

Arctic & Antarctic



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CIRCUMPOLAR SOCIOCULTURAL ISSUES

Volume 11 Number 11 - 2017

ISSN 1851-4685

Foundation for High Studies on Antarctica and Extreme Environments
(FAE, Argentina)

Faculty of Social Sciences - Universidad del Salvador
(Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Faculty of Social Sciences – University of Iceland
(Reykjavík, Iceland)

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Cover design: Matías Reck

Illustration: "*Patagonian landscape (Argentina)*" (acrylic on canvas, 80 cm x 60cm) by Enrique del Acebo Ibáñez.

EDITORS

Editor-in-Chief

Enrique del Acebo Ibáñez
Universidad del Salvador (Argentina)

Co-Editors

Helgi Gunnlaugsson
University of Iceland (Iceland)

Daniel Chartier
University of Québec-Montréal (Canada)

Jarkko Saarinen
University of Oulu (Finland)

Anna Stammner-Gossmann
University of Lapland (Finland)

Jan Borm
University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (France)

Editorial Secretary:

Agustín García Serventi
National University of Tierra del Fuego (Argentina)

Editorial Assistant

Vanesa Romina Solá
Universidad del Salvador (Argentina)

Designer

Matías Reck

SCIENTIFIC EDITORIAL BOARD

Fritz Becker, *University of Namibia (Namibia)*

Michael Bravo, *Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, UK*

Ingi Rúnar Eðvarðsson, *University of Akureyri (Iceland)*

Hólmfríður Garðarsdóttir, *University of Iceland (Iceland)*

Timo Järvikoski, *University of Oulu (Finland)*

Karin Jóhanna L. Knudsen, *University of Faroe Islands (Faroe Islands)*

Konstantin Krivoshapkin, *Vice-Rector of North-Eastern Federal University,
Yakutsk –UFNE-Russia*

Samona Kurilova, *Institute for Humanities Research and Indigenous Studies of
Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Laboratory of Complex
Geocultural Studies of the Arctic, Yakutsk/ Sakha Republic, Russia*

María de Monserrat Llairó, *University of Buenos Aires (Argentina)*

Geneviève de Mahieu, *Universidad del Salvador (Argentina)*

Vera Nikiforova, *Arctic State Institute of Culture and Arts, Laboratory of Complex
Geocultural Studies of the Arctic, Yakutsk / Sakha Republic, Russia*

Anssi Paasi, *University of Oulu (Finland)*

Olga Povoroznyuk, *Russian Academy of Sciences (Russia)*

Ekaterina Romanova, *Institute for Humanities Research and Indigenous Studies of
Siberian Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences, Laboratory of Complex Geocultural
Studies of the Arctic, Yakutsk / Sakha Republic, Russia*

Severine Rugumanu, *University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)*

Peter Schweitzer, *University of Alaska – Fairbanks (USA)*

Florian Stammer, *Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge (UK) &
University of Lapland (Finland)*

Maritta Stoor-Lehtonen, *University of Jyväskylä (Finland)*

Piers Vitebsky, *Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge (UK)*

Liudmila Zamorshchikova, *North-Eastern Federal University, Chair of Thematic
Network of the University of the Arctic, Yakutsk / Sakha Republic, Russia*

Arctic & Antarctic

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CIRCUMPOLAR SOCIOCULTURAL ISSUES

Volume 11 Number 11 - 2017

Contents

**Ana Butto (Anthropological Research Association,
CONICET, Argentina)**

*Women and children first: age and gender in the photographs of the "Desert Conquest"
in Northpatagonia, Argentina, by the end of the 19th Century. / 9*

Hólmfríður Garðarsdóttir (University of Iceland)

*Contesting submissiveness:
Susana Silvestre's urban female subjects of the 1990s. / 33*

Kristinn Schram & Andrea Fiocca (University of Iceland)

*Mobility and change in the Arctic:
an ethnographic case study of sled dogs in Greenland / 57*

Contributors information / 87

Reports / 89

Institutional information / 105

Notes for contributors / 129

Women and children first: age and gender in the photographs of the "Desert Conquest" in Northpatagonia, Argentina, by the end of the 19th Century.

Ana Butto

CONICET – ALA- University of Buenos Aires

Abstract

In this paper, we examine a corpus of 235 photographs produced during the "Desert Conquest", which was carried out in the late 19th Century in North Patagonia (Argentina), in order to track down the representations of age and gender of the photographed subjects: soldiers who integrated the military campaigns, western settlers and Indigenous peoples that inhabited those territories.

This analysis shows that the photographic representation was set on the male military sector, presenting them as the builders of the Argentine Nation, disregarding the settler families and the indigenous peoples who inhabited these territories. Women and children, both Western and Indigenous, became invisible to the official history. We consider that visual archaeology allows us to critically examine what has been established as "natural" by the state-nation.

Keywords: photographs, Desert Conquest, Argentina, military, settlers, indigenous, age, gender.

Introduction

The general topic of this paper discusses the contact between the native Patagonian societies and the Western society over the formation and expansion of the Argentine Nation-State, since the late 19th Century until about 1950. We consider that the state formation implies the intention of creating an "imagined community" (Anderson 2006), in which all members are considered formally and institutionally "equal" and are united by horizontal feelings of comradeship, ignoring the inequalities between them,

so as to present the state as an homogenous entity (Quijada et al 2000). The state aims to standardize and regulate the society by defining two central concepts: territory and citizenship. In order to regulate these, the state moves the necessary resources -human, material and symbolic- which are the basis of its power and of its legitimate monopoly of physical violence. Thus, the state always implies a demand for legitimacy; which becomes the main resource to hide the political restraint of the citizens (Weber 2003 [1918]). In this political - ideological framework, indigenous peoples constituted a double barrier: on one hand to citizenship, since they had not been assimilated into the "civilized" Western life yet and, on the other hand, to the territory, because they inhabit spaces that were required by landowners for urgent agricultural and ranching exploitation.

