

University of Southern Mississippi

ARCHITECTURAL CORRELATES OF MISSISSIPPIAN CHIEFDOMS:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE MOUNDVILLE AND LUBBUB CREEK CHIEFDOMS

by

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION . . . . .	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	iii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	vi
LIST OF FIGURES . . . . .	vii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Research Objectives	
Applications of the Approach	
Overview of Mississippian Culture	
Rank in Mississippian Culture	
Summary of the Chapters	
II. ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE . . . . .	12
Cultural Influences on Architecture	
Style and Architecture	
Architectural Variables in the Archaeological Record	
Architecture and the Use of Location and Space	
Public and Domestic Architecture	
Summary	
III. CHARACTERISTICS OF CHIEFDOMS . . . . .	29
Authority and Legitimation in Chiefdoms	
Economic Bases of Chiefdoms	
Ideological Bases of Chiefdoms	
Political Organizations of Chiefdoms	
Rank Indicators in Chiefdoms: An Archaeological Viewpoint	
Summary	
IV. MISSISSIPPIAN ARCHITECTURE: A FIRST APPROXIMATION THROUGH ETHNOHISTORIC ACCOUNTS AND PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH . . . . .	52
Ethnohistoric Insights into Architectural Variability	
Symbolic Association of Architecture Location and its Manipulation By Elites	
Summary	

V. THE SAMPLE . . . . .	66
Lubbub Creek	
Moundville	
Methods of Excavation	
Methods for Assigning Structures to Occupation	
Periods	
Methods for Assigning Artifacts to Structures	
VI. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS . . . . .	88
Analysis	
Expectations	
Methods for Grouping Material Correlates	
Methods for Examining Location in the Sample	
Methods for Architecture Size	
Lubbub Creek	
Moundville	
Results	
VII. DISCUSSION. . . . .	115
Differential Use of the Built Environment	
A Comparison of Architectural Style Between Two	
Chiefdom Systems	
Incorporating Architectural Style into Current	
Interpretations of the Moundville and Lubbub Creek	
Chiefdoms	
Elites, Power, Religion, Social Control and the	
Built Environment: Concluding Remarks	
Conclusion	
APPENDIX	
A. ARTIFACTS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH STRUCTURE . . . . .	129
REFERENCES CITED . . . . .	137

# LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
5.1	Summary of Architecture Floor Area ( $m^2$ ) at Lubbug Creek . . . . .	77
5.2	Summary of Architecture Floor Area ( $m^2$ ) at Moundville . . . . .	83
6.1	Lubbug Creek Structures: Material Correlates of Function . . . . .	95
6.2	Lubbug Creek Structures: Material Correlates of Function and Structure Floor Area ( $m^2$ ) . . .	96
6.3	Lubbug Creek Structures: Material Correlates of Function and Structure Location . . . . .	97
6.4	Lubbug Creek Structures: Material Correlates of Function, Structure Location and Structure Floor Area ( $m^2$ ) . . . . .	98
6.5	Moundville Structures: Material Correlates of Function . . . . .	102
6.6	Moundville Structures: Material Correlates of Function and Structure Floor Area ( $m^2$ ) . . .	103
6.7	Moundville Structures: Material Correlates of Function and Structure Location . . . . .	104
6.8	Moundville Structures: Material Correlates of Function, Structure Location and Structure Floor Area ( $m^2$ ) . . . . .	105

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
5.1	Location of Sites Used in the Research . . . .	68
5.2	Distribution of Summerville I Structures at Lubbub Creek . . . . .	71
5.3	Distribution of Summerville II/III Structures at Lubbub Creek. . . . .	74
5.4	Distribution of Summerville IV Structures at Lubbub Creek . . . . .	76
5.5	Distribution of Structures at Moundville . . .	82

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Incorporating architectural studies in the interpretation of past societies is becoming a more central objective in many archaeological research agendas. Until the 1980s, interpretations of architecture in archaeology was generally viewed as having a secondary role in the understanding of past societies. In most cases, these prevalent interpretations of architecture relegated the built environment to a sheltering mechanism against environmental influences. Although the influence of the natural environment on architecture design is important (Whiting and Ayres 1968; Branch and Fitch 1969), it is the social or behavioral aspect of architecture that is emphasized in this research. This thesis is an attempt to examine architecture as an active influence in cultural processes. Specifically, architecture is seen as a device that transmits social information on status and identity in ranked societies as a means of promoting rank differences between social groups through visual cues.

The social role of architecture in prehistoric Mississippian societies in present day Alabama has never received much attention. However, incorporating social aspects of architectural analysis has proven a valuable tool in the study of past sociocultural systems in other geographic regions of the world, like the Southwestern

United States (Adams 1983; Hill 1970; Lowell 1991; Reid and Whittlesey 1982; Saile 1977), the Near East (Kramer 1982), and Latin America (Arnold and Ford 1980; Cliff 1988; Evans 1985; Flannery 1976a, 1976b; Stanish 1992). A study comparable to these, such as the present one, may provide similarly useful information in the interpretation of Mississippian societies in Alabama.

Some attempts have been made to include architecture in the archaeological analysis of Mississippian cultures in other parts of the Eastern Woodlands. The Snodgrass site, excavated by Price and Griffin (1979) in southeast Missouri, provides a good example. A central issue in their work is correlating architectural size with other categories of material culture (i.e. pottery, subsistence, and status objects) in order to define elite and nonelite areas of residence. Other seminal works include Lewis and Kneberg (1946) and Polhemus (1986) from the eastern Tennessee area, providing a comparative data base for discussions on Mississippian architectural floor size variability. Similarly, Chapman (1976) attempts to relate architecture size to status through location of structures within the settlement, i.e. propinquity to stockades, plazas, etc. Other research involving architecture includes Pauketat's (1987) descriptive account with his descriptive account of a Cahokian domestic structure, and Hargave's (1991) selectionist perspective on the interpretation of



Mississippian architecture, using as a sample the excavated structures of the FAI-270 Project.

Historic southeastern architecture of the Mouse Creek phase in the eastern Tennessee area is discussed by Sullivan (1987); however, this mainly includes an ecological approach, incorporating seasonal (winter/summer) house construction. Along this same line, Faulkner (1977) discusses the chronological sequence of winter houses in the Upper Duck Valley of Middle Tennessee.

In the Alabama area, research by McKenzie (1964), Jennings (1941), and Marshall (1986) provide the only attempts at discussing archaeological architecture dating to the Mississippian period. However, these studies have merely provided descriptive accounts of architectural variability, without further investigating the possible social implications once the descriptive process has been finalized.

### Research Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to demonstrate the usefulness of architectural analysis in the anthropological interpretation of past societies. Specifically, I seek to look for community patterns that indicate the use of architectural styles within chiefdom level communities during the Mississippian period of Southeastern prehistory. Furthermore, attempts will be made to demonstrate how the

built environment is interconnected with status, religion, and social control in the negotiation of political power. A central focus discusses how the built environment was manipulated by emerging Mississippian elites as a means of legitimizing or consolidating positions of authority. The elite were able to spin an elaborate web of political, religious and economic threads in order to control people and communities. When viewing architecture as an active participant in social processes, it is most profitable to situate it within the total built environment and not as individual buildings. Instead, individual buildings are part of a "system of signs" designed to communicate, control and reinforce preferred behavior as dictated by dominant groups (Rapoport 1969; Sanders 1990).

This research is not a descriptive review of architecture in prehistory, but rather an attempt to situate architecture as an active, systemic aspect of culture process. There has been a tendency to end with descriptions without investigating how the spatial and stylistic manipulation of architecture affects human behavior, or how human behavior affects architecture. However, it is at this juncture that the active meaning of architecture becomes observable. Research involving social aspects of architecture, such as a means of enhancing status or promoting cultural identity, are often subsumed within the broader field of symbolic studies. When architecture is

observed as active rather than as passive, new questions concerning social control, among others, can be presented. Architecture as a means of social control has been discussed by Monks (1993) and Fritz (1978) in other areas of the world, providing a comparative framework for this approach to the study of Mississippian architecture in Alabama. Information incorporated into architectural styles which communicate messages of superiority or dominance can be coded in both religious and political terms.

#### Applications of the Approach

Structures from the Lubbub and Moundville ceremonial sites in the Alabama area dating to the Mississippian period are examined in an attempt to define how and to what degree architecture was used to communicate messages of social control. These sites were chosen because large areas of these settlements have been excavated, providing a useful data base from which to work. These sites were also chosen because they represent two separate chiefdoms, including both types of chiefdom political systems (simple and complex), enabling a comparison between two systems and possible variations that they may exhibit.

#### Overview of Mississippian Culture

The emergence of the Mississippian Culture circa A.D. 800 in the Central Mississippian Valley marked the

beginnings of a new lifestyle for large areas of the Eastern Woodlands. From this general area of origin, its spread to the majority of the Southeast by A.D. 1000 or 1100 is documented from ethnohistoric accounts and data obtained through archaeological contexts (Smith 1984). In areas outside what has traditionally been termed the Southeast, complexes such as Fort Ancient and the historic Oneota exhibited many Mississippian characteristics. Further south, archaeology has defined three main Mississippian complexes: the South Appalachian Mississippian (Ferguson 1971), the Plaquemine Mississippian, and the Middle Mississippian (Griffen 1967). Ethnohistoric accounts indicate that the Caddo, the Natchez, and the Apalachee possessed many Mississippian characteristics up to European contact. During the Mississippian period, impressive centers such as Cahokia, Moundville, Spiro, Etowah, Kincaid, the Angel Site, and others were built.

The term Mississippian was introduced by Holmes (1903) as a descriptive term for a new shell-tempered pottery that was being found throughout the Southeast. Holmes was not attempting to define or give definition to a past culture, but merely to classify a new ceramic tradition. The term Mississippian soon became associated with the culture that produced the shell-tempered pottery. Muller (1983:311) applies the term Mississippian to

those Late Prehistoric societies along the major river valleys in the area from Natchez to St.

Louis and from Memphis to Knoxville that built substructure mounds and made pottery with crushed shell added to the clay.

In using this definition, Muller continues to apply ceramics as an indicator, but adds a geographical dimension setting off the Southeast as the core of the Mississippian Culture. Implicit within his definition is the rank order exhibited in the social and political organization of these societies. Blitz (1993:5-6) and Steponaitis (1986) explicitly state that Mississippian societies have intensive maize agriculture, sedentary communities containing platform mounds arranged around a plaza, large trade networks, established religion, and a hierarchical social organization. Walthall (1980:185) suggests that the emergence of the Mississippian culture was marked by the appearance of distinctive pottery, usually shell tempered, platform mound constructions that were built for temples, elite residences and council buildings, and plazas located in the middle of ceremonial centers. Scarry (1990:175-176) focuses on the political organization that Mississippian societies exhibited due to their substantial divergence from the preceding periods of southeastern prehistory.

Smith (1978) refers to the Mississippian in slightly different terms by incorporating a more ecological basis. Instead of identifying individual culture traits as indicative of Mississippian, Smith (1978:486) opts to explain the Mississippian "as a ranked form of social

organization. [that] had developed a specific complex adaptation to linear, environmentally circumscribed floodplain habitat zones." These zones were occupied for maize agriculture due to the ability of the soil to renew itself from the nearby flowing waters. These zones, which were environmentally circumscribed, would warrant boundaries and the defense of those boundaries, if necessary, to protect the limited arable land (Smith 1978:482-483). Using this definition of Mississippian, Smith circumvents the tricky problem of identifying individual traits as being Mississippian and relies instead on subsistence procurement. The change from food gathering to food production allowed Mississippian societies to supply an expanding population and/or permitted population concentrations. In either case, the existence of chiefdoms is directly connected to the production of sufficient food resources.

For the purpose of this paper and taking into account the above definitions of what constitutes a Mississippian society, I propose the following. Mississippian is defined as a ranked form of sociopolitical organization that was based on food production (usually maize) that encompassed multicomunity polities controlled by hereditary elites whose authority was legitimized by ideological and cosmological precepts. This is not meant to be a holistic, comprehensive definition which can be evenly applied to all Mississippian-like manifestations in the Southeast.

Nevertheless, the use of this definition effectively emphasizes those aspects most important to the Alabama area and the present study.

### Rank in Mississippian Culture

The sociopolitical organization characterizing the Mississippian period reached a complexity indicative of chiefdom level societies. Institutionalized inequality manifested itself according to two divisions within society, elites and commoners. Rank was determined by many variables including age, prowess in warfare, kinship and religion (Hudson 1976:203). The method used to determine rank was variable from one chiefdom to another and between time periods.

In pristine chiefdoms, elites used a religious ideology to legitimize their political and social positions in society (Anderson 1994). In effect, it legitimizes the first appearance of institutionalized inequality in the Southeast. This religious ideology pertained only to those of the chiefly lineage composing the highest ranking members in society. Thus, the very high status positions in pristine chiefdoms were passed down through kinship lines (Anderson 1994). Vacant superordinate offices, such as that of the chief, were filled by selecting from this "affinal pool" of possible replacements. A few other administrators and high status warriors may also have had elite status, but

their rank was not equivalent to the highest ranking individuals from the chiefly lineage. The commoners, comprising those not of relation to the chief or part of the political apparatus, constituted the bulk of the population.

In pristine chiefdoms, rank was religiously based; however, as they mature secular approaches of acquiring rank and power become more prevalent (Anderson 1994). This may indicate that commoners wanted access to means of rank enhancement that was previously, through religious ideology, out of their grasp (Gibson 1974). Warfare may well have provided this outlet by allowing elites to maintain their positions while giving commoners the chance for upward social mobility. Chiefdoms that could not make this transition declined in power or eventually collapsed. In sum, it can be suggested that religion was the most important aspect of the Mississippian lifestyle, by providing a base for elite power and high status positions in pristine chiefdoms. As some pristine chiefdoms mature, religion continues to be very influential but secular means of obtaining high status positions are provided by warfare (Anderson 1994).

#### Summary of the Chapters

Chapter II addresses the importance of cultural factors, such as social complexity and ideology, on architecture. Since individuals and groups actively



incorporate stylistic communicative devices into architecture. it reflects culture, while actively shaping social behavior. Specifically, it is the stylistic variables such as architectural location and size which serve to transmit social information within a settlement.

Chapter III gives an in-depth look at the inner workings of chiefdom level societies, incorporating known information from the Mississippian culture. Discussion includes their religiously based ideology used to institutionalize systems of inequality between elites and commoners, and the various material manifestations of chiefdom rank order.

Chapter IV discusses Mississippian architecture from an ethnohistoric and archaeological perspective in the Alabama area. This will provide the data necessary to formulate expectations that will be applied to the sample. Chapter V describes the sample, including methods used to excavate the sites and structures found on the sites. Also given are the methods used in assigning artifacts and occupation periods to structures used in the sample. Chapter VI provides the the analysis and results from each site according to the ten expectations formulated from ethnohistoric accounts.

Chapter VII discusses the results and how this reflects the manipulation of architecture by elites. This chapter also contains the conclusions drawn from this research.

## CHAPTER II

### ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE

Architecture is a material manifestation that clearly cuts across the three classes of artifacts identified by Binford (1962:219-220): technomic, socio-technic, and ideotechnic variables. Because of this, architecture provides an excellent source of archaeological information for anthropological research. Though Binford does not mention architecture in his explanation of each class, his distinctions are appropriate to the present model being formulated. Each of the three provide, although not always separately, an approach to architectural research in archaeology.

Technomic objects incorporate all items used by a society which directly cope with the physical environment. Socio-technic artifacts have their primary function in the defining and articulating of individuals and groups into a cohesive societal unit. Changes in socio-technic items occur when the social structure is altered by outside influences, which Binford saw as being primarily the environment (1962:219). The third class reflects the ideological component of society and its members are known as ideotechnic artifacts. These are items that

signify and symbolize the ideological rationalizations for the social system and ... provide the symbolic milieu in which individuals are enculturated, a necessity if they are to take

their place as functional participants in the social system. (Binford 1962:219-220)

Again, change is intricately connected to environmental fluctuations.

Of Binford's triadic classification of material culture, only technomic aspects of architecture have received extensive research in American archaeology, until recently. Architectural data and their interpretation, especially those of the Mississippian period, have been mainly viewed as resulting from environmental pressures. Thus, architecture has been seen primarily as a means of adapting to the environment, and therefore, must have had a passive role in culture. This is most clearly observable in the research and use of Fitch and Branch's (1960) cross-cultural survey of architecture design and the environment. Other important research includes that of Robbins (1966), Whiting and Ayres (1968), and many interpretations of Mississippian architecture mentioned in Chapter I.

Martin, Longacre and Hill (1967:15) were the first to apply Binford's terminology directly to the study of architecture by stating that

architecture must be viewed in two cultural contexts: technomic, for it deals directly with environmental problems, and socio-technic, for it reflects the social relationship of the culture.

Following Binford, Martin, Longacre and Hill, it is expected that all societies incorporate both environmental and social factors into their architecture. Additionally, the balance

between the two changes from one society to another, and from one environment to the next. An example is the comparison of Inuit and Cherokee architecture. The Inuit, due to their habitation of an extremely cold, harsh, and resource deficient environment, are largely restricted to the use of snow and ice as building materials in the winter. Even living in these difficult conditions, social factors can still be observed in Inuit architecture, such as through the arrangement of interior rooms. The Cherokee, on the other hand, lived in a much more permissive climate, and ecological factors have a less direct influence on architecture, allowing for greater cultural influence (Rapoport 1969).

This thesis focuses on the cultural factors responsible for architectural variability. I take as a starting point the notion that architecture is "a reflection of behavior or the use of space which, in turn is a reflection of culture" (Kent 1990a:3). Used in this manner, architecture is seen as very culturally oriented and considers ecological factors as only "limiting" in a very broad sense (Rapoport 1969: Kent 1990a). For the cases mentioned, environmental differences should play a minimal role within the sample since they occur in a geographic zone with moderate or mild climatic conditions (Cole 1983:18-19). This is not to relegate the importance of environmental factors on architecture to an insignificant role, but by holding this

variable constant and expanding on cultural factors, new and possibly better suited interpretations of architecture and consequently behavior can be made.

