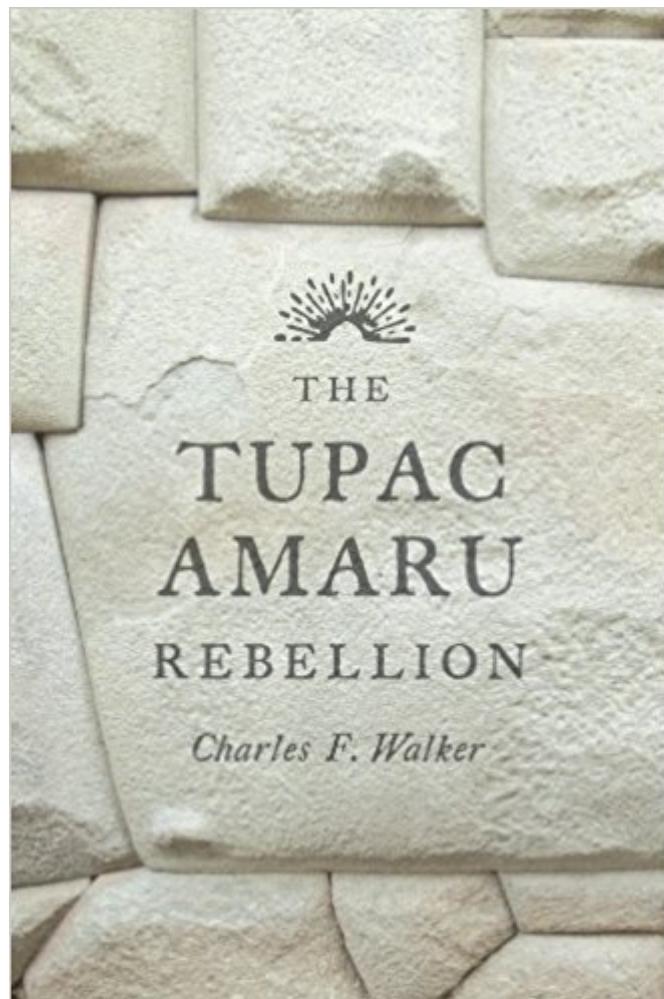


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The Tupac Amaru Rebellion



Synopsis

The largest rebellion in the history of Spain's American empire--a conflict greater in territory and costlier in lives than the contemporaneous American Revolution--began as a local revolt against colonial authorities in 1780. As an official collector of tribute for the imperial crown, José Gabriel Condorcanqui had seen firsthand what oppressive Spanish rule meant for Peru's Indian population. Adopting the Inca royal name Tupac Amaru, he set events in motion that would transform him into Latin America's most iconic revolutionary figure. Tupac Amaru's political aims were modest at first. He claimed to act on the Spanish king's behalf, expelling corrupt Spaniards and abolishing onerous taxes. But the rebellion became increasingly bloody as it spread throughout Peru and into parts of modern-day Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina. By late 1780, Tupac Amaru, his wife Micaela Bastidas, and their followers had defeated the Spanish in numerous battles and gained control over a vast territory. As the rebellion swept through Indian villages to gain recruits and overthrow the Spanish corregidores, rumors spread that the Incas had returned to reclaim their kingdom. Charles Walker immerses readers in the rebellion's guerrilla campaigns, propaganda war, and brutal acts of retribution. He highlights the importance of Bastidas--the key strategist--and reassesses the role of the Catholic Church in the uprising's demise. The Tupac Amaru Rebellion examines why a revolt that began as a multiclass alliance against European-born usurpers degenerated into a vicious caste war--and left a legacy that continues to influence South American politics today.

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Customer Reviews

This new narrative of the rebellion(s) that shook the southern Andes in the late 18th century deserves a wide readership. Graduate and undergraduate students interested in the Andes, rebellion, or social movements will learn much from Walker's detailed reconstruction of the trajectory of cosmopolitan Andean 'kuraka' José Gabriel Condorcanqui, who along with his wife Micaela Bastidas and other family members led an uprising that called into question the foundations of colonial rule in Peru. Travelers to Cusco who want to learn more about the local history of this modern tourist destination will recognize landmarks and landscapes in this work's accessible text, and will likely be shocked by the city and region's past of rural resistance and violent repression. Historians will be impressed as well by the breadth of the source material use, both from the archives and printed primary sources. Any future inquiries into Peru during the so-called Age of Revolutions will use this work as a reference and bibliographical guide. In addition to important contributions regarding the near-mythical Micaela Bastidas, José Gabriel's co-leader and spouse, Walker also provides a novel interpretation of the role of Catholicism and the Church in shaping the rebellions that ultimately extended from northern Cuzco to La Paz and beyond in modern Bolivia. (Note: though the Tupac Katari rebellions in Alto Perú have their own sections, this book is strongest when discussing Cuzco and is undoubtedly Peru-centric.

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