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## Bilbao: Basque Pathways to Globalization

By: *Gerardo del Cerro Santamaría*

*The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York, USA*

A volume in the new Current Research in Urban and Regional Studies series



The gleaming Guggenheim Museum Bilbao has put the Basque capital on the map of world cities and has exacerbated optimism among public officials worldwide about the role of spectacular architecture in urban renewal. This book - a theoretically-informed case study and a major synthesis of Bilbao's developments through the lens of globalization - analyzes the Guggenheim project as the latest of Bilbao's globalization efforts, puts the project in the context of Bilbao's decades-long transformation and contends that Bilbao's positive economic performance since 1994 is not fundamentally due to the success of Frank Gehry's building, but rather to a complex array of causal processes that must be understood in the context of Bilbao's connections with the world economy and a changing world-system.

The author argues that globalization processes in Bilbao are as old as the city itself and that the role of the State must be taken into account in order to explain the city's changing fortunes throughout the years. Globalization itself ought to be understood as a complex and variable network-like process with multiscale nodes, an approach which is carefully theorized and empirically developed in this book.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gerardo del Cerro Santamaría, born in Spain and a long-time observer of urban and Basque affairs, teaches at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City. He specialized in urbanism and political economy with Janet Abu-Lughod, Manuel Castells, and Diane Davis, holds Ph.D.'s from the New School for Social Research and the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, and has published on urban issues in Spain and the United States.

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"In a remarkable achievement, Del Cerro has written a stunning history of the special semi-independent politics and enviable entrepreneurial talents that enabled the city to adapt from its initial trade, shipping, mining, and manufacturing functions to international banking, services, and culture. This well-documented case study makes a vital contribution to global city studies, now moving at last beyond premature generalizations to variations in contexts and agency "

**Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *New School for Social Research, USA***

"Gerardo del Cerro raises the methodological and analytical bar in studies of globalization through this insightful and finely-crafted historical study of Bilbao. Far from confining his research to the relations between the local and the global... del Cerro builds powerful claims around a nuanced analysis of the mediating role that Basque regionalism and the Spanish nation-state play in establishing Bilbao's global trajectories. This book's appreciation for history and the complexities of scale make it one of the more sophisticated studies of globalization available today."

**Diane E. Davis, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA***

"The singular achievement of Gerardo del Cerro's book is to provide a convincing explanation--based on a subtle and detailed historical sociology--of what has come to be known as the 'Bilbao effect'. He provides critical insights on the role of proactive globalizing politicians, bureaucrats and professionals in marketing their city, locating this in its proper historical context, and showing how in this aspect of capitalist globalization as in most others, there are winners and there are losers."

**Leslie Sklair, *London School of Economics and Political Science, UK***

"Bilbao: Basque Pathways to Globalization gives a clear and comprehensive explanation of the role of cities in a globalized world. This book is remarkable for the display of criticism that combines historical knowledge and socio-economic analysis to produce a coherent whole. In developing his innovative approach, the author has built upon some of the best insights that have been proposed during the last years in this rapidly-changing field."

**Miguel Beltrán, *Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain***

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5. Basque and Caucasian (or the hypothetical Mediterranean substratum related to them). influenced AA before its disintegration. 6. AA influenced Basque and Caucasian before their disintegration. 7. Basque (related to Caucasian) influenced Berber. I will now apply these criteria of the genetic classification of Basque and the question of whether Basque is closer to Afro-Asiatic or Caucasian:

Morphology: On several counts the morphology of Basque is more consistent with Caucasian than with Afro-Asiatic. In nominal morphology there is no trace in Basque of the AA two-gender system with -(a)t as a marker of the feminine gender.<sup>2</sup> There is no grammatical gender at all in present-day Basque, but I have proposed that the existence of some apparent fossilized prefixes (\*i-/e-, \*u-/o-, \*bi

The Basque Country is subdivided into three provinces. Bilbao is the main city and capital of the province of Bizkaia (in Basque) or Vizcaya (in Spanish) (Fig. 2).<sup>1</sup> The metropolitan area of Bilbao (Bilbao Metropolitana) is formed by the City of Bilbao and several surrounding municipalities.<sup>2</sup> In 2005, the City of Bilbao had 350,000 inhabitants and the metropolitan area 900,000 inhabitants. Urban history Bilbao emerged as a small trading and fishing village in medieval times. Del Cerro Santamaría, G (2007) Bilbao: Basque Pathways to Globalisation, Oxford: Elsevier. Domingo, M (2005) Vivienda obrera en Bilbao y el bajo Nervión: Las casas baratas, una nueva forma de alojamiento (1911-1936), Doctoral thesis, Universitat de Girona.