

Body ornaments and gender in the ethnographic photographs of Yámana/Yagán

Adornos corporales y género en las fotografías etnográficas de Yámana/Yagán

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Abstract

This work aims to discuss the contribution of the study of ethnographic photographs about the body adornments and the gender regulations of the Yámana/Yagán society of Tierra del Fuego (Argentina and Chile). Photography is understood as a cultural artifact that allows the rescue of multiple agencies, considering that the elements included in the image –such as body ornaments–refer not only to the interests of the photographer but also to those of the photographed. In order to analyze these elements, 428 ethnographic photographs of Yamanas/Yaganes, obtained between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, were studied; of which 140 individuals were photographed carrying a total of 171 body ornaments between necklaces, bracelets and/or anklets. The link between type of ornament and gender of its wearer was analyzed, and it was found that necklaces were worn by both women and men, while bracelets and anklets were worn by women. These results allow us to discuss the role of body ornaments in the construction and regulation of gender roles in Yámana/Yagán society. Simultaneously, the contribution of ethnographic photographs as artifacts of material culture is evaluated, which, by combining an anthropological and archaeological perspective, are relevant to produce new knowledge about the indigenous past.

Keywords

Photography, indigenous people, Yámana, body ornament, gender, artifact.

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Resumen

Este trabajo se propone discutir el aporte del estudio de las fotografías etnográficas acerca de los adornos corporales y las regulaciones de género de la sociedad Yámana/Yagán de Tierra del Fuego (Argentina y Chile). Se entiende a la fotografía como un artefacto cultural que permite rescatar múltiples agencias, considerando que los elementos incluidos en la imagen –como los adornos corporales– refieren no sólo a los intereses del fotógrafo sino también a los de los fotografiados. A fin de analizar esos elementos, se estudiaron 428 fotografías etnográficas de Yámanas/Yaganes, obtenidas entre fines del siglo XIX y comienzos del XX; se seleccionaron 140 individuos fotografiados que portaban un total de 171 adornos corporales entre collares, brazaletes y/o tobilleras. Se analizó el vínculo entre tipo de adorno y género de su portador, y se encontró que los collares fueron usados tanto por mujeres como por hombres, mientras que brazaletes y tobilleras lo fueron por Woman. Estos resultados permiten discutir el rol de los adornos en la construcción y regulación de roles de género en la sociedad Yámana/Yagán. Simultáneamente se evalúa el aporte de las fotografías etnográficas como artefactos de cultura material que, mediante la combinación de una mirada antropológica y arqueológica, resultan relevantes para producir nuevos conocimientos sobre el pasado indígena.

Palabras clave

Fotografía, indígena, Yámana, adorno corporal, género, artefacto.

Introduction

This paper aims to discuss how audiovisual anthropology, and specifically the study of ethnographic photographs, allows us to understand the role played by the corporal adornments used by indigenous peoples in the construction and regulation of gender roles (Claassen 1992, Conkey and Gero, 1991, Butler, 2004). The case that we will analyze is the Yámana/Yagán society, whose ancestral ³territory covers the south of the archipelago of Tierra del Fuego (Argentina and Chile), concentrating on the way in which women and men wear the corporal adornments -collar, bracelets and anklets -.

3 There are documents that show that the name yagán was adopted by this society at the end of the 19th century, but no information is available for earlier times (Piana in Fiore and Varela, 2009).

We understand that ethnographic photographs are indices of a reality both represented and reproduced by the capture of light and the referents located in front of the photographic device, so that not only reflect the vision of the producer of the image, but also the real referent contributes to its representation (Fiore and Varela, 2009). In this way, we consider that it is possible to rescue information about the natives photographed and, in this case, about the use of their body adornments. In this work we return to the concept of gender as a construction of the sociocultural and historically situated body, which implies physical and behavioral characteristics that include and surpass sex, orienting the development of elements such as physical appearance, posture, movement / gesticulation, modes of dress and ornamentation, generating an individual social role but emergent of the interaction with other individuals (Conkey and Spector, 1984, Claassen, 1992, Sørensen, 2000). Therefore, we understand that indigenous body adornments participated in such gender construction in indigenous Fueguine societies (Fiore, 2007).

