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**DOI:** 10.4185/RLCS-65-2010-889-146-158-EN - ISSN 1138 - 5820 - RLCS # 65 - 2010

In tribute to an unknown photographer, named Pepe Sáez, author of the only negative that exists of the executions at O Campo da Rata (A Coruña, 23 October 1936)

## Photographs from where the world is called Galicia

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**Abstract:** If our main goal is to reconstruct the history of photojournalism in Galicia from the photograph as part of the journalistic discourse, it leads us to confirm some uncertainties that disable a linear story by being unable to construct, much less in the case of a social institution as the press, the period leading to the Second Republic with the long years of dictatorship, nor able to extract a major influence by the photographic practices of the early years of political transition in the subsequent configuration of the role of photojournalism in the media enterprises. This study tries to establish an anthropological link between certain images, to punctuate the signification of the photographic act and, finally, to highlight the value of the act of viewing, and the photos remembered, those images that among all the other images are ours, and we recover them so that other people love them too.

**Keywords:** Photojournalism; Galicia; visual culture; reception; Pepe Sáez; Manuel Ferrol; Xosé Castro; Fernando Bellas.

**Summary:** 1. Introduction. 2. Brief General Intrahistory. 3. Photograph as res Pública. 4. The atmosphere. 5. Emigration, a sad poem from Galicia. 6. Twenty years later, a photograph appeared. 7. The double life of the photograph. 8. In conclusion: The name of things. 9. References.

Translated by **Cruz Alberto Martínez Arcos** (University of London)

### 1. Introduction

Let's do photos as photographs, is the slogan with which Paul Strand puts the photography among the new objects used to express the 20th century; objects whose technical condition is joined to the real as the material and the reproductive principle as constitutive, which remains a way of thinking of the photo as the press photograph, the photograph based on rules that tell us about actuality, conflict and the audience to whom the photograph is addressed, of photos that are originated and bring with them the imperative to be seen.

What exists without having to go through the device or the author, but that needs of the device and the author to become a photographic image enters to form the gaze of a spectator, a spectator who sees what others see thanks to the existence of the media, and particularly the press. What exists by entering into a relationship with an author who makes the first act that is the selection, selecting the part for the whole and the moment, based on the professional culture of journalism, becomes an image that today allows us to access the reality of a time and a place, and encourages that ability to feel, once again, like people entitled to watch.

Spectators-authors, our current role goes beyond a simple decoding operation, which identifies and gives vague meanings to what we are looking at and remains limited to explaining aesthetic values. Our active and creative role should be the recovery of the meaning we can give to this intersection of past and present to open our imagination to all those events of which we have barely a trace.

The first authorial act is to choose among a huge, fragmented and eroded reality (1900-1980) those photographs, those photographers with which our eyes can talk to. And it compels me to note there are some reservations that disable a linear story because we cannot reconstruct, much less in the case of a social institution like the press, the period leading to the second republic with the long years of dictatorship, neither can we draw a significant influence by the photographic practices of the early years of political transition in the posterior configuration of the function of the photojournalist in the printed press.

In this way, with security, a bond can be established between certain images, and this bond is based more on the invisible connections created between them, through their membership to a certain common area, the sharing of culture in which they acquire a particular meaning, in short, the bond is based on being part and art of the same longings, the same weaknesses, and the same ways of resenting joy or loss.

Another approach covers different ages of the photographic culture: the photograph as photograph in the 20s-30s period and its photogenic atmosphere; the belief in the crucial moment, in that possibility that the material is expressed

in unison with whom produces the photo, the 50s-60s period, and the direct conquest of the unexpected, of making a body with what is happening.

And finally, the act of looking, the photos you remember: those images that among all the images are ours. The photos you want for various reasons, personal or communal, the photos that you show over and over again so that other people want them too. Three times, three pictures, three authors who are milestones in this limitless world of photojournalism in Galicia constitute my proposal.

## 2. Brief General Intrahistory

As in any European country, modernity in Galicia has one of its clearest indicators in the press and uses photography as one of its best-kept discursive keys. As in many other European countries, the passage from the 19th to the 20th century not only brought a new figure –the writers turning into journalists– but also the materialization of the conditions that allowed the conception of the newspapers as modern companies and the unification of other professions within the real of journalism, in this case the profession of photojournalist.

In this respect, two things should be remembered: that since the mid 19th century the transforming ideology of modernity has produced press headings in Galicia demanding the building of the nation, and that the interwar periods, which is actually the generation which gives way to the transition from literature to journalism, is what will give shape to an agenda that, as a distinctive feature, upholds agrarianism, nationalism and republicanism. With this agenda, the photographic sagas of Pacheco; great promoters of the photographic culture, in thematic, technical and editorial levels, Ksado and even authors like José Suárez will weave this idyllic image of the photograph as an element that conveys the social, the identity, and the citizenship.

