

Nuptiality in Buenos Aires in the mid-twentieth century: Chascomús, La Plata and San Martín

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Abstract

This research analyzes nuptiality trends around 1947 and 1960 in Buenos Aires (Argentina) and three of bonaerenses districts. First this research describes the demographic policies related to nuptiality. Then the study analyzes the statistics of marriages and the structure of the population by sex, age and marital status according to the census definition. It also describes the subpopulation that voluntarily disassociated from a cohabitation or marriage based on the relative distribution as well as the probability of being divorced in 1947 and separated / divorced in 1960. This cross-cutting perspective contextualizes the trends in the constitution and dissolution of unions. The paper concludes that secularization had not been completed in the mid-twentieth century; in fact, the demographic policies demanded that the nuptiality was the expression of economic policies founded on the natural order of things.

Key words: Nuptiality, mid-twentieth century, population policies, Argentina.

Resumen

La nupcialidad en Buenos Aires a mediados del siglo XX: Chascomús, La Plata y San Martín

Esta investigación analiza las tendencias en la nupcialidad tomando como hitos temporales 1947 y 1960 en Buenos Aires y tres partidos bonaerenses. En primera instancia se describe la política demográfica relacionada con la nupcialidad. Seguidamente se analizan las estadísticas de matrimonios y la estructura de la población por sexo, edad y por estado civil según la definición censal. Se describe además a la subpoblación que se desvinculó voluntariamente de una cohabitación o de un matrimonio atendiendo a la distribución relativa así como, a la probabilidad de estar divorciado en 1947 y separado/divorciado en 1960. Esta perspectiva transversal da contexto a las tendencias halladas en la constitución y disolución de las uniones. El trabajo concluye que la secularización no se había completado en la Argentina a mediados del siglo XX, de hecho, la política demográfica de entonces pretendió que la nupcialidad fuera la expresión de la política económica acuñada en el orden natural de las cosas.

Palabras clave: Nupcialidad, mediados del siglo veinte, políticas de población, Argentina.

INTRODUCTION

Even though there is no one universal definition, population policies can be defined as a set of decisions that make up a public sector strategy. "According with the needs and expectations of the community to develop, conserve and use the human resources that affect migration and the probability of growth of the population, its distribution by age, the constitution of families, the geographical location of the inhabitants, and their incorporation into the workforce and education"(IUSSP, CELADE, 1982: par. 930) among other aspects that should be highlighted.

Therefore, examining what happened in relation to the population in the years following the enactment of Law # 14.394 in 1954, it is essential to further understand the population policies that aimed to resolve the social conflict created by the existence of the **dissolution of marriage** (IUSSP, CELADE, 1982: 510) for couples at that time. In other words, it could be interpreted that the abovementioned change in laws aimed at a change in customs which is a sign of a broader change in society as a whole (Elias, 1998: 218) and as such, it generated resistance.

In short, the objective of this research is to approach trends in nuptiality taking the years 1947 and 1960 as time benchmarks. The spotlight is on the districts of Chascomús, La Plata and San Martín, located in the Province of Buenos Aires, in order to show certain aspects of nuptiality that can be described by means of data available at a district scale.

Following the introduction of concepts and methodological aspects of the research, some elements of demographic policy and nuptiality are presented, including the analysis of statistics related to marriages. Since the number of people of marriageable age has an impact on first marriage, the population of the province of Buenos Aires is described by sex and age highlighting the peculiarities of the selected districts. This is done so as to make, consequently, a description of the census data related to the civil status variable that enabled us to determine the volume of population who voluntarily dissolved a consensual union or a marriage, and furthermore, the probability of them being divorced in 1947 and 1960. Finally, a conclusion is presented.

CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH

According to the Multilingual Demographic Dictionary,

the study of nuptiality covers, mainly, the study of quantitative phenomena resulting from matrimonies or legitimate unions, i.e., from unions of different sex, carried out according to the law or custom and that entitle the individuals involved in such bond to certain rights and obligations (IUSSP, CELADE, 1982: 83).

The analysis of the frequency of such events and of the dissolution thereof provides us with a basis for the studies on nuptiality.¹ Moreover, if the strict meaning of the word nuptiality is addressed, the notions found are endogamy, exogamy, mixed marriages, homogamy and heterogamy.

Even though in demography the study of nuptiality covers quantitative aspects of the phenomenon, it is observed that the terms of the definition exceed² such a definition since, historically, nuptiality is in itself the expression of a specific policy.

It is well known that in demography populationist policies vary from population control policies, and the natalist or pronatalist from the antinatalist (IUSSP, CELADE, 1982: par.140); by extension, policies that favour divorce – divorcist – are distinguished from those against divorce or anti-divorcist. Moreover, demographic doctrines can eventually serve as basis for the adoption of a demographic policy which is not always expressed as such.

Therefore, this research approached in the first place, those aspects related to the population policies giving meaning to the population data exa-

¹ The studies on nuptiality cover a wide range of research on the topic of constitution and dissolution of marital unions and, by extension, the studies on families.

² True, if the comprehension has to do with the *field of marriage* there appears words such as State, church authorities, administrative procedures, traditions, society, type of union (consensual, marital and free), stability, temporary. When it has to do with the *figure of divorce*, in some laws, restrictions for the dissolution of the marital bond are simultaneously found, with the addition that the technical terminology attaches the word *couple*, to “the set of two people of different sex that live in *stable union*” (IUSSP, CELADE, 1982: par. 503). Even so, today it is possible to state that a couple is the set of two people not necessarily of different sex who live in temporary union. Given that couples form part of the population, they are identified as *almost invariable* systems. Because of the characteristics that group them—which could refer to the rules of homogamy and patriarchy taking as examples the minimum age to get married, the difference of age between the spouses, and the labour condition according to gender— they have rooted to a greater or lesser extent definitively in the social system (Masciadri, 2012a). Although with the advent of industrial societies, urbanization, and specially, with the statutory amendments in marital matters, progressive - but slow- changes have been seen, the variation of the level of life expectancy has a great impact, and it has been conjectured that in the future, people shall be able to complete successive studies and get married with individuals of different generations (Bourgeois-Pichat, 1985: 87).

mined, considering that both aspects should not be separated, although it is not always possible to approach both of them.

As regards population policies, it is well known that during the second Peron³ administration, in the year 1954, the Civil Code was amended, (section 31, Law # 14.394), a draft that paved the way to absolute divorce. However, said enhancement in civil rights succumbed to executive order 4.070 dated March 1st 1956 which suspended this amendment. **The text** *Demografía Argentina. Esbozo de una política demográfica* provides the reader with a basis for the understanding of such specific fact, since amendments regarding marriage have had a great impact on the characteristics and evolution of nuptiality of peoples, while emerging as a response thereof (Domingo, 1997).

Nevertheless, it should be noted that in Argentina, the legislative changes regarding marriage have not always been reflected in the statistics registry. This difficulty is expressed in terms of measurement. For example, a first approach to the study of nuptiality is based on crude marriage rate, since it is known that nuptiality, measured in long time periods, shows a constant behaviour in the fundamentals although altered by conflicts and crises (Pressat, 1973: 179). This statement, which is generally true, demonstrates the difficulty to apply it in those contexts where couples were not necessarily conformed through marriage. It is the case of Central and South American countries where –although monogamy and Catholic tradition prevails - marriage is not the only way to form a couple; neither is absolute divorce the only way to dissolve the couple. (Masciadri, 2006).

According to Otero (2006: 50) “the set of representations about social reality underlying the construction of statistics and their supporting criteria enable us to speak about a statistics ideology that as any ideological representation” is full of value judgements. From that perspective, it would be interesting to interpret the gaps on the subject. But it happens that the statistics management constructed upon said paradigm⁴ invisibilized the consensual union until the V National Census in 1960.⁵ And it further cau-

³ June 4, 1952 through September 20, 1955.

⁴ The Western model of marriage moors its character of performative representation in its monogamy aspect - that of a stable couple - which favours social homogeneity and compelling heterosexuality as intergenerational hinge, founded on the institution of marriage, which assures personal and family stability, and is adverse to the institution of divorce that results in personal and family instability (Masciadri, 2013).

⁵ In Argentina, this type of union which has been called ‘illegitimate’ existed with varying frequency depending on the region (Llorens y Avila, 1948; Somoza, 1971; Bunge, 1984; Pantelides, 1984; Germani, 1987; Torrado, 1993; Torrado, 2003; Moreno, 2007). The data in Chart 1 shows that, in the districts under analysis, the so-called ‘illegitimacy’ was lower than the average of the province, but for some exceptions: Chascomús, in 1959; and General San Martín, in 1958 and 1960.

sed, even though Argentine legislation had accepted limited divorce since 1889, that the number of people divorced would be unknown until the IV Census in 1947. This situation had an impact on the statistics entries of marriages which did not register any type of divorce (limited or absolute) although there is isolated, scattered information of the divorced marital status of migrants as well as of people registered at courts (Comisión de Códigos, 1926; Rodríguez Molas, 1984; Valobra y Giordano, 2013).

Notwithstanding the above mentioned issues, the sources available are valid to explore the topic. As regards marriage statistics the main challenge is that we are dealing with fragmentary data, which results in a difficulty to conform series, as will clearly be observed below. The same happens with the information regarding marital status and nationality of the spouses, seasonality, and children born out of wedlock.

As regards census data, it should be noted that the question referring to the civil status of persons censused in 1947 and 1960 presents problems since the variable categories are not mutually exclusive (Pantelides, 1984; Cacopardo, 1996; Masciadri, 2002): (a) in the 1947 census, the civil status categories registered were: single, married, widow, and divorced; (b) in the 1960 census, the civil status categories listed were: single, married, widow, separated or divorced, and cohabitating —single individual who lives together with another as husband and wife out of wedlock—. ⁶

In short, the 1947 census overrated the single population even though all categories were affected by errors in the marital status statement. It is the case of the *divorced* population, which decreases from 1947 and 1960, -most probably - due to the fact that a portion of the legally divorced population (limited divorce) stating that (s)he was separated (from cohabitation or legal marriage) without any legal proceeding whatsoever might have been included in the single category.

On the whole, this study applied the methodology of previous studies (Masciadri, 2002). The analysis is a transversal study based on the cross-sectional data published in the statistics bulletins of the Province of Buenos Aires, by the Ministry of Economy, the Statistics Department, apart from the ones referred in publications of the General Department of Statistics

⁶ In the 1947 census, the question was addressed to the whole universe of censuses whereas in 1960, the question was applied to individuals of 12 years old or over. It is necessary to point out that the 1960 census surveyed the dissolution of unions, searching civil status of individuals as follows: widow (person who lost her condition of being married due to the death of her legal spouse, even if the person cohabit in de facto marriage), separated (person who does not live with his/her legitimate spouse nor is part of another consensual union), divorced (legally separated person with possibility to remarry) while the 1947 census makes reference to the category of widower and divorced with no specifications whatsoever (Cacopardo, 1996: 356).

and Research, Finance Ministry, Econometrics and Prevision, in the year 1947 and census information.

