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Argentine Historians in Exile: Emilio Ravignani and José Luis Romero in Uruguay (1948-1954)

Pablo Buchbinder

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this essay is to analyze the experiences of Emilio Ravignani and José Luis Romero during their exile in Uruguay in the late 1940s and early 1950s. First, the academic activities of Ravignani and Romero at the University of the Republic in Montevideo are studied. Then, the impact of their exile on their historiographical production is evaluated.

KEYWORDS: Historians, Exile, Uruguay, Argentina.

I. INTRODUCTION¹

IN November 1946, ten months after the election that designated Juan Domingo Perón as president of Argentina, Emilio Ravignani resigned from his positions as professor of American history and Director of the Historical Research Institute at the School of Philosophy and Arts of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA). One month before, he had resigned from his position as professor of constitutional history at the National University of La Plata. In both cases he resigned in order to keep up his professional dignity by refusing to be compulsorily retired. In this way, his long academic career that had begun in the first decade of the century ended. Ravignani had been the first and until then the only director of the Historical Research Institute, a position he had held since 1920.

His resignation was not exceptional. In the period immediately before and after Juan Domingo Perón's rise to the presidency of the nation, one third of all university professors was forced to leave their positions. Some were dismissed with immediate effect, others compulsorily retired, and the rest resigned arguing that adequate conditions for their academic activities no longer existed. The disciple closest to Ravignani, Ricardo Caillet Bois, was expelled in November 1946. José Luis Romero, a historian with scientific and political perspectives very different from those of Ravignani and Caillet Bois, was also forced to leave his position as professor at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata (National University of La Plata) at the end of the same year. He would stay out of university classrooms during Perón's entire presidency. After the coup that removed Perón, in September 1955, the new government designated Romero as dean of the University of Buenos Aires and Caillet Bois as director of the Historical Research Institute, renamed then the E. Ravignani Institute of Argentine and American History. Ravignani himself had died one year before Perón was overthrown, on the 8th March 1954.

¹ The author thanks Nicolás Buchbinder for his valuable help in the translation of this article.

Ravignani and Romero shared not only the same profession, but also a remarkable concern for public life. The former was a prominent leader of the conservative wing of the political party Unión Cívica Radical (Radical Civic Union), while the latter had joined the Socialist Party in 1945. The purpose of this paper consists in analyzing the consequences that the rise of peronism had on both historians as well as their university activities during the exile that they were forced into due to their political opinions.

II. PERONISM AND THE ARGENTINE ACADEMIC WORLD

One of the substantive effects that the emergence of peronism had on the world of Argentine politics was its intense polarization. Society was divided into two parts, supporters and opponents of peronism, and this became quickly irreconcilable. The reasons for this division could be found in the diverging views on the new national government. A large part of the Argentine intellectuals saw Perón as a replica of the European fascist dictators. In the academic world, the division was more outspoken than elsewhere. Peronism suppressed the autonomy of the university, first *de facto*, and then *de iure*. From 1918 on, and only with a short interruption from September 1930 to February 1932, the universities had developed their activities while enjoying effective autonomy in relation to political power. Furthermore, a climate of considerable ideological pluralism prevailed in the universities. Until the arrival of peronism, the political views of the academics did not decisively determine their careers. From 1943 onward, when the nationalist and Catholic government emerged from the military coup in June of that year, and later with Perón's election as president, politics invaded the academic world, and the most renowned opponents were gradually forced to resign their positions.² Beyond their relationship with the new administration, the opponents had also marked political differences among themselves: there were radicals, socialists, communists and conservatives. The historians expelled from the universities also differed much in their outlook in academic, methodological and thematic terms.