The press, subject in history, is intertwined with a relative process of urbanization, egalitarian desire, public literacy, increase in purchasing power and leisure time, and developed the aforementioned business and professional conception that involved stable editorial staff, certain specialization, development of the journalistic genres, graphic arts, and associations –the Press Association of La Coruña begins its campaign against censorship–, the arrival of the photo and advertising and, as the most significant event, the construction of an audience as a central target.

The knowledge of each anthropological manifestation, the establishment of certain icons such as ‘a naiciña’ (the young mother/ the young nation that feeds its children) that has reached all artistic practices [1], joins the transformative concern and, therefore, the political demand. The successive campaigns demanding the railroad, and the abolition of forums used to represent the processing sector are, in themselves, the application of the philosophy of progress.

In this context, the photo conceived for the press is the real photograph, that is at the same time, a transitive image that leads us towards something that is different to what is on the image, towards something out of range without which this particular photo we look at only would take us back to its function of trailing other material. That material is beyond the sight and that is why we are provided with the written text, but sometimes the place emanates from the own photographic image, in a gesture, in an object that it connotes, is the way of looking, a motive that concentrates and symbolizes the idea of wellness: Ribadeo, Road bicycle racing, 1933, Pepe Sáez in Galician *Life*. [2]

## 3. Photograph as Public Object

A genre like the portrait and the news-photo; a graphic magazine, *Vida Gallega*, adjusted to Francoism, and a newspaper, *El Pueblo Gallego* (The Galician People) [3], owned by a Galician bourgeois, interested in politics, the President of the government delivering the powers to the *Frente Popular* (Popular Front) and defending the republican legality, Manuel Portela Valladares, exiled in France while his head was seized to remain as “Prensa del Movimiento” (Movement Press) until its extinction was decreed in 1979. A photographer of lineage, with his studio in Vigo and working for the major newspapers, Jaime Pacheco, and a medium-town photographer, with studio and occasional press services shaped the standard landscape of the profession, with one foot on the commercial field and the other one on the media arena.

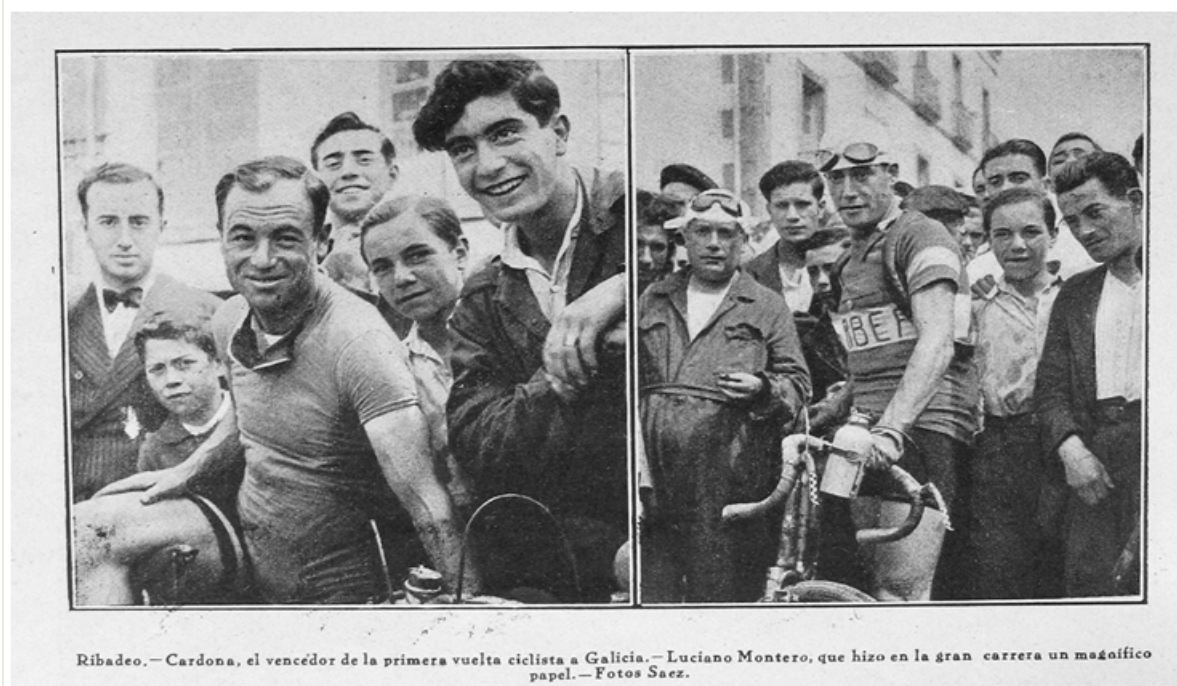
Something as seemingly routine, as an event planned in the agenda, acquires through history a special significance, a plus of information like the *studium*, and the *punctum* in that placid and chiselled expression of its protagonist: this picture of the arrival of the road bicycle racing, this American shot that frames all those on sight, that body in contact with other bodies of the same and different ages looking at the camera, smiling to others, to the readers, and for themselves as readers, it is itself a social gesture and representation of the republic as citizenship in the process of construction, as a democratic programme, as the next imaginary.

