

A NEW INTERPRETATION OF GUAMAN POMA'S  
CALCULATIONS ON THE TITLE PAGE OF THE  
*NUEVA CORÓNICA Y BUEN GOBIERNO*

BY

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For deciphering and understanding the autograph manuscript of the *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (Copenhagen, Royal Library, GKS 2232 4°) of Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (d. 1616?), scholars until 1980 have been dependent on the evidence offered by the retouched monochrome facsimile edited by Paul Rivet almost seven decades ago (Guaman Poma 1936). In this facsimile, the author's late annotations and emendations are often impossible to read. Reliable information on these important elements of the author's work only became available with John V. Murra and Rolena Adorno's critical edition (Guaman Poma 1980b), based on the latter's transcription of the autograph manuscript made in the Royal Library in June-July 1977. It is still the standard scholarly edition, now supplemented by the digital facsimile available on the Guaman Poma website (Guaman Poma 2001).

The present paper discusses a pair of calculations inscribed by Guaman Poma on the title page of his book (Figs. 1 and 2). They concern the size of the manuscript and have hitherto been only partly deciphered. On the basis of the evidence offered by the online facsimile (and by a print of the high-resolution image of the title page, from which the digital image on the Internet was derived), it appears that Guaman Poma inscribed not two, or three, but no less than six coherent statements about the size of the *Nueva corónica*, and that he did it not only with great accuracy, but also with great economy, in

<sup>1</sup> I thank Professor Rolena Adorno, Yale University, for her readiness to read and comment on numerous drafts of this paper, and I assume full responsibility for all remaining errors and shortcomings. Page numbers in square brackets refer to the consecutive pagination of the manuscript, as standardized in Guaman Poma 1980b. For a full survey of Guaman Poma's pagination(s), including his aberrant graphisms, see Boserup and Adorno 2003a.

each case adding to a previous sum of either *oxas / fojas* (leaves: units of 2 pages, a recto and a verso), or *pliegos* (sheets: units of 4 leaves, or 8 pages, since the manuscript is a quarto volume). It seems that Guaman Poma was concerned to keep track of the exact extent of his book because he was aware that “pliego” was a key concept in book pricing. As he scrupulously updated his calculations of the number of sheets that constituted his manuscript, he was anticipating both the approval of his book by the Royal Council of the king of Spain, and its printing and publication.<sup>2</sup>

The following analysis is dependent on Adorno’s detailed mapping of the successive stages in the evolution of the *Nueva crónica y buen gobierno*, which is one of the pathbreaking results of her efforts to coordinate the dynamic of Guaman Poma’s thought with the codicological and paleographical evolution of his manuscript (Adorno 1979-80; 1980; 1987; 2002). I will suggest an alternative solution to her latest reading and interpretation of the title page calculations, which involves an earlier setting and date for Guaman Poma’s repagination of part of his manuscript, but, as will become evident, this and other corrective amendments to her assessments corroborate the validity of her findings and of her general approach to the *Nueva crónica* as the product of one mind and one hand, i.e. of “an author and artist in control of his own medium” (Adorno 2002: 96).

Before presenting my reading and analysis of the title page calculations, a review of previous transcriptions and interpretations will be useful.

#### *From Richard Pietschmann to Franklin Pease*

After Professor Richard Pietschmann’s discovery in 1908 of the *Nueva crónica* in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, he had the manuscript on loan for nearly fifteen years in the Göttingen University Library of which he was the director. He prepared a transcription and critical edition that was to be published in Germany, as he had done for his 1906 edition of the *Historia indica* of Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In the apocryphal letter from his father to Philip III of Spain that prefaces the *Nueva crónica y buen gobierno*, Guaman Poma asks that the king publish his work: “y que demás del serui-cio de vuestra Magestad que rezultará ynprimirse la dicha historia” (Guaman Poma 1980b: 7).

<sup>3</sup> This Spanish chronicler of Inca Peru completed his work in Cuzco in 1572, when the last of the Incas was still alive at Vilcabamba. The manuscript of the *Historia indica* was discovered in the library of the University of Göttingen in 1893, and Pietschmann was its first editor: *Geschichte des Inkareiches von Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1906) (Porrás Barrenechea [1962] 1986: 366). Guaman Poma was Pietschmann’s second Americanist project.

After Pietschmann's death in 1923, Ferdinand Hestermann agreed to continue his work, and the Royal Library put Guaman Poma's autograph codex at his disposal in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg. The edition was completed in 1930, and Guaman Poma's manuscript was returned to Copenhagen. The Pietschmann-Hestermann edition, based throughout on unrestricted autopsy, remained unpublished due to a lack of funds for such ventures in pre-war Germany. Regrettably, it seems certain that it did not survive World War II.<sup>4</sup>

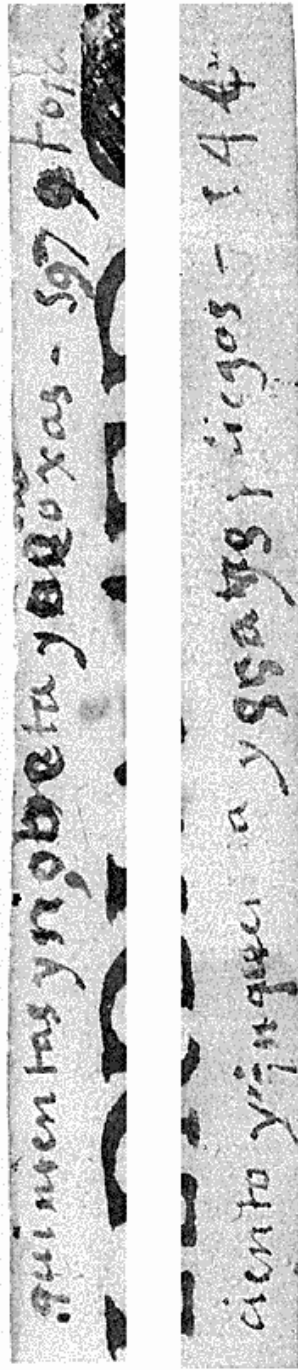
Paul Rivet's facsimile had been in preparation since 1930 when it finally appeared in 1936. The photographs were taken in the Royal Library but retouched throughout by the French printer, in order to make the composition and details of Guaman Poma's drawings stand out as clearly as possible, and to make his text legible in spite of the "bleedthroughs" from the writing on the reverse on every single leaf of the manuscript (Adorno 2002: 30ff.). Although prints made from the nearly 600 retouched plates were sent to Copenhagen and diligently checked in the Royal Library against the original codex, it was inevitable that a substantial number of erroneous retouches were included in the final printed facsimile. Beside the errors due to retouches, passages where Guaman Poma had annotated or emended his text were liable to become confused or downright unreadable, because all the layers of text, although often written with ink of different shades of colour, were undifferentiated in the high-contrast black-and-white facsimile. Hence, the three editions of the *Nueva corónica* that are based exclusively on the 1936 facsimile – the editions of Arthur Posnansky, Luis Bustíos Gálvez, and Franklin Pease, respectively (Guaman Poma 1944; 1956-1966; 1980a) – must be used with great caution, particularly in the areas where Guaman Poma overwrote his text or where the Paris technicians attempted to make corrections.

In his first presentation of the manuscript, Pietschmann had given exact information on several of Guaman Poma's late additions and corrections (Pietschmann 1908), but he had left no clue in print as to how to read and interpret the short title page annotations concerning the size of the manuscript.

