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Luis Mari Zaldúa Etxabe

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Luis Mari Zaldúa Etxabe

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Gipuzkoa in antiquity: languages and linguistic areas in the light of onomastics

Gipuzkoa Antzinaroan: hizkuntzak eta eremu linguistikoak onomastikaren argitan

Gipuzkoa en la Edad Antigua: lenguas y áreas lingüísticas a la luz de la onomástica

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ABSTRACT

Some recent studies claim that a pre-Latin Indo-European (Celtic) language was predominant in Gipuzkoa during antiquity. However, the pertinent information available is scant and often questionable. Here we examine the data that can be drawn from Roman-era epigraphy as well as geographers' and historians' books in a unified fashion and compare these data with medieval and Modern Age Basque onomastics. The purpose is to shed light on the linguistic situation of Gipuzkoan antiquity from a geographic as well as historical perspective. In the same vein, we attempt to verify whether linguistic and archeological data point in the same direction, in order to determine the existence of one or several cultural areas.

Keywords: Gipuzkoa; antiquity; Basque (language); onomastics; epigraphy.

LABURPENA

Gaurko zenbait ikertzaileen iritziz, dagoen informazioa urria eta zalantzazkoa izan arren, ezagutzen den apurra aski da Antzinaroan Gipuzkoan latinaren aurreko hizkuntza indoeuropar (zelta) bat gailentzen zelako hipotesia proposatzeko. Lan honetan erromatar garaiko epigrafiatik zein geografo eta historialarien liburuetatik atera daitekeen informazioa modu bateratuan aztertzen dut, eta hura Erdi Aroko nahiz Aro Modernoko euskal onomastikarekin erkatzen, Gipuzkoako Antzinaroko hizkuntza egoeraren ezagutzan argi egiten laguntzeko, bai geografiaren aldetik, bai historiaren aldetik. Orobat, hizkuntza eta arkeologia arloko datuek norabide bera markatzen duten ikusten ahalegintzen naiz, kultura eremu bakarra edota bat baino gehiago zeuden antzematen saiatzeko.

Gako hitzak: Gipuzkoa; Antzinaroa; euskara; onomastika; epigrafia.

RESUMEN

En opinión de algunos investigadores actuales, lo poco que se conoce es suficiente para proponer la hipótesis de que en la Edad Antigua en Gipuzkoa predominaba una lengua indoeuropea pre-latina (celta), a pesar de que la información existente es escasa y dudosa. En este trabajo analizo de manera conjunta la información que se puede extraer de la epigrafía y la que se puede sacar de los libros de los geógrafos e historiadores romanos, y la comparo con la onomástica vasca de la Edad Media y de la Edad Moderna. El propósito es aclarar la situación lingüística de Gipuzkoa en la Edad Antigua, desde el punto de vista geográfico e histórico. Analizo también si los datos lingüísticos y arqueológicos apuntan en la misma dirección, con el objeto de vislumbrar si había un área cultural o más de una.

Palabras clave: Gipuzkoa; Edad Antigua; lengua vasca; onomástica; epigrafía.

1. INTRODUCTION. 2. LANGUAGES USED IN ANTIQUITY IN THE WESTERN PYRENEES. 3. ANDREARRIAGA STELA (OIARTZUN). 4. PART OF THE ALTAR OF THE HERMITAGE OF SAN VALERIO (ARRASATE). 5. PLACES MENTIONED BY GEOGRAPHERS AND HISTORIANS IN ANTIQUITY. 6. SURVIVING ANCIENT TOPONYMS IN GIPUZKOA. 6.1. Place names of pre-Latin Indo-European origin. 6.2. Place names derived from Latin. 7. LANGUAGE AREAS AND INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM ARCHAEOLOGY. 7.1. Imagined boundary between the Bardulians and the Basques. 7.2. Pyrenees cromlech limits and the Basque language area. 8. SOME CONCLUSIONS. 8.1. The reason for the languages recorded in the inscriptions and those used by the offerers. 8.2. Chronology of onomastic samples. 8.3. Imaginary linguistic areas in Gipuzkoa during Antiquity. 9. REFERENCES.

1. INTRODUCTION

Three inscriptions engraved in stone during the Roman period have been found in Gipuzkoa to this day: in Oiartzun, Zegama and Arrasate. The first one contains features that can be found in Aquitanian onomastics. All the «onyms» in the second one are Latin. The third is an altar dedicated to a god who does not appear to be of Basque origin.

What was really on the Oiartzun tombstone was finally clarified in 1968, although it had been well known since the 19th century. The one at Zegama cannot be read in its entirety. Finally, the Arrasate epigraph was «found» in 2010 in the museum at Segobriga (Cuenca), preserved among objects of unknown origin.

The series of inscriptions with Basque roots in Gipuzkoa is thus very scarce, compared to those found in Navarre, but not in comparison with the epigraphic remains found in Araba, Bizkaia, Lapurdi and Zuberoa, where there are very few names engraved in stone that are not Latin or Celtic.

As for the toponyms mentioned by Roman geographers and historians in their works on the Gipuzkoa area, it must be said that, apart from Oiartzun and Deba, the names they use pose serious problems in terms of location and form, especially because there are no traces of those places in more modern toponymy.

The coins with Iberian script (epicoric signary) which have been found in the province were not made there but, rather, minted in neighbouring and distant places (southern Vasconic, Celtiberian and Iberian cities).

After Mitxelena's 1956 work, nothing has been published explicitly and in a unified way examining the Roman-era evidence in Gipuzkoa in the field of onomastics. According to some researchers today, although information is scarce and on occasion doubtful, what little is known about the linguistic situation of ancient Gipuzkoa has given rise to the view –with varying degrees of conviction– that a pre-Latin Indo-European (Celtic) language prevailed at that time. Some of the authors are reputable experts in the Paleo-Hispanic languages, and their work has been published in widely circulated journals and books. It is worthwhile, therefore, trying to confirm or refute whether the theory they put forward is correct.

Thus, there is scarce direct information, and only indirect sources are available. In such situations the importance of toponymy and the contribution it can make are widely recognised. Thanks to Professor Patxi Salaberri Zaratiegi I have recently had the opportunity to study the testimonies and etymologies of the names of the villages and towns of Gipuzkoa and, of course, there is no shortage of them from antiquity. Firstly (2016), I examined place names with the *-(is)am(a, o)* Indo-European superlative suffix, as well as some names of grazing lands (Bas. *saroi*; Spa. *sel*) of deanthroponymic origin (2018). It is clear that toponymy, as an indirect source, is no more than a helpful tool for researching the languages of the past; at the same time it is no less true that we have no other resources, as long as new, decisive discoveries fail to be uncovered.

