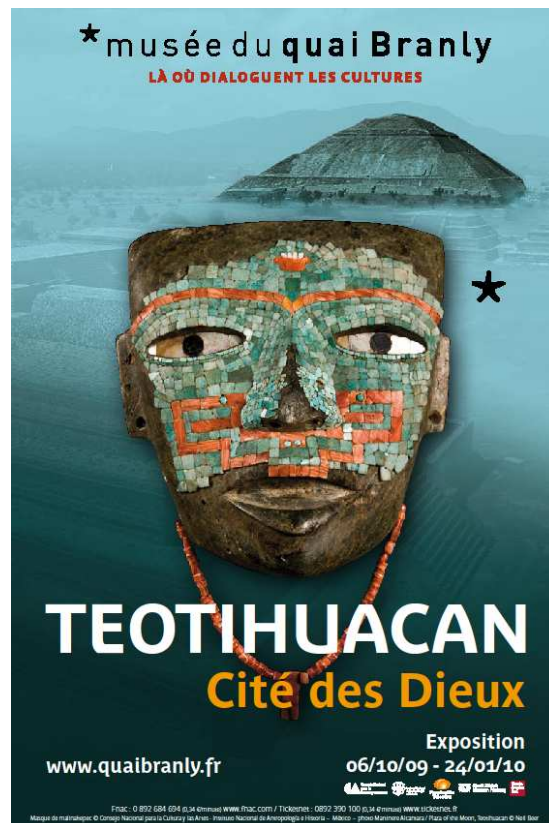




Teotihuacan City of the Gods

Temporary Exhibition
The Garden Gallery

06/10/09 - 24/01/10



Exhibition Curator
Felipe Solís (†)

This exhibition is placed under the patronage of Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy,
President of the Republic and Mr. Felipe Calderón Hinojosa,
President of the United States of Mexico.

Installation Design **Jakob+Macfarlane**

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* FOREWORD by STEPHANE MARTIN, PRESIDENT of the MUSEE DU QUAI BRANLY

“Teotihuacan” in the *nahuatl* language spoken by the Aztecs of the 13th-16th centuries means: “the place where Gods are born”.

The exhibition opens with an impressive sculpture of a sacred jaguar, from the Xalla Palace. This masterpiece attests to the brilliance of Teotihuacan, the imposing city of Ancient Mexico that prospered for almost eight centuries between 100 B.C.E and 650 C.E. It “glorifies the power of Teotihuacan, represented by one of the most important entities, the feline,” in the words of Felipe Solís.



West and North

The exhibition brings together around 450 pieces, 15 of which are monumental sculptures from the temple of the feathered Serpent, as well as a selection of the prestigious collection from Diego Rivera. It also represents the art of wall painting through a selection of mural works, and stonework with an authoritative ensemble of masks, figurines, ear ornaments, and other finely worked or polished objects from the tombs that brought to light the significance and place of funerary rites in this city linked to the laws of the cosmos.

Some of these works are **recent discoveries**, as is the case of those brought to light in the Pyramid of the Moon, revealed to the public thanks to the excavations conducted between 1998 and 2004. **These essential investigations in the field of archaeology have allowed for a better understanding of the objects and social organization of Teotihuacan.**

Displayed for the **first time in Europe**, all these pieces were selected for their diversity and remarkable aesthetic. Most come from Mexican collections. I hope in this way to pay homage to the director of one of the most beautiful museums in the world, the National Museum of Anthropology of Mexico City, Felipe Solís. This eminent connoisseur of ancient civilization dedicated his life to investigating the mysteries of ancient Mexican civilizations and Teotihuacan. He honored us by agreeing to reveal the fruit of his labors.

This exhibition presented in Monterrey, New Mexico from September 2008 to January 2009, will later be welcomed by the Rietberg Museum in Zurich and the Martin-Gropius-Bau Museum in Berlin. It is the **result of cooperation between Mexican and French museums** that have long maintained a relationship of trust, as exemplified through the exceptional loan made in 2000 for the opening of the Pavillon des Sessions.

Teotihuacan, City of the Gods is coproduced with the **National Institute of Anthropology and History of Mexico**. I must recognize here Mr. Alfonso de Maria y Campos, its general director. My heartfelt gratitude also goes to his collaborator, Ms. Miriam Kaiser.

This large event, which will incorporate meetings, colloquia, and a number of conferences, has also benefitted from the **valuable support of the French Embassy in Mexico** and the assistance of specialists around the world. Our gratitude goes to all of them.

* PREFACE by FELIPE SOLÍS (†), CURATOR¹

Excerpts from the catalog of the exhibition *Teotihuacan, City of the Gods*



Felipe Solís (†) © DR

“... The mysterious impression made by the ruins of ancient Mexico lead to reflection on the past, an examination of the 3000 years of history experienced on the Mesoamerican territory before the arrival of the Spanish conquerors. The vast cultural production attested to by the vestiges of this distant past reveals itself in enigmatic artistic traditions, both original in their symbolism and complex in their meaning. These traditions arouse great interest, as much on the part of a public eager to understand the history of humanity as by amateurs of the aesthetic of the eccentric forms they have created. This explains the warm welcome that the great exhibitions on ancient Mexico have received in the world’s capitals, beginning in the first half of the 20th century.

We have prepared for this occasion a **monumental and complete panorama of the most powerful city of the central region of Mexico and of the largest pre-Columbian city that existed there, known today by the name Teotihuacan, ‘the place where Gods are born.’**

In the cultural evolution of ancient Mexico, **Teotihuacan illustrates in an exemplary manner the emergence of a state-like political formation that can more generally be considered a large city-state controlling a vast, densely populated territory, as well as a number of peripheral regions.** This entity maintained important economic relations with other regions, which explains its growth and power.

Its inhabitant created extraordinary pieces considered today **universal works of plastic arts. Discovered during different archaeological excavations, they were preserved in different museums where specialists were entrusted with their study, conservation, and propagation of the cultural legacy of this ancient people...**

We strove to bring together pieces never or rarely exhibited, drawn from the principal museums and collections in Mexico and, in some cases, kept in these institutions for more than 100 years, and to show for the first time the most important recent archaeological discoveries. “Teotihuacan, City of the Gods” was designed to provide an overview of this pre-Columbian metropolis. We also felt it necessary to **recreate the pillars of the palace of Quetzalpapalotl, the portico of Atetelco, and the form of the interior courts of the palatial groups,** thanks to new museum installations...

The exhibition on Teotihuacan travels for the first time to different European capitals, beginning at the Musée du quai Branly on October 6, 2009. It brings together a **group of works incomparably illustrating the extraordinary taste for contrast, equilibrium, and harmony of forms, textures, and colors** that the Mesoamerican artists knew how to incorporate in their creations. Thanks to these objects, we can appreciate the immense wealth of cultural heritage belonging to Mexico. The challenge of our era consists not only of ensuring public access to this admirable heritage, but also of continuing related research, encouraging its conservation, and promoting its dissemination for the pleasure and enrichment of future generations to come...”

¹ * Felipe Solís (†) passed away April 23, 2009. This text is based on the thematic structure outlined by Felipe Solís, and its content comes from ideas set forth in his books, essays, articles, interviews, notes, and writings, published and unpublished. The final draft was undertaken by his collaborators and friends.

* **TEOTIHUACAN, CITY OF THE GODS**

The Musée du quai Branly presents, for the first time in Europe, an exhibition dedicated to the mythical and mysterious civilization of Teotihuacan, assembling 450 exceptional pieces. Founded in the 1st century B.C.E., the great ancient Mexican city of Teotihuacan experienced unparalleled cultural and artistic vitality until the 7th century C.E. When the Aztecs discovered the city that had been abandoned for 600 years, they named it “the place where Gods are born”, impressed by its greatness and beauty.

The investigations led under the aegis of the National Institute of Anthropology and History of Mexico (INAH) over the course of the past 25 years led to major discoveries and permitted better understanding of this mysterious culture. **The exceptional group presented at the Musée du quai Branly provides a unique opportunity for the European public to understand the role of this ancient city in the Mesoamerican world from historic, anthropological, and mythological perspectives.**

The items exhibited, of which **95% are from Mexican collections and 5% from European collections**, allow one to dive into the daily life of this extraordinary city. The colossal architectural sculpture, wall paintings, ritual masks, votive statues, jewelry, and ceramics bear witness to the boldness of artistic expression of Teotihuacan. Objects found at other sites also reveal the influence of Teotihuacan in Mesoamerica during its height, from 250 to 550 C.E.

Designed by the archaeologist Felipe Solís (†) who passed away on April 23, 2009, barely 25 days before the opening of the exhibition in Mexico City, this exhibition is his last large project.



Peinture murale

Teotihuacan: a unique site

Designated a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, Teotihuacan is situated at 2,275m high in the semi-arid highlands of the center of Mexico.

Its 20 square kilometers welcomed some 100,000 inhabitants for many centuries. **The pyramids, built entirely by hands, with stone tools, are one of the most impressive vestiges of this ancient city.** The influence of these major buildings made **Teotihuacan one of the most influential societies of all the civilizations of its period.** It receives every year millions of visitors from the entire world.

