

A CITY TRANSFORMED BY THE ARMY.
ATLANTIC NETWORKS IN SAN MIGUEL DE TUCUMÁN, 1812-1819

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ABSTRACT

Even though the city of San Miguel de Tucumán was located in a peripheral, mountain and remote geography, the wars of independence, and particularly the cantonment of the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú*, revitalized its territory and reinforced their integration into the political-military circuits of what we may call Atlantic networks. This city, that had been a battlefield (1812) but also the main quartering site of that army between 1812 and 1819, doubled its population and underwent transformations derived from the arrival of hundreds of officers and troops, with the consequent technical changes derived from the need to build hospitals, fortifications, military factories and other ways of supplying the new arrivals. Understood at the time as an army of *porteños*, regarding the origin of the majority of its officers and sub-officialdom, however, a small but significant part of the officers were European, who brought with them the technical knowledge learned during their passage through the Napoleonic Wars. The objective of the article is to analyze the atlantic network created by the arrival of political and military officers such as the French Philippe Bertrés (1786-1856), Enrique Paillardell (1785-1815), Jean Joseph D'Auxion de La Vayesse (1775-1829), the Austrian Baron Holmberg (1778-1853), and the Italian Emilio Salvigni (1789-1866), all of them officers that brought specific knowledge (military techniques, mathematics, agronomy) that contributed to their integration into local networks.

Keywords: Atlantic Networks; Tucumán, Auxiliary Army of Perú, Napoleonic Officers, Independence War.

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INTRODUCTION

This research supposes the existence of a fluid Atlantic network, whose complex circulation of people, goods and ideas demands an approach that exceeds the national framework.

The revolution at Río de la Plata officially started on May 25th 1810 as a provisional government council was formed in Buenos Aires, capital city of the Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata. However, the effects of the Spanish monarchy crisis had been felt for some time in this remote spot of the Spanish empire. One of the first decisions this board took was to conform military expeditions heading to Paraguay and Alto Perú with the aim of making sure these jurisdictions were subjected to the new authorities. Thus, this was the origin of the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú*. This army was originally organized with the existent military forces of the capital city and played a remarkable role in the revolutionary wars of Alto Perú. The newly created military force was also crucial to intervene in the inner Viceroyalty provinces, such as Córdoba, Santiago del Estero, Jujuy, Salta and Tucumán, all of which were located along the old royal road (*Camino Real*) which connected Buenos Aires and Potosí. The province of Tucumán originated in 1814, in an executive decree from the central governing power located in Buenos Aires, which mentioned this territory's contribution to war. The new province was, since its origins, characterized by its close relationship with the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* and the presence of men born in other areas of the *Virreinato del Río de la Plata* and even military men from the so-called 'Napoleonic diaspora' (Bruyère-Ostells 2009).

The spread of Napoleonic army officers that had taken part in the *Grand Armée* experience (1805-1815) is an object of study that counts on significant precedents. In addition, the historic transformations of this province, key to the revolution (due to its location as nexus between Buenos Aires and Alto Perú), require an analysis that would bear in mind the circulation of human and material resources around the Atlantic network. Such an approach can allow us to observe how what happened in a spot as remote as Tucumán may entail an intriguing observation point to understand the American revolutions in the frame of the Spanish crisis which was, in turn, contextualized within the hegemonic conflict between Great Britain and the French *Premier Empire* (1804-1815) (Planert 2016).

Even when in Argentine historiography the adoption of the bases of Atlantic History is still partial, we argue that this military staff flux shares the characteristics of other analytical nuclei in Atlantic studies, such as metropolis-colony relationships, slave trade, among other points of discussion (Adelman 1999, Gallo 1994, Ternavasio 2015, Wasserman 2019). Without

explicitly adhering to such conceptual line, the whole historiography from Río de la Plata has attained prominent reconceptualization in its study of independences in the last decades. This stems from the fact that it has solidly articulated local events with the monarchical crisis (1808-1814), on the one hand; and the context of Atlantic transformations, on the other.

As to the Napoleonic diaspora, we rely on a preliminary bibliographic corpus whose production and scale of inquiry is inter-oceanic, as well. Recent work has allowed to reconstruct the presence of over 500 Napoleonic officers in South America in what is now Chilean, Argentine, Peruvian and Venezuelan land (Puigmal 2013, 2015). Such work has come to demonstrate how these agents were able to become part of the American political, military, and administrative networks.

In a play of scale between Atlantic geography and local analysis of a province under construction, biographic trajectories were observed by analyzing how the presence of one of the main revolutionary armies invigorated this geographical space, which was a commercial, political, and military nexus between the port of Buenos Aires and the South Andean region of the American continent. Situated along the *Camino Real*, during colonial times Tucumán worked as an intermediary point in the commercial axis Potosí-Buenos Aires. Yet, due to difficulties in keeping control over Alto Perú, this geographical space became the main support for the revolution that would take place inside the United Provinces. This process began to take place in 1816 when the *Ejército Auxiliar* stationed in San Miguel de Tucumán, acting as a warrant of the central government's authority (Morea 2012). Meanwhile, the presence of the army had other effects. In the first place, it increased local population, which grew from 3000 in 1816 to more than 5000 in 1818 considering the army men (Tío Vallejo 2001: 253). Naturally, there were social and economic consequences. Among the former, matters related to social order could be mentioned and among the latter, productive and commercial activities were stimulated: hospitals, fortifications and weapon factories were set up, which required new technical knowledge, some of which was afforded by the new-comers.

At first we attempt to pursue a more general approach about the arrival of those military men to the Río de la Plata as compared to what occurred in other American areas. Yet, we will then look at some of those trajectories in detail to explore the elements upon which these men's incorporation to the *Rioplatense* society was made effective, as well as analysing their level of success or failure. In this way, we will see how men coming mainly from France, as well as other parts of Europe, were incorporated into the local territory will be addressed. The demobilization of British, Prussian, Austrian and French armies after Waterloo permitted these soldiers' arrival to Río de la Plata. Their stay in these lands was not solely tied to their willing-

ness. After the war, which had made them attractive figures, many stayed having managed to either re-signify their abilities in a different institutional framework or marry a member of the local social universe.

