

CORICANCHA



CORICANCHA / SUN TEMPLE, CUSCO. T ROSCOE

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4. D ROSCOE

BACKGROUND

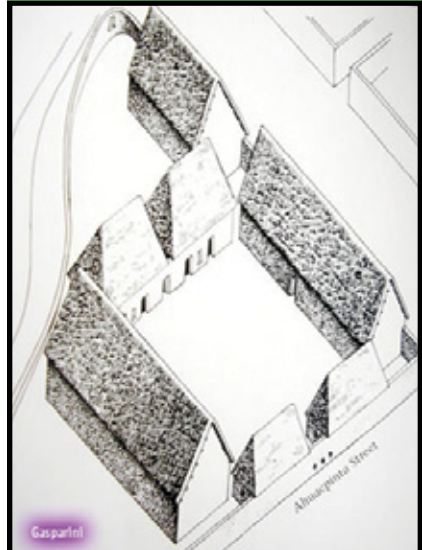
Coricancha, Qorikancha. Sun Temple. “The Golden Enclosure.” Coricancha was the ‘center of the center of the universe.’⁸ Temple of the Sun walls were plated with gold. The site is an example of the Inca’s perfect masonry. George Squier drew the first plans. Also studied and excavated by Max Uhle and John Rowe.⁴

Said to have been built by [Manco Capac I](#).⁶ Major buildings: Sun, Moon, Stars, Lightning, Rainbow, chapter house for priests. The building was covered in massive gold plates, each weighing 4–10 lbs and gold straw was worked into the roof to catch sunlight.⁹ 700 plates of gold were removed by the Spanish, each 2 hand widths wide. Each weighed 4.5lbs after being melt down.⁴ Golden garden and walls possibly made by Chimu.¹

The body of the dead Incas were kept here. They stayed dressed as normal. (Bodies of Viracocha, Tupac Inca Yupanuu, and Huayna Capac were moved to Lima, and lost.)

The western wall held a golden representation of the sun, a human face looking out of its center: engraved on a huge gold plate decorated with emeralds and precious stones. It was directly across from an easterly window, so the rising sun would strike it and light up the whole room. The image of the Sun was taken by the Spaniard [Lequizano](#). He lost it gambling in a single night. Thus the Spanish proverb “Juega el Sol antes que amanezca.” He plays away the Sun before sunrise.

The moon had a dedicated room, covered in silver, the mother of the Incas. Other rooms were dedicated to the stars, sister of the sun; thunder



RENDERING. GASPIRINI

and lightning, ministers of vengeance; and the rainbow.⁶

[Ayar Auca](#) (enemy), an ancestor of the Incas, flew down to Cuzco to take possession of it. On landing at the site of Temple of the Sun he was turned into stone and called cozco – local language for heap of stone.⁷



12. WEST WALL, D ROSCOE

HISTORY

The Coricancha was the Incas' most sacred building. First built in 1100s and then enlarged by each new Inca. Became largest building in Cuzco. Sanctuary of the Sun, Chapel of the Moon, Chapel to the Stars, Chapel of Lightning, Chapel of Rainbow, and residence of



12. DOOR, R TADLOCK

keepers of temple. Many walls, completely covered in gold. The temple held 4000 priests and attendants.³ The Coricancha was rebuilt by [Pachacuti](#) after his vision at the shrine, [Susurpuquiu](#) – a pacarina, spring. A god dressed in puma skins, serpents, and earspools with a headress of sun rays. The god told Pachacuti of his divine kinship and predicted his victory over the [Chancas](#).^{Molina, Sarmiento, Betanzos, 2} [Hernando de Soto](#) and 2 soldiers were the only Spanish to see it in original state.⁹ A tunnel connected Coricancha to Sacsayhuaman.^{Poma}

[Francisco Pizarro](#) entered Cuzco 5 months after executing [Atahualpa](#) and went to the Coricancha. [Villac Umu](#), chief priest, said they must fast for 1 year, be barefoot, and carry a symbolic load. They entered anyway. Villac continued the daily ritual. Inca mummies were taken to the square and offered food and drink. Villac brought the sun idol. Food was burned for the idol and a voice called out. All who heard, sat silently until complete. Then returned to Coricancha.⁴

At night the sun idol was kept in a room with many *mamaconas*, who claimed sex with the sun.^{Pedro Pizarro} The golden child effigy was taken to Spain and on Charles V command, it was melted down to form coins.⁴

El Convento y Templo de Santo Domingo. [Juan Pizarro](#) was given the Coricancha



13. D ROSCOE



14. R ROSCOE

and he willed it to the Dominicans. [Sayri](#)

[Tupac](#) was instructed in Christianity and attended Mass at Santo Domingo. He was accused of worshipping the sun instead. He willed a chapel to be built here and was buried here along with



