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Ricardo Villaalba's Péron et Bolivie : types et costumes : an album of cartes de visite

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Ricardo Villaalba's Péron et Bolivie: Types et Costumes

An Album of Cartes de Visite

By

Patricia G Pena, Bachelor of Art Photography, Columbia College Chicago, Chicago

1996-2001

A Thesis presented

to Ryerson University and George Eastman House

in partial fulfillments of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Art

Photographic Preservation and Collections Management

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2007

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**Ricardo Villaalba's *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes*:
A Cartes de Visite Album**

**Patricia Peña
2007**

Abstract

Despite the research done by many authors on the history of Andean people and their culture, and some research done on the history of Latin American photography, little is known about the *Villaalba's Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album. It is my contention that in order to understand how commercial photography altered and perpetuated an image of Andean people, it is necessary to understand the influences of the nineteenth century mindset and the business of photography. The album *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes*, consists of two hundred cartes de visite ca. 1860 on Aymara and Quechua Indian types. The symbolic clues within the images, and nineteenth century cultural attitudes, as suggested by the handwritten text, imply the categorization of Villaalba's sitters as types of people that could be seen in Péru and Bolivia. My examination and analysis of the album aims to interpret the images through a variety of disciplines that include photography, anthropology, and sociology. By investigating the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album, I hope to contribute research about the album, create an awareness of its existence, and provide an examination of Villaalba's work that will help others investigate similar topics.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the help and support of these invaluable people.

I would like to thank David Wooters, Photo Archivist at George Eastman House, Joe Struble, Assistant Archivist, and Laurie Soures, Manager of Collections Information, at George Eastman House for leading me to *Peron et Bolivie- Types et Costume*, providing me with continuous access to the original object, and for teaching me to document and make the album accessible through The Museum System (TMS).

Rebecca Johnson Melvin, Associate Librarian, Special Collections University of Delaware Library was the first to assist me with locating cartes de visite by Villaalba outside of George Eastman House. Patricia Kervick, Associate Archivist and India Spartz, Senior Archivist at the Peabody Museum Archives were instrumental in facilitating my research of Villaalba material outside of George Eastman House and for welcoming me into their institution and allowing me access to their collection.

I would also like to thank Don Snyder, Professor, School of Image Arts at Ryerson University for his support and attention to detail. Finally, I would like to thank Alison Nordstrom, Curator of Photographs at George Eastman House and my thesis advisor, for her unconditional support, open line of communication, and genuine interest in my thesis topic and my well being; without her this thesis would not have been possible.

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Introduction

A photo of a child dressed up as a priest, a man's reverence for a llama or a woman dressed in traditional garb would not be groundbreaking, new or all that unusual today. When Ricardo Villaalba created these types of photographs in the mid to late 1800s it was another matter.

The leather bound album titled *Péron et Bolivie-Types et Costumes* contains two hundred cartes de visite of Peruvian and Bolivian types ca. 1860. Its symmetric layout guides the viewer to discover people dressed in costume, their possible occupations, and perhaps even offers a glimpse into their culture. Villaalba's album is an example of nineteenth century type photography that reveals his understanding and interpretation of Aymara and Quechua people, and therefore introduces viewers to the Andean type. It is important to understand that types are clichés and exaggerations and do not represent individuals; they are generalizations about a particular group of people. Ricardo Villaalba's album *Péron et Bolivie-Types et Costumes* is important for a number of reasons, but I will focus on the use of typological photography in Péru and Bolivia, the use of cartes de visite (a new photographic process at the time) and the album's historical significance as a whole.

Carte de visite type photography was desirable for several reasons. Cartes de visite were mass-produced inexpensively, became affordable for everyone to purchase and, consequently were much in demand. Although the primary function of the carte de visite was not ethnographic, its inherent characteristics as an affordable and easily mass produced object made the carte a perfect tool for the dissemination of early type

photography. As cartes were bought, traded and given as gifts they traveled around the globe, and thus provided people from various regions with similar perceptions of those portrayed in the cartes. Often times both the photographer and the sitter had an active role in how photographs were perceived. According to Poole, while some sitters were willing participants others were not. This can essentially mean that the sitters actively played a role in creating their own stereotype, an over simplistic representation of themselves some truth and a great deal of exaggeration.

Through this thesis, I hope to demonstrate how these photographs entwined sitters, photographers and viewers. Through my research I will attempt to point out that Villaalba's interpretations of the Aymara and Quechua people captured through his photography influenced and shaped how people viewed and perceived Latin American people. I will also demonstrate that at times the subjects in many photographs were dressed purposefully and sometimes redressed for other pictures to fit the notion of a certain type. Villaalba was by no means the only photographer during the mid-nineteenth century that specialized in cartes de visites of types. In this thesis I will also compare Villaalba's work to other photographers in Mexico, foreign born and national born, who were making photos of types around the same time.

Many works of art do not reveal their intentions easily. There may have been many reasons to make an album such as Villaalba's *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes*. The photos may have been used as a studio sampler, as types for sale; they could have been exhibited, or constructed to represent what Péruvians and Bolivians looked like. This thesis considers the album and its images for both its past and present significance.

Literature Survey

Books and journals encompassing multiple disciplines shed light on Villaalba's album *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes*. In *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean World*¹ Deborah Poole examines novels, engravings from expeditions, cartes de visite, costumbrista painting which originated in Spain and was later appropriated to depict Andean life and customs.

According to Poole, in order to interpret images "it is necessary to abandon the act of seeing or 'the gaze' as a singular or one-sided instrument of domination and control."² Poole's notion of visual economy proposes that Andean cartes should be considered for and valued manifestations of social interaction and that through those relationships, attitudes, sentiments, and ambitions meaning and value can be invested. Therefore, it is important to understand and clearly identify how Andean people influenced the kinds of images that met European expectations of the Other. Poole also suggests that some sitters were paid and others were not. This implies that some of Villaalba's sitters may have been willing to pose for him and may have been active participants in portraying Andean types.

Poole discusses a selection of images from Villaalba's *Péron et Bolivie: Types et Costumes* album. Poole maintains that the album is a studio sampler that customers could see and choose from a range of sociological types and compositional formats, poses, and moods available upon request. Regardless of why the album was put together, Villaalba's

¹ Poole, Deborah. *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

²Ibid.7

are an exaggerated visual description of nineteenth century Andean people. The combination of cartes and text draws the viewer in further to examine the cartes and the types of people in the album.

Keith McElroy's *Early Peruvian Photography: A Critical Case Study*³ provides a concise overview of the history and business of photography in Péru by focusing on the daguerreotype and the carte de visite. The introduction tells the story of how Péru, after the colonial conquest, became culturally dependent on Spain. McElroy also writes of the French fascination with photography, and how Péruvians followed suit and quickly embraced this new technology in hopes that Europe would see them as equals. McElroy's brief explanation of "tipos" or types, and how the business of photography in Latin America promoted and strengthened stereotypes, echoes Poole's concept of how cartes should be looked at and how they accrued value through social interaction.

In *Image and Memory: Photography from Latin America, 1866-1994*, Wendy Watriss writes about how the "photographic experience in Latin America was a European experience."⁴ As photography became popular, many people wanted to have their pictures taken. Portraits were kept in albums that helped sequence the images and create a family record. Local photographers were trained as apprentices to European photographers and later set up their own businesses. According to Watriss, European studio portrait conventions such as poses, clothing, lighting, decorations, and accessories became the norm worldwide. These studio portrait conventions can be seen throughout Villaalba's album.

³McElroy, Keith. *Early Peruvian Photography: A Critical Case Study* (Ann Arbor: Michigan, UMI Research Press, 1985).

⁴Watriss, Wendy. *Image and Memory: Photography from Latin America, 1866-1994* (Austin: Texas, University of Texas Press, 1998).

Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*⁵ focuses on how travel writing influenced Europe's expansion and "continuing adventurism"⁶ into foreign lands, particularly those of South America and Africa. Pratt has coined the phrase "contact zones"⁷ to refer to spaces where different cultures meet, interact, and even struggle with each other. An important contact zone to consider is the space experienced by photographers and their sitters, due to the cultural gap between them. In many nineteenth century studio portraits of types, sitters were often photographed with strange expressions on their faces, or in slouching or rigid poses as seen in some of Villaalba's cartes. Although Villaalba was Bolivian born, we do not know whether or not he was familiar with Andean culture nor if he would have been able to portray it accurately.