Thus, in the last years of the 19th Century, many military campaigns were carried out along the Patagonian territory, in order to break and dismantle the Indigenous nations that inhabited those territories. These military campaigns, carried out between 1879 and 1883, were named and known as the "Desert Conquest", and proclaimed both materially and symbolically the occupation of the Northpatagonian territory, referred to as the "desert" (Wright 1997, Bandieri 2005, Mandrini 2006). Through all these military advances, some indigenous groups were submitted peacefully to the state power, while others were militarily defeated and taken as prisoners (Mases 2010). Both groups, the ones who negotiated their surrender to the state and those who were defeated in battle suffered the same destinations: a) forced transfer to Buenos Aires as prisoners in concentration camps; b) sold as domestic servants for metropolitan families; c) coercively incorporated into the Argentine Military Forces and d) occupied as farm laborers in the Pampa region or in sugar mills on the Northwest region (Mases 2010, Papazian & Nagi 2010).

The encounter of the military expedition and the Patagonian natives left behind a great number of records, both visual and written, as a result of the direct contact between Argentine government agents with native populations and territories. We consider that the study of these materials provides first hand information about identity and cultural constructions of these indigenous and Western people, for anyone willing to decode the language of such records. These military campaigns involved a twofold process: on the one hand, the definition of who the Argentine citizens were, and how they should behave; on the other hand, the division of the internal and external territorial borders of the country-state (Bechis 1992).

This struggle of interests in land and national sovereignty is reflected in both the photographs taken during the military campaigns and the “imaginary” of the members of the expedition, who became the “nation builders” (De Jong 2002). As builders, the expeditionaries created an official story in which the government agents, soldiers and indigenous chiefs, all of them male and adult, were the main leaders; but, hiding the roles that women and children played in this situation.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to critically assess two photograph collections, which were produced during the military campaigns conducted to Northern Patagonia between 1879 and 1883, framed in the “hegemonic” history of Argentine state power. Since we do not consider the history of state power truly totalitarian and hegemonic, but containing fractures, we propose to assess the gender and age of the photographed subjects in order to evaluate the presence -or absence- of subjects different from those traditionally associated with the military members: adult males.

The “Desert Conquest” and its visualization

As stated above, the “Desert Conquest” refers to a series of military campaigns directed by the Argentine state against the indigenous people of Northpatagonia (Mases 2010). These military campaigns began at the end of the 19th Century, but the negotiations with these indigenous nations had a long previous history. Juan Manuel de Rosas, as manager of the Indian Pacific Trading, firstly began at the 1820’s “the extension of the provincial territory through negotiations with native groups occupying the sought land” (Ratto 2007, 89). This peaceful relationship with the natives was held for a long time. However, frequent Indian raids, seeking supplies to trade in the Chilean market, did exist. In 1833, several provinces -Buenos Aires, Cordoba, San Luis and Mendoza- organized and carried out a military campaign to consolidate the territories that had been incorporated during 1828, but that were still under constant threat of Indian raids. This campaign was marked by the combination of negotiation and repression: while peace pacts were signed with the Pampa natives, violent confrontation was carried out with the Ranqueles and the Indian Confederation. After these campaigns, the Western society obtained a relative calm on the borders (Bayer 2010).

By 1850 the consolidation of the Argentina’s state required a clear demarcation of limits with neighboring countries and an identification of

who the Argentine citizens were. The occupation of the Patagonian territory, claimed also by the neighbour state of Chile, and the "civilization" or extermination of the natives became of the essence.

Therefore, during the government of Nicolas Avellaneda, from 1874 to 1880, many attempts to extend the South boundary of Buenos Aires were conducted. The first plan was carried out by the war minister, Adolfo Alsina, who built towns and forts, telegraph lines, and a big trench, which was supposed to prevent the Indian raids. However, Alsina died before achieving all these projects and he was replaced by the young General Julio A. Roca, who became responsible for planning an offensive attack against the natives. Roca's plan involved two stages: a general offensive between the South of Buenos Aires and Rio Negro and a coordinated march of several divisions that converged in Choele Choel, a town in Río Negro. Halfway through the year 1878, the plan was underway and Roca's army achieved its first success by rescuing Western captives and capturing natives who were turned into prisoners and destined to servitude (Mases 2010).

The "Expedition to Río Negro", also carried out by General Roca, was started between March and April 1879 and it consisted of five divisions which advanced towards the Patagonian territory, claiming it for the Argentine state. This military success, along with a carefully thought campaign launched Roca to presidency of Argentina. Under Roca's administration, another military expedition was sent in 1882 farther south, under the leadership of Generals Conrado Villegas and Lorenzo Vintter. This expedition, named "Andes Campaign South of Patagonia", was aimed to extend the borders to the entire province of Neuquén and reaching Nahuel Huapi Lake.



Figure 1: Map of the Patagonian region in Argentina and South America.

The whole "Desert Conquest" was largely recorded by written and visual means, from wide expeditionary writings (in the form of military memories, literary stories, tales, newspaper articles, biographies) which describes the fort and military campaign experience, to photographs taken by official photographers who accompanied the army in its entrance to the Patagonian desert. Particularly, these two military expeditions travelled with photographers, who took several pictures and gathered them in photographic albums, which served as a visual record of the military campaigns to Northern Patagonia and, of course, as a record of the success of the Argentine state (Vezub 2002, Torre 2011, González 2012).