7. BLOCKS, M TADLOCK

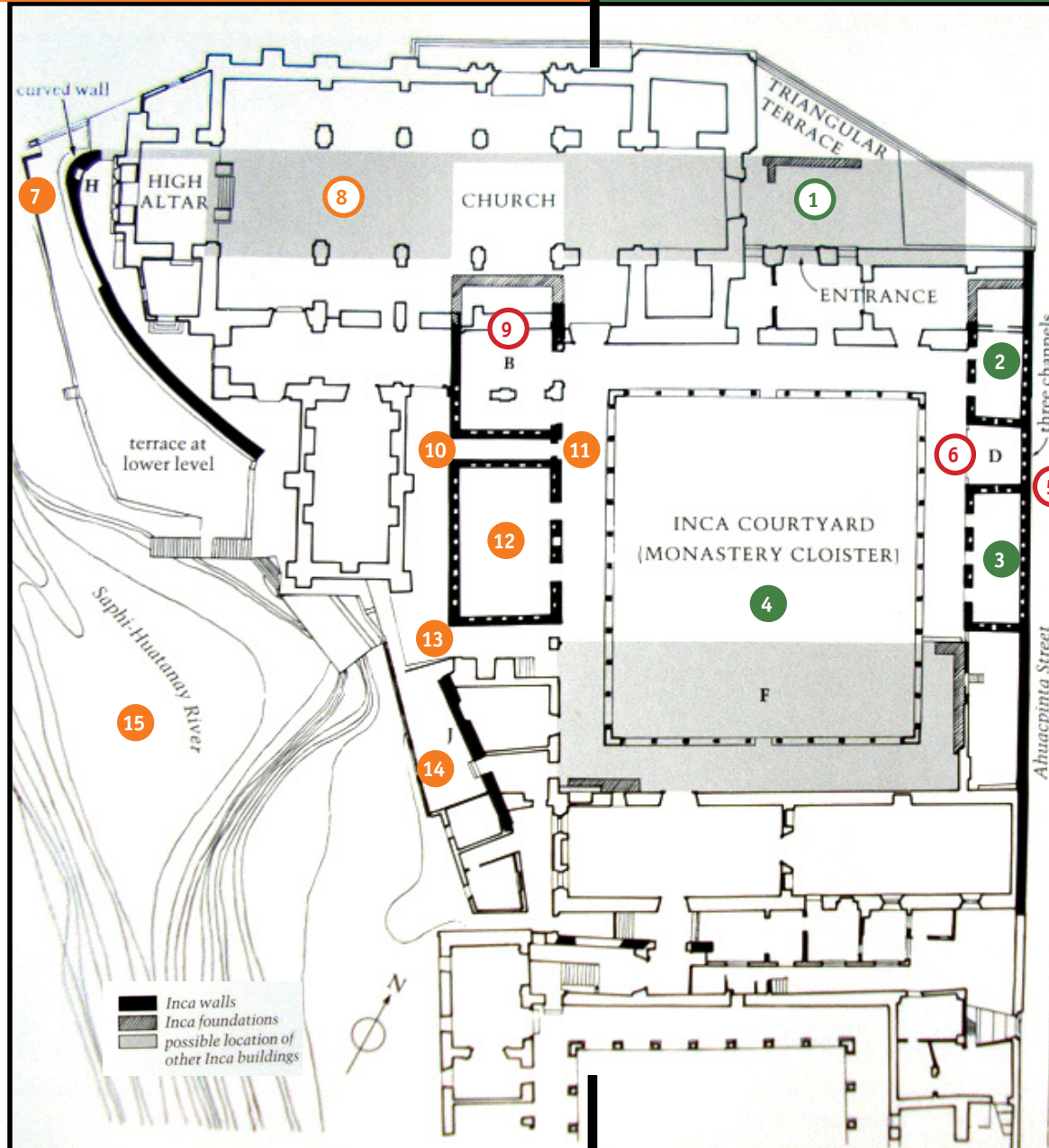
his wife-sister. [Tupac Amaru](#) was also buried here after his execution.⁴ Juan Pizarro's body is also held here.⁵

1533, MAR–APR. Martin Bueno and Pedro Martuide Moguer, illiterate soldiers and Juan Zarate, notary – traveled to Cuzco at Atahualpa and Pizarro's request to encourage the removal of gold. See [Cuzco History](#) for more. The Spaniards went to the Coricancha and removed the 700 gold plating around its outside walls. Each 2.5ft in length and weighing 4.5lbs – about 9 years of wages each. The spaniards returned to Pizarro with 178 loads of gold.⁵ They also collected a 190lbs gold altar, and 120lbs gold fountain.³

1538 JULY 8. Hernando de Soto has Almagro garrotted in his cell at the Sun Temple.⁵

- 7. CURVED WALL
- 8. UNDERGROUND BUILDING
- 9. ROOM A
- 10. HALLWAY
- 11. DOUBLE-JAM DOORWAY
- 12. VENUS CHAMBER
- 13. CORNER WALL
- 14. OUTSIDE WALL
- 15. GARDEN

- 1. MAIN TEMPLE
- 2. THUNDER CHAMBER
- 3. RAINBOW CHAMBER
- 4. BASIN, COURTYARD
- 5. THREE CHANNELS
- 6. SIDE CHAMBER



6. ALVA



MOLDS. M. TADLOCK

- LEGEND**
- 7 Location without photo.
 - 6 Location with photo.
 - 5 Location with needed photo.