DEMOGRAPHIC POLICY AND NUPTIALITY

At this point, it may be interesting to introduce some discussions of the Peronist period which had an impact on the demographic policies related to nuptiality. These matters were influenced by the Conservative Catholic theories, especially some debates during the first Peronist administration, which – however – co-existed with other diverging lines. Such profiles expressed their conceptions through the enactment of reforms —Constitutional (1949) and Civil Code (1954) amendment— and in particular through the amendment of the Family Law jeopardized by lack of consent through the suspension of Section 31 (Law 14.394) following the 1955 uprising—self-called Argentinean Revolution—which overthrew elected President Perón.

In fact, after WWI, the conservative character of the Argentine State was easily identified in certain spheres. In the army, for instance, it was expressed by the National Defence Doctrine, a concept of total or full scale war, which was “transferred as an organizing vector in the field of politics” by the Peronist movement (Bernetti y Puiggrós, 1993: 58); it was also expressed by the National Security Doctrine opposing the above mentioned movement, which ruled as from 1955. It could also be identified in the Ministry of Education —with the participation of Oscar Ivanissevich, Catholic fundamentalist who took over the University of Buenos Aires from April 30th 1946 through May 27th, 1949, Secretary of Education and Minister of Education during the first and second Peronist administration and during the third administration, the presidency of Estela Martínez de Perón. Finally, it was evidenced in the demographic policy which was to be revised by a text - mentioned below - collateral to said policy.

It can be stated that the scientific community associated with demography in those times, - allegedly neutral — was able to identify the transgressions to the Western model of marriage in *Demografía Argentina. Esbozo de una política demográfica* (Argentine Demography. Draft of a demographic policy) written by engineer Emilio Llorens and Carlos Correa Ávila, PHD in Economic Sciences. The former had been a General Economic Geographer at the *Universidad de Buenos Aires* and student at del *Salvador* school —as had been Alejandro Bunge, the author of *Una Nueva Argentina* (A new Argentina), Arturo M. Bas author of *El divorcio: cancer de la sociedad* (Divorce: the cancer of society) as well as the six sons of

Alejandro Bunge, and several future collaborators of the *Revista de Economía Argentina* (*Magazine of Argentine Economy*). The latter had been a professor of *Argentine Economic and Political Geography* at *Universidad de La Plata* and a member – together with Llorens, of the elite that made up the government officials. Among the most reputable were Raúl Presbisch and José Figuerola— who was advisor of the Military Government led by Edelmiro Farrell (1943); head of the Department of Statistics, reporting to the Secretariat of Industry and Commerce; treasurer of the *Instituto Alejandro Bunge* of Social and Economics Research; Secretary of the Publishing Department of *Revista de Economía Argentina* and so on (González Bollo, 2004; Biernat, 2007; Otero, 2007).

Published in 1948, by the School of Economic Sciences of the National University of Buenos Aires, which was then under audit, the work stated as follows:

To counteract the atmosphere that the materialist life conception has created resulting in the discredit of family dignity (...) of which the uppermost expression is the communist campaign against the institution of family (...) it is necessary to organise a permanent national campaign aiming at re-establishing the prestige that the institution of family should have.

In the said campaign, schools were identified as a “permanent instrument of propaganda aimed at both children and their relatives” (1948: 71), remarks appearing in chapter seven *Measures to foster nuptiality* related to the *Propagation of the concepts of family dignity and the social value thereof*.

In fact, appealing to a scientifically based discourse, Llorens and Correa Ávila —a disciple of Alejandro Bunge, who had been founder, in 1918 of the magazine *Revista de Economía Argentina* which, undoubtedly, had an impact on the development of Argentine demography as a discipline—put forward the need to strengthen family life, while taking steps to foster nuptiality and birth, and diminish mortality. In order to “increase nuptiality and assure family life” they put forward the following four principles:

- i) “affirm the Christian concept of the indissolubility of marriage; ii) remove miscarriages of justice which delay or hinder legitimate marriage; iii) carry out a campaign with the objective of preventing illegitimate unions, replacing and stabilizing them by legitimate marriage; iv) facilitate early marriages and create difficulties to **celibacy**” (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 65).

In fact, among the *Measures to promote nuptiality* there are —besides the above mentioned *Propagation of notions describing the dignity of family and social value*—, the *Campaign against illegitimate unions*, the *amendments to the judicial regulation*, the *education for family life*, the *economics measures* and the *defence and dignity of women*.

According to what had been expressed in the framework of the *Campaign against illegitimate unions*, both the State and the cultural and social institutions shall “put into evidence the imprudence as well as the individual and social dangers” of concubinage, therefore, marriage registration should be facilitated —mainly in rural areas— as advocated in the “Government Plan 1947-51” the drafting of which Llorens and Correa Ávila (1948: 72, 141) took part in, in response to the request made by José Figueroa who led the Plan from the Technical Secretariat of the President, as member of the Alejandro Bunge Institute of Economic and Social Researches (Biernat, 2013: 10).

In the section related to *Amendments to judicial regulations* Bunge’s disciples stated that “bearing in mind that the basis of the Argentine Culture is absolutely Christian and Catholic” the State is conferred with the function of “assuring the Family institution *the regime of legal indissolubility of marriage*” (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 72). In addition, they stated that assimilating “legitimate children to illegitimate ones” would foster social disorder, which should be prevented (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 73). On the other hand, they considered it necessary to amend “the pre-nuptial certificate regime”, which was to be deferred when it was difficult or almost impossible to obtain as a result of medical assistance. Thus, the obstacle to the celebration of marriages was avoided, since, if not, said certificate would become “an incentive to **concubinage** and consequently to illegitimacy” (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 73).

The measures for the *Education for family life* and the *Defence and dignity of women* are in dialogue with each other, since the criterion of the academics involved was: that “naturally, man and woman are inclined to family, as a necessary improvement” (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 74). And the role of the State, through school and other media (radiotelephony) was that of showing the specific functions: women’s education should tend towards “taking care of the home, upbringing and education of the children, the administration of family economy” (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 74). That is to say, the demographic policy had to “praise in the environment and in practice the dignity of a woman as wife and as mother”, expressing disagreement with all measures which might result in

the extension of women's rights: "to work, to earn a salary similar to that of men, to become actively engaged in politics" (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 76) since that would put the family organization at stake.

Economic Measures, advocate the implementation of a special tax for single individuals, with the objective of inducing them to get married and to contribute at the same time, to support the social advantages attributed to married individuals such as loans amortized in ascending scale according to the number of sons, a higher salary for being married, among others.⁷

As it is well-known, during the period under study, three laws were—more or less directly—related to nuptiality. The first one, regarding adoption (13.252), was enacted in 1948, during the first Peronist government. Said law established, among other things, the possibility to adopt any minor under 18, (without it being restricted to orphans or abandoned minors), while welcomed the adoption by the father of children born out of wedlock (Villalta, 2012: 118).

The second law was the one related to the children born out of wedlock (Law 14.367), passed on November 2, 1954, which changed the status of illegitimate children to those being born out of wedlock. However, as pointed out by specialized studies, both rules did not reach the egalitarian values they aimed at, especially because they pursued to strike a balance with the maintenance of the institution of marriage in such a way that these laws would not increase their scope or relevance as a social foundation (Cosse, 2006; Giordano, Ramacciotti and Valobra, 2015). That is to say, it was assumed that total equalization of children born in wedlock and out of wedlock would result in a crisis affecting the family institution in such a way that the abovementioned academics sustained that such "sentimental equalization, analogous to that used in favour of divorce" would foster social disorder (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 73).

The third law, enacted during the second Peronist administration in the year 1954, was a bill that the Executive Branch passed for debate in the House of Representatives, which gave rise to absolute divorce (Article 31). That is to say, said law expressed a way regarding nuptiality which did not exist until that moment, i.e., the breaking of all legal obligations resulting from the status of spouse, including the removal of legal obstacles to a new marriage. From the extensions of civil rights discussed above, the

⁷ Several measures have an impact on demographic phenomena, especially those related to housing, employment, and public health. It is evident the relationship between birth and anti-divorcist policies: among the advantages often granted by legislation favouring birth are the marriage loans, of which the repayment is usually totally or partially written off, after the birth of certain number of children (IUSSP, CELADE, 1982: 141). Cfr. Gonnard, 1972; Torrado *et al.*, 1986; Masciadri, 2012a, 2012b.

first and second laws survived the institutional changes brought about after the 1955 military coup, while the third one succumbed to executive order 4.070 dated March 1st, 1956 which declared said law in suspense, freezing the judicial proceedings that had been started and rejecting new petitions. The resistance to change⁸ expressed in the suspension of Article 31 had its sociological rationale in the Lepleysian theory that assumes that “the problems relating social disorder, demoralization of popular classes and the diffusion of unstable family”⁹ (Cicchelli-Pugeault and Cicchelli, 1999: 67) had to be solved by means of moral strengthening of the family bonds and not by means of an improvement in quality of life.

In fact, the authors of *Demografía Argentina. Esbozo de una política demográfica* (*Argentine Demography. Draft of a demographic policy*) regarded the expansion of civil rights as a sign of social disorder during the Peronist administration. It is true that many of the measures created in the aforementioned book formed part of the well-known First 5-Year Plan (1947-1951) of the Peronist government, since those who drafted the policy—as academics—also took part—as state officers—collaborating in the aforementioned government scheme 1947-51” (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948; Biernat, 2007). This element provides concrete evidence of the contradictions and frictions¹⁰ existing between the dissenting conservative and innovative factions which formed part of the government at that time. All in all, the “issue” of population became paroxysmal towards the census year. The census was scheduled for September 30, 1960, and was carried out under a state of siege, as the Plan Conintes was enforced. It was designed with the purpose of eliminating the Peronist organizations, which were proscribed (Pontoriero and Franco, 2013; Masciadri, 2016a, 2016b).

⁸ Generally speaking, it is thought that everything that seeks its explanation in human beings can be clarified by means of the consideration of isolated individuals. However, as human beings live together in groups, conflicts are an aspect of social structures living together: “*It is not aggressiveness that triggers conflicts, but conflicts that trigger aggressiveness*” (Elias, 2009: 186). And divorce, during the time under analysis, was a subject that, according to Carlos Silveyra threatens “the stability of family”, tradition, Argentine custom and the whole Latin race (1929: XXII-XXIII). Silveyra, frequently seen at the Circulo Militar (Military Club), director of the *Clarín* magazine and member of the Argentine Popular Committee against Communism (C-PACC) considered that torture and killing united the Nationalist Movement in its sacred aspect. Cfr. Finchelstein, 2010:142.

⁹ That is to say, “social stability” would be achieved by appealing to the patriarchal legal spirit founded on a “stable order” based on the Christian family. Cfr. Masciadri, 2012a.

¹⁰ Law 13.010 which granted women’s right to vote in 1947; Law 13.252 of the year 1948 and Law 14.367, of the year 1954 which changed the status of those children born out of wedlock; the amendment of the Constitution in 1949 which put men and women judicially at the same level as spouses and as parental authorities; the absolute divorce in 1954, a year in which furthermore the minimum age to get married is raised to 14 for women and 16 for men (Llorens and Correa Ávila, 1948: 53; Torrado, 1993: 267-269; Barrancos, 2007).

