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# Utility Ware Ceramic Metrics and Hasinai Caddo Archaeology in East Texas

*Timothy K. Perttula*

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## Introduction

The use of ceramic metrics (i.e., ratios of various categories of decorated sherds as well as use of different tempers) has become an important analytical tool in assessing the stylistic similarity of different assemblages of Late Caddo and Historic Caddo ceramic assemblages in East Texas (see especially Marceaux 2011). In this article, I employ recent compilations of ceramic vessel sherd assemblages from sites in the Neches, Angelina, and Sabine River basins that focus on the distinctive character of Caddo utility ware vessel decorations, particularly the common use of brushing as a decorative method, and the ratio of brushed to other wet paste decorated sherds.

## Upper Neches Cluster

The upper Neches cluster of ceramic vessel assemblages (Figure 1) dating from ca. A.D. 1560 to post-A.D. 1680 includes a number of sites near the headwaters of the river, including sites in the Lake Palestine area and various sites on tributaries of the Neches River, including Flat Creek and Caddo Creek. The compilation provided in Table 1 is from Perttula and Walters (2016:Table 22). Brushed sherds are particularly common in these upper Neches sites, and thus the ratios of brushed sherds to other wet paste sherds (i.e., incised, punctated, incised-punctated) is considerable.

**Table 1. Comparative sherd assemblage data from Lake Palestine Caddo sites and nearby Caddo sites in the upper Neches River basin.**

| Site   | No. of Dec. Sherds | %Brushed | %bone-temper | %Wet-paste decorations | P/DR | Brushed/Wet paste ratio |
|--|--------------------|----------|--------------|------------------------|------|-------------------------|
| YOUNGEST SITES: GROUP I, Allen phase, ca. post-A.D. 1680 |                    |          |              |                        |      |                         |
| 41CE421*   | 1805               | 88.1     | 5.4          | 7.8                    | 0.28 | 8.50                    |
| 41CE429*   | 465                | 87.7     | 0.8          | 9.7                    | 0.22 | 9.07                    |
| Pine Snake*  | 305                | 85.2     | 5.7          | 8.8                    | 0.51 | 9.63                    |
| 41CE354*   | 474                | 82.7     | 3.1          | 8.9                    | 0.20 | 8.14                    |
| GROUP II, latest Frankston phase, ca. A.D. 1560-1680     |                    |          |              |                        |      |                         |
| 41HE22   | 228                | 85.5     | ?            | 7.5                    | 0.62 | 11.5                    |
| 41AN1  | 295                | 83.1     | 5.1          | 7.1                    | 0.19 | 7.21                    |
| 41CE324  | 188                | 81.9     | 3.2          | 7.3                    | 0.48 | 11.0                    |
| Attaway  | 814                | 84.4     | ?            | 10.6                   | 1.71 | 8.0                     |
| Debro  | 311                | 80.0     | ?            | 10.3                   | 0.14 | 7.75                    |
| 41SM91   | 191                | 75.9     | 0.7          | 14.7                   | 0.51 | 5.18                    |
| 41AN21*  | 133                | 75.9     | 1.1          | 17.1                   | 0.30 | 5.32                    |
| William Sherman  | 525                | 75.8     | ?            | 16.2                   | 0.44 | 4.68                    |
| A. C. Saunders   | 5805               | 74.5     | 15.5         | 14.4                   | 0.21 | 5.30                    |
| 41AN8*   | 98                 | 70.4     | 3.3          | 18.3                   | 0.55 | 3.83                    |
| 41AN2*   | 152                | 67.8     | 11.5         | 17.8                   | 0.41 | 3.81                    |