<sup>4</sup> I am thankful to Dr. Helmut Rohlfing, Keeper of Manuscripts, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen, for information concerning the papers of Richard Pietschmann. The boxes related to the *Nueva corónica* transcription were never returned by Hestermann, and according to a handwritten note by Dr. Rohlfing's predecessor, based on information supplied by the Friedrich-Hestermann-Institut in Jena, Hestermann's private library was destroyed by fire in 1945, during an Allied air raid.



Fig. 1. Title page of GKS 2232 4°. (Foto Det Kongelige Bibliotek)



In the first transcription of the Paris 1936 facsimile, published eight years later in La Paz, Bolivia, Arthur Posnansky ventured the following reading of the notations that appear on the title page of the autograph manuscript:

[Top:] **quinientas y nobenta y siete oxas 597 t.ojo.**

[Bottom:] **cuatrociento y cinquenta oxas p.ciegos.**

(Guaman Poma 1944: vii)

In an explanatory note, Posnansky interpreted this as “exactly 597” pages of text and “approximately 450” pages of illustrations. The latter, he conjectured, were characterized by Guaman Poma as being “for the blind” (*p.ciegos*), i.e. those who cannot read, and inferring that the former were for those “with eyes” (*t.ojo*), that is for those who could read. Taken together, according to Posnansky, these two totals corresponded “more or less exactly” to the number of leaves (*hojas*) of the original – although, as he added, the totals had evidently been corrected by the author.

Luis Bustíos Gálvez’ edition of the *Nueva corónica*, consisting of a transcription of the Paris facsimile preceded by an “interpretación” in current Spanish which is in fact a complete – and creative – rewriting of Guaman Poma’s text, contains no critical apparatus, but it is patent that Bustíos Gálvez’ “interpretación” of the title page annotations (he did not

Fig. 2. Enlargements of the top and bottom lines on the title page of GKS 2232 4°  
(Foto Det Kongelige Bibliotek)

transcribe them) depends on Posnansky's reading, although it also differs from it on some points:

[Top:] **QUINIENTOS Y NOVENTISIETE (597) hojas para los que saben leer.**

[Bottom:] **Ciento cincuenta y cinco, más 244 gráficos para los que no saben leer.**

(Guaman Poma 1956-1966: xxi)

Bustíos Gálvez freely weaves a rewording of Posnansky's interpretation of "t.ojo" and "p.ciego" into a quasi-transcription, which on one point (*ciento*), is superior to Posnansky's unwarranted reading "cuatrociento". The "244 gráficos", added to his bold reading "155", which replaces Posnansky's even bolder "approximately 450 illustrations", give a total of 399 full page drawings, corresponding to the number found in the *Nueva corónica*.

Even as "read" by Posnansky and Bustíos Gálvez, the ensuing totals, 597 pages of text + 450 (or 150) full page drawings – are quite far from the 1190 pages of the manuscript, of which 399 pages are full page drawings, while the remaining 791 are filled by Guaman Poma's prose text.

In the latest of the three transcriptions of the Paris 1936 facsimile, Franklin Pease mentions that he consulted Posnansky's edition while making his transcription, but he bypasses in silence the title page annotations there (Guaman Poma 1980a) as well as in his 1993 edition of the work (Guaman Poma 1993).

#### *A Reading Based on Autopsy*

Posnansky's ingenious pair of opposites, *t.ojo* and *p.ciego*, canonized by Bustíos Gálvez, was generally accepted for a number of years. However, already in her first published work on Guaman Poma, Adorno ventilated her scepticism by stressing the fundamental integration of image and text: "the author's cryptic notation on the title page, which suggests that the book was intended for two separate audiences, literate and illiterate, corroborates the need to consider the visual narration as an integral part of the text" (Adorno 1974: 3). Her doubts were confirmed by autopsy in 1977, and Guaman Poma's "final" emendations of his title page annotations were transcribed thus in the Murra-Adorno edition of 1980:

[Top:] **quinientas y nove[n]ta y [ ] oxas – 5979 foja[ ]**

[Bottom:] **ciento y quare[nt]a y ssays pliegos – 146**  
(Guaman Poma 1980b: 2)

In the explanatory note *ad loc.* (Guaman Poma 1980b: 1126), Murra and Adorno dismissed as groundless the references of Posnansky and Bustíos Gálvez to the “eyes” (*ojos*) of the literate, as opposed to the illiterate “blind” (*ciegos*): *ojos* was to be read *oxas* / *fojas*, and *ciegos* was a misreading of *pliegos*. As for 5979, it was explained by Murra and Adorno as an initially erroneous (transposed) graphism 597 emended into 579. They further considered the total of 579 leaves (= 1158 pages) as “el primer cálculo de páginas totales”, while the 146 *pliegos*, taking a *pliego* to be 8 pages, gives a “cálculo definitivo” of 1168 pages (146 x 8). Guaman Poma, they explained, added 10 pages to his previous total corresponding to the 10 pages that he apparently planned to insert after 985 [1003],<sup>5</sup> cf. his correction of +10 of the page numbers from 986 and on, becoming 996 ff. (see Table 1).

The title page totals were also briefly touched upon in Adorno's introductory essay to the 1980 edition, “La redacción y enmendación del autógrafo de la *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno*”. She here interpreted 144, beneath the emendation 146, as the result of an erroneous division by 8 of 1168, and explicitly pointed out that 1168 (“11068” in Guaman Poma's own, slightly aberrant graphism) is the page number that Guaman Poma ultimately inscribed on the last page of his work, preceding the table of contents, i.e. page [1178] (Adorno in Guaman Poma 1980b: xxxviii, note 14).

In a paper published the same year, Adorno further suggested that Guaman Poma's repeatedly updated totals of leaves and sheets were intended “for the future printer” (Adorno 1979-80: 21; see also Adorno 1987: xlv, note 54, and Adorno 1989: 52).

#### *The Evidence of the Digital Facsimile*

After the Royal Library's publication in 2001 of a complete digital facsimile, it has become possible to study the manuscript at greater leisure, and Adorno has recently added new insights and interpretations to her previous examination of the manuscript (Adorno 2002). Furthermore, a *Pagination Survey* has been published, giving

<sup>5</sup> As mentioned earlier, all references to pagination of the *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* consist of a double entry: Guaman Poma's original page number is followed by the consecutive numbering of the manuscript's pages as used in the Murra-Adorno edition (1980b) and the online digital edition.

for the first time detailed and coherent readings of Guaman Poma's rather complicated successive paginations of his manuscript (Boserup and Adorno 2003a).

Among other important new findings, Adorno has expanded her 1977 reading of the title page calculations and succeeded in coordinating them even more closely with the codicological evidence of the manuscript, as follows (Adorno 2002: 98ff.):

(1) Beneath *quinientas y nobe[n]ta y [ ] oxas*, now read as *quinientas y nobe[n]ta y [7] oxas*, Guaman Poma had inscribed *quinientas y siete[n]ta y [9] oxas*. In accordance with this reading, "5979" is not an emendation of transposed digits, as previously interpreted, but the result of an update: first 579 leaves, then (later) 597 leaves (Adorno 2002: 99; see Fig. 2).

(2) Beneath *ciento y quare[nt]a y ssays pliegos*, Adorno now reads *ciento y quare[nt]a y quatro pliegos* – matching the emendation of 144 into 146 that she reported in 1980 (Adorno 2002: 98; see Fig. 2).

(3) The total of 579 leaves (= 1158 pages) is now explicitly analyzed: "The total of 1158 pages was produced by taking his initial pagination of the book through chapter 35 (the inns on the royal roads) that is, page 1083 (actual page 1103), and adding the number of pages, 36 and 39, respectively, that correspond to the chapters "Camina el autor" and "the months of the year":  $1083 + 36 + 39 = 1158$ ". Adorno had earlier conjectured, on internal evidence, that this chapter was the last one composed by the author, but she now also demonstrates that it constitutes a separate codicological element (for this term, see Munk Olsen 1998). Moreover, she has observed – based on codicological evidence and on documentary evidence in the Royal Library predating the latest rebinding of the manuscript in 1927 – that Guaman Poma had inserted the "Camina" chapter into his already sewn manuscript (Adorno 2002: 25, 71, 76, 99).