It is worth mentioning that “as the ‘40s come to a close, Populationism of Bungean inspiration¹¹ more evidently approaches the advocates of traditional thought” (Biernat, 2013: 11-12), which led members of the *Alejandro Bunge* Institute such as Llorens and Correa Ávila to use the *Dinámica Social* magazine—made up of pro-fascist nationalists, republicans, Catholics, and Hispanics—to spread their ideas, as shown by the publication of the text *La crisis demográfica de la raza blanca* (*Demographic crisis of the White race*) by Correa Ávila (Biernat, 2013, 2007; González Bollo, 2010). This reference seems to be related to the removal of José Figuerola from the administrative sphere. Figuerola tendered his resignation when the National Department of Statistics and Censuses (DNIEC, for its acronym in Spanish)¹² remained under the control of the Technical Secretariat, that is to say, when doctor Raúl Mendé—Peronist political activist and leader of the youth organized under Argentine Catholic Action—was no longer State Secretary and became the *Minister of Technical Affairs*, following the 1949 constitutional amendment. These changes are reflected in the staff in charge of the (1953-1957) Second 5-Year Plan (*Segundo Plan Quinquenal*, as it was called in Spanish): members of the National Ethnic Institute—national research organization (Biernat, 2007: 63) reporting to the Ministry of Technical Affairs and to the Migrations National Department—who considered it relevant to “regulate illegitimate unions” and to suppress “public and official discrimination amongst the so-called legitimate and illegitimate children” (Biernat, 2013: 14; Santana, 2010).

So far we have presented the foundations on which the political demography was based in order to control nuptiality. Likewise, it is worth noting that the aspects of the demographic policies commented above had an impact on the demographic registries, resulting in measurement problems. Thus, the characteristics of marriages registered in the Province of Buenos Aires and the districts under analysis are described, so that later on the population data corresponding to the years 1947 and 1960 can be examined.

¹¹ Demography also covers the study of demographic doctrines or population theories, since it attempts to explain and foresee “the evolution of demographic phenomena and make its consequences clear” (IUSSP, CELADE, 1982: 19; Gonnard, 1972; Vetta, Courgeau, 2003). As regards this topic, several contemporary studies consider that divorce diminishes the quality of the population, plus the fact that, eventually, said theories can serve as foundation for policy adoption.

¹² The purpose of the DNIEC was to centralize primary data so as to achieve economic goals and national defense; it was part of the National Defense Council and the Technical Secretariat of the Office of the President.

FREQUENCY OF MARRIAGES

As mentioned above, the analysis of the frequency of marriages and the dissolution thereof represents, in part, the bases for the studies on nuptiality. However, one should not forget that the historic time is inscribed in the generation and vice-versa, thus determining differentiated experiences according to age, cohort, and sex which – as far as possible – should be taken into account. Among the rules and customs used to confirm an agreement of union between a man and a woman, it is well known that the wedding ceremony was the most frequent; therefore, marriage statistics provide the researcher with specific data. One of the difficulties in this research is that the frequency of marriages recorded is fragmentary, which makes it difficult to create an extensive and homogenous temporal and geographic series to calculate the crude marriage rate. Notwithstanding the above, data indicates that the crude marriage rate of the Province of Buenos Aires was slightly higher than that of the country in the period 1947-1960 (Table 1). Among the districts under analysis, General San Martín presented the highest, La Plata's rates were close to those of the Province and Chascomús presented lower rates, except in 1949. In the National series, the top mark (8.7 marriages per thousand) occurred in 1947 moment at which the number decreases. In the Province of Buenos Aires, the rate fell from 9.1 per thousand, in 1947 to 7.5 per thousand, in 1960.

By having the frequency of marriages by the age of the spouses and if specific rates of first marriages are calculated, the differences by sex and by year of observation can be seen (Table 2). As shown below, the increases in the indexes of masculinity recorded in 1947, as from the group 35-39, had their impact on masculine bachelorship. In addition, the intensity of women's nuptiality in 1947 seems to have been notorious (700 per thousand) in ages 25-29, 30-34, 35-39 and 40-49, showing rates which far exceeded the ones corresponding to group 20-24. This is evidence of a particular experience regarding nuptiality of women cohorts that in 1947 were aged 25-49. That is why in 1947, the average age of marriage of bachelors (31.2 years-old) was lower than age of spinsters (32.1 years-old); therefore, feminine nuptiality above the age of 25 increased due to the high indexes of masculinity.

Table 1: Gross nuptiality rate (per thousand) and live births out of marriage * (per hundred). Argentina, Buenos Aires and parties, years available

Year	Gross nuptiality rate (in thousand)				Born out of marriage (per one hundred registered births)					
	Argentina	Buenos Aires	Chascomús	General San Martín	La Plata	Argentina	Buenos Aires	Chascomús	General San Martín	La Plata
1947	8.7	9.1				27.8	16.9			
1948	8.6	8.9								
1949	8.4	9.2	9.6	10.5	10.1	26.4	15.0			
1950	8.3	9.1	7.9	10.7	9.5		15.1	13.5	10.1	9.8
1951	8.1	9.1								
1952	7.6									
1953	7.7	8.8	8.0	11.1	8.9		14.0	13.7	12.6	10.1
1954	7.7	-				24.5	13.6			
1955	7.5	8.8	7.0	11.5	8.9					
1956	7.5	9.1	7.0	12.3	9.0					
1957	7.5	9.4	7.3	13.2	9.4					
1958	7.3	8.1	6.7	12.6	8.9		16.1	15.1	17.3	11.0
1959	7.2	7.9	7.6	8.5	7.3		16.7	19.3	16.8	11.5
1960	7.0	7.5	6.6	11.7	7.5	23.5	16.9	12.9	17.6	12.2

Buenos Aires: Rural = rural population (per thousand inhabitants).

Buenos Aires: Illegitimacy = illegitimate births (per one hundred thousand registered births).

*Somoza (1971: 182-183).

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of marriage statistics: 1949 y 1960: Somoza (1971: 182-183). 1949 y 1954: Torrado (2003: 263).

Table 2: Specific rates of first-nuptiality by quinquennial groups of age and sex (per thousand), synthetic index of first-nuptiality (ISPN) and average age at first marriage (EMM). Buenos Aires, 1947 and 1960

Age groups, index, average age	Sex and census year			
	Men		Women	
	1947	1960	1947	1960
15-19	2.9	4.8	1.0	42.0
20-24	63.3	66.7	61.1	141.4
25-29	133.1	135.0	246.8	140.4
30-34	89.3	98.0	191.5	90.3
35-39	57.6	61.4	119.8	58.7
40-49	33.1	58.9	80.2	60.4
ISPN	375	425	700	533
EMM	31.2	31.6	32.1	29.3

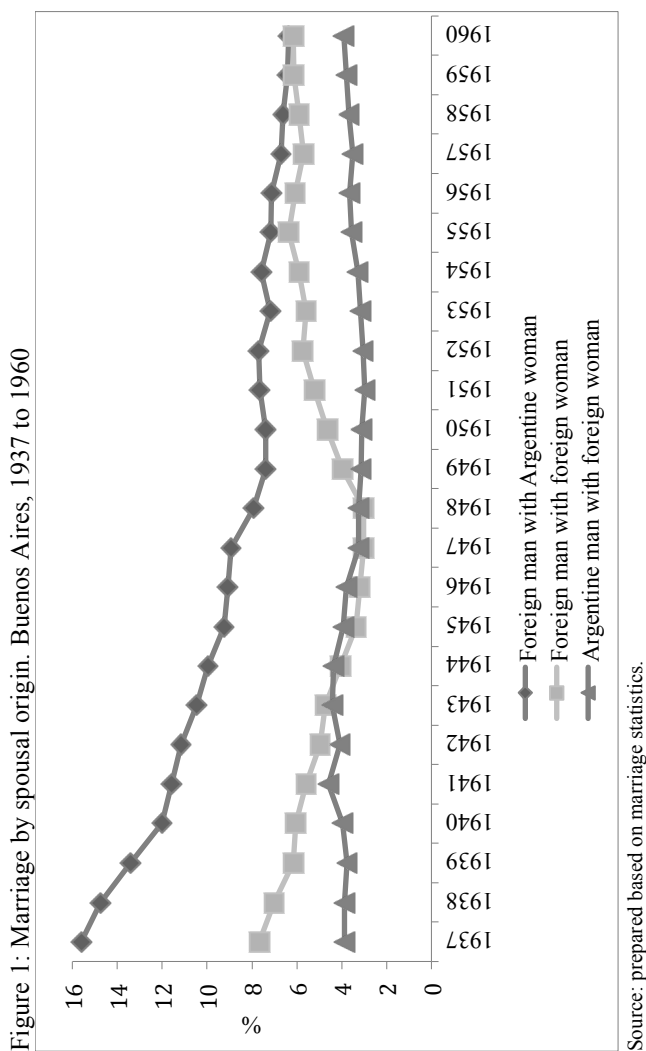
Note: single marriages/single population.

Source: elaboration on the basis of marriage statistics.

Certainly, in 1960, when masculinity indexes changed, the average age of bachelor marriages rose (31.6 years) above those of bachelorettes (29.3 years) while the specific primo-nuptiality rates become more intense among women between the ages of 15 and 19 and between 20 and 24 thus becoming closer to that of men within the 25 to 29 age group (Table2). Due to the fact that couples are *almost invariable* systems, when the cohort effects disappear, the trend embedded in the social system related to the age difference between spouses resurfaces (Masciadri, 2006).

Nuptiality also includes studies on endogamy, exogamy, homogamy and heterogamy, as well as research on mixed marriages. The first term refers to practices related to the election of a spouse within the same group -geographic, social, religious or other - exogamy being the exact opposite.

As illustrated in Figure 1, between 1937 and 1960, marriages underwent change as regards origin. The percentage of marriages between *Argentines* rose from 72.9 percent in 1937 to 83.6 percent in 1960. Marriages between *foreigners* dropped from 7.7 percent to three percent between 1937 and 1948, when they rose to account for 6.2 percent in 1960. The mixed marriages between *Argentine men* and *foreign women* were regular, while those between *foreign men* and *Argentine women* dropped from 15.6 percent in 1937 to 6.4 percent in 1960.



As was to be expected, if we review marriage distribution by marital status—single or widows/ers—96 percent of marriages entered into in 1950, in the Province of Buenos Aires, were between *single persons*. As to nationality, 85 percent of provincial marriages correspond to *native persons*: this percentage was exceeded by Chascomús and La Plata and General San Martín recorded levels under this percentage. Also, the provincial percentage of marriages between *foreigners* reached 4.6 percent: General San Martín and La Plata exceeded this percentage and in Chascomús only three marriages between foreigners were entered into (Table 3).