Shortly before the collapse of Teotihuacan, the principal temples of the city were set on fire, in acts of desecration aimed at destroying the symbol of the power of the State. The destruction of these religious sites that played an essential role in the legitimacy of the authority of the powers that be, is one of the many parameters that could elucidate the mystery of the fall of this civilization, a mystery still unsolved until today. The city was then only inhabited by some families that lived nearby.

Centuries after the abandonment of Teotihuacan, **the Aztecs revived the spirit of the place.** They considered the remains of the pyramids as constructions that could not have been created by man, and so forcibly the work of gods or titans. For them, it was the site where the gods had created the world. **The works of art were imitated, the representations of some gods copied, and even copies of pyramid-temples of Teotihuacan were made.**

The plan of the city follows a predetermined layout that responds to their cosmic view of the universe. The east-west axis represents the course of the sun around the earth. The north-south axis turns on the vertical, the north being high and the south within the earth. These orientations determined the planning of the city in every aspect.

The style of Teotihuacan possesses its own character however: its architecture is imposing, by its dimensions by also by its concept of urban planning, its manner of laying out building in relation to each other. Monumental sculpture is often found on the building. The artists of Teotihuacan distinguished themselves by the refinement of the stonework, the masks and figurines being the best examples. Of all the Mesoamerican cultures, that of Teotihuacan has created the greatest number of masks. They show impassive, impersonal, idealized faces. Perhaps they were individualized by decorated outfits of perishable materials that are today lost.

The population lived in architectural complexes of varying construction quality. More than 2000 quarters, also called residential complexes, have been identified. They were demarcated, for the most part, by 30 to 100 meter long walls incorporating one or two entrances. The complexes sheltered from 20 to 100 people, grouped by ethnic origin or economic activity.

Each family had what could be called an apartment, consisting of a single floor and covered with a flat roof. These apartments were organized around a central patio that helped to distribute air and light. Rainwater off the roofs was collected for quotidian use. They incorporated common living areas that served as kitchen, dining area, food storage, general storage and waste. All had a complex system of water drainage. There was often, in the middle of the patio, an altar or ritual space. The size and decoration of these quarters varies, some similar to palaces, like the Zacuala complex whose construction would be completed over the course of the subsequent historic phase.

95% of the city has not yet been the subject of systematic archaeological excavations, which leave a number of areas of Teotihuacan culture in shadow. For example, we do not know who governed the city. But it is certain that such city planning and such power are indicative of a strong central power and large institutional organization.

The mystery of the fall of Teotihuacan

Progressively abandoned between 550 and 650 C.E., the reason for the decline of the city is still unknown. Why did one of the greatest Mesoamerican civilizations suddenly disappear? In less than a century, the flourishing city of Teotihuacan declined, and the hypotheses for this fall are many. Foreign invasion? Revolutions? Overuse of the earth or climatic change leading to famine? Epidemic? Movements of population leading to loss of commercial routes by Teotihuacan? The question remains unanswered.

* EXHIBITION ROUTE

Section 1 – Teotihuacan: its history and monumental architecture

Introduction to Teotihuacan

Following Mexican tradition, the exhibition opens with one of the most important pieces: an architectural sculpture more than 2 meters high, in the form of a “sacred jaguar”, recently discovered at the Xalla Palace, and very characteristic of Teotihuacan art. A masterpiece, it offers the public a strong image to remember.

▣ A video projection shows the topology of the site as we see it today (with its principal temples) and provides understanding of its spatial organization.



Xalla Jaguar


Chronology of Teotihuacan (100 B.C.E. to 650 C.E.) in relation to the rest of the world

The archaeological remains of Teotihuacan are evidence of its prodigious evolution, from its founding around 100 B.C.E. Its territorial and demographic expansion, as well as its political, cultural, and artistic vitality, remained constant until the 7th century. During the eight centuries of its history, the city endured a number of political, economic, and religious changes. **These transformations translate into different artistic styles.**

The exhibition proposes to **relate the principal Mesoamerican cultures to the western and Asian world**, through a chronology that runs from 2000 B.C.E. to 1521 C.E.: each culture that developed over time is related to the construction of an historic or archaeological site of Teotihuacan.

The five main phases of the history of Teotihuacan

- Phase 1 (100 B.C.E.-0): Teotihuacan was simply a **large village** (“Proto-Teotihuacan”).
- Phase 2 (0 – 150 C.E.): Large **urban evolution** of Teotihuacan. This phase, called Tzacualli, saw the growth of grand architecture and the implementation of specific urban planning, based on the inhabitants’ vision of the world: a plan in which these features constitute the central point. The west (sunset) represents death; the south the source of fertility. The principal north-south axis, the Avenue of the Dead, linked a ritual building, the Pyramid of the Moon (to the north) and the Citadel of the Great Complex (to the south), an open space identified as the market of the city. **The construction of the pyramids of the Moon and Sun commands the architectural identity of the city.** Added to these are the platforms, temples, and palaces constructed over 500 years. The architects initially used immense battered walls for the foundations, such that the combination talud-tablero (inclined surface surmounted by a vertical panel) became the visual symbol of the city.
- Phase 3 (150-250 C.E.): During this period, Teotihuacan became the great **economic center of the country**, notably by controlling the obsidian mines.
- Phase 4 (250-550 C.E.): On the seat of its economic power, the city grew by 20km² and **established an oligarchy**. This was the **height of Teotihuacan**.
- Phase 5 (550-650 C.E.): **Decline and fall**. The exhibition evokes the different theories behind the cause of the fall.

 A multimedia program presents the urban planning, economy, art, and craftsmanship in the city and provides some details about the history of Teotihuacan.

The archaeological site of Teotihuacan – the central model of the exhibition

A large model 5x10m specially designed for the exhibition presents to the public the entire topology of the city, built along a central axis: the Avenue of the Dead. The principal sacred structures like the **pyramids of the Sun and Moon** or the **Temple of the Feathered Serpent**, situated at the heart of the Citadel, were located and erected according to precise astronomical criteria. These buildings linked the inhabitants of Teotihuacan with the most significant astral phenomena: equinox celebrations, or dominance of the north star during the night are some examples. The influence of the power of the city clearly shows through this monumental architecture. The magnificent preserved sculpture gives an idea of what Teotihuacan could have been at the pinnacle of its splendor.



Three interactive terminals allow the young public to discover the different aspects of Teotihuacan through an investigative game. The child must help an archaeologist to solve the mysteries that surround the city. Each of the phases of the game invites him to go and look at an object in the exhibition or on the model.

Colossal or architectural sculptural and wall paintings

About 15 objects of extraordinary form and dimensions give the visitors the opportunity to discover the artistic expression of the city. From the 2nd century, the people of Teotihuacan decorated some of the principal buildings with impressive architectural sculptures.

The most striking example is that of the **Temple of the Feathered Serpent**, of which a number of fragments and elements are presented.

The exhibition also teaches the visitors about the tradition of decoration for different constructions by showing the most striking pieces, but also explaining fabrication techniques of these exceptional wall paintings.

This section of the exhibition is remarkable for its **prestigious selection of wall paintings, as well as for the roughly 15 fragments of murals presented, spanning from naturalism to geometric abstraction.**

[A multimedia program describes the different techniques used](#)

Section 2 – Politics, economy and society: hierarchy and power, sacrifice, war



Sacrificed prisoner

The recent excavations in the Temple of the Feathered Serpent and in the Pyramid of the Moon provide **better understanding of the social organization of the city.** The empire of Teotihuacan was established on **militarism, the offering of prisoners or sacrifice of victims**, notably during commemoration ceremonies or enlargement of ritual buildings. The objects resulting from these discoveries – extremely delicate and **presented for the first time in Europe** – as well as a **selection of the exceptional collection of the artist Diego Rivera**, bear witness to its militarism and bellicose dimension.

The Teotihuacan form of government is currently the object of large debates. The existence of a **social and political system led by multiple governing persons** is supposed, each being associated with one of the quarters of the city, but the hypothesis of a government under the umbrella of one **single person possessing substantial powers** is not excluded.

The figures associated to the political structure, like the **priests, traders, ambassadors or warriors, are represented in processions on wall paintings** or on ceramic vases, but the message focuses on the **completed tasks** and on the functions rather than the individuals.

Scientists do not yet have any indications sufficiently clear to determine the spaces where the leaders of the city made decisions and resided. Until now, **no tomb or inscription describing important actions of a leader has been found.** In other words, the central figures of this culture, as opposed to numerous other Mesoamerican leaders, **strive to preserve anonymity.**

In the Mesoamerican world, **war and trade are closely associated.** The caravans of merchants, ambassadors, and warriors continued over hundreds of kilometers towards extremely varied regions to trade diverse goods such as ceramics, obsidian, textiles, or perishable goods. **Parallel to this, strategic, political, and trade alliances were woven and strengthened between the different Mesoamerican powers of the time,** alliances sealed by the exchange of luxury objects, such as quetzal feathers, mica, or jadeite.

