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Correctionville and the Oneota Tradition: The Western Oneota and the Correctionville Phase

Dale Henning, with contributions by Brennan J. Dolan, Linda Scott Cummings, R. A. Varney, Cindy Strong, and Sabrina Calabrese. OSA Report 26, 2023. 206 pp., 54 figures, 7 maps, 28 tables. \$25 (PDF).

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Correctionville and the Oneota Tradition: The Western Oneota and the Correctionville Phase is a site report about a group of six Oneota villages located in northwest lowa on the Little Sioux River that form the Correctionville phase. The bulk of the assemblage comes from the Correctionville site (13 WD 6), where salvage excavations were conducted in the 1950s as the site was being mined for gravel. The seven chapters in the report provide an introduction and background followed by chapters describing several classes of material remains: ceramics, chipped stone, ground stone, redstone or catlinite, and faunal remains. The book ends with a final chapter that summarizes the discussion sections of each of the individual chapters under headings that make it easy to find the summaries and a summary conclusion. Appendices provide more information about the items discussed in each chapter, two radiocarbon dates, and a report of X-ray fluorescence measurements on sherds from Correctionville and other sites.

The introduction provides basic background information, including a definition of Oneota and the geographic and temporal distribution of various Oneota occupations. The Oneota landscape is largely empty, with occupations confined to relatively small areas dispersed throughout the Prairie Peninsula, especially in the portion west of the Mississippi. Unfortunately, a map of the Prairie Peninsula is not provided, although several maps show the locations of the various occupations. Brief summaries of each occupation, horizon, and/or site are provided—somewhat uncritically, which may give the reader things to quibble about—creating a handy overview of the numerous sites, complexes, and horizons. The chapter also discusses possible connections between archaeologically known Oneota occupations and historically recorded Indigenous groups.

The subsequent chapters provide detailed descriptions of several types of materials. As is typical for Oneota, ceramics get a lot of attention. The type Perrot Punctate, as defined by Hall (1962:175–177), links the Correctionville phase with other contemporary Oneota sites that were occupied during the Developmental Horizon around 1300 CE. Strangely enough, there is no figure that clearly illustrates this

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pottery type, at least according to the figure captions. As this pottery style makes up about 30% of the decorated assemblage, there is substantial stylistic variation, some of which points to contacts with other groups and other regions. The chapters on chipped and ground stone are short, and the chipped-stone chapter notes that the assemblage is "relatively generic" and therefore typically Oneota. The chapter on redstone (pipestone) will be interesting to people because this widely traded material has a well-defined source area and appears at many Oneota sites. Small catlinite tablets were made at Correctionville based on catlinite debris at the sites and abraders in the ground-stone tool assemblage that have been associated with catlinite processing at other sites. Catlinite processing seems to have been restricted to sites in northwest lowa. The interpretation of the faunal remains is hampered by the way the remains were collected. The Correctionville excavations were mainly conducted as salvage activities as the site was being destroyed, and screening and flotation were not used. There is also no clear provenience record for most of the specimens. The assemblage is dominated by mammals and bison are prevalent, although there is some doubt as to whether that indicates procurement/processing or collection bias for large elements. Canids were also abundant and were processed on-site. A very small number of fish bones, a bone from a pond turtle, and a fragment of a bone fishhook provide intriguing hints that aquatic resources were more important than was typical at western Oneota sites. The diverse bone-tool assemblage is clearly described with abundant illustrations.

The appendices provide basic data that could be useful for comparative purposes, although some of the labels differ between the figure captions and the ceramic appendix, requiring some work on the reader's part. An appendix describing the results of X-ray fluorescence measurements on sherds from Correctionville and other sites is purely descriptive and not referred to in the rest of the text.

The author participated in some of the excavations at Correctionville when he was just beginning his career in the 1950s. In this volume, he returns to the site with many years of experience and much knowledge of Oneota. Although the notes and maps of the excavations were lost in the intervening years, this report provides a clear description of an assemblage from a western Oneota Developmental Horizon I (ca. 1300 CE) village, places that assemblage into the widest possible context, and presents some areas for future research. I would recommend this volume for Oneota enthusiasts or anyone who wants an example of how to get lots of information out of what initially seems to be a poorly documented site.

References Cited

Hall, Robert L. (1962) The Archaeology of Carcajou Point: With an Interpretation of the Development of Oneota Culture in Wisconsin. 2 vols. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison.