

Stephen F. Austin State University
SFA ScholarWorks

CRHR: Archaeology

Center for Regional Heritage Research

2013

The Clements Site (41CS25): A Late 17th-to Early 18th-Century Nasoni Caddo Settlement and Cemetery

Robert Z. Selden Jr.
seldenjr@sfasu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/crhr>

 Part of the [Archaeological Anthropology Commons](#)

Tell us how this article helped you.

Recommended Citation

Selden, Robert Z. Jr., "The Clements Site (41CS25): A Late 17th-to Early 18th-Century Nasoni Caddo Settlement and Cemetery" (2013). *CRHR: Archaeology*. Paper 4.
<http://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/crhr/4>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Regional Heritage Research at SFA ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in CRHR: Archaeology by an authorized administrator of SFA ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu.

Yatasi, both of which may have developed from Belcher phase groups.

Focusing upon the Terán map of an Upper Nasoni village, Sabo identifies three sets of related symbolic relationships: between the sun and the Ayo-Caddi-Aymay, between the Ayo-Caddi-Aymay and the sacred fire in the temple, and between the temple fire and fires of individual households. Each is expressed at multiple levels, reflecting a cosmological structure understood by all involved.

This edited volume provides a glimpse into the novel and valuable methods employed by Caddo archaeologists as they endeavor to extract a meaningful dialogue regarding the numerous social and cultural relationships that existed among and across the spatial and temporal divisions that occur within the ancestral Caddo society. In covering such a wide variety of topics, Perttula and Walker have assembled a work that should be of interest to anyone endeavoring to pursue research aimed at complex societies. These results from multiple projects at various scales of analysis could be useful in both CRM and classroom settings, as we strive to continually improve our research designs.

The Clements Site (41CS25): A Late 17th- to Early 18th-Century Nasoni Caddo Settlement and Cemetery. TIMOTHY K. PERTTULA, BO NELSON, ROBERT L. CAST, and BOBBY GONZALEZ. American Museum of Natural History—Scientific Publications, New York, 2010. 52 pp., illus., maps, notes. \$25.00 (paper), ISSN: 0065-9452.

Reviewed by Robert Z. Selden, Jr., Ceramics Laboratory, Department of Anthropology, Texas A&M University, 4352 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4352. e-mail: zac_selden@tamu.edu

This book represents a collaborative effort between the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), National Park Service, Caddo Nation of Oklahoma Historic Preservation Program, and archaeologists interested in the native history of the Caddo, which led to the first consolidation of archaeological information from the Clements site in East Texas. This site was originally excavated by avocational archaeologist Will T. Scott, who sold his collection from the site to the AMNH in 1900 for \$200. Subsequent investigations by the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory were interpreted without the aid of the AMNH collection due to the absence of documentation linking these collections. Hence, this represents the first comprehensive reporting of excavated materials from the Clements site, and a much more robust and contemporary

interpretation regarding the material culture of the Caddo people.

The rediscovery of the collection at the AMNH was accidental, made during a routine Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) visit regarding a Caddo cranium and funerary offerings recovered from archaeological contexts in northwest Louisiana. It was that discovery that prompted this volume, which was authored by highly regarded Caddo archaeologists with the aid of the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, and the NAGPRA Coordinator of the Caddo Nation to explore the character and significance of the associated and unassociated funerary objects that accompanied burials within this Nasoni Caddo cemetery.

While the content of this book is justifiably representative of a technical report, the authors present a well-structured argument for their interpretation of the site as a whole, and within the larger region. Perttula et al. approach this by way of discussions regarding subjective artifact categories followed by one of regional dynamics and the potential that these findings have for shared social, religious, and philosophical beliefs of the Nasoni Caddo inhabitants. Through careful consideration of ceramics, lithics, freshwater mussel shells, marine shell ornaments, pigment, and pipes, the whole of the collection is now documented within a singular source, resulting in the first comprehensive snapshot of funerary objects used by the Nasoni Caddo at the Clements site.

Through the course of the investigation, many of the previous interpretations were updated using the now combined data set—which includes a rejection of the cannibalism hypothesis put forth by Jackson (see pp. 13–14)—to a consilience that paints a more holistic portrait of the inhabitants that is representative of the entirety of this collection. Although ancillary to the goals of their project, the authors seem to convey a silent warning with regard to the interpretation of material culture from archaeological contexts, and it is my opinion that this would be a valuable case study within the context of a university classroom.

The mechanics and structure of the book make it well suited and accessible to a variety of audiences, the figures and tables are clear and succinct, and perhaps the best news is that this volume is accessible electronically—free of charge—on the AMNH web page at <http://hdl.handle.net/2246/6037>. While this book will certainly be of interest to archaeologists, historians, and students within the realm of Caddo studies, it is also an excellent example of (1) how to integrate two collections and contemplate more holistic interpretations and (2) the many risks inherent in the interpretation of material culture.

Copyright of Southeastern Archaeology is the property of Southeastern Archaeological Conference and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.