

# Towards a Basque State



citizenship and culture



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# TOWARDS A BASQUE STATE

*citizenship and culture*



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With the assistance of the: Basque Summer University

ISBN: 978-84-8438-422-9  
Legal deposit: BI-1289-2012  
Original title: Euskal Estatuari bidea zabaltzen: herritartasuna eta kultura.

Cover design: Ipar Hegoa Foundation  
Translator: Alan R. King

Distributed by:

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## The Basque State and culture

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## 2. Citizenship, immigration and the Basque state.

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Immigration is directly related to citizenship, the nation and the state, revealing as it does the constructed nature of those categories. Here the impact of immigration on Euskal Herria is examined from this perspective, looking first at the processes of migration to it which have produced the make-up of present-day Basque society to a large extent. This is followed by a consideration of the way migratory movements have been viewed by the movement for the development of Euskal Herria into a state, the Basque nationalist movement, since these attitudes have played a fundamental role in defining Basque citizenship. After some observations about multiculturalism, the chapter concludes with a look at how the creation of a Basque state might contribute to this and the issues that will be raised.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent decades immigration has become a basic area of study in the Social Sciences and above all in political analysis. It is such a broad subject that many aspects have been made the subject of study, but since the nineties cultural issues have received special attention. This has resulted in a great many analyses, approaches and debates concerning multiculturalism. There have also been criticisms which accuse such studies of limiting themselves to providing a cultural response to a situation which has many different aspects, and of only associating multiculturalism with immigration.

When studying immigration we should be aware of this field's many limitations; for instance, subjects that are treated as related to immigration are generally applicable to the whole population, not just to immigrants. Nevertheless, in this chapter I propose to examine the issue of immigration from the viewpoint of a host-society that wishes to achieve its own state, by looking at immigration in relation to subjects such as the state, the nation and the nationalist movement. In this sense the focus of my attention will not be on the immigrant *per se* (otherwise, I would also have to consider the benefits and problems that a new state would entail for the migrant), and when mention is made of the immigrant's point of view it will be in relation to the perspective outlined above.

'Immigration' and 'immigrant' are disputed categories that have been discussed from numerous angles. In the opinion of some, the label 'immigrant' is better avoided because of its negative connotations. In this view (see Bilbeny, 2009), only people who have arrived recently should be spoken of as immigrants. The point of this is to do away with the category of 'immigrant' and just consider such a person as a 'normal' full citizen, without this implying any wish to belittle people's original cultural identities or customs as a result (Zapata-Barrero, 2004). Be that as it may, in this study I will use the term 'immigrant' in a vaguely defined way to refer to all inhabitants who have originally come from anywhere outside Euskal Herria, even when the process of their migration began decades ago.

To begin with I will consider some key concepts referring to the relationship between immigration and the state or nation on a theoretical level, before turning to look at the Basque Country's situation in detail. First of all I will focus on the most salient characteristics of the flows of immigrants to Euskal Herria; then the most significant debates that have taken place in the Basque Country on the subject of immigration will briefly be reviewed, focusing on the main lines of thought and developments in the Basque nationalist camp regarding immigration. Following that, I will examine some of the notions that constantly enter into discussions about contemporary immigration such as 'integration' and 'multiculturalism', and I will conclude by attempting to relate the ideas discussed to the need for a Basque state.

### 1. IMMIGRATION, STATE AND NATION

Migratory movements have many consequences both for the migrants' land of origin and for the destination country. Here I will focus on the relationship between immigration and the concepts of nation and state.

Immigrating means moving to a different state, which has a number of *administrative* effects, such as the actual entry process, work permits, regularization of legal status and so on. But the state is not concerned with this administrative aspect only. There is also an undeniable political facet, and here is where the variable of 'nation' enters the picture.

States typically attribute to their territory a national nature and characterise themselves as a *nation-state*. The state bases its claim to legitimacy on the existence of a nation. There are many ways to understand 'nation', and different elements may be emphasised when defining the nation and specific nations in particular, such as language, ethnicity, history and national aspirations; but in the last resort the nation is a political fact linked to a political goal. Claims to nationhood are not limited to states, and there are many nationalist movements which have not attained to statehood; in many countries there are conflicts between the nationalism of the state and those without a state on this account.

So when migrants move to a state, they also enter a nation. It may be the case that there is no contradiction between the two planes of reality, or that the contradiction that exists is only of concern to a small minority group with negligible social impact. But if there exists in the country a significant nationalist movement which disagrees with the nation championed by the state, a national conflict may be in store; and just as local inhabitants will hold a position on the matter, so will immigrants. But whether or not there exists a movement to challenge the official national project, the state may be counted on to promote its own national project, or to try to do so at any rate, making use for the purpose of all the social institutions at its disposal and unobtrusively taking advantage of a multitude of events that are in the public eye at any given time (cf. Billig, 1995). The state's brand of nationalism is usually highly effective because it is not perceived as nationalism but merely as the result of 'normality'. A nationalist movement without a state, on the other hand, must declare its purpose to the world and its followers must adopt a more dynamic approach to achieve its end.

