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Elena Phipps

Textile Society of America, elena@ephipps.org

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An Andean Colonial Woman's Mantle: the New World and its Global Networks.¹

Elena Phipps

elena@ephipps.org

Examining the subject of global trade in the 16th century focuses on a period when Spanish and Portuguese navigators dispersed throughout the world, seeking spices and treasures from new lands. To discuss the impact of this enterprise solely in terms of trade, is difficult, particularly in regards to the Americas. This is because the process of establishing trade relationships was only one aspect in the overall act of these historical encounters between worlds. (Figure 1.) The impact of which manifested in the entire transformation of the cultures of the region that was achieved through the violence of conquest, religious conversion and establishment of Colonial rule. These factors are part of cultural transformation that took place in the Americas and should be considered as part of any examination of the material goods that were produced and traded as a result. Among the consequences of transformation, the social impact of these exchange relationships is particularly visible in the realm of textiles, and this paper will focus on some of these issues in the context of one special textile.

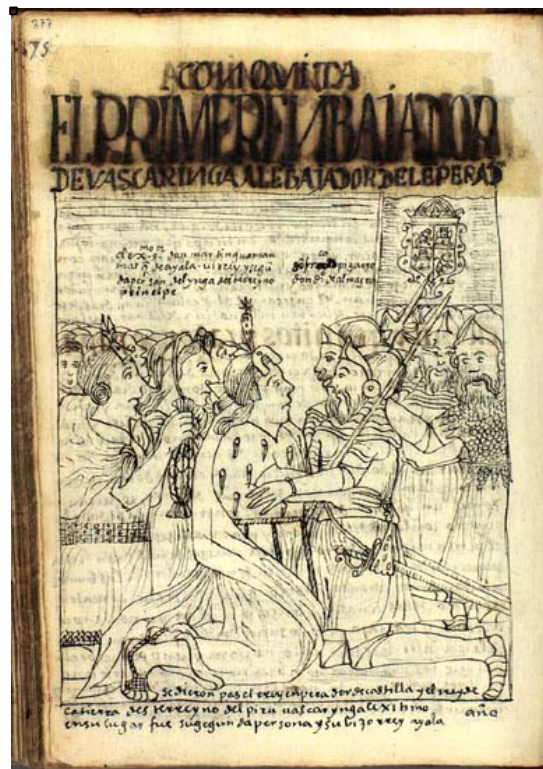


Figure 1. The First Ambassador. Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala .El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno (The First New Chronicle and Good Government) 1615 Kongelige Bibliotek. Gl. kgl. S. 2232, 4^o, p. 375[377].

¹ This paper was presented in the context of the TSA panel for *The Interwoven Globe: textiles and trade 16th-18th century* in



Figure 2, left. Woman's Mantle, Peru, Late 16th c./early 17th c. Tapestry weave, cotton warp, camelid weft. Metropolitan Museum of Art. Roger's Fund, 1908 (08.108.10).

Figure 3, right. Coya (Inca Queen) Martin de Murúa *Historia general del Piru*, 1616, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16 (83.MP.159, folio 23v) illustrated manuscript, J. Paul Getty Museum.

The textile is a woman's garment—a shoulder mantle—made in the Southern highlands of the Andes, probably sometime in the mid- to-late 16th century. (Figure 2.) The garment would have been worn by an Andean woman of high status, and we know this from various factors in its design and execution that reference both Inca and Spanish cultures.² Woven in tapestry weave, of the finest quality of alpaca yarns, its polychrome designs include rectangular geometric designs, called *tocapu*, various birds and flowers, and a background of an undulating and interconnected fretwork pattern.

While the Inca culture had no writing prior to the arrival of the Spanish, we know a great deal about them from both the archaeological record and the early colonial documents prepared by both Spanish and native Andean scholars.³ Woven in tapestry weave, many of these tunics have been preserved, notably the tunic belonging to the Dumbarton Oaks Collection, which has allover *tocapu*, worn by the Inka king.⁴

Women also wore special garments—a dress that wrapped around the body and was held by pins at the shoulder. (Figure 3.) A mantle, covering the shoulders was pinned at the breast. We know about the

² See E. Phipps "Garments and Identity in the Colonial Andes". Phipps, Hecht and Esteras *The Colonial Andes: tapestries and silverwork 1530-1830*. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004, pp. 16-41.