The didactic intension of the information about sports and its photographic treatment in a closer-than-usual frame connotes with that little twist of language the hero to imitate. A hero who has just faced difficulties but reaches the end and is praised. A hero that you can just reach out and touch with your hand.

The space created by any press photo, the gap between the picture and the viewer, is in this case of complete sympathy. This is a picture that we all pass, we are able to let it pass because it coincides with what we believe in, because it provides us new unpaid uses of time and because it puts us in contact with the winner as part of a larger body, the social body that barely touches that almost external element, the solitary young bow-tie gentleman, like a shadow coming to town.

In the layout, Cardona’s photo, the winner of the first Galicia’s Road bicycle racing –as mentioned in the caption, dated in the town of Ribadeo in 1933– forms a diptych with another image, of a more open shot, also of a group looking into

the camera and looking at the photographer, looking at us who occupy the place of the photographer [Pepe Sáez], which introduces Luciano Montero, who made a magnificent role in the profession –literal text in the caption– creating a transference between the two photographs, a shared field that expands to the subject who watches and knows that what he or she sees is seen by others, an shared image.



[Photograph 1: Pepe Sáez, in *Galician Life*]

#### 4. The atmosphere, that garment

The second photograph is not of an event or scenario in the public space. It is an indoors photograph, posed for it, built from the realization that only the atmosphere, as a creative figure, is capable of revealing, and taken by one of the greatest producers of images of that time, Jaime Pacheco and company.

Alfonso Castelao's portrait was published on Sunday the 3rd of October 1926, on page one of *El Pueblo Gallego* (The Galician people) to tell us about the incorporation of this politician, writer and cartoonist [who incorporated the editorial cartoon on page one of *Galicia*], with another famous Galician Petruccio, Ramón Otero Pedrayo, to the newspaper's team of collaborators.

The camera and the photographer are in this case, only mediators between the unique possibility to create a communicative convention through the beauty that only exists in photography, a figure of language that generates empathy, that space that includes the person in the photo and the person that looks at it and transforms the photo and the person in it into a subject with the ability to see exactly what is given to see. In the foreground, the soul of the picture, the level that transfers the most intangible of its model, the level that goes through the appearance to set an attitude and a state of consciousness, is offered to us as a foreground opening, from a slightly high angle, with the light concentrated in the face and the eyes –with oculi, its particular sign of distinction– of a Castelao who slightly raises his gaze up to the other, his spectator-model.

And it is in this space, in this way round, where the connotation of the pose and the photographic techno-structure –the illumination, the slight *flou* that converts the character into a being with wings– gives Castelao's portrait a symbolic value that recognizes the "we". The slight inclination of the body out of the frame, towards the counterfield strengthening the space, the "air" that Pacheco turns into a dusky tonal mass, in a background that seems old and deep, on which, finally, the figure makes its way to the surface. Nothing can better embody the desire for the emergence of a new Galicia better than this perfect synecdoche.



[Photograph 2: Castelao, by Pacheco, *The Galician People*]

No character portrait from the portraits already catalogued from the study of Pacheco has this intensity able to lead us to some of the portraits by Nadar. For example, the one of Victor Hugo. A portrait, desired by the photographed person as the first condition, is transformed at that moment of no return which registers the mark of their cooperation. A portrait that speaks of a kind of loving dedication from the subject to his image in order to detach it from himself and let it go to a public-citizen who is also asked to cooperate and love.

Paul Strand, Álvarez Bravo and Richard Avedon speak of the difficulty of getting that intangible element that the photographer can only wish and wait for. Because the portrait is the genre in which, like no other, it is the model what makes the expressions. Again, looking once and again at Pacheco's Castelao, I think of John Berger's phase which I used as a caption for Ricard Terré's the *cross-eyed girl*: Rubens many times painted his dear Hélène Fourment. Sometimes she collaborated, other times she did not. When she did not collaborated, the portrait was no more than a painted ideal, when she did, the viewer also expected her. [4]

But just a decade later the story broke in two. The "we", the target of Castelao's eyes became the fragmented body of executions and terror while the Galician politician was making his war drawings from different fronts loyal to the Republic, and it was already in America [he died in Buenos Aires in January of 1950] where he left a book, "Always in Galicia", which later generations would know as "the bible".

The conditions for photojournalism, for that photo meant for the press, and some of the rules that the journalistic discourse had transformed into more or less stable, disappear. And with this, also disappears that specific time and place frame established between the newspaper, the authorship and an audience wanting to vote. From then on, the

orders indicate that only those photographs authorized by the pro-coup ruling power should be taken, and that only what the pro-coup power leaves alive can exist.