### Cultural Influences on Architecture

Shelter is one of the basic necessities for human survival, but given a particular level of technology the manner in which shelters are built is largely cultural. This thesis focuses on two main cultural influences in the formation and use of architecture: sociopolitical complexity and ideology as seen through religion. Other important cultural variables such as marriage and kinship organization also affect architectural variability by dictating structure size and community settlement, etc. While these variables are not incorporated in the present study, their contribution to the interpretation of architectural attributes is potentially immense. Another obvious source of architectural variability is the intended function of the structure. Because of this latter point, there will be some attempt at broadly defining and differentiating functions of architecture within the community.

### SocioPolitical Complexity and the Built Environment

One of the most salient cultural factors on architecture is the degree of sociopolitical complexity

within a community. Human societies exhibit a wide range of variation in sociopolitical complexity that can be arranged along a continuum from societies with little to no differentiation at one end to societies with stratified, hierarchical, and specialized societies at the other. Social complexity partly determines the organization of space and the built environment. Increase in complexity produces a more varied and segmented use of space and architecture (Kent 1990b).

Egalitarian Societies and Architecture. Kent (1990b)

proposes that in egalitarian societies, where the lack of formal leadership positions or stratification exists, architecture and the use of space will typically be characterized by uniformity and homogeneity. Additionally, there will be few to no designated special-purpose buildings or activities areas (Trigger 1968:55-56). This is consistent with the notion that little or no rank differentiation exists between individuals in egalitarian societies, so differentiation in material correlates will not exist. Examples include the Mbuti, Hadza, Agta, Yanomamo (Kent 1990b).

Ranked and Stratified Societies and Architecture. Unlike simpler societies, chiefdoms and states exhibit an increase in variability and heterogeneity in architecture. Societies such as the Maya have greater differentiation of structure

form and size due to the need to differentiate between individuals and groups (Cliff 1988). and secondly to accommodate a greater number of specialized functions. Unequal access to resources, which is a characteristic of complex groups, can take the form of land, valued objects, esoteric knowledge, etc. These social differences provide the basis for stratification or rank in society, which leads to formal variation in architecture. Thus, architecture variability is often dependent on the rank and status of the occupants.

#### Ideology and Architecture

A second major cultural influence on architecture is ideology. The role of ideology in the construction and placement of architecture takes many forms. The aspect of ideology that will be pursued further is the manner in which culture instills religious and cosmological principles into and through its architecture. Ideology is defined as "the ability of a group of individuals to utilize cultural symbols for certain willfully designed ends" (Yengoyan 1985:332). In ranked societies, "material goods and their associated symbols are being used not to represent relationships but to mask relationships of inequality and domination as part of a religiously sanctioned worldview" (Yengoyan 1985:332). In other words, visual differences which are more pronounced in ranked societies as a means to

demonstrating one's rank are legitimized by incorporating religious symbols naturalizing systems of inequality. This point will be discussed further in the following section and in Chapter III.

Cosmology and Religion in Architecture. The impact religion can have on the construction of architecture within a society is a difficult task to interpret in archaeology. However, ethnographic research incorporating non-Western indigenous societies provides a small but usable pool of data from which it is possible to draw some examples and conclusions which can then be applied to the Mississippian period. The effects of religion and cosmology on architecture are observable both at the household and community levels.

At the household level, individual structures can exhibit religious messages both inside, by the placement of walls and furniture, and outside by location and size (Trigger 1968:59). Research by Cunningham (1973) on the Atoni of Indonesia showed that individual houses were built according to, and dictated by, cosmological and political viewpoints. Every part of the house had a particular name which corresponded to social and political positions in society and/or incorporated Atoni ritualism and symbolism. Cunningham (1973:234) proposes that

the house -- with its constituent parts,  
divisions, form, symbols, and prescriptions



concerning order, arrangement, and the behavior of those included and excluded -- may be like a model of the cosmos as conceived by a people. The Atoni explicitly express "order" in the house, and much in their social and political order is related in form and naming to it.

Kus and Raharijaona (1990) observed the same occurrence in the Betsileo of Madagascar. According to the Betsileo, the individual houses of a community were arranged during construction according to the cardinal directions. The north is associated with nobility and seniority, and the south with humility and lowliness. The east is associated with the sacred and the west with the profane. As such, the northeast corner of every house is held in high esteem. It is believed that the layout of the house, and its association with the other houses within the community, played a critical role in the political ordering and control by elites.

A further example of cosmology and religion in architecture is found among the Algonquin and Sioux of North America. In this case the sacred initiatory huts of these people represents the Universe. Elaide (1981:116) states

its [the hut's] roof represents the celestial canopy, the floor represents the Earth, the four walls the four directions of cosmic space. The ritual construction of the space is emphasized by a triple symbolism: the four doors, the four windows, and the four colors signifying the four cardinal points. The construction of this sacred hut repeats the cosmogony because this small house represents the World.

At the community level, the placement of temples and other religious buildings, as well as various community

structures and dwellings, can be connected to prevalent cosmologies and worldviews (Trigger 1968:59). Fritz (1978) maintains that architecture in the Chaco Canyon encoded messages pertaining to secular and sacred areas within communities and across the region. Architecture provides the "organizational basis for theocratic control" (Fritz 1978:54) while coagulating the profane with the sacred, the commoners with the elites. Research conducted on style demonstrates that decoration can be used to "guide encounters between opposed categories" (Braithwaite 1982:80) which are based on ritual symbolism and function.

Systems of symbols not only express and communicate, but also guide and effect action. They may have a ritual function within the social and conceptual order to "facilitate passages and/or to authorize encounters between opposed orders" and to "authorize...the necessary or unavoidable breaches of social order" (Braithwaite 1982:81 and her quote of Bourdieu 1977:120 and 124).

Religious symbols that are carried over to decoration "are geared to the legitimation and misrecognition of the real power relations and to the naturalization and reproduction of the social order" (Braithwaite 1982:81). It stands to reason that architecture incorporating "symbols" can communicate this due to its visibility. The effects of style in architecture will be expanded below.

### Style and Architecture

Rapoport (1982) proposes that architecture acts as "a mnemonic device for reminding users of particular types of

behavior" within a society. Thus, aside from its functional qualities, architecture incorporates variables intended to provide information to members of society. Such variables are stylistic. Style, in the sense used here, is defined as the "formal variation in material culture that transmits information about personal and social identity" (Wiessner 1983:256). In this manner, style can be related to any aspect of material culture that any society produces. Wobst (1977), Conkey (1978), Conkey and Hastorf (1990) and Wiessner (1990) include as part of their definition the idea that style is an active medium of communication through which social relationships are defined (Earle 1990:73). Style can be manipulated by certain individuals or groups in a community to communicate legitimacy, social control, and preferred worldviews, as well as norms and traditions. In other words, style is used to infer and support status (Earle 1990; Wiessner 1990). It is expected that egalitarian societies have little need to use style in this manner. Ranked societies, on the other hand, tend to use style, including architectural style, as a mechanism to regulate social behavior (Earle 1990).

In order for style to transmit information to society at large, it must be placed on an object that is openly visible to most, if not all, the members in a community, allowing the transmitted information to be received constantly by society. The value of encoding social

information in architectural style is that (1) it is available to the community at large and (2) that it transmits messages between individuals and groups without necessitating direct contact between them (Wobst 1970:328). It is efficient because it constantly transmits the messages and serves to dramatically demarcate boundaries between social groups (Wobst 1977; Hodder 1979). Those in power transmit the messages that reinforce their position in society, couching messages in political and/or religious terms. At the same time, these messages work to integrate the community for continued (un)conscious support and legitimation of elite individuals and groups (Wiessner 1990:110). Style thus acts as "an active medium" or as a "mnemonic device" for transmitting particular behaviors, and one that is manipulated in ranked societies by those in control.

#### Architectural Variables in the Archaeological Record

Architectural style, in the sense presented in this thesis, is an aspect of formal analysis. Formal analysis is concerned with how people perceive, conceptualize, and interact in a visually dominated world through patterns and cues. Formal analysis in architectural research in archaeology seems to point to two main variables relating behavior with architectural style: location and size (Fletcher 1977). Clearly interpretations using

architectural data derived from archaeological contexts are limited by the effects of post-depositional disturbances, both cultural and environmental, and by data retrieval stemming from complex superpositioning of structures or ineffective excavation methods. However, location and size are sufficiently robust archaeological indicators of architectural variability to allow comparative studies in many cases.

#### Architecture and the Use of Location and Space

Proxemics is a term first coined by Hall (1966) and is defined as the study of human perceptions and use of space. Hall's main premise is that the use of space is based on cultural factors that are unique for each society. Thus, the spatial organization of a settlement is dictated by how the community perceives distances between different people and groups of people. One aspect of proxemics used by archaeologists involves the analysis of space as a transmitter of information on human differentiation and status (Sommer 1969; Fletcher 1977). Donley (1982) reasons that those in power can use space as a mechanism to reinforce underlying principles in a community. She furthers this point in later research by stating that

powerful people determine the use, symbolic meaning, and form of...space. As a result, the spaces "loaded with meaning" help to ensure that the powerful will remain in power. The people in power make the architectural spaces into mnemonic

devices that cue their superior position. (Donley-Reid (1990:115))

Elites are often noted as having preferred areas of occupation within the settlement, separate from the rest of the community (Trigger 1968), which demonstrates their distinctiveness and rank within society. Physical separation from the rest of society can be presumed to mirror that distinctiveness.

Whalen (1983) applies this spatial theory to the site of Tomaltepec (ca. 1500-850 B.C.), located in the southern Mexican highlands. He proposes "that a society's spatial organization reflects at least some of the roles, statuses, and distinctions...[on] which social organization is based" (Whalen 1983:24). This implies that if the community of Tomaltepec was highly stratified, then the elites would use space differently from the rest of the community. Whalen tested this proposition by measuring spatial propinquity between structures, reasoning that elites would have had more distance between neighboring structures than the commoners. Conversely, if the community was more egalitarian, then distance between all the structures should be roughly the same. Tomaltepec produced four household complexes with little differentiation between the household groups. This indication of egalitarian organization was corroborated by the analysis of burials and associated mortuary program which showed few differences. Whalen concludes that spatial distance is a viable tool in the

explication of social organization and behavior in archaeology.

Another way space is used to communicate status in ranked societies is through the elite's association with those areas of the community that would help legitimize their position in society. This often occurs early in a political move when power and status are still undefined. Examples include elite residences located near sacred areas that hold special religious importance or where earlier community decision-making took place, such as old council houses or temples (Lewis and Kneberg 1958; Rudolph 1984; Anderson 1994).

#### Architecture Size

The size of individual structures in ranked societies is related to the status of the individuals living/working inside. Kent (1990b) states that ranked societies exhibit formal differentiation in architectural size that reflects the status of the individuals using it. For example, in Fiji, house size is determined by the owner's rank in society (Kent 1990b:140). Other ethnographic research has concentrated on quantifying the labor input needed to construct individual buildings (Callahan 1981; Erasmus 1965; Redfield 1934). Some of this information has been applied to the archaeological record to support interpretations of elite power, or lack thereof, through labor (recorded in

person-hours) needed to construct temples and residences (Abrams 1989, Arnold and Ford 1980).

Ethnoarchaeology and Architecture Size. Archaeological application of the premise that size of architecture is in itself a form of communication can be supported by referring to ethnographic cases. Ethnoarchaeological research in the last 20 years has challenged the long held assertion that indigent people live in larger structures because they generally have more children to care for (Netting 1982). New data suggests that the affluent members of society have structure sizes that are on the average greater than the mean of the society (Netting 1982:642). The affluent benefit from having larger structures because of the prestige and status that it communicates to the other members of the community (Netting 1982:657). Netting concludes that variable structure sizes are an indication of wealth differential, with larger structures being built and used by the elite or affluent members of society. Kramer's research in the Near East (1979, 1982) has demonstrated a similar relationship with the wealthy (landed) as usually having a larger living area than the poorer (landless) members of the community.



### Public and Domestic Architecture

General terms are used to describe structures and their functions within society: public and domestic architecture. In ranked societies, public architecture incorporates those structures having a ceremonial or political function within a community. Domestic architecture refers to nonpublic structures that operate mainly as a living area for a family or group.

Included within public architecture are buildings that encompass several functionally diverse categories ranging from fairly accessible communal structures to highly restricted structures. Communal public architecture refers mostly to council houses, although some ceremonial buildings and storage granaries may be included in this category. Highly restricted public structures should include the majority of the temples (DePratter 1991) and the charnel houses, as well as some of the storage granaries and other ceremonial buildings. This outline will be highly dependent on the degree of political stratification that exists in each community. Ranked communities with a moderate political rank order will have more community accessible structures regardless of the function, while highly ranked communities will have more structures that are restricted to a select few. Because of this, public architecture is highly sensitive to political and social changes that occur.

within the community, making it a valuable tool in the interpretation of past societies.

Domestic architecture can also be divided into two groups incorporating structures inhabited by both high status (elite) individuals and commoners. Residences of the elite will be visibly distinct from commoners in highly ranked societies where ostentatious displays of wealth and power confirm their high position in society. In ranked societies exhibiting a lesser degree of political control, the residences will be more visibly similar although some difference may exist.

#### Summary

Four suppositions have been established at this point. First, cultural variables are important in the formation of architecture. Second, two major cultural influences that affect architecture are sociopolitical complexity and religious ideology. Third, architecture has style that is used to transmit social information and define interaction and behavior. Fourth, three cultural variables influencing architecture are location, size, and intended function of individual buildings. In summary, this is an analysis of the segregation of status positions through the use of architectural styles in public and domestic structures.

### CHAPTER III

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF CHIEFDOMS

Chiefdoms are defined as ranked prestate social systems that have a hereditary elite who consolidate economic and political functions of a multicomunity polity under a religious superstructure. Consolidation occurs both geographically, by having centralized ceremonial center locations, and by having the chiefly elite perform most secular and sacred functions of the chiefdom. Having briefly discussed the general effects of sociopolitical complexity, religious ideology, and function on architecture in the previous chapter, this section focuses in greater detail on these variables in chiefdoms. Before this can be exercised, a better understanding of the intricacies of chiefdom evolution needs to be addressed.

Chiefdoms are an intermediate stage in the evolution of cultural systems from acephalous societies to stratified, bureaucratic states. In other words, chiefdoms were the first to institutionalize inequality and they are an important link in the understanding of the emergence of this process and its further elaboration in state level societies. Inequality in chiefdoms can be simplified by distinguishing two broad levels within each society: elites and commoners.

### Authority and Legitimation in Chiefdoms

Max Weber provided some of the earliest detailed accounts of the tenuous relationship between elites and commoners in ranked pre-state societies by describing what he terms traditional authority. Traditional authority is one aspect of Weber's three-part taxonomy based on the level of authority and legitimation that the political organization attains. The first level, labeled charismatic authority, describes authority in small-scale societies. The second level, traditional authority, is synonymous with chiefdom-level societies. The third level, bureaucratic authority, is equivalent to state-level societies. Of direct interest to this thesis are Weber's views on traditional authority. For Weber,

authority will be called traditional if legitimacy is claimed for it and believed in virtue of the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. The masters [elites] are designated according to traditional status. (Weber 1968:226)

He goes on to observe that

so far as his [elite] action follows principles at all, these are governed by considerations of ethical common sense, of equity or of utilitarian expediency. They are not formal principles, as in the case of legal authority [bureaucracies]. The exercise of power is oriented toward the consideration of how far master [elite] and staff can go in view of the subjects' [commoners] traditional compliance without arousing their resistance. When resistance occurs, it is directed against the master [elite] or his servant personally, the accusation being that he failed to observe the traditional limits of his power. Opposition is not directed against the system as such - it is a case of 'traditionalist revolution.' (Weber 1968:227)

Weber (1968:237) also states that traditional authority "cannot use the administrative machinery against the members of the group and hence is strongly dependent for its own legitimacy upon the safeguarding of tradition in every respect." Thus, in order for elites to retain and reinforce their positions of authority, all rules and power must be defined within the confines dictated by the tradition. This excludes the use of physical force as a legitimizing mechanism, making other legitimizing approaches essential to negotiate power struggles. Two broad approaches have been proposed to explain the manner in which political inequality was established and maintained in chiefdoms. The first involves economic factors while the second approach pursues ideological factors as important in this process.

#### Economic Bases of Chiefdoms

Much of the research dealing with chiefdom political formation and stability have centered on economic factors. Earle (1987:291-298) identifies two approaches within the materialist framework, those who favor a managerial role and those who emphasize the control of economic wealth.

One of the components of the managerial role in chiefdoms is the concept of redistribution. Sahlins (1958) and Service (1962) both propose that redistribution unifies geographically, politically, and economically diverse

regions within chiefdoms. Service (1962:143-144) claims that

more frequently, and in all cases importantly, the rise of chiefdoms seems to have been related to a total environmental situation which was selective for specialization in production and redistribution of produce from a controlling center.

This allows the elite to centralize surplus which is then distributed and circulated back to the community at a later date. The position of elites in society is enhanced not because (s)he controlled the distribution, but because by giving the products back, (s)he could acquire prestige.

Critiques of the role of redistribution in chiefdoms (Peebles and Kus 1977; Wright 1984; Earle 1978, Anderson 1990) have challenged this long held viewpoint. Wright (1984:45-48) in particular prefers a more ideological approach to material transactions by referring to it as tribute that is legitimized by religious overtones.

Earle (1987:293) gives other managerial roles that could have produced and maintained a ranked social order, including irrigation complexes and warfare. Irrigation complexes, especially large and extensive systems, require labor forces and planning that are best facilitated by a centralized management system. In time, this centralized node, due to its importance, develops into and maintains an elite rank within society. Warfare, as developed by Carneiro (1981), is another factor that may have played an important role. The acquisition and retention of land and

labor to augment agricultural productivity favors those societies that are centralized due to its increased ability to feed the people. A centralized management system will also provide a higher degree of protection for highly productive arable lands from neighboring groups. The control of economic wealth as a factor in the evolution of chiefdoms has also been proposed. Earle (1987:294) states that control takes the form of differential access to productive resources and/or to exchange of wealth. Control of productive resources such as surplus and land permits an elite segment of society to emerge. The distribution and circulation of surplus through the elites allows for control. This control is the foundation of elite authority. Earle (1987:295-296) identifies several other mechanisms of elite control such as new technologies and prestige goods.