Therefore, we focused our study on a total of 428 ethnographic photographs of the Yámana/Yagán society, obtained between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, paying special attention to individuals who carried body adornments. Of that sample, 86 photographs were selected that portrayed 140 individuals, who use a total of 171 corporal adornments - 124 necklaces, 20 bracelets and 27 anklets -, which were analyzed especially from the gender of its wearer. Based on these variables of analysis, we hope to discuss the role of adornments in the constructions and regulations of the Yámana/Yagán society, as well as the contribution of ethnographic photographs and audiovisual anthropology when it comes to knowing these gender regulations (*sensu* Butler, 2004).

Case study and state of the issue

The Yámana/Yagán are a native people whose traditional way of life was hunter-gatherer-fisherman with canoe mobility, who occupied the southern portion of the Big Island of Tierra del Fuego and the islands of the Fuegian archipelago to Cape Horn (Orquera and Piana, 2015). The ancestors of the Yámana/Yagán inhabited this territory since the 7300 years BP cal - before

the present ⁴- (Orquera and Piana, 1999). Their subsistence was based on the hunting of sea lions, guanacos and birds, the fishing of fish and the collection of molluscs, besides the occasional use of beached whales (Gusinde, 1986, Orquera and Piana, 1999). In order to take advantage of these resources, they developed a specific technology of mobility and capture of prey: canoes, harpoons and other throwing weapons that facilitated transfers and transportation, as well as the capture of essential resources (Orquera and Piana, 2015). The camps, consisting of log huts, branches and leaves, were inhabited by family groups. Occasionally large group meetings were held, by the whaling of a whale or to celebrate initiation rites to adulthood mixed -chiéjaus- and masculine-kina- (Gusinde, 1986 [1937]). Travelers who came into contact with this ethnic group from the seventeenth century pointed to the absence of heads or figures with a royal authority (Fitz Roy, 1839). The sexual division of labor was semi-egalitarian, since the distribution of female and male tasks was complementary (Gusinde, 1986 [1937] and Fiore, 2007).

Many of the travelers who came in contact with the Yámana/Yagán pointed to the use of body adornments (Fitz Roy, 1839, Hyades and Deniker, 2007 [1891], Bridges, 2005 [1948], Gusinde, 1986 [1937]). The facial and body painting ⁵is mentioned by most travelers, as well as the use of necklaces, bracelets and anklets by all age groups (Martial, 2007 [1888]). Feather diadems⁶, used in ceremonies, were observed by fewer travelers (Gusinde, 1986 [1937]). Together with the travelers, from the 17th century began explorations of the Fuegian territory, new artefacts and raw materials arrived, including necklaces and bracelets from European beads that were adopted by the Yámana/Yagán (Orquera and Piana, 2015).

4 In archeology, the radiocarbon dates are presented as BP years “before the present”, counting the date from 1950 to the past.

5 The facial painting portrayed in the ethnographic photographs of Yámana / Yagán has been extensively studied by Fiore (2002) and will not be addressed in this work.

6 The feather diadems used in the different ceremonies will be the focus of another work, and will not be addressed in this article.

Figure 1
Map of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego and location
of the ancestral territory of the Yámana/Yagán



Map source: www.patagoniatravelfinder.com

Due to the attraction of this original Fuegian people, because it was considered a “survival” of a past extinct way of life or as contemporary exotic specimens (Gusinde, 1986 [1937] and Penhos, 2005), there is a large corpus of photographs of the Yámana/Yagán. These have been studied by researchers from multiple disciplines, usually focused on three elements: representation, circulation and the represented referent.