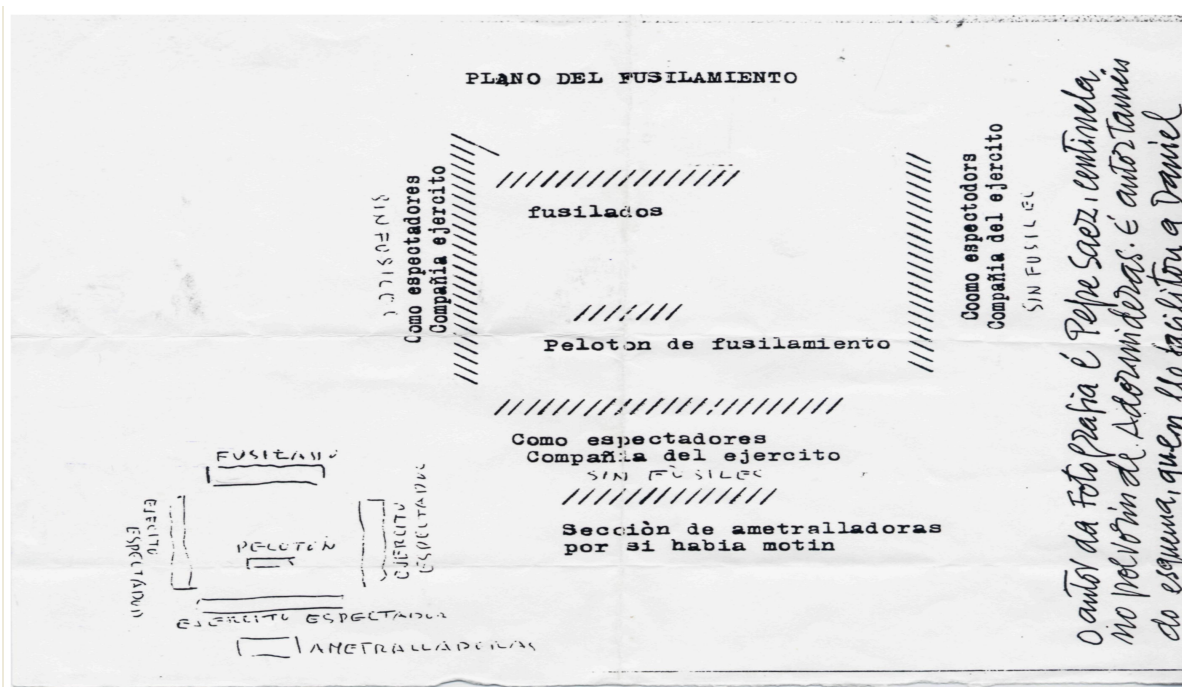
But as a way of bright trail, of the profession that had formed on the idea of citizenship, we have a negative; a trail ignored by and inaccessible for the ruling power, and we have an informative sketch to tell us all that we cannot see in that image that, like no other in Galicia, foregrounds the indexical value, the trace of reality over the film, the confirmation that what was permeated on photography actually existed.

We have left one illegal photo, although with little sharpness, of the executions of a group of rebel soldiers in October 1936; we have left the photo shot by a guard from the sentry box, and which was hidden for over fifty years. The sentry-soldier who is alert and has a camera with him is Pepe Sáez, that photographer from Ribadeo, who is producer of magnificent images of the first road bicycle racing. He himself, in 1988, hands in the picture to the writer and playwright Daniel Cortezón, so that this picture can begin the search for a receiver willing to pass it up. From then on, its journey towards the "we" was lethargic until Isaac Díaz Pardo designed the memorial to those executed in O Campo da Rata and hands in that photo-document so that, in 2001, it can become part of that place of death next to a *dark sea*.

A photograph that makes us think about the actual act of shooting a picture as a communal act.



[Photograph 3: Executions in Campo da Rata, Pepe Sáez]



[Graph 1: Angle of execution made by the photographer himself, and until now unpublished]

### 5. Emigration, a sad poem from Galicia

If a single image can represent us as a group inside and outside, in Galicia and in the world that is not called Galicia, this is an image of loss. If there is a photograph in which, once again, the atmosphere is the one setting the invisible link between the field, the outside field that our imagination completes, and a counterfield that keeps us away, unable to speak, locking in our role of persons sentenced to watch and able to activate all possible modes of perception –the visual, the lexical, and the reactive–, “if a single picture is capable of suspending the passing of saliva through our throat, that picture is Manuel Ferrol’s *Padre e Hijo* (Father and Son), from 1957.



[Photographs 4 and 5: *Emigration*, Manuel Ferrol]

Faced with the official propoganda, the “creation of the Americas”, the charitable photo extolling the sentimentality or the desire for adventure forced on us to conceal our secular and planned exodus, a resident of the *Faros*, born in *Cabo Vilao* in 1923, a character of the border between land and sea –passing by the Ons Islands, *Cabo Silleiro* or *Sálvora*–, who knows the value of the moment in the storm, faces the emigration as an abysmal loss, as a photograph with a

face, as photography of pain and with the anti-cliché expression of that pain: the children cry, the men have the right to cry.

