Case 9-MEX-Aztec-Axe Money-Copper-1250



**Case No.: 10**

**Accession Number:**

**Formal Label:** MEX-Aztec-Axe Money-Copper-1250 CE.

**Display Description:**

The Aztecs were a barbarian tribe who came into the Valley of Mexico during the 13th Century. Their language, Uto-Aztecan was once widely spoken from Washington State all the way down to Nicaragua. Hoe (because of the shape) money was extensively used by all classes of Aztec society. The axe money was fashioned entirely by working (hammering). In shaping the object, the original metal blank was hammered and annealed many times to thin the metal, to spread the broad blade, and to form the raised flange that runs along the edges of the shank. The metal was pounded severely in the final stage of manufacture and was left in this forged condition, presumably to harden it. After the object was shaped, a series of grooves was made on one surface, both in the shank and in the blade. The photomicrographs reveal that these grooves were not cut into the metal. Rather, they were formed by a hard tool that was pressed into and dragged along the surface of the object. This tool compressed the metal immediately beneath it, forming the groove. The compressed, highly worked and deformed metal is characterized by elongated grains full of strain lines produced by the force exerted by the tool.

**LC Classification:**

**Date or Time Horizon:** 1250

**Geographical Area: Tenochitlan**

**Map:**

**GPS Coordinates:**

**Cultural Affiliation:** Aztec

**Medium:** copper

**Dimensions**: 6" long and about 1.75" wide  
**Weight:**

**Provenance:**

**Condition:**

**Discussion:**

**References:**