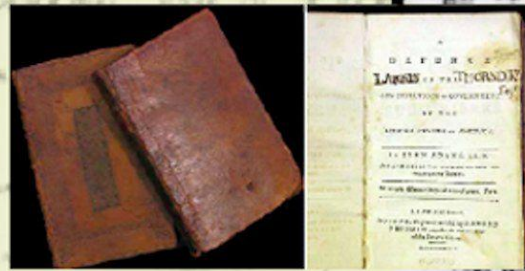


John Adams A Visit to Bilbao and the US Constitution



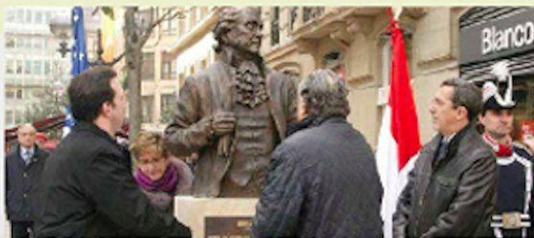
John Adams (October 30, 1735 – July 4, 1826) was the second president of the United States, and is known as one of the fathers of the Constitution of the United States of America. Adams was the first vice president of the republic and served two terms under the presidential mandate of George Washington. He was the second president of the United States from April 4, 1797 until March 3, 1801. His vice president and rival, Thomas Jefferson, defeated Adams in his bid for a second term as president and won their party's nomination for president in the elections of 1801.

In 1776 Adams joined the committee that drafted the Declaration of Independence. Three years later he worked on the Massachusetts Constitution and so his position as one of the founding fathers of the United States of America was assured by 1787. In the late 1770s, in his position



as Minister Plenipotentiary, Adams traveled to Europe in order to find constitutions and laws that would serve him in designing what would later become the American Constitution of 1787.

The search for constitutions brought Adams also to the Basque Country. His stay in Bilbao is reflected in his book *A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States*, (1787), where he cites Biscay and its capital Bilbao as having a prominent place in the republic democracies of Europe. He speaks of Bilbao as the capital of the Republic of Biscay, and that while part of Spain, was totally self-governing and independent.



Statue of John Adams in Bilbao