Taking these officers as point of departure, we will observe the role the technical knowledge they had, or claimed they had, played in the revolution, and later in the period known as '*autonomías provinciales*' (Goldman 1998). Apart from the capacities acquired in their military training, we will observe the bonds they built during the independence process. If the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* and the province of Tucumán will be our anchorage point, some of the selected trajectories will demand careful observation of these individuals' circulation around the provinces and states with still preliminary borders.

In this respect, we shall focus particularly on the life trajectory of two Frenchmen, Philippe Bertrés (1786-1856) and Jean Joseph Dauxión Lavaysse (1775-1829), given that their stay in Tucumán, through their incorporation into the army, synthesizes some more general aspects of the process of European officers' recruitment in the *Rioplátense* territory. Lastly, from a knowledge circulation point a view, we will observe how Lavaysse's and Bertres's social practices in various fields (warfare, journalism, surveying and political theory) generated two-sided transformations: installing little known practices and theories in the northern city and modifying ideas of their own as a result of their contact with the local world.

With respect to the sources, we will privilege some documents which have, up-to-date, been scarcely dealt with. For instance, Bertrés's maps, plot delimitations and blueprints, which evidence his fundamental role as an engineer and surveyor associated with the aforementioned army in the provinces of Río de la Plata and in the Republic of Bolivia. In Dauxión Lavaysse's case, we shall highlight the documentary use of his written work as publicist, barely addressed so far, showing his role as legal advisor which allowed him to redirect his former military training. For the remaining cases, we will focus on the records from the *Archivo General de la Nación* (Buenos Aires, Argentina) and the *Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Tucumán* (Tucumán, Argentina).

WATERLOO AND NAPOLEON'S FOLLOWERS' PATHS

The revolutions era is an extraordinary time to analyse the bonds between Europe and America from the Atlantic History perspective. Being the war one of the most important events of that time, opting for the military men as carriers to observe continental connections is significant, as it is to link the revolutionary processes in a sense that overcomes the uni-

directional. If we choose to concentrate on these men that fought in the Napoleonic armies, it is because we believe that, by representing them as idea and knowledge bearers, it is possible to also view them as articulators and even intermediaries between spaces. So as to picture these historic subjects as vectors, or rather connecting dots between lines, it is necessary to examine their life trajectories, mindsets and practical knowledge, along with the series of causes that made their arrival to Río de la Plata possible.

It is possible to distinguish different migration waves of Napoleonic officers. The pairing 1815/1816 is a strong point due to Bonaparte's defeat and the overall demobilization of the armies after Waterloo battle, but it is fair to say that since the onset of Spanish monarchical crisis the arrival of men that had participated in Napoleonic wars was constant.

England was a frequent boarding point for many of these men; nevertheless, another departing point before reaching South America was the port of Baltimore, intermediary between Europe and America (Puigmal 2013, 2015). This first exile destination for Napoleonic officers, who would then go all along the American continent from north to south, is connected to a complex diplomatic weave. Since French occupation, Spain and Great Britain had become allied, situation unaltered by the return of Fernando VII or Napoleon's defeat. For the British authorities it was complicated to allow vessels with soldiers to depart towards Latin America, knowing that most of them would swell the ranks of revolutionary armies opposing the Spanish crown. This historic circumstance lets us more closely approach what several historians call the 'the western question', namely the particular balance game between the major European powers and the rising United States when facing the Spanish monarchical crisis (Blaufarb 2007). A characteristic trait of this period is the complex inter-imperial scale which was an incentive to increase people's circulation. In this respect, it should be noted that despite being Spanish allies, the British harboured ambitions concerning Fernando VII's American territories, while the French were concerned about the shelter the American gave to the republicans and Bonapartists. In turn, although Americans boasted about their neutral position, they attentively followed the dismantling of Spanish colonial control.

As a matter of fact, in the new republic's ground, not only was there a complex game of spies in terms of mutual vigilance among North American authorities and French, Spanish and British ambassadors, but different projects were conceived of and networks of European and American exiles built too. At first, French occupation and the monarch's imprisonment, but then the restored Spanish king's weakness, served as motivations for those who promoted independentist and expansionist ideas giving rise to ample circulation of men, ideas and goods in a short time. The coming and going of messengers, along with French and American projects of trade and

occupation of different parts of the Spanish empire, became even more complicated with José Bonaparte's presence in the United States and the increasing arrival of Napoleon's supporters after Waterloo (Blaufarb 2005). The emperor's brother's arrival boosted the mushrooming of rumors about these men's possible ambitions. The potential political projects that caused collective astonishment were connected to the United States' own attitude, considering that the nascent republic was taking over a stronger role in the commercial and political life of the Atlantic system (Blaufarb 2007). Uncertainty also stemmed from the possible individual initiatives which, under the umbrella term of the 'Age of Revolution', could lead to a combination of individual ambition, ideological commitment and adventurous spirit in a time of radical transformation of the political languages.

In the second decade of the 19th century, the United States certainly became a place of exile or banishment for those who had fallen out of favour of the different revolutionary projects, even the South American ones, and from there initiatives that had the Spanish America as main target (Blaufarb 2005, Entin 2015).

On a different note, historiography has verified the presence of former members of Napoleonic armies in most of the war forces in the different revolutionary governments along the continent. At that time, the debatable nature of their true intentions, as well as specialized historiography, was called into doubt.

In this respect, Napoleon's final downfall and, above all his imprisonment in Saint Helena, fostered the most diverse hypotheses. If some actors had recurrently wondered whether the French officers in American territory were acting as the emperor's messengers, Bonaparte's imprisonment in the middle of the Atlantic fueled rumors about a possible rescue from America to take him back to New Spain in order to crown him in the new world (Ocampo 2007). Under those circumstances, the officers settled in America could turn out to be essential. Beyond this, the motivations that explain their presence in America could be diverse, to some extent it comes as a complex task for historians to reconstruct those motivations and distinguish between attained projects, rejected alternatives and unlikely versions.

In that matter, neither can ideological conviction be held as the main motivation to move, nor can such arguments be completely ruled out as potential explanations for their proceedings. What we can be sure about is that it was not the only element. Napoleon's defeat meant the overall cantonment of European armies, affecting a vast number of soldiers' way of living. For some of them, joining the revolutionary armies was a solution to unemployment and lack of income. There were not few cases in which adventurous spirits prevailed with the idea of casting aside the possibility of going back to their places of origin once the war ended in Europe. This

was the reason why moving to America implied both pursuing their military careers and a certain way of life (Puigmal 2013).

