

The Making of an Enlightened Ruling Class. Basque and Navarrese Elites in the Educational System of the Spanish Monarchy (1717-1808)¹

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Abstract: During the 18th century, the Bourbon dynasty promoted and created an array of educational institutions that would serve its own reformist project by training its military and political agents. This paper approaches this educational system through four of its most important centres: the Naval Officer's Royal Academy, the Noble's Royal Seminary, the Royal Academy of Artillery and the Royal Patriotic Seminary of Vergara. The prosopographical analysis of the pupils is the empirical foundation and the core of our work. For the sake of detail, we focus on the Basque and Navarrese students that attended these institutions, who were part of a broader elite closely linked to the Spanish state-building process. Many of the region's most important families, the ones controlling the regional political space, sent their children to these academies while they took important careers in the imperial political structures. Moreover, our work shows these families' role in transmitting reformist ideas in their local communities. Therefore, our approach stresses the need to analyse education not in an isolated way, but in close relation with the other elements of the system.

Keywords: Elites; Education; Enlightenment; Spanish Empire; Prosopography.

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1. Introduction

In an excellent synthesis of the 18th-century Spanish history, Antonio Domínguez Ortiz (1976) argued that ‘The Enlightenment was the spiritual adventure of several thousand Spaniards’, concentrated ‘around the royal court and various mercantile cities’, where ‘foreign people, ideas and writings were easier to come by’. It is true that there were some ‘curious souls who thirsted for novelty even in the most remote [and peripheral] locations’ (p. 494) but, in Domínguez Ortiz’s opinion, outside these focal points (the great cities and the royal court), novelties were as a rule received with surprise and incomprehension. This idea, that the attitude in a handful of Enlightened strongholds was in sharp contrast with that attested in the periphery, is often reproduced. Recent publications have, however, argued for a replacement of this old paradigm with a new one according to which ‘access to novelties depended not so much on location as on the closeness of connections (...) with the circles in which the changes were taking place’ (Imízcoz, 2017). This means that we should pay less attention to geography than to the connections of social actors with Enlightened circles, which would explain how examples of people who were well-attuned to the changes shaking the western world in the 18th century can be found in locations that were far away from the economic and political centres of the Monarchy, and which were characterised by strongly traditional cultural milieus.

This issue may seem unimportant for the matter at hand. However, we bring it to the fore in order to embrace a perspective which, although not new, has rarely been applied: namely, that which underlines the relationship of education with other political and social variables (Nava, 1991). It is a known fact that education played a crucial role in 18th-century reformist projects; the foundation of new educational institutions was at the centre of the Bourbon reforms (Sarrailh, 1979). The relationship between the absolutist project and Enlightened initiatives has led some authors to argue that these enterprises were nothing but a way to consolidate the power of the Crown, and that, as a result, they cannot be justifiably regarded as truly reformist in nature (Sánchez-Blanco, 2002). Other authors, however, stress the highly innovative character of the Spanish Enlightenment (Astigarraga, 2015).

It is obvious that many Enlightened initiatives were part and parcel of the process of state-building launched by the Bourbons. However, if too much focus is laid on this idea, we shall lose sight of the actors that populated the circles in which the new political class was being hatched – circles in which new educational centres played as important a role as the royal academies, the press or the *tertulias* [T.N. informal debating forums]. Our perspective is situated at the intersection between two inseparable elements: on the one hand, the political, cultural and economic transformations sponsored by the 18th-century reformist Monarchy; and on the other, the family groups most closely related with the construction of the first Spanish state apparatus. From the perspective of these groups, the use of educational institutions as mechanisms of social reproduction becomes clear. However, if the stress is laid on the Crown, the will to create new elites – endowed with technical and scientific knowledge – with which to fill the reformist cadres also becomes self-evident. This was a mutually beneficial relationship.

In this regard, we are particularly interested in those institutions that most clearly fulfilled this function, the *Reales Seminarios de Nobles* (Royal Schools for the Nobility) and the military academies, elite centres which were closely linked with the Crown and in which the breach from past practices was most evident (Imízcoz and Chaparro, 2013). In this work, we shall focus on four institutions that played a particularly important role in the educational structure set up by the Monarchy: the *Real Academia de Guardiamarinas* (Royal Midshipman Academy), the *Real Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid, the *Real Colegio de Artillería* (Royal Artillery College) of Segovia and the *Real Seminario Patriótico* (Royal Patriotic School) of Vergara. This choice of subject, as well as a general introduction to the innovative character of these institutions, will be addressed in the first section.

In the following two sections, we shall scale down the investigation, a necessity given the kind of analysis that we are trying to achieve, in order to gather detailed information concerning the actors involved in these institutions. This detailed analysis shall concentrate on students from the Basque provinces and Navarra, two regions that greatly contributed to the production of elites for the reformist project of the Bourbons.

As previously noted, education cannot be divorced from other variables. For this reason, the third section analyses the family environment of students, in order to outline their links with other circles of the reformist Monarchy. As pointed out by Nuria Valverde (2007), the scientific advances and intellectual debates that took place in these centres had a considerable influence on the emergence of the new political and ideological paradigms being followed by small elite groups. The actors that populated these milieus were part of a limited set of relations in which a new society was being crafted.

2. The educational structure in the context of the Bourbonic state-building process. The formation of state cadres

The educational institutions sponsored by the Crown in the 18th century cannot be understood outside a much broader context. We need to examine them in relation to the institutional network which aimed to extend royal power to all areas from which it had hitherto been absent. Three political phenomena converged in the first half of the 18th century: absolutism, regalism, and administrative reform. In practice, these three ideas had to overcome the obstacles posed by intermediate institutions, especially the Church and the polysynodial political regime, to the development of the state's executive apparatus (Rivera, 2002).

Slowly, throughout the first half of the century, education took the centre stage, although this cannot be dissociated from the economic and administrative reforms (Milano, 2017). However, in order to fully grasp the nature of the Bourbon-sponsored educational institutions, we must explain the background against which this reform was deployed. The Monarchy was largely governed by tradition. The state, as we understand the concept today, was but one of the components of this order, itself a medley of autonomous organisations, with the role of the king being limited to arbitration in case of conflict (Descimon, Schaub and Vincent, 1997; Garriga, 2004).

Throughout the 18th century, the Crown slowly dissolved the barriers posed by this order and expanded its range of action through a deep reconfiguring of the structures of government (Dedieu, 2011). First, it created an executive ministerial framework which revolved around specialised secretariats. Their function was to effectively implement the Court's directives at the expense of the existing corporate system of intermediate institutions. This policy was in open conflict with the contractual jurisdictional apparatus embodied by *Consejos*, magistrates and universities; institutions defended by those sectors that had not joined the path of reform.

The army, also the subject of deep reforms, was the second pillar of the reformist policies. The Crown began to train its own officers. Thereafter, army and navy officers had to come from the military academies created by the Crown, and promotions would be strictly regulated. The army became an increasingly technical body, especially the so-called 'wise arms' (engineers, artillery officers and seamen). A small but significant sector of the army became the source of scientists, professors, reformist thinkers and Enlightened rulers, all of which were convinced of the public value of education (Herrero, 2016).

The creation of the figure of the midshipman in 1717 responded to the need to breed new officers with which to staff the changing military structures. The foundation of their academy, therefore, sought to form a service nobility. Understood as a taking a step towards a naval commission, the students in Cádiz received a double form of training: in the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* they were taught scientific-technical subjects, while in the *Compañía de Guardiamarinas* they received their military training. In 1718, in a directive for the government, the king said that the foundation of the Academy aimed to 'train the nobility of the realm to serve in My Army and Navy, adorned with scientific and mathematical knowledge (...), geometry, trigonometry, cosmography, the art of navigation, manoeuvres, fortification, artillery theory, and shipbuilding' (Ortega-del-Cerro, 2018, 53).

