



Fig. 4: Carved rock of Intinkala.

the higher position of the Horca, sunrise would have been observed earlier and signals might have been passed on to the lower Intinkala station.

While the eastern orientation of the main carvings is clear, the function of carved rocks as observatories in general is difficult to prove. Trimborn's interpretation is a possibility but I think that the carvings of the main boulder may have been used primarily as counting devices. I have argued elsewhere (in preparation) that rock complexes with grid-like carvings which were huacas on the Cusco ceque lines did not only function as places where offerings were presented and burnt but also as locations where such offerings were accounted for and perhaps transcribed and recorded on quipus. Such reasoning is based on the visual resemblance between rows of carved seats, platforms, or steps and the Inca yupana which is a stone tool with grid-like compartments which were used for counting purposes and into which quipus could be translated. Each compartment or carved platform stood for one decimal unit and each row counted a different object category. Thus the main boulder at Intinkala could have registered three types of objects in quantities up to three decimal units (singles, tens, and hundreds). One person may have counted the items in a specific object category while a second person placed small stones on the carved platforms corresponding to the counted decimal units. Such a context could have been the primary function of the whole site of Intinkala: a very large number of pilgrims passed through Copacabana and they all likely brought some type of offering for the local shrines. Pil-

grims and offerings could have been counted on the carved platforms. Further, there were numerous storehouses in the surroundings of Copacabana. According to Ramos Gavilán (1888: 127 [1621: Bk. 1, chap. 20]), stored supplies were used to provide pilgrims as well as warriors and priests with food, drink, and clothing based on need. The Inca must have kept track in some form of the supplies being handed out and of new supplies coming in most likely as tribute from subjected villages. These counting activities may have been conducted at Intinkala. The presence of walls – although their full extent remains unknown – indicates the creation of secluded spaces and restricted access. While speculative, one can envision that Intinkala was an architectural complex with carved counting systems which served administrative and partly ritual purposes.

It is further possible that Intinkala was the location where the idol of Copacabana was on display. Ramos Gavilán reports:

Among the idols in the area the most famous among the people of Yunguyo was the idol of Copacabana, which was later excavated by the Spanish who found it next to two large stones, one of which was called *Ticonipa* and the other *Guacocho*, both of which were worshipped by the Yunguyos. Since they were poor people, they offered their idols and stones sheep and *chicha*; and when they had some gold or silver, they kept it to offer it to the Sun or Moon. This idol Copacabana stood in the village of the same name in the direction to Tiquina. It could have stood near the present pantheon where there are a number of seats carved into the stones. The idol was of a blue and showy stone and only consisted of a