies.

– Production: Indeed, foreign investment did not reach the 1913 level until the nineteen-nineties, and it is ceasing to be a necessary condition for transnational business, as a result of the rise of strategic alliances or fusions and takeovers which do not involve productive investment. Despite the high profile of transnational companies in this domain, with a complex integration strategy combining relationships within, and between, firms and complex networks, we should not forget that these businesses only provide jobs for a small proportion of the world labour market.

According to Ángel Martínez González-Tablas, most of the elements that make the economic system work have their own globalisation story; the lack of uniformity is their dominant characteristic. The present stage presents qualitative differences from earlier ones, with new markets, new participants, new instruments, a less automatic regulatory framework in a multipolar context and a spectacular growth of gross money flow.

As globalisation proceeds and mobility of capital, companies and workers grows, it will become increasingly difficult for governments to implement a policy of income redistribution. The winners in the globalisation race will be those who are the most mobile.

Mobility is thus becoming a basic factor in companies' efficiency and competitivity, and that of the richest and best qualified individuals who, thanks to globalisation, are able to move their production to wherever the costs are lowest, who can place their capital in places where the after-tax profits are highest, and sell their work in places where the salaries after tax are best. Although most support a tax rise to compensate losers, the "market", i.e. the companies and financial institutions themselves, can evade these on account of their mobility.

Since a government's ability to pay for investments, consumption or devolution depends on its ability to charge and collect taxes, the mobility of the factors of production, which are basically what generates most of the public money collected, will make it more and more difficult for states to sustain their spending.

"Manpower" is the factor of production that is least mobile on account of family ties, culture and language, and it is consequently easier to tax. Thus governments have managed to continue to increase their public spending but they have done this by moving the centre of gravity of taxation from capital income to work income. The varying mobility of these factors of production will determine the amount of tax paid.

Taxation will move progressively towards income from less mobile factors and assets, semi-skilled and non-skilled human resources, real estate, medium and small businesses, and towards spending rather than income, until such a time as either there is fiscal harmonisation or a sharp reduction in taxation, hence in the ability of states and governments to develop economic and social policy.

Meanwhile, there are increasing calls for greater protection and the public income of states is falling; the growing tendency is for citizens to take responsibility for their own finances, with the privatisation of the things covered by social security.

The scenario just described poses a contridiction between the need for more social protection for globalisation's *losers* and the fact that it is hard for states to come by the resources needed to satisfy that need. The upshot of that contradiction, unless a solution is found not only in economic but also in social terms, could turn out to be public rejection for the current globalisation trend, with popular sentiment turning towards self-contained economies.

2. *THE SPATIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF GLOBALISATION*

The territorial model corresponding to advanced capitalism is the metropolitan region (Harvey, 1977), the limits of which are nebulous. The metropolitan region implies a spatial spreading-out so that it becomes harder and harder to establish a clear boundary between rural and urban areas, with an ever greater dispersion of activities within the metropolitan and regional area.

This spatial form seems to correspond to production characterised by greater decentralisation of productive activity in space and a parallel concentration of the tertiary sector, particularly with regard to advanced services and the financial sector, and by new modalities of reproduction of the work force and daily life. This territorial model is marked by a radical increase in transportation needs and energy consumption (Fernández Durán, 1993).

The vastness of present-day transportation networks has made it possible to organise production transnationally in a process comparable to the development of information systems whereby it is possible to control production from the centre of the system practically in real time (Hobsbawm, 2000).

According to Ramón Fernández Durán, transport, telecommunications and energy are the key elements of the present production and territorial model, as a result of changes in the sphere of production and transformations in the domain of reproduction and daily life.

The exponential growth of the demand for vehicle mobility in relation to production is driven by the decentralisation of certain industrial sectors or specific phases of production which are farmed out to countries on the periphery, while the market for finished products is in the centre. The "diffuse factory" and new production techniques based on the *just in time* method seek to reduce stocks through knowledge of demand in order to reduce storage costs and immobilised capital. Thus transport is converted into a key element in the actual chain of production which extends beyond the factory, merging into transport as just one more means of production (Kanzow, 1990).

Again, in reproducing the workforce and daily life, the breakup of the nuclear family and the ensuing rise in the demand for housing and expansion of the urban belt, together with an increase in buying power for self-standing houses, favour a greater suburbanisation of growth. The separation between place of residence and workplace increases by virtue of the dispersion of industrial employment in the periphery of metropolitan areas and the growing concentration of the advanced tertiary sector in central areas, pushing residential homes away from such districts.