The service, therefore, required training in a number of subjects which were outside the usual range of aristocratic education. By establishing a single training model, the institution was breaking ground, well ahead of the remaining arms, which did not follow its example until much later. The professionalisation of midshipmen – that is, that all navy officers had to be graduate midshipmen – was achieved in the 1770s. Following this professionalisation, branches of the *Compañía* were opened in Cartagena and El Ferrol (Ortega-del-Cerro, 2018, 55-61).

Similarly, the *Real Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid, founded in 1725 after the model of the college of Saint Louis, in Paris, aimed to educate the nobility so they could serve 'the motherland with credibility and usefulness'². This elite research and education centre was entrusted to the Society of Jesus, and was located in the facilities of the Jesuit's Imperial College of Madrid. The school's first regulations, published in 1730, declared that the aim of the foundation was for 'Spain's nobility [to receive] a good education', the formation of 'Christian gentlemen' through the study of religion, grammar, rhetoric, poetry, French, Italian, Greek, geography and,

² *Novísima Recopilación de las leyes de España*. Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1805, lib. VIII, tit. III, ley I.

for those who wished to continue further, logic, philosophy, metaphysics and canon law. Several typically aristocratic skills were also included, such as music, dancing, fencing and horse riding³. The curriculum combined these traditional skills with novel fields of knowledge, including experimental physics, mathematics and geometry (Soubeyroux, 1995). By the mid-18th century, Ferdinand VI considered that the level of training achieved by the institution merited a reward; thenceforth, graduating from the school was to be considered a bonus for accessing administrative posts, and students with mathematical training were to be admitted in any regiment, should they wish to begin a military career (Valverde, 2017). In this way, the place of the school in the formation of the State's elite and the reproduction of the Crown's service cadres was guaranteed.

This position was consolidated even further in the second half of the century, after the expulsion of the Jesuits. On the one hand, the Crown suppressed an intermediary in the management of the centre; on the other, the appointment of Jorge Juan as director gave the centre a more technical edge. His appointment was followed by an increase of empirical subjects in the curriculum, at the expense of the humanities (Peset, 1981), or, in other words, by 'the choice of arms over letters, in contrast with the prevailing practice at the universities' (Soubeyroux, 1995, 212). Although this further turned the school into an agent of modernisation, it did so by giving the Crown an even greater role in it, as expressed in the king's wish to give nobles 'all that is necessary to ensure that one day they can be of use to me'⁴.

But, what nobility are we talking about? Pablo Ortega del Cerro (2018) has rightly pointed out the need to distinguish between nominal and real nobility, with which actual power rested. We know that the *Academias* and *Seminarios* progressively incorporated elements from mercantile circles, without this having a detrimental effect on their aristocratic nature (Andújar, 2014). Similarly, we need to distinguish between conservatively traditional groups, for which these educational institutions were little more than an outlet for later-born sons (like a career in the church), and other groups that were more closely connected with the state-building process (Ortega-del-Cerro, 2015).

Concerning midshipmen, it seems clear that the Monarchy deliberately avoided attracting major Castilian families and grandes, preferring a middling nobility closely tied to the Crown (Ortega-del-Cerro, 2018). The *Colegio de Artillería* of Segovia, a first-rate scientific centre, was to recruit 'the noble and distinguished youth of this realm', which, after learning 'the sciences pertaining to the Artillery academy, [could] become useful subjects to [the king's] service' (cit. Herrero, 1990, 109). Again, the high nobility was intentionally avoided; minor and mid-level aristocrats, willing to commit fully to the Crown, were much preferred.

The *Real Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara, founded in 1776 with the support of the elites that endorsed the Crown's reformist efforts, was the embodiment of the educational project of the *Real Sociedad Bascongada de Amigos del País* (RSBAP) (Royal Basque Society of Friends of the Country). This institution tried

³ *Constituciones del Real Seminario, fundado en el Colegio Imperial de la Compañía de Jesús de Madrid*. Madrid: Gabriel Barrio, 1730, pp. 4-5, 13, 39-42.

⁴ *Constituciones del Real Seminario de Nobles de Madrid*. Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1799, pp. 3-4.

to give its teaching a practical and empirical edge, combining traditional subjects with practical training in such fields as commerce, chemistry, mineralogy, metallurgy, architecture and politics (Astigarraga, 2003). Although theoretically restricted to the nobility, it admitted students from various backgrounds, especially from the elites that populated the peripheries of the empire, a group that was especially attuned to reformist policies (Chaparro, 2011). The aim, according to *Plan de una Escuela patriótica*, published in 1775 (and the blueprint of the school), was to ‘train subjects in those trades and careers that will be immediately useful to the State’⁵.

In short, the groups which attended these centres received a first-rate education under the direct protection of the Crown, which intervened decisively to stop anti-reformist sectors from undermining its interests (Navarro, 2013). These institutions attracted groups of the population that demanded ‘specialised centres which [taught] the subjects expected at the Court’ (Aguilar, 1980, 330). The social background of the students is eloquent in this regard. In the *Real Seminario de Nobles*, for instance, the social profile varied according to regional origin, but in general, at least after the expulsion of the Jesuits, the children of military men prevailed, followed by the children of high-ranking state officials (Andújar, 2004). In the *Seminario Patriótico de Vergara*, the children of military men, high-ranking state officials, rich merchants and local patricians were the most numerous groups (Chaparro, 2011). The data available for the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* suggest that its cadets had a similar profile (Bermejo, Esteban and Gorráiz, 2013).

It is important to stress that these institutions not only served as centres for the transmission of knowledge. Their objectives made explicit reference to public good and service to the motherland, which suggests that they also operated as laboratories for the creation of a new society. Students were expected to transmit the new social conventions and to express them in their future behaviour. In this regard, the leaders of the RSBAP believed that education was a crucial tool for the creation of a more virtuous society, made up of useful citizens who, through their behaviour, contributed to public welfare (Astigarraga, 2003).

The dissemination, and transformation, of patterns of behaviour was one of the aims of this educational model. The will to spread civilisation is explicitly declared in its ordinances. The *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid trained students so that ‘later, by word and deed, they can show their Families the exercise of Virtue, Piety and Christian Modesty’. When they left the centre in a group, they were to be ‘not rowdy, but orderly; not hasty, but mature and grave’. Physical contact was forbidden. Table manners should be observed, ‘eating not with disorderly greed, nor lying over the table, nor behaving in any way immodest or inappropriate for honest tables’. Even the students mutual relationships were regulated, ‘and must be as respectful as their noble blood requires’, avoiding ‘rude or simple words [...] which are repugnant to the decency of nobility’⁶.

Political relationships are social relationships. According to the Enlightened mentality, the control of the passions can only be brought about by careful training, whose purpose is to subject emotion to reason (Lagroye, 2003). These were central

⁵ *Extractos de las Juntas Generales celebradas por la RSBAP*, 1775, pp. 2, 108-109.

⁶ *Constituciones del Real Seminario* [de 1730], pp. 4, 17-24, 31-32.

questions, because they shaped the political position of the students. Manners, customs and civility were for the Enlightenment fundamental political variables (Raynaud, 2013). In consequence, in the *Real Colegio de Artillería* of Segovia it was believed that the behaviour and the scientific knowledge of cadets had to be commensurate. Special care was taken that the cadets, when they abandoned the school premises, did not meet 'undistinguished' people; table manners were enforced and religious practice was closely regulated; their personal habits were monitored and corrected, as were their mutual relationships (García, 2012). Moral education was as important as physical and intellectual training. Refined pursuits were encouraged, which explains the lessons in fencing and dancing, activities that were limited to a select few (Herrero, 1990).

