

## José María Arguedas: Mapping the Peruvian Andes for *La Prensa*, Buenos Aires

ELLA DUNNE

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

José María Arguedas, Peruvian author, anthropologist, and translator, addressed the relationship between the dominated, dominant, and in-between of the Peruvian Andes in the early twentieth century, where Spanish and Quechua language and culture exist together and interact. His work studied and acknowledged across the globe, Arguedas has been recognised for his experimentation with language, his connection with myth, song, and landscape and his cultural, social, and political representation of the marginalised indigenous and mestizo communities of his country at the time and today. Between 1938 and 1948, Arguedas published thirty articles for the Sunday supplement of the Buenos Aires newspaper *La Prensa*, now primarily studied as texts included in posthumous anthologies.<sup>1</sup> Through examining and translating the original texts along with images as published in *La Prensa*, I explore the interlinking and co-dependent physical and social concepts that form a conceptual map of the Peruvian Andes. In drawing this conceptual map, I underscore the importance of the articles' graphic content.

Moving between the coastal metropolis of Lima and Sicuani in the Cuzco district of the Peruvian Andes, Arguedas offered the contemporary Buenos Aires reader insight into the life and culture of the Peruvian Andes. In the thirty articles he created a conceptual map of the region as he travelled through the Southern and Central Andean region, tracing his own location and the sites of study through the pictorial and typographic texts. This essay traces these steps, through words and through photography and illustration printed in the press in order to build a map. I argue that Arguedas' readers, then and now, can visualise a conceptual map layering physical, social and historical concepts drawn by Arguedas in the articles published for *La Prensa*. Arguedas draws the relationship across national borders, between himself, his subject, and the reader and across regional borders between the different districts of the Andes and also between the Andes and the wider coast, with the constant presence of Lima as the metropolis. The author described and portrayed these physical and geographical conditions then mapped them onto the intellectual and social context in which he wrote, his subject lived, and his audience read. Examining these interconnecting narratives reveals a many-layered map of the Peruvian Andes that allows us to consider both Arguedas' process and how the Argentine reader came to understand the region through the author's conceptual map.

I pose these questions through my approach to the source text. I have translated the articles written by Arguedas for *La Prensa* into English from my position as a United Kingdom native speaker of English and student at King's College London. Translating these texts has revealed a new form of reading, and new possibilities of understanding how Arguedas himself was writing. I understand translation to be the closest form of reading a text: these translations allow me to get as close as possible to the articles, to the language and images on the page. In her introduction to

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the edited anthology *Creating Context in Andean Cultures*, Howard-Malverde explains that in the edition:

The notion of text was taken in its very broadest sense: thus the text of textiles—two words with a common root in Latin *texere* meaning ‘to weave’ – could be as valid an object of our interests as the alphabetic script of the seventeenth-century Huarochirí manuscript or the oral discourse of speech makers and dramatists in modern day Peru and Colombia.<sup>2</sup>

Her broad outlook allows an unrestricted understanding of the term ‘text’ that allows a more complete tracing of the conceptual map drawn, allowing space for the oral, the visual and the written that constitute Arguedas’ corpus. Arguedas’ ‘reader’ should also be considered the ‘listener’ and ‘interpreter’ of sounds, song and of the images—photographs and illustrations—that guide this essay.

Through translating his work, I have also come to understand Arguedas as a translator. Nicholas Round identifies “mediator” and “bridge” as amongst the most common metaphors for the translator within translation theory, going further to identify the understanding of translation as a ‘reconciling activity’—notions deriving from the Latin *transferre* and *reddere*.<sup>3</sup> Within the context of Arguedas’ work, fundamental studies by the likes of Cornejo Polar, Rowe and Lienhard all agree that as a writer Arguedas was on a quest to become a “mediator” and “bridge”, between the races, social classes and languages of the Peru of his time, always advocating for the voice of the Indigenous and mestizo people, especially of the Peruvian Andes, to be heard by Spanish-speaking Peruvians but also by the wider Spanish-speaking population, especially the Buenos Aires reader in this case. Rowe develops the term ‘transferencia’, understanding translation as a process that goes beyond the transferal from language incorporating the cultural, social contexts of these languages.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, Bhabha’s *in-between* allows us to consider the mode of ‘transferencia’ or mediation rather than the ‘reconciling’ result—it encourages us to explore the space rather than a beginning and end.<sup>5</sup> The space, here, is the conceptual map this essay begins to identify and explore.