(4) As for Guaman Poma's next total, the 146 sheets, corresponding to 1168 pages, Adorno suggests a new interpretation. The difference of 10 pages from the previous total of 1158 pages, she explains, is not related to lost pages or pages that were planned but never inserted. The 10 extra pages are due to Guaman Poma's endeavour to "repair", from 986 [1004] onward, an error of minus-10 pages that he had made during the initial pagination of the manuscript, when after page 532 [536] he continued once more with page 523 [537], cf. Table 1.



This means that there is no evidence at 985 [1103] that points to any loss of pages or to an unfinished chapter (Adorno 2002: 61-64, 99).

(5) Adorno interprets the update from 579 leaves to 597 leaves as corresponding to the addition, at a late stage, of the 18 leaves of the “Camina” chapter. Thus, Guaman Poma’s latest and highest total, 597 leaves = 1194 pages (4 more than the manuscript actually consists of, everything counted), includes the “Camina” chapter twice. Adorno suggests that Guaman Poma forgot that he had already included this belatedly added chapter in his earlier calculation (Adorno 2002: 99).

(6) Finally, while Adorno earlier had considered the title page tallies to be directed to the future printer, she now suggests that Guaman Poma wanted to “seal” his manuscript by stating its exact length, thus protecting it from being tampered with and reduced or expanded (Adorno 2002: 98)

For a summary of Adorno’s 2002 analysis, see Table 2.

#### *Further Considerations*

Close scrutiny of the digital facsimile reveals that Guaman Poma inscribed one more – and final – sum on the title page. Arthur Posnansky’s old reading of the bottom annotation “cinquenta” (accepted by Bustíos Gálvez) is valid. It is an emendation of “quarenta” beneath. It has probably been overlooked because Guaman Poma did not follow it up by also emending “144”, later “146”, into 150. The most probable explanation within the framework of Adorno’s analysis would seem to be that Guaman Poma somewhat carelessly added 3 of the 4 unpaginated – and probably loosely inserted – leaves ([466/467: 978-981; 1066/1067]) to his previous highest total of 597, thus reaching 600 leaves = 150 sheets.

One other paleographical observation should be added. In the annotation at the top of the title page, neither “9” nor “7” fit the evidence. However, if one takes into account some tiny remains of letters above the line,<sup>6</sup> it seems possible to reconstruct “*nu[eue]*” subsequently emended into “*siete]*” (as transcribed by Posnansky). Furthermore, the fact that there was not space enough for the last letters of these two words, so that Guaman Poma had to write them above the line, indicates that a previous, shorter word might be sought underneath,

<sup>6</sup>This truncation is due to the fact that the edges of the pages of the book block were trimmed during rebinding in the 17th century.

fitting into the space between “y” and “oxas”. Having been twice emended, the initial short word is obviously difficult to read with any degree of certainty, but “tres” would possibly fit into the available space. In this case, Guaman Poma’s very first total of leaves amounted to 573. The sequence of overwritings, letter group by letter group, would seem to be the following: tr-es → n-u[eue] → si-e[te] (see Fig. 2). Throughout the *Nueva corónica* autograph, when Guaman Poma makes emendations, he strives to reuse as much as possible of the previously inscribed letters, or, if that is impossible (as we shall see exemplified below), he allows elements that he has replaced to remain alongside the correction, if his intended emendation seems clear enough. In this way, Guaman Poma attempted to avoid marring unnecessarily the pristine, finished appearance of his manuscript’s pages. In general, he assiduously avoided strikeouts and obtrusive overwritings. His many repaginations – totalling 183 – exemplify quite vividly this aspect of his scribal habits, e.g. when on page 1094 [1140], after the insertion of the 36 pages of the “Camina” chapter, “1094” + 36 becomes “11030” rather than 1130: Guaman Poma added a digit in the front in order to avoid an ugly correction of “0” to “1”. See Boserup and Adorno 2003a: 113, and Adorno’s fundamental remarks on the dilemmas and choices of Guaman Poma as author *and* artist *and* scribe (Adorno 2002: 96f.).

Beside the fact that such small bits of evidence can be gained by examining the online facsimile that is now at everybody’s disposal, two points in Adorno’s analysis of the title page annotations deserve further attention.

To start with the most obvious point, it seems rather improbable that during his apparently short final stay in Lima, Guaman Poma should have committed such a serious blunder as adding *twice* the same 36 pages (“Camina”) to his total count.

Furthermore, it seems that Adorno’s explanation of the total of 579 leaves (= 1158 pages) implies that Guaman Poma chose an unduly complicated way of determining what the size of his book would be if “Camina” was added to it. Let us review the facts. While paginating, Guaman Poma made 3 errors: The first one, at page 154, was never corrected and apparently never detected. The two others, at 537 (-10 pages) and 1109 (+10 pages), respectively, exactly counter-balanced one another, and Guaman Poma eventually detected them and corrected all the page numbers from 986 [1004] to 1109 [1165]. So, at the outset, if we overlook the error at page 154, the last thirteen pages of the manuscript, from 1120 [1166] to 1132 [1178], were *correctly* paginated, and the book’s total number of pages up to the

table of contents, would seem – to anyone who did not know better – to be 1132. It is correct that if one starts from within the wrongly paginated sequence, at 1083 (as Adorno does), one gets 1158 when adding first “Camina”, and then the subsequent chapter (1083 + 36 + 39), but one must ask why Guaman Poma did not simply add 36 to 1132, since at that point in time, according to Adorno, he had not yet realized that he had made an error of minus-10 pages at 537. Adorno’s assumption that Guaman Poma had not realized his error of minus-10 when he calculated the 579 total, rests on the fact that this is necessary for arriving at 1158 rather than 1168. The simplest scenario, however, would be that Guaman Poma discovered – and corrected – his minus-10 error while still in Lucanas and before he decided to write “Camina” and to insert it into his book. This line of thought is corroborated by the fact that the pages following “Camina” (up to 1109 [1165]) have been corrected twice, first +10, then +36. If Guaman Poma only discovered the error of minus-10 in Lima, and after having written “Camina”, one would expect him to have done only one repagination of the last 39 pages (adding 46 to 1084 [1140] and carrying on from there to the end), instead of what he actually did, that is first adding 10 (26 times: from 1084 [1140] to 1109 [1165]), and then again adding 36 (39 times: from 1084 [1140] to the end).

So, although Adorno’s analysis is simple and coherent and does fit the codicological evidence, her coordination of the title page annotations with Guaman Poma’s own pagination leaves a few unsolved questions. Taken together, they call for a renewed analysis of the available evidence.

#### *An Expanding Manuscript*

As point of departure I take the development of Guaman Poma’s book, as analyzed by Adorno already in 1980 and now including her 2002 findings. For the present purpose, her results can be summarized

in eight steps. They represent possible points of reference with which one can try to match the precise but laconic title page calculations:

1	Unpaginated fair copy (including the title page, the table of contents, and the final leaf)
2	Sewing of the codex
3	Pagination from the page following the title page and up to but not including the table of contents
4	Addition of one leaf (unpaginated) describing the viceroy don Fernando de Torres y Portugal
5	Discovery of 10 repeated page numbers (error of minus-10), followed by partial repagination
6	Replacement of one leaf, containing the description of the viceroy don Juan de Mendoza y Luna
7	Insertion of the "Camina el autor" chapter before the final "Meses del año" chapter and the repagination of the latter
8	Additions of two leaves to the "Pregunta el autor" chapter, and one leaf to the description of Potosí in the "Ciudades y villas" chapter, all three unpaginated

As mentioned above, Adorno assigns step 5 to after Guaman Poma's arrival to Lima (and his composition of "Camina"), while the present analysis assigns Guaman Poma's discovery of his minus-10 error to an earlier date, while he was still in Lucanas.

