Overview of the Pre-classic period!

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Objectives

• Discuss the activities before the eruption of the Maya classic period.
• Discuss the development of the pre-classic period
Pre classic period also referred to as the formative period!

- Early pre-classic - 3000-1000 BC
- Middle pre-classic - 1000 BC-300 BC
- Late pre-classic - 300 BC-300 CE
The Olmec

- The Olmec also were experimenting with Agriculture in the Coastal Areas of Veracruz.
Early pre-classic

- Early forms of Agriculture!

- Farming first took place in Chiapas (Mexico), and El Salvador
2000 BCE pollen analysis shows that corn was grown in Peten, Guatemala
Important sites: Santa Rita, Corozal, (Cahal Pech and Blackman Eddy)- Belize River Valley
Cuello Orange Walk

• Occupied: 2500-2000 BCE
• Maize was experimented continuously 1300 years
• Ceramics such as pots, jars, bowls, and plates were found; predominantly red with simple designs
Middle pre-classic

• Agricultural surplus production that societies became more populous, stratified, and diverse. Especially within the Belize River Valley!

• The Maya became “Maya”!
• Produced for local consumption and for trading
Middle- Preclassic sites in Belize

- Cahal Pech, Lamanai, Cuello, Santa Rita, Colha, and Blackman Eddy
Colha Orange Walk (1150-1300 AD)

• Earliest place to cultivate and eat chocolate
• They produced chert and obsidian and also eccentric flints
• Abandoned and reinhabited in 950 AD
Late-Pre-classic period

• Major achievements were already set in place: mathematics, astronomy, calendrics, architecture, etc.

• Ceramic styles became more uniform cross-regionally and polychrome pottery was widespread.
Architecture

- Stelae were initially produced in the highlands and the Pacific Coast of Chiapas, Mexico and Guatemala.

- In Belize and Peten, a Stucco Mask tradition may have preceded the use of stelae
What lead to the height of the Maya civilization?

• Agriculture! Because the people began to plant they settled in an area, eventually they specialized in different areas of work and some became full time farmers.

• Surplus production lead to growth their grandeur expanded.

• The rural areas were essential since the farmers were from there.