Notes and Advances of the Peruvian Digital Curation of Images from Early 20th Century Printed Magazines

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Abstract. In Latin America, there is an absence of digital curation promoting the dissemination of graphic information from printed journalistic products for the general public, which could, at the same time, contribute to their country's memory. For this reason, the article delves into the research-creation project "Images of Peruvian Society at the Dawn of Peruvian Independence Centenary: Virtual Curation of Visual Imaginaries of Modernity," financed by a Peruvian university. The project investigates imaginaries from Lima during President Leguía's government (1919-1930)—known as the "oncenio"—through caricatures, advertising, and covers of two illustrated magazines: Variedades and Mundial. This article details the categorization and analysis stage only in the case of advertising images. From the interpretive paradigm, a qualitative analysis guide with a deductive approach was applied to an intentional sample of three images of Horniman's Tea advertisements, a well-known English brand in the food industry. John Thompson's method of depth hermeneutics [1] was applied, carrying out historical social analysis, discursive analysis, and interpretation and reinterpretation. The main results showed that the dissemination of advertisements, sponsored by Peruvian power groups, fostered new cultural codes of European origin and were superimposed on the majority of cultural values in Lima's society at the beginning of the 20th century. This article contributes to research lines related to the digital curation of journalistic and advertising products, as well as to visual studies.

Keywords: Digital Curation · Advertising · Peruvian Modernity

1 Introduction

Curation is a discipline that studies artistic cultural creation [2]. It entails a work of socialization of objects and ideas through a mediation of the curator between the artist and public [3]. Likewise, curation must consider discursive constructions and non-discursive dominions, such as economic processes, political events and institutions [4].

The curator conceptualizes and organizes content through the interpretation of its values and meaning: curator is a specialist who develops a curatorial guide for the public [2, 5]. However, in early 20th century, the simple artist-spectator dichotomy collapsed due to the rapid development of visual media that allowed people in general to find objects of surveillance, attention, and observation [6].

1.1 The Advent of Digital Curation

With the use of new information and communication technology (ICT), museums started providing online access to all their collections, such is the case of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York (USA); others even offered open access to digital collections in such a way that could be reproduced or edited [7]. Likewise, there are various university initiatives linked to the development of digital collections that function as living archives [8–10] or initiatives with state participation, such as the World Digital Library [11], the Mexican Digital Library [12], and the Chilean Memory digital collection [13]. These initiatives have digitized important documents from different eras with reviews that contextualize their origin. Collaborative museums have also emerged, where the role of the spectator goes beyond the viewing experience, such as the *Museu da Pessoa* in Brazil [14]. In Peru, some projects were found, such as *Yuyanapaq* [15], that documents historical events from photographic records, or *Tafos* [16], that reproduces the images of *Talleres de Fotografía Social*. The absence of archives or digital collections of images affects the way we narrate the past and reconstruct history [17, 18]. In this context, it is important to review the order and format of the collections, since this affects the content represented as much as the construction of meaning, and it is the curator who responds and changes the layout of the exhibition according to what happens in real time [7].

1.2 Graphic Images and the Construction of Imaginaries and Resignification

In graphic images production through print media, there is the dominance of political power and authority related to a monetized exchange economy and a secular and materialistic culture [19–21]. In this context, being modern proposes a permanent cycle of changes between the old and the ever-new [22]. Caricatures, artistic reproductions, journalistic photographs, and advertising illustrations are constituted as symbolic forms that shape the spirit and meaning of an era [23–25]. There are interests and ideas behind these visual representation spaces [26–28]. More specifically, they present ideologies as systems of meanings, values, and beliefs that build imaginaries. From the moment they are disseminated and framed in a type and media, images are resignified by different groups or individuals and are understood within a context [29]. In this line, images have their own agency [30] and can become a mechanism of exclusion [31].

