



# Teotihuacan: The History of Ancient Mesoamerica's Largest City

*Charles River Editors*

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\*Includes pictures.

\*Includes footnotes and a bibliography for further reading.

On January 31, 378 AD, a massive army arrived at the gates of the city of Tikal, one of the Ancient Maya's most important settlements in the Yucatan Peninsula. The events that transpired became known by the Spanish name "Entrada" ("Entry"), referring to "the entry of Teotihuacan". While there is no clear record of the events due to the sheer scale of destruction that took place, it's clear that neither Tikal nor the Maya as a whole had ever seen anything like it because these foreign soldiers not only conquered but also subsequently ruled Tikal despite the fact they had come from Teotihuacan, located about 630 miles (1,013 kilometers) away. In the process, the Teotihuacanos not only changed Tikal but the direction of the Mayan civilization for centuries to come.

At the time, Teotihuacan was the biggest city in South America and was located in the Valley of Mexico near today's Mexico City. Thriving between 100-750 AD, it was one of the largest cities in the ancient world, with a population estimated at upwards of 150,000-250,000, over three times the size of contemporary Mayan capitals. Furthermore, Teotihuacan was a supremely well-planned and efficient city that was able to field massive armies and extend its power far beyond its home base to create a unified empire unlike anything in the region before it. In fact, the city's residents seemed so sure of its power that there were apparently no walls or military fortifications around Teotihuacan. Thanks to that power, Teotihuacan not only served as a vital center for trade in Ancient Mesoamerica but also spread its architecture, art, religion, and culture, all of which subsequently influenced the famous Mesoamerican civilizations that followed, including the Aztec and Maya.

Although Teotihuacan reached the height of its power and influence about 1500 years ago, the city is still an endless topic of fascination and debate, in addition to being Mexico's most toured archaeological site. The origins of the city remain mysterious (as do the city's founders), and scholars are still coming up with theories to explain the city's demise. All the while, later Mesoamerican civilizations remembered Teotihuacan, and the Aztec even considered the city's ruins a site of worship.

Teotihuacan: The History of Ancient Mesoamerica's Largest City covers the history of the city, as well as the speculation and debate surrounding it. Along with pictures, footnotes, and a bibliography, you will learn about Teotihuacan like you never have before, in no time at all.

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