Exclusive habits were essential for this new refined social elite, which was to stand as a model for the rest of the population. The 1748 navy regulations ordered that midshipmen 'treated one another [...] with civility and good manners, as becomes their quality', avoiding 'the company of lowlifes and plebeians, which vulgarises and reduces [one's] position' (Ortega-del-Cerro, 2018, 73). In the *Seminario* of Vergara, which was limited to close relatives of RSBAP members, social skills (dancing, fencing, playing music) were combined with academic pursuits (human and experimental sciences, religion) (Palacios, 1986).

As noted, the foundation of these centres was not only an imposition of the Crown, but also responded to the demands posed by groups committed to the regeneration of the Monarchy. Their interests were complementary. The success of the families that staffed the state apparatus was also the success of the Monarchy. This mutual interest is, for instance, clear in the speech given by the Vizcaya-born José de Mazarredo, commander of the *Compañía de Guardiamarinas*. According to this celebrated seaman, the cadets had joined the institution to 'take advantage of the means that the King offers so they can become valuable to the state' while 'increasing the honour of their families' (Ortega-del-Cerro, 2018, 61-62).

3. From household to Court: education as a social demand. The foundation of the *Real Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara

The example of the *Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara will allow us to illustrate a twofold phenomenon. First, the centres that constituted the educational model set up by the reformist Monarchy cannot be analysed in isolation: they were closely interrelated and populated by the same actors, drawn from a small group and united by the collective task of creating their own cultural milieu. Second, their creation, although closely related to the Crown, did not rely solely upon it, but had the support of emerging reformist elites.

The success of the *Seminario Patriótico* was a priority for the RSBAP. Both institutions have been labelled as being both exceptional – they were created by a group of local patricians from the northern periphery – and hard to explain. Several years ago, José María Imízcoz and Álvaro Chaparro (2009) demonstrated the relationship between founding families of the RSBAP and the process of social mobility connected with the administration of the imperial economy, and the governance of the state and the army. The 24 board members that governed the institution were

linked by family ties (Aguinagalde, 1998) and the core of the institution was formed by a group of families related to the founder and director Xavier María de Munibe e Idiáquez (Azcoitia 1729-Vergara 1785), Count of Peñafloreda. Many of these families had been related by bonds of kinship since the 17th century and even earlier, as their matrimonial alliances were regularly renewed (Figure 1).

The membership of this society encompassed a wide range of family ties and social backgrounds, from provincial leaders, whose trajectory in service of the Crown can sometimes be traced back to the Habsburg period, to emerging groups formed by 'new men', mere *hidalgos* without their own territorial or jurisdictional base. Although some, as first-borns, controlled their families' land, their level of wealth could not be compared to that of the high Castilian nobility. Their social and political ascent depended entirely on the monarch's favour. In many cases, the origin of these families is rather obscure. Many of them began thriving through commerce in the second half of the 17th century, especially by exporting Castilian wool to northern Europe and iron to America. The common denominator to their social progression was that they all rendered services to the Crown (Imízcoz and Guerrero, 2003; Guerrero, 2012).

These groups were concerned because the existing educational options did not meet their needs, and took action to redress this situation. Members of these families had been educated abroad, in Bayonne, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Sorèze, Pau or Paris. In addition, and a little known fact, the founders of the *Seminario Patriótico* had taken part in the setup of the Monarchy's educational structure. Between 1728 and 1775, 26 future members of the RSBAP attended the *Real Seminario de Nobles*, which from the outset hosted students sent by Basque Enlightened families⁷. At the same time, thirteen future members of the RSBAP studied in the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* prior to 1776, the year the *Seminario Patriótico* was founded in Vergara. Among them were several members of the founding members' inner circle; as well as other who played little role in the RSBAP, but that had very prominent careers elsewhere, for example Cosme de Churruca and José de Mazarredo in the navy⁸.

The foundation of the *Seminario Patriótico* met with success, despite the difficulties encountered. RSBAP members and their families had excellent

⁷ Martín Epalza Olarte (1728-1731), Martín Areizaga (1732-1735), Pedro Unceta (1735-1738), Joaquín Gutiérrez Rubalcaba (1740-1745), Mateo Miguel Ugarte (1741-1744), Joaquín Aguirre Porcel (1741), Fausto del Corral (1743-1750), José Horcasitas (1747-1752), Tomás de Lezo (1747-1749), Roque Xabier Moyúa Munibe (1748-1750), Joaquín de Eguía (1748-1751), Joaquín Hurtado de Mendoza (1750-1753), Carlos Gutiérrez de los Ríos (1750-1758), Antonio Valdés (1752-1756), Joaquín Antonio Arriaga (1752-1760), Pablo Epalza (1752-1757), José Juan Cadalso (1758-1760), Hermenegildo Zuaznávar (1761-1764), Rafael Landáburu (1762-...), José Agustín Ibáñez de la Rentería (1762-...), Manuel Altuna (1764-...), Juan de Dios Landáburu (1764-...), Antonio Vélez de Larrea (1771-1781), Ignacio Vélez de Larrea (1771-1783), José María Allende (1771-1774), Manuel María Acedo (1775-1778). Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN), Universidades, libros 1304-1305. The list of RSBAP can be found in Martínez (1985).

⁸ Miguel José Gastón de Iriarte (1733-1740), Antonio Búcaro (1738-1740), Atanasio Sáinz de Baranda (1742-1749), Fermín Carasa (1745-1751), Tomás de Lezo (1749-...), Miguel Arízcuñ (1754-...), Francisco Javier Argáiz Esquivel (1754-...), Antonio Valdés (1757-1761), Carlos del Corral (1757-...), José de Mazarredo Salazar (1759-...), Ignacio María Álava (1766-1769), Joaquín Porcel (1773-...), Cosme Churruca (1776-1778). Válgoma (1943-1956), Moreno de Guerra (1913) and Martínez (1985).

connections at the royal Court, and their power, influence and proximity to the Crown were great assets for the institution. These privileged connections with the king's circle resulted in the cession of the Jesuits' college in Vergara, together with their rents, after the expulsion of the Society of Jesus in 1767, and the royal endorsement of the school.

Personal letters reveal the range of contacts that the founding society mobilised in order to overcome the obstacles met by the institution. On 10 August 1769, seven years before the foundation of the school, the Count of Peñafiorida informed Pedro Jacinto de Álava, a board member, that his uncle, the Marquis of Valdelirios, was going to pull some strings 'through the Secretary of State'. From his position in this secretariat, the official Miguel de Otamendi was 'going to do his best to meet our demands' (Tellechea, 1987, 83). The connections of Enlightened Basques at Court is a constant feature of these letters; on 6 December 1770, Pedro Jacinto de Álava informed Peñafiorida that 'Otamendi says that he is constantly being informed by [Eugenio de] Llaguno', his primary contact in the Secretary of State, 'of the situation concerning our business, and assures me that it cannot be in better hands than his friend's, because he is not only familiar with all the business being dealt with by the Secretary of State, but he is also sympathetic to our ideas'⁹.