Harold Osborne's *Indians of the Andes: Aymaras and Quechuas*⁸ was published in 1952. The book includes two maps of Péru and Bolivia and thirty illustrations of objects, people, and places. *Indians of the Andes: Aymaras and Quechuas* consists of seven chapters in which Osborne tells the history and culture of the Aymaras and Quechua people. Osborne's writing style is a combination of the real and the exaggerated; the same effect that nineteenth and early twentieth century expositions had on their attendees. Much like Villaalba's album, which includes text and image, Osborne's writings create a clichéd portrait of a people and place, similar to the way the photograph has influenced the notion of the type.

⁵ Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

⁶ Ibid. 1

⁷ Ibid. 6-7

⁸ Osborne, Harold. "*Indians of the Andes: Aymaras and Quechuas*" London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1952.

*Photography: A Cultural History*⁹ by Marien and *A New History of Photography*¹⁰ by Frizot are useful texts that cover important points about the multiple uses of photography in the worlds of art and science. Marien writes, “The notion of the human character could be interpreted through facial expressions persisted throughout nineteenth century portraiture in all visual media. In fact, as photographs became more generally available, they made readings of inner character more widespread.”¹¹

Both Marien and Frizot write about the physician Guillaume Duchenne de Boulogne’s well-known reaction-provoking experiments that resulted in physical evidence recorded by the ostensibly captured photograph. Based on his findings, Duchenne took his subject’s emotional responses to be typical of all human beings, proving his theory of physiognomy. At the same time researchers were using photography to prove their theories. For example, scientist Charles Darwin completed a study in 1838 called *The Expression of the Emotions Man and Animals*, in which he used Duchenne’s photographs that contended that emotional states were the same in all humans, and that animals expressed their emotions in a similar manner to humans; therefore, man and animal were not separately created species. This is an example of how photography crossed paths with science, a dangerous combination that could have reinforced prejudice and stereotypes of certain people or culture by the way of the photographer’s lens, which was once thought to be only a mechanical reproduction. Although Villaalba’s cartes do not appear to follow Duchenne or Darwin’s theories of physiognomy, it is important to understand how

⁹ Marien, Mary Warner. *Photography: A Cultural History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006.

¹⁰ Frizot, Michel. *A New History of Photography*. 1998

¹¹ Marien, Mary Warner. *Photography: A Cultural History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006. 137

nineteenth century pseudo-sciences could have influenced the rationale associated with images of this kind or from this time period.

Frizot's *A New History of Photography* states, "The body was seen as the visible proof of human differences, criminal tendencies, pathology, and delinquency."¹² The connection that Frizot makes between photography and ethnography is that photography is fundamentally ethnographic (including when its sole aim is art or advertising). This implies that because photography is ultimately mechanical, first and foremost, it records the exact physical characteristics of a person or a place regardless of whether it was the photographer's intention. Frizot's section on "Types and Races" demonstrates how ethnographers used portraits to prove the existence of different types of people worldwide. These kinds of portraits, in turn, stimulated travel and the desire for colonial conquest among European societies. Frizot notes that it was typical of native people to be staged either partially unclothed or naked, and to be photographed from behind, full-face and in profile by the photographer. It was also common for photographers to direct the sitters, "prevent them from moving, put them in a typical attitude, encourage them to make the best of themselves with clothes and accessories."¹³ Often times the photographer staged the images to make them more visually appealing, unlike ethnographers who document people of a certain culture or ethnic group.

In *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*¹⁴, John Tagg discusses the ways that the meaning and interpretation of photographs changes throughout time and is influenced by society. Tagg's chapter, *A Democracy of the Image: Photographic Portraiture*

¹² *Ibid.* 259

¹³ Frizot, Michel. *A New History of Photography*. 267.

¹⁴ Tagg, John. *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*. (MN: Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press)

and Commodity Production provides a unique view on portraiture, social class, and the democracy of the image. Tagg and Poole write about how images that western society values are those that we acquire and seek connection with; in turn, they give visible form to our understanding about social interactions and exchanges.

Robert Levine's *Images of History: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Latin American Photographs as Documents*¹⁵ explores the social and physical uses of photography in Latin America. Levine's introduction discusses how photographs provide concrete visual documentation of the past and therefore can indicate a person's "religion, ethnicity, elements of order and disorder, economic status, tastes, attitudes, and human relations."¹⁶ He believes that a group's social and economic status dictates the way that they respond to the camera. According to Levine, lower class individuals reveal different mannerisms depending on where the photograph is taken.

If it is assumed that Villaalba directed his sitters then Levine's theories would not apply to the images in the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album. However, Levine's statements are reminiscent of more typical ethnographic images, particularly those that taken in the nineteenth century South Pacific. Although Levine's writings suggest that many of the individuals photographed seem passive or lazy, it is my contention that some of Villaalba's sitters are aware of the camera. An excellent example of this is the carte in Villaalba's album where a man uses a mirror as a device to confront the camera¹⁷. Villaalba's album, may be either as a cohesive example of his most successful images or simply as an arbitrary selection made to demonstrate his studio techniques and practices.

¹⁵ Levine, Robert. *Images of History: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Latin American Photographs as Documents*.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ See acc# 7.

Police Pictures: The Photograph as Evidence by Sandra S. Phillips, Mark Haworth-Booth, and Carol Squires discusses the multi-purposes and trajectories of photographs as they were used for “investigation, evidence gathering, and scientific categorization.”¹⁸ The writings in this book imply that nineteenth century photographs taken within this social convention indicate their purpose in the world. Phillips writes about how Charles Darwin’s *Origins of Species*, Johann Lavater’s *Essays on Physiognomy*, and Guillaume Duchenne’s documented tests on his patients regarding human expression shaped how people perceived certain social classes and nationalities as criminals. This type of photographic research continued in the United States and Europe with Bertillon’s System, which used measurements to classify criminals. I tend to agree with Phillip’s observation but in Villaalba’s case, the two hundred cartes de visite that depict sitters in costumes and a few different backdrops play a large role in creating a stereotype of the Aymara and Quechua society in the *Peron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album.

Emmanuelle Crane’s *Photographing Kanak Women in the Nineteenth Century, a Voyeuristic Approach*¹⁹ takes on a different approach when writing about images from the South Pacific, than other researchers who write about the image and include it in their books or journals. According to Crane, reading a photograph involves identifying as many aspects of its cultural context as possible: the photographer, date and photographic technology used to produce the image. The artifice (that is, the props and backgrounds) are highly charged culturally and their influence on the ‘truth’ of an ethnographic image is immense. I tend to agree with Crane’s notion of investigating the image as a whole

¹⁸ Phillips, Sandra S. *Police Pictures: The Photograph as Evidence*. (San Francisco, Calif.: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art 1997) 7

¹⁹ Crane, Emmanuelle. *Photographing Kanak Women in the Nineteenth Century, a Voyeuristic Approach*. (2004): 13-21.

(photographer, process, props, and costumes) because I believe that it gives the viewer a better understanding of the image. It is interesting to note that while Crane believes the image is better understood when it is seen as a whole, he contradicts himself by not allowing the viewer see the images that he writes about. Crane has chosen to omit images in order to avoid “charge of biased selectivity and the perpetuations of colonial views.”²⁰ This manner of working allows the viewer to learn about these kinds of images by reading about how the history of photography has played a role in illustrating a type that can be imagined easily yet still leaves the reader wanting to see the actual images he writes about.

²⁰Ibid. 15

Background/Context

To provide context for Villaalba's album, the individual cartes and the combination of image and handwritten text in it, I began researching the history of the Aymara and Quechua people, the history of photography in Latin America, and how the photographic image played a role in creating and perpetuating a type. According to Osborne, the origins of the Aymara and Quechua people are obscure but they were once under Inca rule. The Aymara and Quechua people speak different languages but today, in many cases, they share some of the same vocabulary. The Aymara live in a more arid environment in and around Ouro, Cochabamba, Potosí, and Sucre, while the Quechuas live in the Northern plateau in and around Lake Titicaca.

Before the invention of photography, Europe's physical encounters with the West were written, painted, and drawn. According to Poole, "during the early eighteenth century, the Spanish Crown allowed several French naturalists to travel and study in South America."²¹ Most of their written accounts were eagerly read in Europe. One excerpt discovered by Poole read: "Color: Dark olive-brown. Average height: 1 meter 597 millimeters . . . Mouth rather large; medium lips . . . Physiognomy: serious, reflective, sad."²² This was on of the many pictures painted and consumed by European people after such writings on Latin America.

