

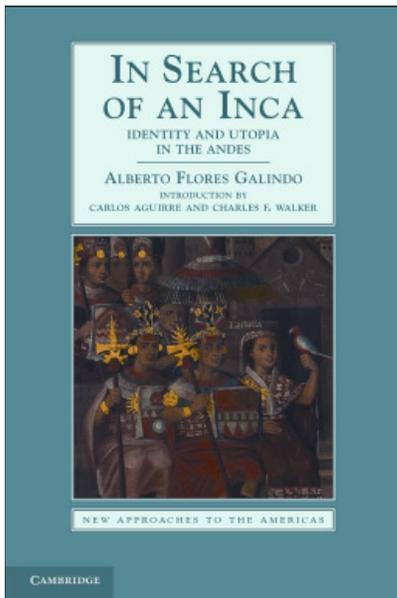
# In Search of an Inca

## Identity and Utopia in the Andes

### Alberto Flores Galindo

Edited by Carlos Aguirre and Charles F. Walker  
Translated by Willie Hiatt and Charles F. Walker

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*In Search of an Inca* examines how people in the Andean region have invoked the Incas to question and rethink colonialism and injustice, from the time of the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century until the late twentieth century. It stresses the recurrence of the 'Andean Utopia', that is, the idealization of the pre-colonial past as an era of harmony, justice, and prosperity and the foundation for political and social agendas for the future. In this award-winning work, Alberto Flores Galindo highlights how different groups imagined the pre-Andean world as a model for a new society. These included those conquered by the Spanish in the sixteenth century but also rebels in the colonial and modern era and a heterogeneous group of intellectuals and dissenters. This sweeping and accessible history of the Andes over the last five hundred years offers important reflections on and grounds for comparison of memory, utopianism, and resistance.

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"When the Spanish conquerors garroted Atahualpa in 1535, they killed an emperor but inaugurated the myth of the Inca's return. Flores Galindo, in his now-classic *In Search of an Inca*, traces the utopian myth that has persisted in many forms in the Andean region down to the present, inspiring uprisings, prophecies, sects, and local rituals. The most spectacular of the uprisings was the Tupac Amaru rebellion of 1780 that was punished with such severity that public indigenous culture was forced underground to be kept alive in the prodigious Andean memory bank. For as Flores Galindo emphasizes, there is no equivalent historical memory to that of the Andes, either in Europe or in Mexico. *In Search of an Inca* follows the underground path of myth and memory and the ethnic tensions that have preoccupied Peru's greatest thinkers. It is an absorbing story that needed to be told. - Jean Franco, Columbia University

"Alberto Flores Galindo was Peru's most creative historian in the post-1960s era. This book brilliantly interprets the yearnings for an Inca past that inspired struggles to reinvent Peru's present and future." - Steve J. Stern, Alberto Flores Galindo Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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#### CONTENTS

Editors' introduction; Acknowledgments; Introduction; 1. Europe and the land of the Incas: the Andean utopia; 2. Communities and doctrines: the struggle for souls (central Andes, 1608-1666); 3. The spark and the fire: Juan Santos Atahualpa; 4. The Tupac Amaru Revolution and the Andean people; 5. Govern the world, disrupt the world; 6. Soldiers and montoneros; 7. A republic without citizens; 8. The utopian horizon; 9. The boiling point; 10. The silent war; 11. Epilogue: dreams and nightmares.

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