

Effigy pipes of the Lower Mississippi Valley: Iconography, style, and function

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ABSTRACT

Based on formal analysis of a large corpus of Mississippian effigy pipes, the distinctive Bellaire style is here defined. Native to the Lower Mississippi Valley, this style encompasses multiple themes, the two most common being an underwater panther and a crouching human. The style dates ca. AD 1100–1500 and can be further divided into two substyles, Bellaire A and Bellaire B, that likely represent change through time. We argue that the more elaborate pipes were made by master carvers, and were commissioned by religious practitioners who used them in shamanic rituals that engaged with Beneath-World powers. There can now be little doubt that the Lower Mississippi Valley was home to a considerable body of representational art during Mississippian times, one that has long been overlooked.

1. Introduction

Recent years have seen an explosion of research on the style and meaning of imagery from ancient American South (e.g., [Townsend and Sharp, 2004](#); [Reilly and Garber, 2007](#); [Lankford et al., 2011](#)). These advances have been fueled in part by the emergence of a distinctive approach—drawing on the methods of art history and anthropology—that relies on studying a large corpus of related images, looking for consistent patterns in execution and subject matter, and connecting these patterns to the ethnographic record. Our goals here are to illustrate the approach and to expand this body of research.

More specifically, our methods are rooted in the work of Philip Phillips, James A. Brown, and Jon D. Muller ([Phillips and Brown, 1978, 1984](#); [Muller, 1979](#)), and have been described in detail by [Knight \(2013\)](#). They have been implemented at the annual Mississippian Iconographic Workshop, organized by F. Kent Reilly, where the present study began. Relying on formal analysis, we first recognize local styles, generally named for a type locality, at a scale we believe corresponds to specific networks of artisans. These are very different from the “international” styles often invoked by practitioners, and they are independent of other archaeological taxa such as phases or cultures. Once styles are defined in this manner, we employ a mode of iconographic analysis that makes use of ethnographic information in a limited and controlled way, paying close attention to historical connections.

Our case study focuses on effigy pipes that date to the Mississippian period, ca. A.D 1000–1500, and were made in the Lower Mississippi Valley (LMV). This region has sometimes been viewed as marginal to

the artistic florescence that took place across the America South at this time ([Phillips and Brown, 1978: 202–206](#)). For example, the region has produced very few examples of the embossed copper plates and ornaments, the engraved shell gorgets and cups, the temple statuary, or the stone palettes seen in other parts of the Mississippian world. However, religious and political expression across the Mississippian world were far from uniform, resulting in distinct regional specializations ([Lankford et al., 2011](#)). Despite the rarity of other categories of finely crafted objects, these effigy pipes appear to be a regional specialty in the LMV. We will describe their styles and subject matter, infer their meanings, and draw some conclusions about the regionally distinctive social and religious environment in which they were made and used.

2. Study area and corpus

Our study area encompasses parts of the southern LMV and adjacent regions that were home to the Plaquemine culture and its variants after AD 1000 ([Jeter and Williams, 1989](#); [Rees and Livingood, 2007](#)). It includes the lower Yazoo Basin, the Tensas Basin, the lower Ouachita and Red River basins, the Natchez Bluffs, the middle and lower Pearl River, the Atchafalaya Basin, and adjacent portions of the northern Gulf Coast ([Fig. 1](#)).

To assemble the corpus of pipes used herein, we followed a protocol that first identified all the effigy pipes that were in some way connected with our study area, and then excluded those that were either clearly foreign in origin, too early in date, or of dubious authenticity. To be more specific, we initially included all effigy pipes that satisfied at least