Arguedas wrote these articles at the start of his career following eight months in El Sexto prison for taking part in an anti-fascist protest with fellow university students in Lima. At the time, the Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui (1894–1930), inspired by a new socialism arriving from Europe and Russia, was a leading figure in promoting political and social change through literary *indigenismo* in the journal *Amauta*.<sup>6</sup> Reading the journal and surrounding himself with like-minded people, Arguedas became associated with the Peña Pancho Fierro, an organisation of artists, musicians and intellectuals promoting awareness of indigenous culture and Andean arts from the capital. Retrospectively, in his acceptance speech of the Premio Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, “No soy un aculturado”, Arguedas comments:

En la primera juventud estaba cargado de una gran rebeldía y de una gran impaciencia por luchar, por hacer algo [...] Fue

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leyendo a Mariátegui y después a Lenin que encontré un orden  
permanente en las cosas; la teoría socialista no sólo dio un  
cauce a todo el porvenir sino a lo que había en mi energía.<sup>7</sup>

This ‘primera juventud’ for Arguedas was part of a wider movement identified in Latin American literary and political scholarship. After the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and the First World War Latin American intellectuals were, according to Meyer, beginning to recognise their own socio-political agency in what she describes as a ‘disillusionment with Eurocentric positivism’ and a move toward finding personal and national identity.<sup>8</sup> Arguedas’ experience reflected this movement. Upon release from prison he moved to the Cusco district to work as a Geography and Literature teacher at the *Colegio “Mateo Pumacchua,”* or *Colegio Nacional de Sicuani*. In the same year, *Canto Kechwa. Con un ensayo sobre la capacidad de creación artística del pueblo indio y mestizo* was published, a collection of Quechua songs transcribed and printed in parallel with Spanish translations and accompanied by illustrations. In 1939, Arguedas married Celia Bustamante, leader of the *Peña Pancho Fierro*, an organisation of artists and writers focusing on indigenous Peruvian art and culture. The couple lived between Sicuani and Lima until 1941, the year that Arguedas’ second novel *Yawar Fiesta* was published. The description of Arguedas and his wife by their niece Cecilia, at the time is significant:

Alegres, jóvenes, apasionados. Todo lo que los rodeaba adquiriría un acento de belleza y plasticidad. Sus ropas, sus cosas, la disposición de los muebles, sus souvenirs, algunas plantas, los gatos, sin los que José no podía estar. Los veo aún: José rasgueando su charango en el ocio de una tarde feliz, cantando suavemente huaynos que me eran familiares; o, sino también el estentóreo «Wifalalaaaa! Wifalalaaaa!». De vez en cuando se lanzaba a bailar. José era como un niño más en la casa. Lo admirábamos en parte porque mi abuela nos había enseñado a respetar el talento, la inteligencia.<sup>9</sup>

Her memories draw on a happiness, enthusiasm and energy now often forgotten in light of Arguedas’ suicide in 1969. As we read the articles published over this period, I argue that we must always bear in mind this tone of happiness early in Arguedas’ writing career and adult life, avoiding casting the shadow of suicide over the early collection.

From 1942 to 1956, Arguedas worked for the *Sección de Folklore y Artes Populares* at the *Ministerio de Educación Pública*. He also wrote “Cuzco” for the *Corporación Nacional de Turismo*, published in Lima as a short tourist pamphlet describing the city. And in 1947, almost ten years after *Canto Kechwa* and marking the end of this period, *Mitos, leyendas y cuentos peruanos*, co-written with Francisco Izquierdo Ríos, was published in Lima. Then, in 1948, a ‘fragmento’ of *Los ríos profundos* was published in *Las Moradas*, Vol. II, no. 4, which would become the second chapter of the novel. For Cornejo Polar, this preview of the novel, which chronologically marks the end of the period considered in this essay, marks the start of Arguedas’ creative journey and development in his literary writing.<sup>10</sup> These articles come to an end at the point where Cornejo Polar identifies a beginning. I

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argue, however, that Arguedas' mapping and writing of the Andes starts long before the publication of his novel and in this essay and my further research I identify these articles as an essential part of Arguedas' wider corpus—including text, photography and song. The articles written for *La Prensa* immediately challenge any understanding of the period between 1937 and 1948 as being a gap in Arguedas' writing career and his creativity, a challenge previously noted by Arguedas' friend and colleague in anthropology John Murra.<sup>11</sup> In taking these articles as my primary source, I challenge this common assumption in Arguedian scholarship, moving away from a general focus on Arguedas' fictional writing as his primary corpus and developing an understanding of the conceptual mapping of the Andes in these articles *for La Prensa* through image and text.

Where Buenos Aires does not appear explicitly within Arguedas' articles, the site of publication and the tone of the articles reveals its important presence on the page as an intellectual point on the map. Focusing on the literary and intellectual landscape relevant to Arguedas' work and our understanding thereof, it is important to note that at the start of the twentieth century Buenos Aires was negotiating self-identification—personal, cosmopolitan, national and continental—within the context of becoming a multicultural hub for immigrants from across the globe. Nodding at the rise of the Latin American vanguard, Beatriz Sarlo uses the work of Xul Solar as a pictographic representation of Buenos Aires at the start of the twentieth century:

Lo que Xul mezcla en sus cuadros también se mezcla en la cultura de los intelectuales: modernidad europea y diferencia rioplatense, aceleración y angustia, tradicionalismo y espíritu renovador; criollismo y vanguardia. Buenos Aires: el gran escenario latinoamericano de una *cultura de mezcla*.<sup>12</sup>

