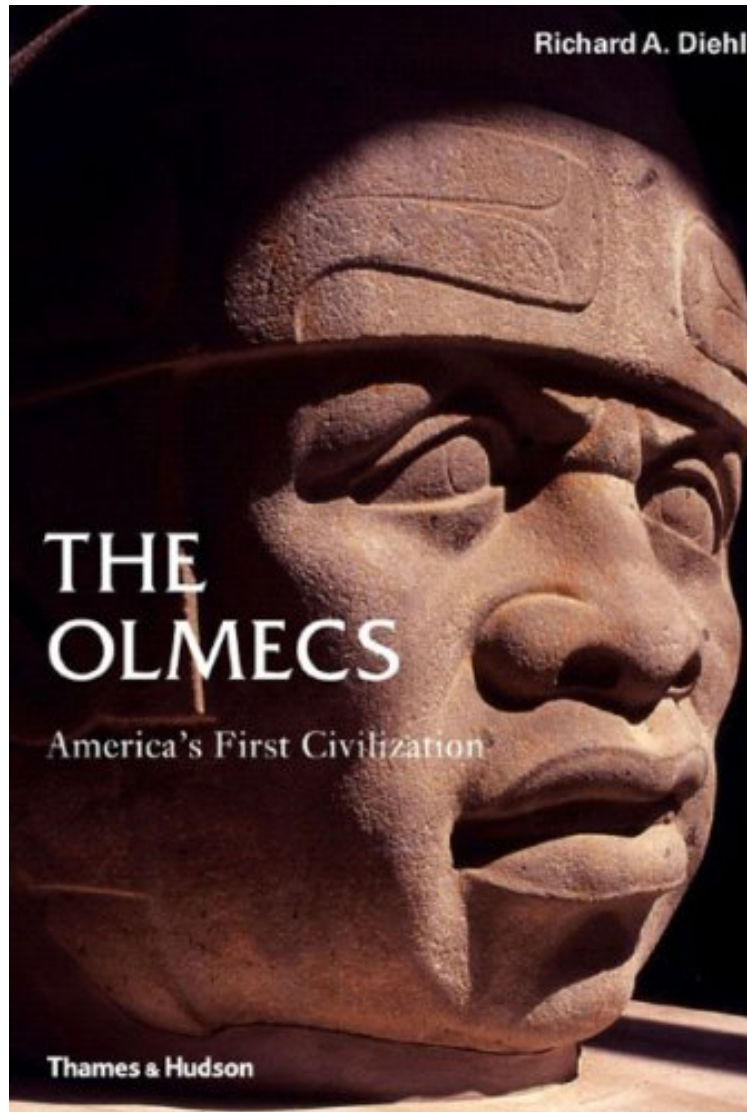


(Library ebook) The Olmecs: America's First Civilization (Ancient Peoples and Places)

# The Olmecs: America's First Civilization (Ancient Peoples and Places)

*Richard A. Diehl*

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**Richard A. Diehl : The Olmecs: America's First Civilization (Ancient Peoples and Places)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Olmecs: America's First Civilization (Ancient Peoples and Places):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very Good Book But Slightly OutdatedBy Stanley C. SargentThe author worked with Michael Coe for years, Coe being one of the most respected names in Maya archaeology, so the

author knows his stuff. He makes it clear when he is expressing an opinion, which I appreciate. The illustrations are mostly in b/w but there are some color pages. The text is interesting and factual, although a new edition, updated edition would be nice. It's a good, basic reference book for anyone interested in the Olmec civilization. Unfortunately, we don't know all that much about the Olmecs as they had little or no writing, and the assumption that they were the direct predecessors of the Maya has become questionable. It's a book worth reading and not only the artifacts but the civilization in many aspects.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read  
By Barrie Russell  
Very thorough review of what we know about the Olmecs, though a little out of date now. Still, an interesting introduction to the subject.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. the whole Olmec catalogue  
By Bob Newman  
If you really need to know everything that's known in modern times about the Olmecs, the first civilization in the Americas, located along Mexico's Gulf coast---the culture that produced the colossal stone heads---then you've probably come to the right place. This is your book, the overview that was needed. You will learn where everything was found, what was found, how big it was, what was it made out of, and where the makers got their material. You will read the names of all the archaeologists who helped discover what is known about the Olmecs. You will find out what guesses they made about this culture, which is known as one of the six core cultures of world history, a culture that came to an end around 400 BC had as its offspring the Maya, the Zapotecs, the Toltecs, and the Aztecs. You will also learn what is known for sure---from modern archaeological detective techniques. Even Olmec influence on surrounding cultures is touched upon. There is no doubt more to learn, even if many possible sites of further knowledge have been destroyed by urban sprawl, road building, and looters. However, I'm not going to tell you that this is an easy read. The words "reader-friendly" have cropped up, but maybe that should be "archaeologically-savvy reader-friendly". You may find interest in the many photographs of artifacts, drawings of others. These are excellent. But trying to read through this book---which I did---is not a simple task. It requires a lot of concentration and unless you are a scholar or potential scholar of things Olmec, it may prove rather taxing. That's the ONLY reason why I've given this otherwise excellent book three stars. It's a great piece of research, a great compilation, done with a lot of thought, for those who want the details. Here they are. For the rest of us, perhaps we needed something less rigorous.

"The first truly complete and authoritative account of this 3,000-year-old culture."  
Michael D. Coe  
The Olmecs of southern Mexico are America's oldest civilization and Mesoamerica's "Mother Culture." Famous for their Colossal Heads carved from giant boulders, the Olmecs have fascinated the public and archaeologists since the 1940s when National Geographic magazine reported the initial explorations of their centers. Despite well-publicized discoveries of spectacular basalt sculptures, portable jade objects, and richly decorated pottery vessels, until recently almost nothing was known about Olmec history, foreign contacts, and daily life. Now archaeologists have recovered information that allows them to assemble a remarkably broad picture of Olmec culture, its accomplishments, and its impact on later Mexican civilizations.

The Olmecs presents the first modern overview of information from recent archaeological field projects and studies of Olmec art. In addition to detailed coverage of Olmec life, culture, and art, it examines the Olmec presence in the surrounding areas of Mexico and their role in the formation of pre-Columbian Mesoamerican civilization. Profusely illustrated, it will become the standard work on this enigmatic culture. 152 illustrations, 20 in color.

"The first truly complete and authoritative account of this 3,000-year-old culture."  
About the Author  
Richard A. Diehl is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa. He has conducted archaeological investigations in Mexico at Tula and the Basin of Mexico, as well as San Lorenzo Tenochtitlan, La Mojarra, and Matapan in southern Veracruz state.