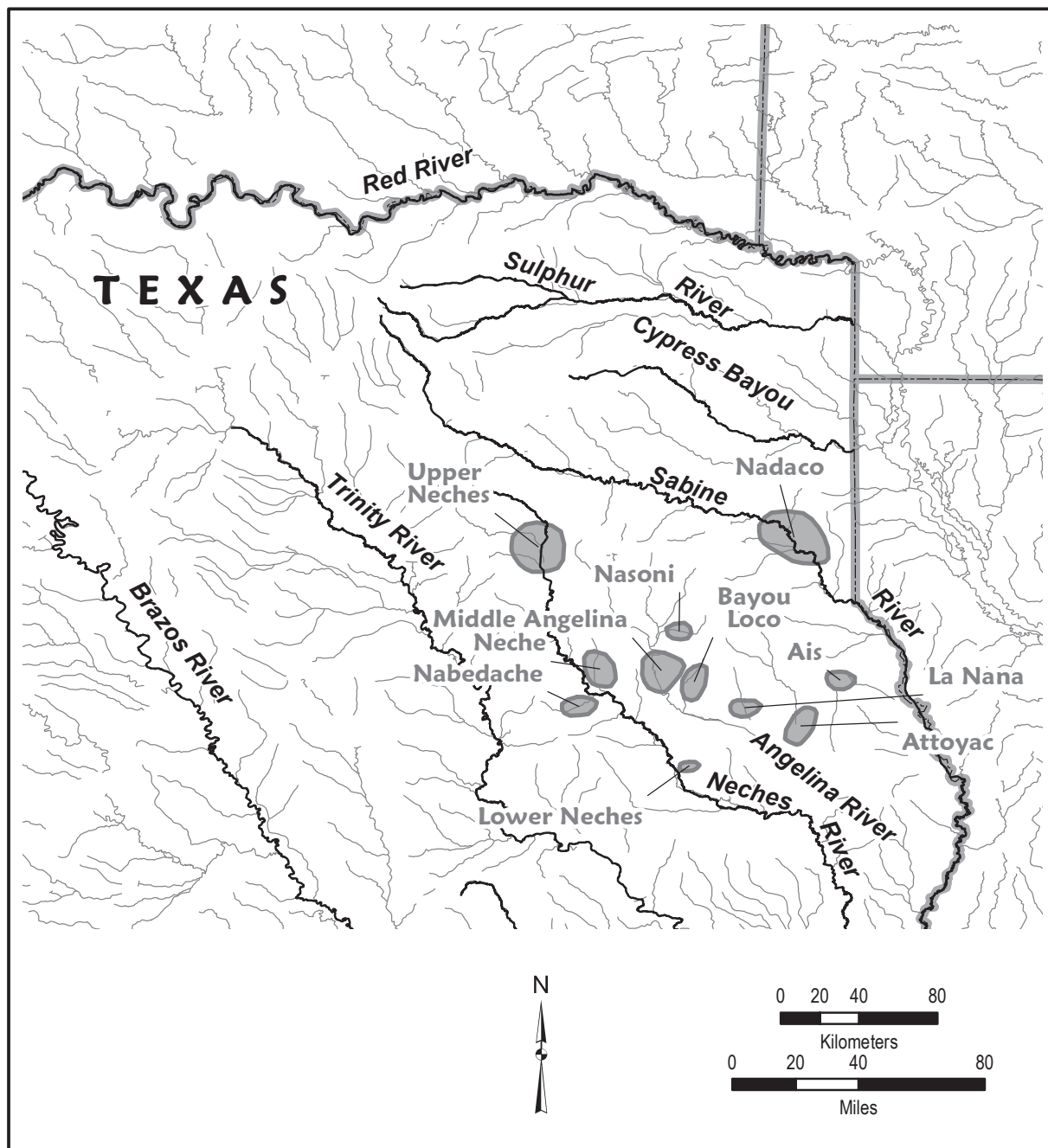


Figure 1. Historic Hasinai Caddo ceramic clusters in East Texas.

### Nadedache Cluster

The Nadedache ceramic cluster is comprised of several post-A.D. 1680 sites on San Pedro Creek in the mid-Neche River basin (see Figure 1) (see Perttula 2016f). In these assemblages, the utility wares include a higher proportion of other wet paste decorative elements (Table 2) than is the case in contemporaneous upper Neches Caddo ceramic assemblages, as only 71.4 percent of all the decorated sherds have brushed decorative elements, and the ratio of brushed to other wet paste sherds is only 4.36, compared to between 8.14-9.63 in post-A.D. 1680 upper Neches cluster sites (see Table 1).