Accustomed to death, "my mother was always left without bed sheets as that they could serve as a shroud in a shipwreck", Manuel Ferrol was a nautical student who first approached photography as an amateur but in an exhibition of Pla i Janini was convinced by the photographer John Cascuera to drop everything and become a portrait photographer. Alongside the banner "Children photography at home", indicating the places in which he was setting up his studio, since the first one in Betanzos and the definitive one at *San Nicolás* street, in *A Coruña*, Ferrol is an archetype of the mentality of the new reporter of the 1950s influenced by the *cinématographe* –he himself was an operator of state-controlled series of cinema news and documentaries since 1965–, he searches for the movement in the photo and looks for the sequence, the story from beginning to end, which determines the photographic act. The observation, the positioning of the evidence and the wait for the imagist stuck to its object, to its scene –because Manuel Ferrol is a man of "scene"–, are to be understood as the possibility of occurrence of the moment already known as decisive.

The truth of what was in front of the camera, the materiality of that referent is, Barthes reminds us, what creates the conditions for the thrill and shock. Maybe that is why the organizers of the exhibition *Postwar Europe 1945-1965. Art after the Flood* [5], fifty years after the end of the second great European war, looked in Manuel Ferrol's series for this double journey, from today to what happened in the past, and found in it the actual echoes of the hearth of the 20th century. Because among the countless images with which Europe remembers its entry to the second half of the 20th century is one of the suffering that connects father and son, very coded characters with social processes condensed in them. And in that suffering is our negation aim to allow us think of ourselves as people with capacity for emotion and imagination. Only with pain.

Obedience to the Church comprises scenes like the confession or the mass; the lack of *raccord* between the eyes; closed spaces; the ruling power deciding over your immigrant status. The political and the personal are traversed by the meaning they acquire as photographs from the attitude of an independent author who rubs with all of these echoes abandoned by those bodies looking towards unknown places.

Again and again Manuel Ferrol photographed the ports and made the A Coruña-Vigo crossing to feel how, right at them moment of sailing, the transatlantic ocean becomes a ghost ship: What happens with all the weeping, with the gibberish of the farewell, why everything turns into this sepulchral silence? The commission requested by the Catholic Commission of Emigration to illustrate a family reunion campaign, force Ferrol to choose between staying with the ecclesiastical "authorities" and the Spanish Institute of Emigration, or entering into the space of "those people who come and go like sleepwalkers and only react to the sound of the *buguina* announcing the hour of truth, that some stay and some go away, just like that".

Sad poem of America, this phrase with which Kerouac defines the work of his fellow traveller Robert Frank, during the cold war of the USA, to offer us the book *Les Américains*, is also, and in the same epoch, the sad and cold poem of Galicia where photojournalism is impossible. But the camera and an essay remain to break the canons, to help us getting to grips with the loss, to hold the loss with our hands. The unstable unfocused framings, their evocative intensity, and the rhythm of the sequence shows the mark of the filmmaker that Manuel Ferrol never became but that fed his furtive collaborations with Val del Omar, with documentary makers like Antonio Román or when he gives us that picture of a woman in Buño waiting everyday for a letter from immigration and which inspired the movie *Mamasunción* (Mother Asunción) of Chano Piñeiro, for whom Ferrel made a cameo in *Sempre Xonxa*.

The narrative structure that Manuel Ferrol develops naturally in this reportage reappears in his more meaningful later works. From the extreme long shot –which includes a photographer doing photography– to the extreme close up and the gradual return to the general long shot, of exit, where nobody no longer produces an image as a reminder and announcer of the wound.

As Ferrol told me, concerned about the disappearance, he put in our hands this aerial view, this topographic photograph, which shows the chapel where Castelao got married. A place, of course, demolished by speculation and the eagerness to wipe out all the places from the arbitrary memory. But none of them were aware of this track left in one of the many unknown images of Ferrol.



[Photograph 6: *Capela in A Estrada*, Manuel Ferrol]

A photograph that becomes part of the experience is certainly one of those rare photos that we can only watch together [6] because it is, at the same time, the epitome of a reality that configures us and encourages us to set our sights in the same place the father and son are looking at: the shadow of the ghost ship. A picture that teaches us to mourn together, without having to shed a tear, and to realise that it is the ruling power which has authority over this scene and over us mortals, with which the power makes up the scene. Since the same year, 1957 [7], Manuel Ferrol has been publishing his photos in the press and combining his work with incursions in different films. The last of his appearances was in my first feature film, *Santa Liberdade* (Saint Freedom), in his role as reporter arriving to Vigo, from Venezuela, as one the passengers of the *Santa Maria*, which was occupied for 13 days by a command of the Iberian Revolutionary Directory of Liberation, on the 21 January 1961, to draw attention against the dictatorships of Franco and Salazar. His story and wonderful photograph of an *Indiano* (an Spaniard who went to the Americas to make his fortune), descending from the ship with a bird in a cage, is published in the pages of *El Ideal Gallego* (The Ideal Galician) newspaper. In the prelude of *Santa Liberdade* Ferrol gives us an opportunity to once again place the transatlantic in an estuary, to remember it from a calendar and reproducing the trick he had done in the fifties in Rafael Gil's movie *Camarote de Lujo* (Luxury Cabin). And with this his last gift, he also withdrew.

There remain seven thousand negatives and that photograph that pulls some other photographs; there remains that photograph that from the book of resistance *Galicia Hoy* (Galicia Today), published in 1966 by Ruedo Ibérico, to the *History of Photography* by Beaumont Newhall, which departs from the A Coruna port on 27 of November of 1957 and continues to this day extending the analytical capability of our vision: Why do we remember this and not this other picture? Why do we want to remember this picture? And so in this way, our memory is uncovered as a memory mediated by photography, as a memory worked over by certain transitive images.

#### **6. Twenty years later, a photograph appeared**

We had been without the possibility of a collective image in the media for so long that the appearance of a direct picture of the conflict triggering an order of expropriation over a piece of land for the benefit of the company Lignitos de Meirama/FENOSA will be, henceforth, the one representing the agrarianism in Galicia, the social confrontation with the power and the return of the photojournalism to the press: Xosé Castro, *As Encrobas*, 1977.

Of all the photographs taken by Castro, only few were published in due course, few and generally poor, because the editor would choose those in which the central action hardly appeared. But reality goes further, and the picture that expresses that intersection with the past is embodied in this lateral shot, at a certain distance, with all the protagonists in the field, constructed using the principles of the informative photograph and the "we were there" in a very smooth manner. And for the person looking at the photo published in the press, this image becomes a symbol of everything that had to remain absent.





[Photograph 7: *As Encrobas*, 1977, Xosé Castro]

Even more. This photograph is the one that gives us back not only the history of the agrarian movement but also the space, the land, and the protective role of the mother, of a *naiciña*, which is now an active part who confronts her own children to, by doing so, release them too.

The internal motion of the picture, the degree of improvisation, the connotation of objects and clothing –the shawl against the three-cornered hat, the cardigan against the cape of the civil guard, an old umbrella and the carabiner going back–, the age and gender differences are part of the elements that also make the analytical look interminable on this document.

But in my case, what I remember is another photo that never appeared in the Galician press because it introduces a qualitative variable that has to do with the silhouetting in the emptiness, with the absence of a particular landscape, with elements that make it acquiring meaning from the past to present and, above all, by the change of location taken by the beholder, which passes from the viewpoint of the woman who crosses her umbrella and her body with the gun. The reader, having to identify his or her viewpoint with the subjective gaze of the protagonist of the confrontation, suddenly recovers the body as a collective body, as a body capable of joining the attack, as a body that breaks the idea of the submissive body, an idea tenaciously incorporated by the ideology of Francoism and conservatism; the reader has to finally choose a role in the drama: has to take or leave the meaning of this picture, from which, unfortunately, he or she may never get detached. But this backlight did not reach us in this way.

As Umberto Eco highlighted in *L'Espresso* (29 May 1977) [8], that same year *Corriere d'Informazione* also featured the photograph of a person wearing a balaclava, in profile, alone in the middle of the street, horizontally holding a gun with both hands. This is an action of *Autonomia Operaria* (Autonomy Operator). In its analysis, Eco makes us realise that this photo is unlike any other image representing the idea of revolution: it lacked the collective element, it returned in a traumatic manner to the figure of the individual hero... It suddenly produced a rejection syndrome.

Through identical roads, the *As Encrobas* photograph produced, on the contrary, a reaction of adherence. The women embody the collective element and also the person with no rights but with the right to have rights: the citizenship in its origins, the primary republicanism. And perhaps for that reason it did not appear.

Child of errands since he was 13-years-old in *Foto Blanco* (White Picture) –the company that supported at the time these photographs–, Xosé Castro is formed between rolls, taking his first pictures with a plastic *Catababy* made in Catalonia, he says, and becoming more and more interested in "the photograph they let you take". Since the sixties, his pictures start covering the day-to-day news in *La Voz de Galicia* and in this process he learns what cannot be shown, like the bodies of dead sailors. His practice responds to an archetype pursuing images without filter, without alibi, the shocking photos of for instance the charred bodies of the plane crash in Alvedro in 1973, which moved all the viewers, which are borderline heinous –with all that it means in the dictatorship. His night-time images of the pair of civil guards saving the portrait of the dictator after the blaze in the *Pazo de Meirás* in 1978, which was occupied after the war by Franco's militants, made him the "I was there" photographer. Although that was almost never by chance. It was not until 1986 when he officially became a permanent graphic editor in *La Voz de Galicia*.

In his personal album there is a scene of 1962 in Bustos with a caption carrying the double coding of the real: *Nenos, niños e ovos* (Nests, children and eggs). And in the photojournalism made in Galicia, he mastered the reporting of conflicts, as we would see later in his photos of the home evictions in Larín. Xosé Castro's work is moved by the laws of the live events, capturing them as they happen, from inside of the most uncertain situations, without the capacity to intervene or wait.



