

Excavations at Shiloh Indian Mounds 1999-2004: What We Have Learned and What Remains to be Done.

David G. Anderson, Department of Anthropology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

The construction of monumental architecture dates back thousands of years in Eastern North America. Multidisciplinary excavations at the primary mound at Shiloh, a major early Mississippian period center in western Tennessee, has helped show how such monuments were constructed in the past and how they can be documented in the present. The Shiloh project was undertaken from 1999 to 2004 by the National Park Service because Mound A, the largest mound on the site, was eroding into the Tennessee River, and engineering studies indicated much of it would be lost within a matter of decades. With the advice and support of the Chickasaw Nation, the excavations and subsequent analyses and reporting documented a wealth of information, with the two-volume technical monograph released in 2013 available online, supplemented by >15 gigabytes of supporting data. With over 50 absolute dates, Mound A is known to have been built from ca. A.D. 950-1300 in a series of construction episodes that included, at times, the use of carefully selected, brightly colored soils. As a result of this project, we now know that mound construction was sometimes a far more complicated and ceremonially charged activity than traditionally assumed. As we shall see, while much was done and learned, much remains to be accomplished by future generations, as is always the case in archaeology.

Those interested in the final monograph may find a pdf copy at

<http://pidba.org/anderson/cv/2013.Anderson.Shiloh.pdf>

The main mound profile is available at:

<http://pidba.org/anderson/cv/Shiloh.foldout.pdf>

Biographical Sketch

David G. Anderson. (Ph.D. Michigan 1990, MA Arkansas 1979; BA Case Western Reserve 1972). Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Tennessee 2009-present, Associate Professor 2004-2009; formerly with the National Park Service, 1988-2003. Awards: First C. B. Moore Award for Excellence in Archaeology, Southeastern Archaeological Conference 1990; Society for American Archaeology (SAA) Dissertation Prize 1991; SAA Presidential Recognition Award 1997; SAA Excellence in Cultural Resource Management Award for Research 1999; Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Science 2014; Lifetime Achievement Award, Southeastern Archaeological Conference, 2018. Archaeological fieldwork in the Southeastern, Southwestern, and Midwestern United States, and in the Caribbean. Professional interests include exploring the development of cultural complexity in Eastern North America, climate change and its effect on human society past and present, maintaining and improving the nation's CRM program, teaching and writing about archaeology, and developing technical and popular syntheses of archaeological research. This work is documented in some 50 books and technical monographs and some 400 shorter publications and meeting papers and posters. Selected publications include *The Savannah River Chiefdoms: Political Change in the Late Prehistoric Southeast* (Alabama 1994), *The Paleoindian and Early Archaic Southeast* (Alabama 1996); *Archaeology of the Mid-Holocene Southeast* (Florida 1996), the latter two edited with Ken Sassaman; *The Woodland Southeast* (Alabama 2002) edited with Bob Mainfort; *Archaeology, History, and Predictive Modeling* (Alabama

2003) with Steve Smith; *Climate Change and Cultural Dynamics: A Global Perspective on Mid-Holocene Transitions* (Academic Press 2007) edited with Kirk A. Maasch and Daniel H. Sandweiss and *Recent Developments in Southeastern Archaeology: From Colonization to Complexity* with Ken Sassaman (Society for American Archaeology Press 2012).