Garcilaso de la Vega, the Inca

by Frances G. Crowley

Garcilaso de la Vega, el Inca, was both a literary writer and a historical chronicler of the conquest of the Americas. It was his avowed primary goal to effectively represent the Inca cause before the Spanish Crown. This purpose is clearly stated in the prefaces and preambles of most of his works. As the presenter of the Indian cause, whether of the Indians in Peru or the Native Americans in the United States, he took positions on issues later challenged by historians; nonetheless he was and is among the first and foremost representatives of the mestizo viewpoint in the New World.

The author of *La Florida del Ynca,* who in Spain claimed his father's name, Garcilaso de la Vega, later adding "el Inca," was born in Cuzco, Peru, on April 12, 1539, and baptized Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, a name still extant on all documentation pertaining to his youth in Peru. His father was Captain Garcilaso de la Vega and his mother was the Inca noblewoman Chimpu Occlo. She was a *palla,* the granddaughter of the emperor Tupac Inca Yupanqui, niece of the legendary emperor Huayna Capac, and cousin of Atauhuallpa and Huascar. Thus, she represented the old Inca hierarchy, whereas Captain Garcilaso represented the Spanish conquistador. A member of the Spanish gentry, Captain Garcilaso de la Vega had left Spain and Badajoz for adventure in the New World. After a nine-year stay in Mexico and Guatemala, the captain followed Pedro de Alvarado to Peru. In his works Garcilaso stresses his father's leadership roles, his native ability to influence both peers and superiors, and the mixture of strictness and gentleness that endeared him as a father.

Garcilaso's education reflects Captain Garcilaso de la Vega's desire that his son be instructed in Spanish culture and the classics. He studied these subjects in Cuzco, under Father Juan del Cuellar, whose dream it was to send all his young mestizo students to the University of Salamanca. From his mother, Palla Chimpu Occlo, and his maternal relatives, especially his uncle, Garcilaso received instruction in the folklore and oral tradition of the

Inca people, including his family's hereditary role in the Inca hierarchy. Garcilaso's historical works and viewpoints reflect the dual and at times conflicting directions of such an education.

Although Captain Garcilaso was fond of his son and exerted throughout his life his paternal responsibility, he was not allowed, as an officer of the king, to regularize his relationship with Chimpu Occlo, or to adopt Garcilaso, lest mestizos gain proprietary rights on Spanish soil. Eventually he was forced to abandon Chimpu Occlo, for whom another marriage was arranged, and to marry Luisa Martel de los Ríos, his designated bride. Garcilaso moved quite freely from his mother's home to his father's. During the Francisco Hernández Girón uprising, while Captain Garcilaso was overseer of the city of Cuzco, his son formed part of the household. He refers to this period of his youth in his *Royal Commentaries* (Book 7, ch.9), where he gives a detailed description of people and events highlighting Cuzco's social and political life.

By 1557 Captain Garcilaso had decided to return to Spain. His departure was postponed because of a protracted illness from which he died. After his father's death in Peru on May 19, 1559, Gómez Suárez was informed that part of his father's estate was bequeathed to his legal wife, Doña Luisa Martel, and her two daughters (who died at an early age). As his natural son, Garcilaso inherited the coca fields of La Hauisca in Paucartambo and 4,000 pesos toward his education in Spain.

By 1560 his stepmother had remarried. This time she married Juan del Pedroche, by whom she had two daughters, Luisa de Herrera and Ana Ruiz. Garcilaso decided to try his fortune in Spain and embarked from Peru for Panama and from there for Lisbon, Portugal, on his way to Spain.

In his introductory letter to *La Florida*, dedicated to Theodosio of Portugal, Duke of Braganza, Garcilaso—who upon his arrival in Spain gradually assumed his father's name—wrote that he had always had a high esteem for Portugal. "This inclination was converted later into obligation, because the first land I saw when I came from my own, which is El Perú, was that of Portugal—the island of El Fayal and La Tercera, and the royal city of Lisbon, in which the royal ministers and the citizens, and those of the islands, being such religious and charitable people, gave me as warm a reception as if I had been a native son of one of them. In order not to weary your Excellency, I do not give you a full account of the gifts and favors they bestowed upon me, one of which was to save me from death." He offered his work as a gesture of gratitude for what he considered his obligation for the kindnesses he received there. Most biographers interpret these statements as flattery to

the powerful, because they assume that he immediately traveled on to Spain. This seems unlikely in view of his statement that he was saved from death by either the duke or the Portuguese people.

He reiterated his offering of his book as an expression of his gratitude for this same favor, by which "I shall be able to repay and satisfy the obligation that I owe to the natives of this most Christian kingdom, for by means of Your Excellency's condescension and favor, I shall be one of them." These are strong words. It is not known when and how Garcilaso incurred an obligation so deep to either the Portuguese or the house of Braganza as to make him wish to be "one of them."

Not much is known about Garcilaso's activities during the year 1560, except for the fact that he went on to Spain, where he first visited Seville, and later Montilla, not far from Córdoba, where his paternal uncle, Captain Alonso de Vargas, resided and received him as a welcome relative.

By 1561 Garcilaso was headed for the Spanish court in Madrid to claim his father's inheritance. This Madrid trip is frequently mentioned in his *Royal Commentaries,* where Garcilaso referred to the hearings on his paternity accorded to him by Lope García de Castro, who blamed Garcilaso's father for lending the rebel Gonzalo Pizarro his horse when Pizarro's horse was killed in a battle. Since Captain Garcilaso and Pizarro had been enemies rather than friends, the allegation seems simply a lame excuse for denying Garcilaso his inheritance. By now he was the only living descendant on his father's side. Had he been legitimate, he could not have been denied his rights. Being Indian and illegitimate, any excuse would do, and one was found in Pizarro's horse (*A General History of Peru,* Book 5, ch. 23).

In 1563 Garcilaso was sufficiently upset by the ruling to decide that it was time to leave Spain and return to Peru. The royal decree permitting his departure was issued June 27, 1563, in Madrid, urging Seville officials to give safe conduct to Peru to "Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, son of Garcilaso de la Vega, who served in that country."[1]

Perhaps because Lope García de Castro, who as a judge denied him his request to be named his father's heir, was about to sail as viceroy of Peru on that very ship, Garcilaso decided to postpone his departure. This was a fortunate decision in light of subsequent events. Aware that his name of Gómez Suárez de Figueroa would not open the doors of Spanish social and political life, as he wished, he changed his name gradually, first to Gómez Suárez de

[1]Aurelio Miró Quesada, *Comentarios reales de los Incas* (Lima: Librería Internacional del Perú, 1959), xii.

la Vega, and on November 22, 1563, to Garcilaso de la Vega. These name changes appear in notarized documents that he signed.

