A000-MEX-Guerrero-Olmecoid-Figurine-Serpentine-Middle Preclassic-1000-400 BCE

  

Figs. 1-3. Guerrero-Figurine-Olmecoid-Serpentine-Middle Preclassic-1000-400 BCE

**Case no.: 10**

**Accession Number: A000**

**Formal Label:** Guerrero-Figurine-Olmecoid-Serpentine-Middle Preclassic-1000-400 BCE

**Display Description:**

This remarkable example of a Middle Preclassic Olmecoid Guerrero figurine exhibits traits including 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. The head is uplifted and the eyes are partly closed as if in meditation. These figurines are found in Guerrero and appear to be the result of Olmec traits fused with local traditions.

The manifold origins of Maya settlement in the Belize River Valley were recognized by Gordon Willey and colleagues (1965; Sharer 1976) in 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 (ca 1050 BCE) and has 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 interactions among groups at the regional Belize Valley scale (Awe, 1992; Cheetham, 1998; Horn, 2015).

Green-colored stone artifacts from the Middle Preclassic Maya Lowlands suggest participation in a pan-Mesoamerican symbolic tradition that inculcated green-colored stones with cosmological significance as the color of the cosmic serpent. and interconnected distant regions of Mesoamerica through exchange of stone materials (including jadeite and serpentine) and cosmologies.

These artifacts embody vestiges of trade and exchange networks that connected communities at a time of emergent social and political complexities. Their restricted distribution to settlements in the Belize Valley, however, suggests some of their importance derived from interactions at the regional level.

**LC Classification:**  [F1435 .M395](http://josiah.brown.edu/search~S7?/cF1435+.M395+2009/cf++1435+m395+2009/-3,-1,,E/browse)

**Date or Time Horizon:** 1000-400 BCE

**Geographical Area:** Guerrero, Mexico

**Map:**

**GPS coordinates:**

**Cultural Affiliation:** Middle Preclassic, 1000-400 BCE

**Medium:** serpentine

**Dimensions:**

**Weight:**

**Condition: original**

**Provenance:**

**Discussion:**

**References:**

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