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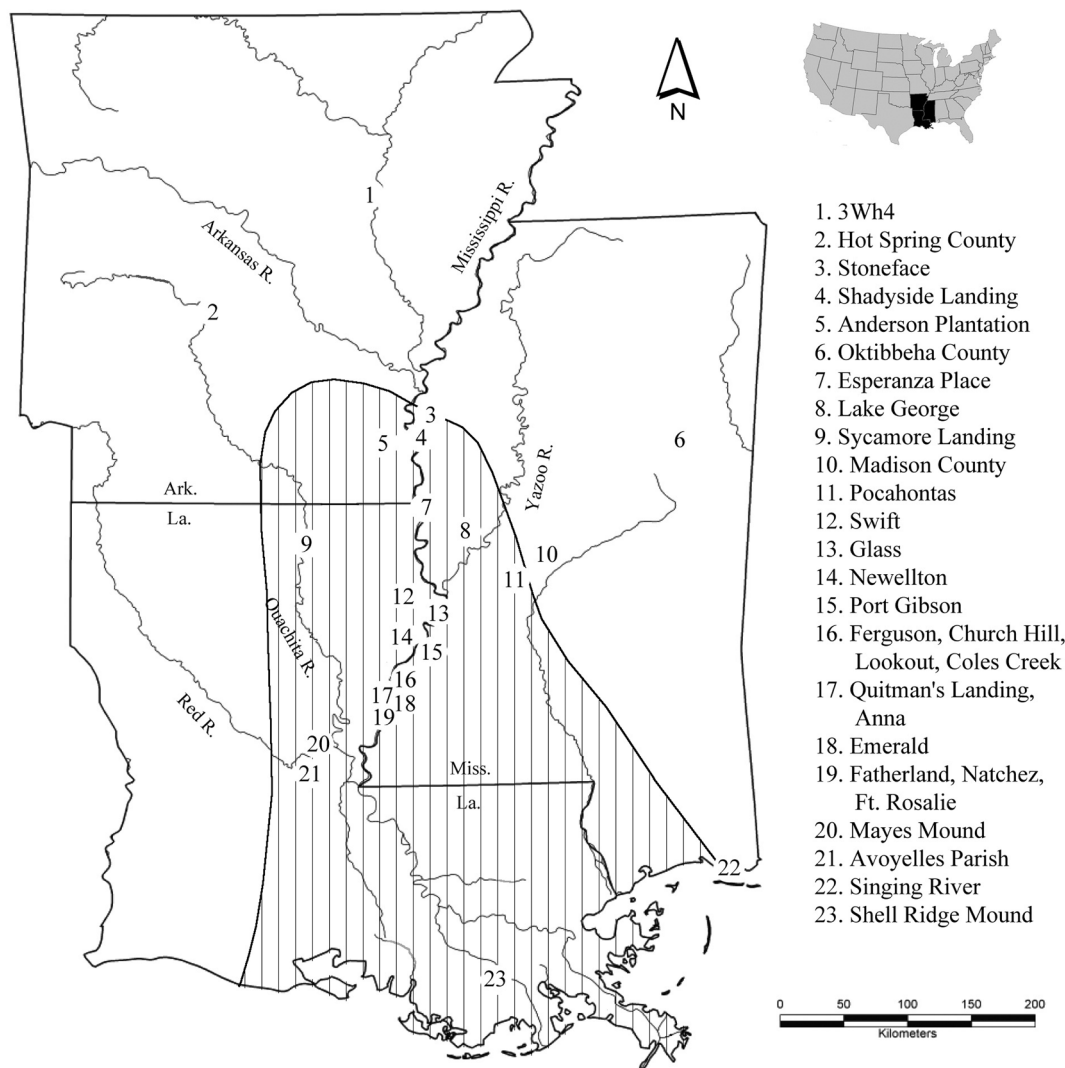


Fig. 1. Map of the study area, showing the geographical extent of the Plaquemine culture (hatched), as well as the known sites and localities that produced the pipes in our corpus (Table 1). Four sites fall outside the area covered by this map: Moundville, Alabama; Reelfoot Lake, Kentucky; Lakeville, Missouri; and Spiro, Oklahoma.

one of the following three conditions: (1) found within the study area; (2) found outside the study area or lacking provenience, but made of a distinctive raw material that is local to the study area such as Glendon Limestone (Steponaitis and Dockery, 2011); or (3) found outside the study area or lacking provenience, but stylistically consistent with known LMV pipes. Three additional criteria were then employed to refine the list. We eliminated from further consideration pipes that were: (1) consistent with distinctive styles strongly associated with regions outside the study area; (2) of questionable authenticity; or (3) unfinished or eroded to the point where their stylistic and thematic features could not be observed.