On March 4, 1570, Garcilaso received orders signed by Philip II and issued in Córdoba, making him captain of three hundred men to serve under his relative, the Marquis de Priego. This was the first of a series of military duties he was to perform. While he was on his way to take up this assignment, his uncle, Captain Alonso de Vargas, died in Montilla. From him Garcilaso inherited the house in Montilla in which he would spend the next two decades. Although, because Captain Alonso's sister had inherited some of the money, the bequest left Garcilaso in only moderate financial circumstances, he was finally in a position to live off his writings and whatever opportunities for small assignments Montilla could offer. His mother, Princess Chimpu Occlo, who was his last direct link to his Peruvian family, had died in 1571. For reasons he did not disclose, he did not get this information until 1573.

These events may have persuaded Garcilaso to remain in Spain. Taken together they may have induced him to undertake to establish a literary career for himself by beginning a translation of the works written by the Portuguese neoplatonist Jehudah Abarbanel, or as he was generally known, León Hebreo. Hebreo's *Dialogues of Love*, originally written in Italian, had already appeared twice in Spanish, as well as in Latin and French editions. Garcilaso's version was elegant, and better conceived than its predecessors. He made a point of his Peruvian antecedents on the title page, where he described himself as "Garcilasso Inga de la Vega, native of Cuzco, head of the kingdoms and provinces of Peru."

After completing the manuscript on León Hebreo and while he tried to negotiate its publication, Garcilaso spent some time interviewing an old captain who had been a member of the Hernando de Soto expedition. The name of this captain, whom he did not identify as his source for *La Florida*, was Gonzalo Silvestre, the mysterious source about whom Garcilaso kept the reader guessing. Garcilaso often visited Silvestre in neighboring Las Posadas, taking notes from Silvestre's eyewitness account as one of Hernando de Soto's leading captains in the Florida expedition.

The question most often asked refers to the mystery of Silvestre's collaboration. He appears several times in *La Florida* as a participant in the expedition and is credited both favorably and adversely for his participation.

Apparently, Garcilaso's first draft of *La Florida* contained the Gonzalo Silvestre version, without mention of Silvestre's or Garcilaso's name, and included another literary effort by Garcilaso, his account of his own geneal-

ogy from the time of his ancestor Garcí Pérez de Vargas who fought for Córdoba and Seville during the reign of King Ferdinand the Saint. This was titled the *Genealogy or account of the Descendancy of the Famous Garcí Pérez de Vargas, with some historical selections worth remembering.* These two—the Silvestre version of the expedition and Garcilaso's *Genealogy*—formed the initial two chapters of what he now decided to call *La Florida.* He may have intended to include the *Genealogy* as the first chapter because it included some of the ancestors of Hernando de Soto.

On November 7, 1589, Garcilaso wrote the king concerning *La Florida,* which he considered almost finished. However, his estimate was considerably premature. It was not until 1596 that he separated *La Florida* from the *Genealogy* and made it a book in its own right. At that time he finished *La Florida,* that is, Silvestre's account of the De Soto expedition, to which he had now added the reports of Juan Coles and Alonso de Carmona, two other members of the expedition. No mention was made of the report by Rodrigo Rangel or of that by the Gentleman from Elvas. He now made a definitive copy of *La Florida,* which must be the one currently at the Biblioteca Nacional of Madrid.

In 1599 he tried to secure permission for publication in Madrid of *La Florida* through the scribe Juan Morales, doorkeeper of the King's Chamber. When it was rejected, the manuscripts of *La Florida* and of the now-completed first half of another book to be called the *Royal Commentaries* were forwarded to Lisbon, where they were almost immediately processed for publication by the house of Pedro Crasbeeck. Printing took more time, however, and it was not until 1605 that the first edition of *La Florida* appeared, and it was 1609 before the *Royal Commentaries* was published. According to the Peruvian scholar Aurelio Miró Quesada, Garcilaso sent the manuscripts to Lisbon, "where the expert printer Pedro Crasbeeck was working and where he hoped to find the support of the famous Portuguese House of Braganza."[2]

Without Crasbeeck, Garcilaso's main works might never have been published. There were some common characteristics between Garcilaso and Pedro Crasbeeck. Both were foreigners, Pedro from the Netherlands and Garcilaso from Peru. Both were trying to establish themselves, Pedro by creating one of the outstanding publishing houses in Lisbon, and Garcilaso by bringing the cultural heritage of Peru to the attention of Spain. Since Montilla, where Garcilaso lived, and Córdoba, where Crasbeeck lived, were

[2]Ibid., ch. 24.

very distant from Lisbon, where Crasbeeck had his publishing house, there arises the question as to how and when editor and author met.

Considering the cool reception of *La Florida* in Spain, the more rapid acceptance by the Portuguese might presuppose some previous contact with the Crasbeeck publishers. The fact that permission to publish the manuscript was speedily granted leads to the assumption that Crasbeeck had talked with Garcilaso and had prepared for the manuscript before its arrival.

Two Peruvian scholars, Aurelio Miró Quesada and Raúl Porras Barrenechea, tentatively placed Garcilaso in Montilla and Las Posadas during the 1580s, but there were many gaps in his activities there. One of these would have had to allow for a prolonged absence covering the time Garcilaso was to spend in Lisbon, in which city he might well have contacted leading publishing houses, including Crasbeeck.

Garcilaso spent this time in Lisbon because he was serving a tour of duty as captain of the ship *San Francisco* during the ill-fated expedition of the Invincible Armada of 1588. As I have reported in an article in *Hispania*, Garcilaso served in that campaign as captain and *tercio* (the commanding officer of a military force of several companies of infantry) on the ship *San Francisco* under Don Agostín Mexía. Garcilaso's name and title appear in the *Relación verdadera del Armada que el Rey nuestro Señor mandó juntar en el puerto de la Ciudad de Lisboa en el Reyno de Portugal en el año 1588.* Garcilaso likewise was mentioned as tercio of Don Agostín in Diego de Pimentel's *Declaración,* highlighting the brief history of the Armada. However, the most specific documentation relating to Garcilaso de la Vega's assignment can be found in the plans for the expedition, drawn by Marquis Alvaro Bazán de Santa Cruz.

These plans are contained under miscellanea in Codex 637 of the archives of the Lisbon National Library. In the "assento de Felipe II con o marqués de Santa Cruz," Garcilaso's name was listed on table 57 as captain of the *San Francisco,* which was also the "Almiranta de Garcilaso" (the flagship of the second in command, who guarded the rear of the convoy), and on table 71 under "tercios de Don Agostín Mexías." Santa Cruz further mentioned the fate of the ships of Agostín Mexías in a letter dated November 9, 1587, in which he stated that the vessels had been converted into hospital ships and that there were more than fourteen thousand patients in them. He suggested that, if after six months on board there was that much illness, it would be essential to clean the ships and try to contain the disease. The king replied that, instead, the fleet was to leave, and that the sailors who were ill were to be taken off their vessels prior to departure.

