

past. Yet there are other kinds of detail. If we are to understand whether the numerous fine minds at San Pablo made original intellectual contributions, we must have extended analyses of their writings, not reduction to skeletal ideas which could have emanated from Dominicans as well. San Pablo's relations with other Jesuit houses and its educational role in Lima need flesh and blood portrayal. Many of the book's virtues come precisely from the extent to which it is detailed. Its gains immeasurably from being the history of one significant establishment, on the basis of minute local records, rather than a superficial survey of many. Some of the freshest knowledge, with the broadest implications, is to be found in the relatively detailed sections on San Pablo's library and pharmacy.

Perhaps, having now set the institutional framework, the author might be prevailed on in the future to write one or more further volumes, giving us a strictly intellectual history of the Jesuits of San Pablo, a more exact social definition of their clientele, and an expansion of the present book's excellent appendix on their economic activities.

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*El Inca. The Life and Times of Garcilaso de la Vega.* By JOHN GRIER VARNER. Austin, 1968. University of Texas Press. The Texas Pan American Series. Illustrations. Notes. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 413. \$10.00.

John G. Varner has accomplished the remarkable feat of writing a book which will appeal to a wide range of readers, from lay history buffs to professional historians of the early Spanish empire. Those who found pleasure in William Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Peru* should similarly enjoy following the life and times of Garcilaso de la Vega (1539-1616). Varner vividly describes the background and events which molded the career of the Inca Garcilaso, natural son of a conquistador and his concubine of royal Inca lineage.

Although Garcilaso spent only the first quarter of his long life in Peru, he is best known today for his chronicle describing Inca civilization and its tragic destruction. Varner has legitimately directed approximately one-half of his book to the Andean homeland with which Garcilaso increasingly identified himself, while living in a sometimes hostile Spain. To be sure, Garcilaso has been given his due as a Renaissance man, the first native-born American to achieve the

honor of publication, and the multilingual and daring translator of León Hebreo's *Dialoghi di Amore*. To my mind, however, Varner is more successful in his sympathetic assessment of the conquistadores, whom he is careful to judge against their own standards and mores, necessarily tempered by the trying circumstances of sixteenth-century Peru.

Varner is at his best in treating the complex mestizo nature of Garcilaso—or Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, as he was known in Cuzco. Sebastián Garcilaso, the historian's cavalier father, pursued a life of adventure and intrigue in golden Peru, but the son went quietly back to Spain to seek his name, his education, his fortune, and his fame. Garcilaso was a prominent member of the emerging mestizo class "which was destined to be torn between its sympathy for the race which gave it stigma and its yearning for the recognition of that race which could give it status" (p. 103). Varner demonstrates that the mestizo Garcilaso spent a large part of his energies collecting rents and instituting suits in an attempt to increase the profits from the numerous shops, orchards, vineyards, and pasturelands, over which he exercised control. Summoned to raise a company and join in subduing the Moriscos, Garcilaso delayed to sue for possession of his deceased uncle's clothing. Only a mestizo could complain, after the death of the sympathetic historian, Ambrosio de Morales, that "God carried him away when I had most need of him" (pp. 248, 304, and 309). Varner has written incisively on the origins of this interesting and important social class.

The faults of this excellent book are few and minor. Varner tends to be a bit hard on Sebastián Garcilaso's detractors. The importance of the controversial Huarina incident would appear to be overplayed. Also, in general, the portrayal of the Inca background might be criticised as somewhat shallow and even romanticised. How much longer shall we be asked to believe that legends of white, bearded gods and long-guarded prophecies of doom played a significant part in the conquest of American Indian civilizations?

Varner's scholarly, yet entertaining, book gives every indication of being well researched. He has obviously spent many fruitful hours in the archives of Badajoz, Córdoba, Cuzco, Montilla, Seville, and Simancas, as well as in diligent consultation of the standard published sources. He writes well and tells such a good tale that one hopes other books will follow soon—such as a study of the full and awesome career of Luisa Martel de los Ríos, Machiavellian creole and stepmother to Garcilaso de la Vega.

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