The arrival to America came to meet the needs of individual initiatives. As to the receptive character of the American contexts a clear contrast can be found concerning how the different revolutionary governments proceeded. While in the former *Capitanía General de Venezuela*, Simón Bolívar carefully planned and carried out a recruitment policy in Europe (Thibaud 2003), in Río de la Plata action was not taken in that sense. Although government representatives from Buenos Aires fostered these unemployed military men's trip, there was no global recruitment strategy (Puigmal 2013). Even though several men from the Napoleonic Wars were incorporated, their arrival was not thoroughly orchestrated by local governments. Quite on the contrary, it occurred thanks to international circumstances and the action of specific individuals.

EUROPEAN OFFICERS' INCURSION IN ARMIES FROM RÍO DE LA PLATA

After Huaqui's defeat (1811) in Alto Perú, the revolution was forced to face a problem that dated back to the very onset of the *Junta* but which until that time had not fully revealed itself: the lack of experienced officers.¹ In this conjunction, the government from Río de la Plata accelerated measures to perfect the main armies of the revolution. The hardening of discipline, the conversion of existent militias into veteran forces, the expansion of recruitment, the configuration of academies of instruction for officers and non-commissioned officers, were intended to tackle the military flaws of the revolutionary project (Fradkin 2009, Morea 2011, 2015, Rabinovich 2011).

Promoting the comeback of former officers that had served the King's arms was significant in addition to the incorporation of men coming from the European wars. The explicit objective was to return to wage war in a way that was more tied to tactic manuals that could guarantee success or, at least, would not jeopardize the revolution in the event of a war field setback (Halperin Donghi 1972b). The diaspora of military staff coming from Napoleon's armies, or the forces that fought against him, and which scattered across the United States, the Caribbean but also Turkey, China or

¹ Huaqui Battle took place on June 20th 1811, near Desaguadero river, border along the viceroyalties of Río de la Plata and del Perú. It was the first great battle of the revolution and it ended with an adverse result for Buenos Aires armies. The defeat was such that it jeopardized the process initiated in May 1810 and led to the replacement of political and military authorities and attempts to give professional status to the military leadership.

The Philippines, was also very important for Río de la Plata where it had specific characteristics (Lusardi 2015, Vaghi 2015).

These men's arrival was often portrayed from San Martín, Alvear, Zapola, Chilavert and Holmberg's arrival to Buenos Aires in 1812 (Halperin Donghi 1972b). These men, together with Rondeau, Moldes, Balcarce and Forest, had been part of the King's forces that had confronted Napoleon's armies and had not been under the leadership of the emperor.² Beside these names, a significant number of European officers, mainly French, joined little by little. When observing the lists of troops of the Río de la Plata regiments, their names outstand.

In spite of these inclusions, neither the recruitment process nor the attempt of professionalization were easy in these lands of South America. For this reason, in a desperate communication with one of the representatives of the Sovereign Congress in 1816, General San Martín claimed they did not count on a single man capable of leading the army and he urged bringing six or eight generals from France, considering their arrival likely to occur by arguing that they had nothing to eat.³ The complaint was so noteworthy that the *Ejército de Los Andes*, devised by San Martín himself, even more than the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú*, achieved considerable inclusion of techniques, disciplines and knowledge. Such incorporations were mainly thanks to San Martín's experience, acquired during his participation in European Wars, rather than due to the incorporation of high-ranking French military officers. In fact, General Brayer's passage was pretty complex and his later removal from this force was involved in much controversy due to accusations and counter-accusations between this officer and San Martín himself (Ocampo 2007, Puigmal 2013).

Originally, soldiers coming from France did not have a prominent performance in the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* either, feature that began to change in 1816 (Morea 2013c). Most of the European officers that have been identified did not have central responsibilities in the running of the troops, and when they did, such as in Carlos Forest's case, their military performance was less than satisfactory (Morea 2015, 2016). Although training in French polytechnic institutes was considerable for the time, there were certain cases, such as Holmberg's, which did not live up to the expectations they

² They were some of the main military officers in the Rioplatense revolutionary process. José de San Martín, Carlos María de Alvear or José Rondeau were Chief Generals in various armies from Buenos Aires. Besides their military occupation, most of them also held important political posts in the institutions that originated after the revolution.

³ Letter addressed to the congressman Tomás Godoy Cruz on April 24th 1816 by San Martín. Documentos para la historia del Libertador general San Martín, Buenos Aires: Instituto Nacional Sanmartiniano. Volumen III, 1954, pp. 344.

had generated upon incorporation either, leaving instead a very poor impression in local forces. Appointed as Chief of the Artillery, his stay was brief and his projects were cut short. This difficult itinerary occurred partly owing to Holmberg's own training flaws, but also due to the fact that his behavior in battle earned him his subordinates' distrust, which rendered his continuity unsustainable (Morea 2013a).

These phenomena underwent certain transformations after the emblematic year 1816, time when the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* settled almost permanently in San Miguel de Tucumán, when new high-ranking officers joined the army ranks. Such are the cases of Jean Joseph Dauxión Lavaysse or Emidio Salvigni. The former was included as Colonel-major of the army and was in charge of the Officers Academy since 1817, while the latter, coming from the Papal States, worked as *aide-de-camp* of the Chief General as Lieutenant Colonel. These names did not only join the *Ejército Auxiliar*, but also became part of a society at war. The decision of defining the defensive space facing the Spanish forces, and going instead for San Martín's continental plan through the crossing of The Andes caused the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* to be stationed in San Miguel de Tucumán (Halperin Donghi 1972a, Mata 2004). The *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú's* new function was not minor, despite the rising importance of the *Ejército de los Andes* (Morea 2012). Some of its main traits were the incorporation of new officers and its role as guardian of the Sovereign Congress which declared independence in 1816. San Miguel de Tucumán, transformed by this double presence of the army and the Congress, became extremely receptive when it came to the incorporation of European officers, as we shall see in the following examples (Leoni Pinto 2007, Nanni 2017c, Parolo 2012, Tío Vallejo y Nanni 2016).

