

Exhibition Launch: Peru's New Chronicle and Good Governance by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala

The Embassy of Peru and Charles University, Faculty of Arts, are pleased to present an exhibition of 32 posters, with drawings by the indigenous chronicler Guaman Poma de Ayala (1535-1616), who toured the ancient Inca Empire, collecting data on the lives and traditions of his ancestors, complemented by scenes of places visited by him.

These drawings are part of a monumental work written by Poma de Ayala, with more than one thousand two hundred pages, divided into two parts. The first one, "New Chronicle", provides a wealth of information about pre-Inca and Inca times. In "Good Governance", in the second part, the author depicts the injustice, exploitation, and abuse of power of colonial rule and also offers suggestions to the Spanish Crown for social and governmental reform in Spain's new colonies.

The chronicle is written mostly in Spanletákish with occasional sections in Quechua (the language of the Inca). Poma's book is remarkable for its 398 full-page line drawings accompanied by the author's explanatory text. The New Chronicle and Good Governance is a long, illustrated history of Inca rule, and the beginnings of the Spanish conquest of Peru.

The manuscript covers the history of Peru from the earliest times and the lives of each of the Inca rulers and their wives, as well as a wealth of information about ordinances, age grades, the calendar, idols, sorcerers, burials, punishments, jails, songs, palaces, roads, storage houses, and

government officials.

The exact details about Guaman Poma and the history of the book remain a mystery. Virtually all knowledge of the author's life comes from the autobiographical content of the chronicle. Guaman Poma was an Indian, born into a noble Inca family. He worked as an interpreter for Spanish missionary clergy and the colonial civil government.

The manuscript was addressed to King Philip III of Spain and sent to the Spanish court; however, there is no evidence to suggest that it ever reached the King's hands. The manuscript somehow made its way to Europe and was not discovered until 1908 in the Royal Library of Copenhagen.

New Chronicle and Good Governance is included on the UNESCO Memory of the World list.

The exhibition launch is going to take place on Monday 12 June at 5 p.m. on the second floor of the CUFA main building.

Exhibition poster