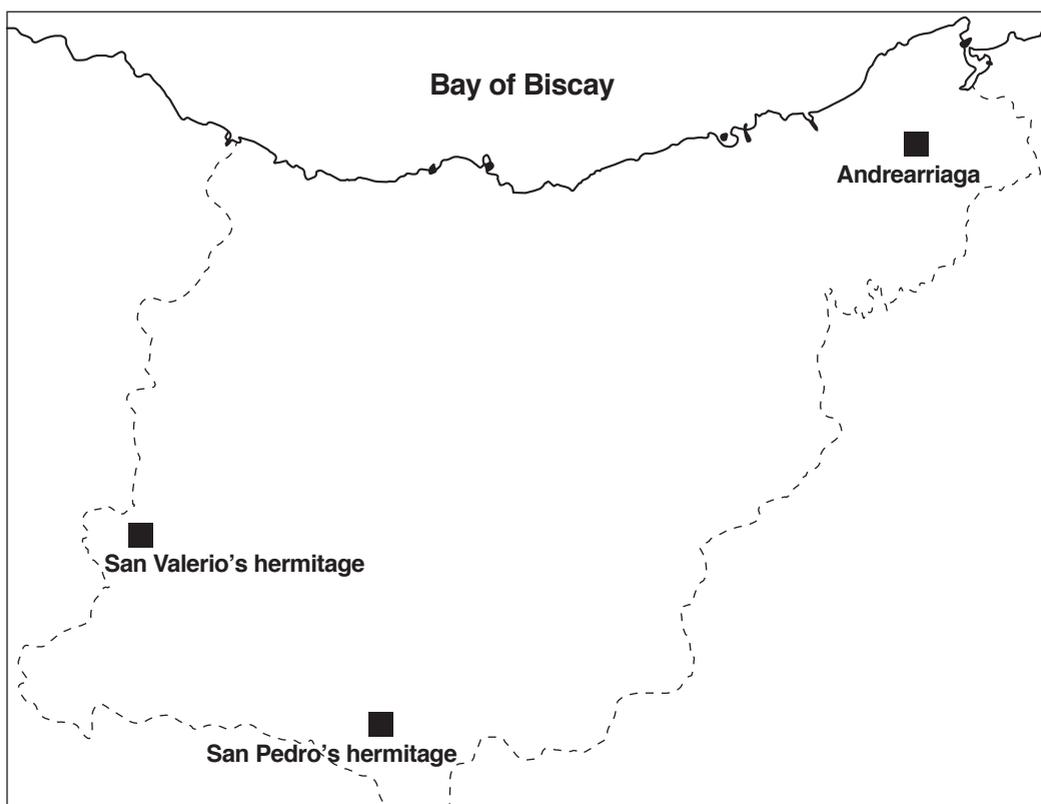


Figure 1. Roman period inscriptions in Gipuzkoa.

The aim of this work is to contribute to knowledge about the linguistic situation of Ancient Gipuzkoa, both geographically and historically. To that purpose I will analyse information that can be extracted from epigraphy and the books by geographers and historians from the Roman period, in a unified way, and compare it with Basque onomastics from the Middle Ages and the Modern Age.

2. LANGUAGES USED IN ANTIQUITY IN THE WESTERN PYRENEES

Little is known about the true geographical extension of the whole of the Basque language –or, if preferred, of the Basque language tree– at the time of the arrival of Latin in the western and southern areas of the Pyrenees, not to mention its characteristics in different places.

In the light of the inscriptions engraved on the stones that have been found since 1960 (after Lerga), it has been verified that the Basque language was widely used in Navarre and at Cinco Villas in Aragon, and probably in the high lands of Soria too. There are inscriptions of Basque origin in Araba, such as the name of the god HELASSE at Miñao, and the anthroponyms LUTBELSCOTTIO and LUNTBELSAR at Durruma, but epigraphy is more abundant in pre-Latin Indo-European anthroponymy. In Bizkaia, on the other hand, there is so far no evidence of names that resemble Basque dating back to the Roman period.

There is only one finding in the Basque Country to the north of the Pyrenees, the name of the god HERAUSCORRITSEHE at Atharratze. That is not surprising, because few inscriptions have been found in the western area of Aquitaine (the Aturri or Adour basin). However, it is well known that in the east of Aquitaine (Upper Garonne) a series of written testimonies to language of Basque origin have been found at Banhères de Luishon¹ (Bagnères-de-Luchon), and especially around Sent Bertran de Comege (Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges; *Lugdunum Convenarum* in the past). Most of the inscriptions in Aquitaine have not been precisely dated, but it is believed that they date from the first to the third century.

What has not yet been clarified is whether the language spoken on the two sides of the Pyrenees was always the same –in other words, whether or not it was divided into dialects– as it is difficult to identify the features using epigraphy in order to establish this (Lerga VM.ME. *vs.* Upper Garonne OMBECCO, Cièr d'Arribèra [Cier-de-Rivière] OMBEXONIS, gen.), and even more so when it is so scarce.

It goes without saying that when Latin arrived, in the district where the Basque language of the time was spoken other languages were also used, to a greater or lesser degree: Iberian and Celtiberian to the south of the Pyrenees, and Gaulish to the north. As to be expected, there seems to have been exchanges between these neighbouring languages.

1 I have written Occitan toponyms in the local language and next to them, in parentheses, their French counterparts.

3. ANDREARRIAGA STELA (OIARTZUN)

Two interpretations can be offered for the personal name *Belteso* on the Andrearriaga stela: *bel-te-so*, or *belte-so*. The basis of the first hypothesis is that the components *bel-*, *-te* and *-so* can be compared with those found in other names with Basque roots from the antique era. The difficulties involved in this line of research, however, are considerable. For one thing, in the onomastics of ancient Basque *bel(s)* is not common at the beginning of the word. After brief examination, it is clear that *-cori-*, *-corri-*, *-gori-* –which have been associated with *gorri* in Basque– appear only in second position; **Cori-*, **Corri-*, **Gori-* do not appear at the beginning of place names: HERAUS-CORRITSEHE, BAICORISO (Belestar [Balesta]) / BAIGORIXO (Uos [Huos]) / BAICOR [r]IXO (Montmajou), BVAIGORIXE (Valentina [Valentine]).

On the other hand, *Belteso* at Oiartzun is the only example of *bel-* by itself (unfollowed by sibilants) in the onomastics of ancient Basque roots. This leads to the possibility that we are dealing with the sibilant-free *sparita* form, which is a relic previous to the addition of the *-tz* morpheme. Another explanation is that what was originally **Belsteso* (with two sibilants) underwent dissimilation, i.e., that this onym bears the same element as (H)ARBELISIS (gen. Cièrp e Gaud [Cierp-Gaud]), LUTBELSCOTTIO, LUNTBEL SAR or BELZCON from the high lands of Soria.

In this sense, it should be reminded that there seems to have been dissimilation between nasal sounds, for example, in HAVTETEN from Sent Liser (Saint-Lizier) (cf. HAVTENSE, Fem., Borderas de Loron [Bordères-Louron]; HAVTENSONI, dat., Fem., Vathcrabèra [Valcabrère]).

There is a third drawback: no stems with laterals in coda position have been found in Aquitanian. Finally, the position of the *-te-* component is also a problem as it is in the final position in all known samples; in other words, because the Oiartzun example is the only one with another suffix (*-so*) following it.

Given the above, and knowing that Aquitanian *-bels-* and Iberian *bel(s)* could be of the same derivation, and that the suffix *-te* exists in both languages, it should not be completely ruled out that *Bel-te* is related to Iberian. One of the main arguments in favour of this view is that in names of distinguishable Basque origin –apart from BELZCON [...] in Villartoso, Soria– *-bel-* does not appear in first position, while it does in names of Iberian origin. It is possible, therefore, that this form is part of a series of components that the two languages may have had in common.

The starting point or premise of the possible second hypothesis (alleged composition) is that it is, in fact, the spelling of *Belte-* **Beltz*, actually **Beltz-so* (cf. *otso* < **hortz-so*?; EHHE-200, pp. xlvi, cxii) or **Beltz-tso*.