Even though several of the most important leaders of the political opposition spent long periods in prison during peronism, this was not the case for Ravignani or Romero. In addition, despite journeys and prolonged stays outside the country during most of the ten years of peronism, both maintained their residency in Argentina. Even so, none could develop activities in the university or public administration. Their expulsion from the university had different consequences for both of them. Ravignani's circumstances to confront the situation were better because he was a practicing lawyer next to his duties as a historian and professor. He was also an active politician. During a large part of the peronist era, he was a member of the National Parliament. Romero's environment, on the other hand, was tightly linked to teaching, in particular at the university, but also as a primary and secondary school teacher. After his expulsion from the university, he found a job in publishing companies as a translator and editor. He was also a lecturer in private institutions.

² P. Buchbinder, *Historia de las Universidades Argentinas* [History of the Argentine universities] (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2010) and *Historia de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras* [History of the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts] (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1997).

Despite the fact that both of them had already been recognized as prestigious historians, their careers and profiles were very different. Since the decade of the 1920s, and together with Ricardo Levene, Ravignani had been a central figure of professional historical writing. That centrality was due to his leadership in the official institutions dedicated to the practice of history. From the late 1910s, he directed the most important university institute for historical research and in addition he had been the dean of the School of Philosophy and Arts of the UBA on two occasions. By contrast, Romero was a marginal figure in academia. He had studied at the National University of La Plata and he had taught the history of historiography there since the end of the 1930s.

Ravignani was one of the principal exponents of the so-called New History School and belonged to a generation oriented toward the study of legal and institutional history. The New History School was influenced by the traditions of erudite history that emerged in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century and that was concerned primarily with the application of the methods of source criticism. Its principal topics were linked to the study of institutions, to legal history and legal ideas, and to political history in its most traditional dimensions.

Romero, by contrast, remained outside the traditional and influential circles of historiographical production. As Fernando Devoto has observed, when he initiated his career as a historian in the 1920s, Romero positioned himself already against the dominant tendencies in the world and in Argentina of which Ravignani was a typical exponent. He was a critic of the so-called erudite school, concerned with data fetishism, with sources and with the method of source criticism. In addition, Argentine history was not the center of its interests. The first stage of his historiographical production had been dedicated to classical Antiquity. Devoto has outlined his attempt to explain the dynamics of politics in Antiquity through the transformation of society and economy. These insights that tightly linked politics and institutions to social conflict was inspired by the famous German historian Arthur Rosenberg, who also had remained at a distance from the dominant historiographical mainstream before his exile in 1933. Given that his accession to the chair of ancient history proved impossible and that he was appointed as a professor of the history of historiography instead, he was forced to immerse himself in the study of the ideas of ancient historians. In those years, he became interested in cultural history and the history of ideas, and he wrote his first texts about Argentine history. In the same period, he composed his first works about medieval history, the field in which he would eventually produce his most important output.³

III. CAREERS AND EXPERIENCES IN URUGUAY: DIVERGING ROADS

Neither Romero nor Ravignani abandoned the historical profession in the peronist period. Both continued writing, doing research and publishing. Nevertheless, their exclusion from the national university circuits – at that time there were no private

³ F. Devoto, “En torno a la formación historiográfica de José Luis Romero” [The historiographical training of José Luis Romero], *José Luis Romero: Vida histórica, ciudad y cultura* [José Luis Romero: his life as a historian, his city, his culture] eds J. E. Burucúa, F. Devoto and A. Gorelik (San Martín: UNSAM EDITA, 2013), 37-56.

universities in Argentina – affected them in a special way. As many other Argentine scholars, both of them found a place to continue their academic activities in Uruguay.

Uruguayan public opinion perceived the new Perón administration negatively. And the Uruguayan government preserved a reformist and liberal orientation similar to the one that had predominated during large parts of the 1910s and 1920s in Argentina. An important and large group of Uruguayan scholars and intellectuals immediately supported the targeted Argentine professors. In addition, during the 1940s and 1950s the Uruguayan law applied the principle of university autonomy. Since the late 1940s, the most important figures associated with the reform of university policy in Latin America, to which also Ravignani and Romero belonged, had become members of the governing board of the University of the Republic, the only university institution in Uruguay. The proximity between Montevideo and Buenos Aires, barely six or seven hours by boat then, made possible carrying out academic duties in Montevideo while maintaining a residence in Buenos Aires.