The photographic album that portrays the "Expedition to Río Negro" in 1879 was developed by the Italian photographer Antonio Pozzo and his assistant, Alfonso Braco. They accompanied the military expedition along with a wagon where they carried the equipments, cameras, plates and the photographic chemicals to develop the pictures immediately (Alimonda & Ferguson 2004). They edited a photographic album that contained 53 pictures. Their cover is dedicated to president Roca and was stored at many national museums and archives (Archivo General de la Nación, Museo Roca, Museo de la Casa Rosada in Argentina and National Library of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). In turn, the other military expedition, "Campaign of the Andes south of Patagonia", was photographed by two topographer-engineers: Carlos Encina and Edgardo Moreno, in addition to the photographer Pedro Morelli. The photographic album produced was named "Topographical views of the National Territory of Limay and Neuquén" and it included 182 images which were stored in the same museums and archives than Pozzo's album (Archivo General de la Nación, Museo Roca, and Museo de la Casa Rosada).

These photographs of both albums have circulated widely over the years in multiple contexts: books, textbooks, newspapers, magazines and art exhibitions; defining a visual imaginary not only about the Desert Conquest, but also about the Indigenous peoples from Patagonia (Yujnovsky 2008, Saletta 2011). The most significant example of large circulation of one of these images could be the detail of a painting by Juan Manuel Blanes, inspired in a photograph by Antonio Pozzo, included in the 100 Argentine pesos bill. The painting, entitled "The military occupation of the Río Negro by the Army on May 25, 1879", painted in 1896, was obviously inspired by one of Pozzo's photographs which

portrays General Roca and his crew posing at Río Negro's shore¹. This way, the images about the conquest of the "wild" are easily available for Argentine citizens, in patriotic symbols, school textbooks and even in current bills.



Figure 2: a) “Villega’s Artillery after the Paso Alsina” (Antonio Pozzo, 1879. Roca Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina); b) “Military occupation of the Río Negro during the expedition under General Julio A. Roca’s command” (Juan Manuel Blanes, 1889. *National Historic Museum*, Buenos Aires, Argentina); c) 100 pesos bill, Argentina.

In turn, the circulation of these images helped to construct the Argentine nation-state as “an imagined political community as inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson 1993: 23). This idea of imagined community is crucial and refers to the fact that although members of the nation will

¹ We have to remark that Blanes painted the whole military crew, gathering together “figures who neither coincided personally on that column (the commanders of the five columns never met each other in their itineraries), nor chronologically” (Torre 2011, 9). In this way, the painting summarizes in only one image the whole crew in charge of the “Desert Conquest”.

never know all their countrymen and in spite of the deep differences and inequalities between them, they share a number of “invented traditions” (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983) that instill a sense of deep fellowship and camaraderie that constructs an imaginary equality, ignoring these real differences and inequalities. The imagination of the community refers to two sets of processes carried out by the state: on the one hand the definition of who the sovereign citizens are, presenting them as equals despite their differences, thus requiring “loyalty and social identification of [the state’s] members” (Corrigan & Sayer 2007, 46) and, on the other hand, the definition of who are not citizens, presenting them as radically different, as “foreign”. Therefore, the ultimate goal of the nation-state is the construction of homogeneity in the inside and heterogeneity in the outside, so that the state is responsible for “eliminating or ignoring the cultural, ethnic, phenotypic [features], and other characteristics of a human group, to be perceived as part of one ethno-cultural and referential unit” (Quijada 2000, 8). This homogenization process creates clear boundaries between the homogeneous group within the nation-state and the heterogeneous group outside, by eliminating “any form of diversity that was not translatable in social terms” (Idem, 19), giving the nation-state a single type of ethnicity.

The Argentine nation-state was built with very strong social and ethnic implications, since for the ruling elite, whose ideology was based at that time on evolutionary ideas in vogue (Montserrat 1993), the state was a “naturally” white, positive and beneficial institution, whereas for the natives it actually implied “the loss of freedom and the destruction of a way of life” (Rock 2006, 26). However, in this process, not only the natives were overshadowed: women and children became also an invisible part of citizens of the nation-state. Thus, the nation builders (De Jong 2002) were only considered white, male and adult. Consequently, the written and visual representation of the “Desert Conquest”, as a model of the state construction, focused on the great achievements of the male soldiers, setting aside all the other citizens involved in the occupation of the new territories (Sontag 2003).

Indexes, Icons and Databases

To analyze this corpus of images of the “Desert Conquest”, we base our research on the theoretical conception of photography as an indexical sign,

that is, as an index of a reality both represented and reproduced by capturing light and referents located in front of the photographic device. This theoretical point of view is anchored in Peirce's conception about the theory of signs, in which the photographic image is firstly an *icon*, as it is a means to express ideas that have a relationship of similarity with the object represented and secondly, an *index*, as it holds a direct relationship with the represented referent (Peirce 1955, Geimer 2009).

For this indexical ontology, photography is an "emanation of the reference" since "from a real body that was there, radiations have left to impress me" (Barthes 2004, 126). Thus, although the reference is gone, his/her/its emanation comes to impress the viewer, confirming and certifying the presence of reference that the photograph represents. The nature of photography is then based on the reference to "this has been": "what I see, it has happened there, in that place that lies between the infinite and the subject (operator or spectator); it has been there, and yet it is immediately separated; it has been absolute, imperatively present, and yet already deferred " (Barthes 2004, 121). For this author there is a dual position of reality and past, which is due to the time passed between the photographic shooting and the reception of the photographic image. Thus, only photography can prove and convincethe viewer that the photographed reference has really existed, since that image is like a fingerprint of the referent.