Through Solar's work, she portrays Buenos Aires as a place of contrasts that grow and develop together in dialogue to create a modern, evolving 'cultura de mezcla.' The physical position of the different capitals, being on opposite coasts of the continent, directly maps onto the contrast between the vanguards developing in the capitals. Whilst in Lima Amauta led the way with an *indigenista* concern for 'lo incaico' and a Marxist political stance in the 1920s, in Buenos Aires the intellectual eye looked beyond the limits of the city to all that was arriving from around the world, with, amongst many circumstances, the mass migration of Spaniards during WWII to the city and rise in communist and anarchist influence in workers movements. The launch of *Sur* in the thirties acted as a platform for intellectuals concerned with addressing the dualities synthesised by Sarlo, through existential questions of identity and the self in dialogue with philosophy arriving from Europe, notably José Ortega y Gasset's *perspectivism*. Although under different circumstances, the Buenos Aires intellectual also developed a concern for everything that came from outside of the city, from the 1920s onwards. With José Hernández's *El gaucho Martín Fierro* (1872) in the late nineteenth century and later Güiraldes's *Don Segundo Sombra* (1926)—a book Arguedas himself recognises as influential—the attraction of utopian rural scenes to the metropolis developed into a wider social and cultural concern. Through looking beyond the capital to the rural, the literary development of the gauchesque contrasts the Peruvian *indigenismo*, revealing the significance not only the setting,

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but also of the perspective from which it is perceived. The distance between Arguedas and his reader must always take this intellectual and socio-cultural context into account.

On the Peruvian side, Lima also features in the articles, not in images but in the text. On the conceptual map that is drawn throughout the articles, Arguedas sketches long routes—roads, train tracks—leading from Cuzco and the Andean region, connecting the coast of Peru with the mountains and the capital with the rural. The verb ‘sketch’ does not quite capture the indelible mark left by these routes in Arguedas’ writing. He describes these systems with such cutting decisiveness, showing their cultural and economic mark on the Andean landscape that the reader can visualise them cutting across the map. Arguedas mentions Lima in his articles as a site in constant interaction with the Andes, physically and conceptually. In ‘La Feria’, he defines the size and economic value of the feria at Huancayo through its physical location in relation to the capital Lima, - it being a comparably simple nine hours away by road at the time.<sup>13</sup> Lima represents modern society and economy. Here, the interconnection between the physical and socio-cultural, intellectual mapping in Arguedas’ writing is at its clearest; the physical construction of roads, the drawing of lines on the map, leads to huge social and economic development and change. Arguedas’ description of the history of the *wayno* maps directly onto the history of the migration between the coast and the sierra:

Cuando las carreteras abrieron el camino de la costa y de la capital de la república a toda la gente de la sierra, los mestizos bajaron en multitud a las ciudades costeñas y llegaron a la antes casi legendaria e imposible Lima. Conscientes de lo que significaba el intercambio con la costa y con la capital, la gente de la sierra desde los indios para arriba. Se entregaron con verdadera desesperación a construir carreteras hacia la costa. Comunicarse con Lima por vía directa fue el ideal ardiente de todos los pueblos andinos.<sup>14</sup>

Arguedas encapsulates the process through an insistence on magnitude, mass and urgency: ‘toda la gente de la sierra,’ ‘multitud,’ ‘verdadera desesperación.’ Communication by land between the capital of Peru and the Andean region had been recently established, with the mass construction of roads linking the mountains to the coast at the end of the nineteenth century. The article depicts Lima through the viewpoint of the Andes, and then further from the viewpoint of the Argentine reader. The intellectual mapping of the capital cities implicitly involved in the publication of Arguedas’ articles places two important sites on the map, and also highlights Arguedas’ own perspective when drawing this conceptual map through words and images. Throughout the articles Arguedas negotiates this international relationship. He establishes himself as a Peruvian, from the Peruvian Andes writing about the Peruvian Andes for the reader of a Buenos Aires newspaper. He shows his awareness of the national border between himself and his reader. Taking, for example, his conversion of Peruvian currency to the Argentine audience in the article ‘La Feria’: Arguedas recognises that his reader has different points of reference, socially and physically<sup>15</sup>. This then expands into a consistent tone throughout the articles forming the voice of a national representative: Arguedas takes on the task of describing his nation for another. This is clear in varying degrees of

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subtlety. Throughout the articles Arguedas defines Andes with 'of Peru' or 'Peruvian'; he recurrently reminds his reader that he is not describing the Andes of other nations. Arguedas draws his map by establishing the borders and limits that contain his object of study.

There is, however, a very rare glimpse of recognition of the cross-national nature of the Andean region. He refers to mule sellers who cross into Peru from Argentina and to fiesta costumes being made in Bolivia to be worn in Peru, all within the Andean context. The Argentine reader of Buenos Aires is, in this way, offered a sense of community; their nation shares similar landscapes and traditions; the border is not uncrossed. The mule sellers, crossing national borders, belong to similar landscapes, as Arguedas acknowledges the expanse of the Andean region beyond the Peruvian border. His insistence on the 'Peruvian' not only marks his distance from the reader but contains his subject to what he knows. Arguedas clearly writes about places he has witnessed, landscapes he knows well. This style is only emphasized by the fact that every time the focus of an article moves towards the coast or to Lima, Arguedas' writing loses its densely descriptive tone and focuses on action and practicalities. The photographs and images accompanying the text, and forming an essential part of the articles, are graphical evidence of this connection to the place and to the subject, showing that Arguedas has witnessed what he describes.