FROM THE NORTH TO THE SOUTH OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT: THE CASE OF DAUXIÓN LAVAYSSE (1817-1829)

Figure hardly addressed by historiography, the versatile Juan José Dauxión Lavaysse makes up a unique example for his travels and knowledge, whose scope of professional action ranged from politics and weapons to journalism and biological sciences. The relative specificity of his case coincides with a time of Atlantic shaking, which favoured adventurous actions of his kind. In effect, the half century in which the Frenchman took part of the Napoleonic army, overlaps with the fifty years which are key in the so-called 'Atlantic Revolutions' (1775-1825), where he could directly witness the French Revolution, the independence of the United States, the Haitian Emancipating movement, and the independence revolutions of Spanish America.

Of his 54 years of age (1775-1829), the adventurer experienced most of his life in the American continent. Born in the High Pyrenees, he threw himself to the first American experience from an early age by travelling to the Antilles from 1791 to 1812. During this time he wrote his most widely-spread text *Voyages aux îles de la Trinidad, de Tobago, de la Marguerite et dans diverses parties de l'Amérique méridionale*. Dauxión Lavaysse returned to Europe showing his newly-acquired knowledge in various fields, product of his involvement in the Antillean colonies. His aforementioned work (1813) was well-received in Paris and was soon translated into German and English. His colourful account based on geographical, botanical, mineralogical and ethnic-demographical descriptions was found particularly interesting (Podgorny 2016, Gainot 2016, Obregon 2018). After his first adventure, he would have two more: a short one (1814), and one that would last his late years (1816-1829). We shall concentrate on the last one where Dauxión Lavaysse would head towards South America. His brief second trip occurred during a failed mission, ordered by King Louis XVIII and Victor Malouet, Ministry of the Navy and Colonies trying to re-establish French sovereignty over Haiti. After this failed mission to Haiti, he was part of the *Grand Armée* reaching Egypt and Russia but the Waterloo defeat (1815) encouraged him to resume the American adventure. Having arrived in the former English colonies of North-America, he met the Chilean José Miguel Carrera with whom he boarded the Clifton Corvette, covering a distance from Baltimore to Buenos Aires between late 1816 and early 1817.

As every biographic reconstruction, some debatable data, and even certain controversies within the isolated historiographical references about his profile emerge. There is general historiographical consensus regarding his noble origin,⁴ his proximity to the figures of the Bonapartes and his religious education under the abbot and intellectual Raynal (1713-1796) (Gargaro 1943, Podgorny 2016). However, doubts with respect to certain issues in his itinerary cannot be separated from a certain tendency of the traditional Argentine and Chilean historiography to put forward his trajectory from an either positive or negative assessing standpoint as to his participation in South American territory. Our questions are linked to the way in which Napoleonic officers could enter these local networks, being their personal assessment outside the scope of this study.

From the historian Alfredo Gargaro's view, we are dealing with one of the French characters who was most closely connected to the social and

⁴ Lavaysse used to amaze rural inhabitants of Andalgalá, a rural area nearby Catamarca, with his stories. He would say that he had dined more than once at an empress's table and had met emperor Alexander's brother. With such tales, he would have his listeners gaping (LAVAYSSE 1823: 31-32).

political life of Santiago del Estero, province bordering Tucumán where Lavaysse lived between 1819 and 1821, having married María Isnardi, member of one of the most important families of the local elite (Gargaro 1943: 3, Morea 2012b). Concerned with looking for heroic profiles in the history of his province, Santiago del Estero, Gargaro led a defense of bigamy and technical negligence accusations against our Frenchman. Chilean historians, according to him, attacked this man's memory just for having confronted the Chilean General José Miguel Carrera. The conflicts derived from tensions between Carrera and O'Higgins, and between the former and Juan Martín de Pueyrredón, feed historiographical views which are too worried about personalities' characterization.

For Gargaro, criticism against Lavaysse came from those Chilean historians biased towards Carrera who purposefully reproduced factious divisions of the past (Gargaro 1943: 6). The defamations towards the Frenchman's honour included the questioning of his first wife's date of death, befallen in France in 1814. This exact piece of information could, in Gargaro's view, clear any doubt about the legality of his posterior marriage to a lady from Santiago del Estero. To make matters worse, there are some versions that point to a third marriage making the Napoleonic officer's relationship with the opposite sex even more complicated. Effectively, according to some biographers (Gainot 2016) he had also got married on his way through the Caribbean, controversial datum which the historian from Santiago quickly denied in an effort to highlight this figure's contribution to the history of Santiago del Estero.

Resuming the Napoleonic officer's chronology, there is general agreement as to his arrival to the port of Buenos Aires in 1817, in a very particular context. Only a few months before the Sovereign Congress had declared independence in Tucumán. This adventurer's arrival occurred in innovative times, which the officer would take advantage of by emphasizing his training and travels. The Supreme Director himself, Juan Martín de Pueyrredón, showed his interest in the Frenchman's landing, not so much for his own Gallic origin on his father's side, but rather for the newcomer's specific credentials. Lavaysse's immediate comprehension of the social environment, already evidenced in his prior destinations, was favoured by getting a *Carta de Ciudadanía* and a first professional function: the direction of the *Academia Militar del Ejército Auxiliar del Perú*. Specific knowledge and marriage were crucial for the incorporation of human resources although they would not guarantee success in their assimilation to local societies (Morea 2013b).

His removal from the port up to the province of Tucumán implied a stay (1817-1819) in this province which had experienced transformations due to the Sovereign Congress' recent activity (Nanni 2017c, Tío Vallejo

y Nanni 2016). Despite the *Provincias Unidas*' representatives would follow Lavaysse's reverse route in 1817 (from Tucumán to Buenos Aires), the Frenchman still found a province that would host the army for two more years and that was used to the presence of foreign men and women. This means that although the traveller would find a Sovereign Congress which had moved towards the port, he would also live with other men from outside the province, given that the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* went on using Tucumán as a cantonment area (Morea 2013a). Our controversial Frenchman would later praise this time in Tucuman during his Chilean stage. He deemed the years 1816-1820 as a time of order attributed to the presence of the Sovereign Congress and the role played by the '*culto general Belgrano*'. Conversely, he would criticise the Rioplatense situation after 1820 from his new headquarters in Santiago de Chile. He would define 1820 as an anarchy of "*Republiquetas, Cabildos y Juntitas*"⁵ and made the opening of the "*Pandora's box of federalism*" responsible for that (Lavaysse 1823: 19).

