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The East Texas Caddo: Modeling Tempo and Place

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ABSTRACT

While large strides have been made in Caddo archaeological research during the last 30 years, there remains no shortage of research questions and problems that can be addressed concerning the Caddoan period, 800-1680 AD. Caddoan groups are known for their well-developed systems ofMound Ceremonialism and siting practices and it is important to address the development and geographical continuity of these Caddoan peoples, providing the specific times when areas were abandoned or population sites diminished; and defining times and areas identifying intensification in mound center construction and large cemeteries became a focus of community social practices.

RESULTS

Although the number of sites is small, they highlight a possible temporal hiatus of nearly 400 years in the Red River basin, and another of nearly 200 years in the Cypress Creek basin, both of which appear here on the basis of data from one site in each river basin. The remaining peaks correlate with populations from the kernel density plot, and they illustrate a small peak in the Red River basin around 400 B.C. followed by slight increases in the dates from the Sulphur, Cypress, and Sabine basins around 200 B.C. This is prior to a 200-year peak in dates from the Sulphur and Sabine River basins for A.D. 50-220, after which a marked increase occurs in the number of dated Woodland sites for the Sulphur, Cypress, Sabine, and Neches River basins from A.D. 600-800.

CONCLUSIONS

We are quickly approaching an era where typological assignments can be associated with radiocarbon samples in this same manner, but significant advances in correlating these data with specific aspects of archaeological assemblages still need to be made as we progress in our analyses of the Woodland period of East Texas. This analysis represents only a small subset of 14C dates from the ETRD, which remains a large and understudied amalgam of radiocarbon dates that is available for use within current cultural resource management endeavors. Through the systematic employment of this methodological approach, it is plausible that similar analyses would generate the arguments presented here (i.e., shorter hiatuses during the later and better-understood Caddo period, and longer hiatuses ranging from the Archaic through Paleoindian periods), providing a productive medium through which dialogues regarding the material culture of East Texas can continue to be developed.