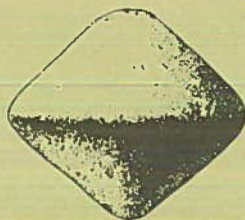
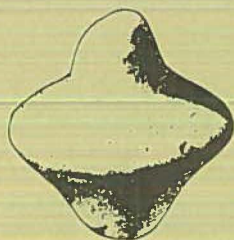


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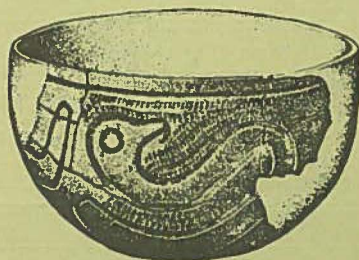
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LOUISIANA IN NORTH AMERICAN PREHISTORY

William G. Haag



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LOUISIANA IN NORTH AMERICAN PREHISTORY

William G. Haag

Any consideration of the prehistory of Louisiana can best be understood in the larger context of North America. That is, Louisiana experienced only a segment of a cultural history that affected the whole continent. Nevertheless, we can epitomize the prehistory of Louisiana by relating it to some of the events that transpired during the last few tens of thousands of years in the entire continent.

Although we are certain that man has been on earth for more than a million years, only during the last few thousands of that long period has he been evidenced in the New World. This million-year period also was a time of great glacial activity, and the polar ice cap in the northern hemisphere periodically expanded to cover many thousands of square miles of land. It was in this setting of alternating cold and warm climates that man was evolving both biologically and culturally. Nevertheless, the habitat of earliest man was tropical or subtropical and continued so for a long time. Only when he had some cultural history behind him was he able to cope with the colder regions. In the last tenth of the million-year period, man became a mighty hunter and traveler.

Population in Africa, Europe, and Asia was sparse until about 75,000 to 50,000 years ago. Hence, we should not be surprised that population pressure was so nonexistent that there was not much reason for man to have been forced to move into the New World. When ice retreated for the last time from the face of northern Europe and Asia, the great Ice Age animals such as the mammoth, mastodon, cave bear, and woolly rhinoceros also retreated northward with the cool climatic conditions they liked, but presumably most eventually became extinct. In the course of the extinction of these large animals, man was forced to follow his "food" wherever it migrated. In all

Reprinted with revision (Figure 10) from *Louisiana Studies*, Vol. IV, No. 3, Winter 1965 with permission of The Louisiana Studies Institute.

probability, the retreating face of the Old World glaciers more or less directed some early inhabitants into the northeastern portions of Siberia and eventually they must have crossed into North America. Bering Strait now is a narrow water barrier, but at the time of the late Wisconsin maximum ice accumulation in the northern hemisphere, approximately 20,000 years ago, the Bering Strait land bridge was more than 1,000 miles wide. The vast ice sheets were accumulations of precipitation that usually ran back to the sea, so at times of maximum glacial extent, sea level was lowered, perhaps as much as 450 feet. Of course, as ice melted from the high latitudes of both hemispheres, sea level did rise again and the Bering Strait land bridge became much narrower and finally ceased to exist.¹

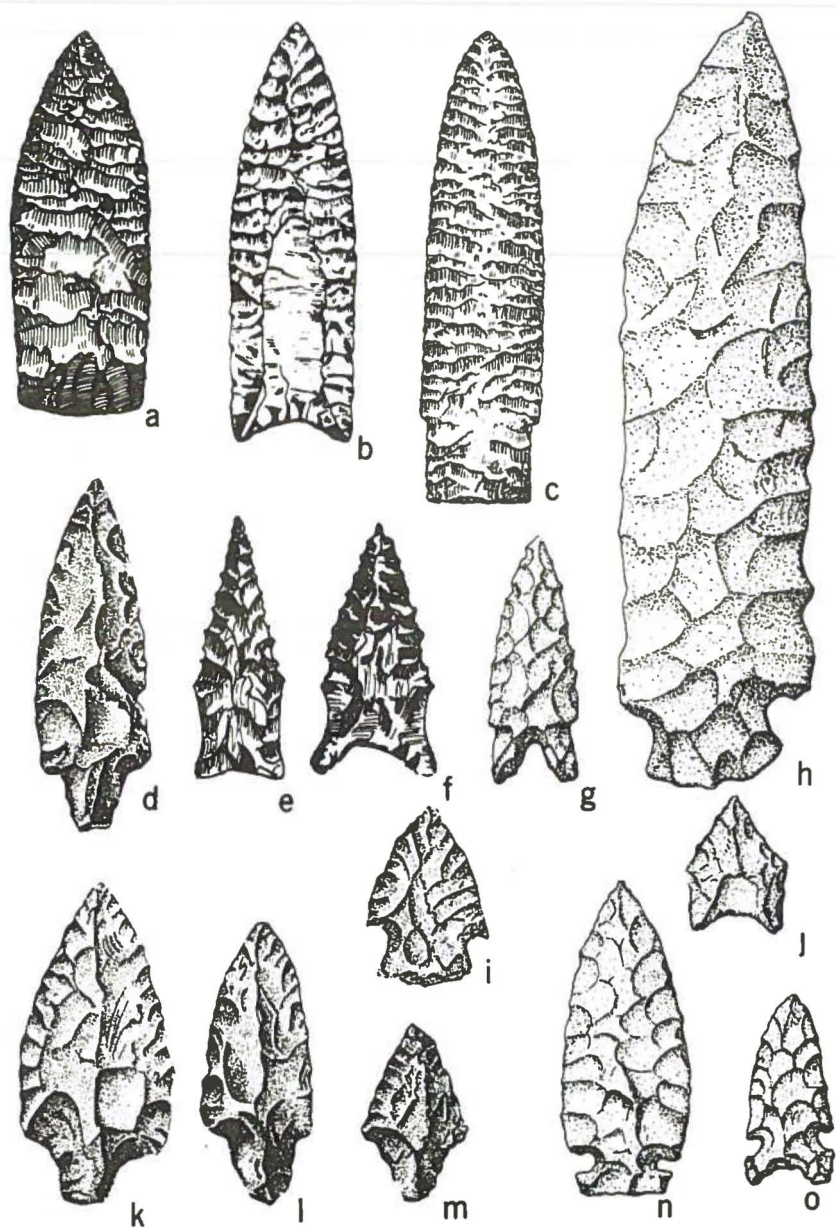
Once peoples ventured into North America, beginning about 30,000 B. C., or even earlier, they clung to the coastlines and spread southward along the margin of the continent for it was here that they could subsist on the readily available seafoods, if game animals were too difficult to capture. It is possible, but not probable, that man spread throughout the New World primarily by means of the then exposed continental shelf—that narrow-to-wide shelf of land that surrounds our continents and lies just below sea level now.² The reason for doubt is because there is sure evidence that he did begin to move inland, perhaps to find large game and later to take advantage of the offerings of the great inland lakes left by the melting ice. These lakes were inhabited by innumerable shore birds and other denizens useful to man. We know that in the interior of North America, particularly in the Plains area, there persisted, until a few thousand years ago, ancient forms of horses, bison, and camels. In any case, we can be confident that man occupied all of the New World in a matter of a few tens of thousands of years. This does not mean that every niche was occupied, but it does mean that by 10,000 B.C. or so, man had spread all the way down to the southern tip of South America. He probably moved everywhere that he could where big game still attracted him. Certainly some of the animals that have been mentioned before that are now extinct, as well as giant bison, sloths, and

elephants, he leisurely pursued all the way to the Atlantic shore of North America. This pursuit of the last remnants of big game may be most important in man's diffusion throughout the New World, but it can be over-emphasized. Big game does not seem to have been so plentiful as to have been the primary food source for any of these early peoples.³

The Lithic Period

The period of earliest man in the New World is called the Lithic or Paleo-Indian and is best represented by sites throughout the High Plains from southern Canada southward through the United States. There are manifestations of this time in Mexico and parts of South America. The eastern United States discloses an occasional find that may be attributed to this period. One should not conceive of the Lithic or Paleo-Indian as a unified or even vaguely similar "culture." Rather it is to be viewed as many and various local adaptations of men equipped with a meager chipped stone toolkit. This diffusion of man throughout the whole of the New World is indeed a rather complex problem and one that need not occupy us at this point. Very few Paleo-Indian remains are found in any one place, but they are sparsely represented from the Pacific to the Atlantic. The best known sites are in the western High Plains. In Louisiana, an occasional projectile point, presumably for a spear or dart thrown by a hook-ended spear thrower, attests the presence of Paleo-Indians. Virtually all of these rare finds are in the northwestern part of the state.⁴ None comes from the younger coastal land.⁵ It is even possible that the isolated finds of early points result from a later culture member "arrowhead collector." However, we do surmise that men moved into Louisiana from the west and north, and from east and north, overland rather than by water (Figure 8).

If it is difficult to fix the direction from which came the earliest migrants into Louisiana, it is also difficult to fix the time at which they made this entrance. Presently, we have no Louisiana archeological materials with radiocarbon dates that are earlier than about 5,000 B.C., but there are



archeological remains in the southern and eastern part of North America that have dates as early as 7,680 B.C.⁶ Thus, we will not be surprised to find remains within Louisiana that are as early as near 10,000 B.C., and it is possible that we could have material of a very early age, say, of the order of 30,000 to 40,000 B.C., for there is mounting evidence elsewhere in North America that there were some occupants in the continent at these ancient times.