King Philip II, aware that the marquis de Santa Cruz was stalling him, began to listen to those who wanted to hasten the departure of the fleet. Upset by the course of events and by the apparent disfavor of the king, the marquis de Santa Cruz succumbed to a heart attack on February 9, 1588, at the age of sixty-three. During the nearly half year between the announcement of the departure and the time it actually took for some vessels to leave, the *San Francisco* remained in Lisbon, giving Garcilaso sufficient time not only to tend to his men, but to place his manuscript outlines with leading Lisbon publishers, including Pedro Crasbeeck.

Garcilaso was a friend of the marquis de Santa Cruz, who listed Garcilaso by his first name in his manifest. The marquis is described in Don Ramiro Blanco's *Elogio de Santa Cruz* as "well built, of brave and gentle presence, dark face and . . . well-shaped chestnut beard."[3]

Garcilaso and his former fellow officers from the Granada expedition must have been stunned by King Philip II's choice of Alfonso Pérez de Guzmán, duke of Medina Sidonia, as commander in chief of the Armada. The best that could be said about him was that he was honest enough to repeatedly turn down the assignment, admitting that he not only was not a seaman, but was prone to seasickness. However, the king was not to be put off. In spite of many problems, he requested that the fleet assemble at La Coruña and from there start the journey to England.

The details of the Spanish expedition appear, carefully assembled and annotated, in Cesáreo Fernández Duro's *La Armada invencible,*[4] a two-volume summary with tables of total ship deployment derived from documents then extant at Simancas. Tables on pages 30 and 80 list Garcilaso de la Vega as captain, among "the tertios [*sic*] of Don Agostín." On page 111 of *La Armada invencible,* the *San Francisco* is listed among the ships that arrived in the ports of Spain, with Garcilaso as *maestro de campo* of Don Pedro [de Valdés'] almiranta. Thus Garcilaso appears as second in command under orders from Don Pedro de Valdés and Agostín Mexía. In letter number 184 of the above-mentioned work, Duro relates on page 186 the king's explicit order that the fleet was to leave from La Coruña July 16, or the next Sunday at the latest, without waiting for the ships that were missing, "because it is preferable to begin this journey, than to take six ships more or less."

Garcilaso's ship appears on the list of vessels ready to leave La Coruña,

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[3]Ramiro Blanco, *Elogio de Santa Cruz* (Madrid: Impreso de D. Pacheco Latorre, 1888).

[4]Cesáreo Fernández Duro, *La Armada invencible,* 2 vols. (Madrid: Est. tipográfico "Succesores de Rivadeneyra," 1884–1885), vol. 1, pp. 30, 80, 101.

according to Duro, page 150. The ships missing after the projected departure were more than six. Letter number 156 on page 219 of Duro's collection reveals that during the storm that lashed the Spanish coast between July 12 and 20, forty Spanish ships of the squadron of Pedro Valdés were not accounted for. Although Valdés was confident he could assemble all the vessels, Admiral Martínez de Recalde reported problems with Don Agostín de Mexía's ships, of which Garcilaso commanded the almiranta—the title given the last ship of the convoy. Further delays are reported for vessels under Agostín Mexía, much of whose fleet, including the *San Francisco*, was to be found in Santander after the war. The scarce documentation pertaining to this aspect of the war is an inducement to further research.

In spite of Medina Sidonia's repeated warnings that captains of ships missing from the Armada during its military engagement would be severely punished, actually not much happened to them, because the storms were severe and the war came to an end so abruptly that damaged ships might not have been able to rejoin the fleet. According to Porras Barrenechea's *Garcilaso en Montilla, nuevos estudios sobre Garcilaso de la Vega*, page 34, "in 1588 there can be noticed prolonged absences during the second part of the year and he only appears incidentally in Montilla during August of 1589." During and after the war, many men were released from the Armada for age or infirmities. There is no evidence of what happened specifically to Garcilaso, nor does he ever refer to it. It was an Inca custom not to concentrate on the negative aspects of life and battles, but to simply move beyond them, which he did.

Garcilaso's life as a chaplain is detailed in *Garcilaso en Montilla*. Raúl Porras Barrenechea and the scholars who worked with him, among them Feliz Alvarez Brun, gathered all available legible letters, contracts, personal transactions, baptismal and wedding certificates, signed by Garcilaso during his chaplaincy. He inherited the chaplaincy, as well as property to maintain it in good condition, from his uncle Alonso de Vargas, who died in 1570. This arrangement allowed the Inca author to make a living from the interest, sales and rentals accruing to him as chaplain, and later, temporarily, provided a living for Diego de Vargas, his natural son by his housekeeper, Beatriz de Vega.

According to the documentation of *Garcilaso en Montilla*, the names appearing on documents vary from Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to Gómez de Figueroa, to Garcilaso de la Vega (page 203) to Garcí Inga de la Vega (page 204), to García Laso de la Vega (page 213) to Garcilaso de la Vega (page 214). As he gradually modified his name, he progressively changed his outlook.

After his captaincy in the Armada, he devoted himself to his chaplaincy. By helping the sick and comforting the dying, he demonstrated in his life a path from the sword he abandoned to the cross he embraced.

In 1596, at age fifty-nine, he had published the *Diálogos de amor* and had written *La Florida.* The documents found in Montilla reveal that his aunt, Doña Luisa Ponce de León, heiress of Don Alonso de Vargas's estate, had left her property to Garcilaso, who moved first to Las Posadas and later to Córdoba. Although the recipient of income from the marquis de Priego, he complained "about my lack of income" (*mi poca hacienda*). In 1591 he received funds for the house of Alonso de Vargas, sold in 1591. Between 1594 and 1597 he continued to own some real estate.

By 1592 Garcilaso had moved to Córdoba, where he was very active writing, entertaining friends both American and Spanish, collecting data and specimens of seeds and plants from the New World, and taking care of the sick. Between 1605 and 1608 Garcilaso was *mayordomo* at the hospital of the Immaculate Conception at the Cathedral of Córdoba. During free moments he spent his time revising manuscripts, arranging for their publication, helping his neighbors, and visiting the sick, until his death on April 23, 1616.

Garcilaso, who in his major works made an impassioned plea for the restitution of Inca rights and for peaceful relations between Incas and Spaniards, never lost the opportunity to mediate on behalf of Inca interests in Spain. To this effect, he even offered space in his tomb to those from both continents who wanted to join him. When, years later, his remains were finally brought to Cuzco, the Spaniards did not want them to leave Spain, nor could anyone tell for sure which they were, because they were fused with those of others. But the Spaniards were unable to prevent his removal, and the Inca, as he was and is still called, claimed his heritage—he went home to Cuzco. He had left Peru as Gómez Suárez de Figueroa; centuries later his remains returned to his country as Garcilaso de la Vega, el Inca, son of the conquistador.