Gorrotxategi (1984, p. 302) –in the section about the theonym AHERBELSTE (Upper Garonne)– does not completely rule out this hypothesis. Salaberri (2009, p. 188), in turn, suggests that perhaps the *Beltxo* form could be derived from *Beltz* + *-txo*.

Moreover, *Belcho* is attested as a personal name in the Lizarra area during the Middle Ages, and there is the record of *Belso* as an oikonym in 1726 at Arano (currently pronounced as *Béltsò*). These are some of the reasons behind the belief that *-te* represents a fricative sound in the Oiartzun inscription.

In this sense, it should be reminded that Arano and Oiartzun are not far apart and, therefore, if the inscription *Belteso* really does represent **Beltz-so* or **Beltz-tso*, then the Navarrese *Beltso* should be seen as related to the Oiartzun form. The main drawback of this study, and it is not an inconsiderable one, is that *-te* may represent a sibilant affricate although there is no clear example of that in Basque onomastics (unlike in Gaulish).

Nevertheless, BELTESONIS seems to be a name of Basque origin mainly because it has *-so* at the end, and that is not to be found in other languages: not in Gaulish, Celtic, or Iberian (cf. eus. *-so* / *-txo*). If *-te* and *-so* were suffixes there would be no problem with order, because; in the onomastics of ancient Aquitaine there are names with two endings, for instance *Hautense* (*-ten* + *-se*).

As far as etymology is concerned, there are several possible options for *Belteso-*:

- Noun (*belt(z)-* [substantive adjective, denoting a characteristic]) + diminutive (*-txo*): ‘Blackie’. This hypothesis requires accepting that *-te* is a way of expressing the affricate sound.
- Noun (*belt(z)-* [substantive adjective, denoting a characteristic]) + reference suffix (*-so*): ‘the one belonging to the blacks, associated with the blacks’. *Idem*.
- Adjective / substantive adjective (*bel(tz)* + *-te* [denoting a characteristic]) + reference suffix (*-so*): ‘the one belonging to the dark-skinned, associated with the dark-skinned’.
- Adjective / substantive adjective (*bel(tz)* + *-te* [denoting a characteristic]) + diminutive (*-txo*): ‘Brunette, Darkie, the little dark-skinned one’.

4. PART OF THE ALTAR OF THE HERMITAGE OF SAN VALERIO (ARRASATE)

Looking at the whole onomastic sequence, and what follows it, it may be thought that *Dialco*, which is written on the altar in the hermitage of San Valerio in Arrasate, is the name of a god. As is usual in such cases, it seems that the theonym is declined in the dative and, consequently, *Dialcus* would be the nominative form.

DIALCO does not resemble the names of the Basque gods in Navarre such as ERRENSAE (dat., Larraga), ITSACURRINNE (Izkue), LARRAHI or LARRAHE (Muruzabal Andion), LARRAHE (Iruxo), LOSAE (dat., Zirauki, Iruxo, Lerate), LOXAE (dat., Argiñaritz), SELATSE, SELAITSE (Barbarin), URDE (Muzki) and LACUBEGI (Uxue). To these we can add HELASSE

in Araba (Miñao). Furthermore, the altar in Arrasate does not feature names of Celtic gods such as TULLONIO (dat., Alegría-Dulantzi), BAELIBIO (2), (Angostina) and LEUCINAE? recorded in Araba (dat., female, Comución). The same is true of PEREMUSTAE (dat., fem) at Eslaba. It is necessary to go as far as El Rasillo de Cameros (La Rioja) to find a (Celtic) theonym such as CALDO VLEDICO, with the same ending.

Although *D-* is not common in words of ancient origin, as far as the initial consonant is concerned it is not entirely impossible that *Dialco* may be of Basque origin. However, since it does not resemble the other names with Basque roots that have been found in the Pyrenees to this day, it makes sense to think that the Arrasate theonym has its origins in a language other than Basque.

The dative *Dialco* looks like a derivative adjective («denominal») with the Hispanic-Celtic suffix *-co*, specifically that of an epithet for a god without a specific theonym (noun). What is not clear is whether the proper name that took the suffix is a toponym or an anthroponym, if it is accepted that some epithets of god names are based on place or personal names.

Looking at the toponymy in the north of the peninsula far beyond the Basque area, there is a place called *Dialcabo* –with *Dial-* at its beginning– in the parish of San Fiz de Monfero (A Coruña).

As for the ancient Latin anthroponymy of Hispania, the proper name «*L(ucius) Persius Diallus*» is recorded in Cordoba (CIL II 2239, HE 3922) not far from the Celtic area. Further afield, the *duo nomina* «*Diacoxi(a)e / Meitim(a)e*» (dat., Fem.) is recorded in Austria (EDH, HD057666).

The main difficulty in accepting the *Diallus* group anthroponym as the possible root for the denominal adjective is that there are no examples of laterals preceding the Hispanic-Celtic *-ko/-co* suffix. One explanation may be to think that there had been syncope (cf. Prósper, 2002, p. 323); in other words, originally the name was **Dialicus* or **Dialecus*.

Dialco is not a Roman god, and seems to be of Celtic origin (cf. *Dyau-*; Gorrotxategi & Ramírez Sádaba, 2013, p. 115), but the name of the offerer (*Valerius Tiro*) does not display the usual Celtiberian *idionym + gentility* shape, but, rather, a form of *duo nomina* common to ordinary peregrini.

5. PLACES MENTIONED BY GEOGRAPHERS AND HISTORIANS IN ANTIQUITY

The study of places mentioned by ancient geographers and historians (Strabo, Pliny, Ptolemy...) raises many questions. The first obstacle is that, at least in our case, few toponyms are mentioned, that there is not enough evidence to investigate them as a whole. Furthermore, the names that are sometimes read in the books of classical authors only appear once.

And more problematically, there is the issue of transmission, and the risks posed by the sources used by authors cannot be underestimated. Finally, it goes without saying that what ancient geographers and historians said when they were talking about distant places should be taken *cum mica salis*. In fact, if we leave out the still existing names Deba and Oiartzun (see Salaberri & Zaldua, 2019, pp. 137-139, 275-277), experts disagree on exactly which of the cities mentioned by Roman geographers and historians actually were in Gipuzkoa. I refer to the toponyms *Morogi* and *Μηνόσκα* / *Menosca* in the books of Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy.

Mitxelena (1956, p. 71) emphasizes that *Menosca* has left no trace in toponymy along the coast, and Gorrotxategi (1995, p. 217) considers it an opaque name. With regard to the ending, it can be compared with the Autrigonic *Virovesca* (in Burgos; currently Briviesca) and with *Contrebia Belaisca* in Zaragoza (the Celtiberian city where the Botorrita bronze plaques were discovered), which Pliny the Elder and Ptolemy mentioned. It has been suggested that this ending may be compared with the Celtiberian *-ska* suffix variant (feminine) used to create denominal adjectives (Villar, 2005, p. 462).

Morogi may have more than one explanation. Considering that it may be of Basque origin, it can be compared with the toponyms *Moregi(a)* / *Boregi(a)* (Metauten, Espartza, Legutio), which are based on the component *more*. Iraburu (1972, pp. 332-335) and Mitxelena (1987, p. 475) stated that *more* could mean ‘lake’ or ‘swamp’. However, in order to be able to connect *Morogi* and *Moregi*, it is necessary to explain the ins and outs of the second open vowel of the form as written by Pliny.