Based on this "footprint idea", Dubois (2008) changes the focus of the debate from the result or the reception of the photograph to its genesis; defending the "photographic act" as the basis for understanding the photographic situation. Thus, the coexistence and physical contiguity with the referent occurs only in that little infinite time: the photographic act. The photographic index becomes unique, because that image is the light footprint of a real object that has been there, making that trace unrepeatabe. Thus, although photographic images can be reproduced technically (Benjamin 2015), the negative that originally captured the referent is unique, as unique as the referent itself. So, photography always refers to the existence of that reference represented, becoming evidence and testimony to the past reality.

We agree with these authors and especially share the idea of an indexical ontology for the photographic images, as we think that these images maintain a direct relationship with the referent represented, that is to say, a relationship of physical contiguity in which, without the reference, there is

no possible photographic representation. According to this theoretical position, we follow the conceptual and methodological guidelines of "visual archeology" (Fiore 2007, Fiore & Varela 2009), which conceives photography as a socially constructed artifact "that tells us something about the culture represented as well as the culture that took the photograph" (Ruby 1996, 346). Photographs constitute then a double record of the photographer's vision and of the materiality of its real represented referent (Fiore and Varela 2009). Following this ontology of photography, we think it is possible to capture both the photographer's view as well as the agency of the photographed subject, from a theoretical perspective in which both are active agents (Giddens 2011) that have competing interests about the photographic representation. The result of this "encounter of subjectivities" (Fiore 2005) depends on the different degrees of freedom which the subjects have in a specific context. In spite of the fact that these will always be greater within the powerful groups, this does not rule out the existence of agency -and actions- within the indigenous groups, which affect their own representation (Idem). Such agencies are what we try to recover.

Following these theoretical and methodological guidelines, we analyzed this corpus of 235 images according to two complementary analytical units: the photographs and the photographed subjects. We recorded several data -in a data base- regarding the information visible in each photograph, according to the following variables at the photograph scale:

1) photographed society, 2) photographer, 3) photographic technique, 4) date, 5) photographic plane, 6) context, 7) number of photographed subjects, 8) material culture objects², 9) structures.

At the photographed subjects scale we include the following variables:

1) name of the subject, 2) gender, 3) age, 4) socio-ethnic assignation, 5) body pose, 6) activity carried, 8) clothing, 9) ornaments, 10) artifacts they manipulate.

Finally, in order to search for the gender and age patterns of the photographed subjects, bi-variate analyses were also carried out. We consider that these analyses allow us to approach the native's agency and part of their routinary cultural practices.

² We consider material culture objects any artifact handled by the photographed subjects, even if they were native artifacts (such as arcs and bows, baskets or pots) or western (such as fire weapons or kitchen appliances).

The Photographs of the Desert Conquest

These images of the Desert Conquest have been studied by some researchers, especially from disciplines like history or art history, focusing either on how they represent historical events or the representation itself. From the historical point of view, these images portray the native world at the moment of destruction of its symbolic universe, prior to their physical disappearance (Vezub 2002). However, for other historians these images propose symmetry between the native and the white worlds, for example in the similarity of the desert images and the Patagonian cities (Alimonda & Ferguson 2004). From the art history point of view, these images helped in the constitution of the Patagonian geography as part of the national territory, by providing versions of an exploitable and living space, which can also be enjoyed aesthetically (Penhos 2005). Additionally, in this very constitution, the photographers left their trademark, sometimes only by including their shadows in the images, as a seal of authorship (Tell 2003). From an anthropological viewpoint, it is remarkable how these photographs, possibly the first ones of the Patagonian territory, are contemporary to the extermination policies developed in the region against the native communities (Masotta 2009).

From an archaeological standpoint, in previous analysis we proposed that the indigenous territory was intentionally represented as a desert, lacking structures, material culture or subjects that might indicate a potential right of the previous inhabitants (Butto 2012). This representation was given under the expansion of the Argentine state-nation, which sought to justify this territory's incorporation. We consider that these images from unpopulated desert landscapes give the viewer a loneliness effect, presenting this land as symbolic liminal space (Wright 1997), ready to be conquered by the Western "civilization".

Moreover, when Indigenous persons were actually represented, they became an "other", different because of the clothes and ornaments they wore and because of the objects they handled. A visual comparison was constructed between the white civilized people who had "conquered" the desert at that moment in time, and the "savage" natives that represented the past, but not the present or the future of the Argentinian nation (Balibar 1991).

Photographic Demography

Since the photographs capture subjects who posed in front of the photographic device, we followed Fiore & Varela's (2009) consideration whereby it is possible to add all photographed subjects in order to calculate the "photographed population" and build from there a "photographic demography". This photographed demography differs from the actual demography, because the same person may be photographed and counted multiple times (Ibidem).

There is insufficient census data to construct a real demography, as in the first three official census of Argentina the only information recorded about the natives who inhabited the national territories was their number; without distinctions of gender or age.

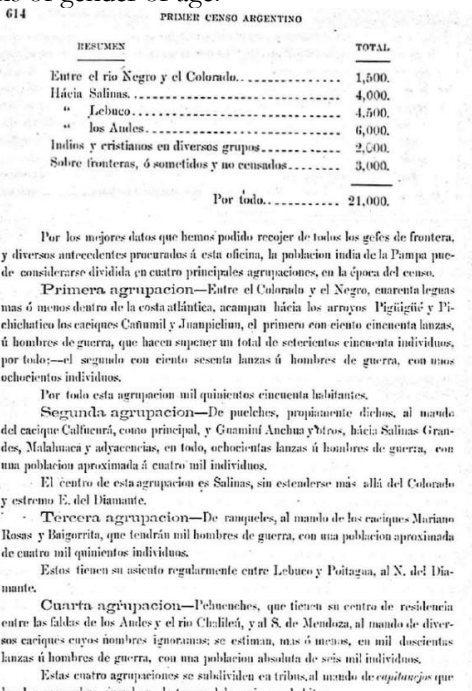


Figure 3: Extract from the first Argentinian census of 1869 (*).