Other descriptive writings on Andean people, like those of David Forbes, who wrote *On the Aymara Indians of Péru and Bolivia*, for the Ethnological Society of London in

²¹ Deborah Poole. *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 33

²² [D'Orbigny, Alcides] quoted in Deborah Poole. *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 59.

the late nineteenth century, were often illustrated graphically. These forms of written and visual representations further encouraged European societies to discover what and who existed in far off places.

As photography gained popularity in Europe, all through the West people embraced it and tailored it to their individual needs. By the 1850s, photography was a moneymaking enterprise throughout Latin America. The combination of European ideas about the Other and the photographs that supported them resulted in a small portable and sometimes inaccurate representation of native populations. These photographs could be purchased, gifted, or traded and in many ways echoed those very same ideas. They played a role in shaping the nineteenth century European conception of the Other and provoked a sense of curiosity about people in environments different from their own. Today, we are able to consider a mixture of good and bad in photography's early uses.

The Carte de Visite in Latin America

In 1854, Disdéri patented the carte de visite process in Europe. They were small mass-produced portraits adhered to cardboard mounts that typically included the photographer's name and studio location. Carte de visite cameras typically used multiple lenses that could expose several images at once directly onto a glass plate. The exposed negatives were typically contact-printed on sensitized paper coated with albumen, which gave them their classic sheen. Later, they were toned in gold chloride, which gave them a warm hue and fixed in sodium thiosulfate to prevent fading. As a result, multiple images could be printed, mounted, and sold inexpensively. The typical subject matter of the cartes was personal- usually a portrait that was sometimes dedicated, signed, and given to a loved one. The manner in which cartes de visite were marketed made everyone - sitters and photographers alike - want to be a part of this new fad.

By 1860, the trend of the tiny visiting card size portrait spread into Latin America. The cartes de visite known as retratos tarjeta, or "card portraits" were made, sold, bought, and traded in Péru and Bolivia. Poole writes, ". . . Andean cartes were produced by both national and foreign photographers."²³ While many of the cartes began as images for the wealthy and for the nobility, later they gained popularity as portraits among the lower and middle classes that depicted the daily life and social roles of people.

²³ Poole, Deborah. *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World*. Pg. 119

Ricardo Villaalba

Daniel Buck, author of *Pioneer Photography in Bolivia: Directory of Daguerreotypists and Photographers, 1840s-1930s*, tells us that Ricardo Villaalba was born in Corocoro, Bolivia, 60 miles southwest of the Bolivian capital of La Paz. Corocoro was one of two main centers known for silver mining, and at the time its population was approximately 10,000 inhabitants - almost all of whom were indigenous. Villaalba was an active photographer in La Paz, Bolivia and in Arequipa, Péru between 1860 and the 1870s. Villaalba was a photographer who made images of many different types of people. He also photographed the beginning of the urbanization of Péru before moving to Paris in 1880. Villaalba became a member of the Société Française de la Photographie and exhibited his work in 1894. To my knowledge not much is known about him after this date.

Ricardo Villaalba left his imprint on the world at a time when cartes de visite were in high demand. Portraits of types were extremely popular and could be seen worldwide. For example, the cartes made by French photographer Francois Aubert in Mexico between 1854 and 1869 depicted working class Mexican types. Much like Villaalba's portraits of Péru and Bolivia that follow the conventions of European cartes de visite, so did many other photographers who made images in Latin America. Other photographers like Antonio Cruces and Luis Campa, made cartes de visite of Mexican labor types similar to Villaalba's images of water carriers, wet nurses, and others. Cruces and Campa's types, like Villaalba's, were photographed in front of studio backdrops that accentuated their sitter's occupation or contrasted their costumes. Whether cartes de visite of types were made in Bolivia, Péru or Mexico they were all visually similar: studio setting, sitter posing straight on or in profile, and costume and props. While it is not

certain whether Villaalba's images were exhibited in other countries, the images by Cruces and Campa formed part of Mexico's national image and were displayed in "the 1876 World's Exposition in Philadelphia."²⁴

²⁴ Lerner, Jesse. Cabinet Magazine. *Imported Nationalism*. Issue 5 Winter 2001/02
<http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/5/importednationalism.php>

Album Description

Considering the limitations of early photographic processes and the usual storage conditions of photographs from the nineteenth century, the album and images taken by Ricardo Villaalba of the Aymara and Quechua people of Péru and Bolivia are in extraordinary condition. Today this album preserves, protects, houses, and contributes to the photographs historical integrity. Villaalba's *Péron et Bolivie – Types et Costumes* not only stores Villaalba's photographs but also continues to command an authoritative presence (due to its construction, book-like nature and photographic scope). It is important to note that many images and albums from this period typically have not survived the wear and tear of their use.

The album *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* is a rich, warm, brown rectangular leather album, fastened with a golden-colored metal clasp located on the fore-edge and measures 22.4 x 28.5cm. The album is slightly distressed around the spine and along the bottom edge. In order to protect the album's spine when viewing the images, a book cradle must be placed underneath the album and adjusted as the pages are turned to support its weight. The album holds two hundred cartes de visite, which generally date between 1850 and 1870. The inscription written on the inside of the front cover reads "Villaalba's Péron et Bolivie—Types and Costumes Indiens of Péron et Bolivie (Quechuas Aymaras) Métis (Cholos et Cholas) Nègres et métis divers" which translates to "Péru and Bolivia – Types and costumes Indians of Péru and Bolivia (Quechuas Aymaras) mixed (Cholas and Cholos) Blacks and various mixes."

Villaalba's album is filled with images of people wearing costumes typical of Péru and Bolivia. The women are dressed in a variety of skirts. According to Osborne, Aymara women tend to wear polleras - skirts known for their long bell shape. Quechua women tend to wear a long skirt without the bell shape called an aksu. Both of the women's costumes characteristically include a white cotton shirt, scarf, knit cap, shawl and/or poncho. According to Osborne, a person's social status can be determined depending on the cut of the pollera, which can indicate the difference between a rural Indian or an urban Mestizo (a person of mixed race especially an offspring of Spaniard and Indian). Because it was common in the nineteenth century for photographers to dress their sitters, these costumes may not reflect the actual ethnic background of Villaalba's sitters. Unlike the women's ornate skirts, which are relatively uniform in nature, the men usually tend to wear a variety of cotton shirts, pants, ponchos, and hats.

In Poole's *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean World*, she describes Ricardo Villaalba's cartes de visite as:

. . .Indian couples, porters, soldiers, cholas, merchants, beggars, lice-pickers, muletiers, and rabonas (the women and wives who accompanied Indian soldiers). Other, more unusual selections include elaborately staged scenes in which Indian children "confess" to other children dressed as priests, or upper class Bolivians pose as Indians playing flutes. Lowland Indians are also included, as are a smattering of Africans and one Aymara of African descent who is identified with the intriguingly arithmetic label of "Noir + Indien".²⁵

The album pages are made of a heavy card stock that has been scored near the spine to allow the pages to turn easily. Each page is numbered, front and back, and

²⁵ Poole, Deborah. *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean World*. 121

contains two photographs that measure approximately 9 x 5.5 cm. They have been cut meticulously and placed in the middle of each page side by side. The front of each page in the album is bordered by cream-colored ink that has begun to transfer to the opposite pages. Most of the cartes are in exceptional condition, however, a few are beginning to fade and silver, a condition that is typical of albumen prints of this age. The majority of the album pages appear to show minor signs of foxing: a common indicator of mineral deposits embedded in the paper stock. These have surfaced likely because of fluctuations in humidity and improper storage conditions. According to Daniel Buck, Villalba worked in La Paz, Bolivia; Arequipa, Péru; and lived in Paris, France.²⁶ The album may have been in any or all of those places prior to its current location at George Eastman House in Rochester, New York when it was acquired from a private dealer in New York City in 1971.

²⁶ Daniel Buck. "Directory of Daguerreotypists & Photographers, 1840s-1930s" <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/dbuck/> (accessed June 1, 2007).

Historical, Scientific, and Social Analysis of Villaalba's Photographs

Although the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album houses two hundred cartes de visite of types, I chose to focus on and investigate thirty cartes which I believe to be visually interesting nineteenth century carte de visite images of Péruvian and Bolivian type portraits. In this thesis I will describe, analyze, and discuss how this selection of cartes could have been seen, utilized, and understood as specific examples of Andean types.

Figure 2, 3, 7, and 10 are especially telling of how nineteenth century type images create a historical document, have the power to influence thinking and stereotype the image of Latin American people, and simultaneously label and generalize his sitters in the manner, which they are juxtaposed and labeled with text in the album. While we do not know Villaalba's intent for making these images we do know that most cartes of types were used for commercial purposes and the stereotyping became a by-product of the process.