The toponym *Morogi* can also be compared to Celtic **mrogi*. Rather than ‘border’, the Celtic word derived from **mrogi* might mean ‘territory’ (Gorrotxategi, 1987, pp. 956-957), and in this respect resembles Gothic *mark* (‘territory’). Matasovic (2009, p. 280) states that in proto-Celtic vocabulary **mrogi* means ‘territory’ or ‘region’, and **morg-* (‘border’) is derived from proto-Indo-European. In fact, the Celtic forms could be explained by Celtic metathesis (**morgi-* > **mrogi-*). Consequently, the hypothesis that *Morogi* was used as an appellation for a specific name cannot be ruled out entirely, taken and adapted from a Celtic language, perhaps from Gaulish. If it were a choronym, there would be no insurmountable obstacle to linking it to **mrogi*, because in Pliny’s text it appears after the phrase *Vardulorum oppida* (the Vardulians’ cities). The main problem is that the **mrogi* > *Morogi* adaptation or shift needs to be clarified, and, unfortunately, no similar case is known in the onomastics of the Basque area.

Finally, according to Ptolemy (II, 6, 9), the city of *Menosca* was on the bank of the river *Μηλάκον* (gen. *Meelako*) where it joined the sea next to Vasconic territory. The only thing that can be said about the etymology is that the suffix *-ko* was used to create denominative adjectives in Celtiberian, as long as we know for sure that the form of the toponym is, in fact, *Meelako*.

It is surprising, at least to an extent, that the ancient *Menosca*, *Meelako* and *Morogi* have no successors or relatives in today’s toponymy, as there are quite old surviving

names (*Zegama...*) and microtoponyms (*Arakama, Arkamo...*) in the province which have the Indo-European suffix *-(is)am(a, o)* (see § 6). There is also a deanthroponymic group derived from Latin.

One of the few ways to know the language of ancient populations is to study the oldest local toponymy. However, when the names cannot be located in space and when they are obscure, of unknown origin and not related to other known names, one should be cautious about drawing conclusions about the linguistic situation. It is especially so when, as in the case of Gipuzkoa (see Figure 2), the places names which may be used are scarce and cover only a small coastal area, and not the entire territory.

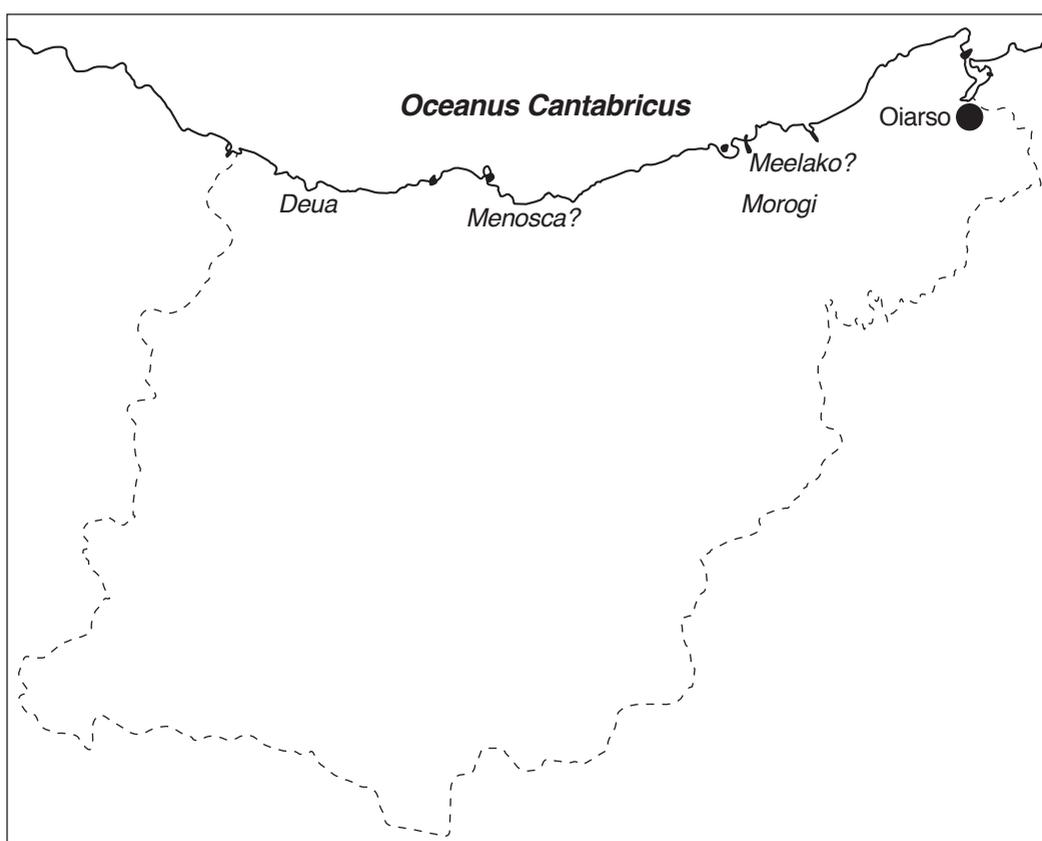


Figure 2. Places mentioned by geographers and historians in antiquity.

6. SURVIVING ANCIENT TOPONYMS IN GIPUZKOA

6.1. Place names of pre-Latin Indo-European origin

Some of the ancient place names that have survived to the present day may provide very interesting information to shed light on times from which there is no written record. I am referring here to those derived from old loans, at least in part because the

shape they had when they entered Basque can be established, and, moreover, we can link it to specific dates.

In order to better understand the traces of pre-Latin Indo-European components in Basque onomastics, in 2016 I published the article «Sobre el elemento indoeuropeo prelatino en la toponimia de Vasconia: los nombres de lugar terminados en *-ama*», and, in 2020, a second article entitled «Latinaren aurreko osagai indoeuroparra Euskal Herriko toponimian: bukaeran *-(iz)amo* duten leku izenak»; in fact, the suffix *-(iz)am(o, a)* is one of the few clear indicators of the presence of Indo-European nouns in our toponymy.

As mentioned in my 2016 and 2020 articles, although they are few in number, there are place names in Gipuzkoa that end in *-(iz)am(a, o)*: *Amiama* (a farmhouse in Gaintza), *Arakama* (a farmhouse in Zegama), *Arkamo* (a mountain in Leintz Gatzaga-Barrundia), *Bedama* (2) (grazing lands in Errezil and Ataun), *Beizama* (town), *Ezama* (2) (farmhouses in Errezil and Tolosa respectively), *Untzama* (a piece of land in Ataun) / *Ultzama* (a piece of land in Altzania) and *Zegama* (village). Note that more than one is in the heart of the province, and several others are in the south.

The linguistic form of some of these toponyms seems to be ancient, especially in the case of those which show the same changes and features that can be seen in the place names of Latin origin which underwent changes according to Basque language rules. By comparison, *Zegama* (<**segh-*; cf. *Sasamón* < *Segisamo*, Burgos) and *Beizama* (<**Venisama*) seem to prove that the Indo-European alveolar sibilant was adopted into the Basque-speaking area as a laminal (*S-* > *Z-*, *-s-* > *-z-*) (Zaldua, 2016, p. 215; Salaberri & Zaldua, 2019, p. 115). In this context it is worth remembering that there are apical sounds in toponyms following Romance language patterns, for instance *Osma* (Gaubea).

