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For more than a millennium the great Mesoamerican city of Teotihuacan (c. 150 B.C.E.-750 C.E.) has been imagined and reimagined by a host of subsequent cultures, including our own. Mesoamerica's Classic Heritage engages the subject of the unity and diversity of pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica by focusing on the classic heritage of this ancient city. This new volume is the product of several years of research by members of Princeton University's Moses Mesoamerican Archive and Research Project and Mexico's Proyecto Teotihuacán. Offering a variety of disciplinary perspectives—including the history of religions, anthropology, archaeology, and art history—and a wealth of new data, Mesoamerica's Classic Heritage examines Teotihuacan's rippling influence across Mesoamerican time and space, including important patterns of continuity and change, and its relationships, both historical and symbolic, with Tenochtitlan, Cholula, and various Maya communities.

The contributors to Mesoamerica's Classic Heritage offer a wide range of individual interpretations, but they agree that Teotihuacan, more than any other pre-Hispanic center, was a paradigmatic source that formed the art and architecture, cosmology and ritual life, and conceptions of urbanism and political authority for significant parts of the Mesoamerican world. This great city achieved the prestige of being the site of the creation of the cosmos and of effective social and political space in Mesoamerica through its capacity to symbolize, perform, and export its imperial authority. These essays reveal the different ways in which Teotihuacan's classic heritage both fed and fed on the dynamic interactivity of the entire area. Whether or not a paradigm shift in Mesoamerican studies is taking place, certainly a new contextual understanding of Teotihuacan and the diversities and unities of Mesoamerica is emerging in these pages.