[Photograph 7: *Nenos, niños e ovos* (Nests, children and eggs), Xosé Castro, 1962)

Also at the end of 1977 there appeared a section, *A Nosa Terra* [9], which recovered which had been the organ of the Galician Party, and transformed it into a weekly newspaper. Its unique contribution to photojournalism during the transition was expanded through the reporting of themes that belonged to the non-representable (people with mental disorders, common criminals, general strikes, and other marginal issues) and gradually became part of the new emerging issues (personal rights like sexual orientation, abortion, divorce), and, above all, through the search for the face of the hegemonic power. *A Nosa Terra* had other photographers in the edition room and up until 1980 Fernando Bellas –currently a TV cameraman and freelance photographer– was the reporter of continuity. This emphatic photograph of the inauguration of President Quiroga's appointment as head of the Xunta Pre-Autonómica (Pre-Autonomy Commite), which takes us back to the farce of the monetary reserve, became the cover of the 64th edition of *A Nosa Terra* (1 July 1979) and continues to be, to this today, one of the few photographs situated at this precise and ironic distance from the ruling power, and also among the profession, had his faithful court. We entitled it: *Madrid ten novo presidente*.



[Photograph 8: Fernando Bellas]

### 7. The double life of the photograph

If it is not easy to look back at a possible history of the photojournalism in Galicia (unless you only want to understand the mechanisms of the authorized photo, the sumptuous yet provincial production of the iconography of power; the customs and ceremonies as a way to representing conformity, and the photograph that brings to us images of an accidental catastrophe “because God wanted it this way”), the double life of the photo, the *intentio auctoris*, as the construction of a pace of relation with the individual and collective spectator, as transformer of the vision and as a reminiscent object, will work through various channels ranging from the catalogue of agitation, the postcard, the cover of a music album [10], and the document, to the monument.

In doing genealogy, and observing the various motives guiding any preference, for an image among other images, the photograph that was meant to be published and got stuck in our memory, is ultimately one that explains some turning points in the uses of the press photography in Galicia. Departing from the identification of three subjects who throughout the twentieth century established between them a common area which generates, at the same time when entering in contact with the audience, that unmentionable element we call atmosphere, that particular emotion of the near/distant, of the *other* as materiality –the republican nationalism, the agricultural events, the diasporas–, the fragmented bodies of the rebels, the joy that surrounds the cyclist and is expressed towards the camera, the self-esteem in that melee, or the melancholy prowling around the scene of a wedding transferred to that inexistent small chapel, that suddenly brings us back to reality.

If the travelling foreign photographers arriving from outside, like Ruth Matilde Anderson in 1924, invited us to pose with a desire to describe our difference; if national photographers, like Chicharro, portrayed us from a frontal and symmetrical shot, without posing, without time; if when the photograph begins to set its vocabulary from the news, the reportage, the graphic illustration, or editorial opinion for different press models, goes and then freezes, now we know that there will always be a *dehinc* looking to the future, Pepe Sáez; an author that will trail that little neorealist hunch, Manuel Ferrol; a photojournalist who will not backtrack when life rushes directly on the film, Xosé Castro.

If the work, the photograph I remember or the photograph I separated from all the other pictures I remember, is the production of a common space between the visible and invisible, and if seeing is judging (something argued by Marie-José Mondzain), the itinerary configured among all the images constitutes a sort of narrative or travelogue, responding to a structure so classic that I hesitate to verbalize. This is because this photo album initiated in the journalistic discourse of modernity, in its conventions of transparency and reality, that we see flow into the *longa noite de pedra*, [long night of stone] that only the combative poetry of Celso Emilio Ferreiro is able to name, also has its moment of glory for a short time at the end of the seventies.

A hopeful romance: the sport, the hero of the house next door one contemplates cheerful; the small, the difference, the new sign in the politics of the times, bran-new newspaper publishing new photos every day, courting you with an active piece, to the conquest: Cardona and Castelao. Or vice versa.

And a moment of death. In total silence. Executions.

A wandering through the interstices of the system until managing to put a face to the loss. To make us feel how the codes of controlled behaviour stumble. The crying that escapes and pulverizes masculinity. The humanist photograph.

And an ending that give us back the body in motion in this image unable to sleep due to confrontation. With the symbolic and conventional mother, filling up the space of the painting, with an off-field –what we cannot see but help us to understand- that pulls us beyond what the picture presents, with a formalization in its characters which would not

resist any diversion towards the aesthetics.

In a moment, happiness is halfway between the imagined and the real.

### 8. In conclusion: The name of things

Only when we move away from something, we name it. This is the phrase that André Gide says to Benjamin in Berlin [11], *ce n'est qu'en quittant une chose que nous la nommons*, after recalling the phrase of the navy of Bougainville: when leaving the island, we called it the Salvation Island, it is also the same phrase that beats in this journey towards certain signals that get us closer to the photojournalism in Galicia over a century that runs from the end of the First World War until the eighties.

If for reasons external to the press universes the photograph was late to be considered material of editorial interest and the pages of the newspapers were nurtured by services provided by certain companies; if for a few years the graphic document stormed into the scene, the graphic staff and genres were normalized until establishing the tandem writer-photographer for certain subjects; if the photograph came to be conceived from within the visual culture of each era, as a valued piece of information, symbolic and formal; if it could abandon all the essentialism to return to its materiality, to what existed; before the various components got mixed, the scenario, once again, disappeared.