After applying these criteria we were left with 57 pipes that comprise the main corpus for this study, all listed in Table 1. In these tables and throughout this work, we identify these pipes with the tripartite numbering system started by Philip Phillips in the 1960s and used in subsequent publications (Brain and Phillips, 1996). Each object is labeled with a string that consists of an abbreviation for the state, the county, and the site where it was found. Appended to the site's abbreviation is a number that uniquely identifies the object in question. "SE" replaces the state and county when both are unknown. An "X" is used in place of the site abbreviation when such provenience is lacking. For pipes previously described by Brain and Phillips (1996), we use the designations they assigned; for others, we have assigned new

designations using the same conventions.

All these pipes were individual finds, so far as we know, except in two cases. The most spectacular exception is the Perrault cache, a group of five pipes that were found together more than a century ago at Emerald Mound near Natchez, Mississippi, by Vincent Perrault (Brown, 1926: 256-263). This group included pipes representing four different themes: a panther (Miss-Ad-E5), a crouching human (Miss-Ad-E4), two panther-raptor-snake monsters (Miss-Ad-E1, -E2), and an owl-fish monster (Miss-Ad-E3). All are made of the same material (Glendon Limestone), and all are so generally similar that they could have been carved by the same hand—although we can only be certain of common authorship in the case of the two panther-raptor-snakes, which are virtually identical. The only other common context in our sample occurred at Sycamore Landing in northern Louisiana, where a burial excavated by Clarence B. Moore contained two effigy pipes (La-Mo-SL1), one depicting a raptor (La-Mo-SL1) and the other a rabbit (La-Mo-SL2) (Moore, 1909: 112-116).

Before we describe the pipes in our corpus, let us briefly discuss the ones that were excluded (Table 2). Among these were three (La-X2, La-Mo-SL3, Okla-Lf-S1309) that depict the Raptor on Human theme in a style that is common in the Caddo area to the west, with notable examples from Spiro (Brown, 1996: 2: Fig. 2. 93b-c; Hamilton, 1952: Pl. 6) and Crenshaw (Durham and Davis, 1975: Figs. 31, 36). Interestingly,

Table 1

Effigy pipes included.