Table 3: Marriages according to marital status and nationality of the parties.
Buenos Aires y partidos, 1950

Marriages	Buenos Aires	Chascomús	General San Martín	La Plata
Total marriages	40 812	181	2 988	3 013
Male singles with female singles	96.2	95.6	95.2	96.3
Single men with widowed women	1.5	1.1	1.8	1.6
Widowed men with single women	1.7	3.3	2.2	1.5
Widowed men with widowed women	0.6		0.7	0.6
Argentine men with Argentine women	34 633	165	2 263	2 548
% total marriages	84.9	91.2	75.7	84.6
Foreign men with foreign women	1 893	3	259	148
% total marriages	4.6	1.7	8.7	4.9
Mixed marriages	4 286	13	466	317
% total marriages	10.5	7.2	15.6	10.5
Foreign men with Argentine women	3 019	10	319	222
% total mixed marriages	70.4		68.5	70.0
Argentine men with foreign women	1 267	3	147	95
% total mixed marriages	29.6		31.5	30.0

Fuente: Own elaboration on the basis of marriages statistics.

Mixed marriages are those entered into by individuals with different characteristics, such as nationality and religion.¹³ That is to say, 10.5 per-

¹³ The marriage breakdown by religion is unknown. However, the prevalence of Catholicism can be corroborated: in 1947, 96 percent and in 1960, 93 percent of the Buenos Aires population

cent (4,286 cases) of total marriages were *mixed* of which 15.6 percent (466 cases), 10.5 percent (317 cases) and 7.2 percent (13 cases) correspond to General San Martín, La Plata and Chascomús, respectively (Table 3).

As stated by Fernando Devoto (2004: 328), marriages, whom people choose to marry, “seem to say a lot about prejudices and stereotypes and about forms of socialization - whether ethnic or not— within the family environment” as well as wider spaces. That is why mixed marriages favour very different cultural patterns and manners of interaction compared to endogamic marriages. On the contrary, for Susana Torrado (2003: 311), mixed marriages between foreign men and Argentine women “did not induce naturalization” of the man, rather, it was the woman who adopted foreign ideas as her own.

It is known that the most significant indicator of assimilation or fusion is that of immigrants’ marriage patterns. Despite their relevance, the only data on marriages by nationality and sex of the spouses was obtained at a provincial level for 1950, which allowed for calculating the level of endogamy by sex (Table 4).

Among foreign men, Paraguayan men were the most endogamic (44.6 percent) followed by Polish, Italian, other European men, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, German and Uruguayan men. Among foreign women, Portuguese women were the most endogamic (68 percent) followed by Italian, Polish, other European women, Russian, Spanish, Paraguayan, German and Uruguayan women. It is possible that endogamy has declined on purpose, for example, due to migration flows from countries like Italy and Spain (Devoto, 2004: 337) which was more evident among men (Table 4).

Finally, it is worth highlighting that no records of marriages and divorces identifying a promotion or even the number of divorce per year were found. Partial data state a figure of 1,500 cases in the whole country (Rodríguez Molas, 1984: 121) while Section 31 remained in force. However, if we observe the seasonality of marriages we notice an irregularity in June 1956 that may be due to the increase in marriages of couples where at least one of the spouses was legally divorced (Table 5).

Based on the analysis performed in this section we obtained a first approximation to the frequency of marriages but there is not enough data on divorces yet. Besides, it is known that in Argentina, despite the fact that monogamy and Catholic tradition prevailed, towards 1950, marriage was not the only way to consolidate couples. Through the analysis of census data we seek to examine the missing aspects.

affirmed being Catholic. Of the districts selected, Chascomús recorded the highest percentage (98 and 97 percent in 1947 and 1960, respectively) (Annex 1).

Table 4: Inbreeding marriages according to nationality by sex. Buenos Aires, 1950

Position	Inbreeding	Marriages	% Inbreeding
<i>Men</i>			
1	Argentin men/Argentine women	35 900	96.5
2	Paraguayan men/Paraguayan women	92	44.6
3	Polish men/Polish women	396	38.9
4	Italian men/Italian women	2 108	33.5
5	Other european men/Other european women	297	30.0
6	Spanish men/Spanish women	994	29.0
7	Portuguese men/Portuguese women	127	26.8
8	Russian men/Russian women	78	25.6
9	German men/German women	81	23.5
10	Uruguayans men/Uruguayans women	157	7.0
<i>Women</i>			
1	Argentine women / Argentine men	37 652	92.0
2	Paraguayan men/Paraguayan men	50	68.0
3	Polish women/Polish men	1 253	56.3
4	Italian women/Italian men	278	55.4
5	Other european women/Other european men	174	51.1
6	Spanish women/Spanish men	41	48.8
7	Portuguese women/Portuguese men	725	39.7
8	Russian women/Russian men	108	38.0
9	German women/German men	64	29.7
10	Uruguayans women/Uruguayans men	109	10.1

Note: the total of marriages in 1950 was of 40 812 and of that total it was subtracted 2.3 percent due to the diversity of nationalities (940 cases, 258 women and 582 men).

Source: elaboration on the basis of marriage statistics.

Table 5: Marriages according to month of occurrence. Buenos Aires, 1947-1957*

	1947	1948	1949	1950	1953	1955	1956	1957
<i>Total marriages per month of occurrence</i>								
	38 806	39 230	40 388	40 812	42 117	42 972	45 060	47 444
January	2 727	3 392	3 540	3 504	3 596	3 836	3 759	4 322
February	3 524	3 464	4 108	3 949	4 228	4 897	4 795	5 728
March	4 217	3 399	4 046	4 257	4 145	5 123	4 898	5 166
April	3 704	4 321	4 063	4 145	4 551	4 377	2 822	4 380
May	3 074	2 697	2 863	2 866	2 946	3 060	3 394	3 858
June	2 655	2 267	2 711	2 771	2 637	2 813	5 069	2 678
July	2 856	3 026	2 768	2 925	2 755	2 623	2 631	2 740
August	2 466	2 105	2 256	2 488	2 466	2 197	2 764	2 902
September	3 117	2 970	3 224	3 243	3 017	3 243	3 366	3 467
October	3 567	4 231	3 800	3 509	4 053	3 380	4 008	4 135
November	3 135	3 401	3 157	3 354	3 585	3 232	3 776	3 927
December	3 764	3 957	3 852	3 801	4 138	4 191	3 778	4 141
<i>Percentage per month of occurrence</i>								
January	7.0	8.6	8.8	8.6	8.5	8.9	8.3	9.1
February	9.1	8.8	10.2	9.7	10.0	11.4	10.6	12.1
March	10.9	8.7	10.0	10.4	9.8	11.9	10.9	10.9
April	9.5	11.0	10.1	10.2	10.8	10.2	6.3	9.2
May	7.9	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.5	8.1
June	6.8	5.8	6.7	6.8	6.3	6.5	11.2	5.6
July	7.4	7.7	6.9	7.2	6.5	6.1	5.8	5.8
August	6.4	5.4	5.6	6.1	5.9	5.1	6.1	6.1
September	8.0	7.6	8.0	7.9	7.2	7.5	7.5	7.3
October	9.2	10.8	9.4	8.6	9.6	7.9	8.9	8.7
November	8.1	8.7	7.8	8.2	8.5	7.5	8.4	8.3
December	9.7	10.1	9.5	9.3	9.8	9.8	8.4	8.7

* available years.

Source: elaboration on the basis of marriage statistics.

BUENOS AIRES POPULATION STRUCTURE BY SEX AND AGE

The existence of the essential mechanism by which individuals are born and die and the period between the birth and death of an individual and all others is what ensures the coexistence through time “of a variable number of people who constitute the population” (Pressat, 1983: 14). Human populations are made up of elements differentiated in such a manner that it is important to know them by status (distribution by age, sex, marital status, religion and others) many of which are the aftermath of demographic phenomena (mortality, fertility, nuptiality, migration) on the population. One of the phenomena that left a visible mark in breakdowns by sex and age in the Argentine population was migration.

According to census information, the provincial population in 1947 was 4,272,336 inhabitants and rose to 6,766,108 inhabitants in 1960, accounting for 27 and 34 percent of the Argentine population in the years under examination (Table 6). When analyzing distribution by large age groups, we notice increases in the 0 to 14 year group and the 65 and over age group, as well as differences in provincial and national structures, mainly in the children population which was lower in the Province of Buenos Aires.

As to the breakdown by sex, it is observed that masculinity indexes dropped from 111 to 103; also, significant differences between the rural population and the rate of children born out of wedlock which, in both cases are under the national average (Table 6).

As stated above, in order to identify the mark certain demographic phenomena left in the population, it is important to review the breakdown by every single age group or, at least, by quinquennial or decennial groups.

It is worth mentioning that the Buenos Aires population was characterized in 1947 as well as in 1960 for being a younger population without evident signs of aging population but with a slight trend to increase at the top in 1960 and changes in the masculinity index recorded historically (Figure 2a and Figure 2b). When analyzing the breakdown by age and sex of the Buenos Aires population, asymmetries are observed. In 1947, 20 to 24 and 15 to 19 age groups were the largest while in 1960, the 0 to 4 and 5 to 9 were the largest.

Table 6: Volume, age structure of the population and selected indicators. Argentina, Buenos Aires y partidos, 1947 y 1960

Population	Argentina		Buenos Aires		Chascomús		General San Martín		La Plata	
	1947	1960	1947	1960	1947	1960	1947	1960	1947	1960
Total	15 893 827	20 010 545	4 272 336	6 766 108	21 560	24 660	269 514	278 751	303 610	338 772
Men	8 145 175	10 005 898	2 250 850	3 434 786	11 265	12 586	137 950	139 521	156 244	167 299
Women	7 748 652	10 004 646	2 021 487	3 331 322	10 295	12 074	131 564	139 230	147 366	171 473
Masculinity index	105	100	111	103	109	104	105	100	106	98
% of the total	100.0	100.0	26.9	33.8	0.5	0.4	6.3	4.1	7.1	5.0
<i>Age distribution (%)</i>										
0-14	30.9	30.8	26.6	27.5		29.3		26.4		23.5
15-64	65.2	63.6	68.9	66.6		63.1		68.7		69.8
65 or more	3.9	5.7	4.5	5.9		7.7		5.0		6.7
Rural	375	262	286	130	578				96	
Illegitimacy	27.8	23.5	16.7	16.8		12.9		17.6		12.2