Understanding Arguedas' position through the field of anthropology in which he was becoming involved reveals further cross-border connections on Arguedas' map. The anthropological project set out by Luis E. Valcárcel, Arguedas' own academic supervisor and mentor, thrived on this broadening concern for the rural beyond Buenos Aires, and a wider concern for defining Latin America in the thirties. Valcárcel himself documents the communication developed between Cuzco and Buenos Aires on cultural anthropological grounds in his *Memorias* (1981). With this documentation and Silvia Graziano's detailed work on Arguedas' connection with Argentina (2011), it is clear that Arguedas' connection was founded in Fausto Burgos' visit to Cuzco, investigating the cultural ties between Tucumán, his birth town, and the Peruvian Andes.<sup>16</sup> While visiting, Burgos met Valcárcel and his fellow indigenista intellectual Uriel García. Burgos was 'impresionado por la campaña indigenista organizada por los cusqueños' and invited them to write for the Sunday supplement of *La Prensa* in Buenos Aires, a supplement that he himself was writing for at the time.<sup>17</sup> Valcárcel writes about the success and legacy of this cross-border collaboration, as part of the *Misión de Arte Incaico*:

El impacto de nuestra Misión de Arte Incaico en Argentina y Uruguay fue muy grande, llegando a aparecer comentarios sobre el suceso en publicaciones europeas.<sup>18</sup>

Echoing the intellectual interest in the indigenous, he also importantly gauges success through contact with Europe: the movement was recognised not only across borders in Latin America but in North America and Europe. Arguedas became involved in the collaboration through Valcárcel, who also later encouraged Arguedas to travel to Spain to complete his postgraduate research in Burmillo, comparing Spanish and Peruvian cultures and societies. It is worth noting that as Arguedas' career developed he moved away from the *indigenista* principles

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of Valcárcel's anthropological and intellectual approach, distancing himself from his mentor. In the same way, Arguedas distanced himself from the regional intellectualism developing in Cuzco, criticising a lack of insight and connection to the subject of their studies.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, this tracing of contacts and interactions allows for a line to be drawn between these places that make physical marks on the map and contextualise the articles.

If Arguedas later disassociated himself with the Cuzco intellectual, I argue that his articles place Cuzco at the center of the conceptual, international map. The article "El nuevo sentido histórico del Cuzco" reveals Cuzco as a central location, to which many of these long routes lead.

Arguedas introduces the city:

Se ha interpretado siempre la palabra K'osk'o como que significa  
ombligo, es decir, centro y ojo del imperio de los Incas.  
Residencia del Inca, hijo del Sol y padre universal de todos los  
indios, la gran ciudad legendaria de la que se habla en los  
confines del Imperio como de algo extraterreno y maravilloso.  
La ciudad dentro del arte, de la riqueza, de la sabiduría y del  
poder.<sup>20</sup>

My translation chooses nucleus for 'ombligo,' finding a noun that encapsulates the centrality of the city, but also holding a sense of life, with 'ombligo' echoing the connection between human and landscape. The central and focal location of Cuzco shapes the understanding of national borders, where Cuzco is a city that crosses national borders as the capital of the Inca empire, before the colonial period and before the definition of republics that creates the border between Argentina and Peru. As the article continues Arguedas makes it clear that through time, with the end of the Inca and start of the colonial empire, the processes of *mestizaje* (understood in his terms) and Hispanicisation and the post-colonial period of Republic, the point on the map remains as a centre of interest and importance. Arguedas' focus on Cuzco, his clear admiration of the city in the aforementioned article, and his use of the Quechua *K'osk'o* throughout, sets Cuzco at the centre of the physical map being drawn. Arguedas' position in relation to the reader is, then, more diverse than simply cross-national. He is surrounded by a completely different landscape of mountains where the coast is distant whilst his reader is on the flat plains of La Plata.

A closer reading and translation of the articles reveals the fragility of the placement of Arguedas as representative, as 'Peruvian' and as spokesperson. Arguedas assesses the complex exchange and interaction not only between two cultures, races and languages, but also the figure of the mestizo and the process of *mestizaje*. Lienhard describes Arguedas as the spokesperson for the mestizo.<sup>21</sup> However, I believe it is more useful to understand Arguedas as translator, rather than spokesperson, with an important distinction. Where a spokesperson communicates for a chosen group, representing them in a cultural, social or political context, a translator occupies Homi Bhabha's in-between, here Arguedas as translator engages not only with reader but also with subject—the people he photographs, observes, talks to and interacts with. Arguedas' voice in the articles for La Prensa reflects this interaction, as he moves in distance from the subject of each