The institutional organization of historical teaching and research at the university level had barely started in Uruguay in 1945. The School of Humanities and Sciences was created in that very year. The establishment of this teaching and research center had been demanded for decades. The School was founded at the initiative of philosopher Carlos Vaz Ferreira and the decree establishing it saw as its objectives the development of higher education and research in philosophy, history and literature and the consolidation of an institution specifically dedicated to scholarship, excluding professional training such as high school teacher training.

The situation of historical writing in Uruguay differed substantially from the Argentine one, where the academic establishment and institutionalization of the humanities originated in the last decade of the nineteenth century. One of the central problems of the new Uruguayan institution was the recruitment of faculty and scientific staff capable of leading and organizing the teaching and research activities. Carlos Zubillaga has observed that, during the discussions about the foundation of the School of Humanities and Sciences, the issue of faculty recruitment came up and the possibility of hiring anti-fascist scholars and intellectuals from Argentina, Spain, Italy or Germany, who were exiled from their home countries, was suggested. As early as December 1946, *El País* [The Nation], one of the most influential newspapers of the country, suggested to establish an institute similar to Ravignani's in Buenos Aires. The activities of his institute were well known in Uruguay, partly because of Ravignani's interest in the figure of José Gervasio Artigas, the most important national hero of Uruguay, and partly because of the active international network building of the institute since the 1920s.⁴ Ravignani could contribute here not only his long experience as an organizer, but also his extensive contacts with historians from Latin America, Europe and the United States. As the correspondence in his personal archive shows, he had been, since the mid-1940s, a figure frequently consulted by historians from all over the world interested in Latin-American history themes.⁵ In this context, Ravignani was

⁴ C. Zubillaga, *Historia e Historiadores en el Uruguay del siglo XX* [History and historians in Uruguay in the twentieth century] (Montevideo, Librería de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación, 2002), 181.

⁵ See the documentation in the *Archivo de Emilio Ravignani (AER)*, Second Series, Box n° 52 in Instituto de Historia Argentina y América E. Ravignani, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras (UBA).

first requested to organize and direct the Historical Research Institute of the School of Humanities and Sciences and then appointed to coordinate the course *Introduction to Historical Studies*. In July 1947, Ravignani became honorary director of the institute. The Uruguayan authorities hoped that he would build in Montevideo an institute similar to the one he had founded and directed in Buenos Aires.⁶

Ravignani's activities at the helm of the institute were a copy, in important respects, of those that he had carried out as director of the Historical Research Institute of the University of Buenos Aires. In addition, these activities were similar to those developed by the most important university history institutes in Europe and the United States since the late nineteenth century. This can be inferred, among others, from the report on the activities of 1950 that he presented to the dean. A central objective of the institute was the establishment of ties with similar organisms in other countries, in particular the Pan-American History and Geography Institute in Mexico. Moreover, Ravignani encouraged hiring professionals in charge of copying Uruguayan documents available in foreign archives. With this purpose in mind, he mobilized several of his former assistants in Buenos Aires, who had also been expelled from the UBA. The critical edition and publication of series of documents constituted another of his goals. Also in 1950, the first volume of the *Documents for the History of the Republic of Uruguay*, one of four planned series of documents, was published. This volume contained the proceedings of the University Board between 1849 and 1870 and would be the first of a long series.⁷ On the other hand, 1950 was the centenary of the death of Artigas. The report edited by Ravignani includes a large list of works, some of them written by collaborators of the institute and by other faculty, but also several written by him personally, revealing that the study of Artigas constituted a central area of research for the institute. Following a UBA School of Philosophy and Literature practice, Ravignani also took care of inviting foreign professors, such as the renowned French anthropologist Paul Rivet, and of guaranteeing the exchange of publications with prestigious historiographical research centers from other countries. His efforts to organize the institutional apparatus necessary for doing research would be recognized as fundamental after his death in March 1954.

