

PERIGLACIAL PHENOMENA IN THE NW OF ARGENTINA

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The Northwest of Argentina is a región, wich from a periglacial or geocryogenic point of view has hardly been studied yet. Nevertheless its geographical position and its importance as a point of human settlement during the Quaternary require an increased emphasis on the study of its sedimentologic and paleoclimatical conditions. Catalano (1926- 1927) described rock glaciers and icings in the Puna Region. Corte registered patterned ground in Volcán Socompa (6031 m). Rock glaciers were reported in the NW region, from N to S at heights over 4500 m a.s.l.:

- At the Sierra of Santa Victoria (22°) rock glaciers have been observed by Corte, Trombotto and Ahumada (1982) and were recently being studied by Zipprich (1998).
- At the Nevados of Acay, Chañi (6200m a.s.l.) and Cachi (24° - 25° S), Igarzábal (1980) mentioned the occurrence of rockglaciers.
- At the Cumbres Calchaquíes, Sierra of Quilmes and Nevados of Aconquija (26°-27°S) recent fieldwork by the author reveals patterned ground of small size , minor rock glaciers and solifluction forms.
- At the Sierras of Famatina (28° - 29°S) Stingl and Garleff recognised rock glaciers.

Knowing geocryogenic phenomena in the NW of Argentina may contribute to:

- Provide information for a better understanding of climate changes.
- Associate results with fossil periglacial forms in order to find out about the altitudinal levels of periglacial paleoclimates.