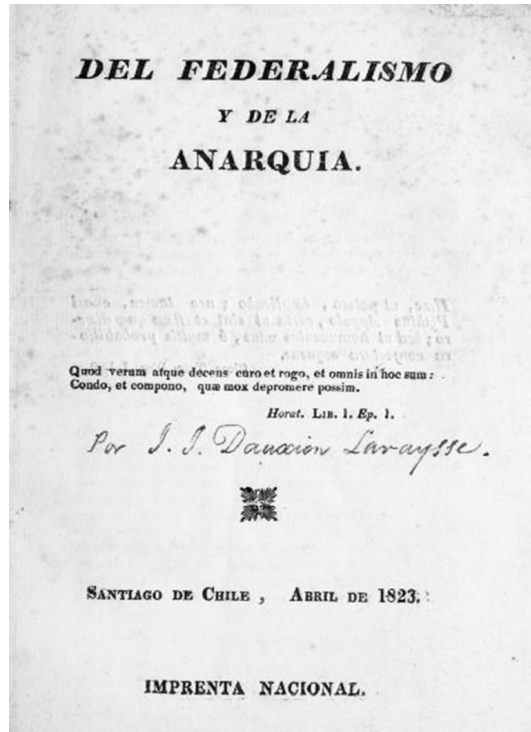
Beside technical knowledge, this military man's well-exploited social skills were fundamental. Lavaysse used to take advantage of his bonds by reproducing an exaggerated account of his noble origin. Despite questioning Rioplatense federalism, he could establish strong relationships with the governors of Tucumán and Santiago del Estero, participating in the separation of the latter province from the former. As we have shown in previous work, he devoted himself to counselling the government as well as to his early journalistic experiences, being for instance part of the editorial department of the newspaper "*El Restaurador Tucumano*" in 1821 (Nanni 2017b).

Besides, in the same year he published in Tucumán a written work which could be taken as the first history book of the province, so far unanalyzed.⁶ In his opuscle published in Tucumán in 1821, as well as in his Chilean written work of 1823, he showed himself close to liberalism and constitutional monarchy of the British model and praised Luis XVIII in the conclusions of the first of those writings. In a similar political line, he criticized those experiences he considered "anarchists" as Rioplatense federalism, which he, in turn, compared to different European movements such as French Jacobinism and the English 'levellers' of the 17th century.

⁵ Lavaysee pejoratively belittles Rioplatense institutions here.

⁶ The opuscles mentioned are a fundamental source which has not been addressed so far. Both have book structure for their serial pagination, footnotes, cover and author details. The original version of "*Opiniones de los publicistas más célebres sobre la forma de gobierno*" (1821), which had been taken as lost, was found by the authors in its original printed form at the *Biblioteca del Museo Casa Histórica de la Independencia*, Miguel A. Nogués collection. The Chilean opuscle (1823), entitled "*Del federalismo y de la anarquía*", can be found on <https://archive.org/details/delfederalismoyd00egaa/page/n2> (accessed March 26, 2020).

His reference system is broad and evidences knowledge of political theory, showing himself close to authors such as Montesquieu, but critical of 'demagogue' theorists like Rousseau and the North American Thomas Paine. The numerous footnotes on his writings covered several authors of political theory such as Samuel Von Pufendorf (1632-1694), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) y Benjamin Constant (1767-1830), demonstrating his interest in the different possible answers to the issue of governability, the foundations of sovereignty and showing proximity to theories related to *unnaturalism* and natural rights. In spite of his tendency to prove his robust knowledge in different fields and his frequent tales among the population of his proximity to the European monarchical circles, Lavaysse would confront severe questioning on both sides of The Andes, as we will see in the following pages.



CIRCULATION OF KNOWLEDGE, CIRCULATION OF TERRITORIES: LAVAYSSE AND HIS CONTROVERSIES ON CHILEAN LAND

Despite being a character with ample mobility in American territory, Dauxión Lavaysse's figure has been hardly addressed. Apart from Alfredo Gargaro's already mentioned work, another antecedent is Irina Podgorny's interesting recent study. The author locates the Frenchman's trajectory within a series of experiences understood under the category of 'adventurers' and even in some cases 'charlatans' (Podgorny 2016). The researcher also points to the year 1816 as a turning point to see the arrival of men from the Northern Atlantic. Bonaparte's defeat and the House of Bourbons' return to France were the context of alterations that explained,

for example, the French botanist Aimé Bonpland's arrival (1773-1858). He became interested in an offer by the province of Buenos Aires to work as professor of Natural History and his was one of the life trajectories examined by Podgorny. Bonpland, a scientist who had previously (1799-1804) travelled with Alexander Humboldt, disembarked in the port of Buenos Aires in November 1816, months before his countryman Lavaysse. With Bernardo O'Higgins's endorsement, these countrymen would be united by their search for job placement opportunities in the 1820s in Chile (1778-1842).

Regardless of Dauxión Lavaysse (together with Aimé Bonpland)'s praising initial welcome, he soon faced up the obstacles of the Chilean society. Unlike the historiographical debate between Gargaro and Chilean historiography, it is not deemed of interest to entertain absolute affirmations about the Frenchman's true qualities. The point is to observe the way in which knowledge and social skills were judged at the very same circumstance, in a frame where scientific disciplines and technical knowledge were at a very early stage.⁷ The fact is that just as he had had conflicts in the northern provinces of Río de la Plata, and while he criticized them from his new Chilean lodgings, he soon affronted new questioning, particularly in his job at the head of Natural History Museum, activity that began in 1822 by a decree of Director O'Higgins. The decree introduced the Frenchman as an expert in different fields of knowledge and explained his removal from Tucumán with the objective of opening a Museum which could reunite natural and mineral riches of that country under construction. Annual salary and other contractual details were included (Gargaro 1943). That marks the historical origin of the National Museum of Natural History of Chile, acknowledging the traveller as the first Director, disregarding criticism and the brevity of his office.