Nevertheless, his hiring policy apparently also provoked controversy and resentment among Uruguayan historians. He seemed to have aroused the hostility of the principal 'official' historian, Juan Pivel Devoto, who was able to exert considerable influence in the press. Carlos Zubillaga has shown how, after Ravignani's death, a series of articles questioning his appointment – as a foreigner – and the orientation of the institute's output appeared in the *El Día* [The Day] newspaper. Ravignani's correspondence with the School board shows a certain preoccupation with the criticism of his work. At the same time, it demonstrated that his links with the relevant figures of Uruguayan politics and government – the result of his experience as an Argentine po-

⁶ In a letter sent to the Uruguayan historian Edmundo Narancio, Ravignani stated: "I have reflected upon the fundamental matter of your honorable invitation to collaborate in the establishment of a Historical Research Institute, at your School of Humanities, following the example of the one created in Buenos Aires, from which I was forced to resign as director". *Archivo del Instituto de Ciencias Históricas (AICH)*, Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación de la Universidad de la República, Correspondence 1947-1948.

⁷ E. Ravignani, "Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas: Memoria - Año 1950" [Institute of Historical Research, report for the year 1950], *Revista de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias*, 6 (1951), 23-34.

litical leader – permitted him to confront this criticism successfully. Ravignani made a special effort to strengthen his contacts in the Senate and obtain the support there of people like the influential senator Gustavo Gallinal.⁸

Carlos Zubillaga has also studied the process that ended with the incorporation of José Luis Romero into the School of Humanities and Sciences and outlined the stark differences with Ravignani's case.⁹ In September 1948, Romero was invited by the Ministry for Public Education to deliver a couple of lectures in Montevideo. In this context, a group of students of the School of Humanities and Sciences asked the dean to invite him to deliver two lectures.¹⁰ Afterward, it was Romero himself who suggested to the secretary of the School the possibility of incorporating him into the teaching faculty. The answer was positive and from 1949, he was hired to teach the courses *introduction to historical studies* (as Ravignani's successor) and *philosophy of history*. Apparently, Ravignani informally gave advice to Romero about his employment chances in Uruguay, which in a certain way reveals the solidarity which had sprung from their common condition as politically persecuted persons in Argentina. The recruitment of Romero did not generate, in contrast to Ravignani's, great public controversies, in part because he did not held a leading position in the university structure, but also in part because Romero did not possess Ravignani's reputation.

Romero's historiographical perspective diverged substantially from the one adopted by Ravignani in similar courses. While the latter proposed focusing his classes on questions related to source criticism, Romero explored conceptual aspects and topics related to epistemology, to the problem of truth and to historical judgment. In addition, the course left room for historiographical themes. In 1950, Romero was hired to teach the courses of philosophy of history and contemporary history. Later, he was asked to organize a seminar about the history of culture. The differences between Ravignani and Romero in terms of historiographical orientation can also be appreciated through the reading of a text written by a student of Romero's, Carlos Visca, that was published in the *Journal of the School of Humanities and Sciences*. The article, focusing on the 'Mentality of the Middle Classes' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had been written for the seminar about the history of culture taught by Romero. Unlike the type of works that Ravignani encouraged, based on the analysis of original archival sources and institutional and legal documents, Visca's article was largely based on novels and literary texts. The author argued that his essay was about the practical thoughts and feelings of a certain social group during a limited period of time. He emphasized that "The archives are not the place where we should look for our information, because almost nothing useful could be found there that would throw light on the mentality of our subject". Visca wanted to reconstruct the evolution and transformation of the bourgeois mentality and the formation of the modern conceptions of progress, nationality, family, class and upward mobility.¹¹

⁸ José M. Traibel to Emilio Ravignani, Montevideo, 23 de enero de 1948, en *AICH*, Correspondence 1947-1948.

