

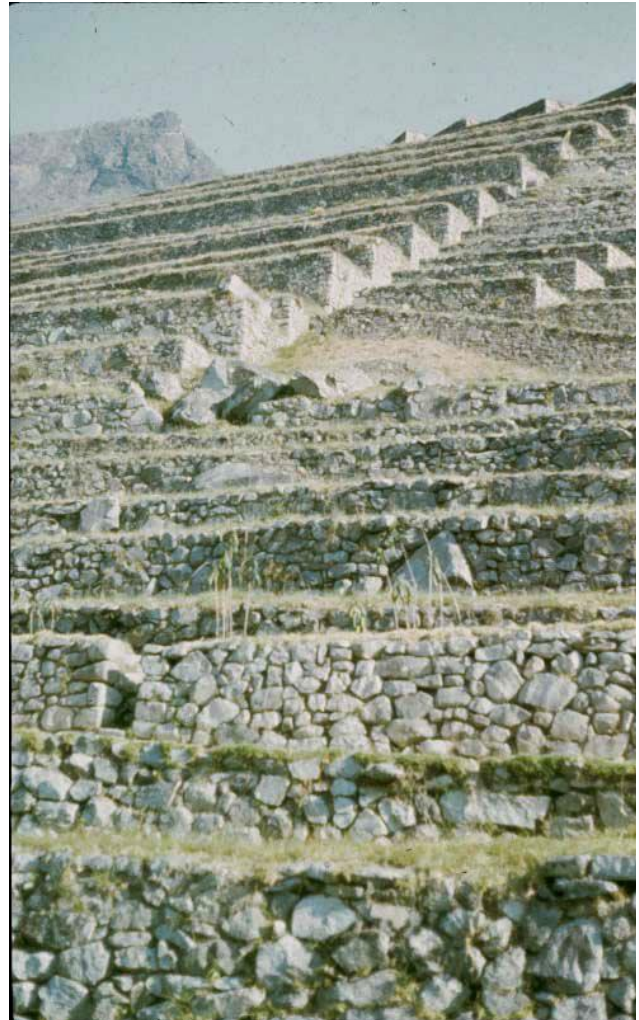
15.2 Mesoamerican Architecture: Yucatan and Machu Picchu

Background: Chichen Itza (left) was a Mayan center on the Yucatan peninsula built around 600 AD. It is located at a *cenote* or sinkhole that provided fresh water to the city. The site has many surviving stone buildings, but the most spectacular is the temple or pyramid dedicated to the feathered serpent-god Kukulkan, better known by the Aztec name Quetzalcoatl. The city was largely abandoned about 1000 AD. The Inca city of Machu Picchu (right) is located in the Peruvian Andes fifty miles northwest of the city of Cuzco. It was probably built in the 15th century as an isolated mountain estate for the Inca emperor. Its stone buildings and terraces were all built using stone tools. It was unknown to people outside the local region until 1911 and was never plundered by the Spanish conquistadors.

Task: Examine the photographs of Chichen Itza and Machu Picchu. What do you learn about these societies from the photographs? Use online sources to write an illustrated report retelling the history of one of these cities.



The Great Mayan Temple on the Yucatan Peninsula at Chichen Itza.



Agricultural terraces at Machu Picchu in the Peruvian Andes.