Likewise, there are no traces among place names in the Basque area with *-(iz)am(a, o)* of some of the phonetic developments observed in neighbouring Romance languages, for instance vowel syncope (*-Vsama/o* > *-Vsmalo*). In fact, according to Prósper (2018, pp. 124-126), vowel syncope was early in Celtic superlatives containing *-isamo*; moreover, some examples are only found in syncopated form. In Gipuzkoa we have the name *Beizama*, which –unlike the toponyms *Osma* (Gaubea) and *Burgo de Osma*– has retained the postonic vowel.

It is well known, finally, that in Latin toponyms that have evolved according to certain Romance language models intervocalic plosives became voiced and, to the contrary, those that have made their way within the Basque language have remained unchanged. In Zegama, for example, there is a farmhouse (called) *Arakama*, which is cognate with the pre-Latin Indo-European name *Aracus* (Zaldua, 2016, p. 2015) and which, evidently, has retained the voiceless plosive in the intervocalic position.

6.2. Place names derived from Latin

As far as Latin toponyms are concerned, first of all, in Gipuzkoa, as in Lapurdi, we have the name Getaria (lat. *Caetariam* ‘fish factory’). As Gorrotxategi (2012, p. 44;

2018, p. 286) states, this must be an early loan, because the intervocalic consonant is not voiced; in other words, because the change *-t-> -d-* has not occurred (cf. Galician *cedeira*) and because the initial velar has not palatalized, and shows no sign of the shift *ke- > tse- > se-* (cf. the abandoned village of *Girku* at Ubarrundia, Salaberri, 2015, p. 152, and *Zirikuzabal* at Leatxe, Salaberri, 1994, pp. 572-573; < lat. *circu*). Moreover, these two changes, especially the second, were completed before the end of the Roman period.

Professor Patxi Salaberri Zaratiegi has given me the opportunity to study the records and the etymologies of various population entities in Gipuzkoa over recent years, and, as expected, many of them are of deanthroponymic origin: *Aduna* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 25), *Andoain* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, pp. 54-55), *Arroabea*, *Arroagoia* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 338), *Bedaio* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 312), *Bedoña* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 275), *Gabiria* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 184), *Hernialde* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, pp. 205-206), *Lazkao* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 243), *Leintz* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 255), *Mendaro* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 264), *Mixoa* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, pp. 272-273), *Oikia* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, pp. 346), *Orendain* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, pp. 291-292), *Orexa* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 294), *Oria* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 239), *Orio* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 296), *Zendoia* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 95), *Zerain* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, pp. 333-334) and *Zestoa* (Salaberri & Zaldúa, 2019, p. 336).

It is worth noting that these denominations cover a wide area in Gipuzkoa, as well as the fact that they show two features that we have used in the pre-Latin toponymy section, namely the examples with an intervocalic voiceless plosive (*Oikia*) and those which illustrate that the *S- > Z-* adaptation has taken place (*Zendoia*, *Zerain*, *Zestoa*).

On examining local toponymy, and specifically the names of farmhouses, as expected there are a number of oikonyms of deanthroponymic origin in the territory under study. I will mention only those with unvoiced consonants between vowels here:

- *Garikao* in Legorreta (*Garicano*, GipIz., p. 100; < **(fundus, tugurium) caricano*; *Caricus* (EDH HD007895, HD013301, HD015670 and HD045891) and **(fundus, tugurium) galicano*; cf. *Galicius*, Solin & Salomies, 1994, p. 85).
- *Abitain* in Azpeitia (GipIz., p. 9; < **(fundus, terra) avitani*; *Avitus*, Solin & Salomies, 1994, p. 30; see Salaberri, 2000, p. 114).
- *Akutain* in Idiazabal (GipIz., p. 96; < **(fundus, terra) acutani*; cf. *Acutius*, Solin & Salomies, 1994, p. 6; see Salaberri, 2000, pp. 126-127).
- *Garitain* in Olaberria (GipIz., p. 102; cf. *Garitao* in Bergara; see Salaberri, 2000, p. 119).
- *Akoa* in Zestoa (*Acúa*, GipIz., p. 17; < **(terra, capana) accona*; *Acco*, Solin & Salomies, 1994, p. 4).

Some grazing lands with Latin names are also found in Gipuzkoa: *Aiazio* (2) (Ataun, Aralar), *Aketain* (Oñati), *Andurio* (Ataun and Zaldibia-Lazkao (Intsusti)), *Aria* (Azpeitia-Zestoa), *Ariztain* (Zestoa), *Aztio* (Zegama), *Txispio* (Mendaro) and *Zaria* (Oiarzun). The intervocalic plosive in the deanthroponymic *aketain* is not voiced (<*(*fundus, tugurium, capana...*) *aquitani*; cf. *Aquitius*, Solin & Salomies, 1994, p. 20; Zaldúa, 2018, p. 891) and in the case of *Zaria*, on the other hand, we have the adaptation S- > Z- (<*(*capana*) *salina, Salius*, Solin & Salomies, 1994, p. 160; Zaldúa, 2018, p. 893).

The linguistic form of all these toponyms derived from Latin, which is incompatible with Romance languages and unique to Basque, indicates that the local population was Basque-speaking when they were created or introduced. Similarly, as we have seen above, there are no traces of syncope among the place names in Gipuzkoa derived from a pre-Latin Indo-European language (*Ezama*), intervocalic plosives –as in Latin denominations– are not voiced (*Arakama*), and Indo-European alveolar sibilants have been adopted as laminals (*Zegama*). All these place-names with the above-mentioned characteristics are distributed over a relatively wide area of the province and not over a small area on the coast, as was the case of the names provided by the geographers and historians of the Roman period.

