

THE XALLA SCULPTURE OF TEOTIHUACAN

THE XALLA SCULPTURE IS DISPLAYED IN MUSEUMS AS IF IT WERE UNCHANGING AND MADE TO BE LOOKED AT. BUT TO THE PEOPLE OF TEOTIHUACAN, IT WAS A LIVING FIGURE WHOSE EXPERIENCES PARALLELED THE HISTORY OF THE CITY, FROM BIRTH TO DEATH.

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THE CITY OF **TEOTIHUACAN**, THE FIRST CITY IN MESOAMERICA, WAS BUILT BY IMMIGRANTS TO THE VALLEY OF MEXICO.

LIKE THE INHABITANTS OF THE CITY, THE **XALLA** SCULPTURE BEGAN ITS LIFE ELSEWHERE, AS MARBLE BROUGHT FROM HUNDREDS OF KILOMETERS AWAY.

THE TEOTIHUCANO SHARED A SPIRITUAL WORLDVIEW THAT TIED AN ETHNICALLY DIVERSE POPULATION TOGETHER. ITS CENTER WAS THE **SUN PYRAMID**, THE LARGEST MONUMENT BUILT IN THE ANCIENT WORLD.

THE FIGURE'S EYES WERE RED TO REPRESENT THE GOD OF WAR, AND IT HAD BLACK LINES ON ITS FACE TO REPRESENT FERTILITY.

THE XALLA FIGURE WAS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THIS WORLDVIEW. IT REPRESENTED A PRISONER WHOSE BLOOD WOULD BE SHED TO STRENGTHEN THE EARTH AND TO GIVE VICTORY IN WAR.

AROUND 550 CE, THE CITY WAS DEMOLISHED.

IT WAS PIERCED BY TWO ARROWS.

ITS DESTROYERS KNEW THE POWER OF THE XALLA FIGURE, PERHAPS INDICATING THEY WERE A GROUP INSIDE THE CITY. THEY **SHATTERED** THE SCULPTURE, USING BOTH FIRE AND TOOLS, AND SPREAD IT AROUND 800 SQUARE METERS.

THE TEMPLO MAYOR IN THE AZTEC CITY OF TENOCHTITLAN

ALTHOUGH ABANDONED, THE LEGACY OF THE CITY CONTINUED. 900 YEARS LATER, THE AZTEC BELIEVED IT WAS THE PLACE WHERE THE WORLD WAS CREATED.

THE XALLA FIGURE, HOWEVER, WAS ONLY PUT BACK TOGETHER IN OUR TIME, TO BE THE OBJECT OF STUDY AND TO BE VIEWED IN MUSEUMS.