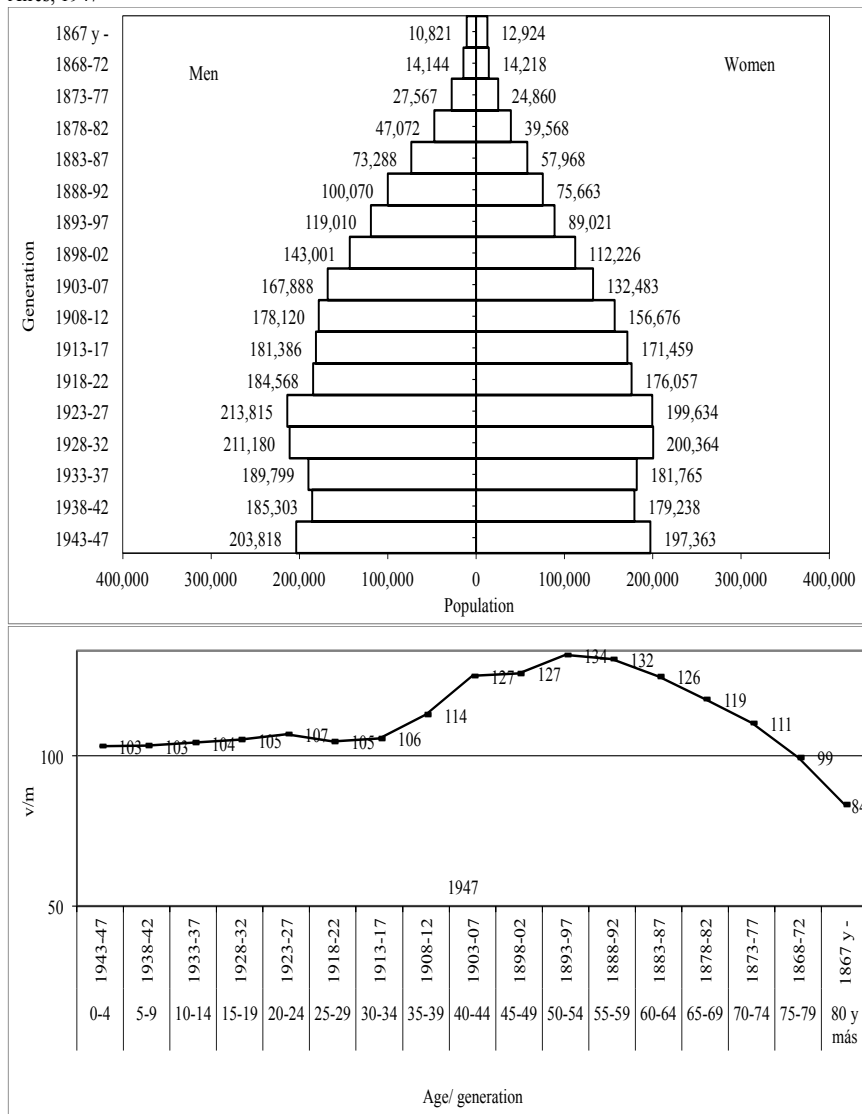
Buenos Aires: *Rural = Rural population (by thousand inhabitants).

Buenos Aires: *Illegitimacy = illegitimate births (per one hundred thousand registered births).

* Somoza, 1971, pp. 182-183.

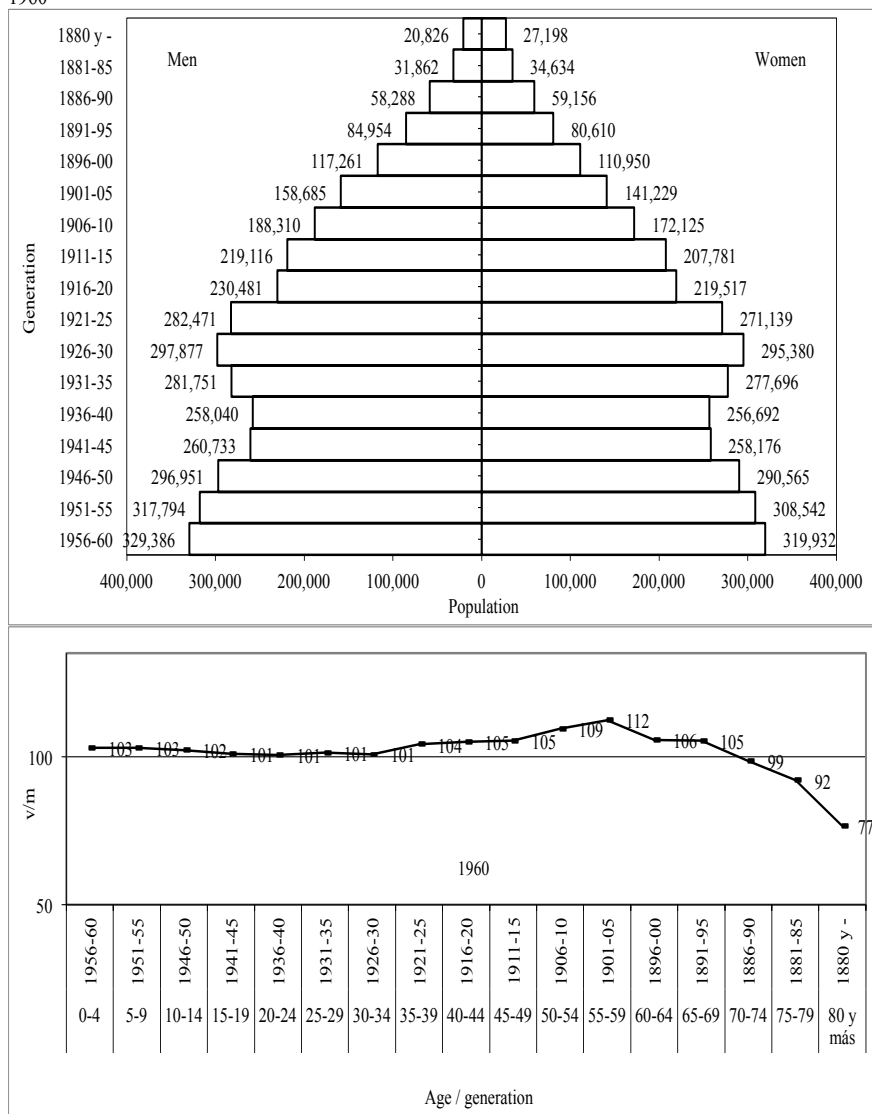
Source: Own elaboration with census database.

Figure 2a: Population by age groups according to sex and masculinity index by age group/generation. Buenos Aires, 1947



Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data.

Figure 2b: Population by age groups, sex and masculinity index by age groups/generation. Buenos Aires, 1960



Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data.

On the other hand, the increase in masculinity indexes recorded in 1947, from the 40 to 44 age group (1903 to 1907 generation) shows the interference of historical migrations led by foreign men which tends to cease towards 1960. As is known, these indexes have affected the masculine bachelorship at national and regional levels (Masciadri, 2013) which have been expressed at a provincial level.¹⁴

As regards the three selected districts, La Plata accounted for the highest volume in 1947 as well as in 1960, closely followed by General San Martín and very far from Chascomús (Table 6). In other words, in 1947, La Plata accounted for seven percent of the provincial total while General San Martín reached six percent and Chascomús accounted for 0.5 percent.

If we analyze the breakdown by sex, the masculinity index of La Plata dropped from 106 in 1947 to 98 in 1960, that of General San Martín dropped from 105 in 1947 to 100 in 1960, and that of Chascomús dropped from 109 in 1947 to 104 in 1960. When considering the urban-rural distribution, in 1947, Chascomús had a higher level of rural population (578 rural inhabitants every one thousand inhabitants) than La Plata where the rate reached 96 rural inhabitants per thousand, while in General San Martín the population was completely urban (Table 6).

This particular fact is reflected in the breakdown by sex and age, since the rural population, mainly male, showed very high masculinity levels in young productive ages (20 to 29 and 10 to 19 age groups) although with differences in the distribution (Table 7): in Chascomús, the masculinity indexes must be mainly related to transoceanic migration, while at the turning point of 1947 the index for La Plata, which was in the 20 to 29 age group, is justified by the reception of young, productive populations.

In short, as to marriageable individuals present, the historical landmarks in the structure by age and sex of the population at provincial level influence couples' creation and dissolution rates as well as bachelorship rates. We should remember that 80 percent of the migratory contribution to Argentina came from Catholic countries, Spain and Italy, where the only acknowledged institution at the time of the large migrations was religious marriage (Moreno, 2007: 517) —the civil ceremony was instituted after WWII— which led to the punishment in all social classes, on both sides of the Atlantic “of bastardy and illegitimacy”.

¹⁴ As pointed out by Ceva (2012: 316-317) until 1924, 84 per cent of the immigrants was between 13 and 60 years of age, even the adults ratio was higher in the period 1921-1924, when it climbed to 88 per cent. As opposed to this, among the arrivals between the years 1947 and 1950, nearly half of the immigrants were between 22 and 40 years old. As from 1950, values oscillated between 30 and 40 per cent. Such decrease is due to the inclusion of children, the rate of complete families having seen increases too.

Table 7: Index of masculinity of the rural population by age group.
Chascomús y La Plata*, 1947

Age	Generation	Chascomús	La Plata
0-9	1938-1947	101	95
10-19	1928-1937	119	159
20-29	1918-1927	116	232
30-39	1908-1917	142	151
40-49	1898-1907	153	162
50-59	1888-1897	171	171
60-69	1878-1887	181	171
70 +	1877 and minus	126	155
Total		127	160

* General San Martín is not included because its composition is urban.

Source: Own elaboration with census database.

For that reason, at departmental level, the marks left by migration and recorded through the population masculinity index allow us to suppose that, at local level, bachelorship must have been intense among the men who lived towards the middle of the 20th century in rural areas within the district.

MARITAL STATUS OF THE POPULATION (1947) AND (1960)

In 1947 in Argentina, in the total population aged 14 and over, 46.5 per cent (5,261,017 individuals) declared themselves married while in the Province of Buenos Aires, 51 per cent did (1,629,693 individuals). In the district of General San Martín 57 per cent (116,697 individuals) declared themselves married and in La Plata 52 per cent did (122,340 individuals). Chascomús came in below the national and provincial percentage, since 45 per cent (7085 individuals) of the population declared themselves *married*.

The *single* population in the country reached 5,331,143 individuals (47 per cent) and the single population of Buenos Aires 1,383,363 individuals (43 per cent). If distribution by district is observed, Chascomús accounted for 48 per cent (7,595 individuals), La Plata 41 per cent (98,162 individuals) and General San Martín 37 per cent (75,298 individuals).

Both in the country and in Buenos Aires, widowed persons were close to six per cent (674,235 individuals and 191,432 individuals, respectively). Said relative measure was repeated almost identically in La Plata (15,519

individuals), in General San Martín (11,844 individuals) and in Chascomús (993 individuals).

As regards the divorced population, in the country the figure reached 52,501 individuals (0.5 per cent) and in the Province it reached a total of 11,879 individuals (0.4 per cent). In General San Martín the *divorced* population reached a 0.6 per cent (1,199 individuals), in La Plata it was of 0.4 per cent (1009 individuals) and in Chascomús only 0.2 per cent (24 individuals) (Table 8a, Table 8b, Table 8c and Table 8d and Annex 2).

Some thirteen years later, the *married* population in the country accounted for 55 per cent of the total (7,685,434). In Buenos Aires it accounted for about 57 per cent (2,973,788) and in the districts under analysis, in General San Martín it reached 60 per cent, in La Plata 56 per cent and in Chascomús, 51 per cent.

That is to say, in 1960 the *single* population in the country was of 4,688,165 individuals (34 per cent), decreasing 13 percentage points as compared with the 1947 record. In the province, the decrease of *single* population was 8 percentage points, reaching 1,832,927 individuals (35 per cent). Among the districts under analysis the largest percentage decrease was in Chascomús (7.6 points) followed by La Plata (5.8 points) and that of General San Martín (4.3 points).

Widows and *widowers* accounted for 5.7 per cent (793,789) at a national scale and 5.1 per cent (269,964) at a provincial scale. On the other hand, the percentages in the districts varied slightly compared to the standard measurement: in La Plata it reached 6.3 per cent, in General San Martín it was 4.9 per cent and in Chascomús it was 5.7 per cent.