The studies focused on representation emphasized the way in which photographers produced images that are more compatible with their imagery of the wild than with the reality of indigenous populations, for which they manipulated resources and devices (Alvarado, 2007, Edwards, 1992). Among these multiple manipulations is the imposition of nudity, which is evident in five portraits taken by a Yámana/Yagán woman by the photographers of the French Scientific Mission to Cape Horn - located in the region between 1882 and 1883 - that the young woman's poses reveal the clear erotic intention of the photographers (Carreño, 2002). On the other hand, the manipulations of clothing can be classified into three types: the “garment” that emphasizes the native garb of Fueguina, to achieve an exact correspondence between indigenous subject, traditional clothing and natural setting; the “investiture” that implied the imposition of Western clothing, to present the Fuegians as neat and orderly beings, capable of being incorporated into civilization; and the “dispossession” of some natives dressed in Western garments, showing them as dispossessed beings (Alvarado and Mason, 2005). Another type of manipulation is the one that recreates natural environments, hiding the captivity of Fuegian groups exhibited at international fairs and human zoos, in order to “create the illusion of a ‘natural’ environment” (Baez & Mason 2006: 56) according to the imaginary about the indigenous populations.

Other approaches emphasize the social and institutional circulation of these images of indigenous Fueguinos and emphasize in their diffusion as part of school manuals. Images of indigenous Fueguinos included in the Chilean school textbooks emphasize their nakedness, precariousness and primitivism, while constructing an arbitrary Fuegian identity, by making erroneous ethnic affiliations (Baez, 2005). On the Argentine side, the Fuegian images published in the school manuals obey two trends: one that shows a pristine image of the indigenous peoples wearing and manipulating only native elements and another that shows them as beings incorporated to the nation-state, manipulating Western elements (Saletta, 2011). In both cases, photography is used as if it were a reliable representation of the past,

but not as a document of the processes of transculturation experienced by these groups since the late nineteenth century.

The conception of photography as an artifact of socially constructed material culture, which provides information about the photographer and the photographed, allowed to retrieve and analyze information about the represented representatives (Edwards, 1992; Fiore and Varela, 2009). This posture understands that not all the elements of an image respond to the imaginary and strategies deployed by the photographers, but that photography allows the inclusion of everyday materiality that escapes the view of the colonizer and that, because it represents the routine (Giddens, 1995), reports on the cultural practices of these peoples (Fiore, 2005, Fiore and Varela, 2009, Butto, 2016). In this line of research, the photographs of Yámana/Yagán and Shelk'nam body paintings have been comparatively studied, showing different uses of body painting as elements that produce social identities and divisions, as ways of exercising power and building roles of gender (Fiore 2005, 2007). In turn, when studying the material culture manipulated in the photographs by the three Fuegian societies - Helk'nam, Yámana/Yagán and Alakaluf / Kawésqar - it was found that each society produced and manipulated different types of artifacts and that the adoption of material culture was different in each case because the processes of contact with Western society differed according to the conflicting Western agents (military, religious missionaries, etc.) and to the values and practices of each indigenous society (Fiore, 2007, Fiore and Varela, 2009, Butto, 2016). These studies of the subjects represented in the ethnographic photographs of Yámana/Yagán show that it is possible to identify and evaluate the manipulation patterns of material culture and the gender of the photographed subjects. In the present case, we will focus on the link between bodily ornaments and gender roles.

Concepts and method: photos, gender and ornaments

Photography was understood, in its beginnings, as a direct analogy of reality, since its mechanical attainment implied a supposedly objective character (Bazin, 1960). The focus on the mechanical mode of production of the photographic image allowed us to think of it as an impression, because its procedure was that of transference (Costa, 1991). In this way, photography

was seen as transparent and as a “message without a code” (Barthes, 2004), which provided “visual and material testimony of events to viewers absent from the scene” (Kossoy, 2001, p. 30). This objective recording capacity made photography a great tool for the first ethnographers - along with writing and sound recording - as it allowed the perpetuation of evidence of their field work (Collier, 1995; Grimshaw, 2001) . Thus, photography allowed to obtain a detailed and genuine memory of these “others” studied and the events experienced during fieldwork, helping to consolidate anthropology as a professional discipline (Naranjo, 2006).

