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| 1. Record Nr. | UNICAMPANIASUN0096025 |
| Autore | Livius, Titus |
| Titolo | 26: Livre 36. / Tite-Live ; texte établi et traduit par André Manuelian |
| Pubbl/distr/stampa | CXL, 130 p. [2-79 doppie], [3] c. di tav. ripieg. : ill. ; 20 cm |
| ISBN | 22-510-1319-9 |
| Edizione | [Paris : Les belles lettres] |
| Descrizione fisica | Testo originale a fronte. |
| Lingua di pubblicazione | Francese
Latino |
| Formato | Materiale a stampa |
| Livello bibliografico | Monografia |
| 2. Record Nr. | UNINA9910813698503321 |
| Autore | Grove David C. |
| Titolo | Discovering the Olmecs : an unconventional history // by David C. Grove |
| Pubbl/distr/stampa | Austin, Texas : , : University of Texas Press, , 2014
©2014 |
| ISBN | 0-292-76830-3
0-292-76829-X |
| Edizione | [First edition.] |
| Descrizione fisica | 1 online resource (208 p.) |
| Collana | William & Bettye Nowlin Series in Art, History, and Culture of the Western Hemisphere |
| Disciplina | 972/.01 |
| Soggetti | Olmecs - History
Olmecs - Antiquities
Mexico Antiquities
Mexico Civilization Indian influences |
| Lingua di pubblicazione | Inglese |
| Formato | Materiale a stampa |
| Livello bibliografico | Monografia |
| Note generali | Description based upon print version of record. |
| Nota di bibliografia | Includes bibliographical references and index. |

Nota di contenuto

""Preface""; ""1. The Olmecs Come to Light""; ""2. The Tulane Expedition and the Olmec World (1925-1926)""; ""3. The First Excavations: Tres Zapotes (1938-1940)""; ""4. Stone Heads in the Jungle (1940)""; ""5. Fortuitous Decisions at La Venta (1942-1943)""; ""6. Monuments on the Rio Chiquito (1945-1946)""; ""7. The Return to La Venta (1955)""; ""8. Of Monuments and Museums (1963, 1968)""; ""9. Adding Antiquity to the Olmecs (1966-1968)""; ""10. Research Headaches at La Venta (1967-1969)""; ""11. Reclaiming La Venta (1984 to the Present)""
""12. San Lorenzo Yields New Secrets (1990-2012, Part 1)""""13. El Manati: "Like Digging in Warm Jell-O" (1987-1993)""; ""14. "They're Blowing Up the Site!" Tres Zapotes after Stirling (1950-2003)""; ""15. An Olmec Stone Quarry and a Sugarcane Crisis (1991)""; ""16. Discoveries Large and Small at San Lorenzo (1990-2012, Part 2)""; ""17. The Night the Lights Went Out (2001)""; ""18. Some Thoughts on the Archaeology of the Olmecs""; ""Bibliographic Essay""; ""Index""

Sommario/riassunto

The Olmecs are renowned for their massive carved stone heads and other sculptures, the first stone monuments produced in Mesoamerica. Seven decades of archaeological research have given us many insights into the lifeways of the Olmecs, who inhabited parts of the modern Mexican states of Veracruz and Tabasco from around 1150 to 400 BC, and there are several good books that summarize the current interpretations of Olmec prehistory. But these formal studies don't describe the field experiences of the archaeologists who made the discoveries. What was it like to endure the Olmec region's heat, humidity, mosquitoes, and ticks to bring that ancient society to light? How did unforeseen events and luck alter carefully planned research programs and the conclusions drawn from them? And, importantly, how did local communities and individuals react to the research projects and discoveries in their territories? In this engaging book, a leading expert on the Olmecs tells those stories from his own experiences and those of his predecessors, colleagues, and students. Beginning with the first modern explorations in the 1920s, David Grove recounts how generations of archaeologists and local residents have uncovered the Olmec past and pieced together a portrait of this ancient civilization that left no written records. The stories are full of fortuitous discoveries and frustrating disappointments, helpful collaborations and deceitful shenanigans. What emerges is an unconventional history of Olmec archaeology, a lively introduction to archaeological fieldwork, and an exceptional overview of all that we currently know about the Olmecs.