⁹ C. Zubillaga, *Historia e Historiadores, en el Uruguay del siglo XX* [History and historians in Uruguay in the twentieth century] (Montevideo, Librería de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación: 2011), 223.

¹⁰ It should be noted that the students were part of the university governance in Uruguay.

¹¹ C. Visca, "La estructura moral de las clases medias (1870-1914) [The mentality of the middle classes (1870-1914)]", *Revista de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias*, 13 (1914): 161-212.

From 1953, Perón's governmental decrees limited travel to foreign countries, in particular those that were periodically undertaken to Uruguay. This regulation not only affected Romero's activity, but also the endeavors of many other Argentine scholars who had found a place for their professional development at the University of the Republic. Faced with this situation, he was offered the possibility of keeping the academic and employment connection with the institution by writing a work linked to any subject of the course and to be published afterward. Romero accepted the offer and his answer also reveals the importance of the Uruguayan university for continuing his duties as a historian and avoiding the acceptance of a simple clerk job. At that occasion, he showed his enthusiasm for the proposal, which, in addition, gave him the opportunity to work on a subject in which he took a particular interest: "... instead of doing the correspondence in an office or any other job that I would have to turn to".¹² However, in May 1954, the university suspended the contract because of its difficult financial situation. A little later, he was offered a new contract that required his definitive settlement in Montevideo, which he accepted. Nevertheless, the change in the political situation in Argentina and Perón's overthrow prevented this project from being put into practice. Romero would resume his links with the University of the Republic from 1956 onward.¹³

IV. EXILES, POLITICAL PERSECUTION AND HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PRODUCTION

A crucial question is how the political experience of persecution under peronism and the subsequent exile in Uruguay affected the historiographical work of the two figures studied in this essay. The historiographical trajectories of Romero and Ravignani reveal different effects of the rise of peronism and of the subsequent exile in Uruguay. In Romero's case, his production as a historian was not decisively affected by the political circumstances. In the years prior to the rise of peronism, his historiographical concerns had jumped from ancient to medieval history, which since then had become the central object of his work. Clearly, Romero had already turned into a medievalist by the early 1950s.¹⁴ Simultaneously, he had also developed an increasing interest in Argentine history, in particular in the development of ideas. This entire process seems to derive from a mid-term and long-term intellectual project and from readings and reflections flowing from his experience as a historian. Moreover, in 1951, Romero was granted a Guggenheim Fellowship, which obligated him

¹² José Luis Romero to Dr. Luis Giordano, Adrogué, 9 June 1953, Archivo de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias, Universidad de la República, File 248.

¹³ We follow here C. Zubillaga's work. "La significación de José Luis Romero en el desarrollo de la historiografía uruguaya [The significance of José Luis Romero in the development of Uruguayan historiography]", *La Historiografía Argentina en el siglo XX* [Argentine historiography in the twentieth century], ed. F. Devoto (Buenos Aires: Editores de América Latina, 2006), 345-376. See also C. Zubillaga "Comunidades historiográficas y renovación disciplinaria en Uruguay [Historiographical communities and discipline renewal in Uruguay]", *Revista Complutense de Historia de América*, 29 (2003), 179-191. For a warm description of Romero's period at the School by one of his former students at Montevideo, see B. París de Oddone, "Presencia de José Luis Romero en la Universidad Uruguaya" [The presence of José Luis Romero in the Uruguayan university], *Cuadernos Americanos*, 4 (1988): 122-128.

¹⁴ A summary of Romero's historiographical trajectory can be consulted in Devoto, "En torno a la formación historiográfica de José Luis Romero", 37-56.

to postpone his teaching commitments in Montevideo in order to examine materials related to various aspects of medieval history at Harvard University's Widener Library. Anyway, when he started writing about the history of ideas in Argentina, from the mid-1940s onward, he sometimes voiced his concerns about peronism explicitly in his texts.