Special relevance is also being acquired by new forms of commercial distribution, hypermarkets in the outskirts of metropolitan areas that alter consumer patterns and encourage the use of cars, as well as increasing commercialisation of leisure activities, again linked to the use of motor vehicles for free-time mobility.

The metropolitan region has an increasingly diffuse, spatially segregated structure which causes transportation to focus on the private vehicle since collective transport is unable to handle the dispersity of this new expansion. This increase of motorised road mobility in metropolitan regions is reflected on the spatial plane by the growing amount of space dedicated to transport, which makes an impact on lifestyles and personal relations in the post-Fordian metropolis.

Alfonso Sanz (1990)[3] says that 10% of medieval cities was taken up by thoroughfares, which made it possible to pursue urban life through a multitude of functions and activities that took place in the streets. With the development of nineteenth-century *ensanches* [when old town centres were widened by building up new adjacent districts to accomodate a growing population and new industrial activities - Translator's Note], roads came to occupy between 15% and 20% of urban space with a differentiation between carriageways and sidewalks, such that vehicles now had a space of their own. In present-day metropolitan regions, roads may take up as much as two-thirds of cities such as Los Angeles, the area for vehicular traffic is absolutely specialised, no other activities or urban functions are being allowed there, and it has turned into a single-function space: thereby urban life becomes starker, losing its diversity and minimizing opportunities for contact between people.

Advanced capitalism is defined by its hypermobility, with no questioning about the difference between mobility and accessibility and without considering the external (social and environmental) effects of continued expansion. The accelerating speed of life that permits maximum fluidity and turnover of capital has become "the dark side of wealth" (Benko, 1985).

Other key elements of the present model of production and territory, besides transport, are telecommunications and information technology. These new technologies permit the decentralisation of production and the centralisation of decision-making, management and control, without which it would not be feasible to take advantage of the relative benefits of the state of the employment market in the periphery, which can bring about a very substantial cheapening of production costs together with centralising the processes of capital accumulation.

According to Borja & Castells (1997)[4], humankind is moving towards a world of generalised urbanisation where even rural areas will form part of a system organised from urban conglomerations. Two phenomena are thought to be responsible for the possible disappearance of cities as a territorial form of social organisation: the IT revolution and the globalisation of the economy and of communication.

The spatial repercussions of globalisation entail new forms of territorial management based on flexible planning to adapt to changing economic conditions and making it possible to respond to private interests focusing on particular parts of the city, within which the specific *project* can influence the long-term plan which defines a city's exact image. Thus the legal framework of city planning is modified towards one that is less interventionist and more flexible. However, this does not imply more participation in city planning for a wide range of groups and social classes. Quite on the contrary, more pride of place is given to technicalities, bureaucracy and increasingly hierarchical decision structures, where there is no room for democratic mechanisms, while on the other hand, the decision-making process over those spaces is becoming more and more open to capital interests.

Certain areas of *global cities* undergo a profound restructuring, with planning able to change at the drop of a penny in order to accommodate *the project*, normally for the advanced tertiary sector but also sometimes for other proposals such as exhibition centres or technology parks which require to be located in parts of the metropolitan region in order to exercise their "command function".

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[3] The EU transport sector accounts for 7% of the GDP, 7% of jobs, 40% of public investment and nearly a third of the total energy consumption. The external socioeconomical "costs" of transport represent close to 5% of the GDP.

[4] Borja & Castells (1997: 11-12) provide statistics that suggest widespread urbanisatio of the whole territory, but go further than that, implying a radical change in the social function of the city as a result of the opportunities for the dissemination of information through telematics.

These surgical operations on the urban fabric involve substantial investments that cannot be covered by private capital alone because of the lack of profitability. New instruments of management are created, and new means of controlling territory, in the shape of half-public half-private bodies and corporations, in such a way that ultimately these spaces can be managed by private interests. This is business management of urban areas clothed in a discourse of ensuring the international competitivity of the metropolitan region in order to attract investment.