### Ideological Bases of Chiefdoms

The second major approach used to explain the establishment and stability of inequality is ideology. The roles of ideology and religion are fundamental to understanding chiefdoms and the Mississippian culture. Mississippian chiefdoms, as most chiefdom systems, are theocratic in nature; theocracy being defined as the religious sanctification of political power and not necessarily leadership by priests (Earle 1987:298). In Mississippian society political and religious roles were

often incorporated into a single office, with rulers as both political leaders and religious functionaries. Knight (1986:685) states that in Mississippian societies

...it is not really necessary to emphasize a distinction between political organization and the organization of cult institutions. These two aspects of social structure are so closely intertwined and congruent among ethnographically comparable complex societies that it makes little analytical sense to treat them as separate domains...Mississippian institutional religion might better be seen as providing the context of Mississippian political power...

In the formation of pristine chiefdoms, a religiously based ideology provided the means by which inequality was institutionalized. Anderson (1990b:27) states

the development of an ideology of power or chiefly sanctity manifested in both objects and behavior is widely regarded as a critical aspect to the development of social inequality.

The religiously based ideology used in the legitimation of political power or inequality is known as political or elite ideology. Pauketat and Emerson (1991:920) contend that

an integral and dynamic component of political hierarchies are elite ideologies. For instance, the chiefly elites of pre-state hierarchial formations view themselves as vested with authoritative political and religious powers and seek to perpetuate this ideology; this is accomplished through the appropriation of traditional kin-based ethics and cosmological precepts.

Political ideologies "were largely responsible for stimulating and maintaining the centralized or 'chiefly' aspects" of chiefdoms (Helms 1992:185). Bender (1985:59) surmised



a system in which social position is achieved through the manipulation of social and ritual power 'naturalizes' that power by associating it with the general well-being of the group.

Ideology, through the guise of religion, obscured the negative oppressive aspects of inequality in pristine ranked nonstate societies by providing a cosmological reason for the difference. The chiefly elites were conceptualized as part of the natural order, an order dictating the inequalities that archaeologists and ethnographers find inherent in chiefdoms (Earle 1985; Helms 1979, 1988, 1992). Aspects of religious ideology used by elites to manipulate their political positions in society and maintain the inherent inequalities characteristic of chiefdoms are discussed below.

#### Aspects of Political Ideologies in Chiefdoms

To define the various aspects of political ideology in chiefdoms is a daunting task, a point that is further revealed by the fact that the components mentioned in no way demonstrate an exhaustive compilation. However, in reviewing the literature on chiefdoms, five variables seem to demonstrate how and why elites were able to establish political ideologies. These five components (there are others not included in this thesis) can be incorporated into a broad category known as esoteric knowledge, which includes affinal ties with celestial powers, the mediation between

worlds (supernatural vs. "this" world), the mediation between people and the environment, the separation of purity and pollution, and long-distance connections with other geopolitical groups and the supernatural.

The possession of esoteric knowledge in chiefdoms by elites is used to confirm their authority and position in society. Esoteric knowledge is defined as the

knowledge of the meaning of sacred symbols, sights into the 'meaning' of life, and understanding of the mystical origins and operations of the cosmos whose creative-destructive energies could be controlled for human use by the application of uniquely human intellect. (Helms 1979:119-120)

The possession of esoteric knowledge by elites enables an understanding of hidden meanings or "hidden things." Helms (1979:120) believes this is a prerequisite to leadership positions in most, if not all, societies. Elites, through esoteric knowledge, possessed a full, deep understanding of the aspects of sacred knowledge and their impact on secular affairs, while commoners understood only the most basic aspects (Helms 1979:127). DePratter (1991) provides several accounts of the use of esoteric knowledge by Mississippian elites to gain and retain control of their subjects. The elite shrouded in secrecy many rituals and religious practices, denying access to this information to most of the population. Some of the many examples of the use of esoteric knowledge by Mississippian elites are discussed below.

Relationship to Celestial Powers. Among egalitarian societies, religion is neither controlled nor focused on an individual or group. Often the immediate manifestation of a religious functionary is bestowed on part-time practitioners called shamans who help and give advice in a limited capacity. Shamans are individuals having personal contacts with the supernatural or the mystical world which can be used to cure or help make upcoming decisions.

+^I(\*37^^\*^U37^\^@e case occurred in chiefdoms, with individuals and groups taking control and utilizing religion and ideology to the legitimation of their authority. At this point elites did not just communicate with the mystical realm, but established an ideology stating their relationship to the celestial powers, such as the sun. By accomplishing this, ideology portrayed the emerging elite as sanctified and legitimate. This is perhaps the most salient aspect of esoteric knowledge generated by elites.

Both Helms (1979) and Goldman (1970) indicate that the ruling elite were directly related to celestial powers. In the Panamanian Isthmus, chiefs are often considered direct representatives of the sun, and as such obtain high social status within society. This is also evident from myths that have recorded various culture heroes as arriving from the sun to earth on a plate of gold (Helms 1979:90). Often these heroes directed the people on proper social behavior ranging from the mundane to ritual preparation and obedience

of the chiefs. Polynesian chiefs such as those in Hawaii and Tonga were considered "personifications of a god" (Goldman 1970:294). In addition, "chiefs and gods met in the same realms of sanctity and of power...chiefs were divine manifestations of the gods" (Goldman 1970:218).

Mississippian elites also negotiated similar ploys in their bid to acquire political power and high status. Elites were often thought to have affinal ties to celestial powers such as the sun, the four winds, or the four cardinal directions. One of the best examples of this ploy was recorded in eighteenth century descriptions of the Natchez. LePetit claims that

the Natchez showed great respect to their chief, the great Sun, due to his descent from the sun. As an indicator of this respect, the Natchez constructed mounds as substructures for both temple and the chief's house. (DePratter 1991:146)

The descendants of this mythic hero continued to rule the Natchez up to the time of European contact and assimilation. This ruling group is known as the Sun caste or clan and constitutes the elite division in Natchez society and were the only ones that had direct access to the temples and chief's houses on top of the mounds.

Mediator/Connection to the Supernatural. Since the chiefly elite were often thought of as being directly related to the supernatural, it was also presumed that these individuals could communicate with the supernatural and mediate

conflicts between "this" world and the supernatural world. The Cuna in Panama envision as part of their cosmology the division of the world into heaven and earth, both of which are composed of eight layers. The eight layers of heaven above the earth plane are invisible, while the eight layers below the earth plane are visible. Through trances and rituals, chiefs travel to these other realms on behalf of the people to search for useful plants/information, or mediate between the people and the good and evil spirits and powers (Helms 1979:117-119).

In Mississippian society, elites often used their esoteric knowledge of the supernatural to mediate on behalf of the people to keep the cosmological balance and ensure continued prosperity (Hudson 1976). Without order and balance, it was believed that disasters and illhealth would fall onto the people. The main method used by the elites to communicate with the supernatural, the sun god, was smoke created by the sacred fire usually located in temples on mounds but also at times in the plaza (DePratter 1991:59). DePratter (1991:61) states that among the Natchez

the sacred fire burning in the temple...was never permitted to go out so the smoke from that special fire, originally brought directly from the sun, rose up to the sky carrying the message that the conditions for life brought to the Natchez by the man and woman from the sun were being followed. In other words, smoke was a critical communication link between the Sun who resided in this world and his "brother" who resided far above him.

Mediator Between People and the Environment. Mediation also occurs between the people and the environment, which, in some cases can be subsumed under mediation with the supernatural given their close association. In chiefdoms, where population increases demanded higher food production levels with decreasing amounts of arable land, new frictions between society and the environment developed. Chiefly elites were thought to be imbued with esoteric knowledge received from the gods to mediate this conflict between nature and culture. Packard (1981:6) describes chiefs as

frequently defined by the members of society as ritual mediators between society and the forces of nature, and that...they were closely associated with the well-being of the land and society and with the problem of ecological control.

The Bashu chiefdom identified this element of elite ideology in their culture. According to the Bashu the world is divided into two categories, the homestead and the bush. The homestead is associated with crops, domesticated animals and order. The bush represents the untame and chaotic, yet powerful medicines and spirits that are useful to the homestead are located in this area. According to Packard,

while these worlds are ideally separate, the continuity and productivity of the homestead depends on the performance of certain ritual actions that mediate between these two worlds and bring them into contact with one another on specific occasions. This mediation permits the domestication and incorporation into the homesteads of certain spirits, medicines, and elements of nature, which are essential to the productivity of the homestead but are associated in their natural state with the chaotic world of the bush (1981:6).

The chief, as mediator during these rituals, negotiates the interaction between these two worlds. A successful mediation produces stable animal and crop production. An unsuccessful mediation produces or continues crop failures due to famines, desiccation, or other natural disasters.

As a type of social and political organization that could support thousands of people in concentrated areas, concern for food production must have been a priority for Mississippian elites. The supernatural connections that elites had were often employed to help in agricultural issues. Stone statues that have been found archaeologically were an important facet of this program (Waring 1968). Ethnohistoric accounts relate how the stone statues, which represented messengers from the supernatural, were displayed at special events involving crop fertility. When not in use these statues were stored in the temple which was normally located on a mound (Waring 1968). DePratter (1991:110) asserts that among the Carolina coast groups

statues were displayed only twice a year; once at planting and once during the harvest season. If the harvest was good the statues were offered thanks; if the harvest was poor, their assistance was sought in assuring a better crop for the following year.

The Calusa believe it was the esoteric knowledge that their chief used during ceremonies and rituals that caused the "earth to produce fruitfully" (DePratter 1991:113).

Powhatan chiefs demonstrate a similar manipulation of esoteric knowledge in the accumulation of surplus produced

by the chiefdom. A surplus that was openly displayed close to elite areas confirmed the sanctity and close connection of the chief to the supernatural and hence legitimized their position in society. The close connection to the supernatural enabled the chief to produce enough food for the people, a relationship confirmed by a display of the surplus (Barker 1992).

Long-Distance Connections. Esoteric knowledge in the form of long-distance connections as a mechanism of elite legitimation, took two forms, geo-political connections and supernatural connections. Geo-political connections to distant neighbors were used for trade purposes and marriage arrangements. These connections were employed to enhance the prestige, authority, and legitimation of chiefly elites due to their ability to contact distant sources while the rest of the community could not. Long distance trade and exchange of prestige goods meant these items were scarce and as such wealth items that could be used for chiefly expansion and higher status. Often these items were valuable not just because they were scarce but also due to their symbolic nature (Helms 1979).

Marriage arrangements between elites of various chiefdoms were important for the same reasons. Affinal ties between elites, especially between elites of different chiefdoms, increased status. As indicated, many elites were



thought of as gods, and marriage between gods enhanced power (Helms 1979). Connection to the supernatural realm is an aspect that has already been discussed and is based on the idea that only chiefs and other high ranking individuals can interact with the mystical realms.

Also closely associated with the religiously based political ideology utilized by Mississippian elites is the use of long-distance trade. Trade provided an additional mechanism manipulated by elites to enhance their status. Trade was important because of the acquisition and accumulation by elites of "valued tangible items" that demonstrated their control of space (Helms 1992:187). This is most evident in long-distance trade and the control of exotic objects. Often these items were thought to be imbued with symbolic power gained through its crafting or through its association with the supernatural in its raw form (Helms 1992:188). In addition, through the use of political ideology, elites were the only individuals able to communicate with the supernatural. Consequently, elite individuals had the ability to gain access to symbolic objects, explaining their frequent inclusion in elite contexts.

Separation Between Purity and Pollution. Goldman (1970:25) states that as long as chiefs fulfill their obligations to the community, the community will continue to acknowledge the sanctity of the office of chief and its associated

privileges. Sanctity was instilled and reinforced through the four variables mentioned above. It was the sanctity of the elites which separated them from the rest of the community. Chiefly elites were pure, because they were being directly related to the gods, and as such, the people were required to treat them as gods. In Polynesia this could take the form of full prostration or kneeling before the chief and avoiding transgression of the boundaries of the chiefly residence. Failure to obey the sanctity of a chief could result in the death of the transgressor because the purity of the chief had been violated.

The theme of sanctity and pollution receives greatest attention through the work of Mary Douglas. Douglas (1979) surmises that all concepts of sanctity and pollution are attempts by individuals or groups to influence other people's behavior. Douglas (1979:3) states

political power is usually held precariously and primitive rulers are no exception. So we find their legitimate pretensions backed by beliefs in extraordinary powers emanating from their persons, from the insignia of their office or from words they can utter. Similarly the ideal order of society is guarded by dangers which threaten transgressors.

In other words, the concept of sanctity and pollution/danger can be used to instill preferred social order or hierarchy. In chiefdoms, this preferred social order, which is deemed natural by the people, is one of the chiefly elites as rulers and of higher status and that of the rest of the population as commoners and low status. Mississippian

society in this regard was no different from other chiefdoms around the world. Hudson (1976) provides many examples of the separation between purity and pollution in ethnohistoric cases. Some had historical antecedents within the prehistoric Mississippian and may have operated to instill a preferred social order as mandated by elites.

### Political Organization of Chiefdoms

In the current discussion of chiefdoms two systems will receive attention: a two-tiered system and a three-tiered system of political organization. The two-tiered system, also known as a simple chiefdom, has only two levels of hierarchy with a single level of decision-making (the chief) above the general population (Steponaitis 1978; Wright 1984; Blitz 1993; Anderson 1994). In the Mississippian case, a small ceremonial center acts as a focal point for a number of farmsteads operating at its periphery (Blitz 1993). Farmsteads were generally inhabited by commoners and comprised the majority of the population for each chiefdom. (Prentice 1987; Mistovich 1988). Typically, the center, where the elites reside, performs the functions of the chiefdom but wields little to moderate control over the inhabitants of that chiefdom.

In a three-tiered, or complex chiefdom, the settlement pattern and political organization is more complex than is the case in simple chiefdoms. As implied by its name, this

type of chiefdom has three levels of hierarchy with two levels of decision-making above the general population (Steponaitis 1978; Wright 1984). The settlement pattern of this type of system has farmsteads at the bottom. Again, these farmsteads are connected to the system at large by small ceremonial centers; but these centers, instead of being autonomous, are now under the control of the powerful civic-ceremonial centers. Civic-ceremonial centers are where the highest ranked individuals live, while other high-ranking kin related elites and some lesser elites reside in small ceremonial centers located throughout the chiefdom. Small ceremonial centers act as intermediaries between the first and third levels in these chiefdoms. Three-tiered systems display more inequality between the elites and commoners than do two-tiered systems. This is due to the need for more authority and power in order to keep the various communities under control and maintain political stability.

Rank Indicators in Chiefdoms:  
An Archaeological Viewpoint

As mentioned above, the social and political organization of chiefdoms is divided into two general groups, elites and commoners. Elites are the political, religious and economic coordinators of chiefdom societies. Commoners provide the resources by which the elites fulfill the above duties such as providing agricultural surplus.

labor, and other important roles. Sumptuary rules provide the best amenities the chiefdom has to offer for the elite of each polity. This includes the best choice of food stuffs, exotic objects, preferred living locations and architecture style. The differences between the two social groups should produce a similar distribution pattern in the archaeological record. To be kept in mind is the importance of the type of chiefdom, simple or complex, that is being discussed. As already mentioned, rank differences are more pronounced in complex chiefdoms than in simple chiefdoms and should provide a clearer distinctions in material correlates between elites and commoners than in simple chiefdoms. Three indicators of this organization preserved in the archaeological record are the mortuary programs, skeletal analysis for health and diet and architecture.

#### The Mortuary Program

Peebles and Kus's (1977) seminal work used burials as a measure of ranking the differentiation that was exhibited in the mortuary program of over 2,000 individuals from the Mississippian center of Moundville as a means of identifying chiefdoms in the archaeological record. From this work, social ranking subsumes two clear groups, a superordinate one (elite), in which social statuses were based on genealogy and a subordinate one (commoners), based on personal accomplishment as dictated by gender and age

limitations. In addition, Peebles and Kus demonstrated that the mortuary program could be applied to the chiefdom as a whole and not just the site of Moundville. Moundville, which was the major ceremonial center, contained the highest-ranking individuals in the chiefdom, based on associated burial accompaniments. Other high ranking burials were found at small ceremonial centers within the chiefdom but associated burial goods demonstrated that all were of lesser rank than the highest ranking burials at Moundville. The farmsteads produced, on the average, the lowest-ranking individuals in the chiefdom.

#### Health and Diet

Rank order can also be inferred from skeletal analysis of burials from secure context. Differential access to resources, such as foods of certain types and in certain quantities, can affect survival and reproductive fitness. Often elites are healthier when compared to commoners due to better, more secure food sources. This is evident in osteological work (Armstrong and Hill 1990; Hatch and Willey 1974; Peebles 1983; Powell 1988) as well as analysis of faunal remains (Scott 1983; Jackson and Scott 1995). As suggested in Jackson and Scott (1995), faunal remains may also provide insights into the symbolic realm of Mississippian life and elite/nonelite interaction. They argue that elites had access to certain animals that were

imbued with or symbolized sacred or cosmological precepts. In each case, only elite had access to those specific species, which include certain birds, black bear, beaver, etc.

### Architecture

Architecture should also follow the pattern as outlined above when using architectural style as a indicator. Both architecture location and size should be influenced by the structure's function (domestic-elite/nonelite, public-communal/highly restricted). Elite residences and highly restricted buildings (also elite associated) are stylistically different from nonelite residences and communal buildings. Variation may also be evident within the general categories mentioned above.

Cordy (1981) noted in his research of Hawaiian chiefdoms that the chief's residence, particularly the paramount chief, was architecturally differentiated from those of the community. In a generalized survey of various chiefdoms throughout the world Earle (1987:291) relates that "chiefs can be differentiated cross-culturally by the size, construction, and location of their houses." Many examples of elite architecture exhibit structural attributes that the rest of community will not have, such as porches, platforms, or other such modifications, operating as status symbols within culture-specific contexts.

