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**OWNERS OF GOLD, SLAVES OF KING, CITIZENS OF  
KINGDOM.**

**The Elite of the Popayan and the Processes of Spanish American  
Independence, 1808-1820.**

**TESIS DOCTORAL  
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## ABSTRACT

As all the cities the Viceroyalty of New Granada, Popayan city reacted to the metropolitan political crisis in 1808. City authorities vowed to the Fernando VII and declared war to Napoleon Bonaparte and intrusive government in Madrid. However, from 1810, the unity of New Granada changed. While the most of cities opted for the formation of a regional government, the Popayan city -as Santa Marta, Panama and Pasto- chooses to continue obeying the metropolitan authorities becomes a realistic bulwark in the region. Thus, over the course of the wars of independence, between 1810 and 1820, the Popayan city defended the continuity of monarchies institutions in the Viceroyalty of New Granada. I intend to reveal in my dissertation Why the elite of the Popayan city, extended to all over the Spanish empire, defended the continuity of the Hispanic Monarchy?

This dissertation is divided into two parts: “*The jurisdiction and city of Popayán between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century*”, and “*The Popayán elite and the processes of independence in Spanish America, 1808-1820*”. Whereas the first part, composed of chapters I and II, deals with the introductory aspects, chapters III-VIII form the main part of the thesis.

Chapter I describes the geography and administrative divisions of the Popayán jurisdiction between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. It tries to explain the geopolitical conditions which permitted the creation and rise of the Popayán elite. It also offers specific examples of families and individuals who made up this elite, the blood relations between many of the lineages, and the bureaucratic expansion that several of their members had reached at the start of the nineteenth century. Chapter II shows how the wealth of the Popayán elite originated, and the type of education they had been receiving from the mid-eighteenth century. Both of these chapters constitute the necessary starting point to be able to understand why various individuals from Popayán were already established in important bureaucratic posts when the imperial crisis of 1808 began.

The second part of the dissertation studies the political participation of many of the members of the Popayán elite during the crisis of the Hispanic monarchy between 1808 and 1820. Chapter III therefore analyses the involvement of count Casa-Valencia and of Francisco Antonio Zea in the events which occurred in the Peninsula between 1808 and 1810. It also examines the actions of Camilo Torres, Joaquín Mosquera and José Ignacio Pombo during the electoral process of 1809 and in the writing of the New Granada memorials which were presented to the Supreme Central Junta. Finally, this chapter deals with the role of the Popayán elite in the creation and subsequent dissolution of the first autonomous government in Quito.

As the members of the Popayán elite divided amongst the numerous political groups that emerged after the crisis of 1808, chapters IV to VII study each of three different spaces which nonetheless remained interconnected during the process. The first of these spaces is the Peninsula, where Joaquín Mosquera, count Casa-Valencia (Pedro Felipe de Valencia) and Francisco Antonio Zea carried out their political activities, both on the patriotic side, as on that of the *afrancesados*. The second space is New Granada. There, Camilo Torres, José Ignacio de Pombo, Manuel Antonio de Pombo, Miguel de Pombo, Ignacio Tenorio, Tomás Tenorio and Francisco José de Caldas led part of the political processes which developed after the abdications of Bayonne. Finally, the third location studied is the city of Popayán, where family relations of all the mentioned above -particularly of José María Mosquera, Antonio Arboleda, Jerónimo Torres, Manuel Antonio Tenorio, the Pérez de Valencia brothers and Félix Restrepo- were involved in the local political processes unleashed.

Following on from the above, chapter IV first turns an eye to the actions of the *payaneses* in the Peninsula during the dissolution of the Junta Central, to the creation of the Council of Regency and the calling of Cortes Generales, and to the political debate taking place in New Granada with regard to whether the Council of Regency should be recognised or not, and whether an autonomous government should be formed -or not- to take up sovereignty while Ferdinand remained imprisoned.

Chapter V shows how the *payaneses* consolidated their position during Joseph Bonaparte's reign, while also offering an account of Joaquín Mosquera's actions during the third Regency, the involvement of individuals from the same place as him in the formation of the New Granada republics, and their confrontation with Antonio Nariño from Santafé. This chapter also analyses the formations of the first autonomous government in the city of Popayán, which was established as depending on Ferdinand VII.

Chapter VI assesses the role of Joaquín Mosquera in the restoration of absolutism in the Peninsula, the political actions of count Casa-Valencia and Camilo Torres towards the end of the New Granada interregnum, and the creation of the first republican government in the jurisdiction and the city of Popayán.

Chapter VII scrutinizes the actions of Joaquín Mosquera during the return of absolutism and the restoration of colonial rule in New Granada and Popayán. It also deals with the Popayán inhabitants who were either executed by the tribunals set up to judge the seditious and rebellious, with those rewarded for their loyal services to the Crown, and with those who were forgiven, despite having been “revolutionary” leaders, due to their blood ties.

The dissertation ends with an afterword offering a glimpse into the early days of the inclusion of the city of Popayán into the republic and the last dying attempts of the royalists to maintain their political influence in the south of New Granada. Finally, there are several appendixes which offer more details on the chronology of events, the demonyms of various places, the members of the local institutions of Popayán -*cabildo*, juntas, electoral, executive and legislative bodies-, and various economic donations of many of the members of the Popayán elite mentioned in the text.

This study is bound by two dates: it begins in 1808 and ends in 1820. The beginning is determined by external factors occurring in the Peninsula -the series of events which transformed the ancient régime in Spain and led to the

independence of most of its overseas territories, including Popayán<sup>1</sup>. In contrast, the termination date of the dissertation responds to an internal circumstance: the last royalist *cabildo* in the city of Popayán dissolved in 1820, and the families which had traditionally supported the king's cause ceased to do so.

Despite the fact that the first part of the thesis is set earlier, in the wake of the nineteenth century, and that the epilogue forays into the 1820s (up to 1825), the analysis done in both of these sections is subordinated to the processes which took place between 1808 and 1820. Thus, the research into the decades prior to 1808 intends to show the political and economic relations established between the Popayán elites before the crisis of empire; whereas the objective of looking at the years 1820-1825 is to illustrate how the parties in the south of the Popayán jurisdiction continued to fight for the royalists even without the support of the provincial capital's elite. Between 1820 and 1825, the military activities of the royalist steadily deteriorated, as the regular army transformed into a guerrilla, which in turn degenerated into groups of bandits and common delinquents, losing in the process the legitimacy which the army had enjoyed during the twelve years encompassed by this study<sup>2</sup>.