To quote Keil & Leiser (1989): "Urban development is an instrument that is used in the mediation between global and local structures. Its main task (that of the Corporation) consists of facilitating the decisions of international capital at the local level." It is not only planning activity and metropolitan management that changes, but also the use that will be made of public resources, by investing in transport and telecommunication systems. This triggers off a crisis in local finance because of the increased functioning costs of all kinds on account of the metropolitan regions.

3. THE METROPOLISATION OF TERRITORY: *EUSKAL HIRIA*

This is all being imitated in Euskal Herria, with the introduction of new forms of control over territory. In Navarre, *Iruñerria* is taking shape as a metropolitan space centred around the capital Pamplona (Iruñea in Basque), and spreading out from there clear across the whole city valley, swallowing up former neighbourhoods or villages like Mendillorri, Etxabakoitz, Barañain, Zizur, Villava, Burlada, Berriozar, Arre, Noain, Aizoain, Huarte, etc. as well as rural districts with land of high agricultural value, generating high costs and a new need for roads to handle traffic around the urban area (Alli, 2001). With different intensity but similar results, the population of the northern Basque Country and practically all of its tertiary sector are already concentrated along a coastal strip of Lapurdi, the so-called BAB cluster which encompasses the towns of Bayonne, Anglet and Biarritz. In the meantime, there is an attempt in Gipuzkoa to articulate a critical mass of 600,000 inhabitants to make up a Basque Eurocity along a Bayonne-Donostia axis, seeking to achieve "the multiplying effect of the eurocity as a mid-range European city."[5]

Meanwhile, metropolitan Bilbao is being called on to play a central role in the "Polynuclear Basque System of Capitals", to which end there are projects underway such as the "Basque Y" high speel rail network and the Guggenheim Museum, destined to excercise command functions. Special mention should be made here, given the special administrative nature of the Basque Autonomous Community with regard to the *diputaciones forales* or provincial governments, the cut-throat rivalry in the race for competitivity between the so-called historical territories (giving rise to such anomalies as five airports within a short distance of each other and several convention centres without any specialisation in what they offer, the Kursaal, Europa and Euskalduna). The risks of this policy are obvious: "a poorly-understood particularism can generate excessive and destructive competition between towns and regions."[6]

Others, such as José Allende (2000), warn of the dangers of mimicking on the local level this centralising process, on the false premise of the "power of cities", by promoting megacities, great metropolitan areas, in an attempt to replace nation-states with city-states, which would tend to favour abandonment of the countryside and concentration of the population and, particularly, of power in the great cities. Returning to the polarised territorial model, city-states could mimic the centralist nation-state but from a position

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[5] Libro Blanco de la Eurociudad Bayonne-San Sebastián, June 2000. Synthesis document of debate. Interreg, European Commission.

[6] Borja & Castells (1997: 19) trust that rather than sterile competition there will arise networks of constructive cooperation between cities and regions.

which, unlike the diffuse territorial model, would favour uniformity and de-ideologisation of citizens, and in consequence would serve the purposes of the de facto economic and financial powers-that-be following globalisation.

Paradoxically the future expectations for all this are the very factors that contribute most to its unsustainability. This is especially so in a scenario where, after the crisis of Fordism and Fordist city planning, the market and its mechanisms have been reintroduced as the determining factor that decides how land should be used and in consequence loosening up the rules of city planning. The instruments of formal planning opt for flexible coordination rather than strict planning, offering general guidelines but not binding regulations which might at least attenuate the effects of supply and demand, thus limiting the role of public functions to setting up a framework where private initiative can proceed as it pleases.

It would seem that the basic characteristics of the new city planning are as follows: flexible planning to adapt to changing economic conditions, a planning crisis with the long-term plan being replaced by the specific project, advanced tertiary sector projects with a command function (including exhibition halls, technology parks, showcase museums and so on), a non-interventionist legal framework giving free play to trends towards de-regulation, abundant investments of public capital managed by mixed companies with commercial management of urban spaces, and the crisis of local finance because of the increase in the functioning costs of these metropolitan areas.

The general idea is to convert city development into an instrument facilitating the decisions of international capital on the local level, putting transportation infrastructure, telecommunications and vast amounts of land at its disposal at bargain prices.

As a result of its uncritical approval of the metropolisation of territory, Euskal Herria is presenting itself in the twenty-first century as a country in open contradiction to many of the underlying principles of the European Union's Green Paper on the Urban Environment. The picture that emerges from the abandoning the notion of a compact city, upheld until now, and opting instead for dispersed expansion of low-density residential areas together with a proliferation of large shopping centres and leisure areas, is a recipe for growing urban unsustainability.