When it comes to the issue of immigration, the difficulty facing the stateless nationalist movement is evident. Such a movement lacks all the mechanisms available to the state, and comes up against numerous obstacles to its national project. It has been noted that in the power relationship between state-sponsored and stateless nationalism, because of many factors, immigrant groups often tend to align themselves with the former to the extent that this affects the immigrant's life directly and the state is the more powerful player (Kymlicka, 2003; Zapata-Barrero, 2008). However, that is not to say that stateless nationalism is incompatible with immigrants, by any means. Stateless nationalist movements may take many lines on immigration, ranging from those who go on the defensive and adopt a xenophobic attitude to immigrants, all the way to those who hope to win over immigrants to their national project. Likewise, state nationalism may also develop different approaches in this respect.

Continuing on the theoretical level, whether or not it obtains a state, the nationalist movement has a complex relationship with immigration. When nationalism specifies the limits of its nation, it defines the members of its nation — its nationals; and when it does so, it determines who are foreigners at the same time. Moreover, to characterize the national *us*, the presence of a foreign *others* is needed, even if only symbolically (Connor, 1998: 51; Triandafyllidou, 1998).

In this classification into national citizens and foreigners, the immigrant is in an ambivalent position, neither a member of the nation for an utter foreigner either. Complete foreigners have their own nation, but immigrants, living in a country that is not their own, render problematic the definitions of *us* and *others* by occupying a grey area somewhere between *outside* and *inside*. To put it another way, immigration '*adulterates*'<sup>10</sup> the nation-state and draws attention to its historical and social character (see Gil Araújo, 2006: 59-61). The fact is that the two realities, that of migration and that of the nation or state, follow distinct logics, and as shown by Abdelmalek Sayad (2010), each opens the way to a different order of things: the national order and the migrational order, so to speak. Inevitably, the relations between these two logics are controversial.

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<sup>10</sup> Or 'denaturalizes'. Notice that the process of obtaining citizenship of a state is referred to as *naturalization*!

## **2. A LOOK AT IMMIGRATION TO THE BASQUE COUNTRY**

The above theoretical discussion has direct implications for the subject that concerns this chapter, the relationship between immigration and a Basque state. For its application to Euskal Herria, we must first of all review the characteristics of immigration to the Basque Country, listing the principal migratory waves that have affected the country and commenting on their nature.

We shall speak about two very different immigration processes, one coming from the Spanish state, the other from other countries, which have taken place in different periods, intensifying at times and dropping off at others, but both occurring concurrently even now (even though a single discourse and social representation of immigration is discussed). If we are to consider the relationship between a state of Euskal Herria and immigration, I think it is essential to take into account the Basque Country's full range of experience regarding immigration, both positive and negative.

But first of all, a clarification. The analysis of immigration to the Basque Country is made difficult by the impossibility of obtaining valid statistics. Consequently the data given below must be understood only as a tentative approximation. For example, the immigration data for northern ("French") Euskal Herria count citizens of southern ("Spanish") Euskal Herria who reside in Hendaia, just across the official border, as immigrants. This is merely one example of the effects of the lack of recognition of Euskal Herria as a structural entity.

### **2.1. The precedent of Basque emigration**

As is well known, in the course of their history Basques have needed to emigrate to other countries, as is witnessed by the Basque diaspora today. Special thought should be given to the place that people of Basque origin born outside Euskal Herria will have in a new Basque state. Among the world's states there are considerable differences regarding the right to citizenship of foreign-born descendants of their nationals. Let us not forget, too, that all immigrants are likewise part of the diasporas of their respective countries.

Turning our attention to immigrants to Euskal Herria, their arrival in significant numbers commenced at the end of the nineteenth century, and the flow of people emigrating from Spain proper began gathering momentum in that period until it turned into a veritable exodus. It was the beginning of a century-long process (see Ruiz Olabuénaga & Blanco, 1994, for a study of the movements of Spanish immigrants to the Basque provinces of Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa). Initially, immigration to the Basque Country was focused on certain parts of Bizkaia (Bilbao, the Left Bank and the Meatzalde region) which attracted workers to industries linked to the growth of mining in the area; the number of immigrants gradually grew. In addition to internal migration within the Basque Country (many people moved from farms in rural Bizkaia to the industrial areas in search of work), the flow of immigrants, mainly Castilians, from regions of Spain bordering on Euskal Herria grew steadily.

The contrast between the demography of the northern ("French") and southern ("Spanish") Basque Country became more pronounced as a result. While the northern provinces of Lapurdi, Low Navarre and Zuberoa continued to lose their population, in the other areas the situation was now changing. Although centring our attention on southern Euskal Herria, it is important to note that the situation was different in different provinces and areas within the country. In High Navarre, for instance, there was no significant influx of immigrants until the middle of the twentieth century, and even then it was slower than in other provinces (García-Sanz & Mikelarena, 2000).