Closely associated with this is the energy and costs that a community is willing to expend on the construction of elite architecture. Construction of elite architecture often requires the service of the community at large. Chiefly elites could summon and organize the large groups of people necessary to maintain existing elite architecture or to build new additions. This produced two effects. First, the size and organization of the labor force indicates the power and consequently represented the status and rank of the chiefly elite. Second, a large organized labor force allows for the construction of public or elite architecture on qualitatively more impressive terms than those used by commoners, who relied mainly on kinship ties for help in domestic construction. This translates into potentially larger and better constructed architecture for elites. This is directly supported by research of Mesopotamian complex chiefdoms (Wright 1984) in which elite architecture is better made and slightly larger, especially that of the paramount chief. Cordy (1981) found a positive correlation in Hawaiian chiefdoms between rank and status and the amount of labor expended on architecture construction. He states "labor expenditure involved in permanent housing construction positively covaries with the social rank of the household's highest member" (Cordy 1981:86).



### Summary

Chiefdom level societies were the first type of sociopolitical system to institutionalize inequality. This inequality was produced by a combination of both secular and sacred variables, with perhaps the sacred determinate being of primary importance. Individuals who control and manipulate the secular and sacred means of inequality are known as the elites, who resided in ceremonial centers. Commoners, who mainly lived in farmsteads, comprise the majority of the population in chiefdoms and had little influence in secular and sacred affairs. As such, chiefdoms in general constitute two social groups, elites and commoners. This inequality is observable in the material correlates left behind, such as through mortuary customs and architecture style.

## CHAPTER IV

### MISSISSIPPIAN ARCHITECTURE: A FIRST APPROXIMATION THROUGH ETHNOHISTORIC ACCOUNTS AND PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Written documents detailing Native American life in the Southeast during the (proto)historic period provide sources of information to help interpret archaeological data from the Mississippian period. Although there is a dearth of information about architecture from the written accounts left behind, a piecing together of various sources provides a small body of evidence that applies to the present study. Ethnohistoric accounts from the southeast are a valuable tool in the archaeological interpretation of the Mississippian Culture due to the cultural continuity that was maintained up to the time of European contact.

#### Ethnohistoric Insights into Architectural Variability

In this chapter I first outline four major categories of architecture and their salient features based on ethnohistoric accounts. In the remainder of the chapter, I focus on the symbolism attached to space and shape, specifically as these relate to two Mississippian architectural phenomena, the platform mound and the plaza. I argue that the expression of basic Mississippian cosmological precepts and their appropriation by the Mississippian elite are central to identification and

interpretation of architectural variability. As mentioned in Chapter II, architectural variability is addressed here according to two functionally different classes, public and domestic. Each of these can be subdivided on the basis of social or political dimensions. Public architecture includes two dialectically opposed categories, communal architecture and highly restricted architecture. Domestic includes both elite and nonelite residential buildings. Thus, four distinguishable classes may be defined for the purposes of this research. Ethnohistoric references to public (communal and highly restricted) and domestic (elite and nonelite) architecture are reviewed here in an attempt to provide some information on architectural and material variability that can be applied to the Mississippian archaeological record.

Domestic Elite Architecture:  
Location, Size and Material Correlates

Several accounts of domestic (residences of both elite and nonelite) architecture within Mississippian settlements were noted by early Europeans. Garcilaso (Varner and Varner 1951), one of the chroniclers of the DeSoto expedition, provides some of the best descriptive accounts of nonpublic elite residences. In one account he states that

the Indians of Florida always try to dwell on high places, and at least the houses of the lords and Caciques are so situated even if the whole village cannot be. But since all of the land is very flat...they build such sites with the strength of

their arms, piling up very large quantities of earth and stamping on it with great force until they have formed a mound from twenty-eight to forty-two feet in height. Then on top of these places they construct flat surfaces which are capable of holding the ten, twelve, fifteen or twenty dwellings of the lord and his family and the people of his service .... In those areas at the foot of this hill, which may be either natural or artificial, they construct a plaza, around which the noblest and most important personages and then the common people build their homes. (Varner and Varner 1951:170-171)

In another account Garcilaso describes the lodging provided to DeSoto at Coza by the chief, who maintained three houses in various parts of the town. In each case the house of the chief was "elevated so as to have the advantages a lord's habitation must have over those of his vassels" (Varner and Varner 1951:343). In one last account he states that in the town of Chisca the Curaca [ruler] lived "off to one side of the town...on a high mound" that was only accessible by two stairways that reached the top (Varner and Varner 1951:423). As shown above, the highest-ranked elite individuals have residences that are spatially separate from the community either horizontally or vertically by their placement on mounds.

Ethnohistoric sources provide some information on architecture size of elite residences. Much of this information pertains to the Natchez, since few specific accounts describe the houses of other groups. Charlevoix's 1672 account of the Natchez describes the chief's house as located on a mound, and having a larger size than other

structures located in the Grand Village (Neitzel 1965:64-65). Iberville's 1700 account adds to this, relating that the chief's house was approximately 25 feet wide and 45 feet long (about 105 m<sup>2</sup>); although, he does not give sizes of the other buildings in the Village (Neitzel 1965:64). Du Pratz (1756:333) provides measurements of 30 feet on a side or about 900 ft<sup>2</sup> (84 m<sup>2</sup>) for the elite residence on the mound. Several other accounts from the DeSoto expedition state that chiefs' houses were larger than those of the commoners in several areas of the Southeast (Bourne 1904:52).

Material correlates of elite residences, as indicated by ethnohistoric and previous archaeological evidence, include domestic debris consisting of faunal and floral remains left over from the preparation and consumption of meals, utilitarian and non-utilitarian objects, and possibly some ritual paraphernalia (pipes, feathers, etc) associated with religious duties held by the elites (Wyckoff and Baugh 1980). Floral (Welch and Scarry 1993) and faunal (Scott 1983; Jackson and Scott 1995) remains may indicate preferential choices of foodstuff, while prestige goods of both local and nonlocal objects such as shell, mica, obsidian, some pottery vessels, and copper may also be used to identify elite residences (DePratter 1991; Schnell et al. 1981).

Domestic Nonelite Architecture:  
Location, Size and Material Correlates

Inferred from Garcilasco's account, nonelite residences were generally located in areas of the settlement away from the mound and plaza. Du Pratz provides some information on nonelite residence size in stating

the cabins of the natives are all perfectly square. There is not one which measures less than 15 feet each way, but there are some more than 30. (Du Pratz 1758:341)

His measurements, as mentioned above, for the elite residence on the mound were 30 feet on a side suggesting that nonelite residences were about 15 feet on a side or about 225 ft<sup>2</sup> (21 m<sup>2</sup>) in area.

The absence of elite residence material correlates, although somewhat simplistic in its approach, should distinguish nonelite residences. Domestic debris should consist mostly of utilitarian objects, no prestige goods, no ritual paraphernalia, and a high proportion of work-related tools and products (Schnell et al.: 1981).

Public Communal Architecture:  
Location, Size and Material Correlates

Communal public architecture is best represented in ethnohistoric accounts by council houses and town houses located within the community. These structures had a quasi-public function serving as the location for community oriented meetings attended by much of the community, but also fairly restricted in access during times of war or

ritual ceremonies (Hudson 1976). Shapes and sizes for these structures range from circular to rectangular, and anywhere from 46 m<sup>2</sup> to 185 m<sup>2</sup> or more (Sullivan 1987). Council houses generally appear in times of consensus-based decision-making or in societies with a low degree of political hierarchy, such as tribal level societies and in simple chiefdom (DePratter 1983; Anderson 1994). These types of structures are generally located in the center of the community near the plaza or public square (Hudson 1976; Sullivan 1987) and have evidence of benches running along the walls and/or clay platforms (Rudolph 1984; Schroedl 1986).

Ethnohistoric accounts and previous archaeological evidence of material correlates of communal architecture are lacking although some correlates may be inferred from the description given above. It can be inferred that domestic debris should be scarce, given its public instead of residential function. Religious paraphernalia for rituals of various purposes (religious, warfare, marriage, etc.) may be present (Hudson 1976) and local prestige goods may be present. Nonlocal prestige goods should be nearly absent from these types of structures.

**Highly Restricted Public Architecture:**  
**Location, Size and Material Correlates**

Public architecture that is highly restricted in terms of access by the community are located in spatially

separated areas of the settlement. Drawing from ethnohistoric sources, Rudolph (1984) and DePratter (1991) both believe that structures located on platform mounds must be highly restricted public structures that developed out of the council house. They argue that this represents a centralization of political authority, having evolved from consensus-based decision-making to decision-making by a few, usually in the hands of a powerful chief and his or her close kin. In this category are temples and its associated burials, charnel houses, and some storage facilities, and perhaps also the mound top residences of the elite (included in domestic architecture because of its nonpublic function). These types of structures are part of a broader social and political context indicating increased inequality that should also reveal itself in other material correlates. While mound top architecture is emphasized here, nonmound restricted structures are also a possibility; likely areas include the plaza and around the mound. Size of structures, as indicated in Chapter II, should be more representative of status and wealth of the elite who control the political and religious apparatus than size because of community involvement. This is due to the need for elites to differentiate themselves from the rest of the community on a more visible basis. In the case of highly restricted temples there are no benches lining the walls allowing



people to congregate, but clay platforms and a dais may be present (Lewis and Kneberg 1958).

Abundant ethnohistoric and archaeological evidence has been accumulated on material correlates of highly restricted public architecture. While material correlates of charnel houses and storage facilities are fairly straightforward (i.e. burials and preserved food surplus respectively), temples are a different matter. Although temple descriptions are varied, DePratter (1991) provides a comprehensive assessment of their major features. There should be little to no domestic debris in the structure, while bird effigies, skulls from slain enemy warriors, wealth objects (including local and nonlocal items), a palisade or screen surrounding the building, colors/paints of symbolic value, copper and pipes are often associated with these structures. Also included should be an entrance facing east, a perpetual (sacred) fire, and a very clean floor (Wyckoff and Baugh 1980).

#### Symbolic Association of Architecture Location and its Manipulation by Elites

Ethnohistoric accounts and previous archaeological research indicate two major sacred areas within many ceremonial centers of the Mississippian period: mounds and plazas. By piecing together ethnohistoric and archaeological evidence, the religious and symbolic importance attached to these areas is addressed.

### The Platform Mound

As briefly indicated in Chapter III, the separation between purity and pollution is an important facet of esoteric knowledge and Mississippian life (Hudson 1976). One example of this is in the construction of platform mounds. The original purpose of these mounds was not to serve as bases for structures, but as places on which to perform rituals and sacred dances (Knight 1989b). This contention is supported by the presence of mound areas in communities prior to the Mississippian florescence. For instance, platform mounds are present during the Middle Woodland at the Ingomar Mounds in northeast Mississippi (Rafferty 1990), and at the better known sites of Pinson in Tennessee and Marksville in Louisiana. These areas were very sacred, for they represented the point at which two worlds came together, the "Upper World" and "This World" (Hudson 1976). By using these mounds, communication could occur between the two worlds; thus, purity and sanctity had to be kept. During the Mississippian, buildings were constructed on these platform mounds, some of which may well have been domestic structures (elite) in addition to temples (highly restricted), indicating, as I suggest, an attempt by elites to associate themselves with the supernatural and to legitimize their control over others.

Another sacred aspect of platform mounds is observable in their reuse and rebuilding over many years. Throughout

the southeast, Mississippian mounds exhibit periodic rebuilding. The rebuilding of mounds generally involved one of two methods: "blanket" mantles and substructural mound stages (Lewis and Kneberg 1941:22-23; Waring 1968:58; Blitz 1983a:251-252). A blanket mantle is a thin covering over the old surface of the mound, while substructure mound stages are layers of earth that add to the overall enlargement of the mound (Blitz 1983a:252). Little is known about reasons rebuilding took place on mounds or the difference, if any, attached to the use of one method over the other. Schnell et al. (1981:198-202) illustrate through research at Cemochechobee, a historic Creek town, that blanket mantles may indicate a renewal and/or purification ritual that symbolized the death of an important individual(s). With the death of certain elites the mound with which those elites were associated with was symbolically cleansed of pollutants by the placing of earth over the decreased living and/or working area.

Regardless of the method behind mound building, it is important to realize that the same spot was used over and over. This indicates its probable importance and sacredness for the people, and the necessity of that place for continued religious and social orientation. For elites, the platform mound provided a means by which they could gain control over the religious affairs, and sanctify inequality and political power (construction of a political ideology).

In short, mounds were the sum of esoteric knowledge which elites had at their disposal. Krause (1990:91) states

we are among those who view Mississippian mound-building as an expressive set of boundary-setting acts which created a place for special events and a restricted range of behavior, a place to display in tangible form the outward and publicly visible meaning of esoteric knowledge.

#### Quadripartite Symbolism in the Built Environment

A second aspect of the built environment associated with the sacred is the plaza, which is a reification of the quadripartite symbolism deeply imbedded in Mississippian culture. Included are the celestial powers known as the four winds and the cardinal directions, which are interchangeable terms. Ethnohistorically, the plaza was related to the busk or square grounds of the Creeks, Kashita, etc. (Waring 1968). The plaza area was often oriented to the cardinal directions. It provided a place to build the sacred fire which had four logs oriented toward the cardinal points (Swanton 1946), again demonstrating the use of a quadripartite design. The building of the sacred fire in this manner was also observed among the Caddo (DePratter 1991). Additional evidence of the sacred nature of the plaza can be seen in the use of these areas as fields for the game of chunky. Originally chunky was played as a means of divination; later, it took on more the role of a game (Brose, Brown, and Penney 1985). Given its sacred

aspects, and judging from Garcilasco's accounts, there is little surprise that elites would locate their residences and possibly highly restricted ceremonial buildings (charnel houses, sweat lodges, etc.) on the plaza. This could also explain the presence of communal architecture in the plaza areas, as seen with the historic Creek (Swanton 1946) and Cherokee (Schroedl 1986; Sullivan 1987). Another line of evidence for the use of the quadripartite theme in sacred contexts is the platform mound mentioned above. Many platform mounds were often constructed in a quadrilateral shape instead of an easier circular shape. Knight (1989a:287) reasons that quadrilateral mounds were preferred because

the "earth island" as a cosmological entity among the southeastern Indians was normally conceived as flat-surfaced and as manifesting four world directions. A Muskogee %' 0

^^^U  
^^

^@ives of the earth as both flat and square, dropping off on four sides. The quadrilaterality and flat-topped configuration of most Mississippian mounds may express this image concretely in an appropriate medium, earth.

These "earth islands" were constructed as flat-topped quadrilateral mounds allowing not only ceremonies to be performed on top but also to represent the four cardinal directions. The cardinal directions were an important aspect of Southeastern Indian cosmology and the incorporation of this concept into their ceremonial and ritual life is not unexpected. It creates an additional

measure of sacredness to the mounds that a circular platform mound could not have provided.

Archaeological evidence also indicates that on occasions the quadripartite design was used to legitimize elite power and status. Ramey Incised pots from the American Bottom provide an example. Cahokian elites incorporated the quadripartite theme through the use of cross-in-circle motifs, "linking the elite with the cosmological order...thereby smoothing over dominant-subordinate social tensions" (Pauketat and Emerson 1991:934).

A final example for the use of quadripartite themes in sacred contexts can be found in the archaeological research of the Range Site in the American Bottom (Kelly 1990). In the center of the Range site "fourfold" pit complexes that Kelly believes belonged to a fertility cult were found. These were religious center points that not only integrated the community but also provided a connection with the supernatural to ensure a stabile agricultural output. Kelly interprets the fourfold pit complex, which may be a forerunner of the plaza, as a variant of the cross-in-circle motif (fire-sun-deity). This is associated with the cardinal directions, or the four winds, as defined above. Through time, the largest structures (whose functions are unknown, but associated artifacts suggest a ceremonial or elite function) in the community became associated with the

fourfold pit complex, suggesting an attempt by elites to affiliate themselves with the religious affairs of the community.

### Summary

By referring to ethnohistoric accounts and previous archaeological research, information regarding each of the four functionally different categories of architectural variability have been defined. In each case a set of criteria (location, size, and material correlates) has been proposed as minimally defining that category from each of the other three. These defining criteria will be applied to my sample in Chapters V and VI in an attempt to identify these structures in the archaeological record in Alabama. This chapter also identified two sacred areas within Mississippian communities, the platform mound and the plaza, and the reasons they are considered sacred. This will be incorporated into the analysis in Chapter VII.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SAMPLE

The two sites chosen for the present research are Lubbub Creek and Moundville. They were chosen due to the abundant evidence of structures found on each of the sites and reported artifact distribution. Two other Mississippian sites, Bessemer located in central Alabama and Hiwassee located in east central Tennessee, were initially examined but were not included in the final analysis due to the paucity of details published on artifact distributions in and around structures at these sites. Few other Mississippian sites in the Mid-South region provide the structure sample size necessary to examine variability for the current research aims.

#### Lubbub Creek

The Lubbub Creek Archaeological Locality (Figure 5.1) is located in west-central Alabama about 33 miles west of Moundville, Alabama. The site was discovered and tested in the 1970s (Jenkins 1975) and excavated in the early 1980s (Peebles 1983b). The locality is situated in a bend of the Tombigbee River that provided a diverse biotic pool which groups of people were able to exploit (for a much more detailed account see Cole 1983). The first intensive use of the site was during the Late Woodland, a period that lasted from A.D. 600 to around 1000 in the Gainesville area. The



Mississippian period started around A.D. 1000 and concluded A.D. 1500, followed by a sparser proto-historic occupation until about A.D. 1600.

The Late Woodland period in the Lubbub area is known as the Miller III culture, of which there are several variants (Jenkins 1982; Welch 1990). The analysis of settlement, subsistence, and mortuary data indicate a fairly egalitarian social organization with some mobility from one geographic area to another. Higher population densities are indicated from preceding periods by an increase in the number of base camps. The volume and geographic scope of extralocal objects also steadily increase during this time (Welch 1990). Miller III architecture, not present at Lubbub, can be found on nearby sites in the Gainesville area. Structures were typically circular, and ranged in size from 18-28 m<sup>2</sup> (Krause and Jenkins 1986). Toward the Terminal Late Woodland period some quadrilaterally shaped structures appeared, indicating some Mississippian influence. Although quadrilateral structures made their appearance, circular structures were still used in some cases, with sizes (whether circular or quadrilateral) remaining about the same.