It must be remembered, however, that much of the surface of the state of Louisiana is quite young, geologically speaking. The present alluviated valley and the deltaic plain of the Mississippi River extending across the state of Louisiana do not anywhere have surfaces older than perhaps 2,000 B.C., and there is presently some reason for believing that the closing date of this deposition is closer to 1,500 B.C.⁷ However, the great terrace lands that border the Mississippi River, like giant ribbons of varying widths, are much older and peoples could have lived on their surfaces at times when they stood at much lower elevations. Only parts of the northwestern portion of the state have been dry land for millions of years. Thus, the land surface of Louisiana that would have been available for these early occupants would have been different in its distributions from the present surface, but still there were ample highlands and river terraces and natural levees that would have supported early man.

While we recognize the fact that the land surface of several thousand years ago was different in distribution from today, there is the possibility that the vegetation covering this surface was of

Figure 1. Projectile point types of various early periods: a, *Plainview*; b, *Clovis*; c, *Scottsbluff*; d, *Kent*; e and f, *Dalton*; g, *Pedernales*; h, unspecialized knife?; i, *Ensor*; j, *San Patrice*; k, l, and m, *Gary*; n, *Big Sandy I*; o, *Big Sandy II*. Types a, b, c, e, f, and h are Paleo-Indian; d, g, i, j, k, l, m, n, and o are Archaic to Woodland. a, b, and c after Wormington (1949); e and f from Cambron and Hulse (1964); remainder from Ford (1936 and 1940).

some difference in appearance also. The origin of the prairies, the open, park-like lands that characterize parts of Louisiana today, is still a matter of great scientific debate. Yet, it is rather probable that some grasslands did exist in the past. If this were true, it is most probable that certain large animals, such as bison, would have been attracted to the region, at least west of the Mississippi River. One thing we can say with confidence about animal life is that it does tend to migrate into regions that are most favorable for it. We can also conclude that bison were extremely sparse in Louisiana at all times. This point will be returned to later on, but it does seem highly probable that the vegetation and animal life were not greatly different 5,000 years ago from what it was in A.D. 1700.

From the foregoing, one might suspect that the opportunity of finding evidences of early man in Louisiana is rather remote and, certainly, such is very near the truth. Nonetheless, some recent work by Gagliano has disclosed evidence which would suggest the presence of rather early man on Avery Island of coastal Louisiana.⁸ His findings are not spectacular, but conclusive, and show an association of the remains of several different kinds of extinct animals including elephants, horses, camels, and bison. Also found at Avery Island are artifacts that are not directly associated with the extinct animal bones but are strongly suggestive of an early occupation in this region. It is not inconceivable that similar long-ago-uplifted spots, such as Jefferson Island and Week's Island, might disclose very early remains of man in Louisiana. Of course, there are reported occurrences of extinct animal remains in a great many areas of the state, particularly in the Feliciana parishes. However, none of these discoveries has had any artifacts associated with it, and we suspect that most, if not all, are secondary deposits. This means that the animals died of natural causes and were encased in sediments. Later the remains were washed out and redeposited at some other spot.

The Archaic Period

No matter how numerous or scarce were the large animals, rather quickly these did become extinct and early New World man was forced to turn his attention to other sources of food. One of the first that attracted him was shellfish, marine—as has been suggested before—and fresh-water. Shellfish are animals that move slowly but require rapidly moving water for their habitat. Thus, shellfish have accumulated in great numbers where there are "riffles" or swiftly flowing sections in fresh-water streams. However, shellfish were not the only things that man ate, and he probably supplemented his meat diet to a great extent with quite a variety of roots and berries.

In some favored spots, on both seacoast and inland stream, there are now the shell remains indicating this long occupation by man. Shellfish may not seem to be a very dependable food supply; but it was, occurring in such abundance that piles to depths of twenty feet or more have accumulated in some parts of the southern United States. In Louisiana, particularly, shell heaps have supplied an abundance of road metal for modern construction, so that much of our early archeological record has completely disappeared. We find an occasional shell heap now marked off only as a remnant—only as a little circle of the remaining shell.

These piles of shells are middens; that is to say, they are garbage piles. They are simply the debris from the everyday living practiced by the peoples of the time, but it was not uncommon for the early inhabitants to use such sites, not only as their dwelling places, but also as the spot for disposal of the dead. The bodies were encased in a hole of the smallest possible size, usually dug to the bottom of the shell heap. And because of the presence of so much shell, rain waters percolating down through them were sweetened, and thus the bones were not eroded away, but in many instances were actually strengthened. Hence, we have excellent records of the physical appearance of some of the early people. In many instances along the conti-

mental margins, the most ancient shell heaps have long since been covered by the rising sea. Often, as the sea rose, a considerable amount of alluvial material was deposited so that the shell heaps are not only below sea level, but they are actually covered by marsh accumulation. Frequently, in the Louisiana coastal marshes, evidence of such a submerged shell heap can be ascertained from the presence of lines of live oak trees which are rooted all the way down into the shell below. Sometimes the tops of these shell heaps still stand above the level of the marsh, but most often it is simply a line of trees that is seen. It may be that the shell heap accumulated along the margin of a bayou and, hence, it would be indicated as a sinuous line of trees. In other instances, the shell was mounded in a pile so that now the heap is indicated by a clump of trees.⁹

When New World man was forced to turn his attention to living upon relatively meager foods, such as the shell middens attest, we consider that he had moved into a stage of cultural evolution to which the name Archaic is given. The earliest shell heaps throughout the eastern part of the United States and along the Pacific Coast are generally attributed to this Archaic Period. In the dry interior western part of the United States, we refer to the equivalent stage as the Desert Culture. Throughout the western hemisphere this hunting and collecting activity serves as the base from which the later cultures have evolved.

In much of the western part of the United States, the Desert Culture dates as early as 8,000 B.C. and was unchanged until modified by the introduction of agriculture. Cultivation of certain domesticated plants was brought from the Valley of Mexico about 2,500 B.C. In all probability, it already had a 3,000-year history by that time; yet when important domesticated plants, such as maize, beans, and squash were introduced into the southwest, they slowly revolutionized the subsistence of these people. Phases of this early agriculture, west and later east, are called the Formative Stage.¹⁰ Of course, some individual western groups persisted down into historic

times as Desert Culture folk, but others took on the new traits of agriculture and were gradually modified into a variety of different cultural manifestations in the southwest. Pottery was introduced into the southwest from Mexico about 150 B.C.

Much the same change transpired in the eastern part of the United States where the Archaic background was also modified in a variety of ways by the introduction of new traits, many of which we are uncertain as to locus of origin. Curiously, agriculture was not important in the east until near the beginning of the Christian Era, but pottery was known by 2,500 B.C.

The Archaic people in the southeast are represented by archeological remains that tell us of a widespread, numerous, simple folk living off the bounty of the land, meager as it must have been in certain times and places. In the hill country of Louisiana, not many people could have been supported by the sparse game and certainly no large villages are identified there. Nearly all of the evidence for the presence of the Archaic Culture comes from numerous large, stemmed projectile points that suggest the use of the spear-thrower and dart. Some recent studies based on projectile points only have suggested a widespread distribution of Archaic in the uplands of Louisiana.¹¹ However, projectile points change rather slowly and may persist for long time spans. They cannot be used with much validity for time markers. Some historic Indians made projectile points similar to some Archaic folks, and some used no points at all. A few specialized forms, however, are excellent cultural indicators (Figure 1).

One might suppose that the coastal regions of Louisiana could support the largest number of Archaic people since a reasonably bountiful supply of foodstuffs might be obtained from either the marsh lands or the Gulf. However, if we look for Archaic remains in these areas today, none is to be found. Yet, there is a ready explanation for this absence. It is simply that the present marsh and coastal surfaces are not of sufficient antiquity to have been the sites on which peoples of this age could have lived. Rather, we find representative Archaic sites

in regions which have been exposed above high water or alluviations of rivers for more than 5,000 years. Hence, the present flood plain of the Mississippi River, which is nowhere as old as 5,000 years, discloses no evidences of Archaic except where an occasional remnant of Pleistocene-age land protrudes through the modern, or recent alluvium.¹²

A glance at the map illustrating the distribution of archeological sites of various ages (Figure 7) shows that none, with one exception, of the Archaic sites is to be found in the coastal area. That exception, of course, is Avery Island in Iberia Parish, where a knoll of several miles diameter has reared its head above the marshy coast lands for thousands of years. In fact, Avery Island, as noted above, is the one spot in the coastal region where early man, of the Lithic stage (Paleo-Indian), is suspected. Avery Island is the topographic expression of a vast salt dome that lies thousands of feet beneath the surface here, and a number of similar formations are found northwestward and southeastward of Avery Island. Thus, it would be no surprise should Archaic materials eventually be found in these more or less restricted spots. There is literally no chance that Lithic or Archaic remains may be found on the present alluvial flood plain or coastal marsh lands. Once we move inland from the low marsh lands, surfaces are encountered that are older than 5,000 years of age, and thus Archaic remains have been found on these upper terraces.

The Archaic Culture is of utmost importance throughout the whole of North America, because of the fact that it formed the basis upon which a great many local or regional variations developed, and Louisiana is no exception to this. Despite the fact that representations of pure Archaic sites are rare, it is evident that we did have a reasonably widespread representation of that stage.

The Poverty Point Period

In Louisiana, the first modification we find of the Archaic background is a culture to which has been given the name Poverty Point, the name being taken

from the type site in northeast Louisiana (Figure 2).¹³ The Poverty Point Culture is one characterized by the introduction of several new traits, one being the use of artificial stones or baked clay balls for cooking "stones." In using the clay balls, boiling was accomplished by heating them in the fire and dropping them in a skin-lined hole full of water. Pottery was still unknown here at this time, but it had been found 1,000 years earlier on the Atlantic coast. (It might be recalled that pottery was not introduced into the southwestern part of the United States until about 150 B.C., whereas agriculture had been introduced more than 2,000 years earlier). The clay balls of the Poverty Point Culture occur by the thousands on Poverty Point sites and are reported only occasionally from other places. The clay balls are just about the size that one might make by squeezing a handful of mud in one hand and tossing it in the fire where it might bake to a hard consistency. If, in the course of reheating, they broke, it was no tragedy, for many more of them could be manufactured easily.