One of the objectives of this study is to bring together a number of the perspectives on the process of Latin American independence into a single narrative, aspiring to create a total or global history of it, even if accepting it is necessarily unfinished and in constant development<sup>3</sup>. Given that socio-political ties between individuals at the beginning of the nineteenth century are seemingly endless, I decided to focus my study on the links established between those

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<sup>1</sup> Miguel Artola, *Los orígenes de la España contemporánea*, 2 Vol. (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1959).

<sup>2</sup> According to Jairo Gutiérrez Ramos, royalism in the city of Pasto can be divided into two different phases: during the first, between 1809 and 1822, it was led by the actions of the local elite, as opposed to the second (1822-1825), during which the indigenous and subaltern groups gained prominence as a result of the Pasto elite having stopped supporting the king's cause. See Jairo Gutiérrez Ramos, *Los indios de Pasto contra la República (1809-1824)* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia, 2007), 156-157.

<sup>3</sup> For the past seventeen years, the Latin American History section of the Department of Medieval, Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Salamanca, has organized a series of scientific symposia on the independences of Latin America, directed by Dr. Julio Sánchez Gómez and Dr. Izaskun Álvarez Cuartero. These meetings have resulted in a collection of edited volumes entitled *Visiones y Revisiones de las Independencias Americanas*, which include contributions from some of the leading historians on the subject.

individuals who belonged to the elites of the city of Popayán and were able to be studied<sup>4</sup>. This group was chosen on the basis that, even if belonging to the fringe on the Spanish empire, the personal circumstances of their members between 1808 and 1820 were strongly affected by the socio-political processes developed in vast sections of the Hispanic domain<sup>5</sup>. The Popayán elite was well entrenched in the social fabric of Hispanic elites: it extended from Popayán and the nearby cities of Pasto, Cali and Cartagena, to the jurisdictional capitals -Quito, Santafé, Panamá, Lima and Caracas-; reaching all the way across to the *de facto* capital of the Spanish empire (Cádiz), the royal court in Madrid, and even to other imperial capitals, such as Paris and London. *Why, how and when* this occurred are some of the questions this study addresses.

Popayán enjoyed a certain degree of economic prevalence in the Spanish empire thanks to the role of its elite in the productive circuits of New Granada gold. The opening of the mining frontier on the Pacific coast in the first half of the eighteenth century had allowed various families from Popayán to take control of the gold districts established in that zone. Some amassed big fortunes which made it possible for them to access positions of power. Despite the Bourbon restoration having limited many of the bureaucratic posts through which Latin American elites had tended to find social promotion, the Popayán elite found new and unexpected spaces to serve the crown, thanks to their returning to the Peninsula. Just as it had occurred during the previous two centuries, the last thirty years of the eighteenth century saw numerous individuals cross the Atlantic Ocean, although this time it was in the opposite direction.

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<sup>4</sup> According to Jean Paul Zuñiga, social networks do not exist *per se*; it is the historian who has to deal with building a network by taking into account just those social relations which -amongst all those able to be analysed- seem to him/her to be the more relevant to the aims and objectives of the research. See Jean Paul Zuñiga, "Clan, Parentela, familia, individuo: métodos y niveles de análisis", *Anuario Instituto de Estudios Históricos y Sociales*, No. 15 (2000): 51-52.

<sup>5</sup> According to José María Imízcoz, the personal experiences of men and women can be used as "Ariadne's thread" towards the writing of a global history. See José María Imízcoz, "Actores, redes, procesos: reflexiones para una historia más global" *Revista de la Facultad de Letras-Historia*, No. 5 (2004): 117-118. In his doctoral thesis "Le Mexique de L'Ancien Régime a la Revolution", François-Xavier Guerra proved that political and social actors in Mexico formed a system of references and consciences -a common political culture- which in time developed into social and political institutions. See François-Xavier Guerra, *México: del Antiguo Régimen a la Revolución* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988).

The war of independence -not that of Latin America, but the one taking place in the Peninsula- created new opportunities for Spanish Americans, also for those who from the distance aspired to take up the posts which were controlled by others in the court. Many individuals from Popayán, well grounded in economic terms in the cities of Latin America, became the main representatives of the political groups which emerged during the Peninsular and American interregnum. However, it is important to call into question whether it was just economic richness that elevated the Popayán elite into conducting socio-political events on both sides of the Atlantic. Of course, it was not. The intellectual dimension was also decisive in this process. What type of education were the members of the Popayán elite receiving at the turn of the nineteenth century? Did any difference exist between the education they were receiving and that which was being given to the elites of other cities in New Granada, and even on the rest of the continent? During the interregnum and the absolutist restoration, the people of Popayán stood out due to their political discourses, often becoming the spokesmen for the demands and requests of all Latin Americans. It is not unusual for historians studying the processes of independence as a whole, to signal their writings as examples of the enlightened and liberal thought of Spanish America<sup>6</sup>. In any case, it is worth recalling that Enlightenment and Liberalism did not constitute a same philosophical system, and that advocates for both systems confronted each other during the crisis of the Hispanic monarchy at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Popayán elite, in the same way as it occurred in the rest of Spanish America, split between those defending the continuity of the *ancien régime* -the absolutists-, and others who opted for a “new” régime, either in the form of a constitutional monarchy or a republic (centralist or federal).

Furthermore, war became a decisive element during the breakdown of the Hispanic system. Between 1808 and 1820, the advances and retreats of the sides

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<sup>6</sup> François-Xavier Guerra, *Modernidad e Independencias. Ensayos sobre las revoluciones hispánicas*, 3rd edition, 2nd reprint (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2010), 135-137; Jaime E. Rodríguez, *La independencia de la América española* (México: El Colegio de México-Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1996), 84; Roberto Breña, *El primer liberalismo español y los procesos de emancipación de América. 1808-1824* (México D. F: El Colegio de México-Centro de Estudios Internacionales, 2006), 98.



in conflict led to many intermediate situations with a high level of complexity and instability, which in turn made the political sympathies of individuals far from being clear and fixed. In this sense, a person could publicly advocate a political option while internally being convinced of another, fight for some time for the interests of the king, go over to the republicans and finally return to the royalists, or vice versa. Traditional historiography tends to identify individuals with a single political option<sup>7</sup>. In opposition to this view, this dissertation observes the historical subject in both the public and private spheres, trying to understand the process of independence from an internal perspective -personal and family convictions of the individual- as much as from the external representations -social, political and economic interests-. Likewise, it reveals how the families suffered in the turmoil of war, and how their members constantly split up amongst the different political options which arose during the process.

Although the literature on this process produced on both sides of the Atlantic is overwhelming and seemingly endless, there remain still some historiographical voids which require being filled, when not corrected. As the characteristics of the existing literature on the subject adapt to each of the regions and cities in Latin America, I thought it appropriate to undertake a particular case study, which in my opinion is of the same importance as other more general studies. Of course, local historiography is not a new field in Colombia, as the regional academies of history have produced numerous works since the commemoration of the first bicentenary of the emancipation at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, the various perspectives and methodologies brought about in good measure by the bicentenary celebrations encouraged me to write a doctoral thesis within this historiographical framework, having nonetheless always present the general context of events (the Hispanic empire). This study, therefore, presents the socio-political processes which individuals from the Popayán elite led in the cities where they experienced their everyday lives between 1808 and 1820, together with revealing the connections and

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<sup>7</sup> Enrique Álvarez Bonilla, "Los Tres Torres", *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades*, Nos. 26-31 (febrero-noviembre 1905): 65-82, 129-148, 193-218, 257-279, 321-335, 385-403; Arcesio Aragón, *Fastos Payaneses 1636-1936* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional), 1939.

intertwinement which existed between them through social and family networks<sup>8</sup>. With this study, I thus intend to contribute to the historiographical debate with regard to the independence, and also to offer new archival data and methodological perspectives.

As many historians have examined the behaviour of the elite of the city of Popayán during the independence process, here I will highlight some of the most recent contributions to the state of the art. Back in 1993, Margarita Garrido asked the following question: why did a group of creoles not declare independence in Popayán, as it had in fact occurred in most other cities of the viceroyalty, where they even managed to gather a fair degree of popular support? Her answer to this -albeit provisional- pointed to the strong personality and masterful use of power of governor Miguel Tacón, the influence of the religious orders over the population, the fear of repression of the elite and the impetuosity and instability of society<sup>9</sup>. Furthermore, she claimed that even though some members of the elite had become aware of the new political ideas and had shared speculations on the future with their families and friends of Santafé and Cartagena, they did not exert an influence on popular opinion, which was deeply manipulated by governor Tacón<sup>10</sup>. Similarly to Margarita Garrido, Anthony McFarlane attributed Popayán's loyalty to the crown to the resolute actions of governor Tacón, and to his ability to exploit existing rivalries both in the city and its wider region. The governor not only earned the trust of some of the clergy and several of the most important families -achieving in the process more authority than the few creoles who aspired to form a governmental junta-, he also took advantage of the rivalry which had traditionally existed between Popayán and Cali by recruiting the leaders of the Patía valley and offering the slaves who fought for the king their freedom, thus turning the inhabitants of the valley into the boldest royalists in New

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<sup>8</sup> According to Diana Balmori, Stuart F. Voss and Miles Wortman, these networks were family associations, bound by alliances based on business, marriage, spatial proximity and -later in time- on their belonging to certain organizations. These networks emerged at the end of the eighteenth century, developed in patterns of three generations, and dominated various regions in Latin America up to the first decades of the twentieth century. See Diana Balmori, Stuart F. Voss and Miles Wortman, *Las Alianzas de familia y la formación del país en América Latina* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1990), 10.

<sup>9</sup> Margarita Garrido, *Reclamos y representaciones: Variaciones sobre la política del Nuevo Reino de Granada, 1770-1815* (Bogotá: Banco de la República, 1993), 272.

<sup>10</sup> Garrido, *Reclamos y Representaciones*, 274.

Granada<sup>11</sup>. Although governor Miguel Tacón certainly did exert some influence over Popayán and its jurisdiction<sup>12</sup>, it seems relevant to ask ourselves why various of the city's inhabitants continued to fight for the cause of the king once the governor had abandoned the city, and whether the royalist inclinations of a whole social group can be explained by the sway of a single person. This dissertation intends to demonstrate that the royalism of many of the families of the Popayán elite, both inside the city and at other locations, was due to the political and economic links which they kept with the crown, more than to the incidental presence of a royal official.

On the other hand, there are various authors who have underlined the intermediary situation of the city of Popayán, and therefore also of its elite, between royalists and republicans during the wars of independence. According to Brian Hamnett, the Popayán elite found itself trapped between the revolutionary dangers of Santafé and the Cauca Valley on the one side, and the arbitrary character of the counterrevolution of Quito and Lima on the other, without really knowing which path to choose<sup>13</sup>. Following up from this same idea, Clément Thibaud considered that the city of Popayán was neither “*fiercely royalist, nor completely patriotic*”; it was due to its geographical location that it became a “*vital prey*” in the battles fought between the two sides in conflict<sup>14</sup>. In addition to Hamnett and Thibaud, Óscar Almario García (observing both the city and its wider jurisdiction), claimed that the Popayán elite, by securing its leadership in the region, managed to establish a *sui generis* balance between the interests and privileges inherited from the ancien régime, and the new republican order<sup>15</sup>. Working along the same lines, this thesis supports the view that at the city of Popayán a point of equilibrium was reached between the royalist forces to the

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<sup>11</sup> Anthony McFarlane, “La Nueva Granada 1810-1815: ¿Patria Boba?”, in *La patria no se hizo sola*, Eds., Manuel Chust and Ivana Frasquet (Madrid: Editorial Silex, 2012), 135.

<sup>12</sup> It is worth recalling that José Manuel Restrepo also attributed the royalism of the inhabitants of Popayán to the influence of governor Tacón. See José Manuel Restrepo, *Historia de la revolución de la República de Colombia*, Tomo I (Medellín: Editorial Bedout, 1974), 142-144.

<sup>13</sup> Brian Hamnett, “Popular Insurrection and Royal Reaction: Colombian Regions, 1810-1823”, in *Reform and Insurrection in Bourbon New Granada and Peru*, Eds., Jonh R. Fisher, Allan Kuethe, and Anthony McFarlane (Baton Rouge/London: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 306.