1.3 *Variedades* and *Mundial* Peruvian Illustrated Magazines, *Patria Nueva* Project and the Discourse of Modernity in Peru

The digital curation that is part of the research-creation project studied affects the relationship between graphic production and the imaginary of modernity in Peru during the *Oncenio de Leguía* [31]. This period is characterized by the beginning of the modernization process in Peru, which contributed to forging an urban and centralized identity under the protection of a modern lifestyle that marked the insertion of Lima society in a peripheral modernity in regard to industrialized countries [32–34]. The Peruvian illustrated magazines *Variedades* (1908–1930) and *Mundial* (1920–1931) circulated uninterruptedly during the *Oncenio de Leguía* (see Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1. *Variedades* Illustrated Magazine

Variedades	
Start	March 7, 1908
End of publication	September 30, 1931
Published numbers	1230
Periodicity	Weekly
Years of edition	23
Number of pages	32 approx.
Themes	Political, economic, social, and cultural, national and international life

Table 2. *Mundial* Illustrated Magazine

Mundial	
Start	April 23, 1920
End of publication	July 26, 1933
Published numbers	582
Periodicity	Weekly
Years of edition	13
Number of pages	24 approx.
Themes	Political, economic, social, and cultural, national and international life

They were spokespersons for the *Patria Nueva* modernization project and for the main leaders of public opinion in Peru [21, 35–37]. In Peru, a new Lima middle class begins to take shape in opposition to a colonial and elitist elite, sharing a materialistic vision of the country [32]. Taking European countries as a reference for modernity and development [32].

Leguía sought to modernize the country through urban and social development and a state bureaucracy centered in Lima [33, 34, 38]. He was supported by the public opinion expressed in editorial productions and journalistic projects, such as the illustrated magazines *Variedades* and *Mundial*. In this scenario, the *indigenismo*—intellectual, artistic, and political movement—arose to revalue Andean roots. However, positivism was the predominant current among Peruvian thinkers at the beginning of the 20th century, which was permeating most of the important cultural and intellectual spaces during this time [39]. It is a colonizing discourse that establishes foreign cultural elements over other traditional ones and configures a coloniality whose fundamental axis is social classification according to the idea of race [40].

2 Methods

The research-creation project "Images of Peruvian Society at the Dawn of Peruvian Independence Centenary: Virtual Curation of Visual Imaginaries of Modernity in the 'Oncenio' de Leguía," financed by a Peruvian university, researches the visual imaginaries of modernity during the government of President Leguía (1919–1930), known as the "oncenio," through cartoons, advertising, and covers of the *Variedades* and *Mundial* magazines (see Tables 1 and 2). The research-creation project aims to carry out a digital curation that includes an online graphic staging of six phases to be carried out (see Fig. 1). Stage 3 is currently being completed, which goes hand in hand with stage 4.

After the bibliographic survey and establishment of the contextual and theoretical framework, the images of the two magazines were digitized, categorized, and coded. The present article emphasizes this stage. More than 3,500 images from the magazines (cartoons, advertisements, and covers) were digitized and stored in the project's first image bank in the cloud. Subsequently, a matrix of categories and codes applicable to the selected images was created based on three axes: inhabitants, social practices, and territory (see Tables 3 and 4). The categories that later allowed us to break down more precise codes were gender, ethnicity, social group, performative space, and elements of interaction. These 101 codes of a dynamic nature were modified according to the meanings that emerged from the application of the second phase of the hermeneutic analysis proposed by Thompson [1] and were attributed to each image in the coding process, depending on its preliminary content.

This article details this stage of data coding and analysis, where images were taken from a selected advertising case to exemplify the process that they followed in the curation and how this is generated naturally in the visualizations, allowed by the digital platform created to store images and encode them online. From the interpretive paradigm, a qualitative analysis guide with a deductive approach was applied to an intentional sample of three images from advertisements for the English brand Horniman's Tea. According to Thompson, the historical-social analysis was carried out for the formal and discursive analysis, and the interpretation and reinterpretation of these selected images.
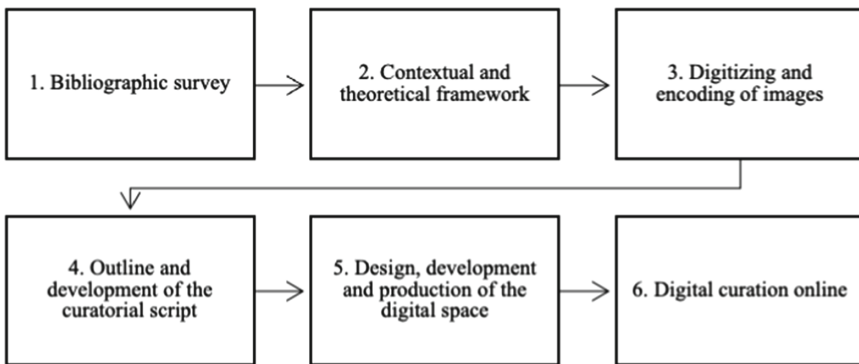