³ Historic writing on the Inca, see, for example, Martin de Murúa. *Historia General del Peru*. Facsimile Edition, Los Angeles, Getty Museum, 2008. See also, Juan de Betanzos, *Narrative of the Inca*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1996. For contemporary scholarship see Terry Daltroy *The Inca*. Malden, Blackwell Publisher, 2002.

⁴ Dumbarton Oaks tunic accession number B518. See E. Phipps. Cat entry no. 18 Man's Tunic (uncu) in *Colonial Andes*, pp 153-6.

details of these Inca garments through dressed ritual figurines preserved in high altitude ceremonial site burials.⁵ Women of high rank and special privilege wore matching sets of garments, though preserved examples are fewer, but show the use of special designs. While some have argued that they are not the same *tocapu* designs, others, like myself, have proposed that they, in fact, reflect the origin of the *tocapu*.⁶



**Figure 4. Miniature Tunic for Statue of Christ, *Uncu Santo* (side A).
Museo Etnografico y Folklore, La Paz, Bolivia.**

In the Colonial era, the use of the special Inca motifs took on new meanings, as association to Inca noble status played a role in the social contract of Spanish administration. In men's garments, we see them depicted in the tunics worn for Christian celebrations, as in the paintings of the Corpus Christi processions in Cuzco from the last quarter of the 17th century almost two hundred years after the conquest.⁷ As the Jesuits, a powerful ecclesiastical order active in the Andean region during the 16th-18th centuries encouraged a closer association between Christianity and native traditions these Inca garments and designs were even produced to clothe statues of Christ. (Figure 4.)

⁵ See J. Reinhard, *Ice Maidens*. Also Phipps Catalogue Nos. 1 and 2 Dressed Miniature Figurine in *Colonial Andes*, pp. 128-30.

⁶ E. Phipps unpublished paper "Tocapu on Colonial Andean Garments" presented at Harvard University *Conference on Tocapu*, 2003.

⁷ See L.E. Wuffarden, Catalogue Nos. 116 a-d Corpus Christi in *Colonial Andes*, pp. 312-318. See also Carolyn Dean *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ*. North Carolina, Duke University Press, 1999.



Figure 5, left. Portrait of a Ñusta, 1730-50. Oil on canvas. Museo Inka, Cuzco. Photo: D. Giannoni.

Figure 6, right. Woman's mantle. Silk and camelid hair. New York, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1902-3-782.

For women, Inca symbols in this format only began to be used in the Colonial era—and in earnest, in traditional garments – the mantles and wrapped dresses. (Figure 5.) While very few have been preserved, these are depicted in paintings particularly in the 17th to 18th centuries. Apart from the paintings, a few actual mantles are known, and were likely used as wedding garments.⁸ The beautiful mantle in the collection of the National Museum of American Indian shows the *tocapu* designs organized in three rows, with two broader fields filled with many small designs, including animals, mermaids and even Spanish soldiers brandishing swords. (Figure 6.) Another, in the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum is woven entirely of silk and metallic yarns, both materials imported from China and Spain in the late 16th century notably through the Manila Galleons. These trade ships crossed the Pacific Ocean to Asia bringing silver from the Americas—both Mexico and Peru-- in exchange for Chinese silk and porcelain. In this example, there is a proliferation of *tocapu* in a most luxurious context.

The Metropolitan Museum's example is the only one that solidly incorporates the influence of Spanish aesthetic in the design. (Figure 7.) The undulating design is very reminiscent of fabrics produced in Spain in the 16th-17th century that favor repeated patterns of ogival shapes—perhaps influenced in part from their Islamic origins. (Figure 8.) Transforming the pattern into a fretwork, this type of design is often likened to metalwork of the period. We can see how the joined crossings of the pattern in

⁸ Some of the finest Colonial women's mantles preserved in museum collections include: National Museum of the American Indian 5/3773, published in *Colonial Andes* Catalogue number 40, pp 192-94; Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum, 1902-1-782, published in *Colonial Andes* Catalogue Number 39, pp190-91; Staatliches Museum für Volkerkunde, Munich, 43-41-3, published in *Colonial Andes* Catalogue Number 38, pp. 187-189.

themselves take shape—sometimes in the guise of a crown or jewel. It was also found in painted leather wall panels, a type of furnishing material that was well known in Spain, and may have been brought to the new world, as well. (Figure 9.) This motif was incorporated in the Andes, into some Colonial era tapestry examples, woven by highly skilled former Inca weavers, with incredible attention to detail.