<sup>14</sup> Clément Thibaud, *Los ejércitos bolivarianos en la guerra de independencia en Colombia y Venezuela* (Bogotá: Planeta- Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos, 2003), 217.

<sup>15</sup> Almario García, “Del nacionalismo americano de las Cortes de Cádiz”, 24.

south -which extended from the viceroyalty of Peru, across the presidency of Quito and to the city of Pasto, on the fringes of the Popayán jurisdiction-; and the republican forces to the north -from the captaincy of Venezuela and the New Granada viceroyalty to the urban centres of the Cauca Valley, also within the Popayán jurisdiction. From 1809, there were amongst the inhabitants of the city of Popayán representatives of both main political projects -the royalist and the republican-autonomist-, together with leaders of other, weaker projects<sup>16</sup>. All of them fought to take control of the city and to obtain personal and collective advantages during the war. In the same way, some of their neighbours, making use of the family and social networks of the Popayán elite, strived to gain external support to uphold their local interests. The balance between the two main groups survived for over twelve years, a period during which control of the city changed hands between royalists and republicans at least six times. This balance, however, fell apart in 1820: the royalists were unable to recover following their defeat at the battle of Pitayó, and the city ceased to have a *cabildo* of sworn loyalty to the king (the actual expression of power). Furthermore, Bolívar would a year later, take advantage of the temporal suspension of aggressive actions to begin holding talks with the representatives of the royalist families, finally winning them over. Their support allowed Bolívar to continue his southern campaign, with which he defeated resistance in Pasto, Quito and Peru, thus politically finishing with royalism in South America.

It is worth noting that in a recent study, Alonso Valencia Llano has stated that the elite of the city of Popayán did not take part in the 1809 *coup* in Quito - and therefore also abstained from all of the following *coups*- because they had found it to be very advantageous to them, and because it put their historic domination of the region at risk. For years, the Popayan elite had enjoyed a proximity of sorts to the viceregal and metropolitan powers, as many of the members were important figures in the bureaucratic and military structures of the

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<sup>16</sup> Oscar Almario García, “Muchos actores, varios proyectos, distintas guerras: la independencia en la gobernación de Popayán y en las provincias del Pacífico, Nueva Granada (1809-1824)”, in *La Independencia de los Países Andinos: Nuevas Perspectivas*, Eds., Guillermo Bustos and Armando Martínez (Quito: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, 2004), 144-163.

colonial state.<sup>17</sup> This dissertation, in accordance with this analysis, intends to follow the trail of the socio-political ties of the family and social networks of the Popayán elite between 1808 and 1820, with the aim of shedding some more light on the complex breakdown of the Hispanic empire.

Prosopography -the study of the complex and multiple connections between individuals within the elite through family, economy and relationships of power and prestige-<sup>18</sup> is one of the analytical tools employed in the writing of this thesis. However, the data assembled with regard to the members of the Popayán elite was not put to use in a merely traditional way. Hence, in addition to identifying the “greatest” families in Popayán, verifying the position of their members in the civil administration, observing their marriage alliances with other respectable families spread across the viceroyalty and the rest of the empire, confirming the patriarchal structure of their lineages<sup>19</sup> and demonstrating their strong ties to the church<sup>20</sup> (all of these being characteristic of traditional prosopography); this dissertation reconstructs the ties the elite of Popayán maintained throughout the changing contexts in which they found themselves, together with their inter-personal relations. In this sense, each member of the Popayán elite had at once more than one role, in accordance both with his relations with other individuals and political systems, and with the position he held in each of these relations (general prosopography)<sup>21</sup>. The works of José

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<sup>17</sup> Alonso Valencia Llano, *La confrontación regional en el proceso de independencia del suroccidente colombiano* (Cali: Editorial Universidad del Valle, 2010), 41-43.

<sup>18</sup> Juan Carlos Garivaglia and Juan Carlos Grosso, “Mexican elites of provincial Town: the Landowners of Tepeaca (1700-1870)”, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 70:2 (1990): 256.

<sup>19</sup> These elements were identified by John E. Kicza in his study of the great families of the late-colonial elite in Mexico. See John E. Kicza, “The Great families of Mexico: Elite Maintenance and Business Practices in Latin Colonial Mexico”, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, No 62:3 (1982): 429-457; William Lofstrom, *La vida íntima de Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera (1798-1830)* (Bogotá: Banco de la República/El Áncora Editores, 1996), 24-26.

<sup>20</sup> Alberto Flores Galindo proved that the great families of Lima arranged for some of their members to have a life in the church. See Alberto Flores Galindo, *La ciudad sumergida: Aristócratas y plebe. Lima: 1760-1830* (Lima: Horizonte, 1990). In contrast, John E. Kicza revealed that in Mexico very few members of the elite occupied ecclesiastic positions. See Kicza, “The Great of families of Mexico”, 455.

<sup>21</sup> Michel Bertrand, “La elite colonial en la Nueva España del siglo XVIII: un planteamiento en términos de redes sociales” in *Beneméritos, aristócratas y empresarios. Identidades y estructuras sociales de las capas altas urbanas en América hispánica*, Eds., Bernd Schröter and Christian Büschges (Madrid/Frankfurt: Vervuert Verlag-Iberoamericana, 1999), 37-42; Ruth Torres Agudo, *Élites y grupos de poder: Los hacendados de Santo Domingo (1750-1795)* (Salamanca: Tesis Doctoral de la

María Imízcoz and Michel Bertrand for other Spanish American regions were taken as examples for this thesis. For instance, in his studies on the Basque families in Spanish America, José María Imízcoz revealed that the majority of them not only did not act in a single region, but were actually very versatile, as their members tended to simultaneously undertake different careers, and partake in different activities and institutions spread across such a vast geographical space, that the definition of family broadly surpassed the mere paternal-filial level to encompass lateral kinship. This way, the Basque families connected individuals of very different condition together, going far beyond the traditional concepts of class and social group<sup>22</sup>. What is more, not all the members of a social network were necessarily blood-related, as opposed to the strong blood-ties implied by lineage. The ties from which these networks originated were very diverse, and included both equal-status relations and other unequal settings in which, however, their dependency was also absent: hence the much more varied, extensive and complex types of relations than had existed in the traditional patronage systems<sup>23</sup>. Michel Bertrand, on the other hand, observed a certain degree of modernity in the relations just described. Traditionally, Spanish American elites had worked on vertical connections, typical of the ancient regime. However, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, horizontal ties, established amongst equals and based on different criteria -such as political and economic obligations- became increasingly important<sup>24</sup>.