Referring to these steps, and to Tables 1 and 3, the following readings and interpretations of the title page annotations are possible:

**Step 1.** If, in order to assess the size of the first completed version of the *Nueva crónica*, one takes the actual size of the manuscript and

subtracts the 44 pages that, according to Adorno, result from Guaman Poma's later additions, the result will be:

Title page [0]	1
[1-1189]	1189
[466/467]	-2
[978-961]	-4
[1066/1067]	-2
[1104-1139]	-36
	<b>1146</b>

Apparently, Guaman Poma expressed this total in leaves, and in sheets:

(a) 1146 pages amount to 573 leaves. As conjectured above, it may in fact be the total inscribed initially on the top line of the title page:

**(1) quinientas y sietenta y [tres] oxas**

(b) In terms of units of 4 leaves, a total of 573 leaves corresponds to 143.25 sheets. Rounded up to full units, this is the total that we find inscribed at the bottom of the title page, before any emendations were made:

**(2) ciento y quare[nt]a y quatro pliegos – 144**

**Step 2.** The sewing of the codex represents a crucial phase in the history of the *Nueva corónica* manuscript (Adorno 2002: 25ff.), but it had no impact on Guaman Poma's assessments of the size of his manuscript.

**Step 3.** Guaman Poma's initial pagination, which omits the title page and the 11 last pages (the table of contents and the final leaf), runs from 1 to 1132 [1178] (see Table 1). While struggling with the tedious

task of pagination, Guaman Poma made three errors, as already mentioned: (1) He repeated page numbers 154 [156] and 155 [157]; (2) he repeated the whole sequence of ten page numbers 523-532; (3) he jumped ten page numbers at 1109 [1165], numbering the following page 1120 [1166]. He apparently never realized the first of these three errors – at least he did nothing to repair his pagination accordingly. As for the two other errors, see Step 5.

**Step 4.** By adding one leaf containing a description of the viceroy don Fernando de Torres y Portugal ([466-467], unpaginated, between 463 [465] and 464 [478]) Guaman Poma did not endanger his earlier total of sheets, since the  $1146 + 2 = 1148$  pages still only amounted to 143.5 sheets.

**Step 5.** In some way or other, Guaman Poma figured out that he had committed an error of minus-10, and he decided to repair this error, not however from the point where he made the error, i.e. from his page 523 [537], but only from 986 [1004], now emended to 996, and onward. According to Adorno, he perhaps started the repagination at this location because he would otherwise have had to mar the beautiful *Mapa Mundi* at 993-994 [1001-1002] (Adorno 2002: 63). Because of his earlier error of plus-10 at 1120 [1166], which counterbalanced his error of minus-10 at 523 [537], his last repagination at this stage was  $1109 \rightarrow 1119$  [1165].

After having emended no less than 124 page numbers ([1004-1065; 1068-1103; 1140-1165]), I suggest that Guaman Poma committed an error. He apparently forgot – for a moment – that his current total of sheets (573) was the result of a calculation based on a count of physical paper units (leaves), rather than on his pagination, and he imagined that his repagination and the increase of the *page numbers* by 10 necessitated a corresponding readjustment of his statements about the *physical size* of his book. So he decided that he had to add 10 pages, or 5 leaves, to his previous total. On the title page, he performed this erroneous addition twice, once in terms of leaves (a), and once in terms of sheets (b):

(a) On the uppermost part of the title page, Guaman Poma emended the total number of leaves. In addition to the imaginary 5 leaves, he must have remembered that he previously (Step 4) had added the unpaginated Torres y Portugal leaf ([466/467]), and therefore he now added not 5 but 6 leaves to his earlier total of 573. Furthermore, he not only *emended* his previous statement, but for greater clarity he

also *repeated* the new total – in digits and with plenty of space between the single digits:

(3) **quinientas y siete[n]ta y nu[eue] oxas – 5 7 9 foja[s]**

The last three letters of *nu[eue]* were written above the line, and nearly disappeared under the later cutting of the edges of the book block.

(b) Six leaves correspond to 1.5 sheets, or, rounded up, to 2 sheets. So he added 2 to his previous total of 144 sheets. This, again, corresponds to the statement on the bottom of the title page, now emended thus:

(4) **ciento y quare[nt]a y ssays pliegos – 146**

One may object that his real total was only  $143.25 + .25$  (the Torres y Portugal leaf) +  $1.25$  (the 10 imagined pages, or 5 leaves) =  $144.75$ , that is 145 sheets. At this stage, I must postulate, Guaman Poma did not bother to redo his original calculation of sheets, but simply made an addition of two rounded-up numbers:  $144 + 2$ .

**Step 6.** The replacement of the Mendoza y Luna leaf (470/471 [474/475]), containing a rewritten portrait of viceroy don Juan de Mendoza (Adorno 2002: 69-75, 86-93), did not necessitate any emendation of the totals on the title page.

**Step 7.** After he arrived in Lima, Guaman Poma wrote the “Camina el autor” chapter and added it to his sewn and paginated manuscript. This chapter consists of 36 pages or 18 leaves. As demonstrated by Adorno, these 18 leaves are made up of two quires, one larger (of 14 leaves) and one smaller (of 4 leaves), and Guaman Poma loosely inserted them as close as possible to the end of his manuscript, where the end of a quire coincided with the end of a chapter, that is, between the *Tanbos* chapter and the final *Meses del año* chapter (Adorno 2002: 25, 78ff.; Boserup and Adorno 2003b: 130). He then paginated it so as to fit in after 1083 → 1093 [1103], and once more repaginated the following 39 pages (up to and still excluding the table of contents and the final leaf), cf. Table 1. Adding these 18 leaves to his previous total, Guaman Poma emended 579 to 597, correcting both the written numbers and the digits:

(5) **quinientas y nobenta y sie[te] oxas – 5<9>7{9} foja[s]**

In this calculation, Guaman Poma added the last two letters of *sie[te]* above the line, thus emending the last three letters of *nu[eu]*. These were cut away later in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the manuscript was rebound (Adorno 2002: 27). For the emendation *nu[eu]* → *sie[te]*, see above. Emending “579” to “597” in a neat way posed a challenge, but since he could insert the new digit “9” in the space between the digits “5” and “7”, Guaman Poma chose – for once – to blot out a cipher, the final “9”.

Adding “Camina” meant adding 4.5 sheets. At this point, Guaman Poma could, if he cared to, convert his new total of 597 leaves to 149.25 sheets, round them up to 150, and once more update the statement at the bottom of the title page. It is an open question whether he did so immediately, after emending 579 to 597, or later, after he had added 3 more leaves, whereby his total actually would reach 600 leaves = 150 sheets. What seems certain is that Guaman Poma – contrary to his procedure in Step 5 – did not round up the 4.5 sheets of “Camina” and add 5 to his previous total of 146. Such an operation would have yielded a total of 151 sheets, and there is no evidence that he made such a calculation.

**Step 8.** The total of 597 leaves seems to have made Guaman Poma aware of the fact that he was close to a round total of 150 sheets, and he did add three more leaves, one double leaf ([978-981]) and one single ([1066/1067]). Guaman Poma did not paginate these last additions, as was the case with the Torres y Portugal leaf [466/467], which he had added earlier.