Finally, the population that voluntarily dissolved conjugal unions remained low in Argentina: the *separated* population accounted for 0.6 per cent (78,626) and the divorced for 10.1 per cent (12,376). In Buenos Aires the *separated* population accounted for 0.5 per cent (25,261) and the divorced for 0.1 per cent (3 189). Similar percentages are found in the districts, even though the volume of the population changes as follows: in La Plata 1 517 individuals declared themselves separated (0.6 per cent) and 317 divorced (0.1 per cent). In General San Martín 1,091 individuals declared separated (0.5 per cent) and 153 divorced (0.1 per cent). In Chascomús the numeral was 73 separated individuals (0.4 per cent) and 4 divorced.

If distribution of population according to civil status and age is examined, it can be observed that the *married* feminine and masculine population in the Province of Buenos Aires concentrated in modal group 40-49 in both census years.

Table 8a: Population according to couple situation by sex, 1947 and 1960

Total population			
	1947	%	1960
T	3,216,367	100.0	5,253,087
V	1,712,957	53.3	2,666,555
M	1,503,410	46.7	2,586,532

100%			
Population with couple			
	1947	%	1960
%	50.7		59.4
T	1,629,693	100.0	3,121,746
V	825,398	50.6	1,544,856
M	804,295	49.4	1,576,890

100%			
Population without couple			
	1947	%	1960
%	49.3		40.6
T	1,586,674	100.0	2,131,341
V	887,559	55.9	1,121,699
M	699,115	44.1	1,009,642

100%			
In union			
	1947	%	1960
%	4.7		5.6
T	147,957	100.0	
V	73,040	49.4	
M	74,917	50.6	

100%			
Never in union -single-			
	1947	%	1960
%	87.2		86.0
T	1,383,363	100.0	1,832,927
V	828,417	59.9	1,049,135
M	554,946	40.1	783,793

100%			
Ever in union			
	1947	%	1960
%	12.8		14.0
T	203,311	100.0	298,414
V	59,142	29.1	72,565
M	144,169	70.9	225,849

100%			
Married			
	1947	%	1960
%	100.0		95.3
T	1,629,693	100.0	2,973,788
V	825,398	50.6	1,471,816
M	804,295	49.4	1,501,972

100%			
Voluntary dissolution			
	1947	%	1960
%	5.8		9.5
T	11,879	100.0	28,450
V	4,909	41.3	12,009
M	6,970	58.7	16,441

100%			
Widowed			
	1947	%	1960
%	94.2		90.5
T	191,432	100.0	269,964
V	54,233	28.3	60,556
M	137,199	71.7	209,408

100%			
Divorced			
	1947	%	1960
%	100.0		11.2
T	11,879	100.0	3,189
V	4,909	41.3	1,316
M	6,970	58.7	1,872

100%			
Separate			
	1947	%	1960
%	88.8		100.0
T	25,261	100.0	
V	10,692	42.3	
M	14,569	57.7	

Note: 1947, population of 14 years or more. 1960: population of 14 years or more.

Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data.

Table 8b: Population according couple situation by sex, Chascomús, 1947 and 1960

Total population			
	1947	%	1960
	100.		
T	15,697	0	18,850
V	8,301	52.9	9,695
M	7,396	47.1	9,155
	100%		
Population with couple			
	1947	%	1960
	45.1		53.2
	100.		
T	7,085	0	10,019
V	3,566	50.3	4,977
M	3,518	49.7	5,042
	100%		
Population without couple			
	1947	%	1960
	45.7		46.8
T	8,612	100.0	8,830
V	4,735	55.0	4,718
M	3,878	45.0	4,113
	100%		
Never in union -single-			
	1947	%	1960
	88.2		87.0
T	7,595	100.0	7,686
V	4,441	58.5	4,420
M	3,154	41.5	3,266
	100%		
Ever in union			
	1947	%	1960
	11.8		13.0
T	1,017	100.0	1,144
V	294	28.9	297
M	724	71.1	846
	100%		
Married			
	1947	%	1960
	100.0		96.0
T	7,085	100.0	9,619
V	3,566	50.3	4,780
M	3,518	49.7	4,838
	100%		
Voluntary dissolution			
	1947	%	1960
	2.4		6.8
T	24	77	100.0
V	12	36	46.8
M	12	41	53.2
	100%		
Widowed			
	1947	%	1960
	97.6		93.2
T	993	100.0	1,067
V	282	28.3	261
M	712	71.7	805
	100%		
Divorced			
	1947	%	1960
			5.2
T	24		4
V	12		1
M	12		3
	100%		
Separate			
	1960	%	
	94.8		
T	73		100.0
V	35		48.0
M	38		52.0

Note: 1947, population of 14 years or more. 1960: population of 14 years or more.
Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data.

Table 8c. Population according to couple situation by sex. General San Martín, 1947 and 1960

Total population			
	1947	%	1960
T	205,038	100.0	219,146
V	105,147	51.3	109,103
M	99,891	48.7	110,043

Population with couple			
	1947	%	1960
T	116,697	100.0	136,068
V	58,180	49.9	67,094
M	58,517	50.1	68,974

Population without couple			
	1947	%	1960
T	88,341	100.0	83,078
V	46,967	53.2	42,009
M	41,374	46.8	41,069

In union			
	1947	%	1960
T	5,670	100.0	5,670
V	2,816	49.7	2,816
M	2,854	50.3	2,854

Never in union -single-			
	1947	%	1960
T	75,298	100.0	71,095
V	43,524	57.8	39,264
M	31,774	42.2	31,831

Ever in union			
	1947	%	1960
T	13,043	100.0	11,983
V	3,442	26.4	2,745
M	9,600	73.6	9,238

Married			
	1947	%	1960
T	116,697	100.0	130,398
V	58,180	49.9	64,278
M	58,517	50.1	66,120

Voluntary dissolution			
	1947	%	1960
T	1,199	100.0	1,244
V	434	36.2	489
M	765	63.8	755

Widowed			
	1947	%	1960
T	11,844	100.0	10,739
V	3,009	25.4	2,256
M	8,835	74.6	8,483

Divorced			
	1947	%	1960
T	1,199	100.0	1,531
V	434	36.2	674
M	765	63.8	857

Separate			
	1947	%	1960
T	1,091	100.0	1,091
V	422	38.7	422
M	669	61.3	669

Note: 1947, population of 14 years or more. 1960: population of 14 years or more.

Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data

Table 8d. Population according to couple situation by sex. La Plata, 1947 and 1960

Total population			
	1947	%	1960
T	237,030	100.0	271,030
V	122,073	51.5	132,211
M	114,957	48.5	138,819
100%			
Population with couple			
	1947	%	1960
T	122,340	100.0	155,546
V	61,340	50.1	76,512
M	61,000	49.9	79,034
100%			
Population without couple			
	1947	%	1960
T	114,690	100.0	115,484
V	60,733	53.0	55,699
M	53,957	47.0	59,785
100%			
In union			
	1947	%	1960
T	4,061	100.0	2,002
V	2,002	49.3	2,059
M	2,059	50.7	
100%			
Never in union -single-			
	1947	%	1960
T	98,162	100.0	96,459
V	56,741	57.8	51,697
M	41,421	42.2	44,762
100%			
Ever in union			
	1947	%	1960
T	16,528	100.0	19,025
V	3,992	24.2	4,002
M	12,536	75.8	15,023
100%			
Married			
	1947	%	1960
T	122,340	100.0	151,485
V	61,340	50.1	74,510
M	61,000	49.9	76,975
100%			
Voluntary dissolution			
	1947	%	1960
T	1,009	100.0	1,834
V	374	37.4	670
M	635	62.6	1,164
100%			
Divorced			
	1947	%	1960
T	1,009	100.0	317
V	374	37.1	125
M	635	62.9	192
100%			
Widowed			
	1947	%	1960
T	15,519	100.0	17,191
V	3,618	23.3	3,332
M	11,901	76.7	13,859
100%			
Separate			
	1947	%	1960
T	1,517	100.0	545
V	545	35.9	972
M	972	64.1	

Note: 1947, population of 14 years or more. 1960: population of 14 years or more.

Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data

Age distribution varies between women and men basically because of the effects of masculine overmortality which determines a greater intensity of widowhood among women.

In 1960, the *cohabitating* population concentrated in modal group 40-49 in both sexes as did the *divorced* population with some displacements (Figure 3a and Figure 3b).

It is possible to create the sub-population *with partner* and *without partner* if observed that the marital status variable can be re-grouped. The sub-population *with partner* includes both married and cohabitants.

That is to say, in 1960, the percentage of *consensual unions* was of 7.3 per cent, at a national scale (606,774 individuals) and of 4.7 per cent at a provincial scale (147,957 individuals). Likewise, in the Buenos Aires districts under analysis said percentage was very low and close to the provincial average.

If the percentage of *consensual unions* is calculated over total number of unions of each age group, the result is that in Buenos Aires, these unions were more frequent among the youngest (Table 9). In turn, the larger percentage of men stands out in the first four age groups, which could be associated to the fact that some women prefer to declare themselves as married *women* instead of *single women in consensual union*.¹⁵

Table 9: Percentage of single (s) in fact union over the total number of unions of each age group. Buenos Aires, 1960

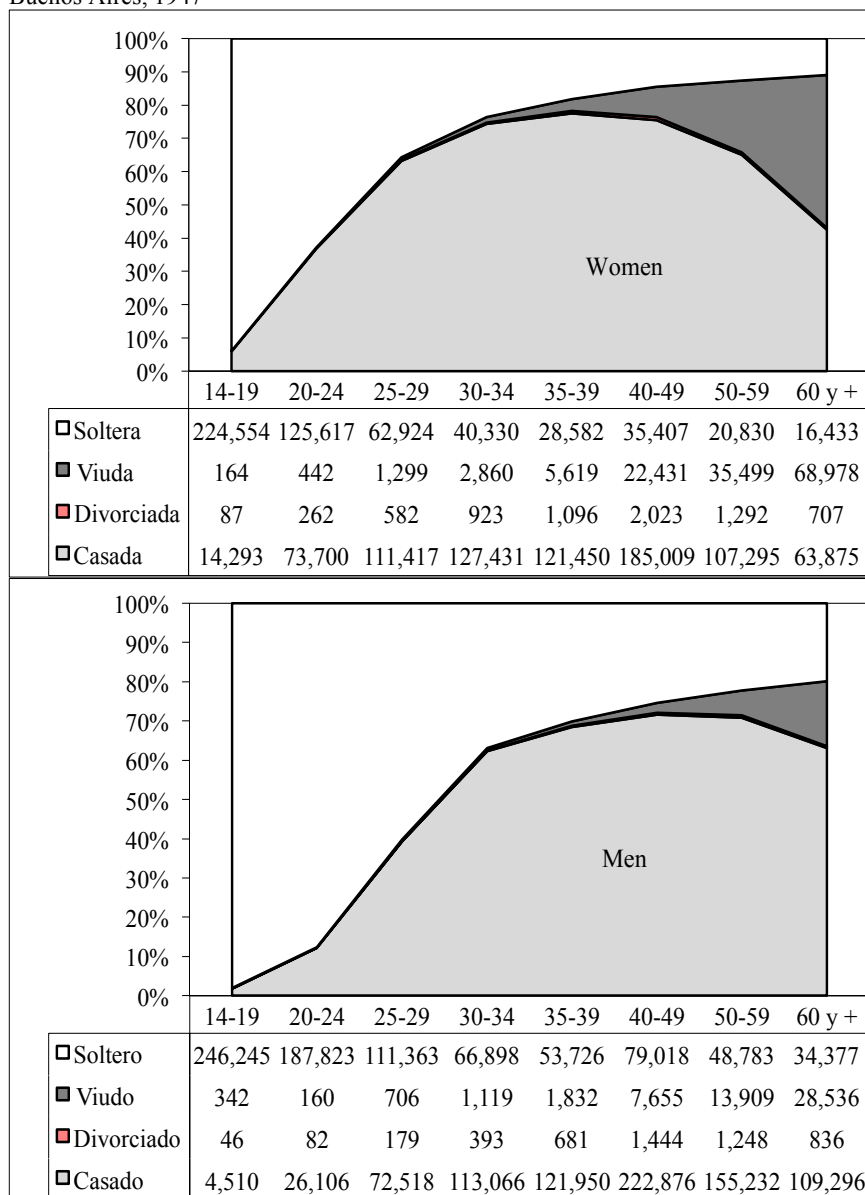
Sex	Total	Age groups							
		15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-49	50-59	60 o +
Men	4.7	22.0	11.0	7.1	5.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	3.6
Women	4.7	12.5	6.9	5.0	4.7	4.3	4.5	4.1	3.6