In fact, his scarce knowledge as to the natural world was reduced to his brief European approach to the zoology and compared anatomy collections of the Natural History Museum in Paris and his aforementioned *Voyage aux îles de Trinidad, de Tobago, de la Marguerite et dans diverses parties de Vénézuéla, dans l'Amérique méridionale*. Careless as it may seem, he admitted his poor training in natural sciences in the pages of that first book. He confessed to not being a naturalist but an amateur in Natural History,

⁷ Following Lavaysse's case, Podgorny concludes that whether they were impostors or not, they were tied by chains individual experience can destroy. Once that threshold is trespassed, it becomes evident that some individuals live their lives travelling and repeating the same stories in every town they visit, to which they shall never return, but meanwhile these liars, and those who are not, are part of a communication and knowledge transmission system which speaks and acts through them and on their behalf (PODGORNY 2016).

and advised those people interested in natural history to read Alexander Von Humboldt (1769-1859) or Félix de Azara (1742-1821). Such educational weakness was criticized in a leaflet which appeared in Santiago de Chile in August 1823, in which his 15 months of activity as Director of the Natural History Museum were assessed. The anonymous printout, published by the National Press of Chile, shows that this adventurer did achieve to put together the said Museum, but limited it to be a copy of general nomenclatures, *repeated by his parrots*.⁸ The flyer mentions the existence of an argumentative sheet of paper not found yet, written by the Frenchman and entitled *Observaciones sobre ciertas preocupaciones nacionales por el Director del Museo* based on which the anonymous author replied the title *Contestación a las observaciones del Director del Museo de Historia Natural* where he sternly warns the readership as to the dangers of the 'impostors' and those who benefit from an 'idle salary'. The anonymous flyer printed in 1823 was not the only critical expression Lavaysse earned during his Chilean years. Two years later, another anonymous printout circulated around Santiago de Chile where his little work was questioned. The printout entitled *Contestación al artículo del Editor de la Década Araucana* was again addressed against Lavaysse challenging his abilities and reporting him as an impostor, reminding of his controversy with José Miguel Carrera.⁹ A much more favorable social climate, and a more direct acceptance of his knowledge will be observed instead in the case of Philippe Bertrés.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AS A WAY OF ACCESSING RIOPLATENSE PROVINCES: PHILIPPE BERTRÉS'S CASE

Also native to France and even coming from the same region, Philippe Bertrés's case allows us to locate similarities, peculiarities and grouping lines within the issue of American assimilation of the Napoleonic diaspora. Equipped with a shorter journey in terms of kilometres, Bertrés also made of Tucumán and the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* his anchorage point to redirect his career in the new continent. Having arrived straight from Europe aboard the brigantine *Le Consolateur*, the officer came to the port of Buenos Aires in 1808 and found the Viceroyalty, which was about to commence

⁸ Retrieved online 11/07/2019 at the website <https://archive.org/details/contestacionla-so00sant/page/n1> (accessed March 26, 2020).

⁹ Retrieved online 07/01/2020 at the website <https://archive.org/details/contestacionla-00npau/page/n1/mode/2up> (accessed March 26, 2020).

a long process of revolution and war, to be a perfect spot where to apply his technical knowledge. Aboard the same vessel came his countryman Etienne Bernard (1760-1840), marquis of Sassenay. Even though we will not be directly concerned with Bernard's particular trajectory, it should be emphasized that his name swelled the ranks of the Frenchmen who took a chance in the territory of Río de la Plata during those years of transformation. Etienne Bernard, who was of noble origin and part of the counter-revolutionary side during 1789, was close to Napoleon Bonaparte and tried unsuccessfully to negotiate in Buenos Aires a closer contact between the Viceroyalty and the Napoleonic empire. To achieve this, Bernard tried to get closer to Santiago de Liniers, official of the Spanish navy of French and noble origin, who by the time Bernard got to Buenos Aires, was Viceroy of Río de la Plata.

As to Bertrés (1786-1856), it is worth pointing out that his stays in San Miguel de Tucumán were longer than his countryman Lavaysse's since they covered the 'Belgrano's period' from 1816 to 1820, but also including a permanence during the three decades that followed. Precisely there, some differences can be found with Lavaysse's case as to the reception networks, given that the engineer succeeded in settling for a longer period, avoided questioning and did not base his career on taking a chance at various activities, mainly focusing on his domains of expertise.

Once the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* and the Sovereign Congress dissolved, the year 1820 became an emblematic year which entailed, all over the Rioplatense provinces, a disintegration with respect to its attempt of unity. For the province of Tucumán such loss of the articulation among the provinces marked the return of who had been its first governor (1814-1817), the leader Bernabé Aráoz. The former local leader gave rise to a new period called *República de Tucumán* (1820-1821), an experience which was courageous but also fragile (Nanni 2017a).

Philippe Bertrés successfully adapted to the Tucumanian leader's return and was, in fact, a centerpiece in the jigsaw (Morea 2016b). By contrast, Jean Joseph Dauxión Lavaysse bet unsuccessfully in favour of Bernabé Aráoz's adversaries and participated in the breakup of Santiago del Estero, which had been part of Tucumán between 1814 and 1820 (Morea 2016b, Nanni 2017a).

What drifted these two Napoleonic officers apart was not only their choice of family and political nuclei but rather the way in which they validated their specific capitals. Having been part of the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* during General Rondeau's command and then in Belgrano's return in 1816, Bertrés came to be crucial for the province when this territory became the Congress headquarters. Once the deliberative organ was moved to Buenos Aires (1817), and after the army abandoned the

province (1819), Bertres's image grew even more, given that he became a vital resource for a province which was forced to face its own institutional loneliness.

PHILIPPE BERTRÉS'S WORK. A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION OF HIS TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

Appreciating his prior participation as part of the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* in Tucumán, Bertrés was appointed by the Local *Cabildo* as General Surveyor in early 1820, facing the search of a person who would participate in the levelling out of the streets which gave shape to the increase of population to the four points of the compass.

The training his French degree in engineering entailed was highly valued in this land. Formed in 1794 by the Committee of Public Salvation, the French revolutionary elite opened the Central School of Public Work which would soon be called *École Polytechnique*, circle where scientists such as Louis Joseph Gay Lussac and American revolutionaries such as Simón Bolívar were educated. Bertrés's engineering education at the *École Polytechnique* in Paris coincided with Napoleon Bonaparte's period, who in 1805 modified the location of such institution and equipped it with exams and higher fees, following the aristocratic idea of training key technical personnel for the revolution. Planned as an ambitious project to build professionals for the revolution, the *École* trained both civil and military engineers, giving great importance to mathematics, geometry, but also to the practical application of knowledge. (Schubring 2014).