The Mississippian occupation at Lubbub can be divided into two periods, according to ceramic chronology: Summerville I and Summerville II-III (Peebles and Mann 1983). Summerville I has been radiocarbon dated from A.D.

Figure 5.1

1000 to 1200, Summerville II/III from A.D. 1200 to 1500. A third occupation episode, Summerville IV, can also be defined by ceramics. This proto-historic component dates from A.D. 1500 to about A.D. 1600.

The Summerville I period marked the beginning of the Mississippian lifestyle around A.D. 1050 and lasted to around A.D. 1200. It was during this time that the use of shell-tempering in pottery became the preferred ceramic manufacturing technique. Other firsts included a moderate degree of social ranking and maize dependency (Blitz 1993). The built environment also changed around this time, with quadrilateral wall-trench architecture replacing the ubiquitous circular structures of the Woodland period. Nonlocal objects which continue to be brought in from distant sources, are found mainly in elite burials (Blitz 1993). Settlement organization was structured by the placement of a central mound and a plaza that bordered it on the east. Both the mound and plaza were surrounded by a inner palisade that was rebuilt two or more times during this period (Cole and Albright 1983). This inner palisade may have functioned more to demarcate social boundaries than for defensive purposes due to the total exclusion of domestic structures within these palisades until the very last construction (Cole and Albright 1983; Blitz 1993). The plaza was largely defined by an absence of domestic debris and architecture. Most of the six known stages of the mound

were destroyed by post-occupational disturbances, so only the premound structures survived. The six mound stages were identified from remaining portions of the mound base.

Several of the very first stages belonged to the Summerville I period with the last three or so belonging to the Summerville II/III period.

Six premound structures were found dating to the Summerville I period, comprising three two building construction phases superimposed on each other. All three building phases were surrounded by a curtain wall or privacy screen (Blitz 1993). The earliest pair (S# 3 and 4) had floor areas of 26 m<sup>2</sup> and 10 m<sup>2</sup> respectively. The second pair (S# 2 and 5A) had floor areas of 31 m<sup>2</sup> and 107 m<sup>2</sup>. The last of the three pairs (S# 1 and 5B) had floor areas of 36 m<sup>2</sup> and 85 m<sup>2</sup>. All premound construction episodes were in an area completely devoid of debris and artifacts. Three other structures (S# 1, 2 and 4) were located outside the mound-plaza-inner palisade complex in various areas of the community (Refer to Figure 5.2). The 8.5 ha community was enclosed by an outer palisade that protected the only approach by land to Lubdub.

Social ranking in the Summerville I population is revealed through a comparison of burials from an elite cemetery and burials found in the village. The elite burials contained mainly subadults and older males, most of whom had grave goods, half of which contained nonlocal

FIGURE 5.2

items. Blitz (1993) believes these burials indicate a formal office and/or highly ranked group of emerging elites. About 43 percent of the village burials contained grave goods, most of which were pottery vessels. No nonlocal items were found with the village burials. A formal cemetery was designed for burial of Summerville I elites at Lubbub, a design that may indicate use by the chiefly lineage. Nonelites of Lubbub were buried in the village perhaps in close association to their houses.

Summerville II-III (A.D. 1200-1500) at Lubbub retained much of the built environment from the preceding period. The mound-plaza-inner palisade complex was still being used, at least in the early part of this period. The latter half of the of the Summerville II/III the inner palisade was no longer being rebuilt (Cole and Albright 1983). The outer palisade was also abandoned sometime during this period. Diagnostic sherds, found in association with remnants of the upper mound stages indicate that the mound was not occupied past this period. However, this trend may have occurred fairly early within the Summerville II/III period. It is my belief that all these events occurred at approximately the same time, and are indicative of broad changes that were occurring within the Lubbub chiefdom. Two access ramps existed before mound abandonment, one on the south side and the other on the east side, providing the only means by which to reach the summit.

Four structures (S# 1, 3, 4, and 7) were found outside the complex and two (S# 6 and 8) were found within the complex (Refer to Map 5.3). These appear only after the inner palisade was no longer being used. A third structure, excavated by Jenkins and Ensor (1981), was located on the northern side of the plaza and can be considered within the same category as Structures 6 and 8. This structure is not represented on the maps or included in the analysis. The four structures located outside the complex range in size from 42 m<sup>2</sup> to 56 m<sup>2</sup>. Structures 6 and 7 had floor areas of 78 m<sup>2</sup> and 50 m<sup>2</sup> respectively.

Artifacts in dated burials from this period indicate a significant decline in nonlocal items from the preceding period (Blitz 1993). In addition, the imports of Moundville trade items such as finewares (i.e. Moundville Engraved, etc.) and rectilinear pottery vessels increase during this time. Taken together, the breakdown of existing Summerville social organization as shown above may indicate a significant Moundville influence on a once autonomous community. It was during this period, especially toward the later half of the period, that Moundville increased in size and power throughout west-central Alabama. Peebles (1987) and Blitz (1993) both advocate an economic alliance more so than a military takeover in Summerville's relation with Moundville, although it seems that this may be just one facet of the overall changes that Moundville caused at Lubdub.

FIGURE 5.3



Summerville IV (A.D. 1500-1600) represents the final period of occupation at Lubbub. Of the five structures dated to this period, Structures 1 and 5 were located along the plaza, while Structures 1, 2, and 3 were found away from the plaza (Refer to Map 5.4). Structure 5 had three construction episodes. Structures 1 ( $39 \text{ m}^2$ ) and 5 (whose floor areas ranged from  $27 \text{ m}^2$  to  $49 \text{ m}^2$ ) were located near the plaza along the southern edge indicating its continued use. Structures 1, 2 and 3 were located northwest of the mound and away from the complex. They had floor areas of  $48 \text{ m}^2$ ,  $12 \text{ m}^2$ , and  $22 \text{ m}^2$  respectively. It is difficult to state with any certainty that the mound continued to act as the focal point of the community. Diagnostic ceramics of this period were not found associated with the mound and no inner palisade was found between the residential area and the mound. The settlement was surrounded by a ditch that operated as a defensive line. No nonlocal items were found with burials dating to this period. Towards the end of this period Moundville begins to wane and eventually to disintegrate altogether. Table 5.1 summarizes all of the structures according to their respective time periods at Lubbub Creek.

FIGURE 5.4

TABLE 5.1

SUMMARY OF ARCHITECTURE FLOOR AREA (m<sup>2</sup>) AT LUBBUB CREEK

	Mound Precinct	Nonmound Areas
Summerville I		
Structure #3	26	
Structure #4	10	
Structure #2	31	
Structure #5A	107	
Structure #5B	85	
Structure #1		35
Structure #2		35
Summerville II/III		
Structure #1		42
Structure #3		42
Structure #4		52
Structure #7		56
Structure #6		78
Structure #8		50
Summerville IV		
Structure #1		48
Structure #2		12
Structure #3		22
Structure #1 (SE)		39
Structure #5A		49
Structure #5B		27
Structure #5C		36

### Moundville

The site of Moundville is located about 15 miles south of the present day city of Tuscaloosa (Figure 5.1). It represents one of the greatest and most significant manifestations of the Mississippian culture in the Southeast. Many of the excavations at Moundville were done in the 1930s and 1940s under several government programs, including the WPA. This work went unpublished until compiled by Peebles in the 1970s (Peebles 1971, 1978, 1979). At its height of power, the site of Moundville controlled a region approximately 33 km from its northern to its southern end, and can accurately be labeled a complex chiefdom. The site itself contained more than 20 mounds arranged around a 30 ha plaza that was situated in the middle of the community. A stockade was built around the settlement encompassing an area about 100 ha in size. As many as 3,000 people may have lived at the site, with as many as 30,000 individuals living within the chiefdom in the Black Warrior River basin. Using ceramics, Moundville can be separated into four time periods (Steponaitis 1983). The chronology is as follows: Moundville I (A.D. 1050-1250), Moundville II (A.D. 1250-1400), Moundville III (A.D. 1400-1550) and Moundville IV (A.D. 1500-1600). Moundville II and III can be separated into early and late subperiods within each period.

Around A.D. 1050 the site of Moundville rose from a fairly egalitarian West Jefferson phase culture to a Mississippian sociopolitical system containing a nascent elite social group. Definite association of one platform mound, including possibly a few others, and the beginnings of the plaza were constructed at this time (Peebles 1987). Few imported objects are found with Moundville I elite burials, all of whom were adults and none of whom showed signs of trauma or malnutrition (Peebles 1986; Powell 1988). Three other sites located near Moundville had significant West Jefferson settlements that developed into Mississippian centers at this time. All four were single mound centers, each representing fairly equal simple chiefdoms (Peebles 1978, 1987).

Archaeological evidence from Moundville II (A.D. 1250-1400) represents a more complex sociopolitical system from the preceding period. Three new mounds were constructed during this period giving the basic outline of the soon-to-be 30 ha plaza. A superordinate rank was now fully developed, represented by elaborate burials of males and females of all ages (Peebles 1986). Imported objects and craft specialization increased during this period (Peebles 1986) and the health of the population continued to be good, especially that of the elites (Peebles and Schoeninger 1981). It is at this point in time that Moundville expanded to include large areas of the Black Warrior River basin

including the three former Moundville I centers and several new centers with their surrounding populations (Peebles 1986). These single mound centers acted as focal points and interlocutors between their surrounding populations and Moundville itself. Moundville at this time may be considered a complex chiefdom.

During Moundville III (A.D. 1400-1500) phase the Moundville chiefdom continued to expand by adding new lands. Much of this expansion came through military conquest (Anderson 1994). Internal growth is observed in the construction of the last 16 mounds presently found on the site and the addition of the first archaeologically known palisade (Peebles 1986). Portions of the palisade excavated by Vogel and Allan (1984) revealed several palisade systems, some of which exhibit extensive rebuilding. Peebles (1986) indicates that during this period, if not before, spatial arrangements indicative of status and rank become apparent. Residential areas for elites and commoners are found as well as specialized areas of the community for craft production and activities. Exotic imports continued to be important to the "prestige goods economy" and elite control. However, by the end of this phase the Moundville chiefdom collapsed and the site of Moundville declined in importance.

Moundville IV (A.D. 1500-1700), also known as the Alabama River phase, is the last recorded occupation of the Moundville site. This period is generally not considered

Mississippian although many Mississippian characteristics were still apparent. During this period no mound construction occurred and the importation of exotic materials and craft specialization decrease markedly (Peebles 1986). The population of the former Moundville chiefdom was now dispersed throughout the basin. Moundville IV populations suffered from malnutrition, disease, and in many cases substantial increases in trauma (Peebles 1986).

Table 5.2 shows all structures found at Moundville and their corresponding sizes and locations. Figure 5.5 shows most of the various excavations that have taken place at Moundville over the last 100 years. Individual areas mentioned below can be keyed into the site by using this map. Since the focus of this research is specifically architecture, only those areas containing complete structure patterns are included and applied to the analysis in the following chapter. The following areas are of concern: Roadway Excavation (Figure 5.5:Area 1), Museum Parking Area Excavations (Figure 5.5:Area 2), West of P' (Figure 5.5:Area 3), Roadway Excavations (Figure 5.5:Area 4), Roadway Excavation (Figure 5.5:Area 5), Roadway Excavation (Figure 5.5:Area 6), Roadway Excavation (Figure 5.5:Area 7), Administration Building Excavations (Figure 5.5:Area 8), South and Southwest of Mound G (Figure 5.5:Area 9), Roadway Excavations (Figure 5.5:Area 10), Roadway

FIGURE 5.5



TABLE 5.2

SUMMARY OF ARCHITECTURE FLOOR AREA (m<sup>2</sup>) AT MOUNDVILLE

Administration Building Excavation	Floor Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Structure #1	30
Structure #4	12
Structure #5	21
Museum Parking Lot Excavation	
Structure #1A	14
Structure #1B	25
Structure #2	11
Structure #3	18
Structure #4	11
Rhodes Site	
The Rhodes Structure	344
Roadway Excavation	
Structure #2	18
Structure #3	18
Structure #4	9
Structure #5	13
Structure #7	17
Structure #8	44
Structure #9	40
Structure #10	22
Structure #11	22
Structure #12	24
Structure #13	16
Structure #16A	20
Structure #16B	96
Structure #17	26
Structure #18A	16
Structure #18B	17
Structure #20	53
South of Mound G	
Structure #5	20
Southwest of Mound G	
Structure #2A	31
Structure #2B	27
Structure #2C	30
Structure #3	22
Structure #4	7
West of Mound P'	
Structure #1	33

Excavations (Figure 5.5:Area 11), Rhodes Site (Figure 5.5:Not shown but located in the extreme northeastern section of the site).

### Methods of Excavation

The quality of the excavations and previous research at Lubbub Creek and Moundville is variable not just between sites but also within sites. Moundville was excavated in the middle of this century, before present advances in field techniques and research designs had been developed. However, Moundville excavations do include a wide array of excavation techniques that were used over the course of its archaeological investigative history (Peebles 1979). Data retrieved from Lubbub, on the other hand, were more thoroughly documented by today's standards, and consequently produced more detailed information. This is not to suggest that the Moundville information is unusable. On the contrary, by careful analysis and by realizing the limitations of the data, the information can be applied to present archaeological research in a meaningful manner. Thus, this thesis is not only an attempt at reinterpreting the uses of architecture in archaeological research, but also a bid to integrate previous research that in the majority of cases remains unexplored. A potential bias lies in the use of sites for which there are varying degrees of detailed information pertaining to material remains.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to work with the available information, since it has the potential to offer a wealth of data about prehistoric architecture variability and function.

### Lubbub Creek

The well-documented results of the Lubbub Creek project was made possible by the efficient recording of most of the excavated materials. All features and insitu artifacts were piece plotted and extensive notes were taken on all remaining artifacts. When possible, associations between features and artifacts were made including associations with structures. When a structure was encountered in the excavations it was divided into four quarters by two 20-cm-wide balks placed in alignment with the grid system (Peebles 1983a). Much of the material was shovel skimmed and troweled in natural levels within the structure. However, in some cases bulldozers disturbed the upper portions of structures making it difficult to map distribution and later, in comparing structures with each other. When possible, piece-plots were taken of in situ artifacts and associated features were water screened.

### Moundville

As noted above, Moundville excavation methods changed during the course of its archaeological history. The

excavation, analysis and incorporation of artifacts and features into published reports was mainly confined to large-sized objects and other cultural manifestations that were deemed noteworthy. Most excavations, until the 1960s, did not include the screening of matrix or the piece plotting of individual artifacts and features (except for burials and recognizable structure patterns). As such, correlating material remains to specific structures must be considered tenuous. Additionally, no known extra precautions were used in the excavation of structures leading to the complete loss of insitu cultural material. Although this may be true, enough was probably recorded to provide some bases for interpreting the function of each structure included in the sample. Much of the information that was used from Moundville was taken from Peebles' (1979) painstaking write-up from the original fieldnotes.

#### Methods for Assigning Structures to Occupation Periods

Structures at Lubbub Creek were assigned to an occupation period according to two sometimes overlapping methods: radiocarbon dating and ceramic associations. Seven structures produced reliable radiocarbon dates from Lubbub although none of the dates were corrected (Peebles 1983a:77). From this, ceramics were seriated into the chronology presented under the Lubbub Creek site discription. As such, the rest of the structures that did

not have radiocarbon dates were chronologically placed according to associated ceramic types.

Radiocarbon samples were not taken during the original excavations at Moundville, so assigning structures to a time period is based almost entirely on ceramics found in burials associated with structures. Given that this would be a daunting task, all structures will be treated synchronically here. Ceramics found in burials associated with structures, will provide a general chronological marker for some structures, where the data appears to warrant it.

#### Methods for Assigning Artifacts to Structures

Artifacts were assigned to structures based on three methods: if an artifact was found insitu in the structure, if features containing artifacts could be associated with a structure, or if unprovenienced artifacts were deemed associated with a structure. Due to the excellent field recording at Lubdub Creek, most assignments of artifacts and features to structures for the present research were by the former two methods. However, because of the paucity of accurate proveniencing at Moundville, method three provided at times the only means of assigning artifacts to structures. In some cases Peebles (1979) was able to associate artifacts with specific structures and when applicable this data was used (see Appendix A).

## CHAPTER VI

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The first part of this chapter analyzes the interrelationships of the three main variables discussed in Chapter IV (material correlates of function, structure location, and structure floor area) based on the Lubdub Creek and Moundville structures included in the sample. The final part of the chapter discusses the results of this analysis, which leads to an in-depth examination of the built environment in Chapter VII.

#### Analysis

The first objective is to give the artifact distribution for each structure in the sample. All structures were classified into four categories. Structures with only utilitarian items comprise the first category, while the second category consist of those with only prestige goods. The third category includes those structures containing both utilitarian items and prestige goods. Finally, structures exhibiting no artifacts were placed in a fourth category.

To examine the second main variable, architecture location was sorted into two categories, structures located within 20 m of a mound or plaza, and those located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza (see Appendix A for specific distances). These categories were cross-tabulated against

the material correlate categories of function outlined above. For example, "all structures with only utilitarian artifacts located within 20 m of a mound or plaza," or "all structures with only utilitarian artifacts located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza."

Next, categories created by the first cross-tabulation were then cross-tabulated against the third main variable, structure floor size. For example, "floor sizes of all structures with only utilitarian artifacts located within 20 m of a mound or plaza," or "floor sizes of all structures with only utilitarian artifacts located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza."

### Expectations

The four main functional categories identified through ethnohistoric accounts are as follows: elite residences, nonelite residences, communal public structures and highly restricted public architecture. For Set I, it is expected that Mississippian

- 1) elite residential architecture should be identifiable by the presence of utilitarian objects associated with activities of daily life. Prestige goods consisting of both local and nonlocal objects, as well as some possible ritual paraphernalia, should also be present.
- 2) nonelite residential architecture should be identifiable by the presence of a preponderance of utilitarian objects. Non-utilitarian objects should be few. No ritual paraphernalia or prestige objects should be present.