In 1774, Pedro Jacinto de Álava informed Peñafiorida that 'the school business is about to come out because' Lt. General Alejandro O'Reilly, who was married to a member of a family from Vizcaya with close ties with the high administration of the Bourbon state, had committed to 'visit the councillors that have to deal with the matter'¹⁰. A few months later, on 16 July 1775, another RSBAP member, José Antonio de Olaeta, happily assured Pedro Jacinto de Álava that 'in Madrid [he] saw very important people attend two meetings celebrated at the residence of the Marquis of Valdelirios', in which 'the *Amigos* Montehermoso and [Luis] Urbina¹¹ worked hard for this project to be carried through as it deserves, for the reputation and honour of our *Sociedad*, and many other attendees concurred'¹². The activation of this social network was key for the success of the institution.

It is obvious that the founders of the school aspired to play a part in the administration of the Empire, although studies of it have often had but a regional focus. It is true that the project had been put forward by a close-knit clique of interconnected families in order to train their children into becoming 'useful subjects for the State'. Yet, the projection of these families went well beyond the Basque Country, and their educational project soon spilled into the rest of the Monarchy. In fact, despite its location in a remote northern valley, only 34% of the student roll came from the Basque provinces and Navarre, the rest coming from Madrid, Cádiz, Cuba, Nueva España, Peru and Nueva Granada, among other origins (Table 1). The geography of the students followed the networks threaded by the RSBAP.

⁹ Archivo del Territorio Histórico de Álava (ATHA), FP, Caja 31, nº 48.

¹⁰ ATHA, FP, caja 31, nº 138.

¹¹ Luis Urbina, board member of the RSBAP from 1767, was appointed Field Marshal in 1770 and Lt. General in 1776.

¹² Biblioteca del Parlamento Vasco, Fondo Bonilla. carpeta 21, carta 47.

The project, therefore, led a small number of families to mobilise their contacts at the highest political level for the foundation of a school which furthered the reformist projects of the Crown, while consolidating the advancement of more-or-less 'new families' by bringing them closer to the king. This small group of families (Munibe, Álava, Esquivel, Corral, Ortés de Velasco, Moyúa, Altuna, Eguía, among others) sought the protection of the Crown in a project which, owing to its innovative character, could trigger the opposition of the most traditional Basque sectors (Otazu and Díaz de Durana, 2008). At the same time, it needs to be taken into account that scientific altruism was not the only motivation behind the project; by carrying it through, these families confirmed their social pre-eminence.

4. Basque and Navarrese elites in the Monarchy's educational model

The previous section has demonstrated the close relationship that existed between family groups that took active part in the construction of the reformist Monarchy's government apparatus and in the foundation of educational institutions. We have suggested that the social ascent of these groups, through their service to the Crown, their connections at court and their presence in innovative educational centres such as the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* and the *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid, may have played a not inconsiderable part in the foundation of the *Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara. However, this phenomenon was not limited to families connected in some way to the RSBAP. According to our estimates, 740 Basque and Navarre youths attended at least of our four schools. We intend to show that this is yet another indication that the elites in these territories played a direct role in the cultural transformations that were taking place in the 18th century.

Approximately 10% of the students in the four schools under consideration came from the Basque Provinces and Navarre. This may not seem much, but it needs to be considered that the population of these territories was less than 5% of the Spanish total (Romero de Solís, 1973)¹³. As such, these provinces were much better represented than other, more populous ones. In the *Colegio de Artillería* of Segovia they accounted for 11% of the student roll, and for 9% in the *Real Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid, where they were especially numerous until the foundation of the *Real Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara. In the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* in Cádiz their numbers were similar. In all cases, they were more numerous than students from more populous regions such as Castilla la Vieja, Galicia, Aragón, Extremadura, the kingdom of Valencia and Cataluña (Table 1). The *Academias de Guardiamarinas* of Cádiz, El Ferrol and Cartagena were, by some distance, the most popular centres, with 418 students¹⁴. Over 170 of the 740 students attended the school at Vergara, while 92 enrolled in the *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid, and 54 in the *Colegio de Artillería*. The coastal provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa were better represented than the province of Álava and Navarre, with over 65% of the Basque and Navarrese students enrolled in one of the four centres (Table 2).

¹³ Data corresponds to 1787.

¹⁴ Data on Basque and Navarrese students in the three *Academias de Guardiasmarinas* are based on Moreno de Guerra (1913).

The distribution of students by origin is very uneven. A substantial proportion of the students came from a small number of big cities; Bilbao, San Sebastián, Pamplona and Vitoria accounted for 40% of the student roll. Also well represented were a group of small or mid-sized towns in Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and the south of Navarre, in which the provinces' leading families had their seats, including Fuenterrabía, Tolosa, Tudela, Azpeitia, Corella, Azcoitia and Durango (Table 3). We must also mention a number of rural areas, whose elites were closely related to the Crown during the 18th century, such as the *Encartaciones* of Vizcaya (32 students), the valley of Ayala (23), Baztán, in Navarra (11), the valley of Léniz (7) and the valley of Orozco (7).

These patterns may give the wrong impression. In fact, it was common for the student rolls in these centres to be formed by members of a handful of, often interconnected, families. For instance, 7 of the 8 students from Guernica were related (Allende Salazar, Olaeta, Castaños). This family was, at the same time, linked to the Gortázar family from Bilbao, which in their turn were related to the Mazarredo family, which, alongside the Moyúa de Vergara family, sent over 30 students to these schools¹⁵. All the students enrolled at the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* from Irún belonged to the same family¹⁶. In the valley of Orozco, three families were represented in these elite centres (families which were closely connected with other families also present in the student roll)¹⁷. Of the 33 students sent by the nearby villages of Azpeitia and Azcoitia, 21 came from the related Altuna, Alcibar, Iturriaga, Emparan and Munibe families, all of which were more or less closely involved in the

¹⁵ From Guernica: Diego Allende Salazar Zubialdea, Ramón Allende Salazar Zubialdea, Ignacio Olaeta Allende and Ramón Olaeta Allende, all of them midshipmen; Mariano Olaeta Ibarra, in Vergara, 1791-...; Juan Francisco Castaños, in Madrid, 1733-1734; José Joaquín Loizaga Castaños, midshipman in 1766. The Loizaga established ties with the Gortázar of Bilbao towards the end of the century. From the Allende Salazar family, linked with the family branch in Guernica: Domingo Allende Salazar Gortázar, midshipman; José Allende Salazar Gortázar, artillery cadet in Segovia; Francisco Paula and Andrés Allende Salazar Ordoño, midshipmen; Diego Pedro Allende Salazar Castaños, *Real Seminario de Nobles* in Madrid; José María and Nicolás Allende Salazar Zubialdea, *Real Seminario de Nobles*; Serapio Luis Hormaza Allende Salazar, *Real Seminario* in Madrid; Francisco and Juan Landecho Allende Salazar, midshipman; Antonio Ordóñez Barraicúa Allende, midshipman. From the Gortázar family: José Javier and Miguel María Gortázar, midshipmen; Francisco Larrínaga Gortázar, *Real Seminario* in Madrid. From the Mazarredo family: José Mazarredo Gortázar, midshipman; Lope, Lorenzo, Ramón, Francisco, Juan Gualberto Mazarredo Gómez, *Seminario* of Vergara; José Francisco and Santiago Mazarredo Gómez, midshipmen. From the Moyúa family: Ramón Moyúa Mazarredo, in Vergara, and Francisco Borja, Joaquín and José Moyúa Mazarredo, midshipmen.

¹⁶ Juan Olazábal Recalde, midshipman; Domingo, Manuel, Joaquín Ventura, José Joaquín Olazábal Murguía, midshipmen, except for Domingo, who attended the *Seminario* of Vergara; José Joaquín Orbe Murguía, *Real Seminario* in Madrid.