Every other page in the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album, features a cream-colored border that frames the cartes and defines their space within each album page. Six of the thirty cartes in this selection depict men and women. One of these cartes shows the same man and woman more than once wearing different costumes, indicating that sitters could have been dressed in a certain way to portray a particular type.

Ten of the thirty cartes from my selection depict two men in each photograph. One of the cartes, which is particularly interesting and unusual, depicts a man sitting with his back to the camera. In the photographic scene, he uses a mirror as a device to

confront the viewer in an indirect manner while sitters in the rest of the album look into directly into the camera. In my opinion this kind of portrait photography was avant-garde for the time.

Four of the thirty cartes from this selection are accompanied by a handwritten caption in French and Spanish underneath each carte that labels and categorizes the sitters as types. The captions read *soldat avec sa femme (rabona)* which translates to *soldier with his woman/wife (rabona)*. Other common captions in the album include: *cholas, Indien et noir* (Indian and Black), and *Nègresse* (Black woman). These kinds of captions further demonstrate Villaalba's sitters were considered to be of a certain type, and that this was their most defining and important feature.

Two cartes portray children; one of these depicts a boy and girl dressed similarly to some of the adults photographed in the album. Two other cartes depict teenage boys, and one features a teenage boy dressed up like a priest. What is interesting about these cartes is that they are using children to portray or perform for the camera an adult type from the Andean region.

The last three cartes depict the interaction between man and animal in the Andes. In one of the two of the cartes, a man kneels in front of his llama indicating a respect for the animal that helped the Aymara and Quechua people in their daily life and were often times sacrificed in a ritual for Mother Earth. Although these cartes reflect only a small portion of what can be seen in Villaalba's album, it is my contention that this selection of images can be seen as an example of how nineteenth century type photography created a historical document, and also influenced the conception of Latin America and its people in the nineteenth century, particularly through objectifying them in photographs.

The first cartes provide the viewer with an introduction to the album. The feel and weight of the cardstock page serves as a reminder to turn the pages gently. Two images of Indian couples have been juxtaposed and framed by a cream-colored border. Like most of the portraits in the album, these cartes were taken inside a studio.

It is important to keep in mind that the immense popularity of the carte de visite in Europe was embraced in Latin America in the mid 1800s. During this time many photographers, foreign and national born, began taking portraits in Péru and Bolivia. As carte de visite portraits gained popularity and the subject matter expanded, portraits of types were in demand. These kinds of images began to meet the needs of the avid collectors whose curiosity for the other demanded their existence and abundance. It is typical of cartes de visite of types to be made inside in front a studio backdrop and for the sitters to be dressed by the photographer. The cartes are full-length straight-on shots, sitting full-length shots, close up shots, and a few that are of a less standard set up. Many of the photographs have distinctive flooring, which indicate that the photographs may have been taken in different rooms or studios. Props like headstands, chairs, multiple wardrobe changes, and hand-held props were used to further emphasize a sitter's occupation or in order to create a whole new type.

Fig. 1

The women stand tall and motionless with the aid of a headstand visible at the back of their feet, while both men sit beside them on a stool. The women wear a variation of rural Indian chola dress (a costume that lies somewhere between ancient Indian dress and Europeanized dress as it was worn in Péru).²⁷ In these cartes, the women wear cotton blouses, long cotton skirts (aksu), and neutral colored ponchos. The men in both cartes wear distinctive hats, long sleeve shirts, and long striped woolen ponchos over long or knee-length cropped pants. The women and men cover their hair with hats or scarves. The couple in the left-hand carte has been photographed barefoot, while the couple in the right-hand carte wears sandals. In both cartes the women stand as the men sit beside them; this creates symmetry [and also a triangular composition] that is evidenced

²⁷ Osborne, Harold. *Indians of the Andes: Aymara and Quechua*. 221

throughout Villaalba's album. The first two cartes are examples of the kinds of types, costumes, and poses that can be seen throughout the album *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes*.

Unlike the first page, the second page (Figure 2) does not have a cream-colored border around the photographs, yet the photographs seem to be perfectly aligned on the page. This suggests that the album could have been put together professionally by Villaalba or a stationer. The handwritten inscriptions underneath the cartes in French and Spanish label the sitters as types and bring to mind a kind of classification system common in ethnographic portraits of the nineteenth century as seen in image titles such as *Creoles from Reunion, 1863* or *Study of Draped Figure 1917-1920*.²⁸ Both of the

²⁸ Frizot, Michel. *A New History of Photography*. 267-269.

cartes depict the sitters in profile. It is evident from the distinctive flooring seen in each of the cartes that the photographs were taken in different locations.

The left-hand carte depicts a type — a soldier, woman, and baby. The handwritten text underneath the carte in French and Spanish reads “Soldat avec sa femme (rabona)” and roughly translates to “soldier with his woman/wife.” The term *rabona* typically refers to Indian women that accompanied soldiers and fought side by side with the soldiers during wartime. The man and woman stand in profile, which makes it easier for the viewer to study their costumes. The man standing two steps in front of the woman wears a brimmed military hat, button down jacket, layered trousers, and carries a musical instrument made of horn in his right hand and supplies on his back. The woman’s long braids cascade onto her shoulders, continue down the top of her long sleeve shirt, and stop at her waist. The motionless baby girl, tucked in the woman’s aguayo (shawl), has been propped with her body towards the camera and is the only one in the group who directly confronts the photographer with her eyes. The woman and the baby wear similar clothing: bowler hats, light-colored long sleeve shirts, and polleras. The baby, additionally, has been wrapped with a small striped poncho.

The two women in the right-hand carte stand in profile which accentuates their typical chola costume: dark braids, aguayo, and pollera (long bell-shaped skirts) with lighter colored petticoats underneath. According to Osborne in *Indians of the Andes: Aymaras and Quechuas*, long hair parted down the middle in chola culture is seen as an important tradition that is seen as a way to entice suitors.²⁹ Because both women appear to be sporting the same hairstyle and outfit, the image leads us to speculate about their relationship to one another, to think about the fashion of the time, and to consider their

²⁹ Osborne. Harold. “*Indians of the Andes: Aymaras and Quechuas.*” 223

social class based on their physical appearance and attire. It is my contention that these two women dressed, in more ornate clothing, are the only ones in the album to represent this particular socio-economic chola class from the time period. The juxtaposition of the image and text emphasizes the cartes as types that can be encountered in the daily life of the Aymara and Quechua people of Peru and Bolivia.

Fig. 3

In Figure 3 the same couple has been photographed against the same backdrop and juxtaposed wearing different clothes, assuming different characters and therefore representing different types. Villaalba has created a different mood in each carte by lightening and darkening the backdrop. The scattered hay seen in both cartes attempts to

bring the exterior environment into the studio and create a portrait *in situ*. Although there are variations in each person's costumes, the basic pieces are the same--pollera, shirts, ponchos, and aguayos.

The left-hand carte depicts a woman and a man facing forward looking into the camera that seem aware of the camera lens. The woman wears a long-sleeve shirt, aguayo, and a dark pollera with a light-colored petticoat. She holds a light-colored handkerchief in her right hand while she rests her left arm across her belly. Her light-colored hat covers the crown of her head and shows off her waist-long dark braids that have been parted down the middle. The man's dark mustache draws attention to his pale skin. He wears a dark poncho with a light-colored v-stripe on the front, dark pants, and a light-colored bowler hat tipped to the left and his tiny charango (guitar) complete his outfit.

The right-hand carte echoes the pose from the left-hand carte in Figure 2. The woman's dark angular hat, striped aguayo, light-colored poncho, and dark pollera contrast her more ostensibly European dress in the left-hand carte. Like the rabona in Figure 2 who carries her baby on her back, the woman in Figure 3 mimics this chola tradition by placing a blonde baby doll on her back. The man standing behind the woman holds a flute to his lips. He carries the same tiny charango on his back, mimicking the way the woman carries the blonde baby doll on her back. Strands of his dark curly hair come out from underneath his striped woolen hat. Because the man's hair is not visible in the left-hand carte, I can conjecture that his hair was hidden in the right hand carte underneath his hat or a hairpiece was added to his costume to in order to portray a type. He wears almost the same outfit that he wore in the left-hand carte, but this time his

pants have been hemmed about 3-4 inches above his ankle. This same pant style can be seen throughout Villaalba's album.