Section 3 - Religion and view of the universe: Gods, rituals, and funerary traditions at Teotihuacan

Religion and cosmology were dominant in the city of Teotihuacan. The study of the monuments and archaeological finds over more than 100 years little by little permits better understanding of the thought and world view of the inhabitants of Teotihuacan. Everything seems symbolic, from the layout of the city to the realistic representations of butterflies, birds, and plants in the wall paintings, to the ceramics and effigies of gods. Some **extraordinary pieces**, from different types of **graves**, depict the **God of Death, the Feathered Serpent, and the God of Storms** (known in the Aztec pantheon by the names of Huehuetotl, Quetzalcoatl, and Tlaloc), who play a dominant role in the official religion. **The masks, the incense burners, and the wall paintings complete this pantheon and illustrate as much the rituals performed by the inhabitants of Teotihuacan as their concept of the world and universe.**

At the heart of the City of the Gods, **the religious class played an essential role.** All the constructions shelter spaces specifically dedicated to religion, from the little patios of residential complexes to large squares that could hold thousands of people, as those found in the Citadel or facing the Square of the Moon. **Between the public religion, orchestrated by the government, and the domestic religions, far more intimate and modest, the differences are glaring.**

The pantheon of divinities very much resembles those observed in all of Mesoamerica; as such, **a large part of the gods venerated in Teotihuacan continued to be worshipped** for a number of centuries in different regions of ancient Mexico.



Sculpture of Huehuetotl

The priests were responsible for **different ceremonies** meant to obtain the favors of the gods. Richly adorned with cotton textiles, bags of copal (a sort of amber), headdresses of feathers, and jewelry of precious stones and shells, they led **spectacular liturgies destined to proclaim messages for fertility, political unity, and renewal of the cosmos.** The role of the priests was so essential that, for a number of years, researchers think that they formed the most elevated class of society. Today, it is thought that the priests were in the service of a much more complex political class.

[📺](#) *A multimedia program presents the principal gods worshipped by the inhabitants of Teotihuacan, notably through their representations on objects recovered during archaeological excavations on the site and explaining the religious concepts of the inhabitants of the city.*



Brasero à pointes

Section 4 - Life in the palaces and houses of Teotihuacan

The spatial organization of Teotihuacan, which follows an orthogonal plan, reveals its profoundly urban nature, such as we understand it today. The exhibition includes the reconstruction of a palace and presents certain **architectural elements and luxurious objects from palaces**, residences with multiple rooms in stone sitting on patios. The objects of daily life such as **molds, ceramics or figurines**, representative of the life of the peasants and lower social classes, come from excavations of peasant cabins, composed of two or three rooms and located outside the city.

They also present a **selection of statuettes, offerings to divinities, recovered with their original colors and exhibited for the first time in Europe.**

The excavations in the Citadel led by Manuel Gamio at the beginning of the last century permitted, for the first time, the identification of rooms of a palace located to the south of the Temple of the Feathered Serpent. The palaces were identified as **multifamily residential complexes**, consisting of rooms grouped around different sized patios. These courtyards allowed the entry of daylight, but also the storage of rainwater collected through canals and led into cisterns. The roofs were decorated with architectural elements and decorations sculpted in the shape of animals that confer their identity to the complex. The most famous complexes, known by the names Atetelco, Tetitla, Zacuala, and Yayahuala, are located in the southwestern part of the city. In the central area, work has recently begun on the Xalla complex.

The complexes are surrounded by a **protective wall** that permitted the control of entry. Each one held an **extended family** belonging to the upper classes of society and a number of employees of different levels: artisans, guards, merchants, and other assistants who, depending on their place in the hierarchy and their proximity to the head of the family, occupied different rooms.

The rooms and covered vestibules **were decorated with superb wall paintings that reproduce the activities performed within the complexes, especially depicting the participation of the family in ritual activities of the city.**

Section 5 – Splendor of craftsmanship: stones, ceramics, and precious stones

More than 400 ateliers where numerous artisanal objects were produced in great number were located in Teotihuacan. The exceptional works of this craftsmanship bear witness to the extremely elaborate and sophisticated techniques, revealed in the variety of the materials: **wall paintings, ceramics, lapidary, and stonework.**

The City of the Gods buzzed with dozens of specialized activities, all imbued with important symbolism. The artistic canons observed in stonecutting, bone and shell carving, decoration of ceramic vases, or the powerful ideological messages contained in the wall paintings demonstrate that a **large part of the production was controlled by the State of Teotihuacan.**

Sculpture representing human figures thus followed a **specific stylistic model**, as much in the creation as in the proportions of the body and face. Although the different raw materials were chosen to create them, like diorite, jadeite, or basalt, all appear to represent **unrecognizable individuals.**



Zoomorphic vessel

Wall painting also followed a **well defined model**. Over time, the colors, tones, and lines of the drawings would only slightly evolve. Even if variations exist in depicted themes, a certain number of constants can be observed, like use of **mica in the plaster, an exotic raw material whose control and distribution depended on the political class.**

The contributions of the craftsmen arriving with the thousands of immigrants to Teotihuacan are considerable. Even if required to followed the strict material and artistic canons imposed by the city, they appear to **have given free reign to their old habits** on the interior of their houses. Thus, in the “Oaxaca quarter” of Teotihuacan were recovered a number of pieces of evidence of consumption and production of certain elements characteristic of the central valleys of Oaxaca, like grey ceramic or funerary urns.

The exhibition also presents the **most important group of masks from Teotihuacan ever assembled.**

Section 6 – Relations of Teotihuacan with the Mesoamerican world



Xipe Totec

The objects presented in this last section attest to **economic, political, religious, and military exchanges** between the city of Teotihuacan and other regions of Mexico (the Maya world, Oaxaca, the Gulf coast, and the west of Mexico).

Teotihuacan certainly dominated a large part of Mesoamerica due to its **economic power founded on military might**. At its height, the city played enjoyed **great prestige** in a number of regions. Entire neighborhoods were reserved for foreign resident from other regions of Mexico. They attest to the power of the city between 250 and 550 C.E., **so prosperous that the Aztecs preserved and offered objects from the ruins of Teotihuacan, centuries after its fall**.

The City of the Gods presents the **most precocious of political organizations** in Mesoamerica. The State of Teotihuacan extended its domination to the central Altiplano from the beginning of the Christian era by establishing **commercial networks and diplomatic, political, and military relations** with many other regions, particularly with cities such as Monte Alban and many Maya cities.

The urban development of the City of the Gods and the identity of the indigenous capital are reflected in the **different styles of architecture, sculpture, wall painting, ceramics, and many other objects**. Archaeological investigations provide understanding on the many bilateral relationship established by Teotihuacan with other regions of Mesoamerica.

The entire zone of the central Altiplano followed the canons established by Teotihuacan in its architecture and in the fabrication of daily and ritual objects. Cholula, located in the Río Atoyac basin, is an exception to this, having developed its own political system and a partially autochthonous culture. **The presence of the Teotihuacan armies was felt along the Gulf coast**, where a military colony was established. However, exchanges with the present state of Guerrero and the Pacific coast were limited to commercial contacts. With Monte Alban, diplomatic relations were evident during the golden age of Teotihuacan (350-550 C.E.): its influence is seen in the forms and styles of ceramic in the Zapotec capital, while the City of the Gods welcomed a number of immigrants from the South of Mesoamerica in its "Oaxaca neighborhood".

In Kaminaljuyú, Tikal, and other Maya cities, contingents from Teotihuacan integrated into armed groups influenced the political life and **even imposed new dynasties**, as is revealed on steles, funerary chambers, and wall paintings of the great city of Petén.

The installation of *Teotihuacan, City of the Gods*, envisioned by Jakob+Macfarlane

The installation places the city of Teotihuacan in the center of the exhibition. It is envisioned as a large model of the site that occupies 2,000m² of the Garden Gallery, situated according to the orientation of the site close to astronomical North.

Jakob+Macfarlane physically plunge the visitor into the heart of the city and the space-time of Teotihuacan. The installation allows for great freedom of movement while permitting an organized and didactic visit of the exhibition.

This dynamic installation is based on **movement**: the movement of the visitor, the movement of the sun, circulation within the city; it also incorporates the **sensations**: light, the monumental aspect. The exhibition permits the visitor to discover objects, paintings, sculpture, spirituality, and immerses the visitor in the city of Teotihuacan.

The principal axis of the city, the Avenue of the Dead, around which are organized the Citadel, the Temple of the Feathered Serpent, the Pyramid of the Sun, the Pyramid of the Moon – the principal monumental constructions of Teotihuacan – is at the center of the exhibition.

Light, shadow, and color: key elements of the installation

The light of the exhibition recreates diurnal cycles, from a sweet, cold dawn, through a strong and hot white azimuth, to dusk. The changes of light are continual, following a 20-minute cycle: the visitor to the exhibit does not notice at first the dynamic lighting, but perceives over the course of the visit a general luminous ambience in movement, which offers a new reading of his/her environment.

The dynamic lighting is applied to three elements of the installation:

- The horizon: linear and diffuse illumination behind the platforms casts light on the walls surrounding the Garden Gallery. It places the silhouette in of the redrawn city in contrast, making it immediately more perceptible.
- The sky: a blanket of diffuse points of light illuminates the principal axis of the city and the pyramids. The lighting levels place a strong accent on the architectural elements. Certain point of light project the shadow of clouds on the city.
- The sun: a focused and punctual lighting illuminates the monumental sculptural “icons”, with high lighting levels. The source of the sun in the sky is recreated and the works are thus lit from different orientations and angles.