But an immigration process that would make a deeper impact on southern Euskal Herria began later, from 1950 onwards and reaching a high point in the sixties and seventies. Vast numbers of Spanish workers arrived, first in Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, later also in Araba and High Navarre, drawn by the availability of work in the Basque Country. This took place during the blackest years of the Franco dictatorship in Spain. The immigrants came in their greatest numbers to Bizkaia, the same region that had already had one wave of immigration, followed by neighbouring Gipuzkoa, where settlements of immigrants were dispersed in different places across the province where industrial development was moving fast; here they gathered in scattered urban centres, giving rise to one notable feature of the Basque urban landscape: hastily built working class precincts, chaotic in design, dotted all over southern Euskal Herria, populated mainly by immigrants. This was also the period, particularly in the seventies, when, on a smaller scale, an influx of immigrants to the provinces of Araba (mainly Gasteiz, the provincial capital) and High Navarre took place.

In this cycle, as in the preceding one, and as is usual in such cases generally, people went through hard times and were forced to live in miserable conditions, while at the same time industrialists had a great opportunity to grow very rich. Moreover, these events exerted an influence on the Basque nationalist movement which was taking off again at that time across Euskal Herria and undergoing a profound change of perspective, as we shall see. Another characteristic of this wave of immigration is that it was not limited to male migrants, as is typical of most economically motivated population movements; it involved similar numbers of both women and men (Ruiz Olabuénaga & Blanco, 1994: 154-155).

The tidal wave of immigrants transformed the social landscape of southern Euskal Herria. The population of Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa, and to a lesser degree High Navarre, grew drastically in conjunction with the profound industrialization and urbanization of the country, with people born outside the Basque Country now forming a significant proportion of the population. Thus in 1973 the inhabitants of southern Euskal Herria who were born in the Basque Country and whose parents were also Basques added up to only 53% of the total population (Jáuregui, 1981: 69). The flow of immigrants stopped in the eighties, in the context of an economic crisis, and the migratory trend suffered a turnaround. Fifteen years would have to pass before new immigrants to the southern Basque Country made their appearance in important numbers again, and this time the immigrants had a different place of origin.

## 2.2. The new wave of immigration

Today Euskal Herria has a population of around 3,100,000, fewer than 10% of whom live in Lapurdi, Low Navarre and Zuberoa (the northern provinces), while the highest percentage, 37.1%, live in Bizkaia.<sup>11</sup>

Table 1. Makeup of the Basque Country's population by country of birth (northern provinces: 2008, southern provinces: 2010).

|   | Araba   | Bizkaia   | Gipuzkoa | High Navarre | North*  | Total     |
|---|---------|-----------|----------|--------------|---------|-----------|
| Euskal Herria                                 | 66.6    | 71.2      | 77.1     | 73.6         | 58.7    | 71.5      |
| France or Spain                               | 23.9    | 21.8      | 15.9     | 13.1         | 31.3    | 19.7      |
| Other states, with Spanish/French citizenship | 0.6     | 1.0       | 1.0      | 2.0          | 5.6     | 1.6       |
| Others  | 8.9     | 6.0       | 6.0      | 11.2         | 4.3     | 7.2       |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | 100     | 100       | 100      | 100          | 100     | 100       |
| <b>Absolute total</b>                         | 313,819 | 1,152,658 | 705,698  | 630,578      | 282,003 | 3,084,756 |

Source: Aierdi, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> The figures presented in this section are taken from Aztiker (2006) and (principally) Aierdi (2011). Most of the Aztiker data are for 2001. Aierdi's are more recent: the statistics for Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa are for 2010, and in the case of northern Euskal Herria, for 2008.

\* These figures have been obtained taking into account the whole department of Pyrénées Atlantiques.

As the table shows, Gipuzkoa is the province with the lowest immigration rate, while the north of the Basque Country has the highest rate. (However, there are big differences among the northern provinces. In 2001 Lapurdi was, of all the Basque provinces, proportionally the one with the highest-percentage immigrant population, whereas Zuberoa was the province with the lowest: see Aztiker, 2006: 116.)

The recently discussed influx of immigrants from the surrounding states, and the constant flow from Spain and France following the immigration wave of 1950-1980, has also had a great effect on Basque society, in which it represents about 20% of the current population; and a further 24% of the 2001 population had one or both parents who had immigrated from the Spanish or French state to Euskal Herria (Aztiker, 2006: 117). In short, one way or another, immigration from Spain or France accounts for a part of present-day Basque demographics that is far too large to ignore.