In addition to the clay balls, another set of artifacts appears to be diagnostic of Poverty Point Culture. A series of small chipped flint objects, to which the name "microlith" has been given, has been found in great numbers only at such sites. *Lith* in combining form means "stone," *micro* means "small," hence, small stone artifacts. These objects are quite numerous, occurring by the tens of thousands on two known Poverty Point Culture sites. Their use is still a mystery to us and some commonplace, everyday utilization is implied because of their great number. They may be the remnants of broken tools, perhaps simple side scrapers, but again the great number of them hardly suggests that this is a very adequate explanation.¹⁴ Sufficient it is to say that few other sites in North America show artifacts of this type, except for scattered ones on the Pacific coast, and some in the eastern part of the United States.

The microlithic objects are unique enough, but the Poverty Point Culture presents an additional astounding trait of tremendous earthworks construction

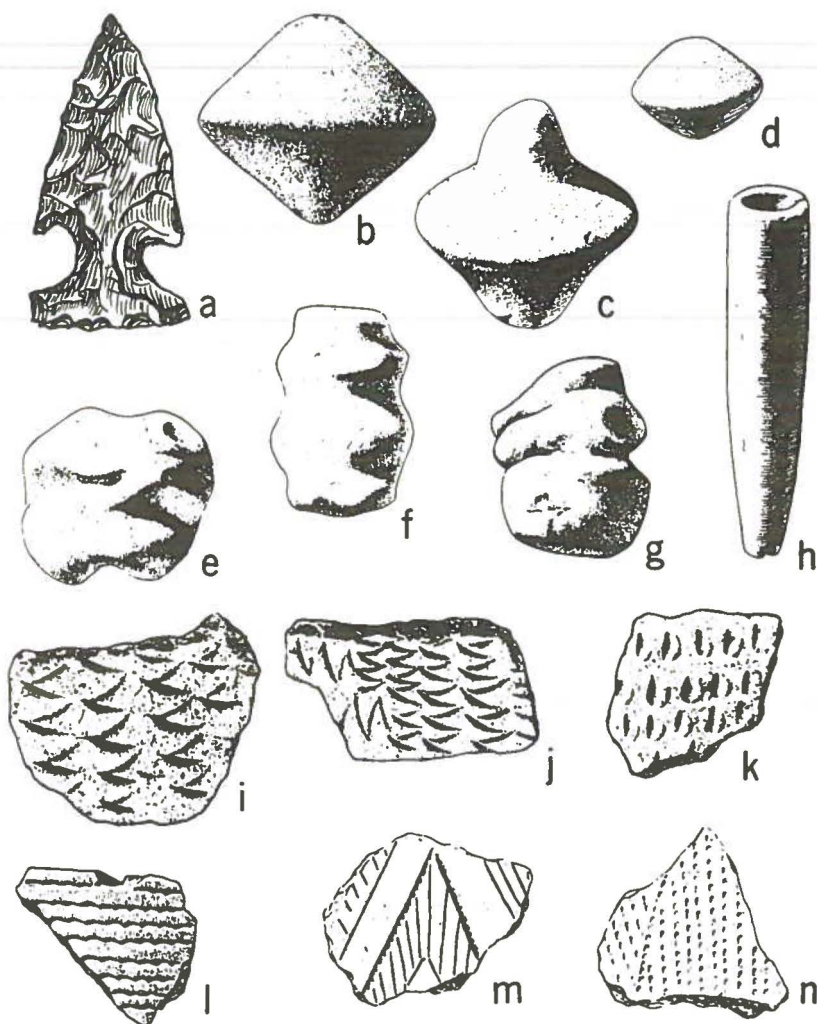


Figure 2. Characteristic artifacts of early Woodland cultures. Poverty Point phase: a, *Motley* point; b - g, various forms of baked-clay Poverty Point objects or cooking "stones"; the small biconical, d, is the only form that is commonly found in Tchefuncte and Marksville sites; h, a tubular pipe. Tchefuncte pottery types: i and j, *Tchefuncte Stamped*; k, *Alexander Pinched*; l, *Tchefuncte Incised*; m and n, *Lake Borgne Incised*.

that bespeaks a rather large population in the Mississippi Valley and northern Louisiana. At the Poverty Point site itself there is an earth structure consisting of six concentric octagons that is presumably of some ceremonial significance. It has been interpreted by some to be a deliberately planned village or arrangement of dwellings.¹⁵ The evidence for this is rather tenuous and at best doubtful. Another feature of the large earthworks is the presence of an enormous associated earth mound, seventy feet high and more than 500 feet long at the base. If one stands on the crest of this mound, he gathers an inescapable suggestion that it is depicting a large bird with outspread wings and spread tail. If so, this bird motif is present at an early time here in the eastern United States and persists through later cultures nearly into historic times, although we are by no means certain that it is the same basic concept that continues throughout that time span. At Poverty Point, steatite (stone) vessels show this same bird carved on their outer surface and small stone beads also are fashioned in this shape.

The Poverty Point Culture, then, is a radically new thing in contradistinction to the drab hunting and gathering culture that we called the Archaic. At best, the Poverty Point Culture may be said to be of late Archaic age but this judgment is based on an absence of pottery at the site. On the other hand, it may be considered as launching the succeeding Woodland or Formative Period (Figure 10). The radiocarbon dates obtained on the Poverty Point Culture suggest that it was at its height about 700 B.C., but it must have had earlier beginnings in northern Louisiana.

Certainly, the Woodland Culture is marked by the introduction of the earth mound. At Poverty Point the bird mound associated with the great octagonal earthworks is judged to be a ceremonial structure that is not concerned with disposal of the dead. In another part of the same site, there was a conical earth mound that seems to have been used in some still unknown manner for the disposal of the dead. Actually, no skeletal material was recovered in the excavation of this mound, but there were evidences that it may have had some burial-ceremonial purpose.

Elsewhere in the eastern part of the United States, the common distinguishing feature of the Woodland Culture is the small earth mound. These mounds, when carefully excavated rarely reveal other than a single burial feature. This is to say that the sites were probably constructed as monuments to an individual. Often the pile of earth was simply erected on top of one individual who might have been laid out at the base or buried in a pit over which the mound was erected. Sometimes the mounds are increased in size by adding other burials. In many instances they are of such small size that not many individuals could possibly be interred. The designation Burial Mound I embraces this period (Figure 10). In Louisiana a few such sites are found, but this manifestation of building earth mounds was not nearly so commonplace in the Lower Mississippi Valley as it was in the Ohio Valley and its tributaries. In some portions of Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, and neighboring regions, earth mounds occur literally by the thousands, and the knowledge we have gained by scientific excavation leads to the conclusion that they are primarily concerned with the disposal of the dead.

A second trait that distinguishes the Woodland Culture is pottery. Pottery was first a simple globular-shaped affair, usually not more than one foot in diameter and not much more than a foot in depth. Surface treatment was simple—severe, geometric incised decorations, or punctations, or cord roughening marks on the surface, or no decoration at all. In most instances, the clay from which the vessel was moulded had crushed bits of rock mixed in with it to serve as a tempering material to prevent cracking as the clay vessel dried. We judge from the more or less advanced state of the first pottery making that the idea for the manufacture of pottery did not originate in the eastern part of the United States. Despite the fact that pottery is first found in the southwest about 2,500 B.C., evidence would suggest that it was introduced into the east from elsewhere. We formerly were confident that the "elsewhere" was Asia, but now we are not so confident. Neither earth mounds nor pottery of the eastern Woodland type seems to have been derived from

Asia. Now we suspect that pottery may have had a more southern origin, perhaps somewhere in the middle reaches of the New World because it occurs much earlier there. We may summarize by saying that the Poverty Point Culture represents an early transition from the Archaic to Woodland in northern Louisiana and, thus, is classified as Late Archaic by some, as Early Woodland or Formative by others (Figure 10).

The Tchefuncte Period

In coastal Louisiana, much of the old tradition of shellfish gathering augmented by hunting persisted long after the Poverty Point Culture was a thousand years old. About 200 B.C. pottery was added to this basic Archaic on the coast and around Lake Pontchartrain without seriously altering the general Archaic economy. This Early Woodland Culture is called Tchefuncte.¹⁶ It is characterized by fairly simple and not very well-made pottery; yet it seems to be the basis for later, better developments (Figure 2). In any event, the pottery made seems to have relations with Transitional or Early Woodland cultures to the east, perhaps as far as the Atlantic. Recent work by James A. Ford in the Huasteca coast of Mexico suggests that area as the source of inspiration for Tchefuncte pottery.¹⁷ Otherwise, our knowledge of the Tchefuncte is limited and is mostly drawn from excavations into middens or shell-heap garbage piles left by these peoples. Whether any agriculture was practiced is unknown but doubtful; almost total dependence upon harvesting the native coastal offerings is indicated.

The Tchefuncte peoples were not notable craftsmen in other things than pottery. Stone work is scarce and flint projectile points are rather large. The type *Gary* is most predominant (Figure 1). The bow was probably unknown, and the spear thrower was still in use at that time. Stone plummet-shaped objects, commonly found in Poverty Point, are numerous enough to imply that the bola was still one of their hunting devices. Tubular stone pipes are commonplace (Figure 2h).

Such evidence as we presently possess suggests that the Tchefuncte Culture developed primarily as

a coastal outgrowth of the Archaic, but gradually spread up the alluvial valley of the Mississippi River, its tributaries, and into the farthestmost regions of the state. The most distant site from the coastal area is one recently discovered in Texas, about midway between Shreveport and Dallas.¹⁸ Recent (1964) investigations by the Mississippi Valley Archaeological Survey of Harvard University has disclosed Tchefuncte artifacts as far north as Madison Parish.