But for postmodern theorists the objectivity of technical images was an illusion, since photography is always symbolic (Flusser, 1990). The photograph would acquire different meanings according to the social and cultural circumstances, revealing the relativity, ambiguity and mutability of its identity. Thus, its meaning would depend on a discursive practice submerged in relations of power-knowledge, whose interpretations depend on the uses and functions of certain institutions that have defined the status of photography (Bourdieu, 1979; Tagg, 2005). From this idea that the photographic device is always a culturally codified device (Sekula in Batchen, 2004), anthropology began to rethink the role that photography played within the politics of representation of otherness, emphasizing visual constructions of colonialism (Scherer, 1995). Thus, visual anthropology focused its analysis on historical photographs as colonial cultural products that created and reproduced popular archetypes of “the exotic” understood as the culturally different (Naranjo, 2006).

From a “critical” position, some theorists have retaken the conception of photography as an index of the represented reality, but simultaneously constructed by the biases of its producers. These authors emphasize the physical connection between the depicted referent and the photographic image, between the object and the visual sign that emanates from it (Peirce, 1995). The singularity of the photographic index is because, if that image is the light trace of a real object that has been there, then it is a unique and unrepeatable mark of that subject / object. Thus, although photographic images can be reproduced technically (Benjamin, 2015) and can be manipulated by numerous editing processes (Kossoy, 2001), the negative that originally captured the referent is as unique as the referent itself. In this way, the photograph refers to the existence of this real referent, becoming evidence, in testimony of that represented reality (Freund, 2015).

This idea of index is the basis for understanding the reference situation of the photograph, since the co-presence between photographer, camera and photographed only occurs during the photographic act, but evidence of such contact for a longer period: the lifetime of the photograph as artifact of material culture (Dubois, 2008; Fiore and Varela, 2009). The conception of photographs as “socially constructed artifacts that tell us something about the culture reflected as well as the culture from which the images are taken” (Ruby, 1996, p.1336) allows us to develop a visual archeology that rescues both the photographer’s agency and the one of the photographed one (Fiore and Varela, 2009). We understand that in the “infinite instant” (Dubois, 2008) in which photographer and reference are to make the photographic take is given a “encounter of subjectivities” (Fiore, 2005) that is subject to the different degrees of freedom of each one of the individuals: photographer and photographed. It is undeniable that photographers have more freedom of action and decision power over the image, since they control more stages of their production: they manage the photographic device, its development and positivized and eventually its circulation - although this can escape its control (Poole, 2002).

However, it is also undeniable that the presence and agency of the photographed subject are essential for the photographic capture to occur; in other words, without real reference there is no photograph. Thus, although the degree of freedom is always greater in the groups that hold power, that is, in photographers, this distinction does not cancel the margin of interference of the photographed subjects with respect to their own representation. We consider, therefore, that in the production of all photographic images, both the producer and the represented operate, with different degrees of pregnancy in the photographic image, and it is in that dialogical relationship in which the image is constructed (Butto, 2016). Therefore, it is possible to capture both the photographer’s view and the agency of the photographed subject from a theoretical perspective in which both are active individuals during the photographic shoot and can record their own imprint and competing interests. In this way, despite the biases of the photographer, the editor, the curator and the archiver, the agency of the photographed subject is there, waiting to be discovered. Thus, we understand that audiovisual anthropology can find in visual archeology (*sensu* Fiore and Varela, 2009) an ally that allows us to rescue the value of ethnographic photographs, which document the recent past of indigenous populations.

To develop a visual archeology of the body ornaments of the Yámana/Yagán society, we selected a total sample of 428 ethnographic photographs obtained between 1882 and 1971 by a minimum of 25 known photographers - in addition to other anonymous ones. The conformation of this sample involved the search, identification and selection of photographs of Yámana/Yagán natives in various archives and publications. The ethnic affiliation of the subjects photographed was based on several complementary criteria: a) the ascription by the archive, b) the epigraphs of the photographers, c) the material culture manipulated by the photographed subjects, d) the landscape and e) the physical appearance of the photographed natives.