(*) The first column shows the amount of indigenous people per region: 1500 between Río Negro and Río Colorado, 4000 in the area of the Salinas, 4500 around Lebuco and 6000 around the Andean region. It also shows 2000 indigenous people in independent groups and an estimate of 3000 indigenous people not included in the census. The written text explains to which tribes do these indigenous people belong: puelches, ranqueles and pehuénches, and under which cacique they were organized.

However, this “photographic demography” provides an interesting overview of "the population composition of the photographed groups, and by extension, of the native population contacted by Westerners" (Fiore & Varela 2009, 199).

This way, the photographic demography shows that from all the photographed subjects in the images of the Desert Conquest (N=1390), most of them are westerners (78%, N=1087) and a minority of them are natives (22%, N=303). We consider that this representation strongly focused on the white population reinforces the image of the Patagonian territory as a “desert” ready to be conquered and incorporated to the Argentinian state-nation.

Table 1: Age, gender and socio-ethnic roles of the photographed subjects

Socio-ethnic roles, age and gender		Western military	Western civilian	Native military	Native civilian	Total
Male	adult	694	240	64	88	1086
	young	0	7	0	19	26
	children	0	37	0	43	80
	baby	0	1	0	3	4
Female	senior	0	0	0	4	4
	adult	0	33	0	24	57
	young	0	4	0	37	41
	children	0	71	0	21	92
Total		694	393	64	239	1390

Not Only Male and Adult Soldiers

We want to concentrate our analysis of these photographs on variables which have been previously disregarded by other research projects: gender, age and socio-ethnic features of the photographed subjects, both Western and Indigenous. We consider that the photographs selected to illustrate the official discourse about the Desert Conquest and, therefore, the formation of the Argentinestate, include certain invisible subaltern social actors: women and children. As discussed above, the visual display of the Desert Conquest was generally focused on the warrior and patriotic character of the military outpost in the wild native territory. Thus, speech and images were built following the logic of "representing war as a solemn

tour just of men" (Sontag 2003, 61). However, as we review and analyze the photographs, qualitative and quantitative patterns arise, which allow us not only to test this visual information against the written documents, but also to identify previously unknown trends (Fiore & Varela 2007). In this case, we will focus on the age and gender of the photographed subjects in the pictures of the Desert Conquest, in order to examine critically whether that conquest was really an exclusively "male issue" or if it was only represented that way.

The first results show that most of the photographed Westerners are members of the army (64% of 1087 Westerners), in contrast to a minority of Indigenous soldiers (21% of 303 natives). Therefore, most of natives are civilians (79%, N=239), while only a few of the westerners are actually civilian (36%, N=393). This contrast indicates a simple yet relevant process: the Westerners advanced as an army in the native territory, while the natives who inhabited those territories -although they were organized defensively and offensively- were not institutionalized as an Army.

We will now focus the analysis on the age and gender variables. That way, we will first study the photographs of adult men, in order to determine if all of them were part of the military sector. Such participation can be traced in the photographs by certain military diacritics such as uniforms, weapons and the alignment in rows. The first significant result is that most of the photographed white men, specifically a 74% (N = 694 from a total of 934 adult white men) belong to the army, but a 25% (N = 240) of these adult white men are civilians, including settlers who inhabited the recently installed forts and Patagonian cities, such as Carmen de Patagones, who are civilians that accompanied the military expeditions, and priests, who accompanied the military expeditions baptizing the natives (as a way to "civilize" them).



Figure 4: "Carhué" (Antonio Pozzo, 1879. Roca Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

However, among the native adult men, the soldiers and warriors are in fact the minority (42%, N = 64 out of 152 native adult men), while most of them are civilians (58 %, N = 88). We find it interesting to compare these visual data with the numbers from the first Argentinian census, carried out in 1869 (i. e. ten years before the first military campaign). According to the estimation made during that census in the Pampean region, there would have been 500 "native men of war" from a total of 2,000 native civilians; which means that a 25% of the native population would have been soldiers. This is a similar proportion to the one shown in the photographs, where a 21% of the photographed natives (N=303) appear to be armed as soldiers. That way, the visual data shows a similar proportion between native soldiers and native civilians that the one registered in the written records. This suggests that a quarter of the native population was prepared for attack or defense, which explains the state of war the native societies were in, because of the continuous invasions carried out by the Argentine army in their territories from 1833 onwards, forcing them to become warriors and defenders of their territories and lifestyles (Mases 2010).



Figure 5: “Cacique Villamain, captains and war natives” (Carlos Encina and Edgardo Moreno, 1882-3. Roca Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

However, not all the photographed subjects were adult men: from the western civilians, 38% (N=153 from 393 western civilians) of the photographed subjects represent different ages and genders (female, children and senior) and that proportion increases, in the case of native civilian to a 63% (N=151 from 239 native civilian) of non-adult men subjects. This is related to the fact that the photographs of the native society includes all age and gender ranges, as the territory that was being

invaded was inhabited by this society, which is then represented in its totality.

As already mentioned, among the western civilians represented in these photographs, the vast majority are adult males (61% N=240). Amazingly, the second group in quantitative importance appear to be female children (18 %, N=71) and male children (9%, N=37). The prominence of this age group has to do with the fact that many of the photographs were taken in the schools recently set up in the new Patagonian colonies. For example, one image shows a group of female children sitting along with a female teacher in the classroom of a school in Carmen de Patagones, while other image shows a children´s music band of a religious school. Therefore, the photographers not only represented the Argentine Army, which was the main focus of their interests, but also included other social actors, like the children who inhabited the recently created Patagonian cities.