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article; sometimes he places himself at a clear distance from the scene, object or concept, whilst at other times, often within the same article, he moves so close as to be part of the article himself. He also moves between social and racial groups, identifying as *mestizo*, *indio* or clearly not *indio* at different moments in his text. And when he is not clearly within a group but acting as omniscient narrator, his opinion is certainly not static: his voice is not one of constant appraisal of the *indio*, as is sometimes understood in the characterising of Arguedas as national hero of Peruvian folklore and *neo-indigensimo*. Indeed, his discussion of language in “Entre el kechwa y el castellano, la angustia del mestizo” is a clear example of Arguedas’ placement, as he uses his own experience as “ejemplo tipo” of the *mestizo* experience. Meanwhile Arguedas’ description of the “Canción del incendio” shows the ambiguity and movement of his voice, as he places himself clearly amongst the “nosotros” of the *indios* whilst also describing the *indios* from the outside. The movement identified is in direct dialogue with Cornjeo Polar’s concept of heterogeneity—paralleling Bakhtin’s heteroglossia—whereby he identifies Arguedas as migrant subject, not *mestizo* subject, because he ‘habla en los locus y [...] duplica (o multiplica) su condición de sujeto.’<sup>22</sup> It becomes clear that Arguedas moves within the “in-between,” as his journey as an anthropologist—or more appropriately *translator*, being constantly aware of the interdisciplinarity of Arguedas’ writing—is in a complex space of both familiarity and change.

At times, Arguedas’ proximity to his source caused his awareness of national and geographical distance between the reader and subject of the articles to dissolve, overridden by a sense of assumed knowledge between Arguedas and his reader. His descriptions and explanations demand a certain degree of shared experience and knowledge. He sees and experiences landscapes, situations and objects and describes them as if the reader has also seen them, using the familiar pronouns *esto* and *eso* when describing the depiction of bulls in Peruvian ceramics, for example.<sup>23</sup> The distance on the conceptual map that is being drawn is made shorter, or at least Arguedas assumes it to be short. He assumes that his reader will understand and relate to the image that he describes.

However, his composition suggests the opposite effect. Arguedas’ writing leaves the impression that he himself is carried away with the subject, drawing intimate details vivid in his mind, without realising that it is not clear to his reader. A key example of this and of the heteroglot movement across the conceptual map is the identification of the characters that populate the landscape. At first, the key characters appear to be clearly divided: *indio*, *mestizo* and señor. This is especially relevant in the naming of the collection of articles for publication as anthology, *Indios, mestizos y señores* (1985). However, as Arguedas appears to be explaining clear rituals, traditions and processes, the reader often comes across confusing and apparently contradictory statements and phrases. Speaking of her own work as anthropologist, Rosaleen Howard explains her interaction and understanding of the terms *indio*, *mestizo* and *blanco*, thereby helping to understand Arguedas’ approach:

En los discursos de la identidad, las categorías opuestas pueden servir como forma de delimitación de los territorios imaginados de la identidad cultural, trazando simbólicamente los márgenes



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entre “indio”, “mestizo”, “blanco”, etcétera. Sin embargo, aquí se trata de idealizaciones de las categorías sociales andinas. En las practicas cotidianas, estas dicotomías se fraccionan y dan origen a la hibridación.<sup>24</sup>

Howard makes a distinction between ‘prácticas cotidianas’ and ‘discursos de la identidad’—the intellectual and the everyday reality. Howard’s observation allows us to understand Arguedas’ writing as a reflection of the ‘prácticas cotidianas’ and so to recognise this ‘hibridación’ and the fracturing of dichotomies—the *indio*, *mestizo* and *blanco* cannot be so easily separated. The article describing the charango can again be used as a clear example. Throughout the article Arguedas refers to the charango as an instrument created by the *indio*, as adaptation of the instruments brought by the conquerors. He describes the different pueblos *indios* to explain the different varieties and uses of the charango, beginning to place the instrument clearly on the map for his reader. Then, quite suddenly he states:

El charango es instrumento mestizo: es del indio actual del Perú y del pueblo leído y trabajador de las ciudades del Ande. Las pandillas mestizas de Carnaval y aun las marineras serranas se bailan con charango. Pero el charango en manos del indio kollavino, o del indio de Pampacangallo y de las quebradas de Apurímac y Ayacucho, es el charango verdadero; nadie lo toca mejor; y oyéndolo tocado por ellos, se comprende de golpe que al charango lo hicieron esos indios y que nació primero para la música de ellos.<sup>25</sup>

The *indio* that has been relevant throughout the article is now replaced with the mestizo in a simple statement, only then to be mixed together as Arguedas’ description goes on. Although only one of many examples this reveals the true complexity of the relation between the human and socio-cultural with the landscape, and of Arguedas’ placement therein.

The photographs and illustrations printed within the articles, sometimes occupying half of the page, reveal another side of Arguedas’ position and clarify one of Arguedas’ aims in building this conceptual map through the articles. There is a clear contribution towards constructing an indigenous epistemology, documenting the history and socio-cultural life of the Andes, past and present. Arguedas’ inclusion and translation of the ‘Doce Meses’ originally written by the chronicler Huaman Poma de Ayala (1534–1615) show Arguedas’ true awareness of the importance of documentation, in image and in text (Figure 1). Arguedas writes in his own article, preceding his translations:

Los dibujos, como la crónica, describen la vida del pueblo indio, desde el “Tutay Pacha” hasta el siglo XVI. Estos dibujos son de un valor inestimable para toda clase de estudios acerca de los períodos preincaico, incaico y colonial del Perú, Bolivia y

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Ecuador. Allí están descritos los vestidos de los nobles y del pueblo; los bailes las costumbres, los trabajos agrícolas y domésticos; los castigos que imponía la justicia incaica y todos los sufrimientos del pueblo indio de la Colonia. Con estos dibujos puede evocarse en toda su fisonomía la vida de los tres países mencionados, durante los periodos a los cuales se refiere la “Nueva Crónica”.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 1: Los Doce Meses, published *La Prensa*, 17 December 1939. Courtesy of Biblioteca Nacional Mariano Moreno.

