

NEW RELEASE KEHRER VERLAG

The Human Cost of Agrottoxins

Pablo E. Piovano

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The impact of 20 years of indiscriminate use of agrochemicals in the rural northeast of Argentina

In 1996 the Argentinian government approved, only relying on studies of the Monsanto Company, the cultivation of transgenic soybeans and the use of glyphosate herbicide spray, which was employed on resistant genetically-modified crops. With nearly two decades of glyphosate spraying affecting directly or indirectly one third of the country's population, Argentina has become a field study in toxic disaster with hundreds of scientific studies and medical surveys confirming the herbicide's lethal impact: Pediatric cancer cases have tripled, miscarriages, and unexplained birth defects have dramatically increased. Respiratory and skin disorders, mental disabilities and spontaneous abortions are just a few of the documented health effects on those living directly in the spray's path. Despite this inconvenient truth, there has not been any official systematized information.

The Human Cost / El Costo Humano documents the impact of 20 years of indiscriminate use of agrochemicals in the rural northeast of Argentina, and the devastating impact of the people and their environment. This book is the first publication of Piovano's body of work, which has been compared to Eugene Smith's *Minamata: The Story of the Poisoning of a City, and of the People Who Choose to Carry the Burden of Courage* about a mercury poisoning scandal in Japan in the 1970s.

»I followed my way and visited villages in the provinces of Entre Ríos, Chaco and Misiones. As I was entering into the shore and into the north the scenery became more and more tragic. It was very

easy in the impacted areas to meet those people affected. One led me to the other. Dozens and dozens of people opened up their homes to me and I found myself again and again before the same kinds of suffering: congenital malformations, miscarriages and cancer. Intimately, the repeated circle of stories and affections was disfiguring the faces to fuse them into a single pain and a single name: drip genocide, silent genocide. (...)

Endosulfan, methamidophos, chlorpyrifos, DDT, atrazine, 2,4-D (a component of Agent Orange used in the Vietnam War) along with others, are used in the country, although some of them have been prohibited.»

– from the text *Sacred Land. Drip Genocide* by Pablo E. Piovano

Pablo E. Piovano (b. 1981) is a photojournalist and multi-scholarship winner based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He has been a staff photographer for the *Página / 12* newspaper in Buenos Aires since the age of 18. For *The Human Cost* he was awarded the Philip Jones Griffiths Award 2016 (UK, for emerging talent in photojournalism), the Sustainability award 2016, Hanover, Germany, the Manuel Rivera-Ortiz Foundation for Documentary Photography & Film Grant 2015, and the First prize at the 2015 Festival Internacional de la Imagen (FINI), Mexico, among others.

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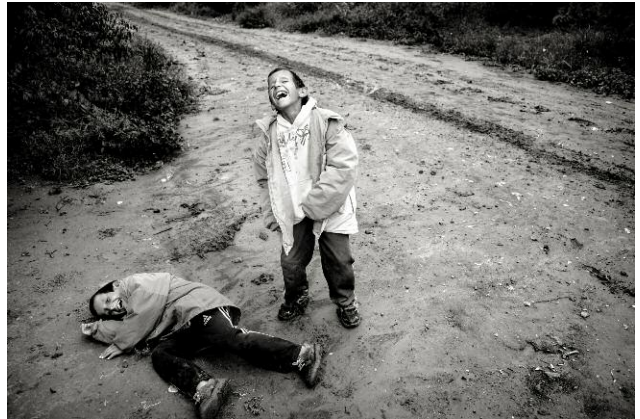
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Captions

1.
04/15/2015 Colonia Alicia, Misiones province.
2.
09/23/2015 Monte Maíz, Córdoba province.
Alfredo Cerán worked for nine years as an agrochemical land applicator in the soybean fields. The beds of his nails were burned, and at present his clinical condition includes nonalcoholic cirrhosis and three herniated discs. Medical results showed residues of glyphosate, chlorpyrifos, azatrine, 2,4-D and cypermethrin in his blood.
3.
04/09/2015 Pozo Azul, Misiones province.
Student in the immediate vicinity of a rural school. In Argentina there are 10,200 rural schools, more than half of the country's educational facilities. Most of these schools are located in areas of agricultural production, which are continuously fumigated. As a result of this, the "Stop fumigating schools" campaign was born in Argentina.
4.
12/02/2014 La Leonesa, Chaco province.
5.
12/10/2014 San Vicente, Misiones province.
Mónica Gabriela Rais. Her mother was 15 when she gave birth. At that time she worked on tobacco plantations.
6. 12/01/2014 Roque Sáenz Peña, Chaco province.
The twins Aldo and Maximiliano Barrios suffer from a serious condition due to congenital microcephaly, one of the diseases associated with the use of neurotoxins in transgenic agriculture. They attend one of the many facilities for the disabled, which increase in number considerably every year.
7.
12/11/2014 Fracrán, Misiones province.
Jessica Sheffer is 14 years old and has a genetic mutation.
8.
11/29/2014 Napenay, Chaco province.
Anita Sosa cannot walk by herself but she plays together with her older sister, pretending to be a dancer. Liliana Dworak, their mother, attributes her daughter's illness to her exposure to fumigations which complicated her last pregnancy.
9.
09/25/2015 Firmat, Santa Fe province.
The Fontanellaz family lives surrounded by fields exposed to constant fumigations. Edgar made 34 judicial complaints. He was attacked twice with gunfire at his home by soybean farmers. His two sons were born with hearing loss.
10.
12/07/2014 Colonia Alicia, Misiones province.
Lucas Techeira is five years old and was born with an incurable disease called ichthyosis lamellar, caused by a gene mutation. His parents worked in a tobacco field and other plantations in the area where agrochemicals such as glyphosate and 2,4-D, one of the components of Agent Orange, are sprayed.
11.
12/06/2014 Colonia Aurora, Misiones province.
Marcos had leukemia at the age of ten. His father worked for more than 30 years as a fumigator in the tobacco factory and his mother was hospitalized for poisoning during pregnancy. His family had to move from the farm where they lived to the urban area of the town, far from the poisons. Marcos has been waiting three years for a kidney transplant in the Posadas IOT sanatorium.
12.
2014 – 2017 Basavilbaso, Entre Ríos province.
Fabián Tomasi and family.