These photographs were analyzed in other works according to the visible information in three levels (Fiore and Varela, 2009; Butto, 2016):

- a. the level of photography, evaluating the processes of formation of the photographic record: photographer, purposes, visited places, length of stay, links with the photographed people, types of shot, ethnic ascription of the photographed people and photographed context;
- b. the level of the photographed individuals: gender, age, social role and name of each person;
- c. the level of photographed artifacts: types of hut, clothing, ornaments, objects.

For this work we selected 86 photographs, portraying 140 individuals who wear body adornments such as necklaces, bracelets and anklets. These portrayed individuals were analyzed according to their gender and the type of ornament (s) used, in order to discuss whether there were exclusively female ornaments, exclusively male or shared by both genders. Because the social construction process of gender is deployed through practices of using body ornaments (Conkey and Spector, 1984, Conkey and Gero, 1991; Fiore, 2007), which construct the gender role of the subject in both self-perception as in the perception by others, the analysis of the bond between persons and ornaments is especially relevant to know these practices. Also, the finding of recurrent tendencies suggests the existence of gender regulations (*sensu* Butler, 2004) that would have worked in this indigenous society. It should be noted that the proposed analysis operates through a dichotomous classification of genres: male and female, without this implying that this dichotomy exclusively operates in the Yámana/Yagán society. However,

given that there are very subtle indications of intra-gender varieties or gender categorizations outside this dichotomy, it is relevant to give an initial overview on this issue (Fiore, 2007).

Body adornments for women and men Yámana/Yagán

The first analysis of this sample of 428 ethnographic photographs of Yamanas / Yaganes is the number of photographed individuals. Since the photograph records the individuals who posed in front of the photographic device, it is possible to register a “photographed population” and from it to construct a “photographic demography” (Fiore and Varela, 2009). This photographed demographic structure will differ from the actual demography, while the same person can be counted several times (all of which was photographed). Unfortunately, there is not enough data to build a real demography, since in the first three National Censuses ⁷only the approximate number of natives living in the National Territories was counted. Thus, although it cannot be compared with a real demography, this photographic demography provides an interesting panorama on “the population composition of the photographed groups, and by extension, the native population contacted by the Westerners” (Fiore and Varela, 2009, p. 199).

Of the 1,557 Yámana/Yagán individuals portrayed, more than half were male (52%, N = 820), less than half were female (45%, N = 711) and some individuals could not be identified as to gender (N = 43). In this sample we find a total of 171 body ornaments used by 140 individuals: 124 necklaces, 20 bracelets and 27 anklets.

The necklaces used by the Yámana/Yagán were mentioned by the majority of the travelers who came in contact with them (Fitz Roy, 1839; Hyades and Deniker, 2007 [1887]; Bridges, 2005 [1948]; Gusinde, 1986 [1937]). The necklaces can be characterized and classified according to their morphology and raw material, which allow deducing their autochthonous or foreign character. The native necklaces worn by the Yámana/Yagán were of three types: (1) pierced snail-shells threaded on ropes⁸, (2) bird-bones also threaded on ropes and (3)

7 But there are other reliable data: Thomas Bridges estimated 2 500, 3 000 people Yaman / yagán for times before 1880, of which in 1884 they survived just over 1 000. By the time Gusinde visited Tierra del Fuego (1920) the Yámana / Yagán were 73, 74. See more data in Orquera and Piana, 2015.

8 The ropes were made from whale tendons, braided gut, twisted fibers or leather (Orquera and Piana,

leather or braided gut (Fitz Roy, 1839; and Deniker, 1887, Gusinde, 1937 and other authors quoted in Orquera and Piana, 2015, pp. 320-325). From the arrival of explorers, scientists and missionaries to the Fuegian territory the Yámana/ Yagán adopted Western elements in their necklaces, such as: glass beads, buttons, glass fragments, pottery or iron (Orquera and Piana, 2015, p. 325). In the analyzed photographs, only a few types of necklaces (Chart 1) appear: among the natives, bone necklaces (Figure 2), snails (Figure 3) and leather necklaces appear, while among the foreign necklaces of different colored beads ⁹appear -whites, dark and a mixture of both- (Figure 4) and metal beads. We found that most of the necklaces photographed are foreign (94%), while the minority (6%) is native.