Like many of the cartes in Villaalba's album, his sitters appear to be rigidly posed and deliberately staged. The fact that the man and woman in these cartes have been dressed up and juxtaposed on the album page implies a confrontation between sitter and viewer and raises questions about Villaalba's intentions and the creation and sequencing of the album. Based on Villaalba's strong photographic composition, the sitters costumes and poses, and popular tastes and interests in the nineteenth century, it is my contention that these kinds of images would have been extremely popular, well collected, and perhaps even added to tourist albums worldwide.

Fig.4

Because the two cartes in Figure 4 appear to speak to how colonialism and religious practices permanently altered the lives of Latin American people, they capture Villaalba's interpretation of how religion and traditions were assimilated into Péruvian and Bolivian culture. During the seventeenth century, missionaries from Spain were sent to the Americas to convert indigenous communities from their pagan rituals to organized religion. They used early church strategies, like the ones used to convert Moors and Jews in Spain, to change and civilize native populations and then take control of Latin American countries. Unlike the stories written about the chuncho (wild Indian) these cartes depict a more passive Indian role-playing or performing for the camera the acculturation of the Aymara and Quechua people into a more European society. These

cartes play an important part in disseminating a piece of the Aymara and Quechua culture to the world.

Both cartes in Figure 4 echo each other's religious theme and pose and depict the priest, sinner, and parishioner type as seen in organized religion. The left-hand carte depicts the act of confession, while the right-hand carte recounts the story of the lamb of God, an early Christian symbol that illustrates a sacrificial lamb used to atone for the sins of man.

In the left-hand carte, a little boy kneels in front of a young boy dressed in a long, dark, belted robe and a short elbow-length cape that covers his shoulders and resembles a priest's outfit. The roles that the boys portray, priest and sinner, can easily be defined by their poses and costumes. The older boy's eyes are closed and his head is down as the younger boy stares intently at the older boy's chest. The priest's higher seated position suggests authority, while the little boy's position implies meekness. The priest's clothing and body language along with the kneeling boy's prayerful hands implies the act of confession, a religious ritual, that entails recounting your sins, being absolved of them, and praying to God as penance. The priest rests his hand on his knee and holds a rather large book, perhaps the bible. He leans his arm on the top of his chair, bends his elbow, and leans his face into his palm.

Fig. 5 (Harvard Peabody)

Fig. 6 (GEH)

Figure 6 is a close-up taken from Figure 4, which belongs to George Eastman House. The Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University owns Figure 5. As we can see from the backdrop, tiled floor, and young child, Figure 5 and Figure 6 appear to be taken on the same day or in the same place. The differences between the cartes is that the Peabody's version appears to depict a much younger boy dressed as the priest and the same little boy this time holds onto the priest's hand. The priest's head in Figure 5 is tipped forward; his arm rests on the back of the chair, and his foot on top of a book which suggests that Villaalba dressed up his sitters in order to portray a type.

In Figure 4, the right-hand carte depicts a young man sitting on a stool clutching a lamb close to his chest. Again, Villaalba has created an environmental portrait by placing his subjects amid piles of hay. The young man's dark curls stick out from underneath the front and at the sides of his hat and his eyes confront the camera and consequently the viewer. These two cartes might have been juxtaposed on this album page in order to

emphasize the role religion could have played on the Aymara and Quechua people, and how it has effected and been integrated into their history and culture.

Fig. 7

Figure 7 depicts two sets of men on the album page. The men in the left-hand carte face the camera and lean against each other with their arms crossed. The men in the left-hand carte wear similar outfits; long sleeve shirts, layered pants, and light-colored hats with thick borders that call attention to their difference in height. They echo each other's pose and their proximity to each other makes the viewer think that they are close friends. As evident from the backdrop and distinct flooring, these cartes were taken inside a studio, but possibly not the same one.

The men in the right-hand carte do not face the photographer. The man standing in profile wears a dark striped wool hat that sits high on his head. His ear is visible from underneath the loose braid that falls to the middle of his back. His two-toned poncho and light colored pants lead the eye down to a mirror. In it, the viewer can see the reflection of a dark-skinned and wide-eyed man. Additionally, on the floor two carefully placed hats with scarves are visible, possibly indicating another piece of the costume or a change of costume for the next pose. Villaalba's avant-garde approach to this image adds a visual complexity that is not present in other cartes in the album. The sitter and viewer are now able to exchange looks in a game of hide and seek and can confront the camera and each other indirectly.

Fig.8

Both cartes above offer the viewer a glimpse into the traditions and culture of the Aymara and Quechua people. In Aymara and Quechua culture, fiestas are lavish celebrations in which both rural and urban Indians participate by celebrating and indulging in everything, including music. These fiestas are typically a mixture of Spanish and Indian traditions and usually center on religious events.

The men in both cartes appear to be dressed in festive attire, perhaps as musicians or dancers, and appear to perform for the camera the same way they might perform for a fiesta. Both cartes have likely been taken in the same studio as is evident from the background and the flooring; both sets of men wear layered clothes and have been photographed barefoot, which is typical of other cartes by Villaalba.

The left-hand carte depicts two men wearing ornate round hats with tall vertical feathers at the top. The straight chin-length hair of the man standing on the left draws the eye to his costume; a multi-colored striped poncho with a rounded white collar and underneath a dark sleeved sweater. His right arm holds a drumstick on top of the bombo (drum). The darker vertical striped poncho that the man sitting wears focuses the attention on his wind instrument and then to another bombo that rests vertically on the floor.

The men in the right-hand carte wear long pointed ornate hats with long feathers that add another two to three feet to each of the men's height. The man on the left is dressed in light-colored clothing: a long-sleeve shirt, vest, and pants. His dark translucent mask hides and prevents the viewer from examining his face and adds another level of anonymity. In his right hand, he holds a light-colored rag and in his left hand a kind of baton. The man dressed in a peacock hat, light-colored shirt, and dark buttoned down

vest and slacks next to him holds his diagonally striped bombo across his chest and a flute to his lips. The juxtaposition of these cartes allows the viewer to study the sitter's costumes, their instruments, and compare every detail of the photographic scene.

Fig.9

The term contact zone refers to social spaces where cultures meet, interact, or even struggle with each other. Pratt further states that these encounters occurred when people from different geographical regions and historical traditions separated and intersected. The resulting relationships were formed by force that typically involved social oppression, inequality, and uncontrollable conflict as evident in colonialism and slavery. The cartes in Figure 9 embody Mary Louise Pratt's notion of the contact zone because they provided the viewer with a visual description of mestizaje or the fusion of cultures in

Peru and Bolivia. Although the text classifies the man in the right-hand carte as Indian and Black, the cartes in the *Peron et Bolivie – Types et Costumes* album serve as visual evidence that contact zones intertwined cultures and resulted in the faces of Peru and Bolivia.

The juxtaposition of these cartes reveals the changing face of nineteenth century Péru and Bolivia - Spanish, Indian, and Black. In the nineteenth century, Péru and Bolivia were huge mining centers for silver, gold, and tin. Foreign investors quickly arrived, established companies, and recruited Andeans and Africans as mineworkers. These new relationships were formed out of the need for survival but later flourished as new nations were established.

Although people in most of Villaalba's cartes have been photographed standing, Villaalba has chosen to show both men seated, perhaps to make a more precise comparison between the types sitting before him. The man in the left-hand carte sits on a wooden crate in front of a plain wall with light trim. His small eyes, thin nose, and lips accentuate his long face. His light-colored hat and dark sash accentuate the man's waist length braid. On top of his dark long sleeved shirt, a striped scarf adorns his neck and a rather large ornate cross hangs at the middle of his chest. His dark layered trousers with a thick white hem highlight his thin legs.

The man in the right-hand carte leans on an ornate prop and sits on a dark wooden chair placing him at a higher plane than the man that sits to his left. Was this intentional? Because of cultural attitudes present in the nineteenth century, I can conjecture that this could have been a comment on social class. In fact, the juxtaposition of the cartes alone can be a comment not just on social class but also one on the difference in cultures and the fusion of cultures. The diagonal line that runs across the backdrop accentuates his dark skin, furrowed eyebrows, small eyes, larger nose and full

lips. The caption underneath the cartes reads, “Noir + Indien” which translates into “Black + Indian” and documents his “identity” or type. The rope loosely coiled around his left shoulder wraps around his bent arm and could possibly depict his occupation. The man’s dark bowler hat and light colored handkerchief underneath forms a barrier between his head and the hat. Underneath his vertically striped poncho, half of a light colored collar peeks out. His checkered slacks resemble modern day pajamas and are radically different from other slacks worn by Villaalba’s sitters.