Garcilaso's first claim to fame had consisted of his translation from Italian into Spanish of the three *Dialogues of Love* by León Hebreo (in Madrid, at the house of Pedro Madrigal, 1590). Garcilaso's translation of the *Dialogues* received an initial ten years' approval from the Crown. The Inquisition, however, finally refused to consider its further distribution in the vernacular, because, according to the Inquisitor, the work of an Inca was not needed, with so many Spaniards skilled in translation. Since there obviously was prejudice against his Inca origins, his translation remained dormant in Madrid catalogs.

To create greater interest in himself and his work, Garcilaso had earlier undertaken the compilation of the genealogy of his family in order to prove his Hispanic descendancy. The resulting material, called the *Genealogy*, was at first intended to form part of his narrative of the vicissitudes of the Florida expedition. How the two works were separated in 1596, and why *La Florida del Inca* appeared in Lisbon in 1605, is still difficult to determine, unless he had occasion to meet Pedro Crasbeeck in Portugal while with the Invincible Armada. If so, Crasbeeck might have urged the separation of the two works and offered to publish only *La Florida*.[5]

The Princeps edition in Spanish of *The Florida of the Inca* was published in 1605 by Crasbeeck. It was dedicated to the duke of Braganza with license of the Holy Inquisition. Garcilaso had less difficulty in obtaining the acceptance of the necessary permits in Portugal. The increasing importance of Pedro Crasbeeck's editorial fortunes in Lisbon may have been the cause of Garcilaso's success in getting a Spanish work published in the Portuguese capital. According to José Durand's bibliographical study, there are currently twenty-one copies of the Princeps editions available.[6] There were two Princeps editions, one dated and the other possibly undated.

The editor of the second edition of *La Florida del Inca*, which appeared in 1723, was the Spanish historian Andrés Gonzales de Barcía Carballido y Zuñiga under the pseudonym Daza de Cardenas. What was added at that time was a eulogy of Garcilaso and a chronology that disappeared in later works. *La Florida* was "directed to the Queen, our Lady." Errata were corrected and data up to 1722 were added. The printer was Nicolás Franco.

The errata dealt with the new Spanish emphasis. Garcilaso's importance as historian of the New World was de-emphasized, and preference was shown for tales that described him personally. Many current works are based on the second, or subsequent, editions, thus reflecting this bias. In these editions part of Garcilaso's introduction is often omitted. This was the case for all the editions by Doña Piñuela and Sons from 1829 on. However, cuts within the text of *La Florida* itself, not just the introduction, begin to appear in editions such as those by Jorge and Antonio Ulloa on which various German translations were based.

The reasons vary, but even before the rebellion of Tupac Amaru II (1779–

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[5]Frances Crowley, "New Information on the Biography of Garcilaso de la Vega, Inca," *Hispania* 48 (September 1965): 481–83.

[6]José Durand, *La Florida del Inca, a Bibliographic Study* (Mexico City: Biblioteca Americana, Fondo Económico, 1956).

1785), which caused copies of Garcilaso's works to be labeled as incendiary by the Crown and to silently disappear from the stores, they became scarce. Hardly any of the copies were true to the original, and the cuts in the Ulloa versions, forming the basis of both the French and German translations, deleted important segments of the original. The resulting books gave European readers the impression that Garcilaso's work was less significant than it had appeared to be to his contemporaries.

At the same time the very foreshortened translations, especially the French ones, guaranteed his work its great popularity. In fact, if it were not for the popularity of the French translations, it is very possible that Garcilaso's works might be nearly impossible to find. The first French translator was Jean Baudoin, who in 1633 translated the "*Histoire de la conquête de la Floride*, à Paris, chez Courbe." There were various editions of *La Florida* in France and the Netherlands before the translation by Pierre Richelet, who joyfully tore into both Garcilaso and Baudoin. While he described the latter as a careless translator, on the prowl for easy money, he attacked the form and style of the author. He was positive that his translation, "Histoire de la Floride, oú relation de ce qui c'est passé dans la découverte de ce pays par Ferdinand de Soto . . . imprimé à Lille, Paris Y Nion, 1709," was better than Baudoin's. At least he recognized that *La Florida* concerned Hernando de Soto's Florida expedition and his problems in dealing with mostly hostile Indians. Richelet confirmed that for forty years copies of Garcilaso's works could be acquired only in auctions, at tremendous prices. He thought it was necessary to issue a new translation because, according to him, the Garcilaso text could not be recognized in the Baudoin edition. But first of all, Richelet felt that cuts were essential. Richelet resented the fact that Baudoin had the audacity to preserve parts of the text that he, Richelet, found boring, but Richelet himself had no such scruples. Thus, there were six abbreviated editions from 1780 on, containing Richelet's negative foreword. What made matters worse was the fact that the subsequent German translation by Konrad Böttger and the English translation by Bernard Shipp were based on Richelet's incomplete text!

The Richelet version was published in 1709 and 1711 by Nion in Paris. It was used as a basis for the translations in Leiden by Van der Aa, in 1737 at The Hague by J. Naulnes, and in the city of Amsterdam by J. F. Bernard. One of the earlier abbreviated Richelet versions was used as a basis for a German edition published in 1753, that, in turn, influenced Konrad Böttger's German version published in Nordhausen in 1785. Böttger's German version—by now, a severely edited version—was then used for the English

translation by Bernard Shipp, *The History of Hernando de Soto and Florida*, Philadelphia, 1881.

If the Germans and the English were reading shortened versions of *La Florida*, and the French were influenced by biased introductions, the harm done to Garcilaso's image in Europe and later in America by these editors cannot be compared with what resulted from the even more radical changes occurring in *The Royal Commentaries of the Incas* from the Princeps edition to the twentieth century. Initially, few of the editors of the *Commentaries* and *The General History of Peru* realized Garcilaso's intent of actually using these works to promote a reinstatement of status for himself and some of the former Inca hierarchy. Having written the *Genealogy* and *La Florida* to showcase his relatives and to exalt his Spanish side, and having failed in this effort to achieve recognition for himself, he embarked on the bolder venture of using a historical buildup to bring the Incas, including himself, back to some degree of status in Peru. He did it so cleverly that the Spaniards who read the last chapters of both the *Commentaries* and *The General History of Peru* considered them reminiscences of past glory, rather than an exhortation for future action. It was not until the revolution of Tupac Amaru II that the Crown became aware of the real impact of Garcilaso's message. Copies of Garcilaso's works were then bought up by the Crown to remove them from the market throughout Latin America, but they survived in libraries and through translation to keep reappearing as symbols of both cultures, the Hispanic and the Inca.

