Qosqo: A Documentary Approach to the Preservation of Andean Culture

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Honors Thesis

QOSQO: A DOCUMENTARY APPROACH TO THE PRESERVATION OF ANDEAN CULTURE

by

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ABSTRACT

**QOSQO: A DOCUMENTARY APPROACH TO THE PRESERVATION OF ANDEAN CULTURE**

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Bachelor of Arts

This thesis and creative project aspire to follow the well-worn path of documentary filmmaking. The written portion of this thesis includes background information on Incan history and the Southern Andean language of Quechua that informed and developed into my film, *Qosqo*. The short documentary is a hybrid between traditional and experimental non-fiction filmmaking, exploring Cusco, Peru’s spirituality through the sage perspective of a native Cusqueñan woman, Norma Sanchez de Incaroca.

The film is a personal reflection of Norma’s experience with the Quechua language, a historically marginalized and currently endangered language. Her reflections are framed within the context of Cusco’s complex past, paralleling culturally relevant themes with her personal life. These themes include the Incan influence in Cusco before and after colonization, the social implications of Quechua culture during the Spanish conquest, and the significance of Incan ruins in contemporary Cusco.

Balancing the personal with the communal, *Qosqo* examines the value of the legacy of the Inca through Norma’s efforts to foster and preserve Quechua. Ultimately,
*Qosqo* asserts that we each have an individual responsibility to cherish the places and people from which we come.

This project’s primary outcome is to highlight an individual’s efforts to cherish and preserve the Quechua language and Incan culture. The film is founded on collaboration between the filmmaker and subject to ensure an accurate anthropological and culturally sensitive product. *Qosqo* has been translated into both English and Spanish, making its content available to both Spanish and English-speaking audiences.
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INTRODUCTION

For over a century, humans have used motion picture cameras to document the world. Combining unique elements of art forms such as photography, theater, and music, film captures and interprets the human experience in an unmatched way. Even in its relative infancy, film grips audiences through the telling of stories that motivate, inspire, warn, and advocate for change.

Non-fiction film exists in a myriad of forms and possesses a range of stylistic elements. Whether through simple home videos to larger-than-life depictions of Earth’s vastness, documentaries illuminate through data and information, advocate for positive change, amplify the voice of the marginalized, exalt the mundane of everyday living, and highlight the value of work through process and duration.

Qosqo is only a small drop in a documentary and anthropology ocean. A century’s worth of ethnographic documentary projects has sought to observe humanity and culture, the customs of a people, or the syllables of a dying tongue. Many of these films have been made by white filmmakers about non-white subjects. With ethnic, racial, and cultural differences in consideration, ethnographic documentaries merit greater authenticity when founded on “careful research and the willing participation of subjects” (Sikand 42). Rather than approaching a subject or area blindly, filmmakers have the responsibility to consider the cultural, historic, religious, and ethnic context of a place while also fostering honest communication with subjects. Ultimately, respectful, collaborative, and sincere relationships can and should be the basis of all internationally based documentary storytelling (Ginsburg 39).

Some of the first non-fiction-based films featured civilizations and traditions that
were on the brink of extinction. Robert Flaherty’s *Nanook of the North* (1922), was one such film. Though the project preceded the “Documentary” genre as we know it today, *Nanook of the North* highlights factually based observations of traditional Inuit living (Duncan). Through open communication and constant participant screenings and feedback sessions, Flaherty’s film was a byproduct of filmmaker-subject collaboration and interpersonal relationships (Barnouw 36). The participants were fully aware of his intentions and methods of documentation and were active participants in the process. Flaherty sought to create a film for the Inuit people: not necessarily for himself. 

Though his films were as widely critiqued as they were acclaimed, Flaherty offered a sincere celebration of the people rather than an exploitation of far-away people in a far-away place. On the subject, he wrote:

“What I want to show is the former majesty and character of these people, while it is still possible—before the white man has destroyed not only their character, but the people as well. The urge that I had to make Nanook came from the way I felt about these people, my admiration for them; I wanted to tell others about them.” (Barnouw 45)

Within the past century, Flaherty’s *Nanook of the North* has become the grandfather of the ethnographic documentary. Since then, filmmakers have similarly attempted to authentically capture the essence of a distant place, a particular culture, or a dying tongue.