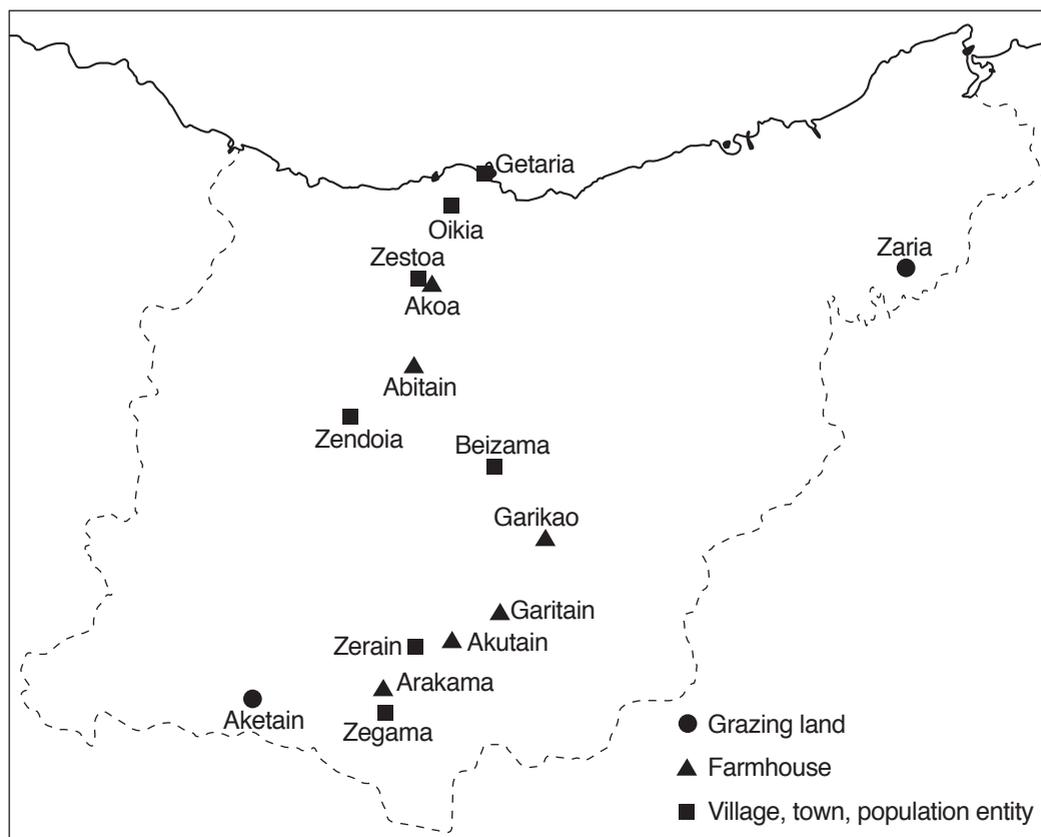


Figure 3. Ancient toponyms in Gipuzkoa that show language form incompatible with Romance languages, and unique to Basque.

7. LANGUAGE AREAS AND INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM ARCHAEOLOGY

7.1. Imagined boundary between the Bardulians and the Basques

Strabo wrote that the city of *Οἰδασσοῦνα* (*Oidasouna*, acc.) was on the border of the Basque territory. Pliny places *Olarso* behind the Basque forest and before the Bardulian cities, and Ptolemy states that *Οἰασσώ* (*Oiasso*) was on the Basque coast. Based on the place names used by these authors (*Morogi*, *Menosca*, *Meelako*, *Deua*), some authors refer to two separate areas in Gipuzkoa, one Vasconic (Basque) and the other Bardulian (Indo-European). In the same vein, considering that Pliny wrote that the Vascons and the Vardulians were in separate *conventus*, some historians believe that those two potential communities had different identities (see Esteban, 1997, p. 58).

There are three distinct areas in the Basque Country in terms of language in Roman times: the area with the most significant Indo-European influence on the names of people and their lands (Lizarra area); another area with an Iberian language and Iberian writing, and a cultural relationship with people in the middle and lower Ebro basins; finally, especially in the central area, a third district with Basque roots in terms of language (cf. Gorrotxategi & Ramírez Sádaba, 2013, pp. 117, 135). According to this distribution, the Andrearriaga stela was located in an area where the language belonging to the Basque tree predominated. No one knows, however, where this imaginary boundary between the Bardulians and the Basques was, much less whether it was ancient or firmly established.

Confirming or supplementing what we know about ancient cultural or linguistic fields with current knowledge of various origins, such as ethnology, archaeology or language, can be a fruitful methodology. Each of those fields might only be able to provide little on its own, but, when brought together, they help to establish a more complete image of a cultural area.

With regard to our area, professor Gorrotxategi (2018, p. 234) tells us that some of the features described by archaeology are consistent with the data and image provided by classical authors, and that the boundary between the Vascons and Bardulians, for example, apparently was on the extreme western edge of the Pyrenean cromlech area. In other words, the possible dividing line between the Basques and the Bardulians in the north-east of Gipuzkoa ran along the boundary of the range of prehistoric stone circles.

Examining this in greater detail, Gorrotxategi (2009, p. 547, 2018, p. 281) states that the Leizaran valley was the boundary of more than one thing. He believes that the Pyrenean cromlech area, with its abundant examples on higher ground, between the Leizaran valley and Andorra –if we only examine the length of the Pyrenees– is the same area where toponyms with the *-os* ending are to be found. Place names with *-os* endings and Pyrenean cromlechs may not be on the same side, but that does not weaken this idea of a boundary because we are examining features and events which are part of long processes.

Therefore, based on archaeological data (the distribution of cromlechs in the Pyrenees), it has been argued that the Leitzaran valley may have been a boundary for cultural Vasconic and linguistic (-os ending) features. But let us examine the question of the cromlechs in the Pyrenees in greater depth.

7.2. Pyrenees cromlech limits and the Basque language area

In the Basque Country, at the end of the Bronze Age, around 700 BCE (1,000 BCE calibrated date), the custom of cremating the dead was widespread, and that custom had come from north of the Pyrenees. The rite was to lay the remains of the cremation (charcoal, bone fragments) in the middle of a circle of stones. On other occasions, a pile of charcoal and pieces of burnt bones were placed at the foot of a stone stele, along with some ceramic vessels, as at Beaskinarte (Aralar) (see Mujika, 2018, p. 108; Mujika et al., 2019, pp. 160-154).

Peñalver (2004, 227) states that the dating of most of them corresponds to the first millennium before the change of Age, and that there is a difference at most of about 840 years between the oldest and the newest; he then specifies that this interval can be extended to about a millennium on the dates obtained by calibration. According to Peñalver (2004, p. 230), the territory where the cromlechs of the Pyrenees are located is 250 kilometres from east to west, and 5 to 40 kilometres wide (excepting *Mendiluze*). In his doctoral thesis published in 2004, he examined 413 (+14) sets and a total of 1,104 Pyrenean cromlechs (+22). He emphasizes that the farther east they are, the higher above ground they are to be found.

New structures and sets have been discovered over recent years. Nowadays, apart from possible specimens at Karrantza and Gorbeia, the northern border of the cromlech district of the Pyrenees is marked at *Baigura* (Ortzaize), *Urtsua* (Kanbo), *Jaizkibel* (Hondarribia), *Mendizorrotz* (Donostia), *Almitxuri?* (Gaztelu), *Ondarre* (Aralar), *Mendiluze* (Entzia), *Iraskardi* (Andia) and *Induriaga* (Zarikieta, Agoitz).

From the south, the cromlech area of the Pyrenees goes as far as Ribagorza, which may be a boundary. One of the most numerous groups in the area is Beranuy and Areny de Noguera (Spa. Arén), located in the Sis Mountains (Montes, Cuchi & Domingo, 2003, pp. 317-323). It should be reminded that in this part of Huesca, although they do not abound, there are toponyms of Basque origin. For example, the monastery of Santa María de Obarra is quite close to the Pyrenees cromlech area (5-6 km), at the foot of the mountain range, specifically in the municipality of Calvera.

On the other side of the watershed, in the region of Occitania (in the department of Haute-Garonne) there are also numerous cromlechs in the Pyrenees near Banhères de Luishon, where many Basque inscriptions have been found. In comparison, at the junction of the valleys of Guelh (Oueil) and Larbost (Larboust), on a mountain called *Mail de Soupène*, quite close to each other, there are the Pyrenean cromlechs *Mail de Soupène / Castera* and *Peyrelade / Sarrat de Cousseillot / Hourtina* (Coutil, 1923, pp. 352-356). Close to them (within a radius of 1-2 km), on both sides of the mountain,

there are several ancient anthroponyms of Basque origin, HARBELEXSIS (gen., Benca [Benque]) and CISSONBONNIS (gen., Sent Avantin [Saint-Aventin]), HANACONIS (gen., Castilhon de Larbost [Castillon-de-Larboust]) and VLOHOXIS (gen., Garin), for example.

