

ish Empire. The authors and the Academia Nacional de Historia of Venezuela should be commended for making these ordinances available to the public and reminding scholars of the fruitful possibilities of archival research in once micropolitan centers like Bourbon Mérida.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-1416720

In Search of an Inca: Identity and Utopia in the Andes. By ALBERTO FLORES GALINDO.

Edited and translated by CARLOS AGUIRRE, CHARLES F. WALKER, and WILLIE HIATT. *New Approaches to the Americas*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Illustrations. Maps. Notes. Glossary. Index. xxix, 270 pp. Paper, \$21.99. Cloth, \$75.00.

Alberto Flores Galindo is remembered as one of Peru's finest political essayists. Over the course of a life cut tragically short at age 41, Flores Galindo (also called familiarly "Tito") produced a body of work that ranges across most of the major topics of Peruvian history. Tito was an activist, first as a student who was dedicated to political activity and later as an independent intellectual with socialist convictions. His work became a kind of index of the topics that attracted the interest of the intellectual left. He wrote fluidly and gracefully and had a capacity for work that the rest of us found difficult to imagine.

In Search of an Inca was first published in Spanish in Havana in 1986 and won the essay prize awarded by the Casa de las Américas that year. The work is essentially a collection of essays, some of which were originally written for other purposes and some specifically composed for this book. The common theme is the vision of a return of a golden age of prosperity for the Andean native people under the leadership an Inca leader who would lead his people to victory over the descendants of the Spaniards who invaded the Andes in the sixteenth century. The first four chapters examine indigenous struggles and revolts of the colonial period, followed by the racism and authoritarian traditions of the nineteenth century (the "anti-utopia"). The chapters that follow focus on the republican period, examining the rise of indigenous mobilization, populist political movements, and the challenges to authoritarian rule in the 1920s and '30s, with the supremely hierarchical and authoritarian model of the Shining Path, the organization that plunged the country into a civil war that lasted until 1995, four years after Flores Galindo's death, and left an estimated 60,000 dead and disappeared, most of them Quechua-speaking peasant farmers from the poorest regions of the country.

The academic quality of the chapters varies considerably. Some of the essays, for example the sweeping introductory chapter and the discussion of racism in chapter 7 ("A Republic without Citizens"), are broad and essentially general, while others such as chapter 3, on the eighteenth-century rebellion led by Juan Santos Atahualpa, meet all of the academic standards for thorough research and careful argument. Readers may find the English version of the book a little stilted in places, but the translators are to be

commended for their efforts, for Tito wrote more like a poet than a historian, and his translators faced a formidable challenge. His shorter work, written as newspaper articles and commentaries, is stimulating and thought-provoking, worth reading and debating by students as well as by general readers interested in the Andes, both past and present. I suspect that readers new to Peru and to Flores Galindo's work will find the essays in this book more stimulating if introduced by someone who can provide an introduction to Flores Galindo's turbulent life and times, but in any case, the book is an important addition to the literature in English available to readers and hopefully an incentive to those able to take on his essays in Spanish.

It is not easy to evaluate the importance of this publication, in part because Flores Galindo's work in its entirety represents something more than the production of an academic historian. Much of his work was an exciting "first pass" at a topic that engaged many in Peru. Tito did not seek to write definitive studies, but to provoke discussion and debate. He was a fine researcher and a thoughtful analyst, but he did not exhaust his subjects, and wrote more to generate debate than to end it. His work spoke to the current concerns of his society, and he expected to be a part of the struggle for a more humanitarian and humane politics that was always his principle objective. It was our loss, as well as his country's, that those expectations were cut tragically short.

But even if later historians write more complete and definitive studies on the topics he studied, Tito's work represents the best and most optimistic of the intellectual production of a period that may well be remembered as one of the most difficult and dangerous in Peru's history. At a time when the tendency to act in terms of prefabricated ideologies and slogans and to propound tried, if hardly true, solutions to his country's problems was overwhelming, Tito stood out as one of a small group of people who argued for a human, creative solution to the chaos of his time. In a testament he made public shortly before he died, he urged people to take a stand against authoritarianism and murder in the name of the left as well as the right. And he insisted, this young man for whom the future had suddenly run out, that the future stands open to those who will swim against the current and seek new alternatives. We should listen.

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DOI 10.1215/00182168-1416729