- 3) public communal architecture should be identifiable by the presence of a few utilitarian objects, while consisting of large amounts of non-utilitarian objects. Multi-ritual paraphernalia should be present, as well as some local prestige goods. Nonlocal prestige items should not be very abundant, and little domestic debris should be apparent. Non-stylistic architectural attributes may include evidence of benches running along the walls (inferred from internal postmolds) and possibly internal platforms.
- 4) highly restricted public architecture should be identifiable by the presence of ceremonial paraphernalia such as the bones of ancestors, bird effigies, pipes, copper, and various other symbolic items. There should be some evidence of both local and nonlocal prestige goods, but no domestic debris should be present due to the religious nature of the buildings. No benches should be found along the walls; however, internal clay platforms and/or a dais may be present.

Once function has been inferred, Set II expectations can then be tested by examining the locations of each structure in each functional class. For Set II, it is expected that Mississippian

- 5) elite residences should be spatially separated from the rest of the community and located near a mound or plaza.
- 6) nonelite residences should be located in areas of the community which are away from a mound or plaza.
- 7) communal public architecture should be located on the plaza.
- 8) highly restricted public architecture should be located near a mound or plaza.

Structure size will next be considered by the third set (Set III) of expectations. Specifically, it is expected that Mississippian

- 9) elite residences should have a larger floor size than nonelite residences.



- 10) public architecture, both communal and highly restricted, should have the largest floor sizes at the site.

#### Methods for Grouping Material Correlates

All artifacts are categorized into one of two groups, utilitarian/domestic debris and prestige goods, which includes both local and nonlocal objects. Utilitarian artifacts are objects that were used in the course of completing daily activities, and would include such items as cooking vessels, serving vessels, work tools, etc (Costin 1991). Included within the prestige sub-group are ritual objects. This is due to the fact that a clear division between prestige goods and ritual paraphernalia is not often easily obtainable, if it exists at all. Nonlocal prestige goods for the sample area includes copper, mica, paints, some extra-local cherts, greenstone celts, marine shell ornaments and a variety of other objects (Peebles 1978; Steponaitis 1986; Welch 1991; Blitz 1993; Welch et al 1993). Most prestige artifacts are non-utilitarian in function. Local prestige goods for the sample area can include pipes, decorations made from animal bones, black bear tooth pendants, and freshwater beads (Peebles 1971; Blitz 1993).

#### Methods for Examining Location in the Sample

The location of individual structures are evaluated in terms of their spatial associations with mounds and/or

plazas. Structures either on mounds or on plazas can be situated in a fairly straightforward manner. To differentiate other structures with respect to relative proximity to these areas, an arbitrary distance was established, creating two categories, those "near" and those "distant." Given that visual cues are important, a visual association between a structure and a mound or plaza is more readily perceivable when the distance is short, rather than long (Fletcher 1977). Thus, an arbitrarily defined distance of 20 m or less is used to defined whether an association is visually perceivable. I believe that a distance greater than 20 m between a structure and a mound/plaza provides too much space between entities to be visually perceivable as being associated. In other words, I believe that structures within 20 m of mounds and plazas can be considered visually associated, while those over 20 m cannot be considered visually associated with a mound or plaza. In using such a distance, I am not stating that it is a concrete limit that is always applicable or that Mississippian societies were even neccessarily cognizant of using it in their built environment. However, some definition of distance must be made in order to measure possible associations between entities and the 20 m limit provides a convenient starting point for this anlaysis. However, it should be noted that the data demonstrated a natural break at around 20 m. providing not only a convenient starting point but also

establishing a firmer connection between the arbitrarily defined distance and the data base.

#### Methods for Architecture Size

Only structures that are complete or nearly complete are included in this thesis in order to get measurements as accurate as possible. To evaluate architecture size, all structure measurements are consistently reported to the closest meter. Since the architectural data from Moundville were reported in feet, these measurements were converted to the metric system using a standardized conversion table.

Floor sizes of all structures are given in interval measurements of square meters rather than transferred into arbitrarily defined nominal data. This is necessary because arbitrary categories potentially mask variability within the sample by pigeon-holing data.

Within quadrilateral structures, floor area is calculated by measuring the length and width from the inside portion of one wall to the inside portion of the opposite parallel wall. In circular structures the measured diameter is used to calculate floor area. Data on size of structures is examined according to site and time periods within sites (where possible) in order to assess both chronological and stylistic variability.

### Lubbub Creek

#### Material Correlates of Function

Of the twenty-one structures included in the Lubbub Creek sample, 20 had associated artifacts (See Table 6.1 and refer to Appendix A for specific artifacts along with their citations). The exception was Structure 3 of the premound precinct, which showed evidence of having been ritually cleansed. Structures 1, 2, and 4 also showed evidence of having been ritually cleansed (Blitz 1983a and 1993). Structures with utilitarian artifacts represent 86 percent (n=18) of the structures in the sample. Of these eighteen structures, 83 percent (n=15) exhibit only utilitarian items and domestic debris, while 17 percent (n=3) had both utilitarian artifacts and prestige goods. About 10 percent (n=2) of the structures contained only prestige goods, including Structures #5A and #5B of the mound precinct, both of which were also ritually cleansed. Thus, prestige goods were associated with 24 percent (n=5) of the structures, or 30 percent of the artifact bearing structures.

#### Material Correlates of Function and Structure Floor Size

Of the eighteen structures containing utilitarian artifacts the average floor size was about 39m<sup>2</sup> (see Table 6.2 for each structure and its corresponding floor size). The fifteen structures that have only utilitarian artifacts

TABLE 6.1

## LUBBUB CREEK STRUCTURES: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION

## A. Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=18)

Summerville I	:	S# 1, 2, S# 1, 2, 4 (Premound)
Summerville II/III	:	S# 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8
Summerville IV	:	S# 1, 2, 3, 1(SE), 5A, 5B, 5C

## B. Only Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=15)

Summerville I	:	S# 2 S# 1, 2, 4 (Premound)
Summerville II/III	:	S# 1, 3, 4, 6, 8
Summerville IV	:	S# 1, 3, 1(SE), 5A, 5B, 5C

## C. Prestige Goods and Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=3)

Summerville I	:	S#1
Summerville II/III	:	S#7
Summerville IV	:	S#2

## D. Only Prestige Artifacts: (n=2)

Summerville I	:	S# 5A, 5B
Summerville II/III	:	None
Summerville IV	:	None

## E. No artifacts (n=1)

Summerville I	:	S# 3
Summerville II/III	:	None
Summerville IV	:	None

TABLE 6.2

LUBBUB CREEK STRUCTURES: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION  
AND STRUCTURE FLOOR AREA ( $m^2$ )

A. Only Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=15)

Summerville I	:	S# 2=35m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 1=36m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 2=31m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 4=10m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	S# 1=42m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 3=42m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 4=52m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 6=78m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 8=50m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville IV	:	S# 1=48m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 3=22m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 1(SE)=39m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 5A=49m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 5B=27m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 5C=36m <sup>2</sup>

B. Prestige Goods and Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=3)

Summerville I	:	S# 1=35m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	S# 7=56m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville IV	:	S# 2=12m <sup>2</sup>

D. Only Prestige Artifacts: (n=2)

Summerville I	:	S# 5A=85m <sup>2</sup>
	:	S# 5B=107m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	None
Summerville IV	:	None

E. No artifacts (n=1)

Summerville I	:	S# 3=26m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	None
Summerville IV	:	None

TABLE 6.3

LUBBUB CREEK STRUCTURES: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION  
AND STRUCTURE LOCATION

A. Only Utilitarian Artifacts (n=15)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=6)	
Summerville I	: S# 2
Summerville II/III	: S# 1, 3, 4
Summerville IV	: S# 1, 3
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=9)	
Summerville I	: S# 1 <sup>1</sup> , 2 <sup>1</sup> , 4 <sup>1</sup>
Summerville II/III	: S# 6, 8
Summerville IV	: S# 1(SE), 5A, 5B, 5C

B. Both Utilitarian Artifacts and Prestige Goods (n=3)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=3)	
Summerville I	: S# 1
Summerville II/III	: S# 7
Summerville IV	: S# 2

Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=0)

C. Only Prestige Goods: (n=2)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=0)

Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=2)	
Summerville I	: S# 5A <sup>1</sup> , 5B <sup>1</sup>
Summerville II/III	: None
Summerville IV	: None

D. No Artifacts: (n=1)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=0)

Less than 20 m from a Mound/Plaza: (n=1)	
Summerville I	: S# 3 <sup>1</sup>
Summerville II/III	: None
Summerville IV	: None

---

Superscript structure numbers indicate mound precinct architecture. This is used to differentiate S#1 nonmound structure from S#1 mound structure.

TABLE 6.4

LUBBUB CREEK: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION, STRUCTURE  
LOCATION, AND STRUCTURE FLOOR AREA (m<sup>2</sup>)

A. Only Utilitarian: (n=15)		
More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=6)		
Summerville I	:	S# 2 = 35m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	S# 1 = 42m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 3 = 42m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 4 = 52m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville IV	:	S# 1 = 48m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 3 = 22m <sup>2</sup>
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=9)		
Summerville I	:	S# S# 1 = 36m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 2 = 31m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 4 = 10m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	S# 6 = 78m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 8 = 50m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville IV	:	S# 1(SE) = 39m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 5A = 49m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 5B = 27m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 5C = 36m <sup>2</sup>
B. Utilitarian Artifacts and Prestige Goods: (n=3)		
More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=3)		
Summerville I	:	S# 1 = 35m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	S# 7 = 56m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville IV	:	S# 2 = 12m <sup>2</sup>
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=0)		
C. Only Prestige Goods: (n=2)		
More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=0)		
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=2)		
Summerville I	:	S# 5A <sup>1</sup> = 107m <sup>2</sup>
		S# 5B <sup>1</sup> = 85m <sup>2</sup>
Summerville II/III	:	None
Summerville IV	:	None
D. No Artifacts: (n=1)		
More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=0)		
Less than 20 m from a Mound/Plaza: (n=1)		
Summerville I	:	S# 3 <sup>1</sup> = 26m <sup>2</sup>

---

Superscript structure numbers indicate mound precinct architecture.



have an average floor size of nearly  $40\text{m}^2$ . The three structures containing both prestige goods and utilitarian artifacts had an average floor size of about  $34\text{ m}^2$ . Those structures associated with only prestige goods had an average floor size of about  $96\text{ m}^2$ , while the only structure with no associated artifacts had a floor size of  $26\text{ m}^2$ .

#### Material Correlates of Function and Structure Location

Of the fifteen structures bearing only utilitarian artifacts, 40 percent ( $n=6$ ) of them are located further than 20 m from a mound or plaza, and 60 percent ( $n=9$ ) are located within 20 m of the mound-plaza (Refer to Table 6.3). Structures containing only prestige goods ( $n=2$ ) were located within 20 m of the mound-plaza. Of the three structures containing both utilitarian artifacts and prestige goods, 100 percent were located more than 20 m from the mound-plaza. These three buildings are Structures #1 (S.I), S#7 (SII/III), and S#2 (S.IV).

#### Material Correlates of Function, Structure Location and Structure Size

Of the six structures containing only utilitarian artifacts located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza, sizes ranged from  $22\text{-}52\text{m}^2$  with a mean of  $40\text{m}^2$  (Refer to Table 6.3 for individual structure sizes). The other nine structures containing only utilitarian artifacts located

within 20 m of a mound or plaza had floor sizes ranging between 27-78m<sup>2</sup> with a mean of 40m<sup>2</sup>. The two structures containing only prestige goods located within 20 m of a mound or plaza had floor areas of 107m<sup>2</sup> and 85m<sup>2</sup>. for a mean area of 96m<sup>2</sup>. Of the three structures containing both utilitarian artifacts and prestige goods located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza, floor area ranged from 12-56m<sup>2</sup>, with a mean area of 34m<sup>2</sup>. The one structure that was devoid of artifacts had a floor area of 26m<sup>2</sup>.

### Moundville

#### Material Correlates of Function

Of the thirty-three structures included in the Moundville sample, all but two contained artifacts (See Table 6.5 and refer to Appendix A for specific artifacts). Of the thirty-one artifact-bearing structures 80 percent (n=25) contained only utilitarian artifacts, 16 percent (n=5) had both utilitarian artifacts and prestige goods, and 5 percent (n=1) had prestige goods but no utilitarian artifacts. Thus, prestige goods were associated with only 19 percent of the structures with artifacts (18 percent of the total structures).

#### Material Correlates of Function and Structure Floor Area

The average floor size of the twenty-five structures containing utilitarian artifacts is 33 m<sup>2</sup> (see Table 6.6 for

each structure and their corresponding sizes). Of those having only utilitarian artifacts, the average structure floor area lowers to  $19 \text{ m}^2$ . In the five structure containing both prestige goods and utilitarian artifacts, the floor area is  $99 \text{ m}^2$ . The one structure with only prestige goods associated with it had a floor area of  $53 \text{ m}^2$ , while the two structures with no associated artifacts has an average floor size of  $42 \text{ m}^2$ .

#### Material Correlates of Function and Structure Location

Of the twenty-five structures that contained only utilitarian artifacts, 96 percent ( $n=24$ ) were located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza (Table 6.7). The other 4 percent ( $n=1$ ) containing only utilitarian artifacts were located within 20 m of a mound or plaza (S#17). Of the five structures consisting of utilitarian artifacts and prestige goods, 20 percent ( $n=1$ ) were located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza. The other 80 percent ( $n=4$ ) were located within 20 m of a mound or plaza. The only structure containing just prestige goods was located within 20 m of the mound or plaza. The two structures containing no artifacts were also located within 20 m of a mound or plaza. In other words, the one structure with only prestige goods was located within 20 m from a mound or plaza, and five of six structures that had prestige goods as part of their assemblage were found within 20 m of

TABLE 6.5

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MOUNDVILLE STRUCTURES: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION

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## A. Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=30)

Administration Building Ex.	:	S# 1, 4, 5
Museum Parking Lot Ex.	:	S# 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 4
Roadway Excavations	:	S# 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16A, 16B, 17, 18A, 18B
South Mound G	:	S# 5
Southwest of Mound G	:	S# 2A, 2B, 2C, 3, 4
West of Mound P'	:	S# 1
Rhodes Site		

## B. Only Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=25)

Administration Building Ex.	:	S# 1, 4, 5
Museum Parking Lot Ex.	:	S# 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 4
Roadway Excavations	:	S# 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17
South of Mound G	:	S# 5
Southwest of Mound G	:	S# 2A, 2B, 2C, 3, 4
West of Mound P'	:	S# 1

## C. Prestige Goods and Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=5)

Roadway Excavations	:	S# 16A, 16B, 18A, 18B
Rhodes Site		

## D. Only Prestige Artifacts: (n=1)

Roadway Excavations	:	S# 20
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## E. No artifacts (n=2)

Roadway Excavations	:	S# 8, 9
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TABLE 6.6

MOUNDVILLE STRUCTURES: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION  
AND STRUCTURE FLOOR AREA (m<sup>2</sup>)

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A. Only Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=25)	
Administration Building Ex.	: S# 1=30m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 4=12m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 5=21m <sup>2</sup>
Museum Parking Lot Ex.	: S# 1A=14m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 1B=25m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 2=11m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 3=18m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 4=11m <sup>2</sup>
Roadway Excavations	: S# 2=18m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 3=18m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 4=9m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 5=13m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 7=17m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 10=22m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 11=22m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 12=24m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 13=16m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 17=26m <sup>2</sup>
South of Mound G	: S# 5=33m <sup>2</sup>
Southwest of Mound G	: S# 2A=31m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 2B=27m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 2C=30m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 3=22m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 4=7m <sup>2</sup>
West of Mound P'	: S# 1=11m <sup>2</sup>
B. Prestige Goods and Utilitarian Artifacts: (n=5)	
Roadway Excavations	: S# 16A=20m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 16B=96m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 18A=16m <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 18B=17m <sup>2</sup>
Rhodes Site	: =344 <sup>2</sup>
C. Only Prestige Artifacts: (n=1)	
Roadway Excavations	: S# 20=53 <sup>2</sup>
D. No artifacts (n=2)	
Roadway Excavations	: S# 8=44 <sup>2</sup>
	: S# 9=40 <sup>2</sup>

TABLE 6.7

MOUNDVILLE STRUCTURES: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION AND  
STRUCTURE LOCATION

A. Only Utilitarian Artifacts (n=25)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=24)

Administration Building Ex.	:	S# 1, 4, 5
Museum Parking Lot Ex.	:	S# 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 4
Roadway Excavations	:	S# 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13
West of Mound P'	:	S# 1
South of Mound G	:	S# 5
Southwest of Mound G	:	S# 2A, 2B, 2C, 3, 4

Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=1)

Roadway Excavations : S# 17

B. Both Utilitarian Artifacts and Prestige Goods (n=5)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=1)

Rhodes

Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=4)

Roadway Excavations : S# 16A, 16B, 18A,  
18B

C. Only Prestige Goods: (n=1)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=0)

Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=1)

Roadway Excavations : S# 20

D. No Artifacts: (n=2)

More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=0)

Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=2)

Roadway Excavations : S# 8, 9

TABLE 6.8

MOUNDVILLE STRUCTURES: MATERIAL CORRELATES OF FUNCTION,  
STRUCTURE LOCATION, AND STRUCTURE FLOOR AREA (m<sup>2</sup>)

A. Only Utilitarian (n=25)		
More than 20 m from a mound or plaza (n=24)		
Administration Building Ex.	Roadway Excavations	
S# 1 = 30m <sup>2</sup>	S# 2 = 18m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 4 = 12m <sup>2</sup>	S# 3 = 18m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 5 = 21m <sup>2</sup>	S# 4 = 9m <sup>2</sup>	
	S# 5 = 13m <sup>2</sup>	
Museum Parking Lot Ex.	S# 7 = 17m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 1A = 14m <sup>2</sup>	S# 10 = 22m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 1B = 25m <sup>2</sup>	S# 11 = 22m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 2 = 11m <sup>2</sup>	S# 12 = 24m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 3 = 18m <sup>2</sup>	S# 13 = 16m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 4 = 11m <sup>2</sup>		
West of Mound P'	South of Mound G	
S# 5 = 11m <sup>2</sup>	S# 5 = 33m <sup>2</sup>	
Southwest of Mound G		
S# 2A = 31m <sup>2</sup>	S# 2B = 27m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 2C = 30m <sup>2</sup>	S# 3 = 22m <sup>2</sup>	
S# 4 = 7m <sup>2</sup>		
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=1)		
Roadway Excavations		
S# 17 = 26m <sup>2</sup>		
B. Utilitarian Artifacts and Prestige Goods (n=5)		
More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=1)		
Rhodes Site		
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=4)		
Roadway Excavations:	S# 16A = 20m <sup>2</sup>	S# 16B = 96m <sup>2</sup>
	S# 18A = 16m <sup>2</sup>	S# 18B = 17m <sup>2</sup>
C. Only Prestige Goods (n=1)		
More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=0)		
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=1)		
Roadway Excavations:	S# 20 = 53m <sup>2</sup>	
D. No Artifacts: (n=2)		
More than 20 m from Mound/Plaza (n=0)		
Less than 20 m from Mound/Plaza: (n=2)		
Roadway Excavations:	S# 8 = 44m <sup>2</sup>	S# 9 = 40m <sup>2</sup>

a mound or plaza. Only one structure with no prestige goods was located near a mound/plaza.