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Fig.10

One of the types depicted in *Péron et Bolivie-Types et Costumes* is of the wet nurse, as shown in the juxtapositioned photos in Figure 10. Villaalba may have also been

attempting to illustrate a comparison between the two separate ethnicities of the women, which would have been common for the time. I found writings by Sussman and Pescador on this general subject useful to my understanding of how cultural inheritance plays a part in the assimilation of a culture.

According to Sussman's *The Wet-Nursing Business in Nineteenth Century France* and Juan Javier's Pescador's *Vanishing Woman: Female Migrations and Ethnic Identity in Late-Colonial Mexico City*, settlers in Latin America continued to hire live-in wet nurses well into the early twentieth century when a mother was physically unable to or preferred not to nurse her children. Many of these women continued on as dry nurses that helped raise these children. Their salary was usually modest and they were further compensated with some clothes and food. Typically, wet nurses who could claim Spanish origins were hired first, followed by those of mixed origins, and lastly those of African descent. Perhaps the women in the Figure 10 cartes are supposed to illustrate the role of the wet nurse and, along with the text, differentiate between black origins and Indian origins.

The strong composition in the left-hand carte is striking and reminiscent of slave daguerreotypes or ambrotypes which depicted a nanny with a baby as seen in the collection of Greg French which document the relationship between nanny and child and the divide between social classes.³⁰ In this instance, the text underneath the carte that reads *Nègresse* (black woman) does not allow viewers to look at the image and make up their own mind; instead, it reinforces the nineteenth century mind-set where categorization and stereotyping seemed to be reasonable and tolerated. Unlike the woman in the right-hand carte, the woman in the left-hand carte sits on chair and has her

³⁰ Gregory Fried. Commonplace: True pictures. *Part I: Early Photographic Techniques*. <http://www.common-place.org/vol-02/no-02/fried/fried-4.shtml> (accessed August 31, 2007).

styled in pinned curls and smiles into the camera. This could possibly suggest that she is either more aware of the camera or she belongs to a different social or economic class than the woman opposite her.

Unlike the woman pictured in the carte on the left, the woman's facial expression, dark backdrop, and distance from the camera makes her appear helpless. The woman in the right-hand carte sits on the floor crossed legged. Her hair has been tucked messily under her angular shaped hat that matches the dark cape that envelops her. Her cleavage is exposed as the baby nurses at her breast. Unlike the light skirt of the women in the left cartes, the dark skirt of the woman in the right carte creates a contrast and distance between the baby and the woman.

Whether intentionally or not, these two women unlike other sitters appear in less rigid poses. They appear more like individuals despite the text that labels the woman as black. Whether these women were actual wet nurses or not will remain a mystery, but it is important to note that the occupation existed and nannies and children were photographed in the nineteenth century.

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6CH 16235 Fig.11

Because the two subjects in Figure 11 appear to be posed and clothed in a similar manner: hats, ponchos, shirts, pants, the exact same sweater and shoes, Villaalba may have been trying to focus attention on the sitter's faces in order to compare and contrast their ethnic backgrounds. This physical comparison could possibly highlight the Native versus the Spaniard and touch upon the assimilation of both groups into the combination of a new culture and traditions.

As these images are juxtaposed on the album page, I can imagine that photographs would have been placed side by side in order to facilitate a comparison. The man in the left hand carte sits and looks into the camera. His dark skin, small eyes, thin long nose, prominent cheekbones, and thin lips are very striking. The man's dark wavy chin-length hair is visible from underneath his striped hat. The contrast between his

vertically striped poncho, patterned sweater sleeves, layered trousers, and shoes appear to be typical Andean costume and make the viewer's eye glance repeatedly between the two men and encourages the examination of the differences in each other's faces.

Unlike the man in the left-hand carte, the man in the right-hand carte wears what seems to be newer clothing. For the photograph he slightly leans forward and rests his left elbow on his knee, supporting his head with his left hand. His small dark hat follows the shape of his head and highlights his side burns. His lighter skin and more European-like facial features contrast those of the man on the left. The man's plain vest and white collar shirt is visible underneath his patterned sweater sleeves that draw attention to his thin legs. Because Villaalba has chosen a simple backdrop and an effective juxtaposition of cartes, his sitters and their costumes stand out and create a visually intriguing type, the average native Andean man versus the mestizaje of the Latin American man.

Fig.12

Both cartes in Figure 12 are similar to ethnographic portraits taken in the South Pacific as written about in Emmanuelle Crane's *Photographing Kanak Women in the Nineteenth Century, a Voyeuristic Approach*. According to Crane, "visitors to the South Pacific came with a store of ready-made images and expectations."³¹ I would imagine that the sale of these kinds of images made the photography business a success and would have increased tourism to Latin America. According to Crane, tourism today still continues to portray a romanticized version of the South Pacific. These same kinds of images can be still be seen in Latin America, for example, on travel websites who would like to romanticize a people or place in order to attract travelers to a destination like Tulum, Mexico as seen in Tulum

³¹ Emmanuelle Crane, "Photographing Kanak Women in the Nineteenth Century, a Voyeuristic Approach?" In *The Journal of Pacific Studies* 27, no.1 (2004), 13-21.

Mexico Travel Information: TravelYucatan.com³² or like La Paz, Bolivia as seen in the Lonely Planet website.³³ These websites like the cartes in Figure 12 still romanticize a culture and attempt to heighten the curiosity of the consumer and lure them to ostensibly exotic places.

On this album page, the cartes depict two adolescents, a boy and a girl, photographed individually in separate studio settings. They are partially clothed in similar costumes: multi-colored feather knee-length garment fastened around their waists, in full-length pose and with bow and arrow in hand. The painted backdrop of a garden behind the boy contrasts with his costume, while the dark plain backdrop behind the girl accentuates her costume and headdress. Both sitters are bare-chested and wear beaded necklaces and bracelets. The young man's straight hair has been secured with a dark headband that creates a kind of halo around his head. The girl wears a light colored feather headdress. The boy's legs are long and muscular. They lead the viewer to his sandaled feet and the scattered piles of simulated grass and the stack of arrows that conceal the bottom of the painted backdrop.

In order to understand the context in which these cartes were made, we must take into consideration the history of types and how romanticized notions led to generalized images of a society. Whether the images were posed by the photographer or by sitter, they continue to influence what is thought about the people and time represented. Crane asserts in *Photographing Kanak Women in the Nineteenth Century, a Voyeuristic Approach*, that it was common in the nineteenth century to regard the body as a sexual object. Most nineteenth

³²Tulum Mexico Travel Information: TravelYucatan.com
http://www.travelyucatan.com/tulum_mexico.php (accessed Aug. 31, 2007).

³³ Lonely Planet. *La Paz Images: Bolivia's largest city is dizzying in every respect*.
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/south-america/bolivia/la-paz?v=images>
(accessed August 31, 2007).

century ethnographic images from the South Pacific support Crane's theory. Instead of individualizing the sitter these cartes added a level of anonymity and distance between sitter, the photographer and the viewer.

The Aymara people were, and continue to be, herders who use the wool and meat from herds of llamas, alpacas, and sheep. Llamas and alpacas were domesticated in Péru and Bolivia during Inca times. Male llamas and barren female llamas were sacrificed in religious ceremonies in honor of Pacha Mama or Mother Earth. While llamas are typically used to transport agricultural produce, alpacas are valued for their wool.

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Fig. 13

The cartes in Figure 13 are the only ones in the album which were taken horizontally but arranged vertically on the page suggesting the image could have been taken one right after the other. These cartes are likely random, but their order could also suggest a narrative about Mama Pacha or mother earth who is the goddess of fertility and oversees planting and harvesting. The man in the left-hand carte looks directly into the eyes of a llama or an alpaca that is slightly shorter than him. A light handkerchief is tied around his head and underneath his dark hat. His single tone poncho falls just below his waist at the front and ends at back of his knee. His dark trousers draw the viewer's attention to his laced shoes.

In the right carte, a man squats down in front of a darker two-toned llama or alpaca as he holds onto the rope around the animal's neck in an almost reverent position. The animal's rigid pose reminds the viewer of a statue. The man's slightly tipped head shows off his strong profile. His light colored hat covers most of his chin-length dark wavy hair. He wears a similar costume to the man in the left-hand carte. Not only do these cartes talk about nature and Andean culture, they also speak about advancing photographic technology and the making of environmental portraits in order to create a photograph representative of the Aymara and Quechua people and culture.

