A000-MEX-Guerrero-Figure-Olmecoid-Green Stone-Middle Preclassic-1000-400 BCE



**Case no.: 10**

**Accession Number: A000**

**Formal Label:** Middle Preclassic Olmecoid Guerrero Figurine

**Display Description:**

This is a remarkable example of Middle Preclassic Olmecoid Guerrero art.  Olmecoid traits such as the characteristic oval head and squat proportions, seated with legs squat and folded beneath, and arms held on the front of the body with fingers touching are found in Guerrero and may be the result of Olmec traits fused with local traditions. The head is uplifted and the eyes are partly closed as if in meditation.

The deep roots of Maya settlement in the Belize River Valley were recognized by Gordon Willey and colleagues (1965; Sharer 1976) with the definition of the Middle Preclassic Jenney Creek phase (c. 900–350 BCE) at Barton Ramie. Subsequent research has extended this chronology to include some of the earliest ceramic-using populations in the eastern Maya Lowlands (c. 1100/1000 BCE) and illuminated aspects of the social, economic, and political systems that characterized Middle Preclassic communities in the region (e.g., Awe, 1992; Brown, 2003; Garber et al., 2004; Healy and Awe, 1995, 1996; Healy, 1999; Hohmann, 2002; Iannone, 1996; Powis, 1996; Powis and Cheetham, 2007). Similarities in artifacts and architecture suggest enduring connections between the Belize Valley and Middle Preclassic settlements elsewhere in Mesoamerica, although certain elements of shared material culture indicate more intensive interaction among groups at the regional scale (Awe, 1992; Cheetham, 1998; Horn, 2015).

Green-colored stone artifacts from the Middle Preclassic Maya Lowlands indicate participation in a pan-Mesoamerican symbolic tradition that endured for millennia. They represent remains of trade and exchange networks that connected distant communities at a time of developing social and political complexity. Their restricted distribution to settlements in the Belize Valley, however, suggests some of their importance derived from interactions at the regional level. This figurine may represent a regional expression of an ideological system that instilled greenstones with cosmological significance and linked distant regions of Mesoamerica through exchange of materials and information.

**LC Classification:**

**Date or Time Horizon:**

**Geographical Area:**

**Map:**

**GPS coordinates:**

**Cultural Affiliation:**

**Media:**

**Dimensions:**

**Weight:**

**Condition:**

**Provenance:**

**Discussion:**

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