Non-fiction documentaries occupy a range from straightforward and concrete storytelling to more lyrical or poetic explorations of an idea or place. Dutch filmmaker Joris Ivens furthered the avant-garde side of anthropological documentary filmmaking
with a lifetime’s worth of films that feature dozens of countries across the world (Nichols, “Documentary Film” 606). His film, *A Valparaiso*, is a short documentary film that uses observational footage and voice-over narration to draw parallels between the everyday life of the Chilean city Valparaiso and the site’s significance culturally and historically.

The film is poetic, abstract, and lyrical and evokes meaning rather than stating it. Ivens experiments with image and color. At the beginning of the film, the images are black and white and then switch to color toward the end of the film. This careful selection of the film medium juxtaposes the city’s gloomy past with the prospects of an optimistic future (Oberon Amsterdam). Other documentary experimentations within the film, such as visual metaphors and editing montages contributed to the film’s impressionistic approach and style. Without needing to pinpoint a specific individual or particular aspect of the city, *A Valparaiso* presents a broader, more ambiguous look at the city.

*Qosqo* conceptually draws from films such as *Nanook of the North* and *A Valparaiso*. My interactions with Norma, first-hand observations of Cusco, and preliminary background research contribute to the approach, scope, and purpose of the film.

Cusco, Peru is a significant place to me. I first became acquainted with Norma while serving there as a volunteer missionary. During my six months living in Cusco, I walked in its streets, met and spoke with people in Spanish, and spent time with Norma in her home and community. Over time, Cusco became so much more than an adventurous and exotic world. Norma became my family and Cusco became my home.

Norma has been a giant in my eyes since the day I met her. Her life is an abundant
one. As a loving wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, and learner, Norma is eager to listen, learn from, and share with those around her. She is a matriarch in her home and her community. For me, Norma is the ideal subject for a documentary. She has a nuanced and experienced perspective on Quechua and its historic impact on social, political, and personal life in Cusco. And most importantly, she is a capable, intelligent, and compassionate woman who advocates for her beliefs and works hard to make a difference in the world around her.
METHODOLOGY

In its most fundamental form, *Qosqo* is a portrait—an abstract, impressionistic portrait of both Norma and the city of Cusco. Few definite lines are drawn and the film requests that the observers learn and feel for themselves. While the film is partially biographical and follows a participatory documentary mode, it also carries with it broader, more anthropological ideas collected through research and observation. Rather than directly addressing both subjects, the film bridges the gap between past and present: between childhood and adulthood and between pre-Columbian, post-Columbian, and modern-day Cusco. This common, connecting link is Quechua, the language of the Inca, the roadblock of the Spanish, and the beating heart of the Andes today.

During the film’s early stages, its scope was adjusted periodically. This is due, in part, to my conscientious steps to ensure the documentary was authentic to Norma’s experience. I was acutely aware of my position as a Caucasian American filmmaker making a film about a Peruvian woman. To help prevent one-sided storytelling, I decided that a successful documentary would require, at the minimum, a good relationship with Norma and make the project as collaborative as possible.

Initially, I intended for this project to serve as a biographical portrait of Norma, focusing on three defining characteristics of her life: her culture, her language, and her religion. These characteristics, in addition to illustrating her personality and experience, were to be juxtaposed with the culture, language, and religions of Cusco. Upon discussing my ideas with Norma, I realized an error in my approach. Norma didn’t share my same enthusiasm for the subject matter. We did not share the same vision for the film.
Further discussion led to greater insight and direction. I quickly realized the impossibility of adequately juxtaposing Cusco and Norma’s culture, religion, and language. I lacked the skill, knowledge, and resources to serve justice to a short film of that magnitude. I also took note of Norma’s natural enthusiasm for Quechua, its history, and its linguistic qualities. I forewent my original ideas to align my preplanned story with the story Norma wanted to tell.

Ultimately, Norma has been the fundamental, unchanging element of this film. I felt drawn to learn more about her story and what things are most important to her when it comes to Cusco’s complex history and her role in it. I believe that “a good documentary stimulates discussion about its subject, not itself” (Nichols, Representing Reality x). Regardless of the film’s social implications or cultural shortcomings, the story is ultimately about and for Norma.

Stylistic Approaches & Rationale

I decided a documentary-based storytelling approach would serve the stories of both subject and subject matter well. On a practical level, documentaries require smaller budgets and smaller crews than fiction productions. On a conceptual level, a documentary can bridge the inherent cultural gap between Norma, Cusco, and myself by creating an environment of conversation and trust. Through research, collaboration, and respect, Qosqo aims to find common ground between subject and filmmaker, filmmaker and viewer, and viewer and subject.