Harold Livermore, in the introduction to his edition of *The Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru*, describes the situation this way:

> The *Dialogues* and the *Florida* (or the greater part of it) were written before Garcilaso's departure from Montilla. His own material difficulties which followed his removal to Córdova inevitably sharpened his sympathy for the vicissitudes of his fellow Incas, and in the *Royal Commentaries* we find him gradually linking hands with them. If in Montilla he had identified himself with the great poet of his father's family, we now see him drawn steadily into the orbit of the Incas whose history he is rehearsing. Even while at Montilla he had kept in touch with the affairs of Peru, receiving not only letters and reports but also the visits of his former school fellows when they came to Spain. Shortly before he completed the manuscript of the first part [of the *Royal Commentaries*], moreover, the surviving Incas in Peru asked him to undertake a mission on their behalf. At a meeting held in Cuzco in March 1603 they had empowered him to seek relief [from taxes] from Philip III for the surviving mem-

bers of the imperial caste of Peru, and they supplied him with a genealogical tree "painted on a vara and a half of white China taffeta" with a list of 567 names of surviving Incas. Immersed in the *Royal Commentaries*, Garcilaso excused himself from this duty, though he expressed every sympathy with it—"I would willingly have devoted my life to this, for it could not have been better employed."[7]

But the existence of 567 petitioners steeled the Spanish government in its determination not to accept the royal origin of the Incas for purposes of tax exemption. Though Garcilaso seems to have come no nearer than this to engaging in political activities on their behalf, his reputation was to suffer. The final humiliation was having the proud title of *Royal Commentaries* suppressed by the Royal Council from his Part Two, which finally appeared seven months after his death under the innocuous guise of a *General History of Peru*.

Garcilaso's claim to be a loyal Spaniard is demonstrated also in the still extant manuscript of his *Genealogy*, which reveals that its early scope was aimed at bolstering his Spanish descent. And, indeed, in his family tree there were members of the Ponce de León and Hernando de Soto branches. Only later were the *Genealogy* and the *La Florida* separated; *La Florida* was to be the survivor of the split. *La Florida* keynotes the exploits of Hernando de Soto throughout his North American odyssey. The work is well planned. But, in fact, the chapter structure it contains is that of the *Genealogy*—which was originally supposed to be the first part of a larger book combining the two works.

The table of contents of *La Florida* graphically presents the steps of the conquest. Books I and II contain the preliminaries, from permission for the venture by Charles V, through the preparations at Havana, the description of Florida, as Garcilaso conceived it from reports, since he had not seen it, and the early battles faced by Hernando de Soto.

The third book narrates events after the departure from Apalache and contains tales of wealth, treachery, mutiny, and generosity on the part of the lady of Cofitachequi, the rebellion of Tascaluça, and the battle of Mauvila. The fourth book deals with the battle of Alibamo.

The fifth book is divided into two chapters, following the plan of the *Genealogy*. The first part contains the death of Hernando de Soto, and the

[7]Harold Livermore, *The Royal Commentaries of the Incas and General History of Peru* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), xxv-vi.

second describes the return of the Spaniards down the Mississippi on their way to Mexico. The sixth book summarizes the reports of the expedition in Mexico and the attempts by Arias and Maldonado to obtain further news of De Soto.

In *La Florida,* the "Preface to the Reader" leaves many questions unanswered. First and foremost is the question of why as outstanding a firm as that of Pedro Crasbeeck accepted a manuscript in which the main source, who is today agreed to be Gonzalo Silvestre, was anonymous. Garcilaso admitted knowing Silvestre, working for him as a part-time secretary off and on at his home, and gave much information about him, but not his name. They discussed events of the expedition for years and finally decided to record them for posterity. Garcilaso's hesitancy in fully identifying his source may reflect a hesitancy on the part of his subject. Garcilaso did, however, introduce two other sources for minimal verification of his account, and he names them as Juan Coles and Alonso de Carmona. Perhaps their verification satisfied the publisher.

Juan Coles, an eyewitness to many of the events in *La Florida,* was a soldier on the expedition and came from Safra. He is supposed to have given his notes about the expedition to the Franciscan Fray Pedro Aguado, who collected them with others from the Windward Isles, Vera Cruz, Tierra Firme, and El Darien, only, according to Garcilaso, to forget them at a printer's in Córdoba, where Garcilaso found and used them. Alonso Priego de Carmona, another eyewitness, and a soldier on the expedition, forwarded his notes to Garcilaso for approval. According to Garcilaso, their notes were short, because they did not intend to print them under their own names. Indeed, since Juan Coles quoted verbal statements by participants, and since the report was written on legal paper, it might have been part of a legal deposition. Garcilaso claimed that Juan Coles's data agreed with the compilation of events gathered in Mexico for Don Antonio de Mendoza, whose papers would contribute greatly to future studies of *La Florida.*

In any evaluation of *La Florida* as a historical document, it is necessary to take notice of the author's first intent in combining the genealogy with *La Florida,* which was to reinforce the significance of his genealogy as a worthy subject of the king. Indeed, the conclusion of his message to the reader was an appeal on behalf of all Indians, criollos, and mestizos of Peru, as being worthy citizens who should be allowed to pursue higher endeavors.

As the *Genealogy* flowed into *La Florida,* so the *Royal Commentaries* were a sequel of that same attempt to promote the Inca cause. Whereas Pedro Crasbeeck published both *La Florida* and the first part of *The Royal*

Commentaries in Lisbon, on becoming court printer of Philip II, he did not print its second part, *The General History of Peru,* which was produced by the widow of Andrés Barrera at her own expense. Pedro Crasbeeck, as the shrewd founder of a growing enterprise, had probably detected what it took the Spanish government over a century to discover, that much of Garcilaso's work had a political emphasis directed toward restoring the status of the Inca royal family.

Critics have usually quoted Garcilaso's stated intent in the prefaces of his volumes and have criticized or praised him in direct relation to his stated intentions. Anthologies and censors have likewise followed his initial roadmarks and accepted his directions. Had the censors paid as much attention to the last chapter of *The Commentaries* and to the last chapter of his *General History of Peru* (see below), the manuscripts might at best have been edited and at worst not have been accepted. In order to observe how official approval was granted, it is necessary to follow the course of these works through channels.

As could be expected, first approval of *The Royal Commentaries* was granted shortly after submission in Lisbon, on November 6, 1604, by Father Luis Dos Anjos, who found the work very "curiously written and worthy of printing." By December 4, 1604, the book was referred to the Holy Office. At the same time the royal palace received the manuscript, which was approved by the Audiencia and by the House of Braganza as early as March 15, 1605. Although the work could not have met royal approval without church approbation, the latter was given officially only in September 1609.