Including immigration to the Basque Country from places not in these two states (the phenomenon to which I shall refer in this paper as 'new immigration'), Araba and High Navarre are the provinces with the highest percentage of immigrants; there are also a significant number (5.6%) of inhabitants of northern Euskal Herria who were born outside France, but who have French citizenship. Another interesting point is that the highest percentage of new immigration is found in High Navarre, precisely the southern Basque province which had the lowest level of immigration from Spain in the twentieth century. It is also notable that the regions that are receiving the highest percentage of immigrants are the southern part of Navarre, around the Tuteria (or Tudela) area, and the Errioxa (Rioja) region of Araba, both of which are basically agricultural areas where the Basque language already had an extreme minority status. The new immigration statistics are also high for the northern Basque Country, no doubt mainly around the coastal region of Lapurdi province.

Given that *officially* only immigrants from places outside Spain or France (depending on which part of the Basque Country one is talking about) are recognised as immigrants, the official percentage of immigrants for Euskal Herria, 7.2%, is lower than that for Spain (12.3%) and a bit higher than that for France (5.8%); it is also close to the European Union average, which is 6.5% (Eurostat, 2011). International immigration to western Europe began to increase much earlier, after World War II, when the influx of immigrants from Northern Africa and Turkey, among other places, began to intensify in France, the UK and Germany. So if we count all the people born outside France, whether or not they have citizenship, their percentage of the French population actually rises to 11.1%, while that of Spain remains at 14%, probably because many immigrants have not yet had time to achieve citizenship (*ibid.*).

A word needs to be said here about the duration of what I call 'new immigration'. How long has this been going on for? In southern Euskal Herria, as in Spain, the new immigration began later than in northern Europe and has risen sharply over the past decade. In Araba, Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and High Navarre, the new immigration started reaching significant levels in the first decade of the new century. The subject of the social image of 'new immigrants' (commonly equated with *illegal immigration* despite the fact that a most new immigrants to the southern Basque Country have legal status) would merit a separate study (Ikuspegi, 2011a).

The main distinguishing characteristic of the new immigration is its place of origin, a fact which tends to lend it visibility, more in fact than the actual numbers. These immigrants are generally from more faraway places than those of the earlier wave, with Latin America providing a major component. The top countries of origin for the southern Basque Country are Morocco (13.5%), Romania (12.3%) and Colombia (9.5%); however, the American continent (mainly Latin America) accounts for a full 42.1% of all new immigrants entering southern Euskal Herria (Aierdi, 2011). This is furthermore immigration with a strong female element, once again with a large presence of Latin American women. Internationally

immigration ceased to be dominated by young men in the industrial sector back at the beginning of the nineteen-seventies, and in some parts of the Basque Country a growing proportion of immigrants is made up of women with occupations in parts of the service sector.

Immigration is generally analysed from the vantage point of the state and it is difficult to obtain data at levels below that. This is particularly noticeable in the case of northern Euskal Herria, because it is not recognised as an entity by official institutions. It can be seen on the table above that immigration from France has made a deep mark on Lapurdi, Low Navarre and Zuberoa, with such immigrants representing over 30% of the total population; adding this to immigration from outside France, autochthonous people now only make up around 60% of the population of the northern Basque Country. Probably most of the immigrants are located on the Lapurdi coast, while in the inland areas the opposite is the case: these districts are being emptied of people. It is an often-forgotten fact, which I believe also merits a separate study, that migration is a very important fact of life in all three northern provinces.

### 3. IMMIGRANTS TO EUSKAL HERRIA AND BASQUE NATIONALISM

Immigration to the Basque Country has been a long process with profound consequences of all kinds for the country's demography, economy, culture, social makeup, politics and so on, which no attempt to understand present-day Basque society can afford to ignore. Since the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the relationship between a Basque state and immigration, we must pause to consider the Basque nationalist movement<sup>12</sup> given that, to some extent, immigration has been one of its driving forces.

National conflict is a basic element in Euskal Herria, with different nationalisms vying for dominance in every realm of life, immigration included. Here the disagreement between Basque and Spanish nationalisms has been more evident in the south (see Zabalo et al., 2010: 37-62) than in Lapurdi, Low Navarre and Zuberoa where, apart from the fact that the situation has its own distinct characteristics, the power relationship was different and the conflict has been channelled into different areas. We will now have a look at how Basque nationalism's attitude to immigration has evolved, although we should note that many factors that have played a fundamental part in it, such as (to name but one) the position of Spanish nationalism, will have to be omitted from consideration here.

As already noted, Basque nationalism has attached great importance to the subject of immigration; this is hardly surprising given the great impact it has had on Euskal Herria. A variety of positions on immigration emerged, but one way or another immigration has been a significant issue for Basque nationalism. For our purposes, what needs to be focused on is the changes in Basque nationalism's views on immigration which have, in the course of a long, drawn-out process, evolved from a closed-minded, antagonistic attitude to immigrants towards a point of view which seeks to integrate them (cf. Conversi, 1997: 187-221).

