**Mexico - Clay Pendants**

By Vanderbilt Center for Latin American Studies

Indigenous people are those who were the first ones to live in an area before any outside people arrived. Because Mexico is so large, there are multiple indigenous groups from Mexico, such as the Mayans, the Olmec, and the Aztecs. All three of these indigenous groups made these pendants out of clay. Small enough to fit in the palm of a hand, many of the pendants had a hole at the top in order to put on a piece of string to wear as a necklace or bracelet. Many of the pendants look like human faces. Some of the pendants were created over 2,000 years ago!

The pendants look like tiny masks. These masks were made to honor the indigenous gods, spiritual forces, and leaders who were believed to have descended from gods themselves. The masks were used in a variety of places, such as for ceremonial dances, battles, and burials.