By contrast, in Ravignani's case, the rise of peronism and probably his exile also had an important impact, especially in his thematic orientation and in his interpretation, but not in his methodological approach. Unlike Romero's, the object of his research was the evolution of Argentina from the colonial period to the middle of the nineteenth century. Ravignani had dedicated an important part of his works to the study of the origins of federalism and to *caudillismo* (chieftainship). He had even written several articles about Juan Manuel de Rosas, who had governed Buenos Aires Province with an iron fist between 1835 and 1852. Ravignani was, as we have already seen, a historian of law and of institutions. His preference for constitutional history and his fidelity to the methods of source criticism clearly permeate his works. However, some of his conclusions questioned the prevailing opinions in the reference works of legal history and even in the history textbooks used in primary and secondary schools. This is evident when one reads some of his writings published in the 1920s and 1930s.

It is difficult to summarize the content of Ravignani's ideas about Argentina's past. We will try to outline here some of its most important aspects. In the first place, we see in his works a strong defense of the contributions of the provinces and *caudillos* to the construction of the modern liberal order in Argentina. Ravignani tried to demonstrate that through their leaders, the *caudillos*, the provinces had simultaneously defended the principle of local autonomy and the will to integrate themselves into a larger political entity: the Argentine nation. In this sense, he criticized the influential versions of legal history that exalted the ruling class of the City of Buenos Aires and accused the *caudillos* – authentic popular leaders of their provinces – of being antinationalist and separatist. Ravignani demonstrated the popular and provincial origin of the political institutions of Argentina and its national constitution. In this context, he had also studied the towering figure of José Gervasio Artigas, who had been harshly described as a separatist and despotic *caudillo* in the two foundational works of Argentine historiography: the *History of Belgrano and the Independence of Argentina*, by Bartolomé Mitre, and the *History of the Republic of Argentina*, by Vicente Fidel López.¹⁵ Ravignani denied Artigas's separatism and accused the authorities in Buenos Aires, whom he labeled centralist and authoritarian, of having unfairly attacked and harassed Artigas.

Finally, Ravignani had also dedicated a considerable part of his works to the study of Juan Manuel de Rosas, a figure cursed by the traditional Argentine historiography. In opposition to an institutional and legal historiography that had even denied the necessity of studying this figure and his time (1835-1852) with the argument that a dictatorship did not create institutions worthy of investigation, Ravignani claimed that it was impossible to understand Argentina's political order in the second half of the

¹⁵ B. Mitre, *Historia de Belgrano y la Independencia Argentina* [History of Belgrano and the independence of Argentina] (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de Mayo, 1859) and V. F. López, *Historia de la República Argentina* [History of the Republic of Argentina] (Buenos Aires: Carlos Casavalle Editor-Imprenta de Mayo, 1883).

nineteenth century without Rosas's contributions. Even with its dictatorial features, Rosas's administration had permitted the unification of the country and its organization as a federation, underscoring in this way the positive aspects of that period.

The rise of Peronism, of which Ravnigani was a public and passionate opponent, caused a significant twist in his historical interpretations. One of the dimensions of that change was the close relationship that he established from then onward between his readings of the past and his discussions of the present. His historiographical work became politicized in a new and unprecedented way, although it continued to adopt the traditional political discourse emphasizing facts and great men that had characterized his historiographical perspective until then. It can be noticed at least how he explicitly tried to avoid that his views of the time of Rosas could be interpreted as a defense of dictatorship as a form of government. In the prologue to a small book published in 1945, he would argue that in his writings on Rosas he had only sought to construct an original explanation. He then emphasized that he had never tried to propose a "justification of evil".¹⁶ The writings about Artigas that he published in these years, developed partly during his exile in Montevideo and most of them published there in 1950, are, in this sense, more revealing. We saw that in his first writings on Artigas, Ravnigani had insisted on presenting him as a popular, federal and democratic leader. By contrast, in his writings of the 1950s, the Uruguayan leader became fundamentally a champion of republican principles of government. He claimed that, to understand Artigas correctly, it was necessary not only to acknowledge his defense of provincial autonomy, but also, and especially, his firm opposition to the monarchical and absolutist forms of government. Hence, through his historical writings, Ravnigani was referring implicitly to the Argentine political present, which he saw dominated by a clearly dictatorial regime.¹⁷