It is no secret that Basque nationalism was born, under the influence of its leader Sabin Arana, out of a reaction against the arrival of Spanish immigrants. As we have seen, there was an important influx of immigrants to recently industrialized parts of Bizkaia at the end of the nineteenth century. At that point Arana founded the *Jeltzale* nationalist movement, which originally was of a conservative and religious nature. Hence the discourse over immigration had pride of place in the new-born nationalist movement, as indeed in all sectors of Bizkaian society at the time — not only in nationalist circles — where it had become the topic of the day.

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<sup>12</sup> Although *nazionalismoa* and *abertzaletasuna* are sometimes considered different concepts, in this work *euskal nazionalismoa* and *abertzaletasuna* are treated as synonyms [both will therefore translated as 'Basque nationalism' - translator].

Arana developed a hard line against Spanish immigrants, a point often emphasised even today, to the point that it has become a cliché used against Basque nationalism.<sup>13</sup> 'Race' was Arana's criterion for Basqueness, yet he understood 'race' in a special way based on the possession of forebears with Basque surnames without incurring in an explicitly biological racism (Azurmendi, 1979: 128; Conversi, 1997: 68). However, there could be no place in Arana's Basque nation for immigrants, about whom he spoke in very harsh terms.

In a period when the Basque nationalists were no more than a small group, Arana adopted the idea of a 'Basque race' then current in European scientific circles and put it to his own use, proclaiming the Basque nation. Nationalist movements use different elements to delimit their nations, and Arana chose 'race', probably because he found other elements (such as language, for example) inadequate for the purpose (regarding Arana's concept of 'race', see Douglass, 2004).

For several decades the Basque nationalist movement was closed to immigrants, despite the fact that immigrants and their descendants were becoming increasingly numerous in the Basque Country, although in practice exceptions were made, and the 'racial requirements' for taking part in the nationalist movement were relaxed. Evidently, this position seriously limited the movement's capacity to expand its ranks and exert more influence. Other attitudes did start to come in gradually, very slowly at first, then with more success. Examples of these changes are to be found among Sabin Arana's followers, as we see in the declarations of some of the leaders of the Jagi-Jagi movement (Gallastegi, 1993: 110 ff.) and in a new secular nationalist tendency, outside the Arana tradition, espoused by Eusko Abertzale Ekintzak, 'Basque Nationalist Action' (see Díez Medrano, 1999: 104).

But Basque nationalism did not fare well when confronted by the ideologies emerging from the workers' movement, not to mention the negative stigma acquired internationally in the following years by the notion of race. Those effects were to make themselves felt fully a few decades later when, in ETA, a left-wing nationalist movement was born. At the time of the wave of immigration in the nineteen-sixties and seventies, a new brand of Basque nationalism came to the fore which adopted a different definition of Basque citizenship. The issue of race was relegated altogether, to be replaced at first by the notion of ethnicity, later still by language (Jáuregui, 1981: 133-135). The issue of immigration figured large in ETA's internal debates in the sixties: at first different points of view were discussed, but once the movement had aligned itself as Marxist, the thesis that immigrants could be integrated into the nationalist movement triumphed outright. This view was subsequently implemented in practice by the Basque Nationalist Left (*ezker abertzalea*) movement (Garmendia, 1983: 78).

This new definition of Basque citizenship opened the doors of the Basque nation wide open to anyone who wanted to belong to it, on condition that they learnt to speak Basque. This turnaround set going a tremendous leap forward in the tenets of Basque nationalism, and resulted in a radical change in relations between immigrants and nationalists (Shafir, 1995: 112). In practice it also meant a further relaxation of the 'conditions' for Basque citizenship, which now boiled down to speaking Basque, political will, and participation (Zabalo, 2006). The main requirement for anyone to be a Basque citizen was to *want* to be one. Nationalist sentiments were encouraged, and 'citizens' were asked to adopt an activist stance.

The change in the concept of 'nation', then, had far-reaching consequences for the movement's dealings with immigrants. And there was a lot of immigration going on at the time, but now, far from stubbornly refusing to let immigrants in, Basque nationalism had

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<sup>13</sup> It is frequently assumed that the contemporary Basque nationalist movement holds a position based on discrimination against immigrants, a claim favoured by placing undue emphasis on the premises of the movement's earliest years while glossing over its evolution over the subsequent sixty-year period. The same ulterior motive is reflected in claims that Basque nationalism is an *ethnic* nationalism understood in a negative sense.

made a different choice: it actually became an important goal of the new movement to attract immigrants to their cause and, in general, towards a sense of Basque national identification. The integration of immigrants was now a major goal of Basque nationalism (Shafir, 1995: 126; Conversi, 1997: 199). Fundamental to this new development was the left-wing character of the new Basque nationalist movement.<sup>14</sup> And a large number of immigrants did join the Basque nationalist movement (see Garmendia et al., 1982; Shafir, 1995: 114-115; Conversi, 1997: 205). Moreover, this approach, which began in the nationalist Left, would eventually be adopted by the entirety of the broad Basque nationalist movement.

