Pre-Hispanic Ritual use of Caves in the Rio La Venta Region,
Chiapas, Mexico

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The knowledge of archeological remains in natural caves of the Rio La Venta area, Chiapas (Mexico), has notably increased since 1993, when La Venta Exploring Team began his long-term spelological exploration. The Rio La Venta Archaeological Project, stemmed by the speleological one in 1997, is currently drawing up a catalogue of archeological caves of the area, once inhabited by Zoque indians. Analysis and excavations of ritual activity areas (offerings, burials, child sacrifice, etc.) is showing their wide distribution and their chronological variations, always related to the cult of water deities paid by indians groups living in a highly karstified area extremely poor in surface waters. The article resumes the results of our work and deals with the main lines of ongoing research.