With the inclusion of these last leaves, Guaman Poma had filled 150 sheets to the brim. Emending once more his total of sheets at the bottom of the title page, he at this stage chose neither to mar the title page by overstriking or blotting out “y ssays” (earlier “y quatro”), nor did he try to find a neat way of emending “146” (earlier “144”) into “150”. In this final update, he only inscribed the word “cinquenta” (correctly read by Posnansky) over “quarenta”:

**(6) ciento y cinque[nt]a y ssays pliegos - 146**

Guaman Poma must have reasoned that although this could be read as 156, the fact that “146” stands unemended makes it evident that what is meant is not 156, but a previous 146 that has been raised to 150.

For a summary of the interpretation suggested above, see Table 3.



*Guaman Poma and the Printed Medium*

While Adorno took Guaman Poma's pagination as her point of departure for analyzing the title page calculations, the approach suggested here starts with the consideration of the whole bulk of Guaman Poma's manuscript, from the first page to the last. The main challenge is constituted by the pivotal total of "579 fojas". While Adorno reached this total by including in it the 18 leaves of the "Camina" chapter (although she included it again in Guaman Poma's subsequent total), I exchange these 18 leaves (or 36 pages) for an equal number of pages, which I identify as the 14 pages that Guaman Poma purposely excluded from his pagination, the 12 pages that he erroneously missed in his pagination, and the 10 pages that I have suggested that he erroneously added to his total, following up on his laborious repair of the minus-10 error:

Unpaginated title page [0]	1
Unpaginated Torres y Portugal leaf [466/467]	2
Unpaginated table of contents and final leaf [1179-1189]	11
Pagination error of -2 at 154 [156]	2
Pagination error of -10 at 523 [537]	10
Erroneous addition of 5 leaves to total, as follow-up on repair of pagination error of -10	10
	<b>36</b>

In the end, the arithmetical manipulations of Guaman Poma's totals of leaves and sheets confront us with an interpretative choice. Apart from the pagination errors which both Adorno's and the present analysis take into account, we might ask whether it is more probable that Guaman Poma made two rather crude errors (the faulty division sum 144, and the repeated inclusion of the "Camina" chapter), or that he made one single blunder (raising his total of leaves by 5, equalling 10 pages, after having raised 124 page numbers by 10). In other words, was Guaman Poma occasionally quite careless, or was he

overly eager not to give a count that fell short of the actual size of his book?

Whichever interpretation one may prefer, the one suggested in the present paper strongly corroborates Adorno's general view of Guaman Poma's controlled and pragmatic working habits as well as her analysis of the crucial last phases of the evolution of his book. In the interpretation which I have suggested, following step by step the development of the manuscript as mapped out by Adorno, every addition of physical elements is encompassed by an updated total, and no single leaf of the manuscript is left unaccounted for. This, again, corroborates Adorno's conviction that no part of the manuscript as finalized by Guaman Poma is missing, and that no extraneous element has been added at any point in the transmission of the manuscript up to its inclusion ca. 1660 in the Royal Library, where it remained – virtually unnoticed – for 250 years (Adorno 2002: 18-23).

Why did Guaman Poma so scrupulously update his tallies of leaves and sheets? As mentioned earlier, Adorno initially thought that they represented information destined for the printer, and she has recently additionally suggested that Guaman Poma wanted to "seal" and thus protect his manuscript. He may indeed have had both these objectives in mind while correcting his annotations on the title page of his manuscript. His calculations, however, can also be linked directly to the Spanish book pricing system which prevailed from the late 15th century to its abolition by royal decree in 1762.<sup>7</sup>

In Spain itself, state regulation of printing was under the authority of the *Consejo Real*, the Royal Council of Castile. Normally, if accepted, the *Licencia*, or permission to print, was issued together with a *Privilegio* which protected the interests and rights of the publishers (and, in consequence, of authors and booksellers) as well as the interests and rights of the prospective customers (and, in consequence, of the state).<sup>8</sup> On the one hand, the privilege granted by the state guaran-

<sup>7</sup>Reyes Gómez 2000; vol. 1, pp. 29, 545. I follow here the authoritative accounts of Fermín de los Reyes Gómez (1998, 2000) on the royal legislation governing Spanish book-publishing in Spain and America, and I refer to Francisco Rico's (1999) illuminating description, in his account of the publication of Cervantes' *Don Quijote* in 1604, of the steps typically leading from manuscript to printed book.

<sup>8</sup>The license (*licencia*) was the authorization to print, while the privilege (*privilegio*) implied monopoly rights to it. Reyes Gómez (2000: vol. 1, p. 40) explains that the concession of a privilege implied the previous steps of the work's examination and censorship, which, in turn, presupposed a license, but he makes clear that the two should not be confused or conflated: the privilege presupposed a license, but the license did not guarantee exclusive rights to the work's printing.

teed the publisher a monopoly for a fixed number of years, normally ten, and promised to punish pirating or other infractions of the privilege bestowed. On the other hand, the privilege guaranteed the reader the integrity of the printed text (through the *Errata* List, based on collation with the previously accepted manuscript)<sup>9</sup> and fixed the market price of the book (exclusive of binding). The market price was determined on the basis of the total number of sheets ("pliegos"), corresponding to 2 leaves (4 pages) for folio volumes, 4 leaves (8 pages) for quarto volumes, and 8 leaves (16 pages) for octavo volumes.<sup>10</sup> It was compulsory to publicize, among the preliminaries, a price statement (the *Tasa*), which included the premises upon which the market price had been fixed: the total number of sheets, and a rate per sheet (*tasa*) of the volume in question. The *tasa* rating apparently took little or no account of the book's contents; it would probably be based on the quality of the paper, and/or on the quantity of illustrations included, the reproduction technology applied, and related matters.

The following quotation of the *tasa* statement of December 1604, which appears in the first edition (Madrid, 1605) of the First Part<sup>11</sup> of Cervantes' *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, exemplifies the kind of information on state price control that Guaman Poma must have encountered again and again during his readings:<sup>12</sup>

"Yo, Juan Gallo de Andrada, escribano de Cámara del Rey nuestro señor, de los que residen en su Consejo, certifico y doy fe que, habiendo visto por los señores dél un libro intitulado *El ingenioso hidalgo de la Mancha*, compuesto por Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, tasaron cada pliego del dicho libro a tres maravedis y medio; el cual tiene ochenta y tres pliegos, que al dicho precio monta el dicho libro doscientos y noventa maravedis y medio, en que se ha de vender en papel; y dieron licencia para que a este precio se

<sup>9</sup>This process often employed more than one *corrector* (Reyes Gómez 2000: vol. 1, p. 232). Rico (1999: cxciv) notes that no less than three were employed in the correction of the eighty *pliegos* of Cervantes' text during the months of October and November, 1604.

<sup>10</sup>The *tasa* set for Cervantes' *Don Quijote* (Cervantes 2000: 73) confirms that in quarto-size books, a *pliego* was the equivalent of 8 pages. Rico (1999:cxciv) notes that the *Don Quijote* volume, in quarto size, consisted of 664 pages or 83 pliegos.

<sup>11</sup>The designation of the 1605 edition of Cervantes' *Don Quijote* as the "First Part" is a later one, being made only after Cervantes published its sequel in 1615.

<sup>12</sup>John V. Murra (1992: 64) addresses the question of how Guaman Poma got access to "a first-class sixteenth-century Spanish library" and suggests "that the owner of the library was Cristóbal de Albornoz and that Guaman Poma had privileged access to it".