Theme: Designation ^a	Site	County	Museum ^b	Catalog Number	Material	Style	Figure	Published Illustrations
Panther:								
Ark-Ch-AP1	Anderson Plantation (Bellaire Mound)	Chicot Co., AR	GM	6125.1204	Limestone (Paleozoic)	Bellaire A 2h		Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Brose et al., 1985:Pl. 130; Feest, 1986:Fig. 140; Lemley and Dickinson, 1997:Pls. 5, 6.3; Lemley and Dickinson, 1964:Fig. 2
Ark-Ga-HS1	(unknown)	Hot Spring Co., AR	NMNH	A 088173	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 2d		McGuire, 1899:Fig. 158; Brain and Phillips, 1996:387
Ark-Wh-F1	3Wh4	White Co., AR	AAS	2005-473-116-14	Limestone (Paleozoic)	Bellaire B –		Figley, 1966:Figs. 4-5
Miss-Ad-E5	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	MPM	16209	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 2a		Brown, 1926:Fig. 221; West, 1934:Pl. 91.4; Brain and Phillips, 1996:387
Miss-Ad-F2	Fatherland	Adams Co., MS	MDAH	61.753.28	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 2i		Brain and Phillips, 1996:386
Miss-Yo-LG1	Lake George	Yazoo Co., MS	MDAH	60.342	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 2j		Williams and Brain, 1983:Fig. 7.32a-c; Brain and Phillips, 1996:386
Miss-X5	(unknown)	(Yazoo River, MS)	BMC	70.31.174	Limestone	Bellaire A 2g		Brain and Phillips, 1996:386; Squier and Davis, 1848:Fig. 75
La-Te-N1	Newellton	Tensas Pa., LA	Pr		Stone	Bellaire U –		Brain and Phillips, 1996:387
La-Av-X1	(unknown)	Avoyelles Pa., LA	X		Ceramic	Individual –		Gregory, 1963:238-239
Ala-Tu-M1	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	PMAE	48121	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire A 2e		Moore, 1905:Figs. 1-3; Williams and Brain, 1983:Fig. 7.32a-c; Brain and Phillips, 1996:385
Ala-Tu-M91	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	NMAI	17/0893	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire A 2b		Moore, 1905:Figs. 165, 166; West, 1934:Pl. 90.1; Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Moorehead, 1910:Pl. 488
Ala-Tu-M161	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	TSM	82.100.820	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 2f		Thurston, 1890:Fig. 84; Moore, 1905:Fig. 1; Cox, 1985:Pl. 6; Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Steponaitis et al., 2004:Fig. 17
Ala-Tu-M165	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	AlaMNH	1948.002.14	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 2c		Scary, 1995:Fig. 86; Krebs et al., 1986:104; Brain and Phillips, 1996:385
Okla-Lf-S65	Spiro	Le Flore Co., OK	NMNH	A 448667	Fluorite	Bellaire B 2k		Sievert & Rogers, 2011: Fig. 8.6-8.7; Hamilton, 1952: Pl. 17d
SE-X302	(unknown)	(French Louisiana)	MOB	71.1950.88.1	Limestone	Bellaire U 2l		
Miss-Je-L1	Lookout	Jefferson Co., MS	PMAE	980-14-10/58238	Sandstone	Individual –		Brain and Phillips, 1996:387; Brown, 1985:Figs. 5, 11b
Crouching Human:								
Miss-Ad-E4	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	MPM	16208	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 3e		Brown, 1926:Figs. 219, 225; West, 1934:Pl. 91.3; Brain and Phillips, 1996:385
Miss-Ad-F1	Fatherland	Adams Co., MS	MDAH	60.89	Limestone	Bellaire A 6		Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Ford, 1936:Fig. 11; Netzel, 1965:Fig. 15
Miss-Wr-G1	Glass	Warren Co., MS	OCM		Glendon Limestone	Bellaire U 3d		Brain et al., 1995
SE-X301	(unknown)	(unknown)	X		Stone	Bellaire A 3b		Beltrami, 1828:Pl. 2.4; Feest, 1996:Fig. 3; Marino, 1986:Fig. 1.7; Vigorelli, 1986:Fig. 2
Miss-X4	(unknown)	(unknown)	BM	37.2802PA	Sandstone	Bellaire A 3a		Anonymous, 1949; Boehme et al., 1995:Pl. 42; Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Brose et al., 1985:Pl. 131; Choris, 1822:Pl. 10; Coe et al., 1986: 60; Coe, 1976:Pl. 40; Davis, 1858; Dye, 2004:Fig. 8; Feest, 1996:Figs. 1-2, 4-5; Roux de Rochelle, 1837: Pl. 40; Schoolcraft, 1860:5:Pl. 8, 1860:6:Pl. 51; Squier and Davis, 1848:Fig. 149; Ray and Montgomery, 2011: Fig. 7
Miss-X3	(unknown)	(unknown)	MMA	2011.154.18	Limestone	Bellaire A 3c		Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Coe, 1976:Fig. 39
Miss-Hi-P1	Pocahontas	Hinds Co., MS	MDAH	60.73	Ceramic	Bellaire A 3h		Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Ford, 1936:Fig. 24
Miss-Ws-SL1	Shadyside Landing	Washington Co., MS	NMAI	17/2963	Limestone	Bellaire B 3f		Brown, 1926:Figs. 216-217; Moore, 1911:Pl. 29
Miss-Ja-P1	Singing River (Pinola)	Jackson Co., MS	X		Ceramic	Bellaire A 3i		Anonymous, 1960:100; Brain and Phillips, 1996:385; Blitz and Mann, 2000:cover; Dilworth, 1979:144; Greenwell, 1984:Fig. 5.14
Miss-Ok-X1	(unknown)	Oktibbeha Co., MS	Pr		Sandstone	Bellaire A –		J.N. Brown, 2007
La-Lf-SR1	Shell Ridge Mound	Lafourche Pa., LA	NMAI	00/7761	Ceramic	Bellaire A 3k-1		Jones, 1901:Fig. 35; West, 1934:Pl. 90.2
La-Lf-SR2	Shell Ridge Mound	Lafourche Pa., LA	NMAI	00/7301	Sandstone	Individual 3j		Jones, 1901:Fig. 36
La-X1	(unknown)	(unknown), LA	AMNH	T-836	Ceramic	Individual –		
Miss-Ad-FR2	[Ft. Rosalie vicinity, near Natchez]	Adams Co., MS	NMAI	00/7170	Quartzite	Individual 3g		Jones, 1901:Fig. 67 (right)
Miss-Bo-S1	Stoneface	Bolivar Co., MS	CEI		Quartzite	Individual –		Ryan et al., 2003:Figs. 7-97