**Table 2. Decorative methods represented in the ceramic sherds at San Pedro Creek sites.**

| Attributes                             | Ivie #1         | Historic Nabedache Caddo Sites |                      |                                |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
|  | 41HO263         | 41HO211                        | 41HO214              | 41HO91                         |
| P/DR                                   | 0.60            | 0.34                           | 0.32                 | 0.56                           |
| % Brushed among all sherds             | 36.4            | 53.2                           | 56.7                 | 44.2                           |
| % Brushed among decorated sherds       | 58.2            | 71.4                           | 76.0                 | 69.2                           |
| % Engraved among all sherds            | 4.5             | 10.6                           | 7.8                  | 9.8                            |
| % Incised among all sherds             | 8.0             | 9.6                            | 5.3                  | 4.9                            |
| % Punctated among all sherds           | 11.4            | -                              | 2.6                  | 3.3                            |
| % Neck banded among all sherds         | 1.1             | 2.2                            | -                    | 3.3                            |
| % Applied among all sherds             | -               | 1.1                            | -                    | -                              |
|  | <b>%Brushed</b> | <b>%Wet-paste decoration</b>   | <b>Brushed/Plain</b> | <b>Brushed/Wet paste ratio</b> |
| Nabedache Cluster, summary compilation | 71.4            | 16.4                           | 1.79                 | 4.36                           |

Sample sizes: Ivie #1 (33 plain sherds and 55 decorated sherds, see Perttula 2016f); 41HO211 (24 plain sherds and 70 decorated sherds); 41HO214 (55 plain sherds and 172 decorated sherds); 41HO91 (22 plain sherds and 39 decorated sherds), see Perttula and Nelson (2006, 2007a, 2007b).

### Neches Cluster

The Neches cluster of ceramic vessel sherd assemblages (see Perttula 2016e; Perttula et al. 2016) includes several Allen phase Historic Caddo sites on Bowles Creek and the Neches River (41CE291) as well as one Late Frankston phase (ca. A.D. 1560-1680) investigated component of the George C. Davis site (41CE19) (Fields and Thurmond 1980) on the northern part of the terrace east of the Neches River (see Figure 1). These components have high proportions of brushed sherds and ratios of brushed to other wet paste sherds (Table 3). These assemblages are almost exclusively comprised of grog-tempered vessels, but differences between the sites in the proportion of bone-tempered vessels (either as the sole temper or in combination with grog) suggest that two contemporaneous groups of Allen phase sites are present in the Neches cluster. These two groups (I and II) also are notably different in brushed to plain sherd ratios (Table 3).

**Table 3. Ceramic sherd assemblage comparisons of Neches cluster sites, including 41CE291.**

| Site               | % Grog | % Bone | P/DR | B/PI | B/OWP** |
|--------------------|--------|--------|------|------|---------|
| <b>Allen phase</b> |        |        |      |      |         |
| <b>Group I</b>     |        |        |      |      |         |
| 41CE293            | 98.1   | 5.6    | 0.12 | 7.50 | 5.70    |
| 41CE477            | 95.8   | 4.2    | 0.18 | 4.73 | 13.0    |
| 41CE474            | 97.1   | 2.9    | 0.30 | 3.08 | 9.25    |

**Table 3. Ceramic sherd assemblage comparisons of Neche cluster sites, including 41CE291, cont.**

| Site                                | % Grog | % Bone | P/DR | B/Pl | B/OWP** |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|------|------|---------|
| <b>Allen phase, cont.</b>           |        |        |      |      |         |
| <b>Group II</b>                     |        |        |      |      |         |
| 41CE48                              | 84.2   | 27.7   | 0.31 | 2.43 | 5.48    |
| 41CE475                             | 91.2   | 9.2    | 0.34 | 2.55 | 11.3    |
| 41CE20                              | 98.4*  | 14.3*  | 0.40 | 2.07 | 5.0     |
| 41CE476                             | 91.2   | 9.2    | 0.45 | 1.77 | 7.0     |
| 41CE291                             | 97.4   | 2.6    | 0.30 | 1.94 | 1.84    |
| <b>Late Frankston phase</b>         |        |        |      |      |         |
| <b>Group III</b>                    |        |        |      |      |         |
| 41CE19,<br>Northern<br>part of site | N/A    | N/A    | 0.82 | 0.78 | 1.90    |