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Fig.14

The people depicted in the cartes in Figure 14, are dressed differently from those previously seen in the Villaalba's *Péron et Bolivie-Types et Costumes* album. The men are photographed in front of the same painted backdrop that puts the sitter in what appears to be the English countryside. The extremely European-like backdrop contrasts with the men's Western style costumes and further distances the people as a society separate from Europe. The men in both cartes do not seem to directly be engaged with the camera or the photographer, yet the stance of the man in the left carte shows a strong presence that the man in the carte on the right lacks.

The man in left-hand carte stands in a full-length three-quarter pose that allows his entire costume, head to toe, to be seen. Even though his face and darker hat immediately catch the attention of the viewer, the much lighter gun holstered in his belt

also stands out against his dark pants. The man's checkered, long sleeve, three-buttoned suit coat and the long scarf around his neck are very different from the typical striped woolen ponchos worn by many of Villaalba's sitters. A walking stick anchors the man to the ground. His right hand, just below his holstered gun holds some sort of rope. The light knee-length tights and laced ankle boots are also radically different from Villaalba's other sitters who typically wear sandals or appear barefoot in other cartes.

The right-hand carte features a man dressed in a more typical outfit that can be seen throughout the album. He wears a larger rounded hat, light colored scarf, a striped poncho, the same dark pants, light knee length tights, and a darker pair of laced shoes. The man's eyes seem to be focused elsewhere and fail to engage with the camera, photographer, and viewer. A long rope has been wrapped around the man's right shoulder and falls down his chest and into his right hand. At first glance, the item in his left hand resembles a walking stick, but on closer examination it is a machete that contrasts with his counterpart's gun. The two men in costume posed in front of the ornate backdrop physically remind us of the differences between the rural and the urban.

Fig.15

In both of the above cartes, the children have been posed and dressed to mimic the adults in the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album. The boys in the left-hand carte have been photographed in front of a painted backdrop, which in contrast to a plain background, renders their costumes less prominent. The plain colored backdrop that the girl and boy in the right-hand carte pose against encourages the viewer focus on their costumes.

The boys in the left-hand carte both stand with one hand on their hips and are looking directly into the camera. The boy on the left wears a light-colored hat with a folded brim and a torn long-sleeved shirt and striped pant. The v-shaped shirt leads the viewers to his arms, torn pants, and bare feet. The boy on the right is dressed in the same

manner as seen in some of Villaalba's male sitters: long-sleeved white shirt, striped aguayo, and pants. He too stands barefoot on the patterned tiled flooring. The painted backdrop behind the boys depicts an outdoor scene with a stone wall, trees, steps, and a mounted vase.

In the right-hand carte the girl and boy have been posed in profile. The little girl's hair has been parted down the middle and braided like the adult cholas. A bulky dark aguayo has been fastened at the girl's chest. Her light colored striped poncho is longer at the back than at the front leaving me with a full view of the little girl's hands and objects. Her ankle-length skirt allows the viewer to see her bare feet against a plain light colored floor. The boy behind her stands about a half a foot taller than her. His light colored hat is reminiscent of a fisherman's hat and his striped aguayo also appears bulky like the one the little girl next to him carries on her back. His long-sleeved shirt seems too small for him. A dark striped belt holds his light colored knee-length pants up. He is barefoot against the light colored floor but behind him a dark colored material separates him from the plain colored backdrop. Adults and children dressed alike and these cartes are the only ones in the album that depict small children in pairs dressed and posed like adults in other cartes in the album.

I have chosen to survey the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album because it is a visually interesting and valuable historical document that has not really been examined in depth and can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Since we do not know Villaalba's intentions about the cartes or the album, we can examine the images in terms of how they played a role in shaping European conception of the Aymara and Quechua people. In order to do this it is important to consider the history of photography in Latin America and reflect upon how these cartes continue to educate us today. The *Péron et Bolivie- Types*

et Costumes album invites the viewer to study and make interpretations of Villaalba's representation of the Aymara and Quechua world.

In summation, the cartes depicted throughout this thesis show a number of people representing community roles in an Andean society of the time. The thirty cartes that I have selected to investigate in the cartes de visite section are visually interesting and show a broad range of what can be seen inside of the album *Peron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes*. According to Crane, it is necessary to understand the photograph as a whole in order to be able to decipher it. In Villaalba's case, I believe that the combination of clues such as text, costumes, pose, and lighting help to define his interpretation of the Andean culture.

The combination of text and image in this album is in line with nineteenth century pseudo-science ideas that often developed a classification system for objects and people which used photography as evidence for their hypothesis. This classification system can be seen in daguerreotypes of criminals taken by photographer Matthew Brady in New York City's Blackwell Prison in 1846, followed by the San Francisco Police Department in 1854³⁴ and later in France by Alphonse Bertillon a police department clerk. The "Bertillon system: a series of measurements he considered specific to each body and descriptions of characteristic markings, coupled with two photographs."³⁵ These images became what we know as the mug shot as seen in the book *Police Pictures: The Photograph as Evidence* on page 21. Although Villaalba's photographs echo this common trend, classing people with a camera, costumes and some text, they were probably not used for the same purposes. The text underneath some of the cartes labels the sitter as a

³⁴Phillips, Booth, Squires. *Police Pictures: The Photograph as Evidence*. 9

³⁵ Phillips, Booth, Squires. *Police Pictures: The Photograph as Evidence*.21

type, but at the same time hinders the viewer, in terms of drawing a personal conclusion about an image's meaning a European sensibility may place upon the sitters, but as Poole states some sitters were paid and others were not which means that some of the sitters would have been willing participants and possibly creators of their own stereotypes. But we cannot assume that the sitters would have known how the images would have been used and where they would end up almost one hundred and fifty years later. Perhaps these cartes originated as a way to make money and were considered educational, but today they are inside an album titled *Peron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* whose title tends to influence the way the images and subjects are viewed.

The cartes selected to be examined in this thesis have managed to capture the sitter's physical features, clothing, and even the mood that Villaalba created in his interpretation of the Aymara and Quechua people. Through the photographer's use of costume changes and the staging of types popular in the nineteenth century, the viewer is able to somewhat understand how a type photograph was orchestrated. Without the text there is less conceptual information to interfere with the viewer's interpretation of the photograph. The symmetry that is present in these cartes, and throughout the album, seems intentional and adds to how carefully the album has been arranged.

One may hypothesize that photographers like Villaalba did indeed dress their sitters, but they may have done so in an educated and informed way. According to early twentieth century ethnographic writings on Andean people, "a chola is never seen in public without her aguayo and very rarely without a baby on her back."³⁶ This is exactly how Villaalba chose to portray at least two images as evident in the selection of images investigated in this thesis. Did he have access to writings about his Bolivian people or was

³⁶ Osborne, Harold. *Indians of the Andes: Aymara and Quechua*. Pg. 222

this something that he saw in his daily life? If he did dress them, why did he do it, and how accurate was it? Regardless of whether the sitters were actually priests, wet nurses, cholas, soldiers, or rabonas, the usual rigid poses and costumes were used to immerse the sitters into the role they were supposed to portray for the photograph. Villaalba's cartes in the *Péron et Bolivie: Types et Costumes* album reflect the merging, and acculturation, of an Indian society with a more European one.

Conclusion

With the introduction of the *carte de visite* in Latin America came the democratization of photography. People desired to have their photograph taken, share images with their loved ones, and learn about far off lands and people. A lack of quick, easy, and inexpensive transportation systems, along with nineteenth century writings and drawings of the Other, led people to imagine the unknown instead of actually experiencing it. Through photography everything changed. People were able to acquire an ostensible image of the Other that they took to be real and accurate. The *carte de visite* was a new and affordable medium that aimed to bridge the gap between the elite and the working class. In order to expand their range of subjects, photographers began making most of their type images in their studios. In Villaalba's case, these images depicted the working class Aymara and Quechua types. It was common for the photographer to dress their sitters in different costumes and give them certain props to hold in order to facilitate their interpretation of the sitter's occupation and to set up a comparison between one sitter and another. This, in turn, sparked people's curiosity about the Other and a surge arose in what has been termed armchair tourism. Because in its inception and into the early twentieth century photography was seen as mechanical and non-artistic it was considered to be scientific in nature and therefore a bearer of the truth.

The two hundred cartes displayed in *Péron et Bolivie-Types et Costumes* illustrate Villaalba's interpretation of the society and culture of the Andean people. We cannot

assume that Villaalba's sitters were unaware of the camera or of how these photographs were used; to deny this awareness would only further stereotype his sitters.

The manner in which we can experience the cartes in the *Péron et Bolivie: Types et Costumes* album in the twenty-first century allows the viewer to question the images' purpose, how these photographs could have created a stereotype in the nineteenth century, and whether they still do today. Generally, when people see old photographs they still consider them as a record that has captured a truthful likeness of the sitter. It is possible to perhaps marvel at costumes or contemplate that these sitters remain in some degree present and alive-seeming because of the album.