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

Theme: Designation ^a	Site	County	Museum ^b	Catalog Number	Material	Style	Figure	Published Illustrations
<i>Pot Bearer:</i>								
Ala-Tu-M301	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	PMAE	48120	Glendon Limestone	Individual 4c		Moore, 1905: Figs. 1-3
Miss-Je-F1	Ferguson (Feltus)	Jefferson Co., MS	UPM	14328	Sandstone	Bellaire A 4a		Brain and Phillips, 1996:384; Brown, 1926:Fig. 227
Miss-Je-CC1	Coles Creek	Jefferson Co.(?), MS	NMAI	00/7767	Ceramic	Individual 4d		
Ky-Fu-RL1	Reelfoot Lake	Fulton Co., KY	NMAI	23/1000	Sandstone	Bellaire A 4b		
<i>Pot:</i>								
Ala-Tu-M303	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	AlaMNH	A936.1.203	Glendon Limestone	Individual 4l		Krebs et al., 1986:104
Miss-Je-CH1	Church Hill	Jefferson Co., MS	NMAI	17/2964	Sandstone	Bellaire A 4e		Brown, 1926:Fig. 193; Moore, 1911:Fig. 3
Miss-Ad-FR1	[Ft. Rosalie vicinity, near Natchez]	Adams Co., MS	NMAI	00/7764	Sandstone	Bellaire U 4g		Jones, 1901:Fig. 67 [left]
La-Md-S2	Swift	Madison Pa., LA	NMNH	A 008642	Limestone	Bellaire B 4j		McGuire, 1899: Fig. 142
La-Ct-M2	Mayes Mound	Catahoula Pa., LA	NMAI	17/2896	Sandstone	Individual 4k		Moore, 1913: Figs. 6-8
Mo-St-L1	Lakeville	Stoddard Co., MO	NMNH	A 072134	Sandstone	Bellaire U 4i		McGuire, 1899: Fig. 143; Thomas, 1894:Fig. 91; Chapman, 1980: Figs. 5-39
Miss-Ad-X1	[Natchez vicinity]	Adams Co., MS	MPM	16211	Ceramic	Bellaire U 4h		Brown, 1926:Fig. 203
Miss-Md-X1	[mound]	Madison Co., MS	AMNH	1/1397	Sandstone	Bellaire A 4f		
<i>Raptor:</i>								
La-Mo-SL1	Sycamore Landing	Morehouse Pa., LA	NMAI	17/2839	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 5a		Moore, 1909: Figs. 105, 106; West, 1934:Pl. 97.2; Brain and Phillips, 1996:387
SE-X24	(unknown)	(unknown)	AMNH	12/6	Sandstone	Bellaire B 5b		Brain and Phillips, 1996:387
Miss-Ad-A2	Anna	Adams Co., MS	Pr		Glendon Limestone	Bellaire U -		
<i>Raptor on Human:</i>								
Miss-Is-EP1	Esperanza Place	Issaquena Co., MS	GM	6125.1206	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire U 5c		Dye, 2004:Fig. 15
Miss-Ad-A1	Anna	Adams Co., MS	Pr		Limestone	Bellaire U 5d		
<i>Panther-Raptor-Snake:</i>								
Miss-Ad-E1	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	MPM	16205	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 5e		Brown, 1926: Figs. 218, 223, 224; West, 1934:Pl. 91.2; Phillips and Brown, 1978:Fig. 267; Brain and Phillips, 1996:387; Rellly, 2004:Fig. 12
Miss-Ad-E2	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	MPM	16206	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B -		Brown, 1926:Fig. 222; West, 1934:Pl. 89.3; Brain and Phillips, 1996:387
<i>Owl-Fish:</i>								
Miss-Ad-E3	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	MPM	16207	Glendon Limestone	Bellaire B 5f		Brown, 1926: Figs. 220, 226; West, 1934:Pl. 91.1; Brain and Phillips, 1996:387
<i>Rabbit:</i>								
La-Mo-SL2	Sycamore Landing	Morehouse Pa., LA	NMAI	17/2840	Sandstone	Individual 5g		Moore, 1909: Figs. 107-109
<i>Quadruped:</i>								
Miss-Yo-LG2	Lake George	Yazoo Co., MS	NMAI	17/2962	Ceramic	Individual 5h		Brown, 1926:Fig. 207; Moore, 1908:Fig. 6
Miss-Ad-Q1	Quitman's Landing	Adams Co., MS	UPM	14714	Sandstone	Individual 5i		Brown, 1926:Fig. 215
La-Md-S1	Swift	Madison Pa., LA	NMNH	A 008648	Sandstone	Individual 5j		McGuire, 1899:Fig. 157
<i>Frog:</i>								
Miss-Cb-PG1	Port Gibson	Glaiborne Co., MS	NMAI	00/7294	Sandstone	Individual 5k		Brown, 1926:Fig. 212; Headley, 1976:7-8
La-Ct-M1	Mayes Mound	Catahoula Pa., LA	NMAI	17/2895	Ceramic	Individual 5l		Moore, 1913:Pl. 1; West, 1934:Pl. 130.1