A brief examination of the traits that distinguish the Tchefuncte Culture shows the following: relatively small, conical earth mounds, used for disposal of the dead in flexed or secondary burials; pottery characterized by more or less poorly compacted paste with designs that are essentially punctations in closely-spaced rows or stamped designs applied by a technique called "rocker stamping," as illustrated in Figure 2; a preponderance of plain pottery; and most of the decorative types not very well executed.

As suggested above, the projectile points are not particularly refined, but are of medium size and not retouched. The most common types are *Gary* and *Ellis*, illustrated in Figure 1. Groundstone artifacts include two fairly important types: one, the boatstone, is considered to be an atlatl or spear-thrower weight and is so called because of its general resemblance to a small boat or skiff. The second class of objects is various forms of thin slabs of sandstone that were used as both abraders and saws. Numerous bone and antler objects are found, including socketed antler points, various kinds of bone awls, fish hooks, and ornaments made from bone. It is interesting to note that Poverty Point baked-clay objects are also encountered in the Tchefuncte horizon, but not in great number nor in the variety represented in the earlier period. The simple, small, biconical form is most characteristic (Figure 2d).

Thus, we may say that the Tchefuncte Culture was a coastal adaptation or modification of the Archaic. Probably five or six centuries were expended in this gradual change of a basic Archaic to a coastal life, where shellfish and other offerings of the marsh

lands were exploited. Apparently this exploitation was sufficiently successful that the population increased to the extent that, like the Archaic, a gradual spread of the Tchefuncte Culture may be noted. It spread up the Mississippi River and its tributaries, so that representations of it are found as far west as northeastern Texas and Cameron Parish in southwestern Louisiana. It extended as far north as the present Arkansas-Louisiana line, and there is evidence of its influences into central Mississippi.

As the Tchefuncte diffused gradually northward up the Mississippi Valley there is a strong suggestion that it met a culture spread that was coming down the Mississippi River, namely, the Hopewell influence, emanating from a center encompassing the Ohio and Illinois River valleys.¹⁹

The exact cultural relations between Tchefuncte and Marksville are not clear but are seen best in the pottery typology. It is quite likely that Tchefuncte Culture remained a marginal survival in coastal Louisiana long after the later Marksville Culture was fully developed at the type site.

The Marksville Period

Farther in the interior of North America, especially along the Ohio River, other Woodland cultures were more elaborate. There did develop some wonderfully made pottery that characterizes a culture called the Hopewell in the Ohio area. This Middle Woodland Culture marks a period that had tremendous, far-reaching influences in the eastern part of the United States. Hopewell is characterized not only by the introduction of very fine pottery, but by the introduction of very fine flint artifacts—projectile points that appear to have been manufactured primarily for burial furniture, that is, something to accompany the dead, rather than something utilitarian.

The core or inner developmental culture area for the Hopewell centers around Cincinnati but its total area of influence for the eastern part of the United States is from the Great Lakes to Florida and from the Missouri River to the Atlantic.²⁰

In Louisiana it is seen that the Marksville Culture is a manifestation of this Middle Woodland. There is in Hopewell (Marksville) a continuation of Poverty Point concern with mounds and great earthworks as well as the addition of rather elaborate burial techniques. It is almost as though the Marksville Culture is a pronounced "burial cult" culture with very distinctive pottery largely used as burial furniture. Yet, it may be said that this basically is similar to Hopewell manifestations throughout much of the eastern part of the United States. It is important that the widespread influences and connections of this culture be noted. There are artifacts that seem to have been made of material from as far away as Yellowstone and there are various kinds of marine shells which were traded from the Gulf area all the way into the Ohio country.

There is only one outstanding site for the Marksville Culture—the type site. A great deal of the information about its distribution, and about the less spectacular aspects of the culture, come from small sites scattered throughout the coastal area of Louisiana. The Crooks site, in LaSalle Parish, had a strong representation of the Marksville Culture.²¹ We may summarize the outstanding characteristics of the Marksville Period as follows: It is the culture in which the burial mound became most fully evolved, and is represented by groups of two or more relatively large, conical mounds that contain a series of tombs or burials of select peoples. These mounds are by no means the typical method of disposal of the majority of the people of Marksville Culture times, but rather they were reserved for individuals who might have been "nobility" or shaman. In a few instances, these mounds have shown a trait of a prepared platform on which were scattered the burned remains of numerous individuals, and then the whole covered over by means of an earth cap. However, it is not uncommon to find scattered burials within the constructed mounds, which burials are often accompanied by extra skulls or human jaws that have been cut and perforated as though to be used as ornaments. In general, burials of any kind in Marksville mounds are sparsely supplied with burial goods, or any accompanying artifacts.

Marksville pottery is of two basic kinds: one, that rather ornate ware that accompanies burials, and two, the more or less utilitarian, plain ware. The burial pottery is characteristically ornamented throughout its entire surface. The most diagnostic design is usually outlined by broad, shallow incising. Rocker stamping with a dentate tool covers the background. Note the several examples illustrated in Figure 3.

Perhaps the single most important criterion for the recognition of specific Marksville pottery is the cross-hatched rim. That is, on the Marksville burial furniture pottery, the rims of vessels that had the bird design on them were distinguished by having a band about the rim of fine-line, cross-hatched incising.

During the Marksville Period, there is nothing very distinctive about the projectile points since most of the common Archaic types still persist, notably *Gary* and *Ellis*. However, Marksville is also a time of the development of a variety of other stone artifacts, including such items as boatstones (spear thrower weights?). A variety of ornaments, manufactured from slate and cannel coal, that resemble various kinds of animal forms are found. Another object that suggests connection between Marksville and Ohio Hopewell is the "monitor" pipe. A monitor pipe is made of stone, usually represents an animal figure or a single round bowl that surmounts a curved platform. Other Marksville traits that indicate this same connection are perforated pearl beads, copper ear ornaments, copper beads, bracelets, and celts.

This Middle Woodland Culture probably did not persist unaffected by other cultures for many hundreds of years. In the eastern part of the United States the so-called Early Hopewell Climax came near the beginning of the Christian Era; yet by A.D. 700 a new cultural manifestation makes itself apparent, namely, the Mississippian. However, the intervening time is one of Woodland regional variation where there are local developments — Marksville Culture here in Louisiana is a good example of such.

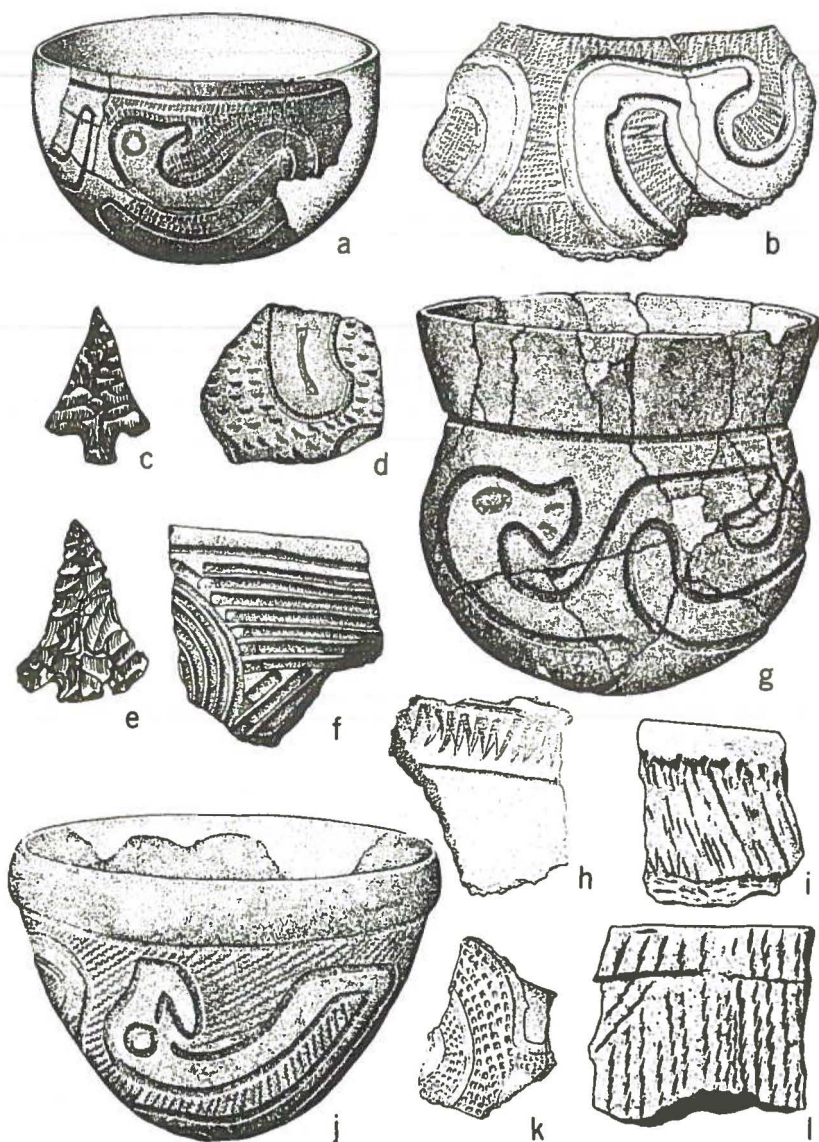


Figure 3. Middle Woodland Period artifacts: a, b, and k, *Marks-ville Stamped* pottery; c, *Alba* projectile point; d, *Churupa Punctated*; e, *Catahoula* point; f, *Yokena Incised*; g, *Marksville Incised*; h, *Troyville Stamped*; i and l, *Mulberry Creek Cord-marked* (Variety *Deasonville*); j, *Crooks Stamped*.