The ensemble of the installation elements are expressed in a monochrome motif of grey and red. This uniformity recalls the monolithic aspect of the architectural elements of the site, sculptures and its country. The choice of grey also highlights the exhibited objects; the red tints, brick, and earth of the potteries; the metals, stones of the jewelry; the sparkling colors of the feathers, paintings, and the polychromy of the architecture.

3 routes offered to the visitor

- A continuous and sequential route that unfolds according to the 6 themes proposed and is followed without confusion.
- A fluid route, whereby the visitor allows herself to be attracted arbitrarily to the monumental sculptures that are distributed throughout the space around the principal core.
- A route that follows the principal axis of the city of Teotihuacan, allowing the visitor to move within this spectacular architecture and experiencing the objects and then to plunging back into the history, craftsmanship, and social organization of the city.

*EXCAVATIONS AND SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES AT TEOTIHUCAN

The large excavation sites

The excavations of the Citadel and the Temple of the Feathered Serpent

Located at the heart of the ancient city of Teotihuacan, this group, considered one of the most remarkable sites of this elevated place of Mesoamerican culture, covers some 160,000 square meters. The vast interior esplanade of the Citadel could hold thousands of people during civil and religious ceremonies that punctuated the life of its inhabitants.



The citadel

At the end of the 19th century, topographic maps permitted the precise location of the mounds of earth under which the city was buried. The exhaustive and systematic excavations of the site began later. The Citadel emerged from the earth, followed soon after by the Temple of the Feathered Serpent. Human bone fragments, ceramics, shells, animal bones, and objects of semi-precious stones or obsidian were discovered.

In 1925, at each corner of the monument, were discovered a ditch with a human skeleton accompanied by a number of offerings: obsidian arrowheads, packs of shells representing human teeth, etc. These burials were certainly part of a group of many sacrificed individuals, found with their hands behind their backs, as if tied. In 1962, the archaeologist René Millon created a map of the city, a document that still serves as a reference today. Subsequent excavations revealed remains of wall paintings decorated with motifs referring to the cosmos and astronomy. Canals, drains, and wells were uncovered, as well as residential, administrative, and security areas. These spaces comprise multiple tombs, some of which were filled with generous offerings.

The more recent excavations, including those of the Temple of the Feathered Serpent, resulted in major breakthroughs in understanding the city of Teotihuacan. A ditch with 18 male skeletons attests to the existence of large-scale human sacrifices. Of the many burials, the interment with the highest number of remains had 20, all male. Among all the offerings, pieces of cloth are found that must have served as protection for the objects. Other female skeletons were also recovered, also sacrificed. Their skulls were all turned towards the temple, as with all the bodies dedicated to monument discovered to date.

The skeletons were always found in groups of 4, 8, 9, 18, or 20. This numerical system reflects the systems of ritual and solar calendars of Mesoamerican civilizations. The Citadel and the temple illustrate the calculation of time, the count of days, months, and cycles. The rituals celebrated had a link with the cosmos and time, but also with military actions, proven by the chest ornaments of shells and human or canine jawbones, distinctive signs thought to be of a military cast.

These excavations provide the opportunity to resolve certain problems, such as the severe deterioration of the monument, but also to understand its function within the State of Teotihuacan, and to define the characteristics of its occupation from its foundation to its abandonment.

The excavations of the Pyramid of the Moon

The recent discoveries of the Teotihuacan excavations reveal the harshness of the repressive and militaristic regime of the city. The large-scale human sacrifices and official rites were carried out in large public buildings. This monument, situated at the northern end of the Avenue of the Dead, has a very strong ideological and cultural significance.



Pyramide de la Lune

Seven distinct stages of construction have been discovered, to which we can associate different phases of offering as a major ideological interest. Large-scale human and animal sacrifices were offered to the monument, as well as many highly refined objects.

Building 1: Construction of 23.5 meters from the side, it dates to 50-100 C.E., thus the oldest foundation found to date at Teotihuacan. It was surely constructed prior to the presence of the strict urban planning put in place by the governing power, and according to which all the building had to be inclined by $15^{\circ}30'$ to the east of astronomical north.

Building 2: Its construction goes back almost to the middle of the 2nd century C.E., and has been dated from the ceramic recovered there.

Building 3: Constructed around 200 C.E., it measures 31.3m along the side.

Building 4: It measures 89.5m from east to west, which presents a fundamental break with the first three phases. Contemporary to the Temple of the Feathered Serpent, it dates to the 3rd century. It represents the enormous political and religious power held by the city.

Building 5: Its architectural style differs from that of the previous buildings. The facades now have an inclined surface surmounted by a vertical surface. Dated to the year 300, the innovation lies in the creation of a supported platform constructed at the same time as the principal building.

Building 6: Built in 350 C.E., its east-west axis measures more than 140m. This building highlights the intense cultural interaction maintained by Teotihuacan with the other Mesoamerican cities.

Building 7: This building bears the topology of the last phase of construction. Built around the year 400, it remained in use until the fall of the city, two centuries later, and is exposed, allowing visitors to the ruins of Teotihuacan to see it.

Offering repositories

These funerary stores are **linked to the construction of different buildings**. One of the funerary pits held the skeleton of a man about 45 years old, wearing richly ornamented jewelry, including ear ornaments and beads and jade, indicated an elevated social rank. In seated position, his arms and hands were links behind the back, indicating that he was sacrificed and buried as an offering. Different bones of felines, canines, serpents, and birds were also uncovered, as well as objects of ceramic, obsidian, shells, wood, and semi-precious materials. Green stone anthropomorphic sculptures were discovered, as well as schematic sculptures in obsidian, from large undulating knives evoking the lightning bolts of the God of the Storm, obsidian arrowheads and blades, sea snails from the Pacific coast, and great pyrite disks. **This offering, because of its location, must be linked to fertility, to war, to human sacrifice, and to the cosmos.**

A second repository had no less than four human skeletons. Tied and gagged, they were between 13 and 44 years old at the time of death. The oldest among them wore ear and nose ornaments, and green stone pearls or a necklace of shells imitating human jawbones similar to those of the jewelry of the funerary stores in the Temple of the Feathered Serpent. These were foreigners, which validates the **hypothesis of prisoners of war**. Eighteen animal heads, apparently decapitated canines and felines, were uncovered, as well as many obsidian objects, in green stones, seashells, cloth remains, and sculptures of seated figures in serpentine.



Anthropomorphic sculpture

Three male skeletons compose another repository. Each of them face an animal skeleton (eagle and puma) in anatomical connection, a position that can be interpreted as signifying **the alter ego, linked to the name or family of the individual concerned**. Hanging from the ears, disks made of shells with jadeite, a necklace of rectangular plates similar to the chest plates worn by the Maya. They are seated in a lotus position, looking towards the sunset, their hands joined on their tied feet, a **sign of majesty and of elevated rank** and reserved for Gods and dignitaries of high rank in the Maya culture, thus revealing the relations linking the city and this civilization. These three individuals must be Maya hierarchs of high rank, coming from one of the cities with which Teotihuacan maintained political ties.

The last funerary repository contained 12 skeletons divided into two distinct groups, one of two individuals and the other of ten human remains without heads. The two individuals of the first group were sacrificed, and dressed with clothing and objects of high quality. In particular, they wore jadeite needles, possibly used for self-sacrifice, many beads and circular pendants. Some fifty skeletal remains of animals, canines, felines, and birds of prey were scattered at the four corners and at the center. Their feet were attached, indicating a specific manner of sacrifice as part of an offering.

Ritual objects were recovered, **including a human figurine made of mosaics in serpentine on a wooden pedestal**. It includes applications in white material for the eyes and teeth, and the lips are pink. Beads and ear ornaments in green stone, with a reddish pigment as well as two plaques made of shell, engraved and pierced, each representing a human figure in profile with a deer head, all have great importance. This sculpture is unique in its genre, no other similar piece have been uncovered at Teotihuacan to date.

These recent excavations, which inform the exhibition, permit **improved comprehension of the general historic process of the city**, the signification of the Pyramid of the moon, and thus the **social, political, economic, religious and ideological organization of the city**.

The art of Teotihuacan

Wall painting

The walls of the city are **for the most part covered with painting**. The ornaments possess a symbolic value whose interpretation still remains difficult. At Teotihuacan, the wall paintings are divided into multiple sections by a mold that creates a frieze. The lower part is sometimes slightly inclined and designed as an embankment. This is why the lower portions are the best preserved. Malachite, green in color, may have served as the pigment.

On the structure called “Feathered Snails” appear many representations of marine animals that, decorated with feathers, acquire the status of symbol. In the Maya region, the conch is the symbol of the beginning and end of a period. This shell also has a very strong relationship with seawater, that also has a number of meanings related to the underworld, among others.

The felines represented on the wall painting lose their animal character to become sacred. Their feather and conch ornaments (headdresses, shells, etc.) raise them to the rank of supernatural representations.



Red Quetzalcoatl

The circle, the “perfect” geometric form, without beginning or end, is represented in a recurring manner in wall paintings. Some paintings represent the animal alter ego of an important political person in the city (or of his lineage), in the form of a mythical evocation.

All the representations provide coherence to the different buildings of the city, as well as a certain continuity and thematic unity in Teotihuacan wall painting.