I wanted the film’s story to pattern a solemn and reflective mood. This style would be used to reflect Norma’s noble and heartfelt personality. I originally planned for
the film to include both observational and participatory modes. Through observation, the audience would see and feel the city of Cusco. Through a participational interview, we would have a more direct experience with Norma and her life experience. Through these two documentary modes, the film would be more flexible and receptive to Norma and her perspective.

For the documentary, I planned to conduct a sit-down interview, ask a few of my pre-written questions about Norma’s upbringing and experience with Quechua, and follow the direction Norma took the conversation. Her dialogue will serve as the backbone and narration of the film. The film would only feature a visualization of Norma’s interview to emphasize a particular phrase or facial expression. The majority of the film would visualize the story through observational coverage of Cusco.

As a non-Cusco native, my primary objective was to make Qosqo a collaborative project. I wanted the film to be a reflection of Norma’s voice discovered through our collaboration, rather than a limited and otherwise biased version of my own. I also planned to show Norma the film throughout its development, encouraging suggestions and corrections to ensure its accuracy and authenticity.

Research & Development

The project’s beginnings are rooted in an intermediate documentary film production course at Brigham Young University during the winter semester of 2022. At the time, we students were assigned to conceptualize and create a short documentary film pitch. This stage of research and development included a more in-depth study of documentary methods and approaches, making contact with potential film subjects, and
conducting pre-interviews.

My initial contact with the film’s subject occurred while living in Peru as a service-based volunteer. Norma and I were in frequent contact and our interactions were rooted in both communal and familial activities. During my six months in Cusco, Norma and I became acquainted and have maintained close contact ever since.

I scheduled a video call with Norma in early March 2022 and pitched her my general concepts for making a documentary about her. She enthusiastically agreed to be interviewed.

In preparation for the film’s production, I wanted to learn as much as possible about Cusco’s history along with the history of the Quechua language. This research was to help inform my approach as a documentarian and add to my pre-established familiarity with the area and culture.

Cusco, Peru is widely regarded as the longest continually inhabited city in the Americas. Tucked away on the peaks of the Peruvian Andes, Cusco was “practically inaccessible, by modern standards” until the 20th century (Kropp 139). Geographically, the city is isolated, practically hidden throughout the centuries from the rest of the world.

The Inca empire, the most influential and powerful kingdom of pre-Columbian South America, spanned across the Andes, reaching from Ecuador to Chile. At its beating heart was Cusco, the Inca’s political, spiritual, economic, and cultural center (Kropp 7). Incan religion is founded on polytheistic and animistic customs. Natural and physical objects hold significant spiritual value. Incan gods include Viracocha, the creator of the world; Inti, the sun god; and Quilla, the moon god, and the wife of Inti (Haggen and Murra). These gods, along with several others, make up the basis of the Inca belief in
deities and higher powers.

The natural world was a vital element within Inca society. In a general sense, the Inca religion embodied a “beautiful symbolization of the Andean landscapes. It gave exalted interoperation to the mountain peaks, rivers, springs, trees, and fertile soil. [...] It was not a religion of concept, but merely sentimental—intuitive” devotion (Garcia and Giesecke 24).

Before Spanish conquistadors’ arrival to the Southern Peruvian Andes, the region was linguistically diverse, with language varying by geographic areas of relatively short distances (Mannheim 38). Though the domain of the Inca empire covered a vast array of tongues, Southern Peruvian Quechua, known as runasimi or “language of the people” by native speakers, was the primary language of the Inca state (Figari). At the time, Quechua was primarily dominant in the Cusco area. Quechua contains linguistic similarities with other languages in the region due to “long-term, sustained, and close contact between the languages” instead of the languages originating in a common ancestral language (Mannheim 34). In the Andes, languages were in constant communication with one another, which over time resulted in a complex and diverse mix of dialects.

Quechua is an agglutinative language. One word can contain considerable emotion and meaning. Quechua has been described as:

“...rich in expressive force and almost entirely onomatopoeic. The Quechua words have great symbolic and biological power; there are common expressions, sentences, and phrases of extreme vividness and suggestiveness, as is true of all agglutinative languages; moreover, the Quechua language lends itself to the translation of deep and delicate manifestations of sentiment, abounding in phrases admirable for their sweetness and lyric quality. The words reveal the impression created by
the natural environment, being, for this reason, of great objective force” (Garcia and Giesecke 16).