Figure 6: “College led by sisters of charity in Patagones. Director and students of the establishment” (Carlos Encina and Edgardo Moreno, 1882-3. Roca Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

Along with these “little” social actors, we find adult women, who were also visually represented in these photograph collections, although in smaller numbers (8%, N=33 of 393 western civilians). Besides, a few young subjects were included in these images: young males (2%, N=7) and young females (1%, N=4) who also appeared in the photographs taken in the Patagonian cities and forts.

This “photographic demography” of the Western society shows a predominance of the adult men dismissing women’s presence in these national territories; despite of what appears to be a balanced demography of women and men in the census previously mentioned. The demographic structure of one of the two Patagonian colonies³, Colonia Chubut, shows 85 men versus 68 women, evidencing similar proportions between genders. Although we cannot extend this example to other patagonian colonies, we do think this contributes to proof that Patagonia was not a “deserted geography” occupied only by soldiers of the national army; it was a lived place, experienced by whole families -including women and children- who relocated their daily lives into these new national territories. However, these lived spaces are not materialized into the photographs, possibly because the photographers imposed a bias to the represented reality, stressing the tough life on the field (Vezub 2002). Such emphasis can also be found on the literature thoroughly read among the cultured sectors of that time (Torres 2011).

When we concentrate our attention on the represented native civilians, we find out that most of them are adult males (37%, N=88 from 239 native civilians). Such image coincides with that of the western civilians. The photographers seem to have reinforced the adult male group in both populations represented: the Westerners and the Indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, other social actors appear in the images: the male children (18%, N=43) and the young females (16 %, N=37) are of quantitative importance. Behind them adult women appear in a similar number (10%, N=24) as the female children (9 %, N=21) and young males (8%, N=19).



Figure 7: “Reuque-Curá natives in Codihue” (Carlos Encina and Edgardo Moreno, 1882-3. Roca Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

³ By the end of the 19th Century there were only two colonies in Patagonia, both on the coast: Carmen de Patagones, at the end of Río Negro and Colonia Chubut (Nacuzzi 2005).

In this case, the first result that calls our attention is that many of the photographed subjects are adults (47%, N=112), most of them male. This predominance probably relates to the fact that the adults were the ones who came into direct contact with the representatives of Western society, including government agents, military agents, naturalist travellers and, of course, photographers. But we can also relate this adult visual predominance to an "inverted population pyramid", "characteristic of moments of population decrease" (Fiore & Varela 2009, 202). This population fall was caused by the increasing killings by military campaigns, directed against these native people, added to the long contact with Western society, which brought new diseases and harmful habits (Nacuzzi 2005, Bandieri 2005, Mases 2010).



Figure 8: "Cacicque Villamain" (Carlos Encina and Edgardo Moreno, 1882-3. Roca Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

Other result that draws our attention is the contrast between the photographs of young men and women: young native females (16%) are more represented than young native males (8%); these even much more represented than western young females (1%). We think this focus on young native females is related to two contemporary but different processes: on the one hand, young native females had become one of the targets to be captured by the invading army, as they were on demand as urban domestic work force (Mases 2010). In this regard, several newspapers of that time published announcements of the arrival of female natives to the city, and their distribution between the wealthy local

families⁴. On the other hand, the body of young natives was the subject of exoticism and eroticism for the Metropolitan public, who accessed ethnographic postcards of unknown but imagined geographies (Masotta 2003). Thus, we think the broad representation of these young women responds primarily to the photographer's attempt to visually appropriate these native bodies, reversing the myth of the white captive in the hands of the natives (Masotta 2003) and exposing the asymmetrical power relationship between photographer and photographed subject.

We consider that this "photographicdemography" of the Patagonian native society suggests an accurate native demography: besides some bias of the photographers, who preferred to represent adult males or young females, this demography shows the variety of age and gender of the whole community that came in contact with the military and scientific expeditions by the end of the 19th Century. These native subjects were the ones inhabiting the Patagonian territory at the time it was invaded. Such invasion was carried out through an unequal war, in which the ArgentineNational Army advanced over native territory, attacking not only native warriors prepared for war, but the whole society: women and children included. This indiscriminate attack on the Patagonian native societies led scholars to characterize the Desert Conquest as a genocide (Feierstein 2007).

Final Words

We consider that the photographic production of the military campaigns directed to Northpatagonia between 1879 and 1883 provided a form of visual and ideological justification for the Argentine state actions: the annihilation and acculturation of the native tribes(Mases 2010). The photographic device succeeded in establishing lasting visual tropes, exerting great power on the visual national imaginary of Argentina (and probably of many Latin American nations). In the case of the Desert Conquest photography, it became a mechanism that constructed the discourse of the Argentine nation, building the Patagonian territory as a desert ready to be conquered and populated, and the Desert Conquest as a heroic and masculine deed.

⁴ An example of this type of news was published in the daily newspaper *La Pampa* of April 23, 1879: "The female natives who were in Martin Garcia should arrive today to our port and will be delivered to the President of the Benevolent Society to distribute them."

The construction of this visual discourse pushed other social actors to a subaltern role (Spivak 1994), and made women and children especially invisible.

The focuses of representation was set on the masculine military sector, which was presented as the builder of the Argentinian nation (De Jong 2002), disregarding the settler western families who inhabited these new territories, in spite of the fact that they made the citizenship actually possible and defend the national territory. These women and children were the support of this Argentine conquest, yet they became invisible for the official history.