These paintings also inform us of the activities of daily life and ritual in Teotihuacan, always imbued with strong symbolism. **Playing ball, associated with the earliest times, was commonly practiced with the foot, or by using a stick, something like the golf of today. No ball field has been found at Teotihuacan but the paintings show that the game was frequently played.**

The iconographic repertory is very rich, but generally remained a ritual vocation, with representations of humans and animals sumptuously adorned and refined, many of which still require decryption.

Ceramic

From the earliest times, the art of ceramic at Teotihuacan finds its origins in the tradition of the basin of Mexico. It essentially comprised utilitarian vessels and pots with curvilinear profiles. Then, from the second period (1-150 C.E.), it acquired its own character, with the appearance of ritual vessels, including the representation of a deity, characteristic of the Teotihuacan culture.

Hemispheric incense burners with pastillage decorations, tripod vases white on orange decorations, and polychrome pots decorated in negative are also part of the reputation of Teotihuacan ceramic.

The pots were created with two techniques: modeling and molding. The molding technique was very common, and was used for manufacture of ritual pieces, like incense burners, braseros, bowls, and figurines. It is possible that the firing took place in open air in small cavities, but not indisputable proof has been found to support this theory.

Pottery satisfied the social and political necessities, but also represented extraordinary creations of exceptional artistic quality. Later, the utilitarian forms diminished in number, while luxury ceramics increased. More elaborate decorative techniques, sometimes using pigment, were created. The drawings consist of parallel lines and geometric motifs laid out vertically or horizontally. The pointed brasero was then invented, and covers appear. Miniature forms without decoration or pigment were abundant. **The symbolic drawings remain rare. At most some flowers with petals, snakes, or trilobes have been recorded.**

At the height of Teotihuacan, imported ceramics became commonly used. The anthropomorphic masks on incense burners and ritual or ceremonial objects were replaced by complete human figures or very elaborate motifs. On the jars, the traits of the figures became more and more stylized. Certain vases were decorated in bas-relief, using incision or excision techniques, and the production of painted vessels increased.

By the fall of Teotihuacan, the quality of ceramics and their diversity had greatly declined. Molded pots with decoration in relief were witness to the collapse of Teotihuacan and the emergence of a new cultural style in the region.



Plastered and painted vase with butterflies

The role of obsidian in Teotihuacan

All the Mesoamerican civilizations living on the central Mexican plateau were linked to the obsidian deposits, both culturally and spiritually. This stone, usually grayish-black in color, was distinct on the Teotihuacan plateau because of its golden green color. Its vitreous texture made it a formidable material for the creation of cut tools or magnificent polished objects.

Obsidian was used for the creation of tools, weapons, jewelry, and ritual objects amongst all the social strata of the city, in town as well as in the country. Used as scrapers for the exploitation of maguey (American agave), the blades were also destined for multiple domestic, artisanal, and ritual uses.

The evolution of the city was directly linked to the obsidian deposit some twenty kilometers to the east. After extraction, cutting of the stone took place in open spaces surrounding the camps near the deposits and, more rarely, in workshops located in the city. Instruments, blades, jewelry, and religious objects such as serpent-shaped knives were made there. Urban workshops located close to the monuments were better specialized in the production of ritual objects. Each artisan participated in all phases of creation of an object, and worked in parallel with his colleagues. At least 12 workshops and 17 concentrations of blades have been recorded, the latter a sign of repetitive and specialized work, certainly linked to the scraping of wood or fibers.



Serpent-shaped knives

Obsidian had great economic value. This material was so important that the control of its distribution was one of the most important functions of the state.

The economy and power of the city of Teotihuacan rested on the exploitation of many deposits of obsidian. This production allowed it to respond to its internal needs, but also to assure an economy of exchange with the other Mesoamerican regions, notably the Maya world.

Ritual contexts (offerings, graves) show that obsidian, of great symbolic value, could be associated with materials like slate, mica, pyrite (or shells), but also basalt, flint, and chalcedony. Wood, skins, and bones were combined with obsidian for the creation of headdresses, jewelry, offerings, and weapons, for men and gods.

A number of pictographic representations exist in which obsidian is present: weapons and pointed barbs in the paraphernalia of priests and the military, curved sacrificial knives serving to extract blood-filled hearts... **The color of the material also had its own symbolism.**

Religious objects were often anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, or in composit geometric forms. **Although polishing and abrading techniques were known, no polished obsidian objects such as mirrors, labrets, ear ornaments, beads, and pendants have been found like in later Mesoamerican cultures.**

At the fall of the city, the disruption in distribution of green obsidian was felt throughout the entire Mesoamerican region.

Dressed bones and shells at Teotihuacan

Combined with green stones or fine feathers, shells were used to fashion objects of prestige worn by the members of the elite to affirm their superiority. They were also buried as funerary offerings in honor of the deceased or a religious building. Thus, a number of individuals wearing very elaborate jewelry were found buried, certainly at the occasion of the consecration of the Temple of the Feathered Serpent. Pendants representing human molars cut from shells were sewn on a fabric enhanced with representations of human and canine jawbones. The settings of these teeth were made of wood covered with a fine layer of green painted plaster. Shells could also be pulled from the pendants representing men wearing headdresses in the form of deer heads.

Beyond the role of the shells in the ritual and religious domain, they were also of great important at the profane level. During public ceremonies, the clothing of important figures were decorated with shell pendants that enhanced their short cape.

Wall paintings also inform us of their musical usage. Shells of large gastropods cut at the extremity in order to produce a sound were widely used. Their end was often adorned with a piece of green stone.



Plastered conch

The inhabitants of Teotihuacan then had a profound familiarity with mollusks. Representations in the wall paintings highlight diving hunters of shells. The two preferred species of the Teotihuacan populace came from Mexican shores still unidentified today. They were transported by river or over land through specialized chains of trade. They were then transformed in the workshops of Teotihuacan. Thus, the clothes embroidered with shells follow the rules established by the central power, even if the variations of form and decoration are numerous.

The exoskeletons of mollusks constitute an important religious symbol, since they are linked to waterways and, as a result, were seen as signs of fertility and nourishment. It was not rare to see animals other than mollusks represented coming out of shells. They were also linked to war and sacrifice; the many offerings to sacrificed individuals attest to this.

Human and animal bones play a very important role within Teotihuacan society. They served, among other things, to create votive or luxury objects: ornamental objects cut from human bone included brooches, hooks, buttons, incrustations, but also perforated teeth and ear ornaments. Self-sacrificial awls made of royal eagle bones and jaguar or human femurs have been found, as well as musical instruments made of human femurs that, marked with cuts, produce a sound when rubbed with another artifact in the method of a musical rub board. Bones served to create tools for daily life. Thus, to harvest corn, the instruments were carved in deer bones. In basketry, the awls came from the metatarsus of the same animal. The needles used for sewing cotton came from human or deer bones. Human skullcaps could be used to hold the paint used for wall paintings or to smooth plastered walls. For lapidary work, the cutters were drawn from femurs or tibias. Feather preparation also had its tools in bone.

Teotihuacan and the Mesoamerican world

The foreign neighborhoods and communities in the city of Teotihuacan

Throughout its history, Teotihuacan received foreign communities who established themselves in the city, **attracted by its economic and cultural influence.**

Its impressive demographic growth cannot be explained by the reproduction of the valley populations alone. It required migrants to move in and for diverse other groups from the surroundings or distant regions to join the city.

Sculpture of the lord of the afterlife



Very early, Teotihuacan exerted his control over the surrounding regions and principally over their agricultural resources, the excess of which probably served in the building of the first great temples and the maintenance of the state machine being created. At the same time, a large number of men must have arrived in the valley of Teotihuacan to work on the creation of the waterworks meant to serve a population of 25,000 souls. A number of them must have been attracted by the rapid economic development and the possibilities that the construction of the one of the largest sanctuaries offered. The possibility of participating in one way or another in this project that reproduced the sacred universe as it was envisioned then, was sufficient motivation to leave home.

Religion played an important role in the process of integration. The generations of arrivals found themselves constrained to renounce their ancestral cultural and linguistic patterns and to integrate themselves into the value system and culture belonging to Teotihuacan.

Around the year 250, the city was the largest center of production and exchange of goods in all Mesoamerica. At this time, it counted 100,000 inhabitants, and covered 25km².

Agriculture ceased being the fundamental factor of the economy. The city could rely on the **production of goods and services** developed on a large scale in each neighborhood. The objects produced by the workshops of the city all possess a particular style that makes them characteristic of Teotihuacan.

At the same time, different foreign ethnic groups, often coming from more distant regions, established themselves in the city. Contrary to the first groups of immigrants, these groups preserved and reproduced the customs and cultural traditions of their places of origin. They manifested their differences in their daily lives. What remains unknown is the reason these groups preserved their specificity. Is the risk of leaving these groups in **relative autonomy** counterbalanced by flourishing economic activity?

Each ethnic group was distinguished by its own economic activity, its funerary rites, and some of their most entrenched traditions, notably religious. The costumes, body ornaments, and physical modifications like tattoos and cranial deformations are also strong elements that distinguish them, at first sight, from the inhabitants of Teotihuacan.

Up until now, archaeologists have identified three different foreign ethnic neighborhoods in the city. Of these, two neighborhoods have residential structures very similar to those of Teotihuacan, while the third is very different.