As viewers today, because we are able to distance ourselves through time and space, we continue to look upon the images of people in carte de visite photographs as foreign to us, whether it is of an Andean wet-nurse, or an upper-class English woman. One might not consider the Aymara and Quechua people as willing or active participants in the creation of Villaalba's cartes, but who is to say that they were forced to participate in the making of the cartes? Why can we not we consider that the images could have been were commissioned by the sitter, made for fun, to prove a point, or simply because the photographer thought that the way that he posed and dressed his subjects would attract more business to his studio?

Villaalba's photographs are similar to most cartes de visite of types from the nineteenth century. In each carte, the sitter or sitters are posed in front of a backdrop in a studio, they occasionally look into the camera, and they illustrate a certain type of person through the costumes they wore and the props that they held. This formulaic process left the nineteenth century viewer to only focus on the sitter's physical features and costumes. I can conjecture that the mounted cartes at the Peabody at Harvard University that

occasionally include the photographer's name and studio location, provide clues to where the photographs were taken and perhaps indicate who the sitters might be.

I believe that Villaalba's strongest photos are the ones accompanied by text, and the cartes where sitters have been dressed repeatedly in order to portray other types. Certain passages of text that accompany the images create a concept of the images content before this content can be assessed in terms of visual clues alone. The use of the same sitters in different costumes depicting different roles further shows that the photographs were Villaalba's staged interpretation of people. Had the photographs been taken in a more natural setting, a different interpretation of these images could be derived. Villaalba tried to create an environmental portrait with props in his studio, which leaves us with plenty of questions about Villaalba and his intentions, the sitters, their occupations and the roles they portray in the album.

While Villaalba's album excels in creating a type, documenting a society, and includes well-composed and well-executed images, it fails in creating an accurate Andean type. Photographs by their very nature, contrary to popular belief, are mere representations of something, not necessarily the truth. We cannot be sure who labeled the album, or why, or how they know whom each person is; before we can even examine the images the text biases our interpretations of the cartes and the sitters. Regardless of what Villaalba's intentions were when he photographed his sitters, the cartes inside the album are generalizations and might not be an accurate representation of the Aymara and Quechua culture.

This is not to say that these types are not educational today because we can learn much about people of the nineteenth century for whom these images were made. The carte de visite was meant for collecting, and how and some of what people collected is

demonstrated in this type of album. Type photography is still considered a commodity. The images are frequently sold by dealers, bought by collectors, and can be found as a source of historical reference at the United States Library of Congress, in museums like George Eastman House, and in the Special Collections of major university libraries. Lastly, I believe that Villaalba's interpretation of the Aymara and Quechua people contributed to the stereotyping of Latin America. The nineteenth century mindset that photography was the bearer of truth contributed to the continued success of the *cartes de visite* type.

This album is interesting because of its ability to illustrate how photography contributed to the creation of an historical document and how the creation of type photographs influenced the world's view of Latin America.

Villaalba may not have been trying to create a narrative, but the constant and consistent photographing of his sitters can be seen as his account of an evolving society. I do believe that Villaalba was fascinated by and truly interested in representing Andean culture. I also believe the *cartes* in the album are successful in portraying the social roles that people played in a society, but it leaves us with many unanswered questions.

The first step in preserving the album, its *cartes*, and the history of photography in Péru and Bolivia is understanding how valuable the album is. It is important to revisit the album, examine, understand, interpret, rediscover it, and add to the research in order to grow and be able to make a distinction between something that can be easily blurred by photography's very nature. Some suggestions for further research include finding more about Villaalba, investigating and comparing other collections to the ones in the United States, and adding more research resources in Spanish.

As far as Villaalba and the album *Péron et Bolivie: Types et Costumes* is concerned, I can only guess that if Villaalba had written an artist statement it might have read something like this: *I am a Bolivian born photographer who has married my interest in the Aymara and Quechua society with photography. The two hundred cartes de visite which can be seen in the Péron et Bolivie: Types et Costumes album, document various aspects of the Aymara and Quechua culture using different lighting, poses, and costumes. My extensive documentation of the Andean culture has led me to include cartes of cholas, soldiers, wet nurses, children, and the acculturation and assimilation of the Aymara and Quechua people. I hope to attract and enlighten viewers as I create a historical visual document that will someday explain how the culture, race, traditions and quotidian life of the Aymara and Quechua people continue to change and evolve.*

Appendix A

Notes on Album Preservation:

Twenty pages of the two hundred pages of *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* show the cream-colored ink border transferring to the opposite pages, and signs of foxing have begun to appear, bringing the future of the album's physical integrity into question. Because interleaving the pages where the ink has begun to transfer would cause stress on the album's spine, conservators at George Eastman House do not consider this minor ink transferring around the cartes de visite so problematic as to warrant extreme action. The only way to diminish stress on the spine is to use a book cradle when viewing the album. As for the foxing, it has been determined that the foxing happened before the arrival of the album at George Eastman House and as long as the album is maintained in a climate controlled vault, the foxing will remain stabilized.

Key Preservation George Eastman House Guidelines — *Villaalba's Péron et Bolivie: Types et Costumes – A Cartes de Visite Album*

1. The *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album is stored in a flat custom-fitted archival box which keeps dust and dirt away from the actual object.
2. The climate-controlled environment prevents temperature and humidity fluctuations, which can cause cockling of the paper, foxing in paper, warped covers, and cracked emulsions. George Eastman House's climate-controlled environment has also stabilized the foxing on the album pages and has prevented further fading of the cartes inside.

3. When the album is taken out for researchers, they are required to use gloves when handling the album in order to avoid leaving oils and residue that can damage the album and to place a book cradle under the album in order to decrease the strain on its spine.
4. The images in the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album have been digitally photographed, partially catalogued, and are now available for patrons to request at George Eastman House as DVD. This newly acquired digital information will give many people access to the material represented in this album.

Appendix B

Image Inventory Notes:

All the pages in the *Péron et Bolivie- Types et Costumes* album contain two juxtaposed cartes de visite.

1. Both cartes in Figure 1 depict a man and woman dressed in native costume, the women stand and the men sit.
2. The carte on the left in Figure 2 is an example of a man, woman, and baby in costume depicting certain characters. Underneath the left carte the handwriting reads, "Soldat avec sa femme (rabonas)."
The carte on the right depicts two women posed in profile dressed in long bell-shaped skirts called polleras. Underneath the carte the handwriting reads, "Cholas."
3. The cartes in Figure 3 depict the same couple dress in different costumes. In the left carte they are photographed full-length and face the camera. In the carte on the right they have been photographed in profile and depict the cholo type.
4. The cartes in Figure 4 both speak to religious traditions in Péru and Bolivia. The carte on the left depicts a boy dressed up in a priest outfit confessing an Indian boy. In the carte on the right, a teenage boy holds a lamb to his chest.
5. The carte in Figure 5 is owned by the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. The carte in Figure 6 is a close up of the left carte in Figure 4. They are a good example of a comparison of between the same scene but different pose. The carte in Figure 6 is the one that has been included in *Peron et Bolivie –Types et Costumes*.
6. Figure 7 features two cartes with two men posing in both. The carte on the left the two men have been posed full-length and face the camera. The men in the carte on the right are not directly looking at the camera. The man sitting on the ground uses a mirror as a device to confront the camera.
7. Both sets of men in Figure 8 are posed full-length in native costume with ornate hats holding musical instruments.
8. The cartes in Figure 9 seem to compare and contrast both men. The man in the carte on the left is wearing a native costume and a long braid peeks out. The man in the cartes on the right also faces the camera and holds a rope in his hand. Underneath his carte the handwriting reads, "Noir + Indien."
9. The women in Figure 10 both depict wet nurses. Underneath the carte on the left reads, "Negresse."

10. Both cartes in Figure 11 compare and contrast between two men wearing similar native outfits and posed in a similar manner, which accentuates the difference in their ethnicity.

11. The cartes in Figure 12 depict a boy and girl posed in profile partially naked. They are reminiscent of ethnographic cartes from the South Pacific.

12. The cartes in Figure 13 have been taken horizontally but have been adhered vertically. These are the only other cartes in the album where an animal is featured.

13. The cartes in Figure 14 depict two men wearing native costumes against a very European backdrop, which contrasts their appearance.

14. The cartes in Figure 15 are the only ones in the album that depict children wearing the same costumes that adults wear in the album.

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