Chart 1
Types of necklaces by gender

Type of Necklace/ ender	Native			Foreign				Total
	bone	snail	leather	white beads	dark beads	white and dark beads	metal beads	
Woman	1	2	-	17	20	41	1	82
Man	-	-	4	8	16	14	-	42
Total	2	2	4	25	36	55	1	124

Chart made by the authors

Regarding gender, we found that all types of necklaces, except leather ones, were more commonly used by women (66% of 124 collars), apparently for exclusively female use those of bone, snail and metal beads (all recorded at low frequencies). Several types of necklaces were also used by men (34% of 124 necklaces), being exclusively masculine ones of leather. That is, women used 6 types of necklaces, of which 3 would have been exclusively female, while men used 4 types of necklaces, of which 1 would have been exclusively male. This predominance in the number and variety of necklaces worn by women is consistent with the observations of some travelers and scientists, who would have pointed out the feminine predilection for this type of ornament (Fitz Roy, 1839, Hyades and Deniker, 2007 [1887]).

2015, p.323).

9 Possibly be glass beads, but it is not possible to verify it from the consulted photographs.

Figure 2
Woman Yámana/Yagán , called Peine, with ceremonial
body painting and wearing a necklace of bones



Photograph by Wilhelm Koppers, 1922.

Figure 3
Yamana / yagán woman wearing a snail necklace



Photograph by Ángeles Sánchez de Caballero, 1910-1920.

Figure 4
Yamaha / yagan youth wearing necklaces from foreign beads



Photo by Jean Louis Doze and Edmond Payen, Scientific Mission to Cape Horn, 1882-1883.

Interestingly, we found that native necklaces are used in the same proportion by men (50% of 8 native necklaces) than by women (50%). These necklaces show a great gender difference, since the only bone necklace and the two necklaces of snails were used only by women, whereas the four leather necklaces were only by men. It should be mentioned that the leather collars used by the men could actually be slings used to hunt birds, which were often worn on the neck (Orquera and Piana, 2015). In fact, some photographs portray Yámana/Yagán men carrying leather necklaces tight to the neck and slings - with a triangular strip of leather and two straps that arrived at the height of the navel. Foreign necklaces follow a different pattern, since most were worn by women (68% of 117 foreign necklaces), and few were by men (32%). Thus, women wore more white beaded necklaces (68% of 25), dark beads (55% of 36), white and dark beads (75% of 55), and also the only metal bead necklace.

We find a possible gender regulation regarding the use of necklaces between the Yámana/Yagán . Native necklaces seem to obey stricter gender regulation: women would have worn bone and snail collars and leather for males. In contrast, foreign necklaces were used interchangeably by both women and men, although in greater proportion by the former. This pattern of behavior observed in ethnographic photographs is consistent with that observed by numerous travelers who came in contact with the Yámana/Yagán : that necklaces were worn by both genders, but preferred by women (Fitz Roy, 1839, Hyades and Deniker , 2007 [1891], Gusinde, 1986 [1937]).

Bracelets were observed and mentioned by some of the travelers who maintained contact with the Yámana/Yagán (Fitz Roy, 1839; Martial, 2007 [1888]; Hyades and Deniker, 2007 [1891]; Gusinde, 1986 [1937] and can be characterized and classified on the basis of their morphology and raw material as native or foreign. The native bracelets were about 2 cm wide and were made with “leather rings of sea lion” (Martial, 2007 [1888], 31) or guanaco, secured by a perforation or by knots made with tendon loops (see enumeration of quotations in Orquera and Piana, 2015). Foreign bracelets were composed of the same Western elements as necklaces: glass and / or ceramic beads (Orquera and Piana, 2015) (Figure 5). In the photographs here analyzed, foreign bracelets (55% of 20 bracelets) predominate slightly above the autochthonous ones (45%) (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Types of bracelet by gender

Type of bracelets/ Gender	Native	Foreign			Total
	leather	white beads	dark beads	white and dark beads	
Woman	6	3	1	4	14
Man	3	3	-	-	6
Total	9	6	1	4	20

Chart made by the authors.

