

A Rock and an Art Place: Inka Stone Carving in Context

Abstract

Inka stone carving as practiced on immobile boulders and outcroppings of rock, located outdoors and often in highly public locations, has proved challenging to art historical analysis. Its mostly abstract forms resist interpretation. Focusing on one of the better documented examples of stone carving—an impressive outcrop named Collaconcho by the Inkas—Dean considers the significance of specific abstract forms, as well as the ways meaning was achieved through the juxtaposition of the outcrop with other worked stones in Collaconcho's environs. It will be suggested that, for Collaconcho and others like it, stone carving addressed imperial concerns regarding potentially resistant populations, but did so indirectly, employing visual analogy and what Dean identifies as an “empathetic perspective.”

About the distinguished lecturer

Carolyn Dean is professor of art history with research interests in the visual culture and histories of the Americas. She is the recent recipient of the Getty Scholars Fellowship, and a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies. Her monograph, *A Culture of Stone: Inka Perspectives on Rock* (Duke University 2010), earned the Arvey Book Award for best book on Latin American art. An earlier book, *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ: Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco, Peru* (Duke University 1999), was expanded and issued as a Spanish edition, *Los cuerpos de los Incas y el cuerpo de Cristo: El Corpus Christi en el Cuzco colonial* (trans. Javier Flores Espinoza, Universidad Mayor San Marcos 2003).

Professor Dean has authored a number of works on Inka art and architecture. They include, “Rocks and Reverence: Inka and Spanish Perceptions of Stonework in the Early Modern Andes,” in *The Matter of Art: Materials, Practices, Cultural Logics, c. 1250–1750* (eds. C. Anderson, A. Dunlop, and P. Smith (Manchester University Press 2015), and “The Inca Married the Earth: Integrated Outcrops and the Making of Place” in *Art Bulletin* (2007). Her co-authored article with Dana Leibsohn, “Hybridity and Its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America” in *Colonial Latin American Review* (2003) won the Conference on Latin American History Prize in 2005, and the Franklin Pease G. Y. Memorial Prize in 2006.