It has been demonstrated that Marksville Culture is an extension from a generalized core area in the Ohio Valley. Only the type site at Marksville represents the highly developed "urbanized" form of the culture. Elsewhere simpler manifestations occur, recognized primarily through pottery types characterizing the period, such as *Marksville Stamped*, *Marksville Incised*, and *Crooks Stamped* (Figure 3). In these "country cousin" sites in marginal areas of Louisiana, a somewhat modified form of the burial mound and its activities associated with the dead is to be seen. In the coastal area, the more or less Archaic type of life continued through Tchefuncte and into Marksville with collecting being the major emphasis. It is appropriate to consider the small Marksville Culture mound sites as marginal, perhaps adherents to the large ceremonial center such as the type site represents. Because the mounds and associated earthworks at Marksville are large and elaborate, the name Burial Mound II has been given to this period.

The Troyville Period

Following the Marksville Period is a time of uncertainty and ill-defined archeological history. Even in the Ohio-Illinois nuclear Hopewell area there is decline. In Louisiana, Marksville is transformed into a vaguely defined culture called Troyville.²² Here, again, the Troyville site—Troyville is an older name for Jonesville—was a spectacular mound site with extensive associated earthworks. Like the Marksville, Troyville distribution is primarily recognized by pottery types in localities other than the type site. Nonetheless, there are other distinguishing characteristics that justify the recognition of Troyville as a separate cultural period.

Most of our knowledge of Troyville is based on a few reports. The Greenhouse site report is a major one, although it has great representation of the succeeding period, the Coles Creek.²³ In fact, Greenhouse is the major reason why some students of Lower Mississippi Valley archeology contend that the "temple mound" began in Troyville times, a problem of which more will be said later.

Troyville pottery types that characterize the period are not exclusively confined to it, a fact that emphasizes the transitional nature of the period. *Troyville Stamped* (Figure 3h) looks like a sloppy *Marksville Stamped* although there are other refinements of type differences that enable the regional student to define sharply the relations among Troyville, Marksville, and Coles Creek.²⁴ Appearing for the first time in Louisiana is *Deasonville Cord Marked*, a variety of *Mulberry Creek Cord Marked*. Other pottery types that cluster in Troyville are *Yokena Incised*, *Churupa Punctated*, *Woodville Red Filmed*, *Larto Red Filmed*, a red-and-white painted type, and others. There are few non-pottery traits that are unique to Troyville. The *Alba* type projectile point, thought to be derived from the Huasteca in Mexico is found (Figure 3c). Its small size suggests the first appearance of the bow and arrow.

Troyville is nowhere found in a pure form on any single site, including the type site at Jonesville, now largely destroyed in road-fill construction. However, this transitional period evolved into a more firmly knit cultural manifestation.

The Coles Creek Culture

It is generally accepted that this cultural period is one of the better defined and most widespread in Louisiana. It is true that certain of its characters are very common throughout much of the Lower Valley but it is only with difficulty that its relationships outside this area are discerned. However, to demonstrate the power of its influences one need only to plot the distribution of its major traits and compare them with Troyville and Marksville. Coles Creek was a much more "successful" culture.

Coles Creek Incised pottery type is a new treatment of a simple nature. A series of incised lines, parallel to the rim with a row of triangular impressions beneath (Figure 4g) is most notable. There seems to be a number of varieties of this type as well as closely related but independent types. *Hardy Incised* (Figure 5a,b) developed in northeastern and

northwestern Louisiana at the same time that *Coles Creek Incised* was so popular in the southern portion, but *Hardy* is at its greatest popularity in the later Plaquemine Period.

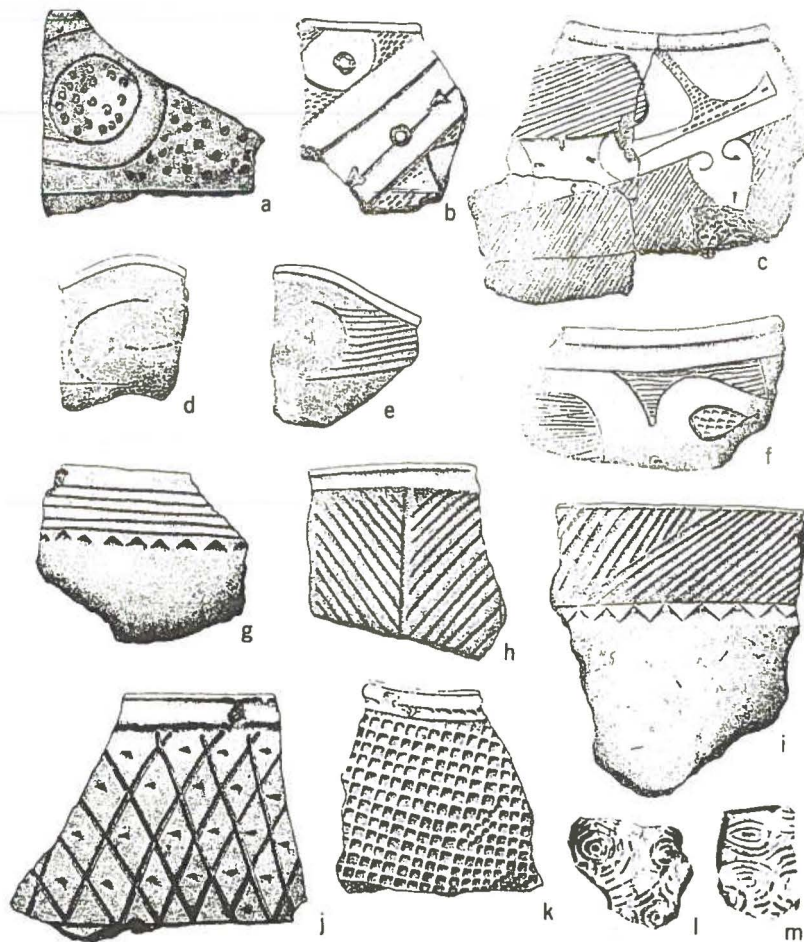


Figure 4. Middle Period Cultures: a-f, *French Fork Incised* pottery; g, *Coles Creek Incised*; h and i, *Mazique Incised*; j, *Beldeau Incised*; k, *Pontchartrain Check Stamp*; l and m, *Complicated Stamped*.

Other commonplace pottery types are *Mazique Incised* (Figure 4h, i), *Beldeau Incised* (Figure 4j), *Pontchartrain Check Stamp* (Figure 4k), and *French Fork Incised* (Figure 4a-f). These and other types occur in various relations through a number of sites from coastal Louisiana to near Arkansas. It should be noted, however, that strong interrelationships between the so-called Caddo area of northwestern Louisiana and the cultures of southeastern Louisiana are not apparent until later (Plaquemine) times.²⁵ The Sanson site, on Catahoula Lake, is about half Bossier Focus (Phase) Caddo and half Plaquemine.

Perhaps the most notable pottery type of the Coles Creek Period is not wholly confined to that time. *French Fork Incised* certainly shows Louisiana affiliations with Florida where the Weeden Island Culture shows remarkably similar ceramic treatments. In *French Fork Incised* we find some of the most esthetically mature pottery of the prehistoric period and it occurs throughout most of the coastal area and the lower alluvial valley of the Mississippi River.

Pontchartrain Check Stamp is a type of pottery that seems to have had direct inspiration out of eastern Georgia. The surface treatment results from paddling the moist pottery with a wooden paddle carved with V-shaped grid lines that produce a series of depressed squares (Figure 7k). *Pontchartrain Check Stamp* is judged to be related to the Deptford Period in Georgia. Later in the Deptford the stamping technique is modified to forms where complicated designs as illustrated in Figure 4, l and m, are the most popular. Potsherds with such designs are found as far west as the Texas border (Figure 8). Stamped pottery is also found in Avoyelles Parish.²⁶

Potsherds, almost indestructible, are the data upon which archeological histories are erected. The Coles Creek Culture is largely defined on pottery types, but most significant is the introduction of another spectacular trait in the southeastern United States, namely, the "Temple Mound." Whereas the burial mound is more or less conical, the temple mound is a sloping-sided, rectangular or square mound with a flat top—a truncated pyramid. It served as the foundation for a building—a building probably

devoted to various kinds of sacred activities—and thus we look upon it as a temple.

Whereas this temple mound appears to be a somewhat rude version of the elaborate stone-faced mounds characteristic of Central America and Mexico, we have no direct evidence that it came into Louisiana from the south. On the contrary, there is the strong suggestion that this idea moved into Louisiana from the east.²⁷ The center of greatest concentration of these pyramidal mounds or temple mounds is in the middle Illinois area, that is, around the East St. Louis region in Illinois. Nevertheless, this is not the place at which the temple mound may be oldest. There is some evidence that small temple mound sites on the Gulf Coast, particularly in Florida and Georgia, are older than those in Illinois. However, this manifestation spread fairly widely through the southern and central part of North America, and the temple mound was to an extent the base upon which developed later cultural manifestations.

A few students of Lower Mississippi Valley archeology would place the beginnings of the Temple Mound Tradition in the late Troyville times, but most are agreed that the coming of this structure coincides with the initial appearance of Coles Creek pottery.²⁸

Very little has been said about house types and settlement plans for the several cultures already discussed. By Coles Creek and Troyville times we have enough examples from excavation to assert that the floor plan of houses is uniformly round. The walls were made by erecting poles, three to six inches in diameter. The earliest evidence of house floors in Louisiana comes in Marksville and here, too, round houses are the order.