¹⁷ Manuel María Olaeta Mundaca, midshipman; Joaquín and Mauricio Olaeta, midshipmen and sons of the president of the *Real Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara since 1785; José Antonio Olaeta. Joaquín Ugarte Santisteban, in Vergara; his son Miguel Pablo Ugarte Epalza, also in Vergara. Related to the Epalza family of Orozco, from Bilbao: Martín Epalza, *Real Seminario* in Madrid; Pablo Epalza Salazar, also at the *Seminario* in Madrid; Juan Nicolás and Santos Antonio Epalza Iruegas, midshipmen. Finally, in Orozco, Antonio Aldecoa Mendoza, cadet in Segovia; Joaquín Aldecoa Mendoza, midshipman, both related to Antonio Mendoza Madariaga, from Bermeo, midshipman.

advancement of Enlightened ideals in Guipúzcoa¹⁸. We do not think that any more examples are necessary to show how easy it is to find connections between the families of the 740 students at hand; three brief paragraphs have sufficed to illustrate the connections of over 70 students.

The social background of these families varied widely. They often operated in several fields: Atlantic commerce was often combined with the possession or acquisition of landed estates; some worked for the Crown, in state administration, army, navy or the royal palace, while their relatives worked in finance, supplying the armed forces or ruling their native cities.

Interestingly, their presence at the universities was very limited. According to our evidence, few of these families sent any of their members to university. It seems clear that university curricula were dominated by subjects which were of little interest to them. In this regard, the close ties that these families kept with the state apparatus may, to some extent, explain this phenomenon. The Basque provinces and Navarre were the place of origin of an important number of leading men in the new state administration, the army and the financial cadres of the Crown. These families were also strongly represented in the new educational structure set up by the Monarchy.

Several people related to the students in our lists occupied top-tier posts at the core of the new administrative system, the *Secretarías de Despacho*. Juan Bautista de Orendáin, secretary of the *Despacho* of State and Finances (1724, 1726-1734), was related to José Aristeguieta, student at the *Real Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid (1764-1766) and at the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* of Cádiz (1766). Sebastián de la Quadra Larena, secretary of the *Despacho* of State (1736-1746), was related to midshipman José Mérida de la Quadra (1738); artilleryman Francisco Antonio Oribe Casas (1770); midshipmen José Mollinedo (1771) and Julián Blázquez (1776); and Francisco Javier Castaños Aragorri (1771), student at the *Real Seminario de Nobles* and future army general, among others. Sebastián Eslava (1754-1759), secretary of the *Despacho* of War, was uncle of midshipmen Juan Miguel and Juan Manuel Eslava (1717). Miguel de Múzquiz, from Baztán, secretary Finances (1766-1785) and War (1780-1785), was related to Salvador de Ozta, artilleryman and student at Vergara; Miguel de Borda, student at the *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid (1779-1785); Hilario Mendinueta (1779-1784) and Ignacio Goyeneche (1784-1785), both students at Vergara; and Luis Goyeneche, student at the *Seminario de Nobles* (1786-1787). The secretary of *Despacho* of the Navy (1776-1783) Pedro González de Castejón, from Tudela, a former midshipman himself, was related to José de Castejón Veraiz, student at Madrid (1777-1778) and Vergara (1779-1780); and midshipman Francisco Javier González de Castejón (1782). The Bilbao-born Diego de Gardoqui, secretary of the *Despacho* of finance (1792-1796), was related to

¹⁸ From Azpeitia: José, Ignacio and Agustín Iturriaga Aguirre, midshipmen; Manuel, Juan José and Ignacio Iturriaga Emparan, midshipmen; Miguel José, Manuel, José and Ignacio Sebastián Emparan Orbe, midshipmen; Enrique Emparan Orbe, in Vergara; José Manuel and Ignacio Emparan Aranguren, *Seminario Patriótico de Vergara*; Manuel and Policarpo Altuna Alcívar, midshipmen. From Azcoitia: José María and Ignacio María Alcívar Acharan, midshipman and *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid, respectively; Manuel Ignacio Altuna, *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid; Manuel Ignacio Altuna Zuloaga, *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid; Félix and Luis Munibe Areizaga, in Vergara and midshipman, respectively.

midshipman José Ramón Gardoqui (1775-1776) and Cesáreo Gardoqui Orueta, student at the *Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara (1777-1789). Finally, Pedro Pablo, the brother of Mariano Luis Urquijo (1798-1800), secretary of the *Despacho* of State, was admitted to the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* in Cádiz in 1783. This phenomenon is but the tip of the iceberg that expanded with endless ramifications at all levels of the administration of the Monarchy and of the two other pillars of Bourbonic reforms: the army and the tax system, coordinated by the newly created intendants.

Access to these schools was restricted. The number of places on offer was small, and getting one involved mobilising an extensive network of contacts (Imízcoz, 2010; Navarro, 2016), for demand generally outstripped supply. The families that possessed the necessary relational capital were few, and did not go far beyond those which formed the relational tissue of Bourbonic reformism.

The schools also operated as a social reproduction mechanism for the high administrative echelons of the state. In order to ensure that these administrative posts stayed within the family, the education of its children was closely monitored (Imízcoz, 2001; González-Ripoll, 1995). In their frequent letters, the students reported on their progress, and also commented upon the latest scientific and intellectual developments. In this way, the families at home were also kept in the loop of ongoing cultural changes.

Scholars and their families played an active part in the debates promoted by the Republic of Letters and in the intellectual controversies that marked the 18th century. The archives of the Gortázar Montiano family, from Bilbao, are illustrative in this regard. When, in the mid-century, the family had to plan the future of their child José Javier, several options were considered, which feature in the letters exchanged with the controversial Jesuit author José Francisco de Isla. In March 1761, Isla mocked the habit of sending children abroad, arguing that ‘a 5-year old girl [...] is sent to a convent in France and, after 20 years, she is sent back home at the age of 25, something that baffles the minds of the most profound philosophers’. However, he believed that ‘up to the age of 12, which is the age of Mademoiselle Gortázar’, the daughter of the family who was studying in Bayonne, ‘French education is better than the Spanish’. In June, he advised the family to send José Javier to the *Seminario de Nobles* of Calatayud, which was managed by the Society of Jesus. This did not convince the Gortázar family, because of this school’s bad reputation among other Bilbao families. In any case, said Isla, whatever their decision, nothing could be worse for the children than to be ‘where they have their parents, uncles, relatives and, especially, grandparents’, because they spoil them, ruining the school’s efforts to shape their personalities¹⁹. Eventually, the young man was sent to the *Real Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid.

In these letters, educational issues were intertwined with other factors. The Gortázar family possessed important commercial assets and were well-connected with the imperial administration; they played an active part in the new public sphere that was crystallising around the Monarchy. José Francisco de Isla, who for his part was directly in contact with ministerial and intellectual circles of the Monarchy, gave them a full account of the controversy generated by the publication of his novel

¹⁹ Archivo Foral de Bizkaia (AFB), Familias, Gortázar, 2463/19.

Historia del famoso predicador fray Gerundio de Campazas (1758), a brutal satire against Baroque predications which caused a considerable stir in intellectual and, especially, ecclesiastical circles, until it was forbidden by the Inquisition in 1760. In part, this controversy sprang from Isla's attacks against the modern scientists who followed Newton, Descartes and Bacon, triggering a response by the pioneers of the RSBAP with the publication of *Los aldeanos críticos* (1758) (Blanco Mozo, 2011, 153-159; 188-189). The Gortázar family, while dealing with their educational concerns, were in the thick of these controversies²⁰.