Nevertheless, given that the photograph constitutes an index of a past reality, it captures not only the photographer's view, but also the photographed subject's agency (Fiore & Varela 2009). Following this theoretical view point, we were able to recover the presence of women and children among the westerner inhabitants of the recent Patagonian cities and the military fronts, showing that the Patagonian "desert" was occupied not only by the Argentine soldiers, but also by the families, women and children who settled in those new and hostile territories. However, these territories were only new for the Westerners and for the state-nation: these territories were traditionally inhabited by the native communities, who also appear in these photographic indexes of the past (*sensu* Barthes 2004). That way, we can also explore the diversity of ages and genders of the native communities portrayed by these photographers and confirm that these communities were not prepared for war: they were the ones under attack in their own territories (Viñas 2003, Nacuzzi 2005, Mases 2010).

Therefore, beyond the persistence of these visual tropes of the "desert" and the male "heroic deed", we would like to remark the importance of the "visual archaeology" for the study of photographs, in order to critically examine what has been established as "natural" by the main powers, in this case, the State. The conception of photography as an index and as a cultural artifact allows us to recover not only the photographer's intentions at the time of producing the image, but also the presence and, more importantly, the agency of the subaltern subjects. This way, we consider that as much as anthropology is a discipline that "documents the non-documented" (Rockwell 2011), the archaeological work with photographs can make visible the invisible and recover new parts of history.

Acknowledgements:

This paper includes the result of part of my Phd thesis, which was funded with scholarships from CONICET (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones en Ciencia y Técnica). The research formed part of a major project directed by Dr. Danae Fiore (funded by MINCYT-ANPCYT Project PICT 38216 - 2005 and Mank'acen Project -Fondo Nacional de las Artes - 2013). I would like to thank Danae Fiore for her kind direction and guidance during this research and to Luis Orquera for always supporting my academic projects and giving me access to the Asociación de Investigaciones Antropológicas (Buenos Aires), where I carry out this research project. I would also like to thank the Roca Museum (Buenos Aires, Argentina) for giving me access to the visual records collections. Finally, I would also like to thank Soledad Mogliati for correcting the grammar, syntax and spelling of the manuscript.

References:

- Alimonda, Héctor & Ferguson, Juan (2004): "La producción del desierto". In: *Revista Chilena de Antropología Visual* no.4, pp. 1-28.
- Anderson, Benedict (2006): *Comunidades imaginadas*. México: FCE.
- Bandieri, Susana (2005): *Historia de la Patagonia*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana.
- Balibar, Etienne (1991): "La forma nación". In: Balibar Etienne & Immanuel Wallerstein (eds.): *Raza, Nación y Clase*. Madrid: IEPALA.
- Barabas, Alicia (2002): "Etnoterritorios y rituales terapéuticos en Oaxaca". In: *Scripta Ethnológica Vol. XXIV*, pp. 9-19
- Barthes, Roland (2004): *La cámara lúcida*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.
- Bayer, Osvaldo (2010): *Historia e la crueldad argentina: Julio A. Roca y el genocidio de los pueblos originarios*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones El Tugurio.
- Bechis, Marta (1992): "Instrumentos metodológicos para el estudio de las relaciones interétnicas en el período formativo y de consolidación de estados nacionales". In: Hidalgo, Cecilia & Liliana Tamango (comp.): *Etnicidad e Identidad*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina.
- Benjamin, Walter (2015): *Estética de la imagen*. Buenos Aires: La Marca editora.
- Butto, Ana (2012): "Con el foco en el otro: Las representaciones visuales acerca del indio y el territorio en los expedicionarios de la conquista del

desierto en las campañas de 1879 y 1883”. In: Nora Kuperszmit, Teresa Lagos Marmol, Leandro Mucciolo & Mariana Sacchi (eds.): *Entre pasados y presentes III, Estudios Contemporáneos en Ciencias Antropológicas*. Buenos Aires: Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Pensamiento Latinoamericano, pp.105-121.

Corrigan, Phillip & Sayer, Derek (2007):“La formación del Estado inglés como revolución cultural”.In: Lagos, María & Pamela Calla (eds): *Cuaderno de Futuro N° 23, Antropología del Estado: Dominación y prácticas contestatarias en América Latina*.La Paz: Informe Nacional sobre Desarrollo Humano del Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (INDH/PNUD).

De Jong, Ingrid (2002):“Indio, nación y soberanía en la cordillera norpatagónica: fronteras de la inclusión y la exclusión en el discurso de Manuel José Olascoaga”. In: Nacuzzi, Lidia (ed.): *Funcionarios, diplomáticos, guerreros. Miradas hacia el otro en las fronteras de Pampa y Patagonia (siglos XVIII y XIX)*.Buenos Aires: Sociedad Argentina de Antropología.

Dubois, Pierre (2008): *El acto fotográfico y otros ensayos*. Buenos Aires: La Marca Editora.

Edwards, Elizabeth (1992): *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920*. London: Yale University Press.

Feierstein, Daniel (2007): *El genocidio como práctica social. Entre el nazismo y la experiencia argentina*. Buenos Aires: FCE.

Fiore, Danae (2007): “Arqueología con fotografías: el registro fotográfico en la investigación arqueológica y el caso de Tierra del Fuego”. In: Flavia Morello, Alfredo Prieto, Mateo Martinic & Gabriel Bahamonde (eds.): *Arqueología de Fuego-Patagonia. Levantando piedras, desenterrando huesos... y develando arcanos*. Punta Arenas: Ediciones CEQUA, pp. 767-778.

Fiore, Danae (2005): “Fotografía y pintura corporal en Tierra del Fuego: un encuentro de subjetividades”. In: *Revista Chilena de Antropología Visual*no. 6, pp. 55-73.