Source: Own elaboration with census database.

In short, Buenos Aires and the districts under analysis have been demonstrated to follow the western model of marriage, which translates into the scarce frequency of *consensual union* and intercultural marriages. By 1960, the figure of 2,973,988 married persons and 147,957 cohabitant persons gives evidence to the binding and disruptive elements in the world of couples.

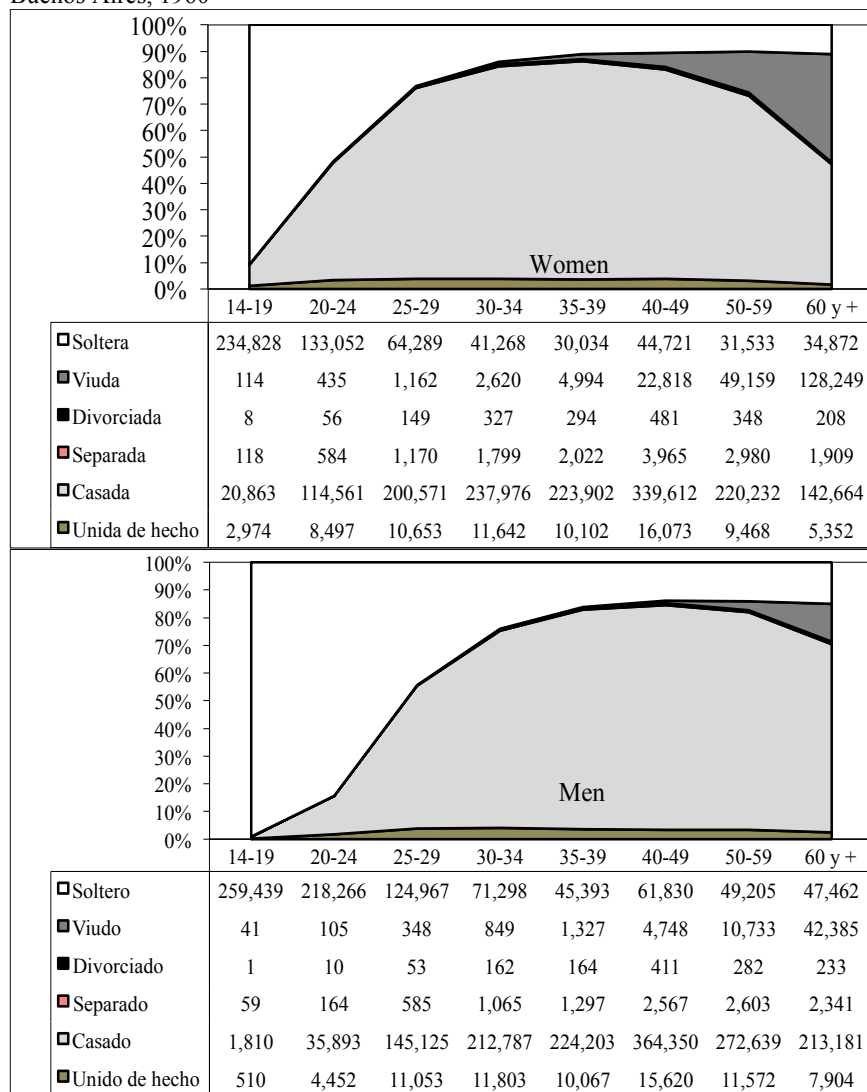
¹⁵ It is well known that the legitimacy of the union is a contractual convention ruled through legal procedures, to the extent that it has been proved that “women who are joined with a partner initially by consent tend to modify such status for reason of prestige or legitimacy of their descendants” (Alcántara, 1983: 100).

Figure 3a: Male and female population by age groups according to marital status.
Buenos Aires, 1947



Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data.

Figura 3b: Male and female population by age groups according marital status.
Buenos Aires, 1960



Source: own elaboration on the basis of Census data.

POPULATION WITHOUT PARTNERS: SINGLE, WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS, SEPARATED AND DIVORCED

As already mentioned, marriage was the “natural state” towards which the set of the Argentine population had to proceed, especially women. That is why, census have always mentioned the single, married and widow/widowers population.

This was so as a response to the rationale that at a certain age¹⁶ people had to get married “for life”, therefore naturalizing the reason why marriage would end (Jelin, 1989). The problems that the census ideology created in the data production have already been discussed (Pantelides, 1984; Cacopardo, 1996; Torrado, 2003). On the whole, this section describes the population without *partner*¹⁷ highlighting the separated and divorced population.

The masculinity index of singles by age groups shows changes in the period: a) in male permanent celibacy, recorded as from the age of 50 and, b) in the indexes of young productive ages (20-24, 25-29, 30-34) linked to immigration.

In fact, in 1947 the single masculinity index of 50-59 was of 234 single men for every 100 single women, while in the 1960, the same index, for the same age, was of 156. The same happens with the final open group. That is to say, the data in Table 10 confirm the observations made in relation to the structure by age and sex which anticipated higher singlehood in men, depending on the age, the generation, and the rural area. In addition, they restate that expressed regarding the feminine primo-nuptiality over 25 years of age.

Another aspect of the studies on nuptiality is related to the concept of married life, which ends due to the death of one of the spouses or divorce (IUSSP, CELADE, 1982). Even so, in the Province of Buenos Aires the ever-united persons in 1947 accounted for 13 per cent and in 1960, 14 per cent of the population 14-year old or over, a percent that was repeated with slight differences in the districts. The scarce increase of the population

¹⁶ As has already been mentioned, the minimum age was 14 for women and 16 for men as from 1954. Today, early marriage is considered a violation of human rights and the term child marriage is used for those cases in which both spouses are a boy and a girl or teenagers, that is to say, a formal or informal marriage taking place before the age of 18. Nowadays, the minimum age recommended to get married is 18, since early marriage is associated with discrimination (Céspedes and Robles, 2016: 27).

¹⁷ In Buenos Aires, the population *without partner* dropped between 1947 and 1960 from 49 to 41 per cent. And from the total population *without partner* in Buenos Aires, 56 per cent in 1947, and 53 per cent in 1960 were men, which indicates an increase in the feminine portion of the sub-group.

ever-united persons is explained by the incipient – although higher - incidence of the voluntary dissolution of marriage (or union) as compared with the lower incidence of the involuntary dissolution of marriage (or union) by the death of one of the spouses.

Table 10: Masculinity index of singles by age groups. Buenos Aires, 1947* y 1960

Year	Total	Age groups							
		15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-49	50-59	60 o +
1947 (t)	149	110	150	177	166	188	223	234	209
1947 (r)	229	139	227	258	294	341	438	549	492
1960 (t)	143	110	164	194	173	151	138	156	136

* Total and rural index.

Source: Own elaboration with census database.

In fact, Somoza (1971: 26) estimated the life expectancy at birth for the period 1946-1948 in 59.09 years for men and 63.59 years for women, a figure that increased for the period 1959-1961, to 63.68 years for men 69.53 and for women. That is to say, the decrease in the level of mortality increased the married life or conjugal life, the involuntary dissolutions of marriage or union and widowhood among women.

As regards voluntary dissolution of the union, the information in Table 11 shows that over 50 per cent of the divorced persons (1947) and separated/divorced persons (1960) in each age group were women, except for the final open group. We must understand that both men and women separated or get divorced equally. However, multiple conditions make women present a lower trend to form new conjugal unions.

By calculating the *probability* of being divorced it is deduced that its occurrence was scarce: seven per thousand in the province in 1947 and eight per thousand in 1960 for both sexes. While in 1947, the *probability* was very low in all districts, General San Martín and La Plata slightly exceeded the measure in the province, whilst Chascomús rated far below this *probability*. As in the province, the above mentioned *probabilities* scarcely increased in 1960: in La Plata, the measurement was 11.7 per thousand; in General San Martín was 9.1 per thousand and in Chascomús it was 7.7 per thousand (Table 12).

Table 11: Percentage of divorced (1947) and separated / divorced (1960) women over the total category in each age group. Buenos Aires

Year	Total	Age groups							
		15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-49	50-59	60 o +
1947	58.7	65.1	76.2	76.5	70.1	61.7	58.3	50.9	45.8
1960	57.8	67.7	78.6	67.4	63.4	61.3	59.9	53.6	45.1

Source: elaboration with census database.

Table 12: Probability of being divorced (Pd) (1947) and separate (Ps), divorced (Pd), and separate/divorced (Ps,d) (1960) (thousands). Buenos Aires y partidos.

Province	Gender	1947		1960	
		P (d)	P (s)	P (d)	P (s,d)
Buenos Aires	Both	7.2	8.0	1.1	9.0
	Men	5.9	6.9	0.9	7.7
	Women	8.6	9.2	1.2	10.3
Chascomús	Both	3.4	7.3	0.4	7.7
	Men	3.4	7.0	0.2	7.2
	Women	3.4	7.5	0.6	8.1
General	Both	10.2	8.0	1.2	9.1
San Martín	Men	7.4	6.3	1.0	7.2
	Women	12.9	9.6	1.3	10.8
La Plata	Both	8.2	9.7	2.1	11.7
	Men	6.1	7.1	1.7	8.7
	Women	10.3	12.1	2.5	14.5

Source: Tables 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d.