Nothing definite is known of settlement pattern or arrangement of houses in a village. Some suggestions from early aerial photographs at the Marksville site would imply round houses in a scattered array about the earthen wall enclosing the ceremonial center.

Meanwhile, in northwestern Louisiana there are evolving a number of local phases, loosely and collectively called Caddo, that have been equated in

time with Coles Creek, yet bear no evident cross-fertilizing influences. The source of this Caddo development is still poorly understood but it is obvious that its ties are with southeastern prehistory rather than the Plains. After the Bellevue phase, a Marksville coeval in the northwest, begin the specializations in pottery and other artifacts that are to culminate in the unique archeological complex called Caddo (Figure 10). Coles Creek trade items penetrate into northwestern Louisiana but no Caddo materials appear in the Lower Valley until the Plaquemine Period.²⁹

In summary, it may be said that the Coles Creek Period is a time of increased expansion of the Lower Mississippi Valley cultures. There is reason, then, to believe that a pronounced population increase was taking place. By this we are forced to conclude that a more secure economy was surely based on increased production of maize. We do not have direct evidence for the use of corn in Coles Creek times, but there is much evidence for its use elsewhere in the South, from Texas to Florida. Coles Creek pottery easily is the most widespread in the Louisiana coastal marshes, and it is almost certain that the exploitation of the Gulf waters and the marshes was a seasonal activity that enhanced the corn economy of larger inland population centers. It is possible, of course, that some parts of the population remained as year-round residents in the marshes for these areas are most suited for support of gatherers.

The Plaquemine Period

Evolving directly out of the Troyville-Coles Creek background in the Lower Valley was the Late Prehistoric Culture called Plaquemine. It shows many new traits but seems to have continued the early Temple Mound Tradition to its logical end (Temple Mound II). Plaquemine sites show the already established pattern of scattered small sites appended to large ceremonial centers developed to its fullest extent. The ceremonial center usually consisted of several large mounds arranged about a central plaza. Some of the truncated pyramidal sites are huge. The famous Emerald Mound near Natchez is said to be the

second largest prehistoric man-made object in the United States. It is exceeded in size only by the great Monks Mound at the Mississippian Culture center near East St. Louis. Everywhere in the Lower Valley the sites with large pyramidal mounds are Plaquemine. This time was the "classic" period for the southern area of the Mississippi Valley.

The pottery of the Plaquemine Period is marked by the appearance of some new traits but some of ancient heritage reappear. In the latter category is "brushing." In this type, the surface of the vessel was roughened by fine lines produced by combing or brushing the pot while in the unfired state. The instrument used may have been a bundle of grass or fibers of some kind. It could have been a stiffer comb-like object as well. Brushing was introduced into Louisiana in the Tchefuncte Period, but dies out until this near-historic time. *Plaquemine Brushed* is found throughout most of the state (Figure 5d, f).

Also to be found in the pottery assemblage are some incised types that are new. *L'Eau Noire Incised* is a distinctive interlocking key design, but most of the incised types are modifications of earlier forms. *Hardy Incised* may have developed out of and along with *Coles Creek Incised*. Interior incising of shallow bowls and plates makes a general appearance during this period. Some forms, such as *Harrison Bayou Incised* (Figure 5e, h) seem clearly to have evolved from *Beldeau Incised*. *Manchac Incised* is certainly a descendant of *Mazique Incised* (Figure 5c).

Engraving appears throughout the whole state on these late horizons, but it is particularly common in Caddo phases. (Engraved designs are scratched onto the pottery after the vessel is completely fired; incised designs are scratched into the surface before firing the vessel.) The long-necked water bottle shape (Figure 9) appears for the first time and, in the Caddo area, it is often engraved. Perhaps one of the most widespread engraved types is *Maddox Engraved*, a simple cross-hatching zoned between incised lines (Figure 5g). *Wilkinson Engraved*—named for Wilkinson County, Mississippi—is also common to both the Caddo area and the Lower Valley.

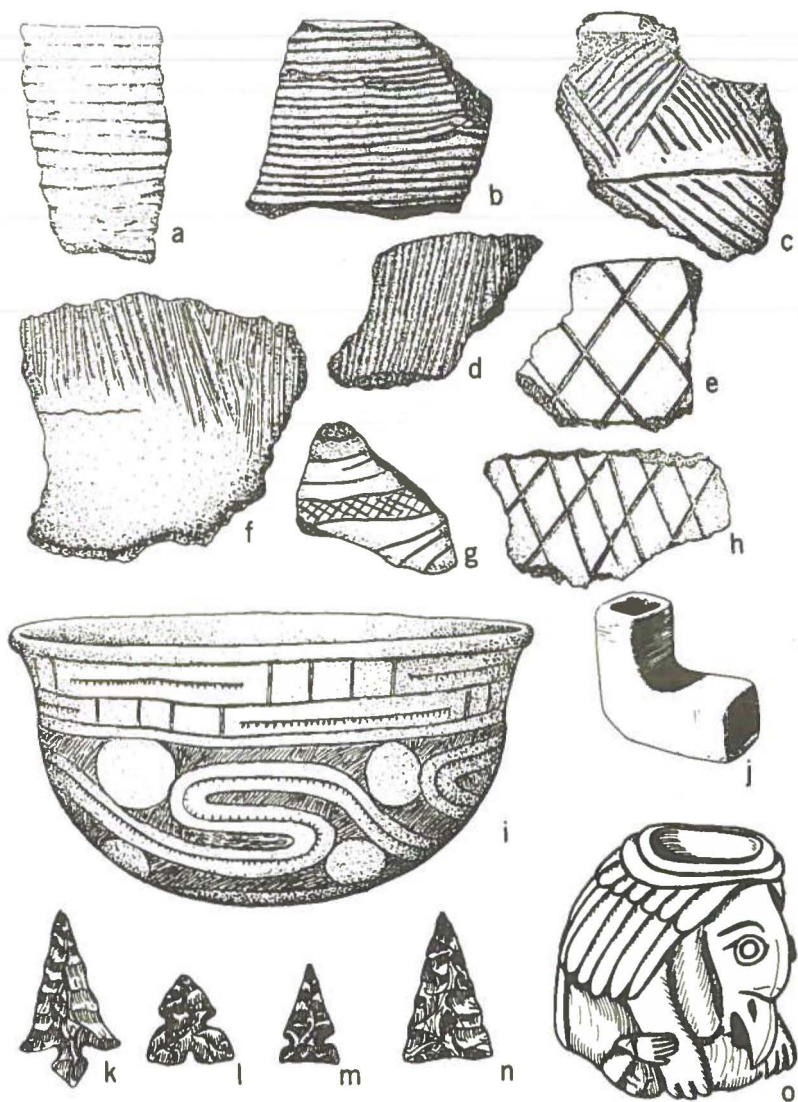


Figure 5. Late periods traits: a and b, *Hardy Incised*; c, *Manchac Incised*, variety of *Mazique Incised*; d and f, *Plaque-mine Brushed*; e and h, *Harrison Bayou Incised*; g, *Maddox Engraved*; i, *Wilkinson Engraved*; j, ceramic elbow pipe; k, *Hayes*; l and m, *Harrell*; n, *Madison*; o, *Southern Cult effigy ceramic pipe*.

Some of the best made, undecorated pottery found in the Mississippi Valley occurs in this period. *Anna Burnished Plain* type is glistening smooth, thin, and hard. The Anna site is a pyramidal mound group northwest of Natchez. *Addis Plain* is also a well-made type found on late sites near Baton Rouge. In the Caddo area there are several well-made plain types and in the Tensas Basin at least two Mississippian Culture (note below) plain wares appear.

Plaquemine Period projectile points are relatively scarce in a region where projectile points of any kind are scarce. They are small, often poorly formed, and not particularly diagnostic. Rather distinctive, however, are small, stemmed projectile points with incurved sides that give the artifact a "fir tree" outline. These have been found with Plaquemine Period materials at the Bayou Goula site and the Medora site (Figure 7).³⁰

Plaquemine Culture houses are rectangular structures like the Coles Creek Period but now are almost exclusively wall-trench construction. In this technique, a trench some twelve to eighteen inches wide and as deep is dug, and poles, six inches or less in diameter, are set in the trench. Then the trench is filled with earth that is packed around the poles. Sometimes horizontal logs are laid in the trench to brace the upright poles; sometimes rocks are used as braces. The space between the upright rows of poles is filled with intertwined vines and small wands, the wattle, and the whole smeared over with mud or daub, hence, the name "wattle and daub" construction. The roof is gabled and thatch-covered.

Such a house is not unique to Plaquemine but occurs throughout the Mississippian Culture phases and in some phases of the Caddo. Just as the temple mound, the wattle and daub house is of uncertain origin, but we are quite confident that the basis is somewhere in Middle America. It was the common house type encountered throughout most of the southeastern United States at times of historic contact.

The Mississippian Culture

In the extreme northeastern part of Louisiana a

cultural manifestation was gradually increasing its influences through several centuries prior to historic contacts of Europeans. It may be considered a concomitant development with Plaquemine (Figure 10) but only in their contact zones are there trade objects and numerous cross-cultural exchanges. The Mississippian Culture is so named because the middle Mississippi River Valley is the zone of its development. It was one of the earliest recognized cultural traditions for the United States, perhaps because of its great mound groups, its variety of pottery, and its remarkably widespread distribution.³¹

Several great ceremonial centers of Mississippian Culture are known in the southeast. It is generally agreed that the area around East St. Louis, Illinois, is the nuclear zone for this culture and its oldest known manifestations are there. This fact is one difficult to reconcile with a Middle American origin but the culture may have diffused through the Caddo area, up the Mississippi River Valley, and then returned in a more vigorous form, or it may have spread via the Florida-Gulf region. All of these pathways are presently "guesses."