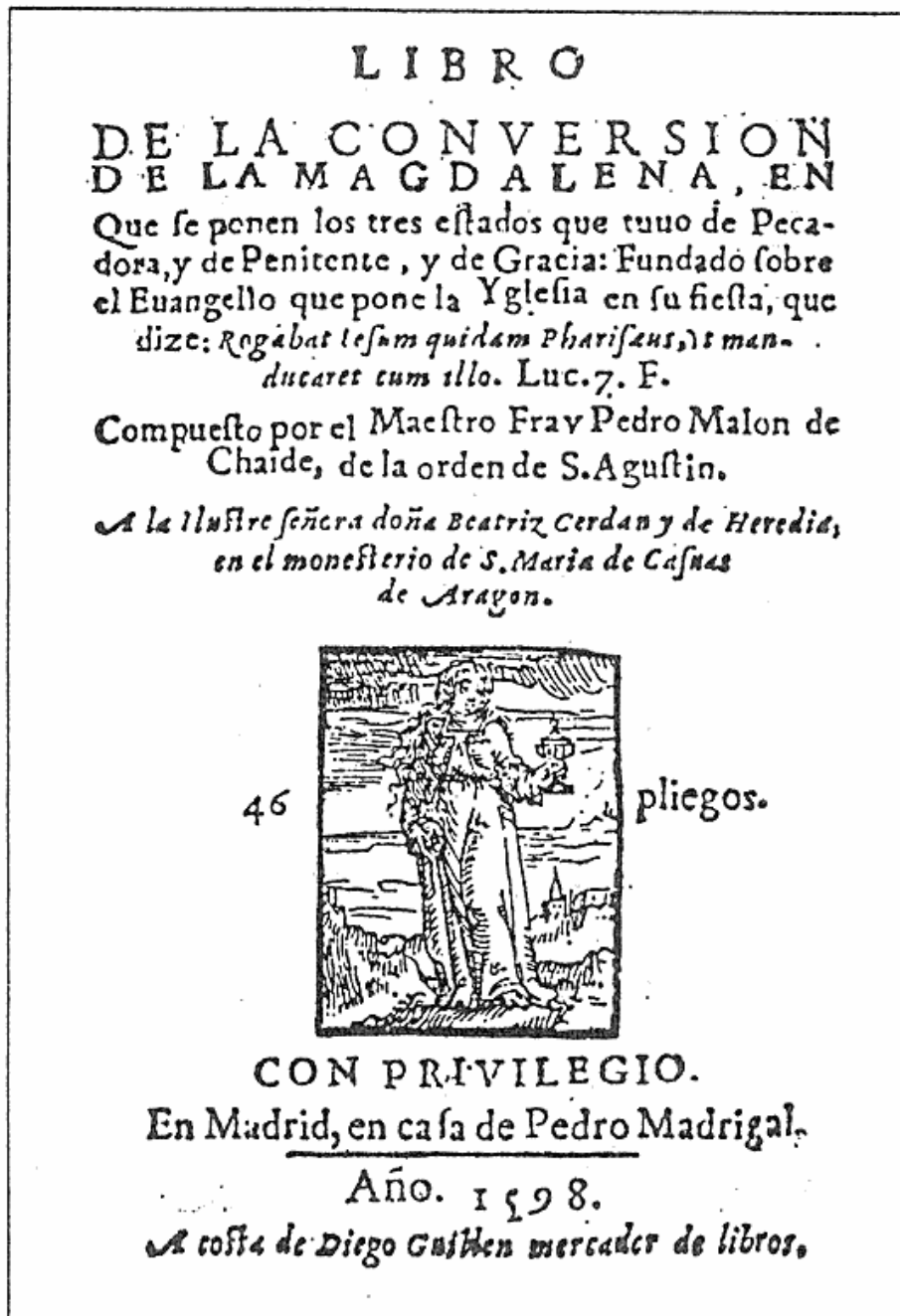


Fig. 3. Title page of *Libro de la conversión de la Magdalena*, by Fray Pedro Malón de Chaide, Madrid: Pedro Madrigal, 1598. With reference to the number of sheets (pliegos). Reproduced from Reyes Gómez 1998: 43.

pueda vender, y mandaron que esta tasa se ponga al principio del dicho libro, y no se pueda vender sin ella." [I, Juan Gallo de Andrada, notary of the Chamber of the king our Lord, of whose members I am one, certify and attest that, having seen on behalf of the Lords of this Council a book entitled *El ingenioso hidalgo de la Mancha*, authored by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, that they have rated at a value of three and a half *maravedís* each sheet of the afore-mentioned book, which consists of eighty three sheets, which at the said price sets the value of the said book at two hundred ninety and a half *maravedís*, at which price it is to be sold unbound, and that they gave their authorization for it to be sold at this price and ordered that this *tasa* be reproduced at the beginning of the afore-mentioned book and that it may not be sold without it.] (Cervantes 2000: 73; my English translation).

It seems that sometimes the sheet rating was deduced from an estimate of a fair price of the volume, rather than the other way round. This appears to be the case for the price of the Second Part of *Don Quijote* (Madrid, 1615), which, at 292 *maravedís*, was practically the same price as that of the First Part (290½), even though it was ten sheets shorter (the rate per sheet was set at 4 *maravedís*, rather than 3½).

As recently demonstrated by Fermín de los Reyes Gómez, the mode of publicizing the diverse elements of *tasa* decisions varied a great deal throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, but from 1587 onward it became occasional practice to include a number on the title page that made reference to the book's *pliegos*; this number was placed variously, above or below the title page engravings, if there were any, or to one side (Reyes Gómez 1998: 48, with illustrations on pages 43-45, idem 2000: vol. 1, p. 239). See Fig. 3. This indicates that Guaman Poma may have intended at least one of the totals to be included on a printed title page of his book, and it may help to understand why his updating was so precise and exhaustive.

Whether Guaman Poma was updating the tallies for the sake of the king's printer or for the sake of royal officials in charge of surveying book production and pricing (or doing both at the same time), he was anticipating a calculation that could not be carried out at that point. The total of sheets could not be determined before the book had been typeset. The normal procedure, of which Guaman Poma seems to have been ignorant, can be summarized as follows. Again, Rico's (1999: cxiii-cxcv) study of the handling of Cervantes' manuscript of *Don Quijote* provides the documentary example: After a manuscript had passed the censorship examination of the Royal Council,

every page of the manuscript was rubricated. The book was then printed, except the first few quire(s), which would contain the *Licencia*, the *Errata* List, the *Tasa* statement, and other preliminaries. At this point, the rubricated manuscript was again submitted to the Royal Council, together with the printed text (in folded, unbound sheets, we must imagine). The printed version was compared to the rubricated manuscript, and the *Errata* List was drawn up. Furthermore, the quantity of paper used, i.e. the number of sheets (*pliegos*), was determined, and a decision was taken as to the rate to be set per sheet (*tasa*) and hence of the price of the book itself. As mentioned, these data were to be made public, among the preliminaries ("al principio"). When the first quire(s), usually unfoliated and unpaginated, had been printed and joined to the main part of the volume, the book could at last be put on the market.

From 1584 and throughout the rest of Guaman Poma's lifetime, there was only one printer in Peru, Antonio Ricardi and his successor Francisco del Canto, hosted by the Jesuit College in Lima. In spite of his extensive readings and his once close relationship with Fray Martín de Murúa (d. 1616?) at the time Murúa was preparing the first version of his *Historia general del Pirú* (1590), and in spite of the fact that Guaman Poma was in Lima in 1597 and 1599 in connection with a lawsuit (Adorno 1993: 73-74), it is not surprising that after having lived most of his life in southern Peru he was not familiar with every detail of the complicated technical and bureaucratic procedures of censorship, printing, and book pricing. As they stand on the title page of his manuscript, the totals of leaves and sheets give good meaning if viewed as simple book-keeping or as "seals", or both. Some evidence, however, seems to indicate that Guaman Poma intended them to be considered in relation to the conventions and terminology of the state's control of printing and pricing. It is clear, nevertheless, that Guaman Poma's familiarity with these conventions did not amount to his full understanding of them.