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Universidad de Salamanca, Facultad de Geografía e Historia, Departamento de Historia, Medieval, Moderna y Contemporánea, 2008), 24-26.

<sup>22</sup> Imízcoz, “Actores, redes, procesos”, 135. José María Imízcoz showed how from the second half of the seventeenth century -and most of all, during the eighteenth- the inhabitants of the Baztan Valley developed a structure of patronage which extended from the local communities to the central government. Their successful careers within the bodies of the state, the church or the army were grounded in strong family, friendship and kinship ties. It therefore became common for an individual who had reached a position of some importance and wealth anywhere different to his place of origin, to call family and friends over and to try to help them build their own careers. See José María “Imízcoz, “Actores sociales y redes de relaciones en las sociedades de Antiguo Régimen. Propuestas de análisis en historia social y política”, in *Historia a debate. Retorno del sujeto*, Vol. II, Ed., Carlos Barros (Santiago de Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 1995), 351.

<sup>23</sup> Pilar Ponce Leiva and Arrigo Amadori, “Redes sociales y ejercicio del poder en la América Hispana: consideraciones teóricas y propuestas de análisis”, *Revista Complutense de Historia de América*, Vol. 34 (2008): 25.

<sup>24</sup> Michel Bertrand, “Las élites sociales de Guatemala en vísperas de la Independencia: estructuras y dinamismo interno”, in *Visiones y Revisiones de la Independencia Americana: México, Centroamérica y Haití*, Eds., Izaskun Álvarez Cuartero and Julio Sánchez Gómez (Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 2005), 58-59.

Microhistory is the other main methodological tool used to write this dissertation. For this reason, the scale of the research was at first limited to certain individuals. Who amongst the inhabitants of Popayán played a bigger role in the process of Spanish American independence? I first traced the evidence of their actions not just in secondary literature, but also in primary sources disseminated across public and private archives. The structure and relations of the Popayán elite were subsequently reconstructed, taking into account the behaviour of its members in the political, economic, social and cultural contexts in which they manifested their belonging to that network<sup>25</sup>. The Popayán elite has therefore been studied as an active social group which underwent radical changes and in which the decisions adopted by each of its members were always determined by more than one context (be it political, economic, social or cultural). Likewise, microhistory has allowed me to study the elite's ability to adjust during the independence process, by reconstructing their relational network in all its complexity -this includes not just the family and marriage relations, but also friendship, nationhood and patronage, amongst other kinds of relations. Microhistory, in conclusion, was determining in reconstructing the relational networks established by members of the Popayán elite, and which conditioned the individual and collective responses to the changing contexts brought about by the process of independence<sup>26</sup>.

Finally, and with regard to the crisis of the Hispanic monarchy and to Spanish American independence, in this study I have taken into consideration Medófilo Medina's recent critique of the interpretative model brought forward by François-Xavier Guerra. In this sense, this dissertation does not take up the united perspective for the study of both processes which he suggested, and instead analyses the crisis of the monarchy and the Spanish American independence as two interdependent processes, both of which had their own dynamics. This highlights the different paths taken between 1808 and 1820 by each of the parts which made up the Hispanic monarchy. Also, while acknowledging the importance of the 1808-1810 years for the study of these

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<sup>25</sup> Imízcoz, "Actores, redes, procesos", 119.

<sup>26</sup> Michel Bertrand, "En busca de una identidad social: redes familiares y élites coloniales en tiempos de crisis", *Anuario de Estudios Bolivarianos*, No. 7-8 (1998-1999): 106.

events, I considered it important to trace too the ideological sources and the economic and political interests which the Popayán elite had had in the eighteenth century, to be able to show the connections of the socio-political processes of this time to that of independence<sup>27</sup>. To conclude, I would like to underline that this thesis breaks away from the geographical paradigm of the nation-State, in a fashion similar to that of a *matryoshka* doll: one space contains another until finally reaching the city of Popayán.

In this dissertation, the concept of “elite” is applied not only to the persons belonging to the group of the powerful and wealthy in the city of Popayán<sup>28</sup>, but also to those who achieved political, ecclesiastical, educational or military distinction<sup>29</sup>. Anyone who possessed a nobility title, occupied a bureaucratic post of some importance (such as the members of the city’s *cabildo*), held a governing position in the ecclesiastical, military or university bodies, or had received further education at the university level, is consequently regarded as a member of the Popayán elite at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is worth bringing to attention that all of these were chosen to make up the new institutions - *doceañistas*, autonomist and republican-; and even to take up positions in charge of the militia on both sides, royalist and republican.

On the other hand, I have taken a broad understanding on who may be defined as a “payanés” (i.e., “from Popayán). By the use of this term I refer not just to those who had been born there, but also to anyone who descended from someone from Popayán, and to all those who made the city their place of

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<sup>27</sup> Medófilo Medina Pineda, “En el Bicentenario: consideraciones en torno al paradigma de François-Xavier Guerra sobre revoluciones hispánicas”, *Anuario Colombiano de Historia de la Cultura*, Vol. 37, N° 1 (2010): 149-188.

<sup>28</sup> This is how David Brading understands the concept when applying it to the Mexican elite. See David Brading, *Mineros y Comerciantes en el Régimen Borbónico (1763-1810)* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993), 403.

<sup>29</sup> With regard to the extension and flexibility of the “Spanish American elite” concept, see Christian Büschges and Bernd Schröter, “Las capas altas hispánicas en la América colonial. Reflexiones sobre un tema y una conferencia”, in *Beneméritos, aristócratas y empresarios. Identidades y estructuras sociales de las capas altas urbanas en América hispánica* Eds., Bernd Schröter y Christian Büschges (Madrid/Frankfurt: Vervuert Verlag-Iberoamericana, 1999), 299-315; Frédérique Langue and Christian Büschges, “¿Las elites de la América Española, del éxito historiográfico al callejón interpretativo?”, in *Excluír para ser. Procesos identitarios y fronteras sociales en la América Hispánica (VII-XVIII)* Coords., Frédérique Langue and Christian Büschges (Madrid/Frankfurt: AHILA-Vervuert Verlag-Iberoamericana, 2005), 9-22.



residence. The reason for this broad approach to the concept is that to some degree they all formed part of the Popayán social networks interacting with each other during the independence process. Likewise, it is important to point out that the group we are referring to here is not all that numerous, despite the extensive approach taken. In contrast with the thriving emigration of people from the peninsula to Spanish America, the number of individuals crossing the Atlantic to the metropolis was very low. The movement of residents between the main Spanish American cities was not very common either, as mostly it just involved bureaucrats being relocated to a new destination on the continent. Many of these, in any case, did seal marriages of convenience with women from the elite families of the cities they had been transferred to, in the process becoming part of their wives' family network while expanding the reach of their own lineage<sup>30</sup>.