In this way, the students attending the educational institutions founded in the 18th century came from families that played an active role in the public sphere shared by the reformist elite. It is highly significant that the families from which these students came were also among the few subscribers to the official press, especially in the second half of the 18th century²¹. This reveals the close ties between these families and the networks that were transforming them culturally, because, along with economic societies, the press became the main opinion-forming tool during the Enlightenment: it created a community of readers who shared the same 'sociocultural identity'. Progressively, this identity came into conflict with the values of the *Ancien Régime*, insofar as it promoted a 'mesocratic and Enlightened [identity], which helped a social and cultural elite to become self-aware' (Fuentes, 2001: 19).

Included among those who received the *Gaceta de Madrid* or the *Mercurio histórico político* were the Gardoqui, Allende Salazar and Gortázar families in Bilbao; the Barrenechea, Sarachaga, Aréchaga, Larrínaga and Mollinedo families, also in Bilbao²²; the Mendoza from Bermeo²³; the Salcedo from Portugalete²⁴; the Lardizábal from Segura²⁵; the Barroeta from Vergara²⁶; the Olazábal from Irún²⁷; the Jusué from Elgóibar²⁸; the Aramburu from Hernani²⁹; the Lizaranzu from Elgóibar³⁰; the Vidarte

²⁰ For the controversy around *Fray Gerundio*, see the letter from José Francisco de Isla to Josefa Teresa de Montiano. Villagarcía, 9-II-1760; or the letter written in Santiago de Compostela on 29 September 1760 and sent José Domingo de Gortázar in 1761 from Pontevedra. AFB, Familias, Gortázar, 2463/19.

²¹ Suscriptors' list can be consulted in AHN, Consejos, legs. 51643-51644.

²² From the Barrenechea: Fernando Santos Barrenechea Castaños, artilleryman of the first promotion to come out of Segovia; Antonio Manuel Barrenechea San Cristóbal, midshipman (1788-...). From the Sarachaga: Miguel Matías Sarachaga, artilleryman graduated from Segovia in 1771; his nephew, Francisco Paula Sarachaga, midshipman (1786-...).

²³ *Supra*, note 18.

²⁴ Related to the midshipman (1770-1771) José Justo Salcedo.

²⁵ Family of Ignacio José Lardizábal Altuna, *Real Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara (1799-1802).

²⁶ Related on the mother's side to Miguel Andrés Barroeta Mugártegui, student at the *Patriótico* of Vergara (1778-1779).

²⁷ *Supra*, note 17.

²⁸ Family of Juan José Jusué Borda, student at *Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid (1756).

²⁹ Family of midshipman (1767-1770) José de Aramburu Urdinola.

³⁰ Relatives of midshipmen Manuel and Joaquín Lizaranzu Mugártegui (1717-1727).

and Eguía from Pamplona³¹; the Alzolaras from Iraeta³²; the Landázuri and Betéluri from Durango³³; Count Echauz from Tolosa³⁴; the Quadra from Somorrostro³⁵; the Antía and Plaza Lazarraga from Oñate³⁶; the Salazar, Candano and Rezábal from Vitoria³⁷; the Iturriaga, Altuna and the Marquis of San Millán from Azpeitia³⁸; the Leizaur and Zuaznávar from San Sebastián³⁹; and the Munibe and Alcibar from Azcoitia⁴⁰.

In conclusion: educational institutions cannot be understood in isolation from the relational network of their members. The study of the educational centres promoted by the Crown in the 18th century has focused excessively on the curriculum, and on the innovative nature of its scientific teaching. In any case, scientific knowledge cannot be divorced from its political impact; especially, from the cracks that it opened in the corporate order of the *Ancien Régime*, because this knowledge had presented new ways to understand society. That is, the members of this structure shared a small relational space in which new political paradigms were crystallising (Valverde, 2007). As pointed out by Antonio Calvo (2013), the agents that shared the same space within the Bourbon reformist monarchy soon developed a gregarious consciousness, a new understanding of the notion of serving the State and a new conceptualisation of the public sphere. However, in the Basque provinces and Navarre, the families that

³¹ From the Vidarte, Manuel Vidarte Solchaga, student at *Real Seminario de Nobles* of Madrid (1771-1772); the rest attended the school in Vergara: Nicolás Vidarte Mendinueta (1782-1788), Fausto Foronda Vidarte (1792-...), Luis Vidarte Mendinueta (1801-1805), Bernabé Otálora Vidarte (1803-1807), Francisco Javier Vidarte Mugártegui (1806-1809). From the Eguía: Manuel Eguía Ramírez de Arellano, midshipman (1744-1751).

³² Relatives of Joaquín Barroeta Aldamar Alzolaras, student at the *Seminario Patriótico* of Vergara (1776-1779).

³³ Relatives of Francisco Landázuri San Cristóbal, midshipman (1761-...); his nephews Pablo and Nicolás Landázuri Arispe, midshipmen (1777-...); his grandson, Juan Ramón Arana Landázuri, *Patriótico* of Vergara (1803-1807). From the Beteluri: Antonio María and José María Letona Beteluri, *Patriótico* of Vergara (1790-1793).

³⁴ Father of midshipman (1784-...) Ignacio Acedo, and of Manuel Acedo, student at the *Seminario de Nobles* (1775-1778).

³⁵ Vid. *supra*.

³⁶ Santos Antía Cenica, artilleryman from Segovia; and his nephew Mariano Antía Irizar, also graduated as artilleryman in the late 18th century. From the Plaza Lazarraga: José Joaquín Plaza, midshipman (1740-1745).

³⁷ The Salazar were related to the future secretary of the *despachos* of navy and finances (during the reign of Ferdinand VII), the midshipman (1775-1776) Luis María Salazar. From the Candano: Dionisio María, Domingo and Andrés Candano Fernández de Angulo, midshipmen. Pedro Alcántara Rezábal, former student at the *Nobles* school in Madrid (1754-1759), suscriptor to *Gaceta de Madrid* in 1781.

³⁸ For the Altuna and the Iturriaga, vid. *supra*, note 19. The Marquis of San Millán was the brother of Antonio and Francisco Aguirre Porcel, graduated as midshipmen in the mid-century.

³⁹ From the Leizaur: Francisco Javier Leizaur Aguirre, *Seminario de Nobles* (1743-1745); José Leizaur Aguirre, midshipman (1754-...); José María Leizaur, *Seminario de Nobles* (1792-1795). From the Zuaznávar: Joaquín Zuaznávar Aragorri, *Seminario Patriótico* (1777-1780); Ignacio Zuaznávar, graduated as artilleryman in Segovia in 1775; José Joaquín Zuaznávar, midshipman (1783-...).

⁴⁰ Vid. *supra*.

participated in this process and which adopted these new cultural paradigms formed a close-knit clique, which stood in sharp contrast with their native background.

5. The student's homes. From local hegemony to cultural criticism

The above cited *Plan de una Escuela Patriótica*, issued by the RSBAP, claimed that the future *Seminario Patriótico*'s role was to form useful servants for the State, but 'in direct relation to the country where it is based' and, importantly, 'providing the means for the «knowledge thus disseminated» to spread for the common good'. As with the *Real Seminario de Nobles* in Madrid, whose students were to serve 'the motherland with credibility and usefulness', the students of the *Seminario Patriótico* were entrusted with spreading the word of reform in their hometowns. The impact that the Enlightened training programmes had at the local level is a field in which much work remains to be done.

As noted, the profile of these student's families is diverse. As a rule, however, their influence was most prominent at the local level, where they held an uncontested hegemonic position. Their applications for a place in the *Academia de Guardiamarinas*, the *Real Seminario de Nobles*, the *Colegio de Artillería* and the *Patriótico*, to which they had to attach proofs of nobility signed by witnesses, is illustrative of the role played by local power in their interests.