The Spanish, upon their initial arrival to Cusco, perceived the region’s lingual multiplicity as an indication of an uncultured and disorganized state. In addition to violent force and cultural genocide, one of the Spanish objectives was to limit the number of languages in use by the people. By enforcing the use of the Spanish language, the conquistadors more successfully controlled the population, taught the Christian religion, and ultimately solidified Spain’s dominance as a superior nation (Mannheim 34-35). The loss of this linguistic diversity contributed to the eventual erasure of the Inca culture.

Despite the overthrowing of the Inca empire, Cusco continued to be a central location of the Spanish operations in the Andes (Kropp 7). Without losing its Inca heritage entirely, Cusco now embodied an intricate combination of both old and new. The ancient civilization fused both Inca and Spanish customs, creating a hybrid culture, city, and language (Kropp 7). Despite Lima eventually becoming the forefront of the country’s government and economy, Cusco was considered “the grand, noble, and most faithful city […] head of the realm and provinces of Peru” (Kropp 28-29).

Today, the majority of Peruvians speak Spanish as their first language whereas Quechua speakers account for only 13% of the population. Quechua is primarily spoken in rural areas and is widely seen as an antiquated language (Language data for Peru). The Peruvian government, educational, and economic institutions are also tailored to Spanish speakers and have historically marginalized Quechua speakers. Quechua is spoken by 8-12 million speakers across 6 different South American countries and is officially categorized as an endangered language (Hornberger 1). Subsequently, recent efforts have aimed to sustain Quechua speaking and teaching.
Other research led me to identify culturally important sites that I planned to incorporate into the film metaphorically.

Situated near Cusco’s main square stands the Q’oricancha, the site of a culturally and religiously significant Incan temple. The Q’oricancha, along with its surrounding area, was considered one of the holiest and most important sites of ancient Cusco. Sources indicate that “none dared to enter this sacred precinct except with bare feet and uncovered head” (Kropp 11).

Structurally, the ruins of the Q’oricancha feature distinguishable elements of Inca architecture: carefully shaped boulders and layered terraces. The site was most certainly constructed to outlast the lives of those who built it (See FIGURE 1). The massive stone walls were plated with sheets of gold and silver: another testament to its value to the Inca and the Quechua people. (Kropp 11). During the Spanish invasion in 1532, Spanish soldiers stripped the walls of precious metals and were sent to Francisco Pizarro who at the time was living in Cajamarca (Kropp 11). Portions of the temple were removed to accommodate the construction of a Catholic monastery, though the Spanish were ultimately unable to move the great stone foundations of the temple (Kropp 9).

With the dominating Spanish-styled architecture perched atop the Inca boulders, one can only reflect on “the lasting quality of what was Incaic and to tantalize with speculation of what glory there must once have been” (Kropp 7-8). Today, the Q’oricancha is a physical manifestation of Cusco’s competing cultural identities: immovable Incan craftsmanship and culture that could never quite be overshadowed by the Spanish conquistadors.
FIGURE 1 - La Q’oricancha

FIGURE 2 - Saqsayhuaman
The ruins of Saqsayhuaman—a once grand fortress and temple—are another architecturally significant place in Cusco (Kropp 8-9). Saqsayhuaman stands today as a testament to Incan craftsmanship and ingenuity. Massive stone boulders make up the walls, steps, and foundations of the site, with some boulders weighing anywhere from a few hundred pounds to multiple tons (Bertman 222). These stones have been placed together with an unexplainable level of precision. Without the aid of cement, the seams between the stones are so perfectly aligned not even the thinnest knife blade could be wedged between them (See FIGURE 2).

Pre-Production Phase

Once I completed the research and development portion of the project, I quickly coordinated specific dates and times with Norma. I gave more information on my specific expectations for her time commitment.

I carefully outlined interview questions before meeting with Norma. I created a rough outline for potential topics and walked through different open-ended questions that could spark conversation. I planned these questions with them as potential backups for the interview, but my main priority was to actively listen and engage in the interview and follow Norma’s general lead. I sent her the interview questions before my arrival.

I first generated the interview questions in English, revised the list, and then translated them into Spanish.

My pre-planned interview questions:

1. In a few sentences, how would you summarize Incan history and the Spanish Inquisition in Cusco?
2. How did you learn Quechua?

