

MEXICO'S PYRAMID OF THE MOON



▲ Teotihuacán was one of the first urban centers in the Americas.

1 A Mysterious City

Teotihuacán (tay-o-tee-hwah-KAHN) was once one of the world's most important cities, but many things about it are still unknown today. How did the people live, and why did they abandon their city? For years, answers to some of these questions have been buried in the Pyramid of the Moon. Now findings in this ancient **structure** are helping archeologists learn more about Teotihuacán's people and their culture.

10 Clues in the Pyramid

Until recently, many **experts** thought Teotihuacán was a peaceful society, mostly ruled by gentle and **wise** leaders. But recent findings in the Pyramid of the Moon **indicate** something else. Archeologists discovered a number of headless bodies. Most were foreigners. Many had their hands tied and were buried alive, along with animals, weapons,¹ and other objects of power. **Apparently** the people and objects found inside the pyramid were **offerings** to the gods.



▲ An archeologist working inside the pyramid unearths human bones – evidence of ancient sacrifice.

However, the findings in the pyramid are difficult to **interpret**. “[These findings] are like sentences,” says archeologist Leonardo Lopez Lujan, “but we don’t have all the words...so they’re hard to read.” Despite these problems, several archeologists have **concluded** this: Teotihuacán was not a society **governed** by peaceful rulers. In reality, **officials** used human sacrifice,² says archeologist Saburo Sugiyama, “to control the people.” The city probably also had a powerful army.³

The Search Goes On

Who were the city's leaders? Scientists don't know. They have not found a king buried in the pyramid or any statues of Teotihuacán's rulers. But archeologists continue to search for them. They hope to learn more about the pyramid's creators and one of the world's most powerful ancient cities.

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¹ A **weapon** is an object like a gun or a knife used to kill others.

² **Human sacrifice** is the killing of a person in a religious ceremony to offer to a god

³ The **army** is a group of people who fight on land in a war.