^a These designations are the same as those of Brain and Phillips (1996). For each pipe they did not discuss, we have created a unique designation following their conventions.

^b Key to abbreviations: AAS, Arkansas Archeological Survey (Fayetteville); AlaMNH, Alabama Museum of Natural History; AMNH, American Museum of Natural History, Division of Anthropology; BM, Brooklyn Museum; BMC, Bryn Mawr College, Special Collections; CEI, Coastal Environments, Inc. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana); GM, Gilcrease Museum; MDAH, Mississippi Department of Archives and History; MMA, Metropolitan Museum of Art; MPM, Milwaukee Public Museum; MQB, Musée du quai Branly; NMAI, National Museum of the American Indian; NMNH, National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology; OCM, Old Courthouse Museum (Vicksburg, Mississippi); PMAE, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (Harvard University); Pr, private collection; TSM, Tennessee State Museum; UPM, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; X, lost or location unknown.

one of these pipes, found at Spiro, is made of Glendon Limestone and thus was included in our initial compilation according to the first three criteria above. Because its style is so distinctive, so common to the west, and so rare in our study area, we interpret this pipe as one made in the Caddo area using a foreign material, a circumstance that also sometimes occurs with pipes we believe were made in the LMV. We have discussed the significance of such mismatches between style and raw material elsewhere (Steponaitis and Dockery, 2014), and will do so again in the pages that follow. For now, we need only point out that, had we included this pipe in our main corpus based on its raw material, it would still have been treated as a stylistic outlier—essentially the same argument we used to eliminate it at the outset.