Figure 7, left. Detail, MMA mantle as shown in figure 2.

Figure 8, center. Spanish silk, late 16th c., Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, (1919, 19.116.4).

Figure 9, right. Tapestry with Interlace Designs, Peru, late 16th- early 17th c. The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C. Acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1952, acc. No. 91-505.

The sources of reference for this patterning may have come from the garments worn by Spanish administrators, and from patterned silk fabrics imported from Spain. Brought into Peru through the annual flotas that carried luxury goods to the colonies, these fabrics were regulated by law, and prohibited to be produced in Peru, until the 18th century trade reforms, as a way of insuring the Spanish monopoly. (Figure 10.) This type of design was also part of the painting tradition, especially adopted by the Cusco school, depicting the image of the Virgin, in all of her manifestations, dressed in Spanish silks. In looking in detail of the MMA mantle, (see fig. 7) a curious manner in which the pattern is depicted can be seen. (Figure 11.) The embroidery of this chasuble in itself has some interesting cross-cultural aspects.⁹ So while these design sources were so prevalent in the period, both in Spain and available in the Andes, a further understanding of the garment, itself leads us to a question about why a woman of Inca descent would choose to wear such a garment?

⁹ The MMA Portuguese chasuble, accession number 42.97 will be part of the *Interwoven Globe* exhibition and catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art, forthcoming 2013. The chasuble with accession number 48.187.691 will be included in the catalogue.



Figure 10, left. 10 *Virgin of the Rosary of Guápulo*, ca. 1680 Peruvian (Cuzco) Oil on canvas 67 1/4 x 43 1/2 in. (170.8 x 110.5 cm) Gift of Loretta Hines Howard, 1964 (64.164.385).

Figure 11, right. 11 *Detail of a Chasuble*, 16th–17th century Spanish or Portuguese. Silk and metal thread on silk L. 47 1/2 inches (120.7 cm) Bequest of Catherine D. Wentworth, 1948 (48.187.691) . Photo by author.

I believe the answer leads back to the issue of the context for the garments—as wedding mantles. In the Inca period of the late 15th and early 16th century, prior to the arrival of the Spanish in 1532, land ownership followed matrilineal descent.¹⁰ After the wars in the Conquest of the Inca empire and the subsequent wars between the conquistadors, themselves ceased, the governance and administration of what became the Viceroyalty of Peru followed the Laws of Indias established in Spain. Seeking legitimacy to rights and privileges, Spanish administrators took wives from Inca royal families. One of the most famous marriages took place in Cusco, in the 1550s between Ñusta Beatriz, Inca princess whose lineage went back to the first Inca king, and Martin Garcia de Loyola, the governor of Chile and grand nephew of Ignacius de Loyola, founder of the Jesuit order. (Figure 12.)

In a painting from that period commemorating the event, and a subject that subsequently was painted again and again, we can see the depiction families of the Inca princess on the left, and that of the Spaniard on the right. The bride is dressed in traditional Inca wrapped dress and mantle-- her parents and clan are shown in what may be considered to be the fashion of the previous generation, in an archaizing style. Holding a bird in her hand, notice the way the tocapu bands outlined in white form borders of the mother's mantle. The mother's garment is very much in the style of the MMA mantle. However, this is not a manner seen in any other preserved examples, either from Inca or Colonial periods. Traditional Inca examples never use this outline around all four edges in their design, as tocapu are normally

¹⁰ See Irene Silverblatt. *Sun, Moon and Witches*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987.

presented in rows. Nor do we see it in Colonial examples. So the unique qualities of the mantle lay both in its design and context.



Figure 12, left. Detail, Marriage of Martin de Loyola to Dona Beatriz Nusta. Late 17th c. Oil on canvas. Convent of Copacabana, Lima. Photo: D. Giannoni.



Figure 13, right. 13 MMA mantle, (fig.2) detail of edge design with Inca-style warp looped selvedge.

We can see that while the traditional Andean weaving methods persisted well into the Colonial era--such as in the unique technical treatments of warps and wefts. (Figure 13.) Whole new layers of interpretation need to be engaged, resulting in a more complex and nuanced understanding of material culture produced in the age of global trade and cultural interchange. As ideas are represented in the textiles that were produced during this vital period of Andean cultural development and change, their meanings and contexts still require further interpretation.

Acknowledgements

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