The westernmost part of the cromlech area of the Pyrenees is the river Oria. The north-western end of the border is marked by the *Mendizorrotz* Pyrenean cromlechs in Donostia (Igeldo). It should also be borne in mind that since 2012 we know that there are Pyrenean cromlechs in the Aralar mountains. This means that the border with Leizaran must be taken as far as the Agauntza-Oria river. If the extent of the Vasconic (and Basque-speaking) area of Gipuzkoa coincides with the area covered by the Pyrenees cromlechs –and it is accepted that cultural, linguistic and archaeological data can be linked– then there would be no choice but to admit that the Basque language was spoken at least in the centre of the province.

The Pyrenean cromlech area has not only spread to Gipuzkoa (Aralar), but also to those found in the round Bronze and Iron Age structures at *Induriaga* (Agoitz) in Navarre. Mujika (2018, p. 108) emphasizes that the presence of these two finds is due to soft rock (limestone, Eocene sandstone, etc.) in areas where structures are poorly preserved, where remains are difficult to detect, and it would not be surprising if the Pyrenees cromlech boundaries were to widen in the future.

It is widely accepted that at the time of the change of era an old variant of Basque was spoken in some areas of the western and central Pyrenees (up to the Aran and Salat valleys). It seems that in the southern part of the central Pyrenees where there are Pyrenean cromlechs, and the area which bears witness to the Basque language, are the same, including the Ribagorza area. Likewise, there are cromlechs in the Pyrenees in the Upper Garonne (Banhères de Luishon...) where many Basque inscriptions have been found. It is worth noting that on the western edge of the Pyrenean cromlech area in addition to toponyms of Basque heritage there is also evidence of anthroponyms with ancient Basque roots: Mendiluze (Entzia), near the Pyrenean cromlechs LUTBELSCOTTIO and LUNTBELSAR, which have been found at Durruma. It goes without saying that at Oiartzun, near the Andrearriaga stele, there are many Pyrenean cromlechs.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1. The reason for the languages recorded in the inscriptions and those used by the offerers

Although a «new» epigraph has been found and another one's reading has been finally clarified, things have not changed fundamentally since Mitxelena published «Gipúzcoa en época romana» in 1956, as the information is still only secondary, scarce and fragmentary. There is a gap of about fifteen generations between the first samples that can be linked to the old Basque heritage lexicon and the first written passages. Since there

are no texts in ancient Basque, in order to try to characterise the language geographically and historically, or to describe it linguistically, there is no choice but to reflect on the indirect data known to us.

Mitxelena (1954, p. 414) reminds us that dividing a name into components, or examining it as if it were a single inseparable element, can only be accepted when the analysis leaves no residue, or only when each element resulting from that division can be identified with at least another element in a different name that is attested at least once. In order for that identification to be acceptable, it is necessary for both components to be completely consistent in terms of form, or, alternatively, for the difference to be small and, if possible, for said difference to be accountable by a general change (alternation) known from other examples. The larger the pieces obtained after analysis and comparison, the greater the certainty and relevance of identification.

Bel(z)-te-so-n-is* as well as **Belte-so-n-is* (Beltz-so-n-is*) might be the most plausible analyses for the Basque root anthroponym BELTESONIS. By the same token, **Dial-(i)co*, *Meno-sca* and **morogi* seem likely accounts for the theonym *Dial-co* and the toponyms *Morogi* and *Menosca*, all of which are probably of Indo-European origin.

In addition to the «onyms» that represent the names of people and gods, it is important to pay attention to the context of the inscriptions, especially the onomastic formulas and the forms of consecration and offering. In the case of Andrearriaga, for example, given that the patronymic, the local name and the idionym are of Latin origin, it is possible that *Valerius* or *Valeria Belteso* was –although the onomastic form of the inscription was Roman– a *peregrinus*, not a Roman citizen, who belonged to a local family or group by that name.

In the case of the Arrasate inscription, there is no indication of the common Celtiberian anthroponym naming pattern, as the name of the supra-family organizational unit, so important to the Celtiberians, is not given. The same is true for personal names with Celtic roots in Araba and Lizarra area; this feature of Celtiberian onomastics is missing. The offerer of the altar at Arrasate, like at Oiartzun, may have been a Romanized man with a *duo nomina* that identifies him as a *peregrinus*, and not a Celtiberian-style *idionym + gentility* onomastic sequence.

In the case of Oiartzun, someone who knew the Basque language must have had the stele made, but in Arrasate, there is no clarity about the linguistic roots of the person who offered the altar and there is no strong argument that they were Celtiberian. Another question is why they praised a god of Celtic origin. One explanation may be that it is located near a territory (Araba) that had a close relationship with the Indo-European area.

8.2. Chronology of onomastic samples

It is difficult to determine the chronology of the various samples in the field of onomastics, especially the deanthroponymic ones that have survived to the present day,

as they are not described in Roman-era inscriptions and books. In fact, the names of places mentioned by geographers and historians, in spite of various difficulties, can be given a date, and limits can be set to the age of stelaes and the names engraved on altars.

Unfortunately, no reference has been found for the time of all ancient inscriptions in the Basque Country and the surrounding territories. Fortunately, however, in the southern part of the Pyrenees there are many inscriptions that can be dated thanks to the type of letters, onomastic style, ornaments and archaeological context. Not with the same precision of C14-dating, but at least with enough precision to link them to certain periods.

By comparing the presumed dates of the written samples with the anthroponymy, theonymy and toponymy in Gipuzkoa from Roman times, it is clear that the designations of Basque origin are not the most recent; the dates on tombstones, altars, and books do not allow us to believe that they are later than those of Indo-European origin.

Comparing the patronymic of the Andrearriaga stela with the possible ages of other Roman anthroponyms from the Roman period attested in Araba (near Gipuzkoa) and in Navarre (Lerga), there is no reason to think that the Basque anthroponymy of ancient Gipuzkoa is more recent than that of the neighbouring territories.

In comparison, and despite the fact that there are very few references, the opposite is true for the possible age of the inscription on the altar in Arrasate and other theonyms of Indo-European origin in Araba and La Rioja, namely that the altar theonyms in the chapel of San Valerio are more recent than the names of Indo-European gods in Araba and La Rioja.

In conclusion, if the possible date of the patronym at Oiartzun is compared with some of the Roman-era theonyms with Basque roots found in Navarre and Araba, there is no obvious reason to believe that the Gipuzkoan epigraphy with ancient Basque roots is later than those of Navarre and Araba.

All this would suggest a possibility I have been considering for a long time: the onomastics in Gipuzkoa with Basque roots are not newer than those of the neighbouring territories, nor later than those of Indo-European origin.

8.3. Imaginary linguistic areas in Gipuzkoa during antiquity

As there are no traces of Basque in the epigraphy in the area around Oiartzun, some researchers believe that in ancient times there were two districts in Gipuzkoa, one Basque, which held a small territory (influenced by the northern Vascons) and the other, which held the largest, non-Basque territory (and which was closely linked to Araba). In fact, based on the toponyms mentioned by ancient geographers and historians, many current researchers believe that the predominant part spoke a pre-Latin Indo-European language, and not a language with Basque roots (see, for example, Villar, 2005, pp. 503-514; Vallejo, 2006, pp. 202-203; Velaza, 2012, p. 80; Jordán, 2019, p. 44).