Pedro Alcántara Argáiz undertook his test to enter the *Colegio de Artillería* in Pamplona, in 1798. Related to several families in similar positions, in Navarra, Guipúzcoa and Álava (including the Esquivel, Counts of Monterrón and the Aranguren, among others), his father had been one of the introducers of pre-liberal economics in Navarre (Astigarraga, 2018). In Pedro Alcántara's proof of nobility, the witnesses declared that his father had retired for health reasons, acting as mayor of Pamplona after his retirement. At the provincial level, he had been a deputy for the military arm in the *Cortes* of Navarre in 1780-1781, a prerogative of the Argáiz family. Afterwards, he was appointed by Charles III to the *Cámara de Comptos* and to the committee entrusted with supplying the navy with timber from the forest of Irati. As a result, he combined an Enlightened education with roles as an active local leader and a trusted servant of the Crown. His relatives had occupied the 'most important and distinguished positions' in Navarre and the 'provinces of Guipúzcoa and Álava', including the mayoralty of Mondragón, as general deputies for both provinces, and as officials at the finance office, the royal palace, the army and the navy⁴¹. The document stressed services rendered to the Crown, but this could not be divorced from their positions as local patricians.

Antonio Balzola underwent a similar test, in order to enter the *Academia de Guardiamarinas* in El Ferrol, in Azcoitia. His record presented him as member of a family that had frequently held the posts of '*Alcalde, Síndico Fiel, Diputado General*' in Guipúzcoa, among 'others of the utmost quality'. By entering the academy, he aimed to 'ennoble yet further the service to His Majesty, as becomes [his] exalted birth'. There is little doubt that his family also aspired to consolidate their central position in the province through his career. Evidence that both objectives were

⁴¹ Archivo de la RSBAP, Peñafloreda, sig. 700.

complementary was the fact that his record claimed that Ignacio de Balzola had been appointed mayor of Deva 'by acclamation' in 1771, after a long a distinguished career serving the Crown in the navy⁴².

These individuals populated a highly exclusive relational environment; the witnesses summoned to vouch for the candidates were often people who operated according to the same social dynamics. For example, Pedro Alcántara Argáiz appointed the Count of Guenduláin, several of whose relatives had attended the *Real Seminario de Nobles* or the *Academia de Guardiamarinas*⁴³, and who claimed to know personally Pedro Jacinto, Luis and Ignacio de Álava, who were closely connected with the RSBAP and the *Seminario Patriótico*. Other witnesses were Field Marshal Manuel de Eguía and the Marquis of Góngora, former students at *Real Seminario de Nobles*; Joaquín Hurtado de Mendoza, former student at the *Real Seminario de Nobles*, acted as witness on behalf of Antonio Balzola; and Manuel Ignacio de Altuna, member of the RSBAP and son of the Marquis of Narros, and the son of Fausto del Corral, acted as witnesses for midshipman José María de Zavala, in 1793⁴⁴.

It is reasonable to think that, in the course of their public careers, during their studies in the new institutions and during their time in the army and the navy, these groups would assume new cultural habits, innovative political values, and the paradigms of the new political economy. The fact is that only a minority of the population, although hegemonic, had interiorised this novel political culture. Most nobles, as well as the lower social strata, still had deep roots in traditional culture. In fact, the dominant theory among the provincial elites in the mid-18th century was grounded on the scholastic tradition of the Salamanca school, influenced by the theories of Francisco Suárez – for instance, *Escudo de la más constante fe y lealtad* (1748) – works of reference for the political class in Vizcaya, or the works on Guipúzcoa published by the Jesuit Manuel de Larramendi (Arrieta, 2014).

In the cultural sphere, the attacks launched against the *Seminario Patriótico* are illustrative of the opposition faced by the project in the province. In 1787, the parish priest of Vergara sent the Inquisition a report denouncing that some of the *Seminario's* teachers were making 'propositions against the purity of faith and good habits, especially those who went to the laboratory to observe the chemical and metallurgical experiments take place'. 'Strong spirits', as some teachers were known, threatened to corrupt the students with their irreligious teachings (Otazu and Díaz de Durana, 2008, 625). Opposition had begun much earlier: a 1773 report about the RSBAP, by the same parish priest, claimed that the society was created in order to oppose the Jesuits (Larrañaga, 1969, 111-112). In 1763, a Jesuit missionary gave a sermon in Vergara in which he attacked the Enlightened men that were later to form the founding core of the RSBAP: he criticised their subjection to fashion, their clothing and their exotic haircuts; he condemned their luxurious lifestyle and questioned the antiquity of their lineage. Previously, the Enlightened Basque elite's receptivity towards French culture had already come under fierce attacks (Areta,

⁴² Archivo Municipal de Azkoitia, Judicial, leg. 32, exp. 3.

⁴³ His maternal uncles, Juan Carlos and Martín Areizaga Irusta, *Seminario de Nobles*; and Ignacio Areizaga Irusta, midshipman.

⁴⁴ Archivo Municipal de Azkoitia, Judicial, leg. 32, exp. 5.

1976, 177; Larrañaga, 1969, 113-114; Otazu and Díaz de Durana, 2008). These criticisms are framed within the broader hostility that various social sectors felt for the RSBAP (Astigarraga, 2000).

The Crown's steadfast support may have arrested criticism for a while. However, when this protection became weaker, especially towards the late 18th century, the attacks against the cultural principles being taught in the new schools intensified. In 1818, the Franciscan Pedro de Astarloa criticised families for constantly referring to the greatness of their lineage and the glory of their ancestors, and trying to show that 'in the town they have no equal'. This was a bad example, because it bred pride, 'and they end so puffed up that they think that the townsfolk cannot do so much as look at them or talk to them' (Astarloa, 1818, II, 99). Similarly, the Carmelite friar Bartolomé de Santa Teresa criticised in 1816 the social habits of the members of 'great houses, gentlemen and ladies', and their bad example, indecent music and provocative clothing (Santa Teresa, 1816, 35-36). These criticisms exemplify the frontal challenge being levelled at the civilisational example that the families involved in reformist Enlightenment could spread in their communities.

6. The results of an exclusive education. Political choices in Enlightened houses during the liberal revolution

Most of the families mentioned in this study went on to embrace moderate liberal political options in the opening decades of the 19th century, and this was also the most common choice for the alumni of the schools created under the wing of the Bourbon crown. One could ask whether, in some sense, an elitist reformism that saw the people as a dangerous entity was the logical ideological conclusion of an Enlightened, civilised education (López Tabar, 2011)? Although some prominent exceptions force us to be cautious⁴⁵, this was the general trend (Cajal, 2002; Artola, 2017). Some of these alumni occupied important posts in the new constitutional order. Miguel Ricardo de Álava Esquivel, former student at the *Seminario Patriótico*, after playing a prominent role in the Peninsular War, was president of the *Cortes* in 1822, secretary of *Despacho* of the Navy in 1834, and *prócer* of the realm between 1834 and 1836; Juan Ramón Arana Landázuri, also a former student at Vergara, was deputy to the *Cortes* for Vizcaya in 1836-1837; José de Churruca, former student at Vergara and member of a family with strong navy connections, was deputy to the *Cortes* for Guipúzcoa in 1843 and ended his days as lifelong senator (Agirreazkuenaga, 1993; Rubio, 1997).

