

ABSTRACT

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This study approaches questions of change and continuity during the long period of resistance to the European conquest in the Calchaquí Valleys, in what is now north-western Argentina. The archaeological perspective is strictly local, essentially limited to the Pichao site area in the Santa María Valley. This work also includes a critical survey of ethnohistorical research and sources concerning the corresponding period. Colonialism and the conditions prevailing in the border areas of expanding colonial states are discussed.

The results of this study show that, at Pichao, the society of the Spanish–Native Period differed markedly from that which had existed prior to European and Inca expansion. The changes observed in the archaeological record are interpreted as partly the results of demographic changes, involving population movement. This kind of processes may have resulted from both Inca and European involvement. The pattern found also reflects the changed external conditions during the long period of conflict with the Europeans.

Keywords: Colonialism, Contact Period, Settlement Studies, Argentina, Calchaquí Valleys

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