Fig. 1. Stages of the Research-creation Project

Table 3. Matrix of Categories and Codes Applicable to Inhabitants

Axis: Inhabitants						
Gender						**Ethnicity**
Sex/Age	Dress	Family role	Job role		Social role & other	Appearance
1 Boy 2 Young 3 Adult 4 Elderly male 5 Girl 6 Young 7 Adult 8 Elderly female	9 Typical 10 Religious 11 Labor – Uniform 12 Labor – Other 13 Casual everyday 14 Formal everyday 15 Fashion 16 Everyday – Other 17 Other	18 Adults 19 Children 20 Adults & children 21 Other	22 Professional 23 Chief 24 Employee 25 Law enforcement 26 Administrative employee 27 Commercial store employee	28 Employee worker 29 Domestic employee 30 Peddler 31 Landowner 32 Foreman 33 Farmer 34 Slave 35 Other	36 Sports social 37 Artistic social 38 Recreational social 39 Political 40 Religious 41 Historical 42 Offender 43 Other	44 Andean 45 Afro-descendant 46 Asian 47 Amazon native 48 Multi-ethnic 49 Caucasian 50 Undefined 51 Other

Table 4. Matrix of Categories and Codes Applicable to Social Practices and Territory

Axis: Social practices	**Axis: Territory**					
Social group	**Performative space**		**Interaction elements**			
Activity	Performative place		Symbolic	Identity	Product	Nature
52 Labor 53 Religious 54 Sanitary 55 Educational 56 Familiar 57 Sports 58 Merchants 59 Armed forces 60 Politicians 61 Friends 62 Marginal 63 Other	64 Symbolic 65 Labor 66 Political 67 Educational 68 Religious 69 Sports 70 Domestic 71 Recreational 72 Commercial shop 73 Sanitary 74 Natural	75 Public urban 76 Coast (*Costa*) 77 Mountain range (*Sierra*) 78 Jungle (*Selva*) 79 Urban Semipublic 80 Natural environment 81 Foreign border 82 Foreign 83 Other	84 Emblematic Peruvian 85 Emblematic Foreign	86 Religious 87 Sports 88 Political 89 Labor 90 Cultural 91 Health 92 *Leguía* 93 Other	94 Public service 95 Basic consumption 96 Special consumption 97 Warlike 98 City	99 Flora 100 Wildlife 101 Other

2.1 Ethical Considerations

Issues of *Variedades* and *Mundial* illustrated journalistic magazines referred to in the research-creation are part of the collection and personal archive of one of the project researchers. During the digitization and coding of the images included in this research,

the moral rights of the authors have been preserved and their use has been restricted to academic and research purposes.

3   Results and Discussion

3.1   Research-Creation in Digital Spaces as the Basis of Curation

The digital space has been key in the development of research-creation projects originating in Peru. In the first place, phases 1 and 2 (see Fig. 1) were carried out remotely from Peru and Spain, since at that time the researchers lived in different places. Digitization tasks were assigned and then uploaded to the cloud before the categorization and coding of the images continued. Coding began the curation from the moment codes that identified the denotative meanings of the image were attributed. Through the platform created by the project programmer, the researchers assigned the codes online for each of the 3,500 pieces, collecting all the visual components of each image. After coding, a code could be selected, and the images grouped together to see patterns, similarities, or differences between the same images.