As in the case of necklaces, women wore bracelets most (70% of 20 bracelets), although they are also seen in some men (30%). Of the four types of bracelets identified in the photos, the women wore four and the men only two, showing that women wore more and a variety of bracelets.

This predominance is registered in both the native bracelets (66% of 9) and in the foreign ones (72% of 11). However, foreign bracelets present a more complex situation: white beaded bracelets were worn by women and men in the same proportion (50% each gender), while dark beaded bracelets and mixed white and dark beads were used only by women.

Thus, the photographs document an interesting gender regulation: both native bracelets and foreign beaded bracelets were worn by women rather than men. This predominance of women's use of bracelets may be linked to observations made by some travelers that adult women and girls wore bracelets (Hyades and Deniker, 2007 [1891] and Gusinde, 1986 [1937]).

Figure 5
Yamana / yagán family. Some wear leather bracelets,
other beaded bracelets, plus necklaces and anklets



Photo by Jean Louis Doze and Edmond Payen, Scientific Mission to Cape Horn, 1882-1883.

Anklets were also observed by many of the travelers who came in contact with the Yámana/Yagán (Fitz Roy, 1839; Martial, 2007 [1888]; Hyades and Deniker, 2007 [1891], Gusinde, 1986 [1937]). The native anklets were about

2 cm wide and could be made of sea lion or guanaco leather, and there is no evidence of the use of foreign anklets (Orquera and Piana, 2015). Unlike the necklaces and bracelets, the anklets photographed have very low variability, since only the autochthonous ones of leather appear (Figure 6).

Figure 6
Yamanas / Yaganes wearing beaded necklaces
and the woman wearing two leather anklets



Photo by Jean Louis Doze and Edmond Payen, Scientific Mission to Cape Horn, 1882-1883.

These anklets were used almost exclusively by women (96%) (Chart 3); in fact, a single male Yámana / Yagan was photographed wearing a leather anklet. In this way, the anklets show a very marked gender regulation, since they seem to have been used almost exclusively by women¹⁰.

¹⁰ The anklets, although used almost exclusively by women, do not seem to be associated with any rite of exclusively feminine passage, like the first menstruation. This assertion is based on the fact

Chart 3
Type of anklets by gender

Type of anklets / Gender	Native
	leather
Woman	26
Man	1
Total	27

Chart made by the authors.

Discussion and final reflections: an archeology of the Fuegian visual record

When discussing these results, we consider it crucial to take into account the photographic demography that we propose at the beginning of the analysis, since it shows that there was a balanced representation of men and women in the corpus of ethnographic photographs of Yamanes / Yaganes, with a slight predominance of males (52%). In this way, the predominance of a type of adornment, feminine or masculine, can not be attributed to the greater representation of a genre, but to the predominance of the use of those adornments. This of course does not imply that such a record is an objective sample of past reality (Barthes, 2004), but allows, through an archaeological look at the photographic record, to “excavate” patterns and trends in the use of ornamental material culture as part of the forms of construction and regulation of the genders within the Yámana / Yagan society.

When analyzing the necklaces, bracelets and anklets according to the gender of those who carried them, we found that the vast majority of these body adornments were worn by women (71% of 172 ornaments). Of these three types of adornments, necklaces were the most shared by women (66%) and men (34% of 124 necklaces); while bracelets were used in greater proportion

that: a) the anklets were used interchangeably by adults, young people and girls - although the latter would not have passed through this rite of passage; b) none of the travelers and ethnographers who recorded data on the Yámana / Yagán mentioned the association of the anklets with that rite of passage and c) the only ornamentation associated with that ritual of female passage seems to have been body painting (Fiore 2002).

by women (70%) than by men (30% of 20 bracelets); and the anklets were almost exclusively worn by women (96% of 27 ankles) (Chart 4).