#### *The Challenge of Imitation*

Modern scholarship on Guaman Poma and his book was initiated almost thirty years ago (see Adorno 1974). The dismissal of Guaman Poma as a "credulous" writer and of his book and its "artistically atrocious" drawings as "disappointing", "absurd", and "negligible" (Means 1923: 398, 400, 404), has long since been replaced by the critical assessment of him as a knowledgeable chronicler, an acute witness of colonial rule, a perceptive reformer, a great artist, and an original and self-aware

author who mastered and combined many traditional literary genres within his work (Adorno [1986] 2000). Contemporary readers of the *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* are not confronted with the “naïve and nearly infantile schemes” (“proyectismo ingenuo y casi infantil”) of a “half-educated Indian” (“indio semi-culto”) (Porrás Barrenechea 1948: 47, 56), but rather with a “hard-headed, well informed advocate of comprehensive administrative reform” (Adorno 2002: 9).

In the present paper I have discussed an issue that pertains to Guaman Poma's understanding of the challenges involved in getting a book published in the Spanish empire. Adorno has repeatedly pointed out that the manuscript closely imitates a printed book: “Guaman Poma followed the full complement of printing conventions in the preparation of his ms., imitating the practices of type-set books in every detail from running heads to catchword” (Adorno 1979-80: 21; see also Adorno 1989: 52; Adorno in Guaman Poma 1987: xlv, note 54). Art historians have further discussed this issue: Tom Cummins has suggested a subconscious aspect of Guaman Poma's imitation: “the attempt to give the manuscript the appearance of a book is part of his ploy to have it published. It is almost as if through performing these acts of similitude, Guaman Poma fulfills this desire” (Cummins 1992: 56). Valerie Fraser has emphasized Guaman Poma's artistic inventiveness in using and developing traditional lettering systems of printed books, and she has suggested that his calligraphy is “the unifying factor throughout the book” (Fraser 1996: 271-273).

With respect to the particular issue discussed here, that is, the title page calculations, it appears that Guaman Poma did imitate a feature that he had observed in printed books, but that he probably had misapprehended its place and meaning in the complicated process of pricing and printing. Having this in mind, and reviewing critically other aspects of Guaman Poma's imitation of the conventions of printed books of his time, it turns out that it would be somewhat exaggerated to say that Guaman Poma succeeded in imitating all of these conventions. In fact, he seems to have failed on some points. Thus, to start with a detail, “Foja 1” on the top right corner of his page 1 (See Fig. 4), is a striking imitation of a similar feature in Spanish 16th and 17th century prints and a tenacious reminiscence from the earliest years of printing, before pagination supplanted foliation and became standard. But if Guaman Poma were to comply fully with this convention, “Foja 1” should rather be “Fol. I”, and it should not be added *alongside* the page numbering of page 1 but rather replace it. Furthermore, neither foliation nor pagination should start on the verso of a leaf, as Guaman Poma's pagination does, and the preliminaries

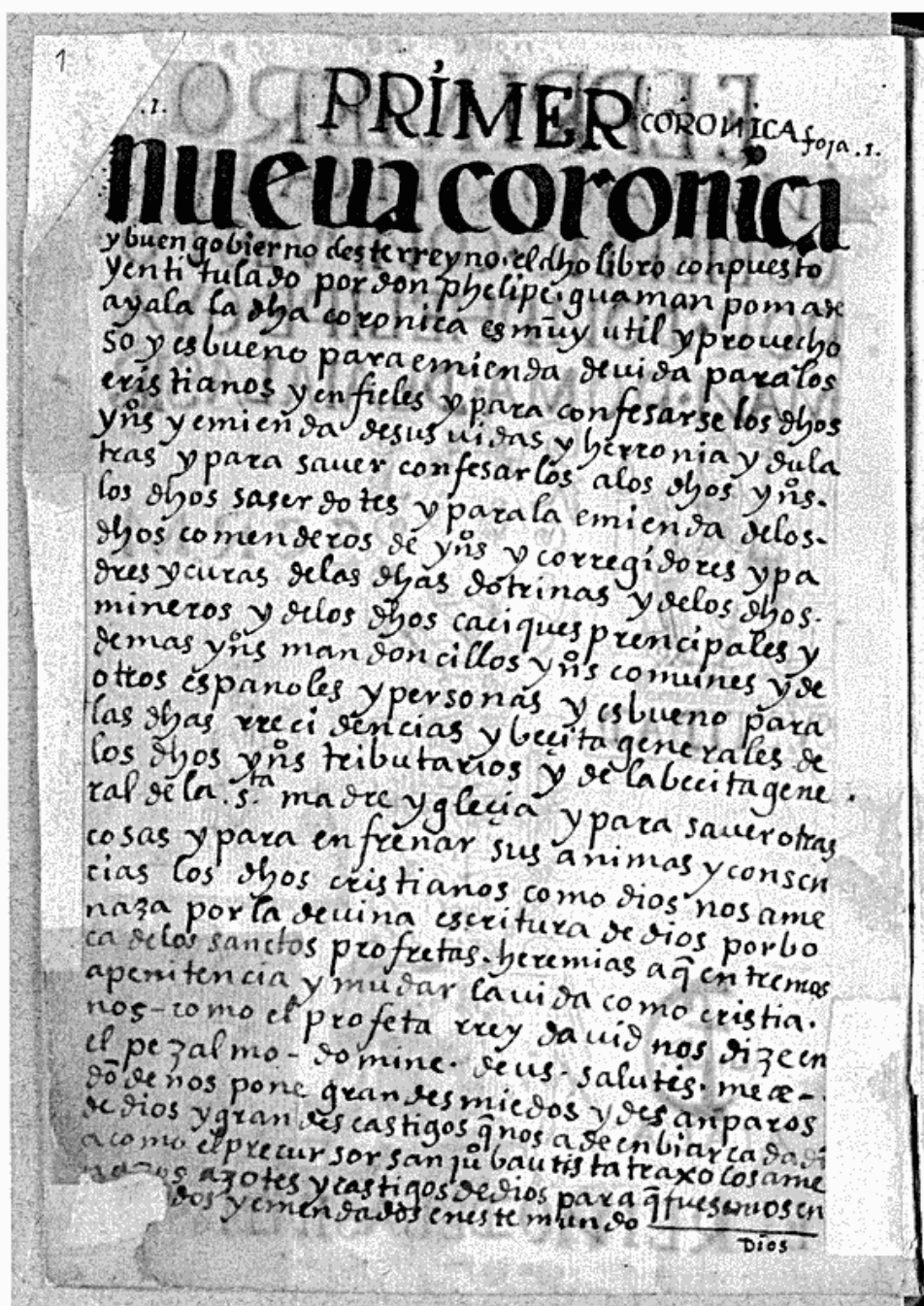


Fig. 4. Page 1 (reverse of the title page) of GKS 2232 4°, inscribed "foja .1." as well as "[page] .1."



(letter to the reader, letters of recommendation, *Licencia*, *Tasa*, *Errata* List, etc.), which consist of materials that would be added after the printing of the main part of the book, should not be included in any count starting at "Fol. I", as they do in Guaman Poma's manuscript. These elements would instead be contained in separate quire(s) – unfoliated and unpaginated, as mentioned above.