Having arrived to American soil with these important credentials, Bertrés was a key element for the redesign of the city during the short-lived Republic of Tucumán (1820-1821). It was a crucial time for the re-structuring of the urban layout, since the whole province and, particularly the city of San Miguel de Tucumán, had reduced their population owing to the withdrawal of the military forces. However, at the same time some officers from foreign provinces and countries who required plots of land had stayed. It was also a political climate of provincial autonomy in which practical knowledge and qualifications to back them up were highly valued (Nanni 2017b).

In this context of empowerment of the influential Aráoz family, the engineer Bertrés was assigned the construction of the city map in 1821 with the title: *Ejidos de San Miguel de Tucumán concedidos por título de gracia y remuneración a su Excelencia Señor Don Bernabé Aráoz, Presidente de la República*.

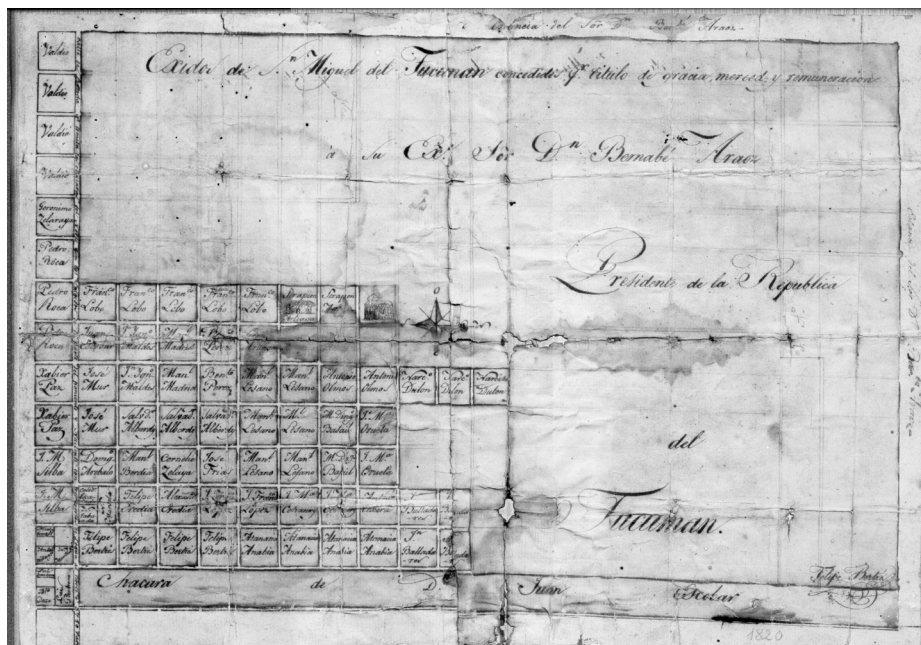
Apart from working on a map to advance this city urbanization, which was still the capital of the province of Tucumán, the map kept record of a series of plots of land granted to the leader Aráoz as a function of his services. To be precise, the valuable lands of the North and West of the city were granted to him enlarging the surface this man, who had amassed his power with the Battle of Tucumán in 1812, already owned (Nanni 2017b).

It was not the first map of Tucuman city and its surroundings. In 1814, General San Martín commissioned the fulfillment of a map which worked as the basis for the one in 1821. Carried out as a detailed sketch on paper with Indian ink and watercolours, this prior map of the already-transformed-by-war Tucumán was accomplished by either Felipe Bertrés or Enrique Paillardell,¹⁰ according to debates of specialists in the area. Although they both point to the influence of this cohort of Frenchmen in American territory, the lack of signatures in the first map, unlike the one of 1821, favours uncertainty.

The hypothesis of Enrique Paillardell (1785-1815) being the author of the 1814 map is grounded on his presence in the north of Río de la Plata as part of the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú*. Paillardell, as old as Bertrés, was also from the south of France and had been educated in the *École polytechnique* of Paris. It is also likely since it was him who designed the *Ciudadela* in the northern city, being besides one of the trustworthy men in the months when San Martín was in Tucumán in charge of the army. For those authors inclined to accredit the map to Bertrés, the presence of almost exact details, such as a very similar image of the wind rose, in both maps (1814 and 1821) is a key issue.

On the other hand, at times when the Congress held meetings in Tucumán, Emilio Salvigni (1789-1866), born in the Papal States, specifically in Imola, arrived in the city. Salvigni brought his warlike experience based on confronting the Napoleonic forces, apart from his studies in Chemistry at the University of Bologna. After resuming his leadership of the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* in August 1816, Manuel Belgrano trusted him with the position of *aide-de-camp* which he retained until 1819. Furthermore, the traveller sealed his permanence in Tucumán through the legal union of

¹⁰ Born in Marseille in 1785, Paillardell graduated as military engineer and served the revolutionary navy. In 1805 he departed towards Lima to reclaim his mother's inheritance. In 1810, he was in Buenos Aires and joined the revolutionary movement and the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú*. After the Huaqui battle he was imprisoned but was released on parole soon after. Paillardell rejoined the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* under the command of San Martín in 1814 for a short time before moving to Buenos Aires. He was shot to death in that city in 1815 after the fall of Alvear's, government which he strongly supported. He was the first to design a general Independence plan for South America and his proposal may have helped San Martín devise his own.



marriage. In the following decade, Salvigni was elected as legislator in the Representatives House of Tucumán on several occasions. Unlike the other travelling companions, Salvigni cannot be found performing other technical positions.

Going back to Bertrés, it should be pointed out that aside from the maps, he carried out a series of plot delimitation as independent assignments in Tucumán in 1821. The objective was to tidily hand over a series of plots to soldiers close to Aráoz's ranks as recognition for their contribution to war. In every case, the technical procedure was the same: Philippe Bertrés conducted a plan with the details of the allotted plot, the name of the recipient officer and specific details of the grids against which the plot bordered. The map was then endorsed by the brand-new 'president' Aráoz and by the Court of Justice, institution created during the Republic of Tucumán. The degree of detail in the drawings should be highlighted, which even included icons that did not only refer to the adjacent plots but also to the presence of other geographical or human accidents such as lagoons, public buildings, military fortresses, among others.

