

MUGAZ GAINDI 2008 CONFERENCE.
Bakersfield, October 22 – 24

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Proposal of Agreement to Collaborate on Basque Studies.

Amidst homogenization in the global village, the Basque culture is unique in its capacity for survival. It symbolizes the importance of diversity in an increasingly uniform world. Basque culture survives, as it has throughout history, while integrating and interacting with other cultures. Basque language, an essential landmark of Basque culture, is an isolate language, but Basque culture does not stand isolated, nor does it want to. Basque communities desire to co-exist and co-evolve while preserving the legacy of their unique identity. Their numbers are few, the homeland is small and Basque influence in the world is limited. Moreover, it remains partly hidden; its presence is under-documented and not officially well recognized. It is a minority culture and its people recognize it, yet they exemplify a profound legacy of uniqueness and the will to survive of a tradition centuries in the making.

Nevertheless, Basque culture has matured enough to produce a reputable academic discourse, research and knowledge. This body of work is shared with the rest of the world as an example of the richness of cultural visions and offers the Basque themselves a more conscious understanding of their own identity.

Today, we recognize the efforts of those pioneers that have done this work: these individuals created a foundation upon which we hope to build. However, much work remains. Individually we have been deeply committed to the study of Basque language, culture and history, yet we realize in order to bring Basque Studies to the level it deserves, we must work together.

Therefore, with the goal of propelling Basque Studies to a broader, deeper and more enduring stage of development, we agree to:

- Work together to develop an ongoing network of collaboration to implement the study, research, teaching and diffusion of Basque language, culture and history.
- Pursue the commitment of academic institutions to initiate, develop and collectively enhance Basque Studies in our campus programs.
- Promote the development of supporting organizations and programs for Basque Studies, such as the Basque Studies Consortium.
- Attract government agencies, Basque communities all over the world, public or private institutions and individuals to the shared goal of bringing Basque Studies to a higher level of quality and excellence.

NAME

INSTITUTION

SIGNATURE