Arguedas places the images on a level with the text, explaining how they clearly *describe* the Andean life across history. He uses the original relief prints from the “Nueva Crónica”, embedding them within his text and forming a header for the article so that the reader traces the months through image as well as text. The graphics also importantly include Quechua text, showing the alphabetisation of the oral language on the page. The photographs and images he uses in his articles serve a very similar purpose to those of Poma, giving life and substance to the indigenous epistemology he builds across the articles. This is an essential part of the press publications that has been lost to Arguedas’ reader today; now the articles are published as an anthology with none of the original images that in his newspaper publication often formed up to half of the space used by Arguedas’ article on the spread.

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The photographs also add specificity and realness to the situations Arguedas describes. Where we have seen how his text shows movement challenging his voice as ‘spokesperson’, these photographs contribute to Arguedas’ translation process and are moments of clarity: he clearly represents the scenes described in the images. They capture fixed moments that echo his constant reminders within his text: he has described only one specific example, and that the rituals, celebrations and traditions vary innumerable throughout the Peruvian Andes. In his text, Arguedas very rarely generalises and constantly acknowledges the unique and focused nature of his subjects. In this way he dissects a map that can be seen as a division between coast and mountain, to show that the Andes does not form one singular and uniform region, but a region ‘rich’ in variety.

Importantly, this richness derives from the close relationship of the human, the socio-cultural, with nature and the surrounding landscape. If they were live, the maps of the towns, villages, mountains, tracks and highlands would show people constantly interacting with their surroundings. Describing the singing of the song of reproach to the Sun and Moon, Arguedas writes:

En los ayllus cantan sentados, en el corredor de las casas: frente  
al corredor está el molle frondoso; y si es en las chukllas de las  
punas, frente a la puerta están los cerros con nieve o sin nieve, la  
pampa o las lagunas con sus totorales oscuros.<sup>27</sup>

The home described is very closely linked to the landscape that surrounds it. In translating the passage, I become extremely aware of the site-specificity of the language: *ayllus*, *molle*, *chuklla*, *puna*, *totorales*. These are all words that, if translated into English must be firmly placed within their indigenous landscape. It is another echo of the presence and power of the Quechua language in the region, a subject worthy of further exploration but beyond this essay. With this remoteness also comes a sense of exclusivity. The *ayllus* — communities, towns, villages — are often drawn as remote capsules. In the first published article Arguedas describes a song about fire, explaining that only the men of the village know the song: ‘Sólo los indios de los ayllus saben.’<sup>28</sup> There is exclusivity to the performance and it is tied with a belonging, a sense of community.

The exclusivity is not only Andean but more local. The celebration of rituals and the use of instruments clearly demonstrates the variety and richness across the Andean region. Returning to the charango, as Arguedas introduces it as a key instrument in Andean life, he explains:

El charango de Ayacucho es más chiquito, unos 40 centímetros; sus  
cuerdas gruesas tienen voz grave y pastosa. Y mientras el  
del Kollao tiene doce trastes, el de Ayacucho sólo tiene seis. Este  
charango casi nunca se toca “punteando”; rasgan todas sus cuerdas, y  
al mismo tiempo, en las cuatro cuerdas y con los seis trastes, se da la  
melodía. Es para música de quebrada; no es para esos waynos de la  
gente de puna, bravíos o desesperados; es para canto dulce; y cuando

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es de tristeza, no es tan tremenda y de tocarla fuerte, como para que lo oigan todos los pueblos que hay en la pampa. La quebrada repite el wayno; y junto al río, en medio de los maizales, o de los sauces que cabecean, mojándose en el agua, no hay necesidad de gritar tanto, ni para decir la pena ni para cantar la alegría o el amor que nace.<sup>29</sup>

Just as the instruments are adapted to the landscape, the materials available, and the purpose required, it becomes clear that the people are shaped by their environment. The people of the quebrada live in different conditions to those of the puna, and so require different means of expression, feeling different emotions and facing the world in a different way. This regional variety and specificity determined by the landscape also shadows the intellectual and socio-historical mapping of the region and of Peru. The essay 'La canción popular mestiza e india en el Perú, su valor documental y poético' begins the placement of socio-economic and cultural conditions on the physical map of the Andes in what I argue is Arguedas' first truly discursive essay amongst the articles published for *La Prensa*. He writes:

A la quebrada dominó el castellano mucho más pronto. En los pueblos tibios de las quebradas hicieron primero su residencia los conquistadores. Subieron al altiplano después, cuando descubrieron minas de oro y palta en las alturas, o persiguiendo a los últimos inkas rebeldes. Pero fue en las quebradas donde se aclimataron más pronto, donde hicieron sus mejores residencias y casi todas sus ciudades. Y por otra parte, el mestizo y aun el indio de los bajíos aprendió más fácilmente el español; porque el español era mucho más apropiado para el habla del hombre de la quebrada, alegre, tierno y sociable que para el indio bravío, reconcentrado y señero de la puna grande.<sup>30</sup>

He uses the map that he has drawn of the landscape, with the detail of the different conditions to approach the huge historical impact of colonialism, the introduction of the Spanish language and the exchange between the Spanish and indigenous cultural and social worlds. The character of the mestizo appears, through mestizaje, in a complex and site-specific sense. The *La Prensa* reader is constantly warned against generalisation and reminded of the variety and expanse of the Andean region. The characters that we have seen move and change, are moving within a landscape and a physical setting.