The model of extensive city development being espoused at present is unsustainable because it implies a rapid increase in absolute and relative surface area (the space occupied per inhabitant) without a corresponding population increase of similar intensity, the expansion of arterial metropolitan and inter-city networks, the increase in the distance between places of residence and places of work, diminishing use of public transport on account of its loss of efficiency in rural suburbs, replacement of the town centre or the marketplace as a meeting place by scattered, large-scale shopping centres, the emergence of peripheral commuter towns, the disappearance of goodneighbourly relations and the degradation of social cohesion, and the increased consumption of resources and generation of waste.

4. THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT OF CITIES

The ecological footprint is an environmental indicator that integrates the impact on its surroundings of a given human community (a country, region or city), taking into consideration both the resources needed and the waste generated, on the premise of maintenance of the community's present level of production and consumption.

The creators of this concept, William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel, defined it as:[7]
> The area of ecologically productive land (cropland, grazing land, forests or aquatic ecosystem) required to produce the resources used, and to assimilate the wastes produced, by a defined population at a specified material standard of living indefinitely, wherever that land may be located.

The approach to calculating ecological footprint takes the following things into consideration:

- To produce anything, regardless of the type of technology used, we need a flow of materials and energy which is ultimately produced by ecological systems.
- We need ecological systems to absorb the waste generated in the production process and use of the final product.
- We occupy space with infrastructure, living space, equipment etc., thereby reducing the surface available for productive ecosystems.

The process of progressively concentrating the population in urban systems and globalisation of the flow of materials and energy makes it increasingly difficult for the population to associate its consumption of goods and energy with their impact on the environment. The ecological footprint allows us to define and visualise the dependence of human societies on the functioning of the planet's ecosystems based on appropriate surface areas to satisfy a given level of consumption. It thus allows us to establish the real productive area that a given human community is appropriating ecologically, whether located inside or outside its own territory, thus also distinguishing between the different ecological functions of ecosystems.

"The battle for sustainability will be won or lost in the cities," said Maurice Strong, secretary general of the Earth Summit in Rio, in 1992. Cities house 45% of the human population but their ecological weight comes not just from geographical proportions but also from ever higher standards of consumption by people in cities. The ecological footprints of industrial cities are a hundred or two hundred times those city's surface areas, and this leads to the liquidation of natural capital.

A United Nations report called *Our Common Future*[8] broached the subject of shared responsibility (1987:27): "The Earth is one but the world is not. We all depend on one biosphere for sustaining our lives. Yet each community, each country, strives for survival and prosperity with little regard for its impact on others. Some consume the Earth's resources at a rate that would leave little for future generations. Others, many more in number, consume far too little and live with the prospect of hunger, squalor, disease, and early death."

The Aalborg Charter makes a similar point: "We have learnt that present levels of resource consumption in the industrialised countries cannot be achieved by all people currently living, much less by future generations, without destroying the natural capital." Economic activity depends on that natural capital: the idea of sustainability arises from recognition of the inequitable, undemocratic nature of current development models.

According to Mathis Wackernagel (1996), most cities are increasingly incapable of responding satisfactorily to population growth and the resulting needs. "Local symptoms are traffic congestion, pollution, poor quality housing in short supply, social fragmentation, noise, rising crime rates, violence and inadequate public services."

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[7] Ecological footprint is calculated in a way based fundamentally on the writings of the creators of this index, Willilam Rees and Mathis Wackernagel, using both their initial theoretical definition as given in *Our ecological Footprint* (1996), and their subsequent applications of this at the level of the state in *Ecological Footprints of Nations* (1997), the municipality in *The Ecological Footprint of Santiago de Chile* (1998), and the region in *Evaluating the use of natural capital with the Ecological footprint. Applications in Sweden and subregions* (1999).

[8] *Our Common Future*, 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) of the United Nations.

The increase in cities' ecological needs correlates with the planet's falling ecological productivity. The challenge is to achieve people's welfare within the limits of the ecologically feasible. The European Union's 1994 report *European Sustainable Citites* proposes five basic strategies:

- sustainable city planning which favours high-density nuclei with access to public transport
- implementation of an integrated transport strategy favouring public transport and non-motorised forms of transportation, with safety improvements for cyclists and pedestrians
- efficient management of the flow of energy and material, including waste, water, infrastructure etc.
- the setting of environmental and social objectives and standards
- the dissemination of environmental information.