The process briefly outlined here had far-reaching consequences. At a time when survival of the Basques' national traits, in particular their language, were already under threat, the massive influx of Spanish immigrants undeniably exacerbated the situation. Within a large part of the Basque public, the sensation of gradual loss of their national traits was intense (Jáuregui, 1981: 70), and this makes the daring new direction taken by Basque nationalism at that point all the more striking.

So far I have discussed immigration from Spain because this has unquestionably had the greatest effect on the southern Basque Country to date, as well as the most profound consequences for Basque nationalism. As mentioned earlier, in northern Euskal Herria the debate developed in other domains and probably calls for a separate analysis. As for the 'new immigration', this was most notable in Araba, Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and High Navarre in the first decade of the new century, and has had less sweeping effects than the preceding immigration cycle. Given that the latter is still very recent, it can probably be assumed that the perspectives already developed by Basque nationalism on the issue remain valid.

#### **4. SOME NOTES ON IMMIGRANT 'INTEGRATION'**

*Immigrant integration* (Favell, 2003) is a broad concept encompassing the entire, long process that follows an immigrant's arrival in the new country. It is the source of widespread debate and touches on many dimensions of society, including the world of work, social relations, party politics, and learning the language. But let us note that structural integration (especially in connection with social structure and work) is inevitable, unlike political and cultural integration. Integration is understood as a two-way process involving both the immigrant and locals. Thus it is a process that takes place between two groups, but since there is an unequal power relationship between the two, it should be borne in mind that it is an asymmetrical process. Although often used as a synonym of assimilation, integration really implies more than that.

The state plays a fundamental role in integration, both on account of its power to define reality and via its immigration policy. The state's citizenship policy can also serve as a basic mechanism for either integrating or excluding immigrants. Moreover, although attention is often paid in this process to certain characteristics of the immigrant (such as religion, or insistence on maintaining their own customs), the inclusion or exclusion mechanisms (as the case may be) tend to depend on the characteristics of the host society (Gil Araújo, 2006: 64). However this may be done, and leaving aside for now discourses aiming to expel or marginalize the 'foreigners', all states wish to assimilate newly arrived individuals arriving in their country. In the process, the two-way aspect of integration tends to be forgotten and it takes on an assimilationist character, where demands are only made on the immigrant. The bottom line is that it is ultimately the immigrant who is told to 'integrate' into the host society, not vice-versa.

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<sup>14</sup> The Marxist influence is present in the very definition of citizenship, with frequent reference to the 'Basque working people' (*pueblo trabajador vasco* in Spanish): Basque is he/she who lives and works in the Basque Country.

Immigration, then, foregrounds social, cultural, political, demographic, legal and other questions. But in the last few decades, the cultural facet has been accorded a central position in academic studies and social debates about immigration. A phenomenon that is fundamentally social in nature has thus become 'ethnified' (Cachón, 2009: 262), as a result of which issues that have other causes as well (such as class, gender, age and so on) are provided with 'cultural' explanations.

Of late, the various ways in which both states and social and political actors address multiculturalism ensuing from immigration have become an endless source of research topics in countries where immigrants have reached significant numbers. Cultural diversity, influenced by immigration, has increased in the host societies, or to be more precise, diversity has become more noticeable. Many models have been developed to address multiculturalism resulting from immigration, according to the context (since, though not the only 'multiculturalism', this is the one that attracts attention). Until the nineteen-seventies, the major paradigm, especially in the English-speaking world, was that of the *melting pot* whose goal was to integrate the immigrant into the host society's culture (as if there were such a thing as a single culture) in different ways. According to this point of view, the process of integrating into the host society, which was assumed to happen 'naturally', was the business of each immigrant. From the seventies onwards, however, the faults and limitations of that paradigm have come to light, and a positive appreciation of multiculturalism, or cultural diversity, arose. Recognising that the putative cultural homogeneity of the host society is a false premise to start with, this view puts the diversity of cultures contributed by immigrants in a positive light. It is now the standard assumption in most immigration studies (see López Sala, 2005: 77-92).

The main paradigm of cultural diversity, that which has been most studied and provoked the most controversy, is that of multiculturalism,<sup>15</sup> which setting out to achieve social equality and cohesion, places the emphasis on protecting the right of national and ethnic minorities to be different (hence it is not exclusively concerned with immigration), and on the whole springs from a liberal viewpoint.<sup>16</sup> Its message may be summed up as: "We are all equal in sharing the same right to be culturally different."

Multiculturalism is criticised from many angles, ranging from those who think that it undermines social cohesion by promoting differentiated cultural communities (see e.g. Sartori, 2003) all the way to the critical feminist standpoint<sup>17</sup>, for instance. There are indeed many different ways to understand multiculturalism.<sup>18</sup> In any case it is obvious that the issue of cultural diversity does come into the integration process that immigrants need to undergo in the host society. Hence the state also needs to define a position on cultural diversity. The proponents of multiculturalism transcend acknowledgment or acceptance of cultural diversity, elevating it to a right.