The wars of independence, however, opened up new channels of geographic mobility. Many, finding themselves in opposition to the governments established at their hometowns, preferred to flee to cities where they could find regimes which coincided with their political convictions (this occurred most of all amongst the elites). Some of these individuals even managed to become members of the institutions of local government. Wars, hence, forced the traditional families to have to share power with newcomers, as demonstrated by the proliferation of new last names amongst the members of the *cabildo* between 1808 and 1820<sup>31</sup>. It is also true, nonetheless, that just as in the city of Guatemala, the traditional families of Popayán tried to limit their marriage alliance with the newcomers to better defend not just their political interests but also the economic assets they had accumulated throughout the eighteenth century<sup>32</sup>. In any case, some of the newer members did manage to integrate through marriage into the family and social networks of Popayán<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Víctor M. Uribe-Urán, *Vidas honorables. Abogados, familia, y política en Colombia, 1780-1850* (Medellín: Fondo Editorial Universidad EAFIT, 2008), 110-112.

<sup>31</sup> See the Appendix 2.

<sup>32</sup> Bertrand, "En busca de una identidad social", 39.

<sup>33</sup> Many of the military officers (autonomous, republican or royalist) who were destined to New Granada cities different to their hometowns -for example Popayán-, married women of the local elites and gained access to their networks of power. With regard to the Europeans who fought in the wars of independence and integrated into the New Granada elites, see Mathew Brown,

A great number and variety of sources were used to write this dissertation. First of all, I consulted the correspondence maintained between the *payaneses*. Thanks to these documents, I was able to analyse the relationship existing between the various dimensions -geographical and institutional and of action- in which the members of the family and social networks of Popayán carried out their lives. These sources made the complex economic, political, social and cultural changes of the independence process more coherent and comprehensible<sup>34</sup>. During the crisis of the Hispanic monarchy, the inhabitants of the city of Popayán carefully observed the fate of their fellow *payaneses* in other cities, and vice versa. By studying the letters that they wrote, we can better understand how they might have influenced the actions of some of their recipients.

Although many of the letters -and memoirs- written by the inhabitants of Popayán between 1808 and 1820 were destroyed and disappeared either ending up at the bottom of the sea or going up in flames, and many others still remain lost, a good number of them were recovered for this purpose<sup>35</sup>. Some were obtained from the collections of correspondence published in Colombia during the past few years as part of the bicentennial commemorations; others were collected from various Colombian and Spanish archives, both private and public.

On the other hand, a series of previously unknown minutes from the *cabildo* of Popayán, corresponding to the years 1810-1815 and 1819, were unearthed during the research. These minutes were not found next to the city

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*Adventuring through Spanish Colonies. Simón Bolívar, Foreign Mercenaries and the Birth of New Nations* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 173-201.

<sup>34</sup> Imízcoz, “Actores, redes, procesos”, 136-138.

<sup>35</sup> This is how Mariano del Campo Larraondo referred to the destruction of documents relative to the independence of Popayán: “*I had been working with some prolixity and speed on that History which goes from the establishment of the Junta de Seguridad on 11 August 1810, until the beginning of 1813. Despite the many dangers I suffered on the field fleeing from the bandits who filled the province in that year, I had managed to preserve that piece of work in a box, together with all the papers I had used to write it. Unfortunately, on one of those days, my servant found himself having to throw the box to the bottom of a gorge. After 1815, I restarted this work, relying solely on memory. Additional troubles forced me to burn this work too the year after, including many verses relative to the subject.*” See Mariano del Campo y Larraondo, *Rasgos poéticos, que pueden servir de apuntamientos sobre la historia de nuestra revolución escrito por el doctor Mariano del Campo y Larraondo*, Ed., Marcela Revollo Rueda (Bogotá: Universidad de la Sabana, 2012), 175-176.

hall's books in the Archivo Central de Cauca. Next to these minutes were found memorials sent by the municipal corporation to some of its peers, such as the *cabildos* of other cities, royalist authorities (presidents of *audiencias*, viceroys, ministers of state, members of the regency), and autonomous or republican institutions. In addition, documents produced by members both of the new institutions -juntas, state councils, congresses, presidencies of state- and of the traditional ones -*gobernaciones*, *audiencias*, general captaincies, viceroyalties-, were also located. Furthermore, I carried out extensive research in the local, regional and imperial newspapers of the period. This allowed me to establish the "published opinion" and to complete the information collected in the archives. Thanks to this vast array of sources and documents, I was able to acquire a detailed knowledge of the official and private dimensions of the processes of independence in which the members of the Popayán elite had become involved<sup>36</sup>. It also permitted me to identify the individuals who formed part of the municipal institutions -both royalist and republican- between 1808 and 1820, together with those of other governmental institution (juntas, electoral bodies, the executive power, etc.), therefore gaining a perfect understanding of the policies advanced by the local institutions and the relation of this with the regional and imperial powers.

In order to find these documents, primary archival research was conducted at the Archivo General de Indias (Seville), Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid), Archivo de Protocolos Notariales (Madrid), Archivo de las Cortes Generales (Madrid), Archivo de la Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid), Archivo General de Palacio (Madrid), Archivo General de Simancas (Simancas), Archivo General de la Nación (Bogotá), Archivo Cipriano Rodríguez Santa María (Bogotá), Archivo Histórico Juan Manuel Pacheco (Bogotá) and Archivo Central del Cauca (Popayán). I also consulted the historical sections of the following

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<sup>36</sup> In his study of the independence of Ecuador, Demetrio Ramos had set out to compare the documents which both officially and privately had been exchanged between the most influential individuals, their friends and members of the government; but the difficulty to find documents of this kind forced him to have to limit his study to following the trail of these exchanges. See Demetrio Ramos Pérez, *Entre el Plata y Bogotá: cuatro claves de la emancipación ecuatoriana* (Madrid: Cultura Hispánica, 1978), 236-337.

libraries: Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid), Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango (Bogotá) and Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia (Bogotá).