P/DR=plain to decorated sherd ratio; B/Pl=brushed/plain sherd ratio; B/OWP=brushed/other wet paste sherd ratio

\*percentages will total to more than 100 percent because some sherds have more than one kind of temper

\*\*sherds with multiple decorative elements (i.e., brushed-incised or brushed-punctated, etc.) are counted as both brushed and as other wet paste sherds

### Nadaco Cluster

The Nadaco cluster of Historic Caddo ceramic assemblages includes a number of early to late 18<sup>th</sup> century sites in the mid-Sabine River basin primarily investigated by Jones (1968), and codified as Kinsloe phase sites. This includes selected sherd assemblages from the Millsey Williamson (41RK3), C. D. Marsh (41HS269), and Cherokee Lake (41RK132) (Jones 1968; Perttula 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2016d, 2016g; Perttula and Nelson 2007c).

### Summary Comparisons

Information used to compile Table 4 is derived from Marceaux (2011) plus the more recent compilations discussed above from post-A.D. 1560 and Historic Caddo ceramic assemblages in the upper Neches, Nabadache, Neche, and Nadaco areas (see Figure 1). The differences in the proportions of brushed sherds among all decorated sherds in Historic Caddo assemblages in 15 different parts of the Sabine, Neches, Angelina, and Attoyac stream basins in East Texas, and the ratio of brushed to other wet paste utility ware sherds, indicate that the character of utility ware vessel and sherd assemblages among Hasinai Caddo groups was diverse in the post-A.D. 1680 era, sufficiently diverse that these assemblage-level distinctions can be affiliated, in some cases, with specific post-A.D. 1680 Caddo tribal groups.

**Table 4. Comparisons between East Texas Historic Caddo assemblages.**

| Areas                   | Percent Brushed in Decorated Sherds | Brushed/Wet Paste | Cluster         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| I, Nadaco, Sabine River | 64.8                                | 1.95              | Nadaco          |
| II, lower Neches        | 90.8                                | 11.38             | None Identified |
| III, Upper Neches       | 82.7-88.1                           | 8.14-9.63         | Upper Neches    |
| III, Neche, I           | 87.4                                | 6.34              | Neche           |

**Table 4. Comparisons between East Texas Historic Caddo assemblages, cont.**

| Areas                        | Percent Brushed in Decorated Sherds | Brushed/Wet Paste | Cluster             |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| IV, Neche, II                | 81.3                                | 6.74              | Neche               |
| IV, Nabedache                | 71.4                                | 4.36              | Nabedache           |
| V, Middle Angelina II        | 70.0                                | 2.30              | Legg Creek          |
| V, Nasoni/East Fork Angelina | 66.8                                | 3.08              | Nasoni              |
| VI, Middle Angelina I        | 84.7                                | 6.71              | King Creek          |
| VI, Bayou Loco I             | 81.8                                | 8.89              | Bayou Loco South    |
| VII, Bayou Loco II           | 60.9                                | 1.86              | Bayou Loco North    |
| VII, Bayou La Nana           | 56.5                                | 2.25              | Nacogdoche          |
| VIII, Attoyac Bayou II       | 50.0                                | 1.72              | Attoyac             |
| VIII, Attoyac Bayou I        | 30.4                                | 0.61              | Upper/Lower Attoyac |
| IX, Ais mission              | 0.0                                 | 0.0               | Ais                 |