And to diminish the absence of the Salvation Island we turn our sight to that tireless look at the camera, towards a portrait published in a journal that draws us into the desires of others, towards that short chronic meant for a long goodbye, that everyday story in which almost nothing happens, towards the eyes of Manuel Ferrol discovering us as an eternal passage, towards that place where anything can happen now and in which the photographer is the external view, the old eyewitness. In between these two practices of our contemporary photos, there remains of all that we were not able to name and that one soldier, named Pepe Sáez, hiding in his sentry box, named.

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### 10. Notes

[1] Asorey in sculpture and even Ksado in photography have works with this motive

[2] *Vida Gallega* (Galician Life), stage 1909-1938: journal-window of the liberal bourgeoisie, organized and animated by Jaime Solá as a modern company aimed to serve the economics of emigration, with an advertising section and high-impact graphics, on its payroll of collaborating photographers are the names that gave continuity to this professional branch: Llanos, Blanco, in addition to Pacheco, Pintos or Ksado. With a strong foothold among Galician people in American and Galicia itself (in number 35, 1912, it states a circulation of 31,500 copies), on its pages the picture

diversified for all types of uses, from the informative to the hagiographic, becoming reference for its stable introduction in the newspapers of that time.

[3] *El Pueblo Gallego* (The Galician People), Vigo, 1924-1936, together with the newspaper *Galicia* (Vigo, 1922-1926), the Republican, Galician, and modern press model, where the image and opinion are spaces for the difference, to create an audience. In 1934, when the Galician party chooses to approach the masses it considers the creation of a newspaper. According to historian Xavier Castro (*O Galeguismo na encrucijada republicana*, TD, USC, 1982), Alexandre Bóveda [a secretary of the organization, shot dead in A Caeira, Pontevedra] had developed a plan to acquire the newspaper *Portela Valladares*, a project approved by the *Consello Nacional* (National Council) in September 1934, after the establishment of a shareholding that would include Basque and Catalan people, autonomous Republicans, and members and friends of the Galician Party.

[4] See Margarita Ledo, *Documentalismo Fotográfico (Documentary Photography)*, Cátedra, Madrid, 1998.

[5] La Caixa Foundation, in coproduction with the Austria's Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, 1995

[6] *Voir ensemble*, the text of a lecture by Jean-Toussaint Desanti, (2001) became the motive for an organized meeting with readers of different origins, by Marie José Mondzain, is for me a headline to which I always return, and with which I learn shades like this: *Chacun voit. Et le voir común n'est pas simplement la convergente d'un regard de Chacón. Il est la production de cet espace commun, où va se constituer l'unité du visible et de l'invisible dans l'uvre.* (Everyone sees. And the common view is not simply a convergent view of Chacón. It is the production of this common space, which will constitute the unity of the visible and invisible in the implement.

[7] Although many times it appears listed as 1956, and I myself have a signed photo of Ferrol with this reference, in the last documentation prepared by Ferrol for his exhibition in the kiosk Alfonso de A Coruña he changes it to 1957.

[8] Graciously ceded by the newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, Paolo Pedrizzetti's photograph was published in my book *Foto-xoc e xornalismo de crise*, Do Castro, Sada-A Coruña, 1988.

[9] *A Nosa Terra* is a weekly Galician newspaper presented in December 1977. I was the author of the project and its director until November 1980. I had the experience of a trial of exemplary and inquisitorial intention, following the publication of a photograph of Fernando Bellas, published on the cover with the title *O pan da marxinação* [The Bread of marginalization] and a photograph of Miliqui, the usual crazy man from Cervantes Square, dressed in lining and with the penis on display, which analyzed the institutional and social considerations towards people with mental disorders. Simultaneously, porn magazines exhibited women's private body parts, so the ruling was in our favour.


[10] The three photographs (Castelao, *Padre e Hijo* [Father and Son], and As Encrobas) are some of the most reproduced images in the history of photography published in Galicia. Undoubtedly the most flexible in its uses was the photograph of Manuel Ferrol, which among its many applications became the cover of the music album of *Os Resentidos Fracaso Tropical*.

[11] See Walter Benjamín, *Imaginación y Sociedad (Imagination and Society)*, *Iluminaciones I (Illuminations I)*, Taurus, Madrid, 1998.

#### HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE IN BIBLIOGRAPHIES / REFERENCES:

Ledo Andión, Margarita (2010): "Photographs from where the world is called Galicia", in *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 65, pages 146 to 158. La Laguna (Tenerife, Canary Islands): La Laguna University, retrieved on \_\_\_th of \_\_\_ of 2\_\_\_, from [http://www.revistalatinacs.org/10/art/889\\_USC/11\\_Margarita\\_LedoEN.html](http://www.revistalatinacs.org/10/art/889_USC/11_Margarita_LedoEN.html)  
DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-65-2010-889-146-158-EN

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