Once we get beyond the liberal premise of the state's neutrality on ethnic issues, the diversity resulting from immigration and the diversity associated with stateless nations must be linked, in cases where there is a strong nationalist movement that does not identify with

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<sup>15</sup> Within the field of cultural diversity, there is a paradigm which is sometimes claimed to go beyond multiculturalism called *interculturalism*. It is by no means clear, however, where the line is to be drawn between it and multiculturalism. Interculturalism claims to give priority to the mutual relationship and synthesis of cultures, while accusing multiculturalism of emphasizing the differences and contrasts between cultures. Interculturalism has mainly been developed on the 'micro' level, particularly in the field of education.

<sup>16</sup> *À propos*, Nimni's (1999) criticism is also worth considering. In his opinion, the Left is mainly responsible for the hegemony of the liberal perspective in the contemporary debate over multiculturalism, because instead of adhering to the theoretical position historically defended in the Left (as e.g. in Austromarxism) of accepting difference, it has abandoned this perspective to the liberals.

<sup>17</sup> Feminists argue that the 'defence of one's own culture' implied by multiculturalism may lead to an essentialist understanding of culture and its reification, resulting in a tendency to forget about power relationships (e.g. between the genders) and internal dissidence within cultural minorities (Yuval-Davis, 2010).

From another perspective, Žižek criticises as false liberal multiculturalism's 'acceptance' and 'tolerance'. Žižek furthermore situates those demands within the logic of the global market; in his opinion liberal multiculturalism orients the struggles of minority groups towards *acceptance* rather than opposition to the system (Žižek, 1998).

<sup>18</sup> See Galfarsoro (2012) for a critical review of multiculturalism.



the state's nationality. In such contexts, the classification proposed by Will Kymlicka is taken as a reference point, a distinction being made between two categories, *multinational* and *polyethnic*, to refer to the main kinds of cultural diversity. According to this, a multicultural state will be a *multinational state* if its citizens are members of different nations, and a *polyethnic state* if they have immigrated from different countries, insofar as this difference has personal or political significance (Kymlicka, 1996: 35 ff.). Normally states will be either multinational or polyethnic (or both), but given that each source of diversity gives rise to different kinds of requirements, the distinction is useful.

With this as his starting point, Kymlicka takes the position that the challenge of multiculturalism is to reconcile national or ethnic differences sustainably while achieving that reconciliation in an ethical manner. Thus Kymlicka extends the subject to the realm of rights. The point defended by multiculturalism is that the collective rights of immigrants and other minorities should be recognised. Expressed schematically, he distinguishes between rights to self-government, polyethnic rights and special rights to representation. The first of these types of rights corresponds to nations without a state; the second is consequent upon polyethnic diversity and is therefore associated with immigration. The latter, in contrast to rights to self-government, have as their goal the integration of ethnic minorities into the society. Lastly, the point of special group representation rights, which are temporary rights linked to the notion of affirmative action or positive discrimination, is to achieve institutional representation for different groups, not only national or ethnic groups (Kymlicka, 1996: 47 ff.).

Applying the multiculturalism approach to Euskal Herria, the contributions this paradigm can make to the Basque situation have been debated, not so much from the perspective of the nationalism that already has its own state but from that of a movement fighting to achieve one. Here emphasis is placed on the need to avoid any kind of assimilationist thinking (even when this may be disguised under the term 'integration') and to insist on the importance of taking immigrants' rights and points of view into account. Based on this approach, the proposal has been made to incorporate a proclamation of immigrants' rights into the overall movement to defend the rights of Basque citizens generally, aiming thereby to construct a movement encompassing the demands of inhabitants of Euskal Herria of diverse origins (Albite, 2008).

## **5. IMMIGRATION AND THE BASQUE STATE: BY WAY OF A CONCLUSION**

Immigration is a political issue. The very notion of immigration in modern times, normally referring to migrations from one country to another, is linked to that of the state: immigration consists of movement between states. Citizenship, understood as membership of the state nationality, contrasts with 'otherness': hence with foreigners and, more controversially, immigrants too. But rather than excluding or segregating immigrants, the discussion over immigrants revolves around 'integration', notwithstanding the controversy surrounding this notion; and in this process, the issue of culture has dominated the stage in recent times. However, there is an asymmetrical relationship between the host society and the immigrant, and despite insistence that integration is a two-way process, it is still a relationship between domains whose social position is based on difference.

The political nature of immigration is nowhere seen more clearly than in the case of a national conflict. When numbers of migrants reach significant levels (remembering that this category is a cover term for countless different places of origin, cultures, classes, genders etc.) in countries where a national conflict is being played out, immigration becomes an important item on the political agenda. Immigration services are normally in the hands of the state, with which migrants typically have their first dealings on an institutional level. That being the case, unless the nationalists without a state develop their own relations with immigrant, this may well result in the state inducting immigrants into its own national project, especially if there are more opportunities for social mobility within the nation

associated with the state and its culture. Therefore the public debate over independence in some countries (Quebec being the best-known case) is sometimes linked to the immigration issue, or to be more precise, to this country's need for competence to develop its own immigration policy.