lower Angelina: 41AG22

Ais mission: Corbin et al. 1980, 1990

Middle Angelina I: 41CE62, 41NA6, 41NA15

Middle Angelina II: 41NA44, 41NA54

Bayou Loco I: 41NA21, 41NA22, 41NA23, 41NA27, 41NA60, 41NA11

Bayou Loco II: 41NA183

Attoyac Bayou I: 41NA67, 41SA116

Attoyac Bayou II: 41SA94

What these comparisons first suggest is that the Mission Dolores de los Ais ceramic assemblage (IX) stands apart in several distinctive ways from Late to Historic Caddo ceramic assemblages associated with Hasinai Caddo groups living in adjoining drainage basins in this part of East Texas (Figure 2). If the Mission Dolores de los Ais ceramics are a representative sample of the character of an 18<sup>th</sup> century Ayish ceramic assemblage, then at this point, no other such Ayish ceramic assemblages have been identified in the region. Such dramatic differences in ceramic stylistic and technological characteristics (i.e., a very high use of bone temper in vessel manufacture) in an Ayish ceramic tradition (whose ancestral sites have yet to be discovered), then also suggest that the Ais or Ayish may not have been living in this part of East Texas long before the Spanish began to make a concerted effort to explore the region after 1689 (Foster 1995), and that their utility ware ceramic tradition evolved from different roots than did Hasinai Caddo ceramic clusters and groups.

The Nadaco (I), lower Neches (II), and upper Neches (northern part of III) ceramic clusters and groups are also divergent from the remainder of the groups, the latter concentrated in the mid-Neches and Angelina River basins (see Figure 2), as are the ceramic clusters in the Attoyac Bayou basin (VIII). The lower Neches and upper Neches groups have the highest proportion of brushed sherds in decorated sherd assemblages and the highest ratios of brushed to other wet paste sherds (see Table 4). The Group IV Neche II and Nabedache clusters are similar in proportions of brushed sherds and in brushed to other wet paste sherd ratios, suggesting these spatially related sites are also closely related in cultural practices.

Ceramic groups V-VI represent the core of known Hasinai Caddo ceramic assemblages in the Angelina River basin (see Figure 2 and Table 4). Ceramic group V has been readily linked with the Nasoni Caddo, since Mission Nasoni (1716-1730) is one of the sites included in the Table 4 compilation. This