3. Why do you still speak Quechua today?

4. Why is Quechua important to you?

5. How would you describe the Quechua language?

6. How often do you use Quechua in your daily life?

7. If you could say one thing to your posterity about your heritage, what would it be?

Having confirmed Norma’s availability and willingness to participate in the project, I purchased plane tickets and made the necessary lodging arrangements. I selected a hotel that would be within walking distance from Norma’s home to maximize my flexibility with her busy schedule.

The final stage of pre-production included the research and gathering of filmmaking gear. Since I would be directing, filming, recording sound, and conducting the interview, I needed to ensure that I had access to a camera setup that would be easy to assemble, operate, and transport. I carefully considered a plan for equipment that would produce the quality I desired while also accommodating the limitations of a one-person camera crew. I researched different audio and visual approaches and considered which gear I could reasonably purchase, find, or borrow. This included using gear that was previously purchased, submitting orders for rental equipment, and borrowing items from generous friends and professors.

For the audio portion of the film, I planned to use my wireless RODE lav microphone and have a backup shotgun microphone attached to the body of the camera.

I eventually decided to shoot the film on the Panasonic GH5, a small and
lightweight DSLR. Capable of recording 4K video, the GH5 is versatile. Its less conspicuous nature would accommodate international travel and result in a less formal interaction with Norma. In addition to its video quality, the GH5 could capture footage in slow-motion at 60 frames per second (fps). I planned for much of the film’s observational and illustrative footage to be shot in 60fps. The smoothness and steadiness of the footage would emphasize the reflectiveness and serenity of Norma’s thoughts. The film would be shot both handheld and stabilized with a tripod.

Production Phase

I originally planned to interview Norma and use cinematic and metaphoric footage for the visuals and her audio for narration. This footage would include observational footage of Norma in and around her home and teaching her kindergarten class.

I mapped out specific locations to illustrate Norma’s most interesting interview points. These locations included culturally significant places in Cusco and its surrounding areas. I planned to get footage of the Saqsayhuaman ruins, the Plaza de Armas, cathedrals, historic streets and architecture, the large mural on Avenida del Sol, the Q’oricancha ruins, a broad overlook of the city, and scenic landscapes within the Peruvian Andes.

As with any documentary project, a project relies less on your plan and is more dependent on the reality of a situation. Upon my arrival in Cusco, I immediately went to greet Norma at her home. We briefly visited and discussed more detailed plans for our interview. During that visit, Norma let me know that she had some scheduling conflicts
arise. The time that we had originally planned for our first interview needed to be rescheduled for a later date. She also let me know that she had almost no time for our previously scheduled filming time in her home, as a week-long church obligation was scheduled just a few days previously. She also let me know that her students would be on vacation for the next week and that I would no longer be able to film the class. Other than the sit-down interview, I was ultimately unable to carry out my plans for participatory footage.

These schedule changes were, of course, disappointing but we quickly brainstormed new ways to maximize our time together and my time in Cusco.

The first interview was conducted on a Sunday afternoon following a family lunch gathering. I was invited to attend and did so to reestablish familiarity between me and Norma prior to conducting the interview and pulling out the camera gear.

When it was time to sit down for the interview, Norma let me know she had a slight time conflict and only had about an hour to talk. I quickly adjusted my shooting schedule, set up the camera and audio equipment, and started rolling. At first, she seemed to be relatively nervous in front of the camera, so I made an effort to turn the interview into more of a conversation. Over time she became less tense and her ideas more free flowing. We walked through some of the questions I had outlined and eventually, Norma was speaking continually without prompting. I only asked minor follow-up questions here and there.

Miscellaneous noises occasionally interrupted the interview. These sounds included the sound of clinking dishes being washed in the kitchen, a dog barking, and car horns and street sounds outside the window. When these distractions arose, we would
pause the interview, or I would ask Norma to repeat what she had last said.

Toward the end of our short hour together, Norma shared a few impactful thoughts that were shared emphatically and passionately. After the interview, I made note of these phrases and determined to include them in the final film product.

In the hours that followed the interview, I reworked the shooting schedule to allow for travel to sites Norma referenced in her responses. In addition to previously scheduled locations, I prepared to visit Norma’s hometown of Calca, a small city in the heart of the Sacred Valley.

Later that week, I also conducted a second interview with Norma, asking follow-up questions based on information gained from the first interview.

Throughout the trip at the end of the day, I offloaded the recorded media to an external hard drive and the backup hard drive in case of data failure, loss, or theft.

Post-production Phase

After returning to the United States, the post-production phase began. This process included the transferring of footage into the Adobe video editing software Premiere Pro where the files were transcoded into editable proxies and organized into various structural folders.