Moundville, Alabama, is one of the most spectacular of these ceremonial centers but it is not so old as some of the phases of the great Monks Mound cluster at East St. Louis. Moundville pottery is quite distinctive and easily recognized in the Lower Mississippi Valley. It diffused from the Mobile Bay area across southern Louisiana in a broad band probably about the thirteenth century (Figure 8). This pottery includes a highly burnished black ware with engraved designs. Other Moundville types are punctated or incised but all are shell-tempered as indicated below. Other Moundville artifacts are quite distinctive and highly ornate and artistic.

The Mississippian Culture thus has temple mounds but we have shown that the Temple Mound Tradition had appeared here in the southeast long before there evolved this distinctive Mississippian Culture. Mississippian is distinguished by the possession of these giant truncated, pyramidal mounds and their very size indicates a large amount of "public works"

and, thus, there is undoubtedly a much greater emphasis upon maize agriculture. We cannot exactly fix the time of the introduction of maize into the eastern part of the United States, but it was certainly much later than in the western part of the United States. Probably it appeared only a century or two before the beginning of the Christian Era. However, by A.D. 1000 the use of maize had gradually increased and it was extensively raised by the time of historic contact.

Another feature of the Mississippian is its distinctive pottery—characteristically, pottery with a lot of fine powdered shell mixed in with the clay (Figure 6). This shell-tempered pottery also exhibits a greater number of forms, often being moulded in the shape of animals or even of human heads. Quite often the rims of bowls are adorned with human heads or animal heads and figurines. There is a widespread use of polychrome painting of pottery during the Mississippian, including what is called negative painting; that is, the design is produced by not painting a given area, or by coating it with wax before the vessel was dipped into a thin film of clay.³²

The Mississippian Culture is also notable for the rectangular house. This construction is as described for the Plaquemine.

One of the remarkable features that developed during Mississippian times is the rise of a new "Cult of the Dead." We surmise that much of the activity in mound and earthworks building during Middle Woodland times, as at Marksville and Hopewell sites, is a concern with some kind of a death cult. This new manifestation, more than 1,000 years later, is more than a renaissance. It is characterized by many more ceremonial artifacts than by earthworks. Some of these objects are of stone, often of the hardest kinds. Other artifacts are of copper, sometimes beaten onto wooden forms of men or birds. Human bones and skulls are depicted on pottery or carved on stone disks. Rattlesnakes or "feathered serpents" also are common motifs. The raptorial bird, with a tearing beak, was a Marksville design element and here again it has been found either carved in the round in stone pipes or made in repoussé of thin

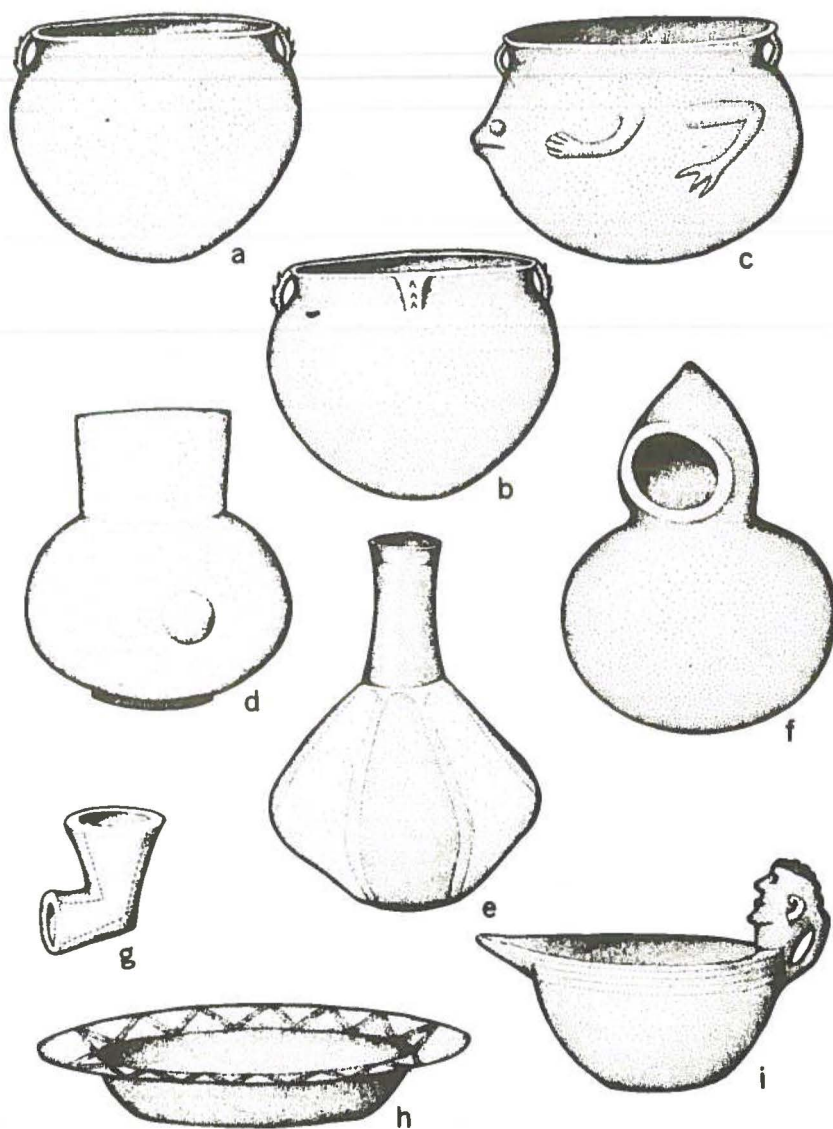


Figure 6. Mississippian ceramic traits: a and b, standard jars with strap and loop handles; c, frog effigy vessel; d, short-necked bottles; e, carafe-necked bottle with painted panels; f, "hooded" water bottle; g, biconical or elbow ceramic pipe; h, shallow bowl with incised chevron design on rim; i, rim-effigy bowl with inward-facing head.

copper. A recently found pipe from southern Louisiana depicts the bird eating a man (Figure 80). Presumably this latter is evidence of the Moundville diffusion. Moundville was undoubtedly a great Southern Cult center. Because of the presence of the raptorial bird motif, this cult is often irreverently called the "Buzzard Cult."³³

The Plaquemine sites of the late prehistoric and early historic period became increasingly oriented toward Mississippian Culture, but many traits of nuclear Mississippi Culture never quite reached the Natchez, Tensas, Houma, or Kadohaches Indians. In the Tensas Basin and, extending perhaps as far south as the general area of the Atchafalaya and the Red River, the large, truncated, pyramidal mound continued to be an important aspect of the archeological picture. The pottery manufactured by these later peoples of Louisiana continues to be more or less outgrowths of local types without being greatly influenced by the Mississippian style from the north.

However, there is one trait that we normally think of as belonging in the Mississippian context which does penetrate into the Lower Mississippi River Valley and that is the palisade. The technique of enclosing a village in a wall of poles which usually has a plastered-over coating of mud is very widespread in the nuclear Mississippian area, and it extends practically to the Atlantic Coast to the east, and to the Gulf Coast to the south. The palisade gives us some insight also into population changes which were taking place in the southeast since the palisade would probably have to be replaced every decade or so as the posts rotted away. Thus, if we find the palisade being constantly made smaller in its compass as each new one is built, we can correlate this with a general population decrease; this does seem to be the case in the southern United States. That is, by the time the Spaniards arrived here, there already had occurred some apparent population reduction. Whether this was because of increased conflict among the Indians, or for some other reason, is not readily known. It is a fact that after the arrival of DeSoto in the southeast, there is a discernible decline in the Indian population. By

the time the French explorers of LaSalle and Marquette's era began moving down the Mississippi River, there was a greatly decreased number of people in the area. This, of course, may be due in large part to diseases introduced by earliest Europeans, but we are still uncertain as to what actually transpired in this connection.

There is another trait somewhat characteristic of the nuclear Mississippian Culture to the north, and that is the utilization of earth mounds for the disposal of large numbers of the dead. Whereas in the earlier Woodland burial mound manifestation—Burial Mound I and II—the mound seems to have served as a monument for some exceptional individual or a few individuals within the culture, now large numbers of dead are deposited in the mounds. This trait has not been reported in Louisiana as yet, but it is quite possible that it may eventually be shown to be here.

What must be borne constantly in mind is that when some new cultural manifestation becomes apparent in a given area it does not necessarily mean that it displaced everything else. It has already been said that the Archaic style of living—that is, of hunting, fishing, and gathering—persisted up to historic times within the boundaries of Louisiana despite the fact that there were far more advanced cultures independently evolving here.

The Caddo Area

The area of northwestern Louisiana, from the Ouachita drainage westward and Red River Valley northward, lies within the heart of a kind of subarea that we call the Caddoan because, in historic times, "Caddo" Indians were living in this region. The archeological manifestations there would suggest that there had been a rather continuous interrelated occupation through the area for many centuries. The Caddoan area, however, is quite extensive and includes archeological remains of several peoples now collectively called the Caddo Indians.³⁴

Our knowledge of the prehistoric Caddo would indicate to us that these peoples are basically south-

eastern Archaic folk who evolved into a variety of later cultures all of which share a few generalized traits. In pottery there are favorite shapes such as the carinated bowl and the bottle. Whereas Mississippian pottery is usually shell tempered—*i.e.*, has ground-up shell mixed into the clay—Caddo pottery has fragments of bones. A popular decorative technique is engraving or etching a design into the burnished surface of the pot after firing. These designs may be fine lines within triangles or diamonds, but most distinctive is the scroll, *e.g.*, *Maddox Engraved* (Figure 5i).