Inca walls
 Inca foundations
 possible location of other Inca buildings

Map by Gasparini, Hemming.



3. R. ROSOCE



2. D ROSCOE



3. NICHES, R. TADLOCK



3. LOOKING N. R. ROSCOE



5. HEMMING, RANNEY

DESCRIPTIONS

1. MAIN TEMPLE.⁴ Foundations were found showing a building here.¹⁰

2. THUNDER CHAMBER. Dedicated to [thunder](#), and [lightning](#). Walls were covered with gold.⁴

Two rooms along [Ahuacpinta St.](#), “possibly held the hostage idols from around the empire.”¹³ Two rooms to the right of the courtyard are thought to be dedicated to the Moon and Lightning.

3. RAINBOW CHAMBER. “cuichu”. Dedicated to the Rainbow. Decorated with a colored arc.^{8, 4} [See 2](#) for more info.

4. COURTYARD, BASIN. BASIN. Octagonal Porphyry basin – in center since 1600, but looks colonial.⁴

COURTYARD. 4 tabernacles in the walls faced into the courtyard. Each were gold plated and had molding around the edges. Inset into the molding were emeralds and turquois. The sapa inca would sit here to watch festivals.⁸

SUBARAURA is at the open gallery of Santo Domingo. Subaraura was the chief of the [Pururauacas](#) – stones, that rose up to defeat the Chancas. Removed by Spanish priests.

LARGEST CHAMBER, gray area, only the foundations were found.⁴

5. THREE CHANNELS ON AHUAPINTA ST. Theories: drains for sacrificial blood or water, drainage, or for sound: when struck it produces the sounds re, la, mi.⁴

6. SIDE CHAMBER. The stone in the center is fake, was placed by Dominicans and is transitional style, and upside down.³



7. R TADLOCK



7. INSIDE, NICHE. R TADLOCK



12. PLASTERING. D ROSCOE

DESCRIPTIONS

7. CURVED WALL. An earthquake has since leveled the church, which was then rebuilt. The actual sun temple is destroyed except for the curved outer wall, best seen from [Pulluchapata St.](#)

8. UNDERGROUND BUILDING under church.⁴

9. ROOM A.⁴

10. HALLWAY.

11. DOUBLE-JAM DOORWAY. doorway between two buildings on W side of courtyard.

12. VENUS CHAMBER. Dedicated to the planet Venus, Pleiades, and other constellations. Large niche are in the center of the E wall. **Plastering** is from the original colonial pattern.

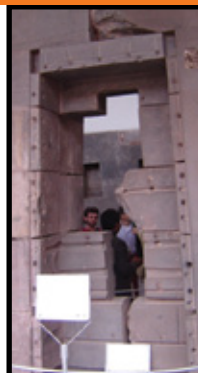
13. CORNER WALL.

14. OUTSIDE WALL.

15. GARDEN. This is not the Intipampa, which was north of Coricancha.



10. D ROSCOE



12. LARGE NICHE. D ROSCOE



11. M TADLOCK



12. BLOCK. D ROSCOE



OUTSIDE. R ROSCOE

OTHER MAPS INCLUDE:

CUSCO AND THE SACRED VALLEY:

- [Cusco Guide](#) – capital of the Incas.
- [Cusco History](#) – history of the capital.
- [Cusco ceque map](#) – holy lines / sites.
- [Sacsahuaman](#) – fortress near Cusco.
- [Ollantaytambo](#) – fortress in Sacred Valley.
- [Pisac](#) – major Inca site in Sacred Valley.

MACHU PICCHU AND INCA TRAIL:

- [Machu Picchu](#) – original lost city.
- [Chachabamba](#) – near Machu Picchu.
- [Choquesuysuy](#) – near Machu Picchu.
- [Inty Pata](#) – near Machu Picchu.
- [Phuyu Pata Marka](#) – along Inca Trail.
- [Sayac Marka](#) – along Inca Trail.
- [Winay Wayna](#) – near Machu Picchu.

VILCABAMBA:

- [Choquequirao](#) – very large site.
- [Puncuyoc](#) – near Vitcos.
- [Vilcabamba](#) – actual lost city.
- [Vilcabamba area](#) – jungle metropolis.
- [Vitcos](#) – rogue capital.
- [Yurak Rumi](#) – Vitcos' Sun Temple.

CHINCHASUYU AND CUNTISUYU:

- [Saihuite](#) – oracle along Apurimac.

COLLASUYU:

- [Temple of Viracocha](#) – largest building.

OTHER RESOURCES INCLUDE:

- [Glossary of quechua](#)
- [Inca rulers](#)
- [Historic names](#)
- [Religion](#)
- [Tribes](#)



15. GARDEN. M TADLOCK

MINI-BIBLIOGRAPHY

If you'd like to contribute photos, I'd love to have your help, andy@andyroscoe.com

Photography: Patrick McGarey, Tricia Roscoe, David Roscoe, Robert Roscoe, Maria Tadlock, Richard Tadlock.

See [Full Bibliography](#) at website.

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8. Vega, Garcilaso de la.
9. von Hagen, Victor.
10. Gaspirini