The photographs, mostly taken by Arguedas himself, show this setting: the churches, the town squares, the roads and paths, mountains and trees and the crowds of people therein. The interaction of Arguedas' descriptions with the photographs almost acts as a coloring book, where the descriptions embellish the black and white images. These descriptions are constructed in a detailed and extremely emphatic descriptive prose. The reader is drawn directly to the site of the article and almost always within an established setting of sky and mountains. Arguedas sets out the terrain through a repeated description and contextualisation within the landscape, dividing the land between the high, pointing peaks, the bare highland puna, the grassy pampa, and the

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lower rolling hills of the Andes. Through his descriptions the reader can see the green of trees, the greys of rocks, blues of the water in the lakes and rivers being inscribed onto the map. These forms appear without color in the photographs, with the palm trees standing behind the crowds in the “Los rezadores” article (Figure 2). The boundaries of towns are defined by natural, geographic structures: rivers, mountains, valleys, gorges. Arguedas’ descriptions of songs, rituals and traditions, are framed and interjected with descriptions of these surroundings. He describes the *ischu* and its different forms that grow on the pampas—he draws the colour of the grass from ‘color oro’ to ‘verde claro’ and then spreads the colour across the map showing the great expanse of land:

Toda la puna está cubierta de ischu. En las pampas grandes el ischu es chiquito y duro, pero dulce para el ganado; allí pastan miles de ovejas, de llamas y de pacos; en las laderas es más arbusto y todavía es buen pasto; pero cerca de las cumbres y de las hondonadas altas, el ischu es grande y duro, allí silba el viento.<sup>31</sup>

His description scans from the flat highland plains to the sloping hillsides and up to the sharp peaks, creating an aerial view for the reader, emphasized by the image of the thousands of sheep, dotted on the landscape.

This terrain map then also reveals towns and dwellings and routes across the land. The links between the towns and villages and other important sites form a huge part of the focus of Arguedas’ articles. Arguedas describes dirt paths and tracks through the long journeys Andean people make from their homes to their nearest towns or between villages. The reader sees them drawn winding around the mountainsides endlessly, rising and falling from peaks to valleys, not forgetting the indelible marks of the new roads and railways. The town is often depicted as a nucleus that becomes the centre of rituals, celebrations and exchanges. People travel to and from this nucleus constantly. At the end of many of Arguedas’ articles, describing events, he depicts the pilgrimage away from the town at the end of the day or end of the celebration: ‘Por todos los caminos se van del pueblo, quejándose siempre’.<sup>32</sup> There is a constant sense of movement, for religious, social, and economic purposes. Here, the people have come to the church to celebrate the dead amongst the community, in the presence of the priest, and are leaving again to return home.





Figure 2: "Los Rezadores" published in *La Prensa*, 21 January 1940. Courtesy of Biblioteca Nacional Mariano Moreno.

Zooming in on the map, Arguedas also lays out the structure of the villages and towns that he describes, allowing the reader to gradually gather an idea of what to expect and what to visualise, confirmed by the photographs. Almost invariably, a town will have a central square, which is entered through the main street in the town. In the square is the church, which almost always has a large cross. On the outskirts of the town are small fields, farmlands and allotments and beyond that, a graveyard. Often, rivers pass the outskirts of the village, forming a boundary and causing bridges to be important features of the landscape. The details of the towns and of the natural landscape are reflected in the photographs and descriptive prose at once, interacting with and giving a setting to the socio-cultural movements of the region.

Essential photographs and graphics combined with Arguedas' detailed, emphatic descriptions in the periodical press construct a conceptual map of the Peruvian Andes. The graphics allow readers to gain insight into the web of associations and concepts within the articles before reading any typographic text. The photographs and graphics allow us, now, and readers then, to understand moments of stasis in the heteroglot voices of the articles, moments captured in time. They reveal, in a fixed moment, the 'who', 'what' and 'where' of the articles. With the combination of graphic and text, the Buenos Aires reader can place the Peruvian Andes both within the broader context of Latin America, between the capitals and in contrast to the coast; and from the perspective of Arguedas, writing and photographing, describing towns and landscapes to the finest detail. As readers, we can use the notion of conceptual mapping to understand the movement of Arguedas himself, as writer and translator. His perspective moves across the map, finding moments of stasis as 'spokesperson,' 'mestizo,' 'indio,' 'peruano,' part of the 'pueblo andino' and

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onlooker. The stasis is momentary and conflicting, with layers of terrain building up on the map with colonial history, the process of mestizaje, movement between regions and across nations, intellectual influences. With the detail of the landscape, the social, cultural and economic role of towns and cities, and the routes that trace lines across the space, the physical map that is drawn serves to reveal the complex, hybrid notions of identity, language and culture that move between places, crossing regions and borders. On the page of the newspaper articles, the photographs, images and words reveal the movement and *in-between* position of Arguedas himself, who draws the conceptual map not from one perspective but from many, moving perspectives.