Sustainable city planning can only begin when the main actors are motivated, and the fact that a good part of the urban population lead lives that are isolated from ecological productivity is a serious obstacle to this. The only way we will be able to make progress towards sustainability is through a sense of the loss of ecological productivity as a degradation of human well-being.[9]

Motorised ultra-mobility tends to break down people's affection for the natural and social surroundings in which they live and to wear down the democratic sense of community, with the result that one's living space becomes less and less identified with the place where one actually *lives* (i.e. spends the night). This situation leads to a growing polarisation of the community between those who have more of an opportunity to choose their place of residence and work, who have no trouble moving around by car or plane; and those others, whether they be classes, genders or age groups, whose means of transport is basically their feet or public transport, whose daily activities are situated near where they live.

People only share space with their equals.[10] They no longer tend to identify much with the place where they are and the people they are with, and this reveals the close connection between the breakdown of social cohesion and a deteriorating environment in the context of the segregating tendencies of people and metropolitan space brought about by dispersed conurbations.

The unsustainability of processes of metropolisation and their economic, social and environmental consequences need to be addressed from several side; among them, one is emerging called *Local Agenda 21*, a vigorous movement of cities and towns defending sustainability. The point of departure for this movement is Chapter 28 of the document of Agenda 21, a programme for the twenty-first century approved by the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (M. Keating, 1996):

> Many of the problems and solutions listed in Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, so local authorities have a key role to play in making sustainable development happen. Local authorities, such as municipal governments, build and maintain such structures as drinking water systems and roads. They oversee the planning of housing and industrial development, set local environmental policies and help to implement national environmental policies. (Agenda 21, chapter 28.1, "Local Authorities", 1992).

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[9] Also known as the boiling frog effect, according to the belief that frogs placed in a pot of water over a small flame will be unaware of the gradual yet eventually fatal rise in the water's temperature (Ornstein & Ehrlich, 1989).

[10] In *La ciudad caleidoscópica*, Pedro Abramo carries out a study of Rio de Janeiro, famous for its shanty towns or *favelas*, while also discussing other examples of social fragmentation and stratification in cities, such as Paris and the regeneration of the La Bastille district.

Similarly, the Aalborg Charter notes that 80% of the European population live in urban areas, and goes on to observe:

"Local government is close to where environmental problems are perceived and closest to the citizens and shares responsibility with governments at all levels for the well-being of humankind and nature. Therefore, cities and towns are key players in the process of changing lifestyles, production, consumption and spatial patterns." (Carta de Aalborg, Chapter I.1, "The role of European cities", 1994)

Unfortunately, the proliferation of international charters and treaties concerning the environment has not so far served to improve the situation; the metropolitan explosion of our cities pushes on, and in so doing pushes us further and further towards the brink of unsustainability; if our cities today are ecologically unsustainable, the suburban stretches arising from the process of dispersed conurbation are much worse even. The residential wave of the last twenty years has greatly increased the consumption of all kinds of resources, from energy and water to groundspace and materials, generating waste and polluting both the local environment and the world's atmosphere. The model that has been established in metropolitan areas is much more inefficient in its use of natural resources, and is far less fair socially, than the model of the compact city.

5. THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWERS IN TERRITORIAL PLANNING IN EUSKAL HERRIA

Article 148.1.3 of Spain's 1978 constitution states that the autonomous communities "may assume competences over… town and country planning and housing".

Given that Article 149, which lists competences attributed exclusive to the State, does not include territorial planning in the list, and given that the Statute of Autonomy of the Basque Country says, in Article 10.31, that "the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country has sole jurisdiction [over] planning of inland territory and coastline, town planning and housing", one might be forgiven for assuming that the upshot of these clauses would be that the Autonomous Community has power over this. The same might also be said of the Autonomous Community of Navarre.

Both of these legal texts allude to exclusive powers (or "competences"), which seems to mean that the autonomous communities in question are competent in all functions, whether legislative or executive, relating to territorial planning. However, it turns out that there are other exclusive competences of the Spanish state that relate to the same physical space, and this gives rise to conflicting claims which can limit the exclusivity of the powers initially referred to.