A few inscriptions and four or five toponyms (most of them obscure and of unknown location) are therefore the main arguments for questioning the fact that the northern Bardulians were Basque-speakers. As far as the epigraphy is concerned, as we have seen, there are only three indicators, with many other traces of the language and those found on the periphery of the territory. It has been thought that the perceived lack of writing in Gipuzkoa is related to the limited influence of Romanization, but the deanthroponymic series seen in its onomastic heritage does not support this idea. It should also be noted that the possibly Celtic god name is from the south-west of Gipuzkoa. Note that this area is adjacent to Araba, near the territory with a significant Indo-European contribution, and it should not be forgotten that Roman culture was also widespread in that area (as evidenced by the tombstone at Zegama). Accordingly, it is possible that *Dialco* is a theonym which arrived during Romanization, and which therefore may be neither native nor local.

On the other hand, the few potential Indo-European toponyms mentioned by classical authors cover not the whole province, but a small area of the coast. Two of the place names mentioned by ancient geographers, Deba and Oiartzun, are still extant at opposite ends of the province. The first is Indo-European and the second is of Basque origin. It is noteworthy that the rest of the place names (*Morogi, Menosca...*), which are considered to be of Indo-European origin, have no successors, even more so when there are quite old place names of Indo-European origin (*Zegama, Beizama...*) in Gipuzkoa today. There is also the name of the town *Getaria*, an early surviving loan. Moreover, no one knows where the places named by those Indo-European toponyms were located: even though they were of the same importance as Oiarso, no trace of them not been found. Finally, we must not forget that there are direct and indirect testimonies of Basque from the Roman period on the coast, the place names Oiartzun or Getaria, for example.

If the Bardulians, or rather the Gipuzkoans who lived in the north-east were Celtiberians –as in Araba– why are there no inscriptions in Celtiberian language, and why are there no traces of the onomastic form used by the Meseta community in the inscriptions, especially in Arrasate? There is no epigraphy with Basque roots above the line between Atharratze-Sorholüze (HERAUSCORRITSEHE) and Izkue (ITSACURRINNE) (in northern Navarre and Lapurdi); the only exception is Andreaarriaga. If desired, that line can be taken as far as Durruma (LUTBELSCOTTIO, LUNTBELSAR) - Miñao (HELASSE). However, few doubt that in ancient times a language with the Basque roots predominated in the upper part of the Basque territory, in the North.

Based on the epigraphy and the toponymy used in classical sources, it is difficult to defend the premise that Gipuzkoa was not Basque-speaking in antiquity. It seems quite clear that Basque was spoken in the north-east of the province, as the toponym (coronym?) Oiarso and the stela of Andreaarriaga suggest. However, there is no difference or limit, either cultural or physical, between this area and the rest of Gipuzkoa allowing us to argue that the two areas had different languages, A clear example of this is the present-day toponymy, both with Basque roots and whose origins are loans.

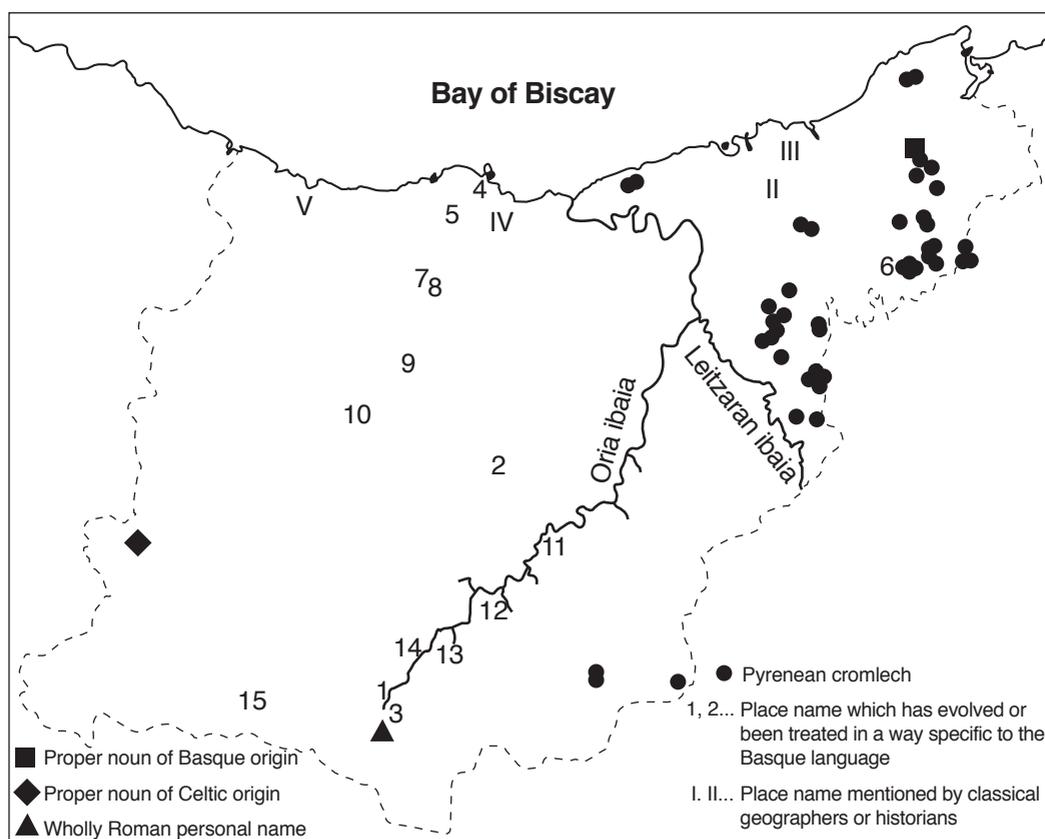


Figure 4. Ancient onomastics and Pyrenean cromlechs in Gipuzkoa.

In fact, the linguistic treatment or evolution of some place names with Indo-European suffixes *-(is)am(a, o)* or Latin deanthroponymic suffixes, which is incompatible with Romance languages and inherent or internal to Basque, quite clearly shows that, when these designations were created or arrived from elsewhere, a Basque root language was prevalent in the area. In other words, the local community spoke Basque, because the forms we have today cannot be explained without the presence of Basque speakers from the very beginning. Similarly, information from the field of archaeology –such as the distribution of Pyrenean cromlechs– does not help to defend «the north-east *vs.* the rest of the territory» distinction. With this in mind, it is possible to think that, in fact, the main argument for stating that Gipuzkoa was Indo-European in language is that it is next to Araba, which is a territory with clear Indo-European influence. Those who claim an Indo-European (Celtic) presence, however, do not take into account that it is also close to the northern part of Navarre, which is considered to be Basque in terms of language, nor that there are ancient anthroponyms of Basque heritage in Araba (Durruma) very close to Gipuzkoa; Miñao is not so far away either.

In the light of the available data, there is not enough reason to support the hypothesis of two linguistic Gipuzkoas. I am not saying, nor do I mean, that the province did not

receive Indo-European influence. The contrary would be surprising: what is expected is to be influenced by the major cultures of the time, as shown by the traces of Latin. It is clear that Gipuzkoa had relations with the north of the Iberian plain, and this also affected the language.

However, the basis for something is one thing, and surface another. In Gipuzkoa, in the light of present-day data, the contribution of languages of Indo-European origin is a layer on top, not on the bottom. In other words, it seems that in ancient times Basques lived in Gipuzkoa, and that the Basque language (or its root) did not arrive here during the first centuries of our era.

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2 I only give the references mentioned in this synthesis, not all of the ones used as sources.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

- acc.: accusative.
dat.: dative.
fem: female.
Bas.: Basque.
Spa.: Spanish.
gen.: genitive.
cal.: calibrated date.
BCE: Before the Common Era.
Lat.: Latin.