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ELLA DUNNE is a PhD student in the Spanish and Latin American Studies department at King's College London and funded by the AHRC project Language Acts and Worldmaking, a team that works together to improve awareness of the power of language and to improve teaching and learning of modern languages. Under the supervision of Professor Catherine Boyle and Dr. Elisa Sampson Vera Tudela, her research considers the translation of José María Arguedas' work.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See William Rowe, *Mito e ideología en la obra de José María Arguedas* (Lima: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 1979) for a detailed bibliography of Arguedas' fictional work.

<sup>2</sup> Rosaleen Howard-Malverde, *Creating Context in Andean Cultures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas Round, "Translation and its Metaphors: The (N+1) Wise Men and the Elephant," *Skase Journal of Translation and Interpretation* 1, no. 1(2005): 58.

<sup>4</sup> Rowe, (1979), 213.

<sup>5</sup> See Homi Bhabha, "How newness enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Time and the Trials of Cultural Translation," in *Writing Black Britain 1948–1998* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 300–307.

<sup>6</sup> Jorge Coronado, in his introduction to *The Andes Imagines: Indigenismo, Society, and Modernity* (2009), aligns the 'disaster of the War of the Pacific' for Peru, with the surge of indigenismo in literary, anthropological and journalistic circles, with Mariátegui and the rise of Marxist political and cultural criticism across the Andean region. So from the late nineteenth to the first half of the twentieth century, the indio was a topic of discussion, and from 1920 to 1940 Coronado describes a "veritable avalanche of writings focused on the plight of the indio," 8.

<sup>7</sup> José María Arguedas, "No soy un aculturado," in *El Zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1971), 282–283.

<sup>8</sup> Here I follow Doris Meyer's use of the term Latin American, bearing in mind the nuance required, considering the variety across the continent and the possible misconceptions therein. Here, however, Meyer traces a general movement and change that, although not place-specific can be identified across the nations of Latin America; Doris Meyer, *Lives on the Line: the Testimony of Contemporary Latin American Authors* (California: University of California Press, 1988), 3.

<sup>9</sup> Cecilia Bustamante, "Una evocación de José María Arguedas," *Revista Iberoamericana* 46, no.122 (1983): 189.

<sup>10</sup> Antonio Cornejo Polar's thesis understands Arguedas's writing as a progression from the first short story to *Los ríos profundos* and then to *Los zorros...* culminating in Arguedas's suicide (1973:14). Rowe takes a similar approach, tracing Arguedas's narrative style from "Wambra Kuyay" through to *Los zorros...* with *Los ríos profundos* marking a step in the progression (1979).

<sup>11</sup> ed. Wachtel and Revel, *Anthropological History of Andean Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 6.

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- <sup>12</sup> Beatriz Sarlo, *Una Modernidad Periférica: Buenos Aires 1920 y 1930* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Nueva Visión, 1988), 15.
- <sup>13</sup> Arguedas, *Obra Antropológica, Tomo 1* (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 2012), 298.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., 303.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid., 296.
- <sup>16</sup> Silvia Graziano, "José María Arguedas en la Argentina: notas sobre una búsqueda," *Letras* 82, no. 117 (2011):103–112.
- <sup>17</sup> Luis E. Valcárcel, *Memorias* (Lima: IEP, 1981), 223.
- <sup>18</sup> Arguedas (2012), 220.
- <sup>19</sup> In the Peruvian context, Deustua and Renique importantly acknowledge and study the development of literary and cultural hubs outside of the capital. The beginning of the twentieth century is a period of huge socio-cultural evolution across the entire country, with an 'intelectualidad regional' as a driving force in this development. The publication of regional journals is an exemplary statistic in their study: between 1918 and 1930 the number of newspapers and journals published rises from 167 to 443, a 265% increase (1984), 2.
- <sup>20</sup> Arguedas (2012), 337.
- <sup>21</sup> Martin Lienhard, *La voz y su huella: escritura y conflicto étnico-social en América Latina 1492-1988* (Hanover: Ediciones del Norte, 1991), 91–137.
- <sup>22</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, ed. Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981; repr.1994); Cornejo Polar, *Los universos narrativos de José María Arguedas* (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1973), 209.
- <sup>23</sup> Arguedas, "La cerámica popular india en el Perú" (2012), 291.
- <sup>24</sup> Rosaleen Howard, *Por los linderos de la lengua: Ideologías lingüísticas en los Andes* (Lima: Fondo Editorial PUCP, 2007), 45.
- <sup>25</sup> Arguedas, (2012), 266.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid., 211.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid., 197.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., 196.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 265.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid., 285.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid., 197.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid., 263.