In his introduction, addressed to Princess Catalina de Braganza, Garcilaso expressed his thanks for her official sponsorship of his work. In his "Preface to the Reader," he introduced the book as a faithful presentation of Inca customs and traditions. Claiming Spanish historians as sources, he professed to correct their statements through commentaries and glosses whenever he thought it necessary. The title page, printed in Spanish in Lisbon in 1609 by Pedro Crasbeeck, claimed that the work dealt with "Inca Kings of Peru, their idolatry, their laws, their government in peace and war, their lives and conquests and all that befell that empire and its republic until the Spanish occupation." No mention was made that Garcilaso also occasionally took the Spaniards to task for things they did, or failed to do.

The General History of Peru, which was to have been the second part of the *Commentaries,* did not get published until 1617, and it was not published by Pedro Crasbeeck. Questions pertaining to Garcilaso's relations with the firm of Pedro Crasbeeck are difficult to answer because the firm

was burned with almost total destruction of documents not contained in libraries. What would be of interest is, why did Garcilaso change from a renowned publisher like Crasbeeck to a woman, and by whose initiative? All we know currently is that *The General History of Peru* appeared in 1617, printed by the widow Barrera.

The title change, from the second part of *The Royal Commentaries* to *The General History of Peru*, may have marked the recognition by his literary executors of a change in the role of the author, who no longer wrote as a commentator—one who comments on history, but instead assumed the role of historian—one who records history. The modification must have been gradual, as all permits and dedications were for the second part of *The Royal Commentaries*. These included the initial petition to print by the author in 1612, the request by Don Diego de Mardones, bishop of Córdoba, for the censor's approval, granted on January 6, 1613, the bishop's subsequent confirmation of the approbation, the approval of the Royal Council, issued in Madrid in 1614, and finally, the acceptance by the king himself. The title *The General History of Peru* is mentioned in none of these documents.

Behind the seemingly casual shift causing the title change, however, there may have been a well-thought-out plan that neither the Portuguese nor the Spanish hierarchy were aware of. The whole concept moved imperceptibly from the simple to the complex. Viewed simply, the *Commentaries* were what Garcilaso had presented them as being. On a more sophisticated level, however, they presented a peculiar double-pronged thrust: one prong was a plea for recognition of Garcilaso's own inheritance rights, which should have accrued to him as the only living son of a conquistador; a second prong was a claim of Inca succession rights involving not only himself, but all descendants of royal lineage. If only one part of the ploy worked, Garcilaso was sure to gain. If the Incas won their rights, his would be a leadership position. If neither possibility was realized, his would be the credit of writing a great work. To succeed, he needed the authority of being not just the author of commentaries, but an accredited historian. His goals must be so simple as to mislead possible political observers. The title page of *The History of Peru* is a masterpiece of understatement. His goals are disarming: "the discovery of Peru, the way the Spaniards won it, the civil wars between the Pizarros and the Almagros and the distribution of the land." Their simplistic nature makes them perfectly acceptable. The dedications were carefully prepared. For the bishop there was the repeated dedication to the Virgin, for the Incas there was praise of their native gifts, a sense of identification and pride and an equation of their prowess to the best that antiquity had to offer. For

the king there was a reminder that Garcilaso's father had been a famous conquistador in the royal service and that Garcilaso's uncle had died for the Spanish cause.

It was common knowledge that Garcilaso had been told by his Spanish father—who had officially recognized Garcilaso as his son, although he had never married Inca Princess Chimpu Occlo—that he should come to Spain and claim his rights before the king. What was less obvious, especially to the Spanish reader of the day, was Garcilaso's thrust on behalf of Inca claims generally. That he favored the Inca cause could be seen in *The Royal Commentaries,* of which the seventh book resounds as a paean of Inca pride. In chapter eight Garcilaso professed to have undertaken the enormous task of recording all exploits of the Inca republic until its last days, as an act of historic preservation. Lest Cuzco be forgotten, he determined to describe it as its "natural son" must, the pun on words being that of *hijo natural* of his father and his city. As such, he saw in Cuzco not only a new Toledo, as some called it, but a new Rome. The only advantage Rome had over Cuzco was its literacy. Appropriately, he adds: "It is also a matter of doubt which of these famous men owe more to the others, whether the warriors to the writer, because by writing their exploits they committed them to eternity, or whether the men of letters owe more to the warriors for supplying them with daily accomplishments about which they may write the rest of their lives."

After examining the introductions and some significant passages of the texts, various conclusions as to the author's purposes can be drawn. As the Crasbeecks may have noticed, they are unusual. It may well be that Pedro Crasbeeck hesitated to continue publication because he saw some of these interpretations as real possibilities. He was originally of Jewish ancestry and he may have felt that during the Union of Spain and Portugal (1588–1640) he could not be involved with what he may have perceived as Garcilaso's commitment to Inca nationalism. For a commitment of some degree there was, as revealed in the fortieth chapter of the ninth book of the *Commentaries.* Originally the manuscript had thirty-nine chapters and was probably accepted and approved of with these. Then Garcilaso claimed to have received certain documents for safekeeping. As these reached him, he decided to incorporate their contents into the book and to add another chapter concerning the successors to Atahuallpa.

It is difficult in the absence of independent manuscript documentation to establish when exactly Garcilaso was contacted by the successors of Atahuallpa, but according to Garcilaso this was done at the end of 1603. The documents the Incas sent him, listing heirs to Inca realms and their corre-

sponding claims, were forwarded by Garcilaso to Alonso de Mesa, son of his neighbor of Cuzco days, and to Melchior Carlos Inca. Both of these friends resided at the court in Valladolid. The documents were a full-fledged claim of royal descendancy, including a family tree with not only the names but the portraits of all Incas of royal descent entitled to succession status. The document followed both male and female lines of descendancy, was written partly in the Indian court language known to Garcilaso and partly in the vernacular, which he does not seem to remember well, and was signed by eleven Inca Indians, using both Indian and Christian names. Enclosed was a plea for tax exemption benefiting all royal descendants, including Garcilaso. By placing this information in the *Commentaries* with the list of all descendants of the Incas, as they still appear, Garcilaso entered a claim for himself and them for whatever benefits might accrue to them.

Initially, the plea seemed to have succeeded. As stated in the last paragraph of the *Commentaries*, Don Melchior Carlos Inca, son of Paullu Inca (godson of Garcilaso) and grandson of Manco Capac, was to be awarded 7,500 ducats of perpetual income, which was to be deposited by the king in Lima. He was to be granted a house in Spain and an official appointment in the Royal Palace. Indians who had come under his power were to pass to the Crown, nor was he to return to the Indies. He had negotiated these concessions since his arrival in Spain in 1602, but by the time the chapter was written in March 1604 none of the conditions had been fulfilled. Garcilaso promised to discuss the consequences of these transactions in the tenth book of the *Commentaries*, as he concluded the ninth book with this statement: "and with this we shall enter the tenth book, which will deal with the heroic incredible actions of the Spaniards who won that empire."