It is important to bear in mind the specific characteristics of Chascomús, since the district presents the lowest probabilities (of being divorced), which could be interpreted as the evidence of a conservative environment, unchanging as regards uses and customs due to the small population size. In other words, in Chascomús the small figures revealed by the 1947 census give evidence to the context: 12 Orthodox Christians, 458 Protestants, 28 Jews, 9 Muslims, 13 intercultural marriages, 12 divorced men, 12 divorced women, 42 children and 36 children (girls) born out of wedlock. Towards 1960, Chascomús did not seem to have changed much: 12 Orthodox Christians, 459 Protestants, 29 Jews, 6 Muslims, 197 men bonded by consent, 204 women bonded by consent, 36 men split/divorced, 41 women split/

divorced, 32 boys and 33 girls born out of wedlock (Annex 1).¹⁸ In short, the small size population of Chascomús, besides being rural towards 1947, more clearly reveals social control mechanisms.

What comes as a surprise is that from such an environment emerged Raúl Alfonsín, who, when President, prompted the passing of the Law of Divorce 23 505 in 1987. To illustrate this fact it is worth mentioning that the statesman attended the primary school *Escuela Normal Regional* in Chascomús, at the age of 13 he was admitted at the Military School *General San Martín* and graduated as lawyer at the National University in La Plata in 1950. Because of the military coup of September 1955, which overthrew President Peron and proscribed Justicialism, Alfonsín spent a short period of time in prison. During the de facto government of Juan Carlos Onganía, he clandestinely agitated in favour of an ethical current of public opinion opposing the military. Such activity resulted in his being arrested in November 1966. Following the death of General Perón, he was co-founder of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights.

The results herein presented seem to confirm that secularization “as a tangible historical fact, which means none other than the separation of Church and State, of religion from politics” (Arendt, 2007: 282) had not been completed in Argentina by mid-20th century. This fact, fit with the development of a demographic policy which aimed at nuptiality being the expression of the economic policy based on the natural order of things.

It should be highlighted that Llorens and Correa Ávila, authors of the above mentioned text *Demografía Argentina. Esbozo de una política demográfica* were more than authorized voices, since not only were they University professors and part of the elite government officials consulted by Peronism and the military, but also they had the prestige of being members of the *Instituto Alejandro Bunge de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales* and of the magazine *Revista de Economía Argentina*.

As regards the period of this study, the elements of demographic policy prepared by Bunge’s disciples seem to have exerted certain influence through the steps taken by José Figuerola - the Technical Secretary of the President —who participated as Head of Cabinet of the Labour Ministry of the dictatorial government of General Miguel Primo Rivera in Spain in the 1920’s (Biernat, 2007:66). However, his dissatisfaction with the course matters had been taking is clear since they referred to the topic of the population as “issue”, hinting at the expansion of civil rights of women and

¹⁸ Added to this description there is the surplus of women in unions which contradicts the monogamous notion of couples: 58 married women and 7 single women bonded by consent.

children in the lower social classes (Santana, 2010). Therefore, they sought to influence the first five-year governmental scheme 1941-51 through the intersection of their relationships of power and knowledge, even though it was clear that the expansion of civil rights during the Peronist administration could not be stopped.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt they did have influence during the first Peronist period, in the sphere of the official demographic policy praising “the dignity of women as wife and mother”, since placing man and woman naturally and operationally in the core of the family, birth rates would increase. That is to say, according to Bunge’s disciples, the measures that would preserve the State from social riots, from the materialist concept of life and from communism did not have to tend to the expansion of civil rights herein commented, since in such expansion they saw a threat. It is true that the economic plan which was favoured with more than 50 per cent per capita income of the workers (MJS DH, SDH, ANM, 2008: 26) brought about a strong impact on the youngest section of the economically active population which, at the same time, is the population in the marriageable age. To the extent that members of the elite government officials— scientifically — stated the need to increase marriages reinforcing punishment if the indissolubility of marriage was broken, as well as on bastardy and illegitimacy, while recommending the creation of economic obstacles to celibacy.

The punitive elements of this policy can be identified in the papers of those times, since those who got divorced are referred to as “living in an atmosphere of lack of decency and immorality equivalent to or even worse than the one that lies on a discrete marital infidelity”, besides being a stigmatization for their children who were “disqualified as illegitimate” (Ingenieros, 1953: 174). The book *El divorcio, cáncer de la sociedad* (*Divorce, the cancer of society*) and Biernat (2013: 21) have identified divorce as one of the factors responsible for birth decrease—as well as sodomy and onanism— which created great concern. Rodríguez Molas (1984: 121-122) makes reference to the punishment on the children of Ángela González Alzaga de Ledesma who were expelled by the authorities of the religious school *La Asunción* which they attended, since their mother had been granted an absolute divorce during the first months of the year 1955 together with the custody of the children born to her first marriage (Masciadri, 2007).

Undoubtedly, indissolubility of marriage was regarded as a key piece in the *apparatus or device* (*dispositif* in French) to the extent that the probability of being divorced in 1947 or 1960 was very low in all the geographic

units under examination. In fact, “the term *apparatus* or *device* refers to that within which, and the reason why, the mere activity of a government is made, without the means being grounded on the living being. That is why devices should always imply a process of subjectivation; they have to produce a subject” (Agamben, 2011: 256).

According to Barrancos (2007:188), “the good marks of birth” were demanded by society, and both Eva Duarte and Perón “had suffered underestimation and humiliation” on their own skin since they carried a history of inadequate filiation. Although the writer also refers to the fact that cruelty was greater towards her because of her status as a woman, and this expression illuminates a singular aspect of statistics. While census ideology refused to compute “illegitimate unions” until 1960 since they damaged the nation’s image, vital statistics identified with alarm the number of “illegitimate” births by differentiating their sex.

These elements seem to confirm Torrado’s thesis (2003: 302) whereby social integration was weak in the society after the national organization, since most marriages were endogamic. The author points to the ethnic integration achieved by the action of the “obligatory, public, gratuitous and lay primary school” which secured “a common basic acculturation”. On the other hand, the text written by Llorens and Correa Ávila (1948: 74) states that education in women’s high school adhere to “the education for a family life”, by which the girl/woman had to be educated to do the housework, raise children, and administer the family economy. That is to say, the model of marriage that the immigrants brought and the one imparted at school was the same.

It has been seen that the figures accompanying the debate did not always respond to the demands of the demographic policy outlined by Bunge’s disciples. Towards 1947, there was in Buenos Aires a high rate of bachelors since the numerical imbalance was notorious when Argentina was receiving the last waves of European immigrants. At the same time, the masculinity indexes of the rural population of Chascomús and La Plata show that the imbalance was greater depending on the generation and the situation that influenced celibacy. Crude marriage rate fell constantly; marriage between natives of Argentina increased due to the *stock* effect—the larger the group, the more endogamy (Devoto, 2004: 332)—while at the same time, towards 1960, there was no choice but to count the consensual unions, since births out of wedlock, typical of the lower classes, did not exhibit the decline desired by those who were drafting the demographic policy under analysis. The ones drafting the policies were old members of

elite government officials who by 1943 gave advise to the military government in force, and who had also interfered in the first stage of the Peronist government. Said group was not pleased at all with the figures accounting for 52,501 divorced individuals, most of them women, which the 1947 census yielded. Moreover they saw with horror the approval of the law regarding absolute divorce which responded to nothing less than the symptoms of social decomposition and the destruction of the natural order. For them, the only possible solution was to retort to a coup d'état and to start a state policy disciplining lower classes in a definitive way.

ANNEX

Appendix 1: Population of five or more years of age according to religion, Buenos Aires and selected parties 1947 y 1960

		Buenos Aires				Chascomús			
		1947	%	1960	%	1947	%	1960	%
Christian religion	Total	4 272 337	100.0	6 118 907	100.0	21 560	100.0	22 283	100.0
	Total	4 104 160	96.1	5 684 486	92.9	21 076	97.8	21 536	96.6
	Catholic	3 989 984		5 477 983		20 606		21 065	
	Orthodox	21 546		28 480		12		12	
	Protestant	92 129		177 428		458		459	
	Others	501		595					
Non-Christian religion	Total*	41 841	1.0	66 977	1.1	40	0.2	39	0.2
	Israelite	32 725		47 086		28		29	
	Muslim	4 854		4 284		9		6	
	Others	4 262		15 607		3		4	
Without religion		79 169	1.9	135 022	2.2	230	1.1	115	0.5
Unknown		47 167	1.1	232 422	3.8	214	1.0	593	2.7
		General San Martín				La Plata			
		1947	%	1960	%	1947	%	1960	%
Christian religion	Total	269 514	100.0	252 732	100.0	302 073	100.0	309 052	100.0
	Total	257 595	95.6	231 967	91.8	287 921	95.3	280 622	90.8
	Catholic	247 846		217 992		280 815		273 970	
	Orthodox	1 104		1 475		2 935		891	
	Protestant	8 621		12 465		4 148		5 738	
	Others	24		35		23		23	
Non-Christian religion	Total*	5 058	1.9	5 759	2.3	3 798	1.3	4 275	1.4
	Israelite	4 452		4 975		3 071		3 350	
	Muslim		440		162		550		95
	Israelite		166		622		177		830
Without religion		4 101	1.5	4 109	1.6	4 781	1.6	7 939	2.6
Unknown		2 760	1.0	10 897	4.3	5 573	1.8	16 216	5.2

* Percentages are not calculated when the total number of cases is equal or less than 50.

Source: elaboration on the basis of census database.

Appendix 2: Population according to couple situation by sex. Argentina, 1947 y 1960

Total Population			
	1947	%	1960
T	11,318,896	100.0	13,865,164
V	5,828,722	51.5	6,901,339
M	5,490,174	48.5	6,963,825

Population with couple			
	1947	%	1960
T	5,261,017	100.0	8,292,207
V	2,639,836	50.2	4,092,186
M	2,621,181	49.8	4,200,021

Population without couple			
	1947	%	1960
T	6,057,879	100.0	5,572,957
V	3,188,886	52.6	2,809,153
M	2,868,993	47.4	2,763,804

In Union			
	1960	%	
T	606,774	100.0	
V	296,187	48.8	
M	310,587	51.2	

Never in union-single-			
	1947	%	1960
T	5,331,143	100.0	4,688,165
V	2,981,121	55.9	2,592,321
M	2,350,022	44.1	2,095,844

Ever in union			
	1947	%	1960
T	726,737	100.0	884,792
V	207,766	28.6	216,832
M	518,971	71.4	667,960

Married			
	1947	%	1960
T	5,261,017	100.0	7,685,434
V	2,639,836	50.2	3,795,999
M	2,621,181	49.8	3,889,434

Voluntary dissolution			
	1947	%	1960
T	52,501	100.0	91,003
V	20,414	38.9	35,877
M	32,087	61.1	55,126

Widowed			
	1947	%	1960
T	674,235	100.0	793,789
V	187,351	27.8	180,955
M	486,884	72.2	612,834

Divorced			
	1947	%	1960
T	52,501	100.0	12,376
V	20,414	38.9	4,748
M	32,087	61.1	7,628

Separated			
	1960	%	
T	78,626	100.0	
V	31,128	39.6	
M	47,498	60.4	

Note: 1947, population of 14 years or more. 1960: population of 12 years or more.
Source: elaboration on the basis of census database.

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