These are only the most significant examples. At the local level, and often against stiff opposition, these houses became the leaders of the moderate liberal parties. The lists of liberals made during the First Carlist War contain the names of

⁴⁵ A number of families, small but significant owing to their high profile, which were present in the Bourbon educational apparatus and in other manifestations of the Enlightenment, joined the counter-revolutionary ranks of Carlism. These include the Verástegui, Corral, Mariaca, Ansótegui, Idiáquez, Gaitán de Ayala, Areizaga, Murúa, Eguía, Sáenz de Buruaga, Urbistondo and Unceta. These were closely related houses, whose contacts with other Enlightened families had become looser. In some cases, only individual members showed their opposition to the liberal ideas of the rest of the family.

many of our alumni, which illustrates the relationship between the schools and early moderate leaders: the Acilona, one of whose members attended the *Colegio de Artillería* in Segovia; the Churruca, moderate leaders in Motrico⁴⁶; the Aldecoa and Ugarte in Orozco⁴⁷; the Otálora in the valley of Léniz⁴⁸; the Olazábal in Irún⁴⁹; the Barandica and Mendoza in Bermeo⁵⁰; the Aranguren in Mondragón; the Mugártegui in Marquina⁵¹; the Urdinola in Oyarzun⁵²; the Ceráin in Maeztu⁵³; the Iturriaga, Emparan and Altuna in Azpeitia⁵⁴; the Zavala, the Altuna, the Olano and the Palacios, among others, in Azcoitia⁵⁵; in Guernica, the Carlists tagged all the families associated with the Enlightenment phenomenon with the liberal label⁵⁶, and in addition, of course, of most families in Bilbao, Vitoria and San Sebastián.

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⁴⁷ AFB, AQ1393/234.

⁴⁸ Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia (BRAH), 9, 6723.

⁴⁹ AGG, CA 205, 1.

⁵⁰ AFB, AQ1393/229.

⁵¹ AFB, AQ1441/251.

⁵² AGG, CA 204, 1.

⁵³ ATHA, DH 226-8.

⁵⁴ AGG, CA 156, 13.

⁵⁵ AGG, CA 205, 1.

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8. Annexes

Table 1. Birthplace of the students of the Artillery College of Segovia, the Seminar of Nobles of Madrid and the Patriotic Seminary of Vergara. Source: Borrero, F. L. (2005-2009), AHN Universidades, book 1304 & 1305; Chaparro, 2011; Martínez, J. (1972).

	Segovia (1765-1808)		RSNMadrid (1727-1808)		RSPVergara (1776-1804)		Total
Andalucía	115	20,6	182	17,2	69	13,5	366
Castilla Vieja	59	10,6	90	8,5	29	5,7	178
Galicia	46	8,2	22	2,1	21	4,1	89
Vascongadas	39	7	64	6	136	26,5	239
Madrid/Sitios Reales	37	6,6	205	19,4	41	8	283
Reino Granada	27	4,8	44	4,2	1	0,2	72
Cataluña	27	4,8	18	1,7	1	0,2	46
Castilla Nueva	26	4,7	105	9,9	4	0,8	135
Cantabria	26	4,7	17	1,6	21	4,1	64
Indias	24	4,3	103	9,7	103	20,1	230
Navarra	21	3,8	31	2,9	40	7,8	92
Aragón	20	3,6	20	1,9	7	1,4	47
Valencia	20	3,6	15	1,4	2	0,4	37
Extremadura	17	3	50	4,7	1	0,2	68
Asturias	17	3	8	0,8	2	0,4	27
Murcia	12	2,2	26	2,5	6	1,2	44
Presidios	8	1,4	3	0,3	1	0,2	12
Rioja	6	1,1	7	0,7	25	4,9	38
Extranjero	4	0,7	22	2,1	1	0,2	27
Canarias	4	0,7	12	1,1	0	0	16
Baleares	3	0,5	14	1,3	2	0,4	19
Total	558	100	1058	100	513	100	2129

*The birthplace of 94 cadets from Segovia and 41 students from Vergara is unknown and, therefore are not included in the table.

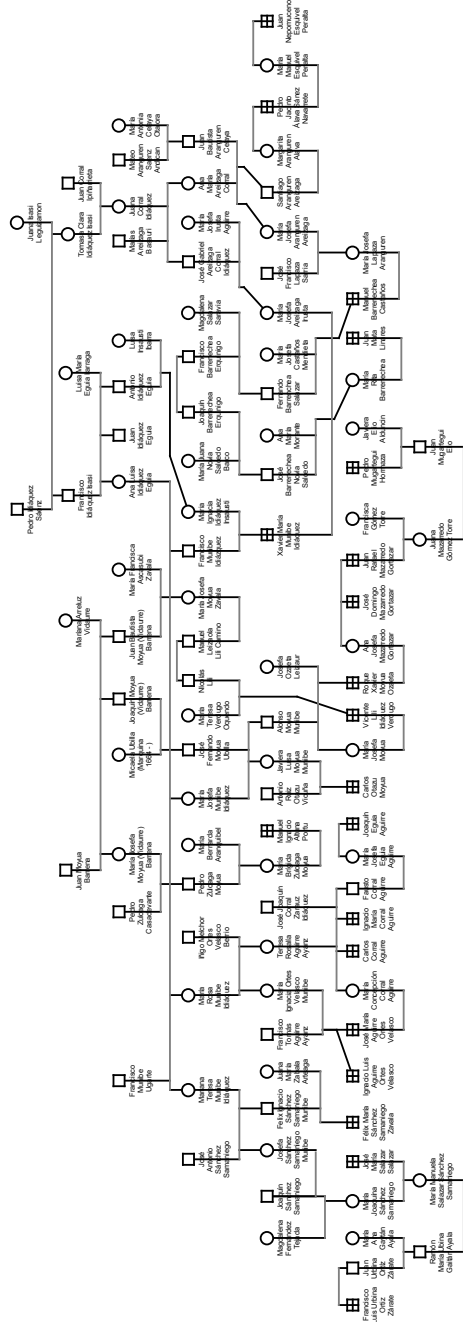
Table 2. Origin provinces of the students. Source: Válgoma, D. (1943-1956); Moreno de Guerra, J. (1913); Borrero, F. L. (2005-2009), AHN Universidades, book 1304 & 1305; Martínez, J. (1972).

	CA Segovia	G. Marinas	RSMadrid	RSVergara	Total
Álava	6	38	4	25	73
Guipúzcoa	11	152	29	53	245
Navarra	21	78	32	40	171
Vizcaya	15	149	27	58	249
Provincia desconocida	1	1			2
Total	54	418	92	176	740

Table 3. Municipalities with 5 or more students

	CASegovia	G. Marina	RSMadrid	RSVergara	Total
Bilbao	9	74	20	26	129
San Sebastián	5	45	12	18	80
Pamplona	2	17	21	12	52
Vitoria	1	24	3	12	40
Fuenterrabía		12	2	6	20
Tolosa	1	11	3	5	20
Tudela	2	7	3	8	20
Azpeitia		13		5	18
Corella	4	12		2	18
Azcoitia		7	5	3	15
Vergara		7	2	6	15
Durango	1	4	1	8	14
Orduña		4	1	5	10
Guernica		6	1	1	8
Oñate	2	6			8
Segura		4		3	7
Irún		4	1	1	6
Orozco	1	4		2	7
Balmaseda	3	2		1	6
Bermeo		5			5
Errazu	1	2		2	5
Gordejuela		4		1	5
Marquina		1	1	3	5
Munguía		5			5
Pasajes de San Juan		5			5
Portugalete		5			5
Villafranca de Navarra		1	1	3	5

Figure 1. Genealogy of RSBAP main members (1771-1772)⁵⁷.



⁵⁷ 18 out of 24 members of the RSBAP are included on the graph. Those marked with a cross, were linked to the institution in 1771. The excluded ones are distant relatives.