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HST100
Primary Source Assignment #4



This mural from Teotihuacan was produced using the Fresco technique. Frescos are made by painting natural pigments mixed with water on wet plaster. The color cures into the paster, creating a very durable wall decoration. Some apartment complexes in Teotihuacan housed teams specializing in grinding limestone and producing plaster. I would assume these same apartments also had fresco artists. Even though the people living in Teotihuacan did not make many written records, they did produce murals that served a storytelling purpose. There was the use of date symbols and symbols of gods. Some murals even seemed to fill an education purpose. Historians and archeologists have found that the elite apartments contained more and better frescos. In this way, we learn some about Teotihuacan social structure. The feathered headdress depicted in this fresco is characteristic of the warrior class that is associated with the cult of the feathered serpent. The warrior class seemed to hold significant power in Teotihuacan. The later leaders of Mayan territories are depicted in similar headdresses indicating some political influence from Teotihuacan.



Teotihuacan is known for pottery shown here. The typical form being the cylinder with big slab legs. The pottery is made from red clay common to the Teotihuacan region. The pottery was often decorated colorfully. The technique used is surprisingly similar to the creation of a fresco. The pottery was coated in plaster and painted while still wet. The Pottery of Teotihuacan was extremely sought after in Mesoamerica, being found as far as the Maya territory. The prevalence of this type of pottery shows how far the influence of Teotihuacan stretched at its height. Pottery making is one of the activities that many Apartment groupings would specialize in

This type of art and basic pottery is typical of a late Neolithic settlement. Teotihuacan indeed showed to be characteristic in many ways of the Neolithic era in lacking metal works or advanced written language. A city of this magnitude and organization is rather uncharacteristic for society at this stage of technological development.