It is at this point that some drastic changes must have been made, for there is no tenth book in *The Royal Commentaries*. That change must not have been contemplated as early as the end of March 1604, nor as late as September 1609, when the Holy Office granted its license. It would be interesting to know when, exactly, the publishing plans were changed and how the title change came about. Perhaps the requests contained in the final chapter of Book 9 were enough to raise some eyebrows in Spain. The relevant portions of that final chapter are as follows:

> Many days after finishing this ninth book I received certain information from Peru, from which I have compiled the following chapter, for I thought that this matter belonged to my history and I have therefore added it here. The few Incas of the royal blood who survived the cruelties and tyrannies of Atahuallpa

and other later oppressions have more descendants than I had imagined, for at the end of the year 1603 they all wrote to Don Melchior Carlos Inca and to Don Alonso de Mesa, the son of Alonso de Mesa who was a *vecino* of Cuzco, and also to me, to ask us to beg His Majesty in the name of them all to have them exempted from the tribute they are paying and from other vexations that they undertook in common with the rest of the Indians. They sent the three of us powers to act together on their behalf with proofs of their descent, including details of which of them descended from which other king, down to the last of their line; and for clearer proof and demonstration they included a genealogical tree showing the royal line from Manco Cápac to Haina Cápac. . . . They write with great confidence, which we all entertain, that when His Catholic Majesty knows their plight he will relieve them and will confer many privileges on them, as befits the descendants of kings.[8]

Those who believe that the descendancy documents were casually inserted in the last book of *The General History of Peru* will find that, in the same last book, in the next to the last paragraph, Don Melchior Carlos Inca reappears. Fearful lest the long list of royal descendants should cause him to lose his privileges, he had not forwarded the documents to the court. This deprived him, as well as his relatives, including Garcilaso, of any benefits they might then have been able to claim. Garcilaso wanted his countrymen to know what happened lest they blame him for not representing them well. The relevant paragraph from the last chapter of the *General History of Peru* is:

With regard to the descendants of these kings not in the direct line, in the last chapter of the First Part of these *Commentaries* we mentioned how many descendants there were of each of the past kings. As I stated there, they themselves sent me a document in the name of all of them with power of attorney in favor of Don Melchior Carlos, Don Alonso de Mesa, and myself, so that any of the three of us could present it on their behalf of [to] His Catholic Majesty and the Supreme Royal Council of the Indies. This document requested that, as descendants of kings, they should be relieved of the vexations they suffered. I sent the petition and the accompanying papers (which were addressed to me) to the capital directed to the said Don Melchior Carlos and Don Alonso de Mesa, but the former, though his own claims were of the same nature and based on the same legal and natural arguments as those of the Incas, was unwilling to present the papers so as not to reveal how many persons there were of the royal blood, thinking that if he did reveal this, he would lose many of

[8]Ibid., pt. 1, p. 625.

> the grants and honors he claimed and hoped to receive. He was therefore reluctant to raise his voice on his kinsmen's behalf; and he died, as has been said, without receiving anything for himself or his friends. I have mentioned this in order to clear myself and so that my relatives, wherever they may be, shall know what happened and not accuse me of neglect or ill-will in not having done what they bade and requested me. I would indeed have been glad to have devoted my life to the service of people who so greatly deserved it, but I have not been able to do more, as I have been engaged in writing this history, which I hope will have been as great a service to the Spaniards who won the empire as to the Incas who formerly possessed it.[9]

The fact that Garcilaso felt he must explain to his relatives and friends why the petition failed shows that he had accepted a commitment to represent the disenfranchised heirs of the Inca Empire. Without objection by the Royal Court, he had fought on two sides of the issue—the Spanish side of his father and the Inca side of his mother. Not until 1780 did the Spanish Crown become aware of the descendancy claims contained in the *Commentaries.* It was then that Charles III ordered local governors to purchase all available copies, lest the books, which he considered seditious, become instantly popular. There were, however, more books than he realized, because Garcilaso's claim still stands four centuries later as proof that history has often been produced to satisfy political ends. A key ingredient in the power game was the *Genealogy,* which he used before *La Florida* and throughout his later works, on both the Spanish and the Inca side of the spectrum, to pursue a respect and a status that, while never awarded him by the king, he received from future generations as a writer.

Appraisal of Garcilaso's *La Florida* among recent writers depends on whether the critics view the work as primarily literary or historical. Whereas the former do not concentrate on credibility, the latter see it as a prevailing issue. A literary critic, Arnold Toynbee, in his foreword to Harold Livermore's *Royal Commentaries* (p. xxiv), perceives the *Dialogues of Love,* the *Florida,* and the two parts of *The Royal Commentaries* as corresponding to successive stages of Garcilaso's development. Toynbee's view is that in *La Florida* Garcilaso leaves the world of philosophy and the speculations of León Hebreo to confront the problems of America and its conquest. His was the tale of a bold expedition among savage Indians, only lately removed from the rites of cannibalism, as this expedition was viewed by a Spanish

[9]Ibid., pt. 2, pp. 1486–87.

conquistador years after the fact. The ever-present contrast was that of conqueror and conquered, or of Hernando de Soto and his Spanish soldiers in their daily interaction with the native Indians. According to Toynbee, one striking aspect of Garcilaso's approach to the subject was his treatment of the two parties, European and Indian, as equals. Toynbee found in the work the romantic qualities of Ginés Pérez de Hita's *Civil Wars of Granada* in which a ruthless struggle between the peoples of two opposing religions is purged of its brutality to make for agreeable reading. It is the pleasant tempo of Garcilaso's narrative, the almost fictionlike alternation of battle and lush description of the hitherto unknown landscape, that endeared him to Europeans and kept them reissuing his editions across the centuries.

John Grier Varner, in his *El Inca*, praised Garcilaso's literary legacy: "To the world, he left the most picturesque of all accounts of a courageous journey through the vast regions of La Florida. Woven through it is the old cavalier's most splendid eulogy. He himself [the old cavalier] had dictated it to his Peruvian amanuensis [Garcilaso], who treated it with the warmth and sympathy it deserved."[10]

The very fact that the *Florida* was a eulogy weakened its historical accuracy. Garcilaso wanted his times to be remembered. He viewed history not unlike the ancient Greek historians, as the cumulative impact of men of action upon their times, their friends, and their foes. His was the song of the Indian, of the "natural man," whose cause Jean Jacques Rousseau espoused in his *Discours sur l'origine de l'inegalité* and in his *Contrat Social.* Rousseau's concept that the "natural man" was at the base of governance heightened French interest in Indian works during the French Revolution. It was Garcilaso's goal to show that the impact on the Americas of the Indian and Inca cultures was equal to the impact of Spain.