Perhaps some other characteristics of Guaman Poma's manuscript can be understood as partly unsuccessful (or very creative) imitations of conventions of the printed book. For example, Guaman Poma inscribed running heads on every page with great care and regularity. They are written in Latinized capitals and centered between the left- and righthand margins of the page in the customary fashion. Yet Guaman Poma was in conflict with this convention and elaborated it somewhat independently, as when he occasionally included a running head in the syntagm of a chapter heading or the title of a drawing.<sup>13</sup>

When Guaman Poma decided to become an "autor", he was transcending the limits imposed on him by his ethnic identity and social position within colonial society. He had decided to further his ends by utilizing a number of specialized techniques that he was not supposed to be acquainted with and that he evidently could not master without access to the exclusive milieu of printing and publishing. It was inevitable that he would make some structural and terminological mistakes while struggling to make his manuscript look like a printed book and thus become worthy of being printed by order of the king of Spain. When we consider his book today, nearly four centuries later, Guaman Poma's small breaches of book conventions enhance our understanding of the many challenges that he had decided to face, and they make his project and his achievement all the more remarkable. Guaman Poma's repeated efforts to calculate the size of his book allow us to appreciate just how indefatigably he attempted to produce an artifact that, in his vision, would be worthy of being housed "in the archive of heaven and that of earth" (Guaman Poma 1980b: 751).

<sup>13</sup> The running head on page [1105], "CAMINA EL AVTOR" can thus be read both *horizontally*, as the beginning of a running head stretching over 36 pages, picked up by "POR LA CIERA CON MVCHA NIEVE...", and *vertically*, picked up by "... con su hijo don Francisco de Ayala ..." on the same page (see Adorno 2002: 76-77). – Such occasional ambivalence has persistently led scholars to misquote the title of the image on page 42 as "PONTIFICAL MVNDO", although the first word is to be read with the running head of the opposite page: CILLA PONTIFICAL, as on pages 35+36, 37+38, 39+40, 43+44, and 45+46.

Table 1: Summary of paginations. Guaman Poma's irregular graphisms have been normalized.

Modern pagination (Murra-Adorno and website)	Real (and actual) pages	Pages in Guaman Poma's initial total	Guaman Poma's initial pagination	Guaman Poma's repair of pagination errors	Guaman Poma's "Camina" pagination	Guaman Poma's repagination after "Camina" insertion	Contents
[0]	1	1					Title page
[1-155]	155	155	1-155				
[156/157]	2	2	154/155	Error of minus-2	No repair		
[158-465]	308	308	156-463				
[466/467]	2						Torres y Portugal
[468-473]	6	6	464-469				
[474-475]	2	2	470/471	Replaced leaf			Mendoza y Lama
[476-536]	61	61	464-532				
[537-977]	441	441	523-963	Error of minus-10			
[978-981]	4						add. to "Pregunta"
[982-1003]	22	22	964-985				
[1004-1065]	62	62	986-1047		996-1057		
[1066/1067]	2						add. to "Potosí"
[1068-1103]	36	36	1048-1083		1058-1093		
[1104-1139]	36					1094-1129	"Camina el autor"
[1140-1165]	26	26	1084-1109		1094-1119	1130-1155	
[1166-1178]	13	13	1120-1132	Error of +10		1156-1168	
[1179-1189]	11	11	Unpaginated			Unpaginated	"Tabla" + last leaf
	<b>1190</b>	<b>1146</b>					

Table 2. Summary of Adorno's 2002 interpretation of Guaman Poma's title page annotations.

Totals	Guaman Poma's calculations	Leaves	Pages	Sheets	Title page statement
1.	$\frac{1083 [1103] + \text{"Camina"} (36 \text{ p.}) + 39 \text{ p.}}{2}$	579	1158		quinientas y siete[n]ta y nu[eue] oxas - 579 foja[s]
2.	$\frac{1158 + 10 \text{ p.}}{8}$		1168	146	ciento y quare[nt]a y quatro > ssays pliegos - 144 > 146
3.	579 leaves + "Camina" (18 leaves)	597	1194		quinientas y nove[n]ta y sie[te] oxas - 597 foja[s]

Table 3. Summary of the present interpretation of Guaman Poma's title page annotations.

Evolution of the ms.: steps and real pages	Guaman Poma's calculations	Total of leaves	Total of pages	Exact total of sheets	Rounded up total of sheets	Title page statements
1a: 1146	Initial count of leaves =	573	1146			[top:] quinientas y siete[n]ta y [tres] oxas
1b: 1146	$\frac{573}{4}$			143.25	144	[bottom:] ciento y quarenta y quatro pliegos - 144
2-4: 1148	573 + 1 leaf =	574	1148	143.50	144	
5a: 1148	573 + 1 + 5 leaves =	579	1158			[top:] quinientas y siete[n]ta y nu[eue] oxas - 579 foja[s]
5b: 1148	144 + 1.5 sheets =			145.50	146	[bottom:] ciento y quarenta y ssays pliegos - 146
7a: 1184	579 + 18 leaves =	597	1194			[top:] quinientas y nove[n]ta y sie[te] oxas - 597 foja[s]
7b: 1184	$\frac{597}{4}$			149.25	150	
8: 1190	579 + 3 leaves =	600	1200	150.00	150	[bottom:] ciento y cinquenta ... pliegos ...

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## RESUMEN

IVAN BOSERUP: Una nueva interpretación de los cálculos hechos por Guaman Poma en la portada de la *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno*

Desde hace muchas décadas, han sido objeto de diversas interpretaciones los cálculos hechos por Guaman Poma en los bordes superiores e inferiores de la portada del manuscrito autógrafo de la *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1616). Esta línea interpretativa comenzó con los editores que aseveraron que Guaman Poma hubiera tratado de indicar el número de páginas disponibles a los que pudieran leer (“ojos”) y a los que fueran analfabetos (“ciegos”) (Posnansky 1944); terminó definitivamente con los investigadores que aclararon que las anotaciones se refieren a pliegos y “fojas” (hojas), que dan cuenta de la extensión del libro manuscrito y que representan, además, una serie de cálculos sucesivos (Adorno 1980). El intento más reciente de interpretar estas cifras coordinó los cómputos con la paginación del libro (Adorno 2002). El presente artículo retoma el problema del significado de los cálculos, eligiendo como punto de partida no la enumeración de páginas sino el cuerpo físico del bulto del manuscrito, desde la primera hoja hasta la última. Al ofrecer dentro de este marco una nueva interpretación de las cifras que satisface los criterios de la evidencia material del manuscrito, se indaga también en el propósito de tales cómputos y se lanza una nueva hipótesis: que Guaman Poma haya intentado conformarse a la práctica de dar relación del número de pliegos de su manuscrito, no para impresores eventuales (Adorno 1980; idem 2002), sino para los oficiales de la corte española. Así, Guaman Poma preparó su libro para la tasación, o la fijación del precio de venta, por el Consejo Real de Castilla. Se aclara que, a partir de los años 1580, muchos libros producidos en España llevaron elementos de la tasa en la misma portada. Aquí se demuestra que, al agregar nuevos folios al conjunto y al calcular simultáneamente la extensión de su libro en “fojas” (unidades de 2 páginas) y pliegos (unidades de 8 páginas), Guaman Poma anticipó los pasos previos a la impresión y venta de su obra, si ésta llegara, como era su deseo, a la corte del rey de España. Al preparar en detalle y actualizar una dimensión de su libro que no se podía llevar a cabo cuando en manuscrito, Guaman Poma revela una falta de conocimiento del proceso complicado de la impresión de libros que no nos debe sorprender. Lo notable es su determinación de hacerse autor y enfrentarse con estos retos múltiples a pesar de sus desventajas al respecto.