Material Correlates of Function, Structure Location, and Structure Size

Of the twenty-four structures containing only utilitarian artifacts located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza, sizes range from 9-33m<sup>2</sup> with a mean of about 19m<sup>2</sup> (Table 6.8). The remaining structure containing only utilitarian artifacts was located within 20 m of a mound or plaza and had a size of 26m<sup>2</sup>. The mean size of all structures containing only utilitarian artifacts is about 19m<sup>2</sup>. Of the four structures containing both utilitarian and prestige goods located within 20 m of a mound or plaza, floor areas range from 17-96m<sup>2</sup> with a mean of 34m<sup>2</sup>. The one structure containing both utilitarian and prestige goods located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza had a floor area of 344m<sup>2</sup>. The one structure with only prestige goods was located within 20 m of a mound or plaza and had a floor areas of 53m<sup>2</sup>. The two structures with no artifacts that were located within 20 m of a mound or plaza had floor areas of 44m<sup>2</sup> and 40m<sup>2</sup>.

Results

Using ethnographic and archaeological data, two areas within Mississippian settlements were initially identified as being elite/sacred areas, the mound and the plaza. These



sources also indicate that elite architecture was generally larger. Conversely, nonelite architecture generally had smaller floor sizes and was located in nonsacred areas of the settlement. It has been proposed in this research that Mississippian architecture belonging to elite and nonelites would be similarly distinguishable by their sizes and locations within a settlement. Thus, it is expected that Mississippian elites would be located in sacred areas and have larger floor sizes. The reasoning is that elite wealth and high social standing in Mississippian societies was generally expressed by access to visibly larger structures. In addition, elites as members of chiefdom society had a political authority based on a religious superstructure, a theme that may have translated into access to sacred locations (Mound/Plaza).

Archaeologically, and for the purpose of this thesis, the presence of only utilitarian artifacts is considered to be indicative of nonelite residential structures, while the presence of both prestige goods and utilitarian artifacts is regarded to be consistent with that expected of elite residential structures. Structures accompanied by prestige goods with an absence of utilitarian goods are deemed to be public architecture. The presence of local prestige goods are believed to be indicative of communal architecture. A general absence of artifacts is consistent with public architecture.

Lubbub

At Lubbub, it is expected (according to Expectations #5, 6 and 9) that nonelite residential buildings should be located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza and comprise the smallest structures, while elite residential buildings are located within 20 m of a mound or plaza and consist of the largest residential structures at the site. It is also expected (according to Expectation #8 and 10) that public architecture is located within 20 m of a mound or plaza and generally the largest structures at the site.

About 60 percent of the nonelite residential structures were located within 20 m of a mound or plaza (this does not count S# 1, 2, and 4 of the premound precinct due to these structures having been ritually cleansed, an elite activity). All three of the elite residential structures were located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza. In addition, the average residential floor size of nonelite buildings is  $9\text{m}^2$  more in area than their elite counterparts ( $43\text{m}^2$  to  $34\text{m}^2$ ). The two examples of public architecture (S#5A and 5B) are located within 20 m of a mound or plaza. No public architecture occurs more than 20 m from a mound or plaza. The two public structures have the largest floor plans found at Lubbub,  $107\text{m}^2$  and  $85\text{m}^2$  respectively. Given this evidence, residential architecture does not fit our expectations, while public architecture does meet the expectations.

In reviewing each time period according to the expectations, the results become varied. During the Summerville I period, a total of eight structures were included. One nonelite residential structure (S#2), one elite residential structure (S#1), three possible elite residential structures from premound precinct (S#1, 2, 4) two public structures (S# 5A and 5B), and one structure with no artifacts from the premound precinct (S# 3). Neither the nonelite residential building, nor the one known elite residential building was located within 20 m of a mound or plaza. Both of these residential structures had the same floor sizes, about  $35\text{m}^2$ . On the other hand, the public architecture was located within 20 m of the mound or plaza and had very large floor sizes,  $107\text{m}^2$  and  $85\text{m}^2$ . These two structures produced the largest floor sizes at Lubdub. The three possible elite residential structures of the premound precinct, along with Structure 3 which has no artifacts, a special situation in itself, were all located within 20 m of the mound or plaza. These Summerville I structures, except for S#4, seem to be residential structures given the close similarity in floor sizes between them and the other two examples of Summerville I residential buildings and their corresponding artifact patterns (See Appendix A). Structure #4 has been tentatively interpreted as a possible storage facility due to its small size, no hearth, and botanical evidence of maize (Blitz 1993). Given this evidence, it can

be suggested that the Summerville I community favors the expectations, but does not provide definitive results. It favors them because the nonelite residential structure was located away from the mound or plaza; public architecture was located near mound or plaza; public architecture was visually larger than other structures; and the artifact-free buildings, possible elite residences or public-oriented structures, were located near a mound or plaza. On the other hand, elite and nonelite residences were basically of the same floor size, thus not supporting the expectations.

A total of six structures were associated with the Summerville II/III period. Five structures were nonelite residences (S# 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8), while one was an elite residence (S#7). Three structures (S# 1, 3, 4) occurred away from the mound and plaza, while two structures (S#6 and 8) were located near the mound or plaza. The latter two nonelite residential structures consist of some of the largest floor sizes found at Lubbock (except for S# 5A and 5B) and practically equal in size to the coeval elite residential structure (S#7), which itself was located away from a mound or plaza. There is little evidence to support the current expectations from the Summerville II/III community, because nonelite residences occur near a mound or plaza, nonelite residences are larger in floor size than the elite residence (or visually equal), and the elite residence is located away from the mound or plaza.

A total of seven structures date to the Summerville IV period. Six structures were nonelite residences (S#1, 3, 1 (SE), 5A, 5B and 5C), and one elite residence (S#2). Structures # 1(SE), 5A, 5B and 5C were located within 20 m of a mound or plaza, while Structures #1 and 3 were located more than 20 m from the mound or plaza. The elite residential structure was located more than 20 m from a mound or plaza. In comparison, all nonelite residential structures were much larger in floor size than the one elite residential structure (S#2). The Summerville IV community does not fit the expectations as outlined from ethnohistoric accounts. Nonelite residential structures are located near the mound-plaza, the elite residence was located away from mound or plaza, and nonelite residences have considerably larger (a size difference that is visually perceivable) floor sizes than the elite residence. The implications of the Lubbock data will be examined in the following chapter.

### Moundville

For Moundville, the same expectations were tested: that nonelite residential buildings are located more than 20 m from the mounds or plazas and comprise the smallest structures, while elite residential buildings are located within 20 m of a mound or plaza and consist of the largest residential structures at the site. Public architecture is

also expected to be located within 20 m. of a mound or plaza and generally the largest structures at the site.

Of the twenty-five nonelite residential structures, twenty-four are located away from a mound or plaza and one is located near a mound or plaza. The average floor size of the nonresidential structures is  $19\text{m}^2$ . Four of the five elite residential structures (S#16A, 16B, 18A, 18B). are located near a mound or plaza with an average floor size of  $34\text{m}^2$ , a visually perceivable difference. However, the one elite residential structure located away from a mound or plaza (the Rhodes site) has a floor size of  $344\text{m}^2$ . The one public building (S#20) is located near a mound or plaza and has a floor size of  $53\text{m}^2$ , as are the two buildings (S#8 and 9) with no artifacts. A closer examination of these two buildings and reviewing earlier published materials (Peebles 1971, 1979) indicate that Structure #8 was a sweat lodge, while Structure #9 was a charnel house. The sweat lodge had double walls encompassing a very hard packed perhaps heat treated clay floor with two hearths located in the center. One hearth was round and basin shaped (fairly typical at Moundville) and the other was square, basin-shaped, with the corners oriented to the cardinal directions. The charnel house contained a great deal of burials scattered inside the structures as well as a few located within a few meters on the outside of the structure. Both of these structures are regarded as public buildings and perhaps given their

functions and location should be considered highly restricted public architecture.

In sum, Moundville mostly supports the ethnohistoric built expectations (Expectations #5, 6, 8, 9, and 10). Only one nonelite structure is located near a mound or plaza and all but one elite structure is located near a mound or plaza. One of the apparent discrepancies, the elite structure (the Rhodes site) located away from a mound or plaza can be accounted for by its close association with the upper Rhodes Site. The Upper Rhodes Site contained various features indicating that it was part of ritual ceremonies. The area lacked middens and garbage pits, which were frequently encountered at the Rhodes site and much of Moundville. In addition, shell beads, mica, a spatulate celt, pipes, and a shell disc were found indicating an elite and/or ritual setting. Perhaps the best evidence demonstrating its ritual function was the presence of three large hearths, Features #9, 14, and 17 (Peebles 1979). Both Feature #9 and 14 had burials, both infant and adult, situated around their circumferences. At other locations at Moundville infant burials were often used as correlates of high status or ritual and the same seems to be true with the Upper Rhodes Site. If the Upper Rhodes Site did function in this capacity, then the elite structure at the Rhodes Site was associated with a sacred area of the community. By including the Upper Rhodes Site, Moundville's structures

(except for S#17) perfectly fit the expectations as outlined from ethnohistoric sources. The differences in floor sizes between nonelite and elite residential structures are visually apparent as are the larger sizes of the public architecture.

Lastly, this research (Lubbub and Moundville) produced no discernible examples of communal architecture as described by ethnohistoric accounts. Although large structures were found on plazas at both sites, none accurately fulfill the expected results. None of the structures were circular, nor did any contain evidence of interior benches running along the interior walls. The presence of nonlocal prestige goods in some structures also precluded identification as communal public architecture. As such, Expectation #7 dealing with communal architecture, will not be included in the Discussion chapter.



## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research is to integrate the built environment as an active participant in the interpretation of cultural processes. From this analysis, two points need to be addressed concerning this issue. The first matter concerns the differential use of architectural styles (location and size) by elites to legitimize power. The second point addresses the differential use of architectural styles by elites between political systems, i.e the comparison of a two-tiered chiefdom with a three-tiered chiefdom via architectural styles. The end of the chapter incorporates this information into existing interpretations of Moundville and Lubbock Creek and how elites used the built environment for political aspirations and social control.

#### Differential Use of the Built Environment

According to ethnohistoric accounts, elites may have used two methods in the manipulation of architectural style to help legitimize emerging or solidify established forms of political authority. One was based on the use of architecture location and the second involved the use of architecture size. According to the expectations formed from the ethnohistoric accounts and the results of the two sites included in the sample, architecture location and size were not necessarily used to equal degrees by elites.

At Lubbub Creek, the elites seem to have adopted several different approaches to the manipulation of architectural style to help convince the community of elite power. In the Summerville I community, elites, as inferred by the placement of their residences (S# 1, 2, and 3 of the premound precinct) and public buildings (S# 5A and 5B also of the premound precinct), used sacred locations (the mound and/or plaza) in the legitimation of authority. The one example of a nonelite Summerville I residence was located well away from sacred locations. However, a possible elite Summerville I residence, Structure # 1 in the village area, was not associated with the mound/plaza. Judging from the presence of only local prestige goods (See Appendix A), this structure may have belonged to lesser elites than the ones associated with the premound precinct. A comparison of architecture size produced little visible difference between elite and nonelite residences and in fact ran contrary to expectations. On the other hand, public buildings were much larger in floor area than the residences. As such, elites during the Summerville I period seem to have used structure location but not structure size to visually communicate their higher rank (however the data for the public structures suggests size may have been important for these structures types). This would suggest that the office that these public buildings are associated with may have been very important, but the average size of elite residences may

indicate that the high-status public offices may not have entirely translated into high status and power for the elites or possessors of these offices (an alternative to this will be discussed below).

The Summerville II/III community displays no recognizable patterns of architecture use as far as the current expectations are concerned. Nonelite residences (2/5: S# 6 and 8) are unexpectedly located near sacred locations (mound/plaza), while the elite Summerville II/III residence (S# 7) is located away from sacred areas. No public buildings were found. Considering structure size, elite and nonelite residences are basically similar in floor area. Judging from this, elites were not able to manipulate architecture style (location or size) to their benefit during the Summerville II/III period.

The Summerville IV community follows the same architectural pattern as the preceding period. The only example of an elite residence (S# 2) was located away from the mound/plaza, while nonelite residences (4/6: S# 1 SE, 5A, 5B, and 5C) were located near these sacred areas. Again, structure sizes were not notably larger for elites and in fact were much smaller in area than their nonelite counterparts. If the assumption that elites manipulated architecture style to bolster their authority is essentially correct, then the Summerville I community elites used only location, not including the public architecture (as

mentioned below architecture size may have operated to bolster elite status but in a slightly different manner). Summerville II/III community elites did not manipulate location or size, and the Summerville IV community elites also did not use location or size to their advantage.

At Moundville, elites used both architecture size and location to help display and reinforce their authority. In all cases elite residences and public buildings are located near sacred areas, while nonelite residences are rarely (only one nonelite structure at Moundville) found located near these areas without some degree of distance or partitioning involved. In considering structure size, elite residences and public buildings are much larger in floor area compared to nonelite residences. This high degree of difference would have been visibly perceivable even to the casual observer.

#### A Comparison of Architectural Style Between Two Chieftdom Systems

As inferred from Chapter VI and the first part of this chapter, Lubbub Creek does not follow very well my original expectations, while Moundville's data conforms fairly well. This does not mean that my analysis or expectations are necessarily flawed. On the contrary, when consideration is given to the two very different political systems in which each community existed, a partial interpretation can be

developed to explain the aberration in the Lubbub Creek data.

Moundville developed into a three-tiered or complex chiefdom early in its history thereby emphasizing rank differences between elites and commoners and adding pressures on elites trying to consolidate power and maintain this difference. In this case, more visual cues were needed to enhance elite authority, including larger residential structures, larger public structures, and locations for these structures near sacred areas. The architectural data from Moundville support these assertions. Thus the use of both structure location and size may have been important variables in the early and rapid emergence of Moundville's elites.

However, since Lubbub was a simple chiefdom (two-tiered) there should be few rank differences between elite and nonelites, and consequently little need to heavily depend on visual markers. The data from Lubbub Creek reflects this when comparing structure size and structure location (except possibly the public buildings of the pre-mound precinct buildings during the Summerville I period). To some degree, Summerville I elites used location of public structures and their residences more so than size of their residential structures to legitimize emerging forms of political authority. During the Summerville II/III and

IV periods, Lubbub elites used neither location or size to their advantage.

However, one other explanation needs to be mentioned when considering the data from Lubbub Creek. In many simple chiefdoms, elites must often distribute much of their wealth in order to retain power or high status positions. In many cases elites are unable to maintain elaborate residences (especially large structures) or keep prestige goods in their immediate vicinity. In such cases the archaeological record may produce results that run counter to expected patterns and cause misinterpretations. If this is true for Lubbub Creek then the smaller size for elite residences may in itself be a demonstration of elite status and power and not a flaw in the research design. Although this is difficult to prove and consequently will not be actively pursued in this research, it is an interesting but serious point that should be kept in mind when considering the architectural data at Lubbub Creek.

In light of the following information, I tentatively suggest that architecture location may have been the first architectural style manipulated by elites to legitimate political power. In support of this, both Lubbub (Summerville I) and Moundville elite structures were located near sacred areas. In addition, Mississippian elites, as already noted, often used a religious ideology to legitimate power, so the placement of elite structures in sacred areas

to bolster or reinforce their position in society is understandable. I further propose that architecture size is expressive of political/socioeconomic status more so than architecture location. This type of power, as would be indicated by prestige goods, etc., is acquired in many Mississippian societies after initial recognition through sacred means.

Incorporating Architectural Style into Current Interpretations of the Moundville and Lubbub Creek Chiefdoms

Lubbub Creek

Blitz (1993) states that a simple chiefdom developed at Lubbub in response to subsistence/population pressures and increases in warfare. Formal leadership offices formed to manage warfare activities and control of surplus, with some evidence that preferential distribution of foodstuffs were given to those holding office. This seems to have occurred from the beginning of the Summerville I period, ending sometime during the Summerville II/III period.

According to the architectural data presented in this thesis, I suggest that Lubbub elites situated their residences and associated public buildings during the Summerville I period near the sacred mound/plaza to help legitimate their emerging political authority. However, except for the public buildings structure size was not or could not be manipulated (or, according to the data given

above, small architecture size may have been a status symbol for elites because their small sizes indicated that much of their wealth was distributed to the community and could not be used to acquire larger architecture).