This perception of the greatness which was Inca America would inspire Simón Bolívar. According to John Grier Varner, "the famed Libertador in a moment of poetic ecstasy wrote to a friend of the unsurpassed wonders of the imperial city [Cuzco] and of the civilization, which it symbolized. Its history . . . was a tapestry of cruelty to the Indians, woven by Bartolomé de las Casas; its legend was to be found in the chronicles of the Inca, Garcilaso de la Vega."[11] The quotation is significant, because it brings to the fore Garcilaso's appeal to the liberators as a symbol for national unification. Part of a

[10]John Grier Varner, *El Inca* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 310.

[11]Ibid., 384.

letter written by Simón Bolívar to José Joaquín Olmedo, written from Cuzco on June 27, 1825, shows that the Garcilaso name itself had become a code word for unification.[12]

In an enlightening article, Hugo Rodríguez Vecchini draws attention to the fact that *La Florida* was published in the same year, 1605, as was Cervantes's *Don Quijote*.[13] Rodríguez Vecchini views *La Florida* as a work in the tradition of Ariosto and Boiardo, modeled equally on history and fiction. For him the majestic bearing of the lady of Cofachiqui is as reminiscent of Cleopatra, as the fierce Vitachuco is of the brave knights of Orlando, be he the Inammorato or the Furioso.

The accuracy of *La Florida* depends in large part, of course, on its original source. The original source of *La Florida*, Gonzalo Silvestre, was probably meant in the beginning to be the sole source. Perhaps, had Gonzalo lived longer, his story would have remained a family document, unpublished or privately printed. But, as John Grier Varner appropriately sums it up, Garcilaso took "occasional journeys back to Montilla and . . . down the dusty road of *Las Posadas* to recapture still what he could from the ailing Silvestre, whose days were ebbing fast. In 1592, after receiving an additional grant from the crown and after demanding that his body, when placed in the sepulcher, be resplendently armed, the gallant old adventurer expired."[14]

Silvestre left money to his nephew Alonso Diaz de Belcazar, to his friend Diego de Córdoba, and to Garcilaso, to whom he bequeathed his data and notes of obligation of 800 ducats. Garcilaso's new sponsor became Juan Fernández Franco, who would not match his friend's generosity, and Garcilaso dedicated the first manuscript to Pedro Fernández de Córdoba, marqués de Priego. It was no longer practical to start the book with a genealogy. Instead, *La Florida* was to be expanded to include the testimony by Coles and Carmona and to become a work of history in its own right.

As a source, Gonzalo Silvestre is vulnerable, since the events he describes were no longer recent. He admits to "presuming" to write the truth. Since both the conquistador and the writer are trustworthy men, *fide dignos*, their testimony, accompanied by that of Coles and Carmona, however admittedly inadequate as to the sequence of events, should be credited. (When Don Francisco de Toledo, who became viceroy of Peru in 1569, took the testi-

[12]*Cartas del Libertador*, vol. 5, pp. 6–8.

[13]H. Rodríguez Vecchini, "Don Quijote y la Florida del Inca," in *Historia y ficción en la narrativa hispanoamericana* (Coloquio de Yale; Caracas: Monte Avila Editores, 1984).

[14]Varner, *El Inca*, 310.

mony of Coles and Carmona at an inquiry he instituted in Cuzco into the nature and extent of the government of the Incas, their report before the viceroy and his son was so persuasive that the viceroy decided to recommend a continuance of the conquest and exploration of Florida.) But in *La Florida* as elsewhere, Garcilaso criticizes his sources, even as he makes common cause with them, so that at times his "I" as a historian becomes a consensus of "we."

In a way Garcilaso's genius for literary writing harmed him as a historian. His definite talent at storytelling, which made him so beloved especially to the French, caused him to be criticized by nineteenth- and twentieth-century authors. In her preface to *La Florida del Inca*, Silvia Lynn Hilton lists Ticknor, Tschundi, and Menendez Pelayo as detractors of Garcilaso, and reports that George Bancroft considered *La Florida del Inca* as nothing more than a novel.[15]

Similarly on the negative side were Manuel Gonzales de la Rosa, John Swanton in the *Final Report of the U.S. De Soto Expedition*, 1939, and Robert Levillier's refutation of many of Garcilaso's assumptions. Errors such as the wrong birthplace for De Soto caused critics, among them David Henige, to challenge "the context, content and credibility of La Florida del Ynca."[16] He questions whether Garcilaso ever heard of the gentleman of Elvas's *Relaçam*, or whether Garcilaso's work was to be an answer to it, extolling Silvestre. He also thinks it unlikely that he did not know about the Rangel and Biedma reports; Henige opts instead to assume that Garcilaso ignored them.

In tables that show that none of the sources agreed on any of the numbers of participants, he brings out that Garcilaso's numbers by far exceeded those of the others. The tables would seem more convincing if all other sources were unanimous, which they are not.

In spite of its acknowledged limitations, *La Florida* is defended as a valuable contribution to the literature and history of Hispanoamerica by José de la Riva Agüero, Aurelio Miró Quesada, José Durand, Silvia Lynn Hilton, and Donald G. Castanien.[17] In Castanien can be found one of the strongest defenders of the early Garcilaso. Castanien writes that "as a work of literary

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[15]Silvia Lynn Hilton, *La Florida del Inca* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1982), 27.

[16]David Henige, "The Context, Content and Credibility of La Florida del Ynca," *The Americas* 43, no. 1 (July 1986).

[17]Donald G. Castanien, *El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega* (New York: Twayne, 1961).

art the *Florida* is by far the most satisfactory of Garcilaso's work, perhaps because it does have so many of the qualities of the novel."[18] In his opinion, and in that of most French authors reviewing *La Florida,* Garcilaso's borrowings from the conventions of romance enhanced the curiosity and the interest of readers.

The debates on the relative values of the writer and the historian have kept *La Florida* in print until the present, and as the debate goes on, Garcilaso will be a subject of further investigation. The work has been compared to the best of chivalric novels and even to the *Quijote,* yet it is unique in its kind as the product of a man of mixed allegiance. As fiction, it is well planned and written. Not many works of fiction have survived over three centuries with more or less continued publication. As a historical work, it poses problems, but so do all the other sources of the De Soto expedition. Anthropologists may have trouble with it, but then Garcilaso did not claim to be an anthropologist. As the debate continues, it will produce new outlooks pertaining to literary values versus historical accuracy. Whatever the outcome, Garcilaso's strength lies in his description of the people, the Indians, the Spaniards, Hernando de Soto, and their superhuman goals. In presenting the verdant scenery of Florida, in describing battles and conflicts, he undoubtedly excels.

[18]Ibid., 76.