Another shortcoming of these provisions is that neither of the constitutional documents concerned provides any indication of how territorial planning is to be defined or delimited conceptually; they merely list items, while leaving plenty of room for uncertainty about the actual content to be attributed to the constitutional expression *territorial planning*, and hence also about what any such powers really consist of.

Take for instance Article 148 of the Spanish Constitution, from which we have already quoted. The article presents an itemized list, item 3 of which is "town and country planning and housing", while item 4 is "public works of interest to the Autonomous Community, within its own territory", item 5 covers "railways and roads whose routes lie exclusively within the territory of the Autonomous Community", item 6 is "ports of haven, recreational ports and airports and, in general, those which are not engaged in commercial activities", item 7 is "agriculture and livestock raising, in accordance with general economic planning",

item 8 is "woodlands and forestry", item 9 is "management of environmental protection", item 10 includes "planning, construction and exploitation of hydraulic projects, canals and irrigation of interest to the Autonomous Community", item 13 is "promotion of economic development of the Autonomous Community within the objectives set by national economic policy", item 16 is "the Autonomous Community's monuments of interest", while item 18 is "the promotion and planning of tourism within its territorial area."

Now it is important to note that the constitution has nothing at all to say about any possible state-level territorial planning, and that silence led, in the period following the passing of the constitution, to legislation in different areas, such as water, coasts, nature conservation, railways, historical and artistic heritage, and so on and so forth, resulting in a dispersal of the laws and regulations covering a subject which, by definition, should be encompassed as a single area and which affects policy in the Autonomous Communities given that they are obliged to incorporate the Spanish legal specifications into their own planning policies.

This being the case, Spain's constitutional court and legal doctrine have made it abundantly clear that the supposed "exclusive competence" of the Autonomous Communities is in realisty a fiction, and there is really no such thing: at the very best, territorial planning is a shared competence, in spite of the fact that a superficial reading of the legal texts appears to suggest otherwise.

A ruling of the constitutional court on the 13th of May, 1986 established categorically the capacity of the state administration to impose its projects upon an autonomous community's territory in any matter that comes under its jurisdiction. What is more, even though it is established that there must exist exceptional reasons justifying this, the exceptional character of such cases is normally turned into a general rule, as we have seen to be the case in the sectorialisation of territorial planning.

Even in instances where, in principle, there is no conflict over jurisdiction, and therefore no reason to invoke arguments of exceptionality, there exist numerous sectorial policies that have been decided at the state level which, according to a range of legal provisions and supported in some cases, as we have seen, by court rulings, override formal instruments of territorial planning. Cases in point include the General Road Plan (*Plan General de Carreteras*), which according to the Fourth Additional Provision of Law 4/1990 on Territorial Planning in the Basque Country simply overrides territorial planning policies; the Water Plan which states, in Article 41, that Hydrological Plans may reserve areas of land for action that is foreseen, making it very clear that this has to be respected by any and all organs of territorial planning; and the Law of Protected Natural Spaces which says that plans for natural resource planning take precedence over any other plans.

These facts serve to drive home our point in this chapter, which is to question the effectiveness of the framework for *territorial planning* within the current administrative arrangement in Euskal Herria in terms of how much power the Basque administration really has to administer its own territory in practice, not just in theory, and to make its own decisions when these conflict with the wishes of organs of the Spanish state or economic interests.

One thing is clear: Basques do not have political power of their own over the planning of their territory in any of the administrative areas into which Euskal Herria is divided at present, and that fact has direct consequences regarding the ability to decide our own future.

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Has the right time come for the creation of a Basque state? If so, why; what would the state of Euskal Herria be like; how would it be constituted; and what do we need to know and understand to be able to address these questions? Towards a Basque state brings together articles by specialists in a wide range of disciplines aiming to help us understand these issues from different vantage points. Together, they speak to many theoretical and practical points, offer keys to a deeper comprehension of the ideological debate, equip us with relevant information and analyses, and go a long way towards transforming the question of Basque sovereignty from an abstract demand into a real, tangible idea, mapped out and given real content. These pages contain arguments which suggest not just that Euskal Herria today possesses the necessary conditions and has the potential to become a successful state ready to take up its place among the nations of Europe, but equally importantly, that this is a development from which every individual who lives and works in the Basque Country stands to benefit.

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