Visual Representations of the Andean World

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In this study, Adorno links Guaman Poma’s drawings of the Andean world pre- and post-contact with traditional Andean forms of spatial organization and visual representation as well as the systems of European iconography that Guaman Poma manipulates as he chronicles the conquest in word and image.

Aguilar, Fabrizio, dir. *Paloma de papel.* Venevisión, 2005. DVD.


These two well-known works by perhaps the greatest of Peruvian writers, José María Arguedas, are presented here bilingually (Spanish/Quechua) with illustrations for children.


This astonishing manuscript with nearly 400 line drawings found at the Royal Library in Copenhagen was recently added to Unesco’s Memory of the World list.


Harrison’s study includes an analysis of the sign systems of the *tocapu* and the *pacarina* and other visual codes of the Andean world past and present.


This lavishly photographed book for children is designed to present the child in the United States with images of life in the Andes.

--- *El toro que se perdió en la lluvia/Paraparapi chinkaq toro.* Transl. Washington Córdova Huamán.


This colorful book for children presents Peruvian historical sites, popular art, and folklore through coloring and other activities.


Jarvis, Peter, dir. *The Incas Remembered.* Monterey Video, 2005. DVD.


The Spanish colonial project involved the creation of Quechua language catechisms complete with curious pictographs for the conversion and instruction of Quechua speakers.

Llosa, Claudia, dir. *La teta asustada.* Olive Films, 2010. DVD.

Méndez, Josué, dir. *Días de santiago.* Lions Gate, 2005. DVD.

*National Geographic: Great Inca Rebellion.* National Geographic Video, 2007. DVD.


The story of the goddess Mama Raiguna is summarized here by the famous historian Rostworowski and presented in an accessible early reader format with colorful illustrations.


Urton analyzes and diagrams the possible sign systems involved in the complicated string devices used by Incan record keepers in a non-textual (but textile) writing system little understood today.


This poem by the beloved Peruvian poet Watanabe is beautifully illustrated with photographs of hand-knitted puppets in a boardbook format for the youngest of readers.
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Over the past seven years I have begun to assemble a collection of works corresponding to my research interest in the visual representation of the Andean world. In *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean World*, anthropologist Deborah Poole notes “the astounding number and variety of images and image-objects through which that place called ‘the Andes’ has been both imagined and desired, marginalized and forgotten by people on both sides of the Atlantic” (7). Poole’s study focuses on the “visual economy” that was patterned around the production, circulation, consumption, and possession of images of the Andes and the Andean peoples” over nearly two hundred years (8), with an emphasis on “the role played by visual images in the circulation of fantasies, ideas, and sentiments between Europe and the Andes” (6).

In assembling my collection through purchases at used book sales in Kansas and Illinois and by internet, as well as Lima’s *Feria del Libro* and various Lima-based cultural institutions, I participate in the circulation, consumption, and possession of images of the Andes at the same time as I analyze those processes. At first I found it ironic that the collection had come together despite the fact that I had not had the opportunity to travel to purchase books in the Andes: all of my purchases were made either in the United States or in the coastal city of Lima. However, this perhaps only confirms the extent to which images of the Andes circulate around the globe; it is not necessary to go to the *sierra* to consume or possess textual collections of highland images.

A significant part of my collection is comprised of children’s books, for various reasons. One reason is that children’s books, traditionally image-rich, have provided me with multiple visual representations for my research while offering a means through which to share my academic interests with my own children. Another reason is that some of these texts are bilingual in Quechua and Spanish, and while a longer Quechua text without corresponding images would
be difficult for me to decipher, my very elementary language abilities in Quechua allow me to comprehend a simple text prepared for children with the help of the images and the translation. Finally, the production of texts for children and youth is of particular interest to me, revealing as it does what is valued and thus what is passed on to the next generation, as well as how we teach our children to think about the world, how to imagine or desire other places and spaces and how to conceive their relationship to them.

As I reflect about this collection and how it has come about, it seems to me that while I have been actively assembling it in the last seven years or so in the context of my doctoral studies, it was in some sense birthed in my own childhood in a small town in central Kansas, where picture books from the public library first sparked my interest in other worlds and provided my only access to those worlds for many years. At that point I could not have imagined that I would learn to read Spanish, much less books in any indigenous language of the Americas, and yet I was already beginning to participate in a global circulation of images that would eventually be of academic—and more than academic—interest to me.

As I continue to add to this collection in the coming years, I hope to address what I see as one weakness of the collection: an absence of artisan-crafted texts from the Andean region produced outside of the established publishing houses. If I have the opportunity to travel to the region in the future, a search for locally-crafted artist books would greatly enrich the collection.