In the Basque Country there is a different situation. Given the lack of competence to deal with immigration (as a matter connected to citizenship and its 'national' dimension), there has been no real public debate on the issue, and politically too, the issue has not been focused on. Discussion of Basque citizenship, on the other hand, gained momentum in the seventies and eighties, at least in the case of the political avantgarde. But today immigration is largely a topic of conversation in other domains, particularly in connection with social issues and, secondarily, in education and language circles.

However, the political dimensions of immigration will have to be discussed in the process of turning Euskal Herria into a state, and when that happens many issues that need to be resolved will be raised including, in particular, the issue of citizenship<sup>19</sup> (conditions for becoming a Basque citizen); the question of cultural diversity associated with immigration (the place for those 'cultures' in different domains of Basque society, such as education for instance); the role of the Basque language in connection with immigrants, and the place for the other languages of the Basque Country (Spanish and French) and of those spoken in it as a consequence of immigration; the treatment and rights of immigrant groups (a discussion on the rights of groups); and immigrant integration (including clarification of the goals that lie hidden behind the word 'integration' and the mechanisms used).

So, a Basque state will have to address different goals regarding immigration, since it will need to serve the interests of all the citizens living in its territory, whatever their place of origin may be. It will aim to strengthen the pillars of the Basque nation, as well as to promote immigrants' well-being and their equality with other citizens. And here it will be as well to bear in mind that *immigrant* is a blanket term and that immigrants are not only individuals who have moved to the country; they each belong to other categories too, such as class, gender and so on. Therefore it is worth pointing out, even if it seems obvious, that all the benefits that accrue to Basque citizens thanks to the existence of a Basque state should also apply to its immigrants.

Every nation that provides itself with a political structure develops its own national immigration policy. And all 'developed' states develop a specific procedure for individuals arriving in the country. Such a national immigration policy will include, among other things, rules and procedures for entry into the state's territory, the acquisition of citizenship and the broad process of immigrant integration, *inter alia*. Some of these matters are of course the responsibility of the European Union in the present case.

Also, the Basque state, like any other, will need to develop its particular policy on migration, which will give Euskal Herria powers and options that it lacks under the current administrative arrangement in which it has no such competence; the impossibility of obtaining certain data for the Basque Country specifically is just one example of this fact. An important part of that policy will concern the immigrant integration process, which it will be possible to design from within Euskal Herria from scratch with clearly defined objectives. Then, for example, unlike now, the Basque language will have a place in that process.<sup>20</sup> Another subject that I have not focused on in this chapter is that of the injustices resulting from present-day policies, but in my opinion a future Basque state should, at the very least, address the challenge of trying to eradicate these, remembering as always that integration is a two-way affair and that it is the job of locals as well as immigrants to adjust.

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<sup>19</sup> This subject is discussed in another chapter of this volume.

<sup>20</sup> One consequence of having a state may be that the Basque language will be treated as a normal part of life rather than as a special feature of a part of the Spanish territory (or French territory, if it were even given that official treatment).



If we want to think about what relationship a Basque state will have with immigrants, it is important to bear in mind the Basque Country's experience with immigration. In this article I have taken note of two aspects of that long, far-reaching process: the major waves of immigration to Euskal Herria starting at the end of the nineteenth century, on the one hand, and Basque nationalism's response to them, on the other.

From the first of these points we conclude that the population of Euskal Herria has diverse origins. Although this is sometimes viewed as a problem, in any case homogeneous societies are actually a myth. Moreover, the makeup of the population of Euskal Herria is not radically different from that of its neighbours. With regard to what I have called the 'new' immigration from overseas, while it is true that the situation is different in each country, the number of immigrants is fairly low in comparison to many European countries, including our immediate neighbours.

In the second place, I have talked about evolution within Basque nationalism on the issue of immigration. I consider this an important topic, because given that the Basque nationalist movement is the force that is driving for a Basque state, the view of immigration developed by that movement acquires considerable significance. We have seen that over the course of time the nationalist movement came to defend, by the second half of the twentieth century, the incorporation of immigrants within the Basque nation. Within Basque nationalism and in Basque society generally, that position provides us with a basis for addressing new immigrations.

Thus considerable experience exists on the subject of immigration in Euskal Herria, and the movement in favour of a Basque state has already addressed the topic, although the great debates took place several decades ago. These may be regarded as strong points for the future state. Contemporary immigration raises some new issues (witness the variety of viewpoints on immigrant integration, for example) which were not resolved in the period of the earlier waves of immigration; these should certainly be pursued, and I believe that the creation of a Basque state can only have a positive effect in that respect.

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