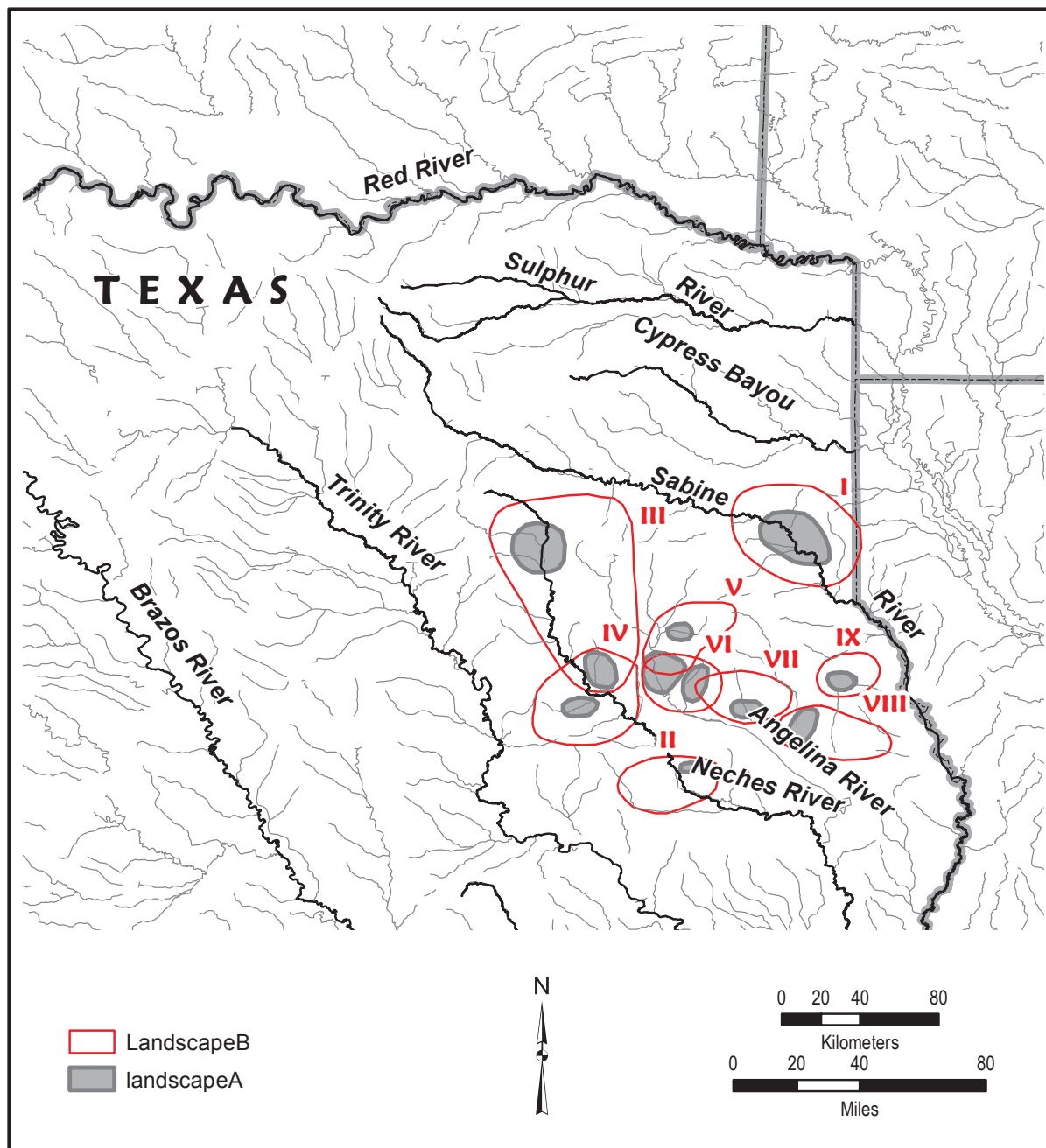


Figure 2. Spatial groupings of Historic Caddo and Historic Ais ceramic clusters I-IX in East Texas.

group in turn is stylistically similar in its utility wares to mid-Angelina River basin sites on Legg Creek, while other mid-Angelina River basin sites (King Creek) are stylistically similar to both Bayou Loco and Bayou La Nana assemblages (see Figure 2 and Table 4). These latter groups may be affiliated with both Hainai and Nacogdoche Caddo groups living in this part of East Texas throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The Attoyac group (VIII) has much lower proportions of brushed sherds and more equitable brushed to other wet paste sherd ratios (0.61-1.72) than the other groups. The ethnic affiliation of this group of sites is not known.



Finally, this ceramic sherd data from a number of sites and areas indicates that the utility wares of the East Texas Hasinai (and the Nadaco on the Sabine) can help identify specific groups/communities of ceramic practice, and if they can be linked confidently to specific Caddo groups known through ethnographic and historic records, then archaeologists are in a much better position to determine the direction of cultural and ceramic change through time, particularly what happened to these groups from pre-contact times through much of the 18th century, and perhaps beyond. With the addition of assemblage level data in fine wares, as well as the occurrence of specific utility ware types (i.e., Lindsey Grooved and Spradley Brushed-Incised, see Marceaux 2011), the picture should be even more illuminating.

Perhaps with additional analyses and the identification of other Historic Caddo ceramic assemblages in East Texas, we can trace the history of groups that survived, identify which ones did not: i.e., why is the area between the Neche and upper Neches apparently unoccupied? Who were the upper Neches group or groups? When did the Ais settle in East Texas, and what group/groups were there before them in the area (see Figure 2), and perhaps which ones aggregated for survival? Hopefully new ceramic assemblages from each of these ceramic clusters and ceramic groups will be identified in the next few years, which, if such is the case, should further advance the study of Hasinai Caddo archaeology.

### Acknowledgments

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