V. FINAL THOUGHTS

Both Ravnigani and Romero found in Montevideo a favorable environment to continue their academic activities. None of them succeeded in imposing his historiographical approaches and judgments, which were so different from each other. Neither did we notice any tensions or conflicts between them, despite their political and historiographical disagreements. Their shared condition of exile had perhaps reduced the importance of these differences. The Uruguayan university world was plural and required the contributions of foreign specialists for the organization of the School of Humanities and Sciences. Ravnigani was hired due to his expertise in the study of Uruguayan history, in particular his renowned works on the most important Uruguayan hero, Artigas. But, probably, the decisive factor in recruiting him for the University of the Republic was his experience in the institutional management of historical research. In addition, it is very likely that his contacts with many of the most important figures of Uruguayan historical writing, established over the years,

¹⁶ E. Ravnigani, *Inferencias sobre Juan Manuel de Rosas y otros ensayos* [Conclusions about Juan Manuel de Rosas and other essays] (Buenos Aires: Huarpes, 1945), 12.

¹⁷ E. Ravnigani, *Inferencias sobre Juan Manuel de Rosas y otros ensayos*, "Trascendencia de los ideales y la acción de Artigas en la Revolución Argentina y Americana [Significance of the ideals and action of Artigas in the Argentina and American Revolution]", *El País*, Montevideo, 24 de septiembre de 1950.

also had an impact. Moreover, his experience in building international networks that enabled the Historical Research Institute of the UBA to become a Latin-American model for the profession, surely constituted a factor that had advanced his recruitment. In Romero's case, by contrast, the participation of students, who due to the traditions of cogovernance in the Uruguayan university exerted an important influence on academic activities, was decisive. The fact that both men were hired also reveals that the power and governance structure of the School of Humanities and Sciences of Montevideo allowed the coexistence of figures characterized by differences of political and historiographical opinion. Ravnigani was a historian criticized by important figures of the local historiographical environment, but he was accepted in the end. Romero's popularity with the students was larger than Ravnigani's, as can be inferred from the testimony of Blanca París de Oddone, and it was a decisive factor in his recruitment for the University of the Republic.¹⁸ Romero also had a decisive impact on the historiographical orientation of a large part of the new generation of historians in Montevideo. However, his works did not have the public resonance of Ravnigani's writings, which appeared frequently in the most important journals. The lack of consolidation of the historiographical and academic field in Uruguay thus allowed the coexistence of alternatives.

By way of conclusion, we can say that Ravnigani and Romero played different roles in the process during which the School of Humanities and Sciences of Montevideo was established. Ravnigani was an organizer and institutional manager. Romero, instead, was much more involved in aspects related to the teaching and intellectual training of students. The place held by Ravnigani made him a target for public criticism and questioning, and his person encountered more resistance than Romero, who could count always on the sympathy of lower-level authorities, but above all on popularity among the students. In circumstances characterized by the persecution and expulsion of prestigious scholars and intellectuals from the Argentine universities, the University of the Republic in the end could count on two of their central figures, who played crucial roles in the establishment of its institutions and the professional training of its historians.

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¹⁸ B. París de Oddone, "José Luis Romero Universitario [José Luis Romero académico]", *Cuadernos Americanos*, N 10 (1988): 129-136.

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