Chart 4
Type of body adornments by gender

Adornments/ Gender	Necklaces	Bracelets	Anklets	Total
Women	83	14	26	123
Man	42	6	1	49
Total	125	20	27	172

Chart made by the authors.

We understand that gender implies a social and historical construction, fruit of the effect of the assignment of cultural roles to each individual according to their corporeality (including and exceeding their sex) and the way in which they assume, reproduce and/or challenge, through a ritualized creation and/or repetition of body gestures and speech acts (Conkey and Spector 1984, Claassen 1992, Butler 2004).

In this way, gender is always performative, requiring a repeated and stylized action of socially determined gestures, movements and body styles as part of different genders- which in the present case, we have defined operative and dichotomically as female or male, although we recognize the existence of internal variations (Fiore, 2007). These acts, gestures and body movements are performative, since they refer to a visible gender identity through concrete practices - dressing, ornamenting, speaking - intelligible within a cultural field (Sørensen, 2000, Butler, 2004). Thus, the practices associated with each gender are self-perceived and perceived by others as part of that gender.

From this conception of gender, we consider body adornments as part of these gender performances, while the use of ornaments lead to the development of body styles that enable both self-perception and perception by others. Body adornments are thus experienced in their bodily use (they bind, hang, curl and even pierce body parts), but they are also displayed for another, which decodes them as belonging (or not) to a gender, according to habits and regulations of their society. Thus, in the Yámana/Yagán case, the feminine use of necklaces, bracelets and anklets could refer to a “differential

visual construction of the female Yamana” (Fiore and Varela 2009: 219). Necklaces were the most frequently used ornaments in society, and the most commonly shared between women and men (although they predominated among the first). However, some types of necklaces seem to have been of exclusive use for each gender: bone and snail necklaces appear only to be worn by women and leather ones only by men. In this way, it is possible to consider that indigenous necklaces would diacritically indicate their wearer as belonging to the feminine or masculine gender; while the foreign ones would have been of indistinct use regarding gender. In the Yámana/Yagán bracelets and anklets appear visually more associated with the feminine gender. In this sense, the inferences made from this visual archeology of the photographic record of this original Fuegian people suggest that while foreign necklaces implied slightly more lax gender regulations, native necklaces and anklets implied rather stricter gender regulations, the bracelets being a comparatively intermediate case.

These differences could arise from the fact that foreign necklaces would have constituted an attractive “novelty” for both genders, which would not have been impregnated with sociocultural values that would affect the regulation of their use with respect to the carrier gender. Conversely, native ornaments would have been impregnated with traditional sociocultural values that were more difficult to change, although some variations in their use are recorded, as documented in the respective data charts.

It is possible to think that the presence of the photographer could have influenced the construction of the photographic record of these ornaments, especially since the women were the most photographed using these ornaments. Photographers could have favored shots in which women wear necklaces, bracelets and anklets, following their own Western norms, in which the feminine is associated with ornamentation and “coquetry.” The existence of shots in which women appear as “docile bodies” (Masotta, 2003) and erotic models (Carreño, 2002) is consistent with this possibility. However, it should also be noted that, although more photographed women wear ornaments, there has been no gender homogeneity in the types of ornaments used, nor entirely random patterns, options of what could have happened if the photographs had been produced according to the imaginary of the photographers. It is here that we consider that the agency of the photographed subjects (*sensu* Giddens, 1995, Fiore, 2007, Fiore and Varela, 2009) comes into operation, since the tendencies found in the use of types of ornaments would have been generated

by the own practices and habits of the photographed people, interpretable as signs of the Yámana/Yagán gender performances.

In this way, we consider that visual anthropology can be enriched by an archaeological look, by recovering the ethnographic value of the photographs and treating them as artifacts that provide information on behavioral patterns of these indigenous populations in the recent past. The systematic and deep analysis of these visual artifacts allows us to contribute new data about the way in which indigenous societies constructed the gender roles and regulations, showing that there were multiple ways of thinking and acting the feminine and the masculine.

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