It should also be mentioned that finding the published sources and the relevant secondary information required conducting research in other libraries, apart from those already mentioned, at the following institutions: Instituto Iberoamericano (Berlin), Instituto de Além Mar (Lisbon), National Library of Portugal (Lisbon), Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Lisbon), Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (Madrid), Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos (Seville), numerous faculty libraries at the Universidad de Salamanca -Instituto Iberoamericano, Historia, Filología, Derecho, Educación y Ciencias Exactas-, Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, Universidad Jaume I (Castellón), Universidad de Granada and the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Between 1808 and 1820 in Popayán, as in many other parts of the Spanish Empire, took place the political transition from an absolute monarchy to a liberal republic. This historical process was not linear or progressive, nor was its result necessary; on the contrary, it had many facets that could have led to a completely different outcome. The republic was not the project par excellence of the Popayán's elite; there were other projects equally important. However, traditional historiography has applied a teleological interpretation to the historical process that took place during these years, considering it only for its results. Thus, what happened by chance has been interpreted as being an inevitable outcome.

This teleological interpretation has been applied not only to the process itself, but also to those who played a role in it. Several members of the Popayán's elite have been described as republicans by the traditional historiography, even though at the beginning they didn't share those ideals or even rejected them outright. Through this historical misrepresentation the non-republican stages of their political thought have been overlooked. In fact, certain historiography has described them as unequivocally committed to the Republic from the very beginning. Primary sources, however, show that during the wars of independence

many of these individuals went through several political stages according to their sociopolitical needs. Thus during the process of Spanish American emancipation, the political points of view of Popayán's elite underwent several stages, not all of them republican, as I hope has been sufficiently demonstrated here.

Therefore, it can be stated that the independence of the city of Popayán happened by chance in 1820. The royalists (the other main political force in the process) had enough financial and human resources as to have been able for longer the obedience to monarchical institutions. The reason why the royalists were not successful in the south of New Granada's Viceroyalty, like they were in Cuba or Puerto Rico, was due more to the internal conflicts between the royalist leaders, the absence of a unified metropolitan policy in South America, and the abuses committed against the civil population by the commanders of the expeditionary army; than to the efficiency of the army and political program of the republicans.

The population of the southern part of the Viceroyalty of New Granada, both the elite and the subaltern groups of natives and blacks (freed and slaves), considered that the traditional order answered more to their collective interests, than the new one advocated by the republicans. This is why the population helped to retain, as far as possible, the monarchical institutions in the province of Popayán. To change this view, regional republican leaders had to resort to force. Three military expeditions (Baraya in 1811, Villavicencio in 1812 and Nariño in 1814) were sent from Santa Fe, to subjugate the southern regions that refused to implement the new republican institutions. Despite the strength of these expeditions, the republicans didn't succeed in defeating the royalists.

Nevertheless, the conflicts and contradictions between the different crown authorities that governed Popayán, undermined royal authority from the inside, just as happened in most parts of Latin America. This is why, the most powerful families of Popayán, with connections in the metropolis and that had so far financed the royal army, chose to support the new Republican project led by Bolivar in 1820. These families had come to the conclusion that the royalists

could no longer guarantee their privileges. Their decision to change sides inclined the balance in favor of the republicans, since the royalist lost their traditional source of funding, and thus the war.

From 1820 the setbacks of the royalists in the province of Popayán became apparent. The border that had remained untouched around the city of Popayán began to move southwards. Inch by inch the republicans won the territories that had traditionally stood for the rights of the King, finally conquering the city of Pasto in 1822. This city had remained unassailable as the standard bearer in the defense of the Spanish monarchy until then. With the loss of Pasto the royalists were deprived of validity and legitimacy. During the following years, until 1825, the subaltern groups of natives and Blacks were the ones who fought for the royal flag, achieving nothing but a final defeat.

Popayán's social networks, established at the end of the XVIII century, made it possible for some individuals to remain in the higher political positions, regardless of the government in power, during the twelve years of civil war for independence. The control of the government of Popayán changed hands between the royalists and the republicans twelve times during these years. Anyhow, the members of the most powerful families of the city, with the larger social networks, managed to remain in the local government institutions and to implement a policy favorable to their families' socio-economical interests.

These networks, besides working for the benefit of Popayán's elite families, also served to hold together several parts of the Spanish monarchy. The powerful bonds of kinship, patronage, shared origins and friendship, were the ones that kept together the southern cities of the viceroyalty of New Granada (including Popayán) under the metropolitan regime. Once that political independence was achieved, these same bonds contributed towards the consolidation of republicanism. Therefore, Popayán's social networks served as powerful ties, both during the absence of effective king leadership, and in the early stages of the first and second Republic.

Contrary to what has been held by the Latin American (and European?) nationalist historiography, the study of the different political stages through which the main actors went through reveals that the wars for independence were not between Latin Americans and Spaniards. There were several Latin Americans amongst the royalist ranks, and several Spaniards amongst the republicans. Latin Americans not only formed part of the king's army, they also financed, promoted and ideologically defended it. A broader spectrum of study shows how several creoles that had previously returned to the Peninsula, took part in the policy making of the Spanish monarchy towards their Latin American territories during the Imperial crisis. They also had a decisive influence in the decisions adopted by their relatives residing in different Latin American cities.

The study of Popayán's elite demonstrates how the members of these families that lived in Spain counseled their Latin American relatives on the policies they should follow. These instructions reached all the members of the family network. This made possible that members of these families, residing in different places and holding different positions, adopted similar decisions to face the political crisis.

These networks, however, worked bi-directionally. During the reconquest by the Expeditionary Army, not all the payaneses that played a leading role in the independent-republican movement were executed. Many of them were forgiven, while others only received a minor punishment, thanks to the mediation of their family and friends in the Peninsula. Family intervention also played an important role in the awards granted by Fernando VII to recognize the loyalty of some *payaneses*.