The Zapotec neighborhood of Teotihuacan

With an area of half a square kilometer, it comprises some fifteen architectural complexes to house some thousand people. Having arrived from Oaxaca around 200 C.E., they continued to exercise their own rites for at least four centuries.

The individuals of elevated social rank were buried in stone tombs located at the heart of the most important buildings of each architectural space. For offerings, the objects were very often imported from their land of origin, but incense burners from Teotihuacan were also found. The individuals from more modest backgrounds were buried lying down, but in ditches in the ground of the different spaces composing the complexes where they lived.

Some associate the Zapotecs with lime works, while others think they managed the flux of orange ceramic. They may also have been responsible for the importation of mica, or the production of red colorant from cochineal.

Discoveries reveal that women were as mobile as men. It is even possible that the children born of Zapotec women in the neighborhood were sent for a number of years to their region of origin, to acquire certain knowledge of their people.



Berceau et enfant

The neighborhood of inhabitants originally from western Mexico

The occupants, numbering about a hundred, had physical differences that blatantly distinguished them from the inhabitants of Teotihuacan. Cranial deformations with strong asymmetry is one such example. These modifications were not practiced by the population originally from the City of the Gods. Skeletons of many children, whose deaths were certainly due to infections linked with these deformations, were found in this neighborhood.

Their tools came mostly from the workshop in the city. It appears that these people quickly adopted a number of customs and cultural elements originally from Teotihuacan.

The merchants' neighborhood

Associated with the Huastec, a community of more than one thousand inhabitants originally from central-north Veracruz established itself in the neighborhood of merchants, covering about 4 hectares. Analyses show that the inhabitants of this neighborhood had at least three different origins. Different elements indicate that their principal activity was long-distance commerce. Men and traveled, while the women, apparently native to Teotihuacan, devoted themselves to spinning, weaving, and textile-dyeing.

Shortly before the collapse of the city, it is probable that a number of members of these foreign communities left Teotihuacan and returned to their places of origin, with which they never stopped maintaining close relations. Nonetheless, they took the relics of their ancestors and enjoyed a certain prestige for having been part of the mythical community of Teotihuacan.

* THE AMERICAS IN THE MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

The collection devoted to the Americas presents **5,000 years of history** | the Americas, from **Alaska to Patagonia**, and consists of **more than 100,000 objects** in all, of which nearly 900 are exhibited in 65 displays, accompanied by multimedia programs.

The Americas visit presents the richest collections of the museum in three parts: recent and current America respond to pre-Columbian America on either side of a reflection on the identity of the object. This highlights a system of transformation of Amerindian thought by considering the form of the object beyond its function. Throughout the visit, the visitor can appreciate how the objects, through the play of colors, materials, and subtle balance between figure and abstraction evoke the major preoccupations of the Amerindian societies: oversee the equilibrium of the world and form or affirm one's identity.

The Americas from the 17th century to our era



© musée du quai Branly, photo Loïs Lam merhuber

In this first sequence, the museography privileges a presentation by regions and themes, with two strong aspects: a series of objects with feathers for the Great Amazonia (the lowlands of South America) and, for the North American Plains, a group of 18th century painted skins, completed by a series of paintings of George Catlin. Additionally, a thematic presentation of textiles, clothes of hide and bark highlight the importance of color for Amerindians, already seen in the feather objects from the pre-Columbian period. American rituals are evoked by series of sacred objects: Otomi cut paper, Huichol beaded calabashes, Lacandon incense burners from Mexico, Pueblo kachina dolls from the United States, as well as shamanic objects for Amazonia. Finally, a series of masks represents the Canadian Northwest and the Inuit, while black America is evoked by objects from black maroons of Guyana, voodoo object from Haiti, as well as Candomblé objects from Brazil.

The singularity of the Amerindian object

Claude Levi-Strauss showed that in America there existed a large system of myth transformation and exchange, translating a unity of thought of the Amerindian populations. These transformations of logical order all proceed from the principle of inversion. The objects of these populations are produced according to the same principle, in which the form is not only conditioned by the destination of the object, but always translates a parallel idea. In approaching the objects on a basis of analogies sometimes unexpected, one can observe that they belong to the same group carrying meaning, through a single group of transformation. Thus, the rattle, meant to call the spirits, is similar to the puzzle in the same way as the mess, thus bringing out their hidden similarity.

The Americas before conquest

The thirds sequence causes the visitor to go back in time and presents the Amerindian populations before the arrival of Europeans. The wealth of the archaeological collections of the museum permits the presentation of an overview of a number of successive cultures, over thousands of years, within many large cultural regions: **Mesoamerica, Central American, the Caribbean, and the Andes.**

The presentation of this sequence is chronological and cultural. It progresses from the earliest periods (Olmecs, Nasca, Maya, and Teotihuacan) to the most recent pre-Hispanic cultures (Aztecs, Inca), those that experienced the confrontation with the European colonists under the whip... To illustrate this period, a large selection of objects was made: statues, ceramics, stone works generally representing divinities, as well as wooden, metal, silver, feather, and textile objects.

Yves Le Fur, director of the department of heritage and of the collections

André Delpuech, head of the heritage unit of the Americas collections

Fabienne de Pierrebourg, head of Americas specialty collections



The Chupicuaro figurine of the Musée du quai Branly

Dated from 600 to 200 B.C.E., the **chupicuaro** figurine chosen as the emblem of the museum is a Mexican terra cotta object from the collection of Guy Joussemet, one of a number of donors who wanted to participate in the enrichment of the museum collections. From a still poorly known civilization of the pre-Columbian period, this 31-centimeter figurine, a symbol of fertility and renewal of the seasons, has traversed two millennia to come to us in an extraordinary state of preservation and take a place today in the **Pavilion of Sessions, a branch of the Musée du quai Branly at the Musée du Louvre.**

© Musée du quai Branly, photo
Arnaud Baumann

*** THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND HISTORY (INAH)**

The National Institute of Anthropology and History is an organization founded in 1939 to guarantee the research, conservation, protection and diffusion of the prehistoric, archaeological, anthropological, and paleontological heritage of Mexico. Its creation has been fundamental for the preservation of Mexican cultural heritage.

It is responsible for more than 110,000 historic monuments built between the 16th and 19th centuries, and for 29,000 archaeological zones in the entire country, although more than 200,00 archaeological remains exist, out of which 150 are open to the public.

It is also in charge of some hundred national museums, which are divided in different categories, according to the diversity and quality of collections, their geographic location and the number of visitors.

INAH, whose principal field of action is scientific research, counts among its collaborators more than 400 specialists in history, social anthropology, physical anthropology, archaeology, ethnohistory, ethnology, architecture, heritage preservation, conservation, and restoration.

* BIOGRAPHY OF FELIPE SOLÍS (†)

Born on December 18, 1944, Felipe Solís (†) was an archaeologist and director of the National Anthropology Museum of Mexico (from 2000). Researcher at the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH-Conaculta) since 1972, he was Curator of the Aztec collections of the museum, where from 1990 to 2000, he filled the role of co-director of the Archaeology section. He was one of the world specialists in Aztec art and culture and of ancient Mexico.

A field archaeologist, he brought important contributions to the discovery of the history of ancient cultures, notably in 1975 with the discoveries of the aqueduct of Chapultepec buried below Mexico City. In 1978, he discovered the monolith of Coyolxauhqui, in the Temple Mayor. He was the first to identify the Goddess of the Moon during excavations under the largest urban agglomeration in the world.

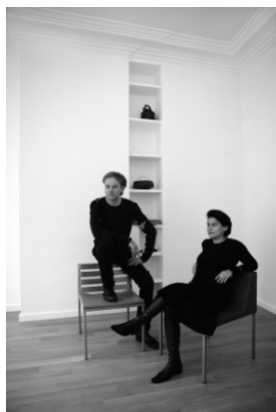


Felipe Solís Olguin (†) © CNCA, INAH, Mexico

Since 1975, he participated in the principal exhibitions dedicated to the Mesoamerican world, presenting archaeological objects from the collections of the National Museum of Anthropology, in Mexico as well as abroad. Among the exhibitions he curated are notably *Mexico, 30 centuries of Splendors*, and *Olmec art in ancient Mesoamerica*. With the archaeologist Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, he organized the exhibition *The Aztecs*, presented with success in London, Berlin, and Bonn. He was also exhibition curator for the exhibition *The Aztec Empire*, presented in 2004 and 2005 in the Guggenheim museums in New York and Bilbao. He was co-curator of the exhibition *The Aztec World* at the Field Museum in Chicago and at the royal academy of London in 2003. He most recently completed the exhibition *Teotihuacan, City of the Gods*, presented in the Lewis hangar of the Fundidora Park in the city of Monterrey, before being presented at the Museum of Anthropology and History and at the Musée du quai Branly in a new configuration.

This considerable work was crowned by the editorial coordination of two commemorative books about the 40 years of the largest museological institution in Mexico. As a specialist of the history of the National Museum of Anthropology, of Aztec culture, of the cultures of the Gulf Coast and of Teotihuacan, he published more than 200 research articles and pieces for dissemination. He is also the author and co-author of 30 books on archaeologist, anthropology, and history. He passed away tragically last April 23 from cardiac arrest.