Fiore, Danae&Varela, María Lidia (2009): *Memorias de papel. Una arqueología visual de las fotografías de pueblos originarios fueguinos*.Buenos Aires: Editorial Dunken.

Geimer, Peter (2009): *Theorien der Fotografie zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius Verlag.

Giddens, Anthony (2011): *La estructuración de la sociedad*.Buenos Aires: Editorial Amorrortu.

González, Carina (2012):“Barbarie natural: fotos del desierto y discusión del archivo nacional en la campaña argentina (1878-1882)”. In: *Letras Hispánicas Vol. 8*, no. 1, pp. 144-161.

Hobsbawn, Eric & Ranger, Terence (1983): *La invención de la tradición*. Barcelona: Editorial Crítica.

Krauss, Rosalind (1999): *Reinventing the medium*. In: *Critical Inquiry* Vol. 25, no.2, pp. 289-305.

Lins Ribeiro, Gustavo (2007): “Descotidianizar. Extrañamiento y conciencia práctica, un ensayo sobre la perspectiva antropológica“. In: Boivin, Mauricio et al. (eds.): *Constructores de Otriedad. Una Introducción a la Antropología Social y Cultural*, Buenos Aires: EUDEBA, pp. 237-242.

Mandrini, Raúl (2006): *Vivir entre dos mundos. Las fronteras del sur de la Argentina. Siglos XVIII y XIX*. Buenos Aires: Alfaguara.

Mases, Enrique (2010): *Estado y cuestión indígena. El destino final de los indios sometidos en el sur del territorio (1878-1930)*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo Libros.

Masotta, Carlos (2003): “Cuerpos dóciles y miradas encontradas. Miniaturización de los cuerpos e indicios de la resistencia en postales de indios argentinas (1900-1940)”. In: *Revista Chilena de Antropología Visual* no. 3, pp. 1-16.

Masotta, Carlos (2009):“Telón de fondo. Paisajes de desierto y alteridad en la fotografía de la Patagonia (1880-1900)”. In: *Aisthesis*, 46, pp. 111-127.

Montserrat, Marcelo (1993): *Ciencia, historia y sociedad en la Argentina del siglo XIX*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina.

Nacuzzi, Lidia (2005): *Identidades impuestas. Tehuelches, aucas y pampas en el norte de la Patagonia*, Buenos Aires: Sociedad Argentina de Antropología.

Papazian, Alexis & Nagy, Mariano (2010). “La Isla Martín García como campo de concentración de indígenas hacia fines del siglo XIX”. In: Bayer, Osvaldo (ed.): *Historia de la crueldad argentina: Julio A. Roca y el genocidio de los pueblos originarios*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones El Tugurio, pp. 77-96.

Peirce, Charles (1955): *Philosophical writings of Peirce*. New York: Dover Publications.

Penhos, Marta (2005):“Frente y perfil. Fotografía y prácticas antropológicas y criminológicas en Argentina a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX”. In: *Arte y antropología en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Fundación Telefónica / Fundación Espigas / FIAAR.

Quijada, Mónica, Bernard, Carmen & Schneider, Arnd (2000). *Homogeneidad y nación con un estudio de caso: Argentina, siglos XIX y XX*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.

Rock, David (2006): *La construcción del Estado y los movimientos políticos en la Argentina, 1860-1916*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo libros.

Rockwell, Elsie (2011): *La experiencia etnográfica. Historia y cultura en los procesos educativos*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Paidós.

Rodríguez, Mariela Eva (2010): “De la “extinción” a la autoafirmación: Procesos de visibilización de la comunidad tehuelche Camusu Aike (provincia de Santa Cruz, Argentina)”. Unedited Phd Thesis, Washington: Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Georgetown University.

Ruby, Jay (1996): “Antropología visual”. In: Levinson, David y Melvin Ember (eds.): *Enciclopedia de antropología cultural*. New York: H. Holt.

Saletta, María José (2011): “Fotografías de indígenas en manuales escolares argentinos: representaciones visuales y connotaciones textuales”. In: *Intersecciones en Antropología* no.13, pp. 181-195.

Sontag, Susan (2003): *Ante el dolor de los demás*. Buenos Aires: Alfaguara.

Spivak, Gayatri (1994): “Can the subaltern speak?” In: Williams, Patrick & Laura Chrisman (eds.): *Colonial and Postcolonial Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tell, Verónica (2003): “La toma del desierto. Sobre la auto-referencialidad fotográfica”. In: *Congreso Internacional de Teoría e Historia del Arte / IX Jornadas del CAIA “Poderes de la Imagen”*. Buenos Aires: CAIA., s/p.

Torre, Claudia (2011): “Militares en el desierto. Expedición, escritura y fotografía”. Leiden: Simposio Internacional Imágenes y Realismos en América Latina.

Vezub, Julio (2002): *Indios y soldados, Las fotografías de Carlos Encina y Edgardo Moreno durante la “Conquista del Desierto”*. Buenos Aires: El Elefante Blanco.

Viñas, David (2003): *Indios, ejército y frontera*. Buenos Aires: Santiago Arcos Editor.

Weber, Max (2003 [1918]): *El político y el científico* Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Wright, P. (1997). “El desierto del Chaco: geografías de la alteridad y el estado”. In: Teruel, Ana & Jerez, Omar (eds.): *Pasado y presente de un mundo postergado: estudios de antropología, historia y arqueología del Chaco y Pedemonte Surandino*. Jujuy, Universidad Nacional de Jujuy, pp. 35-56.

Yujnovsky, I. (2008): “La conquista visual del país de los araucanos (1879-1881)”. In: *Takwá* no. 14, pp. 105-116.