Once the files were organized, I began the edit of the first assembly cut by watching and transcribing both interviews into English. As I listened, I made notes of my favorite phrases or stories. Once the interviews were transcribed, I categorized the sessions based on the subject matter. Then, once the phrases were sectioned by topic, I organized the lines to create a natural progression of thought. Once these sections were revised, I returned to the interview clips, located each phrase, and placed those segments
on an editing timeline. With each editing pass, I further revised the cut, looking for repetitive phrases and identifying ways to express Norma’s ideas in more concise ways.

I next incorporated supporting, indexical images to illustrate specific elements of Norma’s story. I restructured the interview to further clarify narrative elements. I continued to involve Norma in my storytelling process by asking clarifying questions about her intended meaning of specific lines and phrases. During this cut, I realized the film needed footage of Norma teaching Quechua. I coordinated a pick-up shoot with Norma and her granddaughter, Rachel, where I gave instructions on a basic shooting technique. I then had Rachel record a brief Quechua lesson in the kindergarten on her personal iPhone. Once I received Rachel’s footage through Google Drive, I added the sequence to the film. With the help of Norma’s Spanish translation of the Quechua lesson, I added both English and Spanish subtitles to two different versions of the film.

Once the first rough cut was completed, I shared the film with a few family members, where I asked them to identify potential themes and provide feedback and suggestions.

Each cut followed a similar process. I completed a cut, watched it on my own, made a few preliminary revisions, and then screened the video for a small group of individuals. Among these screening participants, I intentionally selected both Spanish and non-Spanish speakers, along with individuals trained and not trained in film theory or analysis.

Once I felt the film was in a state to be shared with Norma, I sent her a link and asked for her suggestions, reminding her of my desire to make the film an accurate and authentic depiction of Cusco and her life. She indicated some discrepancies with the
timeline of her childhood photos and sent more appropriate images for that portion of the film.

Throughout the entirety of the project, I screened, revised, and produced a new version of the film 23 times. Each version was informed by feedback from a diverse audience and/or from Norma herself. After Norma’s approval, the film was finalized.
Project Presentation: Highlights

FIGURE 3: Tourists visiting Cusco’s Plaza de Armas

FIGURE 4: Norma as a child, with her brother
FIGURE 5: Norma with one of her kindergarten classes

FIGURE 6: Cusco mural, Avenida Del Sol
RESULTS

This project provided me with significant opportunities for learning and growth. I encountered unanticipated setbacks that stretched me as a filmmaker. The outcomes of these challenges are manifest in both successes and shortcomings.

Scheduling conflicts during my trip to Cusco limited my access to the subject and forced me to be more creative with the footage I had. I had an idea of what I wanted to create but then came to terms with what was possible. This limitation helped me shape the film in a better way than I had previously imagined. This setback enabled me to look at the raw material more objectively and create something based on my experience rather than my expectations.

This project also taught me the value of intentionally shooting footage. After reviewing my footage, I couldn’t identify a single stylistic consistency. Some shots were handheld, some on a tripod, some in slow motion, and others not. I have a new understanding of the importance of conceptually planning a film long before you shoot it. Additionally, my mixed shooting style has taught me which cinematic techniques work well and which I will use for future projects.

The interview portion of this documentary also taught me the pertinence of asking the right questions. I initially phrased my questions with a specific response in mind. In the future, I will ask more open-ended questions to give the subject the space and platform to say whatever they want to say.

I plan to change my approach to filmmaking based on the experiences that have tutored me along this process. I will continue expanding my abilities as a filmmaker and
storyteller while seeking to foster positive and personable relationships with the subjects.

The film’s first public screening will be for Norma, her family, and her friends in Cusco. I have prepared the film with this presentation in mind. Though I will not be able to attend in person, I will verbally reiterate my gratitude for Norma, her inspiring story, and her participation in this documentary project.
CONCLUSION

*Qosqo* is only one small contribution to over a century of anthropological and ethnographic film endeavors. In its unique way, the film gives viewers a glimpse into an ancient Incan city and the life of a person who calls it home. The film illustrates how valuing heritage and history can increase one’s sense of identity.

Collaborative efforts like *Qosqo* help capture the essence of a place, a language, and a people. These efforts, whether small or large in scope, help foster cultural and language preservation while also opening the conversation to a broader audience. As with any artistic or anthropologic endeavor, we must carefully reflect on the past as we look forward to the future.
REFERENCES