* DESIGN AND INSTALLATION: JAKOB+MACFARLANE



Jakob+Macfarlane © DR

The design and creation of the exhibition installation were entrusted to the agency **Jakob+Macfarlane**.

Dominique Jakob has a degree from the Paris-Villemin architecture school (1991) and a licence in Art History (Université Paris 1).

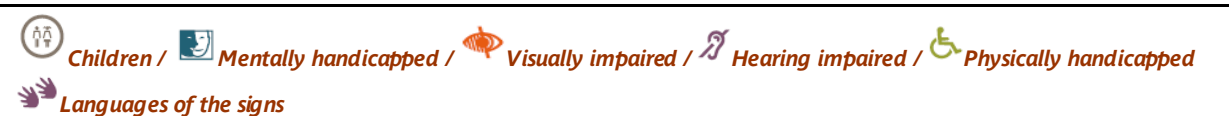
Brendan Macfarlane earned a degree from Southern California Institute of Architectue (Sci-Arc) in 1984, and a master's from the Harvard Graduate School of Design (1990).

Jakob+Macfarlane is a multicultural and multidisciplinary architectural firm located in Paris.

Its work uses digital technologies both as a conceptual aid and as a means of fabrication. Their principal projects include the restaurant **Georges** in the Centre Georges Pompidou (2000), the bookstore **Florence Loewy Books by Artists in Paris** (2001), the **Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard** (2007) as well as the **Docks of Paris, City of fashion and design** and **100 logement Hérold** in Paris (2008). Ongoing are the Fonds regional d'Art Contemporain in Orléans and the Docks of Lyon. Their projects have been exhibited in different museums around the world. They have also taken part in the French selection of the Biennale of Architecture in Venice in 2002, and of the international selection in 2004 and 2008.

In 1999, with 9 other applicants, they participated in the international competition for the oversight of the construction of the Musée du quai Branly.

* AROUND THE EXHIBITION



* Homage to Felipe Solís

Wednesday, October 7, from 6-7pm

Homage to Felipe Solís (†), curator of Teotihuacan, City of the Gods
Film Hall

* Film cycle

Free access based on availability of seats, film hall

The imaginary pre-Hispanic in Mexican cinema

3 talks on the imaginary pre-Hispanic in Mexican cinema are organized from 9 to 11 October, followed by a film projection offered by **Dr. Angel Miguel**, Faculty of Arts of the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos (Mexico):

Friday, October 9, 6pm

Representations of the pre-Hispanic world in Mexican cinema

Talk followed by a projection of *Return to Aztlán*, by Juan Mora Catlett (1991), náhuatl, English subtitles).



Saturday, October 10, at 6pm

Representations of the Spanish conquest

Talk followed by a projection of *Cow's head*, by Nicolás Echevarría (1991, Spanish, English subtitles).


Sunday, October 11, at 4pm


Representations of the survival of the indigenous world

Talk followed by a projection of *Baja California: the limits of time*, by Carlos Bolado (1998, Spanish, no subtitles).

* Speakers cycle

Jacques Kerchache lecture hall

 For the duration of the exhibitions, the lecture hall Jacques Kerchache exhibits a selection of objects from the Museum of Popular Arts (Mexico).

 From October 24 to November 1 2009, a presentation of books from Mexico is organized for young visitors in "original version".

Families

 Sunday, October 18 2009, at 4pm

The adventure of a work *The vase with butterflies*, Teotihuacan culture. A talk made about a copy accessible to the visually impaired in collaboration with the association *Percevoir*. With Fabienne de Pierrebouurg, head of the Americas collection of the Musée du quai Branly and Nicolas Caraty, lecturer.



 **Friday, November 27, 2009, at 7pm**

Lectures shared in the dark in collaboration with the association *Percevoir* from the texts by J.M.G. Le Clézio.

 **Wednesday, October 28, 2009, at 5pm**

The skeletons of the Posada engraver or celebrated death by **Marine Degli**,
Lecturer of documentary studies for the office of the president of the Musée du quai Branly.
All welcome

 **Thursday, October 29, 2009, at 7pm**

Mexican antiquities, views of the archaeology of Mexico through the best prints of the museum library by **Ghislain Dibie**, head of printed heritage of the Musée du quai Branly.
All welcome

* Day of the Dead in Mexico: at the heart of the festival of the dead

 **From October 24 to October 31, 2009**

Around the Teotihuacan exhibition, visitors are invited to discover pre-Columbian and contemporary Mexico, and notably its tradition of celebrating the dead in a very festive manner. A special program is also offered during the holiday, with lectures, visits, and workshops focusing on the Mexico of yesterday and today.

In the foyer of the Claude Lévi-Strauss Theater

     **Saturday, October 24 and Sunday, October 25, 2009**

Around Mexican chocolate: tasting and revelation...

An invitation to discover the know-how of a great chocolatier by learning the history of cacao, its discovery by the Maya in Mexico to the awakening of our taste buds.

October 31 and November 1, 2009, the Musée du quai Branly offers to the public to dive into the heart of the festival of the dead with:

   **Saturday, October 31 and Sunday, November 1, 2009**

From the altar to the ball of the dead...

Workshops are offered to children and adults to learn to create artisanal objects traditionally manufactured by Mexicans for the festival of the dead. Everyone can discover and add to the altar of the dead made especially for the occasion and participate in the big *Baile de los muertos*.

Altar of the dead with artist Cristina Rubalcava

All welcome



Little skeletons playing music, Mexico, carton pâte © musée du quai Branly

Workshops to make skulls of marzipan and cut paper in the manner of Posada

Saturday, October 31 from 11:30am to 6pm

Sunday, November 1st from 11:30am to 4:30pm

Workshops changing every 30 minutes

Foyer of the Claude Lévi-Strauss Theater or Workshop

Ball of the dead: a group of musicians accompanied by dancers introduce the public to Mexican dances.

Sunday 11/01 from 4:30pm to 6:30pm – All welcome

In the exhibition and in the workshops

Multimedia in the Teotihuacan exhibition

A multimedia game involved kids 7 and up, in an investigation in the heart of the City of the Gods. Mysteries surround the objects of the exhibition: from the Avenue of the Dead to the Pyramid of the Sun, a visit where children meet historian, architects, and archaeologists to resolve the puzzles of Teotihuacan.

*For the duration of the exhibition / French, English, and Spanish versions / ages 7 and up.
Teotihuacan exhibition*

Mission Archaeology Workshop – Destination Mexico

What purpose does archaeology serve? What is an excavation? Using models of the pyramids of the site of Teotihuacan, the child becomes an archaeologist, on the lookout for the secrets of pre-Columbian civilization. Duration: 45 min

Saturday, October 24, from 3:30pm to 4:30pm

Monday, October 26 and Friday, October 30 at 2:30pm, 3:30, 4:30, and 5:30

Wednesday, October 28 at 2:30, 3:30, and 4:30

Ages 6 and up, workshop

Globetrotter Mexico

Children set out for Mexico, and discover during the workshop the oral traditions of this country and undertake artistic practice.

Duration : 45 min / French only

Sunday, October 25, Tuesday, October 27, and Thursday, October 29 at 2:30, 3:30, 4:30, 5:30

Ages 6 and up, workshop

Cochineal Workshop – Artistic variations around carmine red

Children are invited to discover through experience the natural pigment of Mesoamerican origin, cochineal. Duration: 45 min

Sunday, October 25 at 11:30am

Tuesday, October 27, Wednesday, October 28, and Thursday, October 29 at 3:30pm and 4:30pm

Families, from 3 to 6 years old, workshop

Fairytale visit Mexico

An immersion into the heart of Mexican pre-Columbia legends. Duration: 1h

Saturday, October 24 at 11:30am and 2:30pm

Monday, October 26 and Friday, October 30 at 11:30am, 2:30pm, and 4pm

Wednesday, October 28 and Sunday, November 1 at 2:30

All welcome, Teotihuacan exhibition

Teotihuacan Guided Visit

A lecturer introduces visitors to the secrets of the great city of ancient Mexico, Teotihuacan.

Duration: 1h30

Sunday, October 25 and Saturday, October 31 at 2:30pm – All welcome

During this week, the museum offers multiple **activities in Spanish:**

- Teotihuacan guided visit: Sunday, October 25 and Saturday, October 31 at 11:30am
- Fairytale visit Mexico: Wednesday, October 28 and Sunday, November 1st at 11:30am
- Mission Archaeology workshop: Saturday, October 24 and Wednesday, October 28 at 5:30pm

From October 20 to December 13

On the occasion of the Mexican Festival of the Dead: installation of the *Tzompantli* of Sergio Hernández

The *tzompantlis*, architectural figures created during the classical period of the Mexica culture, were walls covered with sculpted or real human skulls rectilinear in form.

Mexican artist born in 1957 at Huajuapán (Oaxaca), Sergio Hernández studied at the San Carlos National School of Plastic Arts in La Esmeralda in Mexico City before traveling to Europe, notably Spain and Paris, where he frequented the workshop of engraver Peter Bramsen. His last individual exhibition in Paris took place at the Espace Pierre Cardin in 2002. He lives and works in Oaxaca and Mexico City.