At the time of historic contact, Caddo Indians living in Louisiana built a unique house. It was a rather large, beehive-shaped frame of poles, tied upright and horizontal, onto which bundles of grass were fixed like shingles. A single door, usually opening to the east, and a central fireplace were characteristic. Archeological examples of these circular Caddo houses have been found, invariably with a large post hole beneath the fireplace, indicating that a central pole was used during the construction period. As noted above, the rectangular wattle and daub house also was used in part.³⁵

The Caddo area developed quite independently of the Lower Mississippi Valley area, although we occasionally find a pottery vessel that would suggest trade contacts with the Lower Valley. The Louisiana Caddo peoples also show a number of contacts with the Indian tribes of the Plains as well as those of eastern Texas. However, if there were continuing contacts between the Mississippi Valley region and the Valley of Mexico, one would suspect that it would be in the Caddo region that some evidence of it would be found, but none is there to suggest any kind of influence between the two major regions.

The Historic Period

It is not long after 1700 that Europeans in relatively great numbers moved into the Lower Mississippi Valley area. The Indian cultures rapidly lost their distinctive aspects and the people became more and more altered to white man's culture. Today there

are some Indians still living within the boundaries of Louisiana and yet the amount of their native culture that is retained is infinitesimally small as compared with the white man's way of living which they have taken over. In fact, it would be far more appropriate to say that the white man's way of living has taken over the Indians.

The story of the alteration of Indian cultures to the modern situation, of course, is a very complex one, but after A.D. 1700 we no longer are dealing with prehistory. Indian tribes were decimated, eliminated, or moved about. The general location of the known Indian tribes of Louisiana is shown in Figure 7.

In a few rare spots in Louisiana, European artifacts occur on sites with Indian materials. In the Lower Valley these sites are invariably Plaquemine Culture with European trade goods. Careful excavations have demonstrated a real stratigraphic separation for fully developed historic materials and unadulterated Plaquemine.

It is worthy of note, again, that the introduction of European culture did not completely eliminate Indian cultures but it was far more effective than one Indian culture struggling against another. It is not until the beginning of the eighteenth century that Indian cultures began to be seriously threatened by European inroads, but then, in just a few decades many groups were completely wiped out. The story in Louisiana is not different from other parts of the eastern United States; nor is it much different from other parts of the world—Africa, Asia, or South America—where Europeans came into contact and conflict with native peoples. In every place and everywhere the reduction of the native culture has gone on, but nowhere quite so completely as in the New World.

About 1700, six great language stocks were present in Louisiana. Figure 7 shows the general location of the known tribes. The Caddo speakers in northwestern Louisiana included the Kadohadacho, Natchitoches, Adai, Yatasi, Doustioni, and the Washita. In the southwest the Atakapa stock was the speech



Figure 7. Distribution of some of the better known Indian tribes near the beginning of the eighteenth century.

of the Atakapa and the Opelousa. The Florida Parishes were the home of several Muskogean-speaking tribes, namely, the Houma, the Acolapissa and Tangipahoa, while across the Mississippi lived their relatives, the Quinipissa, the Okelousa, and the Bayogoula. In southern Louisiana, Chitimacha speech was represented by the Chitimacha, the Washa, and the Chawasha. Natchez was spoken by the Tensas and Avoyel. Only the Koroa in the northeastern part of the state spoke Tunica.

Later in the eighteenth century there were several movements of Indian peoples such as the migration of Tunica speakers into the homeland of the Houma.

These latter were treacherously displaced from their village and were forced to establish themselves among friends south of the Mississippi River.

Students of Louisiana prehistory have been interested in this early historic period. However, a number of authors have pointed out the difficulty of determining when one is dealing with the remains of later prehistoric Indians and when one is finding early historic Indian artifacts. In only a few choice places do we know what "trade" items were left. In Louisiana, the most common first European item is "cream ware" as it is called by the specialist. Secondly, we find most often stems and pieces of white clay "churchwarden" pipes, followed by musket balls and green glass. The last is probably from rum bottles. One of the most eloquent and effective agents in the march of civilization has been rum.

If one wished to find "spots" where these historically known Indians lived, he would find their exact location difficult indeed. In fact, archeologists have very few certain historic sites determined for Louisiana. Historians are not so critical as archeologists about location but by any standards it is a near hopeless task to relate pottery types or projectile points with tribes.

A few certain correlations have been made over the several decades of Louisiana archeological research and among these is the famous trading post of the French established by Tonti at the "Portage of the Cross," now Angola Prison Farm.³⁶

Summary

Louisiana has been the center of much prehistoric development and our reconstruction of this past is based on our constantly changing storehouse of information. Each new discovery must be equated with the already known story so that *the* prehistory of Louisiana at any given moment is *a* prehistory. We may note in Figure 8 the numerous cultural influences that have converged on the area through the ages. In some instances, the lines may be misleading in that the movements were not always simple movements of peoples or traits. Take the Caddo as an example:

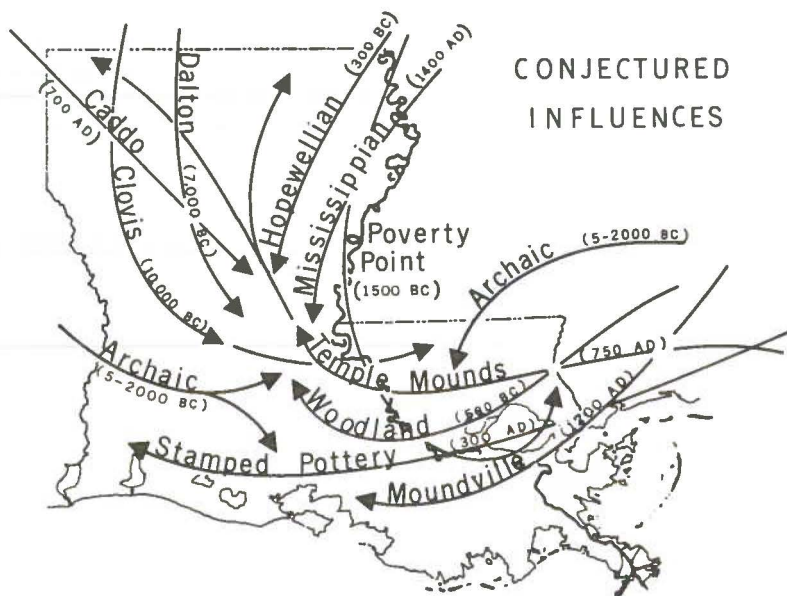


Figure 8. Generalized representation of the cultural influences converging at various times in Louisiana.

the influence of this culture spread slowly down the Red River drainage but Caddo "origins" are clearly southeastern. The center of evolution, however, was in the Louisiana-Arkansas-Oklahoma-Texas meeting zone.

The several cultural influences that impinged on the state meant that there was hardly any portion of the area that was not affected by some prehistoric peoples. As mentioned before, one should not surmise that the introduction of a new culture eliminated everything already on the scene. Some of the previous peoples continued in marginal areas to resist the inroads of the new life. The sites shown in Figure 9 were not simultaneously occupied by any means and some of the cultural manifestations are more widely represented than others. In this figure the relatively bare area of the map represents lack of knowledge as well as sparse occupation.

The sites located in Figure 9 are some of the



Figure 9. Location of some typical sites of the various cultural horizons of prehistoric Louisiana.

better known representative sites of the cultures from Louisiana but they are among many others, of course. These examples also give an idea of the distribution of given cultures. One can gather that the prehistory of Louisiana has been both varied and rich.

The best way to add up the relationships of Louisiana prehistory with that of the surrounding areas is by charting the equivalent phases and cultures that have been identified. Two conclusions are forced upon us, namely, that Louisiana's past is, on the one hand, related to the neighboring areas and,

DATE	PERIODS	RED RIVER	NORTHWEST	NORTHEAST	COASTAL	S.E. U.S.
1500	HISTORIC	NATCHEZ	CADDO	TENSAS	VARIOUS	HISTORIC
	TEMPLE MOUND I	PLAQUEMINE	GLENDORA	TRANSYLVANIA	MOUNDVILLE	LATE MISSISSIPPI
1000			FULTON	PLAQUEMINE		EARLY MISSISSIPPI
	TEMPLE MOUND I	COLES CREEK	GIBSON	COLES CREEK		LATE WOODLAND
			SPIRO			
500	BURIAL MOUND II	TROYVILLE	FREDERICKS	DEASONVILLE	TROYVILLE	MIDDLE WOODLAND
		MARKSVILLE	BELLEVUE	ISSAQUENA	MARKSVILLE	
100				POINT LAKE		
1 AD		TCHEFUNCTE		TCHULA	TCHEFUNCTE	EARLY WOODLAND
500	BURIAL MOUND I	P O V E R T Y		P O I N T		
2000	ARCHAIC	A R C H A I C			?	ARCHAIC
5000						

on the other, enjoys an independence of its own. The evolution of the so-called Red River Mouth cultural sequence was influenced by forces from a few major sources, but this development, in turn, left impressions on distant relatives. Figure 10 represents a correlation of cultures based on the status of our present knowledge. This chart is destined to be changed as our knowledge advances. Even the dates assigned to the various cultures are subject to change, of course, but each year sees our determinations of dates improve as new radiocarbon dates are established.

Louisiana has a strategic place in the rush of complex civilization today with its tremendous stretch of coast line, the traverse of the Mississippi River, its mild climate, and its almost unlimited natural resources. In the past the area was also of strategic import, although for not entirely the same reasons. The Gulf and coast were important and the Mississippi River was of inestimable value to prehistoric man, and certainly, the mild climate was significant. It is the natural resources that differ. Although they are the same today as centuries ago, the cultural demands are vastly different. Our study of prehistoric man emphasizes this dependence of Man upon his cultural direction and dictation. It is the lesson to be learned from all studies of man's behavior.

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