Then, the image classification and code selection phase continued. For example, codes like *Selva* (jungle) as a traditional geographic region of Peru had almost no representation, so imaginaries could not be inferred from the publications. For this reason, a necessary question in the images worked on was that they resulted in some findings concerning the imaginaries of the time known through the historical record and from what the researchers deduced connotatively from Thompson's hermeneutical analysis by viewing the images. Finally, this curation seeks that the future user or visitor in the online staging analyzes the ordered images and resignifies them. The curatorial script, in this case, has been written since the digital support, through the assigned codes, created a route in which the researchers will decide the paths the user will pass in the next stage.

3.2   Ways of Demonstrating Findings from Codes Use: Horniman's Tea Case

To demonstrate the use of codes, an analysis guide has been applied to three selected images that correspond to two codes: "emblematic foreign interaction elements" and "special consumption." The first code refers to those elements present in the image that are identified with a foreign product or service, and the second code refers to practices that are not part of the activities to satisfy basic needs. The advertiser of the three ads analyzed (see Figs. 2, 3, and 4) is Horniman's Tea Company, an old English tea company founded in 1826, creator of packaged tea. The three advertisements are found in Peruvian magazine *Mundial*, which sought to present itself as cosmopolitan, showing scenes from other countries.

There is a Eurocentric look in all the brand's ads. The advertiser speaks as a member of the English social elite and, from that place, addresses his counterparts in the countries of "South America" (see Fig. 1). He uses the figure of a maritime vessel similar to a brigantine, but with a motor, as a space through which the Horniman's tea is transported, promoting one of the most traditional social practices of English culture: drinking tea. We are also told about the tea associated with the road sleeping car, the first in Europe,

due to the speed with which it connected London with Liverpool, two English cities (see Fig. 3). In this case, Horniman's speaks from one English citizen to another. However, at the bottom of the ad, it mentions that the Horniman's product is also intended for society in Lima as well as for the rest of the world.

Likewise, it is associated with the Flying Scotsman train that connects the English capital, London, with the city of Edinburgh, capital of Scotland (see Fig. 3). The advertisement emphasizes the characteristics of this locomotive associated with the services it provides for travelers, where drinking tea appears as a pretext for socializing. Furthermore, the text mentions that everyone in Britain "appreciates the refreshing fragrance, purity and merit of Horniman's tea." That is, it emphasizes the quality and fame of the product abroad. In reference to the form, we can see that the boat trip is idealized as part of a lifestyle, highlighting the practice of drinking tea as an elegant and cosmopolitan practice of socialization (see Fig. 1). The route between English cities is evoked and iconic figures or emblematic places of the place, such as Shakespeare and St. Albans

Fig. 2. Advertisement published on January 4, 1928 [41]

Fig. 3. Advertisement published on September 27, 1929 [42]

Fig. 4. Advertisement published on March 15, 1929 [42]

Cathedral, are named, respectively (see Fig. 2). By alluding to England and presenting English characters drinking tea, a cultural superiority is being assumed which was a reality for the Peruvian oligarchy—the magazine's public—and which is part of the image agency [30].

In these Horniman's Tea advertisements, the invitation to consume the product is accompanied by the technological story of modernity. This story brings progress and coexists with traditions of foreign origin. This idea of modernity is part of the imaginaries of the time and more precisely of the government of Leguía and *Patria Nueva* [32–34]. The advertisements reinforce the idea of linking English culture with the modern or civilized and validate social distances, as they are customs that were not accessible to all Peruvians [31].

4   Conclusions

This article shows us, first of all, the way a research-creation project works when it is carried out by a digital curator that starts in the cloud from its pre-production and exclusively uses digital communication resources in data collection and analysis. The creation of units of meaning from the process of encoding images from Peruvian journalistic magazines from the beginning of the 20th century—which begins the curation while a route begins to be created—allows us to confirm how the cultural imaginaries of an era were formed by comparing them with the historical record. The advertising case addressed exemplifies the redefinition work that, in the case of future online staging, falls on the user. Thus, we can conclude that the use of advertising, sponsored by power groups in Peru, fostered new cultural codes of European origin superimposed on the majority cultural values in Lima society at the beginning of the 20th century. Therefore, the article promotes the recovery of journalistic archives through digital media and contributes to the lines of research related to the digital curation of journalistic and advertising products, as well as to visual studies.

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