Entry hall of the Musée du quai Branly



* International Colloquium: "Rituals and Powers at Teotihuacan"

* Thursday and Friday, October 8 and 9, 2009

Movie theater / Free with reservation - (Discussion in English/Spanish)



© musée du quai Branly, photo Nicolas Borel

This colloquium organized by the Musée du quai Branly and the laboratory "Archéologie des Amériques" (CNRS - Université de Paris I) permits questioning on the organization of power in one of the greatest powers that the Mesoamerican world ever knew. It has long been admitted that the city of Teotihuacan, whose dimensions and rigorous planning will never be equaled (20 km²), was organized into a State. However, and despite a century of research, the specialists do not agree on the nature and organization of the power and every hypothesis has been proposed (theocracy, monarchy, tetrarchy, shared power,

etc.).

The colloquium proposes to clarify certain aspects of power in light of ritual practices of which the ancient city still has a number of indications. These are perceptible through the spaces and assemblages of objects as well as through the scenes depicted in the iconography. A number of these rituals support, based on appearance, strong links with the power whose nature still escapes archaeologists. With the participation of eminent international specialists, archaeologists, and anthropologists, the colloquium presents new approaches and data concerning the articulation between rituals and power, while paying particular attention to the ideological, social, and political implications of predicted ceremonial practices.

A colloquium offered by **Dominique Michelet**, director of research at CNRS of the laboratory "Archéologie des Amériques" (Université Paris I). **Grégory Pereira**, doctor in prehistory and anthropology, CNRS researcher

Detailed program of the international colloquium "Rituals and powers at Teotihuacan"

Thursday, October 8 2009

- 10h-10h30 : **Alejandro Sarabia** (INAH, Teotihuacan) : « The architectural complex of the Pyramid of the Sun »
- 10h30-11h : **Sergio Gomez** (Zona Arqueol. Teotihuacan, INAH) et **Julie Gazzola** (DEA, INAH) : « Groups of power and cosmology. Ritual enactments in the complex of the Citadel »
- 11h30-12h : **Linda R. Manzanilla** (IIA, UNAM, Mexico) : « Seats of power and rituals of the governors : the case of Xalla, a palatial complex at Teotihuacan »
- 12h30-13h : **Ruben Cabrera** (Teotihuacan, INAH) : « Sociopolitical and urban structure in the neighborhoods of the city of Teotihuacan »
- 13h-13h30 : Discussion
- 15h-15h30 : **Saburo Sugiyama** (Aichi Prefectural University, Nagoya, Japon) : « Cosmology, militarism, and political ideology materialized in the pyramid of the Moon »
- 15h30-16h : **Claude F. Baudez** (Directeur de recherche honoraire, CNRS) : « Self-immolation at Teotihuacan »
- 16h-16h30 : **Grégory Pereira** (CNRS, Nanterre), **Olivia Kindl** (Université de Paris X) et **Nicolas Latsanopoulos** (Bureau de l'archéologie, Conseil Général de la Seine-Saint-Denis) : « The reflections of power : a comparative approach to the pyrite mirrors at Teotihuacan »
- 17h-17h30 : **Claudia García - Des Lauriers** (Cotsen Institute of Archeology, UCLA, USA) : « The insignias of holy war : costumes, rituals, and militarism at Teotihuacan »
- 17h30-18h : **David M. Carballo** (Department of Anthropology, University of Alabama, USA) : « Ritual, economy, and the sphere of influence at Teotihuacan »
- 18h-18h30 : Discussion

Vendredi 9 octobre 2009

- 10h-10h30 : **Aurélie Couvreur** (Université Libre de Bruxelles) : « Tlaloc, the land and territory of Teotihuacan »
- 10h30-11h : **M^{re} Josefa Iglesias Ponce de León** et **Alfonso Lacadena** (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Espagne) : « Political action, proselytizing or emulation ? The interaction between the Maya and Teotihuacan seen through rituals »
- 11h30-12h : **George Cowgill** (Arizona State University, USA) : « Allusions to hierarchies in the distinguished and complex rituals of Teotihuacan »
- 12h-12h30 : **Hervé Inglebert** (Université de Paris Ouest Nanterre-La Défense, IUF) : « Public rites and rites of power in Rome from Sylla to Nero : a comparative perspective. »
- 12h30-14h : Final debate by **Guilhem Olivier** (IIH, UNAM) and **Danièle Dehouve** (CNRS EPHE)

* Exhibition Catalog

TEOTIHUACAN, City of the Gods

480 pages in format 24,5 x 29,5 cm
350 illustrations (*to be confirmed*)
Public sale price: 42 €

A co-publication: musée du quai Branly / Somogy, éditions d'art.



SUMMARY

1st part

Beyond the Avenue of the Dead (introduction), Felipe Solís (†)
An introduction to Teotihuacan and its culture, George L. Cowgill
The ecosystems of the Teotihuacan valley over the course of its history, Emily McClung

2nd part

The Pyramid of the Sun, Adventures and misadventures of a monument, Eduardo Matos Moctezuma
Excavations at the Citadel and at the Temple of the Feathered Serpent, Rubén Cabrera-Castro
Excavations at the Pyramid of the Moon, Rubén Cabrera-Castro and Saburo Sugiyama
The ordinary and elite residential complexes in the Great City, Sergio Gomez Chavez and July Gazzola
The City of Teotihuacan: its growth, its architectural developments and its materials culture, George L. Cowgill

3rd part

Ceramic, Claudio María López Pérez
The Obsidian of Teotihuacan, Alejandro Pastrana
The Neighborhoods of Foreign Communities in the city of Teotihuacan, Sergio Gomez Chavez and July Gazzola.

4th part

Wall Painting at Teotihuacan, María Teresa Uriarte
Lapidary Art, Oralia Cabrera Cortes
Monumental Sculpture, Dominique Michelet and Ariane Allain
Worked Bones and Shells of Teotihuacan, A. Velazquez

5th Part

Religion at Teotihuacan, Karl Taube
Symbolic Language and Writing at Teotihuacan, James C. Langley

6th Part

Teotihuacan and the Maya, Eric Taladoire
Teotihuacan and the West of Mexico, Dominique Michelet and Grégory Pereira
Teotihuacan and the Oaxaca, Marcus Winter
Teotihuacan and the Gulf Coast, Ponciano Ortiz Carmen Rodriguez and David Morales

* PRACTICAL INFORMATION: www.quaibranly.fr

Visuals available for the Press

Download visuals at <http://ymago.quaibranly.fr>
Monthly password given to press upon request.

Photographs of objects reproduced in the press packet:

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photo Martirene Alcantara.

INFORMATION

Tél : 01 56 61 70 00 / contact@quaibranly.fr

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Sunday : 11am to 7pm – Thursday, Friday, Saturday : 11am to 21pm
Groups: 9:30am to 11am, every day except Sunday.
Weekly closure on Mondays, except during school holidays (all zones)

ACCÈS

Entrance to the museum is at 206 and 218 rue de l'Université or at 51 quai Branly, Paris 7^e.
Handicap access through 222 rue de l'Université.

Press contact:

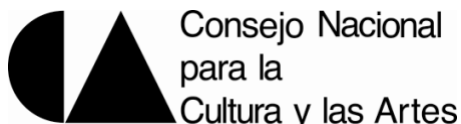
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* PARTNERS



France Télévisions, official partner of the exhibition « TEOTIHUACAN, CITY OF THE GODS »

France Télévisions is extremely happy to be associated with this exhibition-event that, from October 6, 2009 to January 24, 2010, will permit the discovery of about 400 exceptional pieces of the cultural of the great city of Ancient Mexico, Teotihuacan, pieces that are, for the most part, new in Europe.

With the support of its branches France 2 and France 5, France Télévisions will put into action a diversified and complementary line-up that will present the cultural richness of Teotihuacan and of this unique exhibition.

France 2

France 2 develops its partnership politics in the sectors related to the expression of this creation.

For concerts, the choices of France 2 extends to French and international artists, established or rising, who often participate in its largest variety and entertainment evenings.

Humor is also a field where France 2 has a strong presence and accompanies, at times, its leading performers and comedians in their own shows.

The exhibitions supported by France 2 show that art, modern or classical, is always a veritable event. Partner to theater, ballet, classical music, and opera, and numerous festivals, France 2 chooses to meet its public and participate in the better influence of artists.

By associating with the exhibition "Teotihuacan, City of the Gods", France 2 is at the heart of its mission: be the channel of reference for all publics, an ambitious television that wants to be the reflections of a society in movement.

France 5

Culture has a special and privileged place on France 5 since it belongs to everyone and must be accessible to the greatest number.

We find it thus across all the genres, day and night, whether documentaries, magazines, events, or even youth with adaptation of children's literature in animation

From 8:35pm Thursday night, literature is in focus with "The Great Bookstore", followed at 9:30pm in alternation with "One night with" and "An evening at the Museum" presented by Laurence Piquet. On Friday at 8:35pm, the collection "prints" bears witness to the wealth of cultures through 120 52' films shown over 4 years.

New items for back to school 2009, the magazine "Cinémas", the new rendezvous of the 7th art, hosted by Serge Moati each Saturday at 5:55pm and the return of "Café Picouly", a weekly rendezvous on multicultural news hosted by Daniel Picouly Fridays at 9:30pm.

It is then natural that France 5 has decided to be a partner to the exhibition "Teotihuacan, City of the Gods", to affirm more than ever its motto "Let's get to know"!

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