The behavior of *payanese* elite networks was surely not an exception. Several social networks were developed in Latin America from the XVIII century, and like the *payanese* ones, they worked for the maintenance and furthering of their benefits during the interregnum and the six years of the absolutist administration. There are several studies on Latin American elites and social networks, but most of them focus on the period before the political crisis of the

Spanish monarchy. One of the conclusions of this dissertation is that research needs to be done on the political behavior of Spanish American social networks during the independence period. Attention needs to be paid to the triple spatial dimension (European-Peninsular-American) in which these networks developed their activities.

These kind of studies will help us to understand how Latin American elites took advantage of the Spanish monarchy crisis to develop new political communities according to their socio-economic interests. Popayán's most prominent families decided to take part in the republican project once they were persuaded that it guaranteed the slave system in which they have invested their capitals. Therefore, when the main republican leaders decided to postpone the liberation of the slaves, the *payanese* elite gave her backing to the integration of Popayán into a new political community.

In the beginning of the XIX century *payanese* powerful social networks stretched throughout Latin America, as well as the Peninsula and Europe. The political activities of the Latin Americans in the Peninsula and Europe had barely been studied, even less their connection to the process that was taking place in Latin America. However, their decisions often determined those of their relatives and compatriots. A comprehensive study of this group of Latin Americans will allow a better understanding of the complex process that was established between the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the Spanish Empire during its disintegration and the consequent creation of the Latin American nation-states.

In short, the elite of the city of Popayán played a significant role in the complex process of Latin American independence and, as other elites of the Empire, fought to defend their own interests, rather than those of the new political communities. Once the Colombian Republic had been established, several years were needed for her to muster the support of all the social networks that had been established in the viceroyalty of New Granada since the XVIII century, including those of Popayán.



A close reading of the primary sources revealed that the liberalism of Cadiz was present in the southern part of the viceroyalty of New Granada, as in other regions of Latin America. For many years, Colombian traditional historiography neglected its presence under the consideration that New Granada was politically independent from 1810, and henceforth a local constitutional movement was developed. While some provinces of New Granada established government juntas, electoral colleges, executive powers, and constitutions were written; other provinces remained loyal to the Spanish Crown. The latter provinces transformed their local institutions in line with the political revolution that was taking place in the metropolis.

One of those provinces was Popayán. Not only was the Cadiz Constitution sworn to in this jurisdiction, many of the laws passed by the Extraordinary Cortes were also executed there. Local officials and representatives to both the General Cortes and the provincial council were elected, new constitutional town councils were created, and some of the *ancien régime* posts and institutions were eliminated at several of the districts which made up the province. Throughout this revolution in political practices, many of the indigenous groups of the Popayán jurisdiction also became involved.

The city of Pasto and Los Pastos encompassed the two districts where the reforms issued from Cadiz lasted the longest and were more profoundly implemented. In consistency with what had been sanctioned by the 1812 Constitution, the indigenous population of both districts played an active role in the process by which the representatives at the new institutions were elected. Members of the indigenous communities were considered active citizens and were included in the electoral rolls. They were also able to participate in the elections at the parish districts. In accordance with the constitution, the district of Los Pastos -made up in its majority of indigenous people (9.382, according to the census of 1798)- had its first own town council established in 1813. The access to full citizenship and to the rights it entailed generated amongst the indigenous communities of the south of New Granada a sense of representation and sovereignty which until then had not existed. This explains, in part, why these

communities fought for the maintenance of the monarchical institutions and against the implementation of their republican equivalents.

Unlike the indigenous communities, blacks were not granted natural citizenship, they had to earn it by meritorious acts. This differentiation no doubt explains why numerous slaves and free blacks went on to voluntarily fill the ranks of the royalist army, often standing out in battle. Thanks to their contribution being recognized, they achieved not just their freedom -for which they had fought throughout all the eighteenth century-, but also the distinction as citizens, thanks to which they were able to participate in the new political practices of the nineteenth century. However, all the blacks who gained freedom through meritorious acts of war did so during the absolutist administration; they therefore did not obtain the type of citizenship sanctioned at Cadiz.

The Cadiz Constitution was sanctioned in New Granada at the time the civil wars for independence were taking place. The practical execution of the political changes determined by the Cortes of Cadiz was therefore obviously affected by the struggle between the different sides of the conflict in all the provinces of New Granada. Still, the war did not stop Cadiz's constitutionalism from directly and indirectly imbuing the constitutionalism which was developing in the autonomous and republican regions. The people of New Granada became aware of the political transformations occurring in the peninsula between 1808 and 1820 not just through official reports, but also thanks to the letters from relatives in Madrid and Cadiz, and to the many newspapers which were edited in those cities. This allowed the Cadiz Cortes to have an influence on the discussions and decisions adopted by the autonomous and republican provinces of New Granada. The first constitutions of New Granada -both centralist and federalist- were therefore inspired by Latin American and French constitutionalism, but also by the first Hispanic liberalism.

The republican movement in Popayán was, like in many other parts of Latin America, a movement strongly associated with the elite. At first, most of the Popayán families fought to maintain the city under the authority of the king; once

they realized this was a lost cause, however, they joined the republicans. The presence of these families explains why the project for the 1814 Constitution completely ignored the ethnic composition of the jurisdiction. Even though free blacks and slaves made up 17% of the jurisdiction's population, and that the governments on the fringes of the province had discussed some measures to reduce or eliminate slavery, not a word was said about these people in Popayán's 1814 Constitution. In the same way, the indigenous communities, comprising up to 24% of the population, did not take part in the new republican elections. The electoral regulations of 1814 excluded Indians from the right to citizenship, due to them being considered "minors" and their Spanish language skills being deemed far too basic. The Popayán elite thus deprived blacks and Indians from the right to be represented and to have sovereignty, similarly to what happened during the absolutist period.

The Popayán republic was, as many others on the continent, predominantly for the white, the wealthy and the Catholic. These elements were - not coincidentally- those which best defined the city's elite. The endogamic and intermarriage strategies carried out from the foundation of the city by the Popayán lineages, and which had completely excluded the subaltern groups from power, turned into constitutional articles at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The elite managed to adapt the new legal framework to its interests, in the process maintaining the privileges gained over the previous centuries. This in turn would allow the Popayán elite also to rise to the pinnacle of political power in the Republic of Colombia in the following decades.

Once the independence had been achieved, several Popayán lineages stood out in the shaping of the new political community. Mosquera, Valencia, Arboleda, Torres and Pombo were some of the last names which would become common among those of the new governors, judges, senators and presidents of the Republic of Colombia.