Both Blitz (1993) and Welch (1991) believe that sometime during the Summerville II/III period, emerging elites were unable to exert control over nonlocal trading that could have been used to firmly establish their initial success. This is observed in both the marked decline of the nonlocal trade items during the Summerville II/III and IV periods, and their even distribution in all contexts during the entire occupation of Lubbub Creek. Some researchers believe that Lubbub elites were not able to control extra-local trade due to the expansion of Moundville during the Summerville II/III period. Although there is the possibility of Lubbub Creek being politically or militarily controlled by Moundville, most researchers (Peebles 1987; Welch 1991; Blitz 1993) conclude that Lubbub was controlled economically rather than being under direct political or military control. If this was true, then Moundville's control of extra-local trading would have undermined attempts by the Lubbub elite to acquire these items (Blitz 1993). By not being able to demonstrate a control over spatial distance and consequently to demonstrate their close connections to the supernatural, elites at Lubbub were not



able to support their rank and power in society and soon declined in power.

If this model is essentially correct, then the results of the architecture distribution at Lubbug Creek after the Summerville I/early Summerville II/III period can be partly explained. During the mid to late Summerville II/III and Summerville IV periods, elite residences containing nonlocal items are found away from the mound-plaza and some non-elite residences located near the mound-plaza. Given the expansion of Moundville's influence and power during this time and its demand for extra-local items, the decline of extra-local items at Lubbug, the disappearance of fortifications at Lubbug, and the disappearance of separations between sacred and secular areas at Lubbug indicates a fairly coeval collapse of existing religious, economic, and perhaps political institutions at Lubbug at the hands of Moundville. Thus, elite residential architecture was no longer associated with sacred areas (because the elite connection to the sacred was being undermined) and non-elites could build their homes in any location at the site. This would also support the evidence that little to no differences in structure size was noted between elite and nonelite structures. In sum, an economic collapse at Lubbug could, and very well may have, led to a religious and political collapse as well.

### Moundville

As already mentioned, Moundville rose fairly quickly from a simple to a complex chiefdom. Peebles (1987) and others indicate that one of the main catalyst for this rapid transformation was the ability of Moundville elites to control nonlocal trade networks. This occurred from perhaps the late Moundville I period to the late Moundville III period. This is also the time period that most of the structures included in the current sample most likely belong to. Thus, the architectural data indicate that this was also the period when Moundville elites had their structures located near sacred areas and of larger size than the rest of the community. This suggests that elites used both forms of architectural styles to communicate their high status and power. By the beginning of the Moundville IV period, Moundville was already collapsing and its elites were no longer in control or bringing in nonlocal goods. Architectural styles used in the communication of high status were no longer being built during this time.

### Elites, Power, Religion, Social Control and the Built Environment: Concluding Remarks

The pattern of evidence from the Lubbub and Moundville ceremonial centers in the Alabama area suggests that elites may have used architectural style (location and size) as means to legitimize their political authority during the Mississippian. Sanctification can be used by itself as an

initial means of legitimizing authority or it can come later and legitimize established political and economic roles (Anderson 1994). Authority will often become sanctified through a religious ideology as a means to legitimate their role and position in society. I suggests this includes the placing of their homes and offices in areas of the community that would represent their sanctity, furthering legitimation of itself. This is clearly observable at the community level with mounds and plazas possessing structures containing prestige goods (Appendix A) and in some cases large floor areas (the smaller floor areas of elite residences during the Summerville I period at Lubbug Creek may have served as a similar marker).

The built environment expressed this "natural order" with elites occupying sacred areas and commoners nonsacred areas. Architecture location and size acted as a mnemonic device that expressed the rank order of Mississippian society and visually reminded all inhabitants of that rank order. Mounds have long been associated with elites and this does not come as a surprise. But, the plaza is an aspect of elite control that has not been properly addressed. From my research, plazas were used as a legitimizing factor of political power due to the sacredness that plazas had in Mississippian religion. This was seen at Lubbug before its disintegration (Summerville I and perhaps early Summerville II/III), and at Moundville by the placing

of all public architecture and many elite residences. This pattern seems obvious in my sample and provides an interesting starting point for further research in other areas of the southeast during the Mississippian.

Perhaps the best example of the built environment being used as a social control is Lubbub. During Summerville I and early Summerville II/III the built environment at Lubbub expressed a highly dichotomous relationship between the sacred (elite areas) and the profane (nonelite areas). To proceed from the profane to the sacred required several steps. First, one had to pass through the inner palisade that surrounded the complex; this would allow access to one part of the complex. The more sacred areas of the complex such as the (pre)mound structures required a further step. The premound structures (elite residences, public architecture and a storage facility) were surrounded by a curtain wall, while the later mound structures were only accessible by two ramps that could be used only by entering the complex. Thus, elite controlled the movement of people and organized a series of steps that had to be completed to enter various areas of the sacred complex where the elite lived and were buried. However, this separation seems to have disintegrated sometime during the Summerville II/III period and continued until the end of Mississippian occupation. Partitions were no longer being rebuilt and nonelite structures were found near the mound or plaza.

At Moundville, partitions were used to separate nonelite areas that were located close (just outside the 20 m limit) to a mound or plaza. This would have effectively maintained the separation between purity/elite and pollution/commoners. This is reinforced by the fact that all demonstratable elite structures never were partitioned from mounds or plazas.

### Conclusion

Architecture has long been portrayed as a secondary, passive dimension of the archaeological record, especially in the southeast. To accommodate a primary, active interpretation of architecture requires a move from ecological models to those that include a more symbolic approach. The importance of architecture within this behavioral framework was suggested in this research by its inferred active participation in the negotiation of rank and status. Architecture location and size were stylistic cues used by elites to communicate their higher social position in society. It is suggested that architecture size, according to this research, is more closely tied to political or social position in society, or, in other words, to rank differences. Architecture location seems to be more closely tied to achieving sacred connections to legitimize political power. This explains why location was used by both Lubbock and Moundville elites, while only Moundville

elites used size (however, as noted in Chapter VII, Summerville I elites at Lubbub may have used architecture size in providing stylistic cues of power but in a different manner than Moundville elites). At Lubbub, where rank differences were minimal, ties to sacred locations (mound/plazas) were more useful to demonstrate rights to power. At Moundville, where rank differences were much more pronounced, both larger structures and manipulation of sacred locations were used to maintain political power. Future research exploring the active role that architecture can have on culture needs to follow similar research questions and research designs. The value that this line of approach can have to understanding past cultures is potentially immense but until recently has not received much attention.

## APPENDIX A

### ARTIFACTS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH STRUCTURE

#### Lubbub Creek

Structure # and Distance From Nearest Mound/Plaza	Artifacts and their References
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#### S. I (Village)

S# 1 (125m)    Local Prestige Goods  
                     Dog (Jackson and Scott 1995)  
                     Beaverskull (Jackson and Scott 1995)  
                     Bear Remains (Jackson and Scott 1995)

#### Utilitarian Artifacts

486 Sherds (Blitz 1993)  
 Mussel Shells (Blitz 1983b)  
 Faunal Remains (Blitz 1983b)  
 Charred Botanical Material (Blitz 1983b)  
 Several Shell Tools (Blitz 1983b)  
 Lithic Debris (Blitz 1983b)  
 Unmodified Sandstone Chunks (Blitz 1983b)

#### S# 2 (40m)

#### Utilitarian Artifacts

Charred Corn Cobs (Blitz 1983b)  
 523 Sherds (Blitz 1993)  
 Faunal Remains (Blitz 1983b)  
 Stone Discoidal (Blitz 1983b)  
 Unmodified limonite, Sandstone, Chalk, and  
     Hematite (Blitz 1983b)  
 Chert Flakes (Blitz 1983b)  
 3 Microliths (Blitz 1983b)  
 2 Small Abraders (Blitz 1983b)  
 Rounded Hematite (Discoidal?) (Blitz 1983b)  
 Sandstone Discoidal (Blitz 1983b)

#### S. I (Mound)

#### S# 1 (0m)

#### Utilitarian Artifacts

Sherds (Blitz 1983a)  
 Chert Flakes (Blitz 1983a)  
 Shell (Blitz 1983a)

#### S# 2 (0m)

#### Utilitarian Artifacts

Animal Remains (Blitz 1983a)  
 Charcoal (Blitz 1983a)  
 Lithic Debris (Blitz 1983a)  
 Sherds (Blitz 1983a)  
 Discoidals made of Hematite (Blitz 1983a)

- S# 3 (0m) None (Blitz 1983a)
- S# 4 (0m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 Botanical Remains (Corn?) (Blitz 1983a)  
 Sherds (Blitz 1983a)  
 Lithic Debris (Blitz 1983a)
- S# 5A (0m) Nonlocal Prestige Goods  
 Mica (Blitz 1993)  
 Greenstone Celt (Blitz 1993)
- S# 5B (0m) Nonlocal Prestige Goods  
 Sandstone Disc Fragment (Blitz 1993)
- Local Prestige Goods  
 Human Infant Burial (Blitz 1993)  
 Frog Effigy Vessel (Blitz 1993)

#### Unassociated Artifacts From Mound

- Paint Pigments in Exceptional Quantities (Blitz 1993)  
 Several Species of Birds Unique to Lubbock (Scott 1983)  
 Terraced Rectangular Vessel (Blitz 1993)

#### S. II/III

- S# 1 (100m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 Faunal Remains (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
 Mussel Shell (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
 778 Sherds (Blitz 1993)  
 Charred Corn Cobs (Blitz and Peebles 1983)
- S# 3 (60m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 Faunal Remains (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
 Mussel Shell (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
 2,537 Sherds (Blitz 1993)
- S# 4 (100m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 Charred Corn Cobs (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
 789 Sherds (Blitz 1993)
- S# 6 (0m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 Faunal Remains (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
 Quantity of Sherds (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
 Lithic Debris (Blitz and Peebles 1983)



- S# 7 (22m) Nonlocal Prestige Goods  
Sanstone Disk Fragment (Blitz 1993)

Utilitarian Artifacts

Botanical Remains (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
Mussel Shell (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
Fire-Cracked Rocks (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
1,491 Sherds (Blitz 1993)  
2 Small Points (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
Abrader (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
Ground Stone, Limonite, Hematite (Blitz and  
Peebles 1983)

- S# 8 (0m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
Quantity of Sherds (Blitz and Peebles 1983)  
Faunal Remains (Blitz and Peebles 1983)

S. IV

- S# 1 (70m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
Hematite Object (Albright 1983)  
1,065 Sherds (Blitz 1993)  
Hammerstone (Albright 1983)  
Pitted Stone (Albright 1983)  
Drilled Hematite Object (Albright 1983)

- S# 2 (50m) Nonlocal Prestige Goods  
Nonlocal Chert Drill Fragment (Albright  
1983)

Utilitarian Artifacts

Charred Nut Concentration (Albright 1983)  
Lithic Flakes (Albright 1983)  
Ground Sandstone Fragment (Albright 1983)  
Faunal Remains (Albright 1983)

- S# 3 (40m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
Steatite Fragment (Albright 1983)  
1 Drill (Albright 1983)  
2 Biface Fragments (Albright 1983)  
1 Uniface Fragment (Albright 1983)  
Unmodified Rock (Albright 1983)  
Lithic Flakes (Albright 1983)  
Faunal Remains (Albright 1983)  
494 Sherds (Blitz 1993)

S# 1 SE(0m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 1 Triangular Point (Albright 1983)  
 Nutting Stone (Albright 1983)  
 Hematite Discoidal (Albright 1983)  
 Faunal Remains (Albright 1983)  
 A Quantity of Sherds (Albright 1983)  
 Sandstone with Three Drilled Holes (Albright 1983)

S# 5A (0m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 A Quantity of Sherds (Albright 1983)  
 1 Flake (Albright 1983)  
 Unmodified Rock, limonite, hematite, Chalk (Albright 1983)  
 Fire-Cracked Rocks (Albright 1983)  
 1 Ground Sandstone Fragment (Albright 1983)  
 Faunal Remains - Deer (Albright 1983)

S# 5B (0m) No artifacts could be associated with this structure

S# 5C (0m) Utilitarian Artifacts  
 Faunal Remains - Deer (Albright 1983)  
 A Quantity of Sherds (Albright 1983)  
 Hickory Remains (Albright 1983)  
 Wood Charcoal (Albright 1983)

#### Unassociated Artifacts Found With Structures

Sandstone Discoidal (Albright 1983)  
 1286 Sherds (Blitz 1993)  
 Bifaces (Albright 1983)  
 Faunal Remains (Albright 1983)  
 Freshwater Bivalves (Albright 1983)  
 Flakes (Albright 1983)

#### Moundville

Structure # and Distance From Nearest Mound/Plaza	Artifacts and Their References (Peebles 1979 Unless Otherwise Stated)
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 Admin. Building Ex.- Area 8 on Map

S# 1 (76m)	Utilitarian Artifacts Stone Discoidal 2 Small Triangular Point Bone Bead Pottery Effigy Bone Awl
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S# 4 (76m)	Unknown
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S# 5 (76m)

## Utilitarian Artifacts

Worked Rock  
 5 Small Triangular Points  
 2 Pebblehammers  
 Pottery Discoidal  
 2 Bone Needle  
 Pottery Effigy  
 Worked Stone

## Unassociated Artifacts Found in the ABEX

Cane, Red Paint, 2 Bone Awls, 7 Small Triangular Points, 2 Stone Discoidals, Pebbles Discoidal, 2 Pottery Discoidals, Bone "Tool", Sandstone Axe Fragment, Worked Stone, Lump of Hematite, Pottery Effigy, Bone Needle, Pebblehammer, Projectile Point, Worked Bone, Stone Mortar (Paint Grinder), Water Bottle, 2 Red Paint Rock, 3 Sandstone Abrader, 4 greenstone celt fragments, 2 Hematite Fragments, Charred Corn Cob.

## Museum Parking Lot Ex - Area 2 on Map (Extensive Midden (Peebles 1986))

S# 1A (168m)

## Utilitarian Artifacts

Worked Stone

S# 1B (168m)

Unknown

S# 2 (168m)

Unknown

S# 3 (168m)

## Utilitarian Artifacts

3 Pebblehammers  
 Bone Needle  
 Fragment of Greenstone Celt  
 Charred Corn Cobs

S#4 (168m)

## Utilitarian Artifacts

2 Stone Mortars

## Unassociated Artifacts Found in MPLE

12 Stone Mortars, Pottery Tool (Trowel?), 6 Pottery Effigies, 5 Fragments of Greenstone Celts, Greenstone Tool, 3 Pieces of Mica, 22 pebblehammers, Small Pebblehammer, 19 Small Triangular Projectile Points, 5 Projectile Points, Stone Knife Fragment, Large Projectile Point, Piece of Coal, 2 Whetstones, 15 Worked Stones, Chalk Implement, 15 Pottery Discoidals, 4 Stone Discoidals, Limestone Discoidal, Greenstone Discoidal, Flint Discoidal, Tortoise Shell Tool, Horn Tool, Stone Pendant, 2 Charred Corn Cobs, Shark's Tooth, Lump of Pottery Clay, Red Paint, Large Bowl.

West of Mound P' - Area 3 on Map  
 S# 1 (23m) Unknown

South of Mound G - Area 9 on the Map (Peebles 1986 states this area contained midden comprised mainly of nonelite domestic debris)  
 S#5 (23m) Unknown

Southwest of Mound G - Area 9 on the Map (Peebles 1986 states this area contained midden comprised mainly of nonelite domestic debris)

S#2A (23m) Unknown

S#2B (23m) Unknown

S#2C (23m) Unknown

S#3 (23m) Unknown

S#4 (23m) Unknown

#### Roadway Excavations - Areas 1, 4-8, 10, and 11

Area 1 (See Map) - (Peebles 1986 states this area contained midden comprised mainly of nonelite domestic debris)

S# 2 (130m) Unknown

S# 3 (130m) Unknown

S# 4 (130m) Unknown

S# 5 (130m) Unknown

S# 7 (130m) Unknown

Area 4 (See Map)

S# 8 (0m) Burials Associated with Charnel House

Area 5 (See Map)

S# 9 (0m) Sweat Lodge, No Information on Artifacts

Area 6 (See Map) - (Peebles 1986 states this area contained midden comprised mainly of nonelite domestic debris)

S#10 (31m) Unknown

S#11 (31m) Unknown

Area 7 (See Map) - (Peebles 1986 states this area contained midden comprised mainly of nonelite domestic debris)

S#12 (61m) Unknown

S#13 (69m)

Unknown

Area 10 (See Map) - Peebles 1983b maintained this was an elite area that contained caches of skulls and paints, the usual correlates of high status.

S#16a (8m)

Nonlocal Prestige Goods  
Mica

Local Prestige Goods  
Stone Pipe Fragment  
Utilitarian Artifacts  
Stone Axe  
Bone Needle

S#16b (8m)

Local Prestige Goods  
Pottery Pipe  
Pottery Pendant?

Utilitarian Artifacts  
2 Effigy  
2 Pottery Discoidals  
Flint "Spear" Point  
2 Small Triganular Points  
Pebble Discoidal

S#17 (8m)

Utilitarian Artifacts  
Small Triganular Point  
Pottery Effigy

S#18a (8m)

Utilitarian Artifacts  
Bone Tool  
Projectile Point  
2 Small Triamgular Point  
Stone Discoidal  
Charred Wood  
2 Pottery Discoidal  
Sherds

S#18b (8m)

Nonlocal Prestige Goods  
Piece of Copper

Utilitarian Artifacts  
Piece of Axe  
Bone Tool  
2 Small Triganular Point  
Bone Awl  
Pottery Discoidal  
Pottery Ornament  
Worked Stone

Area 11 (See Map) - Peebles 1983b maintained this was an elite area that contained caches of skulls and paints, the usual correlates of high status.

S#20 (15m) Unknown

Rhodes Site (Not on Map)

Nonlocal Prestige Goods  
Copper Object

Local Prestige Goods  
2 Pipes

Utilitarian Artifacts  
Projectile Point  
Pot  
Sherds  
Charred Corn Cobs  
Pottery Discoidal  
Small Water Bottle  
Human Effigy Bowl  
Small Bowl

Unassociated Artifacts From Rhodes Site

2 Bowls, Water Bottle, 2 Dishes, Discoidal Pottery, 4  
Pebblehammers, 9 Whetrock, Stone Disc, 3 Discoidals,  
Ceremonial Axe, Stone Pendant in the Shape of a  
Monolithic Axe, Quarzite Pestle, Obsidian, Copper  
Fragments, 2 Bone Awls, Deer Bone.

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