Late Woodland Interaction Patterns in the Upper Yadkin River Valley

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Introduction

Research conducted in the Yadkin River Valley and beyond has highlighted the co-existence of several distinct community types in the Early to Middle Woodland periods, each with their own unique temporal and spatial boundaries. These communities are often characterized by distinctive materials or styles, suggesting patterns of interaction or differentiation. However, when studying the Late Woodland period, most research has focused on the lower Yadkin Valley with only limited analysis of material exchange occurring within the upper valley. This study aims to explore interaction patterns in the upper Yadkin River Valley by investigating the lithic interaction networks of three villages—31Wk26, 31Sr58, and 31Yd32—and comparing them to the lower Yadkin Valley sites 31Wk130, 31Wk33, and 31Sr57. The research is based on material analyses and diagnostic tools such as factor analysis and cluster analysis to examine the comparative patterns of material interaction.

Background

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Methods

We examined lithic assemblages from sites 31Wk26, 31Wk130, 31Sr58, and 31Yd32 and compared them to the lower Yadkin Valley sites 31Wk130, 31Wk33, and 31Sr57. Diagnostic stone tool elements were identified and counted, and the collections were subjected to a series of diagnostic tests. Lithic analysis was conducted, and diagnostic tools such as factor analysis, cluster analysis, and chi-squared tests were applied to the data. The results were then synthesized to create a model of interaction patterns between the upper and lower Yadkin River Valley communities.

Results

The upper Yadkin River Valley sites show variation in material types compared to the lower Yadkin Valley. Site 31Wk26 shows a greater diversity of materials, including rhyolite, while site 31Yd32 shows a narrower range of materials. Site 31Sr58 shows similarities to both upper and lower valleys, indicating potential interaction between the two regions.

Discussion

The results suggest a complex network of interaction within the Upper Yadkin River Valley. The variation in material types and styles indicates different regional and cultural influences, suggesting the presence of multiple trade networks. Further research is needed to explore the underlying factors driving these interaction patterns and their implications for the broader understanding of Late Woodland interaction in the region.

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References


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