The experience of Aráoz's Republic of Tucumán was brief for the Frenchman but contributed to his consolidation in the Rioplatense provinces. After the failure of Bernabé Aráoz's project, the surveyor and engineer

moved around different provinces. In Buenos Aires, he was assigned independent tasks, among which San Martín's reliance on him can be underlined when he commissioned Bertrés for the design of his wife's, Remedios de Escalada, gravestone, which still carries his signature in its original location at La Recoleta. Bertrés was also close to the minister Bernardino Rivadavia, who appointed him to delineate a 'map of graves' for the whole cemetery above mentioned, apart from conducting the pioneer topographic plan of Buenos Aires in 1823 (Aliata 1993). Despite his work in this influential city, Bertrés chose the north of Río de la Plata as his lodgings; moving around the northern provinces and the neighbouring Republic of Bolivia. Among his jobs in the province of Salta, his design of the impressive Cathedral can be emphasized, while in the Republic of Bolivia his official map (1843), his design of Santa Cruz Cathedral and his role in the School of Civil and Military Architecture (1843) are remarkable.

In spite of his significant mobility, it was San Miguel de Tucumán, the city that had consolidated him in times of Bernabé Aráoz, this Frenchman's permanent returning point, never going back to the European continent. Similar to the other reviewed cases, both his specific knowledge and his efficient social roots facilitated his long stay, in his case, his marriage to two Tucumánian women: María Cainzo and, afterwards Josefa Petrona Moyano.

FINAL REMARKS

The revolutionary processes in the provinces of the north of Río de la Plata, but more specifically the presence of the *Ejército Auxiliar de Perú* between 1812 and 1819, caused huge transformation for San Miguel de Tucumán, which acquired in the said temporal frame the status as province for its contribution to war. The city had been modified in its appearance by the building of hospitals, rifle factories, and fortifications, as well as by the presence of soldiers and officers from neighbouring and remote lands. In a similar vein, the presence of some European officers that had been part of the Napoleonic armies was also important. The specific scrutiny of San Miguel de Tucumán's case develops itself in a dialectical relationship with a historiography which has widened the study of the so-called 'diaspora' of Napoleonic officers along the American continent.

Even if there had been early disembarkments within the Rioplatense revolutionary process, as Baron Holmberg's arrival together with San Martín, José Zapiola and Carlos María de Alvear in 1812 on board the British frigate *George Canning*, it has been contended that 1816 was a particularly favourable context for the arrival of European officers, being Tucumán quite important in their settling process (Blaufarb 2005, Puigmal 2013).

The life journey of the following Frenchmen has been followed: Philippe Bertrés (1786-1856), Enrique Paillardell (1785-1815), Jean Joseph Dauxión de Lavaysse (1775-1829), Aimé Bonpland (1773-1858), Etienne Bernard (1760-1840), as well as the Baron Holmberg (1778-1853) and the man from the Papal States Emidio Salvigni (1789-1866), among other influential men in Rioplatense lands. It has been held that it was not the high number of early migrations which granted their influence on local lands but the relevance of their specific knowledge. Detailed analysis has led us to see the relative success and failure of their incorporation in the different American towns where they settled, but especially in the said city of San Miguel de Tucumán.

The overall demobilization of British, Prussian, Austrian and French armies after Waterloo battle, and the failure of the Napoleonic experience known as *Premier Empire* (1804-1815) caused that a large number of men were available and had lost their livelihood; however, for them to migrate, they had to find governments interested in their credentials (Halperin Donghi 1972b, Thibaud 2003, Morea 2013a, Puigmal 2013). After a prior passage through the United States or other emerging American nation-states, the territory of the former Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata was particularly receptive in this context which coincided with its relative unity after the Declaration of Independence (1816). In a still open and uncertain situation, and considering war as a necessary horizon, warlike practical knowledge but also medical and biological ones, or those of journalistic orientation, were very well received by the Rioplatense elite (Morea 2016, Nanni 2017a).

The friendly welcome by key men such as the Supreme Directors Gervasio Posadas and Juan Martín de Pueyrredón, as well as that of Manuel Belgrano and San Martín, did not necessarily entail an easy reception process. Case by case analysis, together with the crossover of the public and private dimensions (at the time intertwined) allows us to observe the obstacles the travellers had to face in the recipient societies. Their qualities should not be appreciated from a contemporary perspective, but from the needs and perceptions the proper American societies had of these European officers at the time, who in some cases were not able to offer enough evidence of their practical knowledge, generated distrust in their support to the revolution or were simply harmed by opposing factions at the time. In this respect, Lavaysse is a very particular case, whose trajectory is one which we have followed in closer detail and with new documentary sources. Despite his participation in varied Napoleonic war experiences, along with his contribution in North America and the Caribbean, he did not manage to easily adapt to the emerging nation-states of Argentina and Chile. Questioned in what respects to his warfare skills, in the truthfulness of his

accounts and in the rigour of his knowledge, the odd Lavaysse failed to ratify his knowledge and found himself cornered by controversy in both his private and public lives.

The *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú*, and the increasing need for trained technical personnel to carry out tasks around the territory and, particularly in San Miguel de Tucumán, were a favourable context which Lavaysse failed to capitalize on. Like other Europeans, such as Emilio Salvigni, or Aimé Bonpland, he found in the circumstance of 1816 and Director Pueyrredón a highly welcoming attitude, but the peculiarities of each trajectory resulted in different experiences.

Lavaysse's dramatic end, as well as his tendency to move every time he was the object of complaints, stands in contrast with the other well-developed case, that of engineer and surveyor Philippe Bertrés. In his case, his ratification of the knowledge acquired in the Polytechnic School of Paris, just like his strong bond with institutions and social networks, led to a different result. In an army which needed building planning and fortifications, he shared a favourable perception with other countrymen of similar training like Enrique Paillardelle. Bertrés's promising relationship with generals of the *Ejército Auxiliar del Perú* such as José Rondeau, Manuel Belgrano and governors of the provinces paved his way in a rudimentary professional world lacking in legitimized knowledge. Besides his talent proven in plans, plot delimitations, cemetery and cathedral design, his social and marital links acted as a supportive network which clearly opposed the more disruptive experiences of Lavaysse or Baron Holmberg, questioned in their passing through American lands. The dynamic nature of the reviewed trajectories allows us to continue a historiographical line which involves leaving national borders aside, frequently presupposed by the historiographical agenda, to locate instead the mobility of an Atlantic world transformed by the revolutionary processes.

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