Key Terms, Concepts and Characters

Nov. 14, 16 and 21, 2006: Mesoamerica: Emergence of early lowland civilization

Formative Period
- late: 500 - 0 B.C.
- middle: 900 - 500 B.C.
- early: 2,500 - 900 B.C.

Developments:
1. public architecture - esp. temples
2. craft specialization
3. long distance exchange networks
4. emerging social hierarchies

Cultural uniformity of early Mesoamerican civilizations
1. similarity of subsistence
2. settled village life
3. social hierarchies
4. centralized political organization
5. shared set of religious beliefs
6. writing systems
7. numerical systems

Olmecs
Major Sites
- San Lorenzo: ca. 1,500 - 1,100 B.C. (apogee ca. 1,200 - 1,100 B.C.)
- La Venta: ca. 1,300 - 500 B.C. (apogee ca. 800 - 500 B.C.)
- Tres Zapotes:

Tuxtla Mts.
slash and burn agriculture
vacant ceremonial center model
origins models
- highlands origins
- local in situ evolution
models for centralization and development
- role of trade and development of elite groups
- agricultural intensification and status differentiation
  - levee lands - Coatzacoalcos River and soils (L-K & S. - Cotzocoalcos)
estuarine/riverine resources and agricultural potential model
- role of religious ideology as a centralizing focus.