Also excluded were two made of a dark green chlorite schist that depict a human (Miss-Ad-X2) and a bear (Miss-Je-F2), respectively, both collected in the 1840s by Montroville Dickeson in southwestern Mississippi. In style and raw material, these are clearly Cherokee pipes that date to the early nineteenth century (Witthoft, 1949; Power, 2007: 90). Although their authenticity is beyond reproach, their reported provenience is doubtful, in that it seems unlikely they were found archaeologically—a suspicion entirely warranted by Dickeson's collecting practices (Veit, 1997: 115–118, 1999: 29–30).¹

A seated-human effigy (Miss-Yo-S1) is carved in a style most frequently found in the Mississippi Valley from the confluence of the Arkansas River upstream to that of the Ohio. Not surprisingly, this pipe was found at the northern end of our study area, the part closest to its presumed homeland.

Another pipe is a so-called “garfish” effigy (Miss-Je-F3) that Montroville Dickeson collected at the Ferguson Mounds, a site now called Feltus, in southwest Mississippi. Its closest analog comes from a late Middle Woodland site in Ohio (West, 1934: 202, Pl. 133; Lepper, 2005: 114). Given that the radiocarbon dates at Feltus range from the eighth to the eleventh centuries AD (Kassabaum, 2014; Steponaitis et al., 2015), we believe this pipe most likely dates to pre-Mississippian times.

Finally, we must add a word of explanation, and a disclaimer, about how we eliminated the pipes of questionable authenticity. As anyone who has been asked to opine on such matters knows, judgments on authenticity can be precarious, especially if they are made purely on visual grounds. Some pipes are so far out of line from examples of known provenience and lineage that one can label them as fakes with little doubt. Yet one also encounters pieces that may be atypical but not as far out of line, leaving their authenticity doubtful but not completely implausible. For such cases we have adopted a simple rule of thumb: If there is reasonable doubt, then we exclude the pipe from our corpus. This rule stems from considering the consequences of making an error. From the standpoint of stylistic or iconographic analysis, we believe that erroneously accepting a fake artifact as real (analogous to a Type II error in statistics) is far more damaging than rejecting a real artifact as fake (analogous to a Type I error). Thus, we feel it is safer to err on the side of caution and have adopted a fairly strict standard for inclusion, that is, to include only the pipes whose authenticity seems beyond reasonable doubt. Note that Table 2 contains only the pipes of questionable authenticity that are either published or in museum collections. We saw many such pipes in private collections that are not mentioned here.²

¹ Whatever their actual provenience, it is easy to understand how these pipes may have found their way to Mississippi in the 1840s. As Brett Riggs has pointed out (personal communication), a large number of U.S. Army troops were deployed to western North Carolina in the late 1830s to carry out the Cherokee Removal. Many of these soldiers acquired Cherokee pipes while there, and the subsequent dispersal of these troops created an equally wide dispersal of these pipes.

² Here we must also mention an unusual pipe currently housed in the collections at Bryn Mawr College which is made of sandstone and depicts a crouching man with talons on his feet, serpents on his back and, and a chunky

Now let us turn to a detailed consideration of the pipes that comprise our corpus. We first describe the themes represented in our effigy pipes, and then move on to matters of style. Our methodology follows that of Knight (2013), for whom the distinction between theme and style is critical. By theme we mean the subject matter of the effigy, or *what* is being depicted. Style, on the other hand, refers to the particular mode of artistic execution, or *how* the theme is depicted. Needless to say, theme and style must be treated as independent dimensions. A given theme may be rendered in different styles, and a given style may encompass multiple themes. As we shall see, examples of both circumstances occur in our corpus.

3. Themes

At least 11 different themes can be identified in our sample of pipes (Table 1). Eight are zoomorphic or mainly so, two are anthropomorphic, and one depicts an object that is arguably related to one of the anthropomorphic categories. Each theme is here described in turn, roughly in order of abundance, with the two most common themes—panther and crouching human—presented first.

Most of these pipes were made of stone, usually limestone or sandstone (Table 1). The preferred limestone came from the Glendon Formation, which outcrops along the eastern edge of the Mississippi valley near Vicksburg (Steponaitis and Dockery, 2011). Many of the sandstone pipes appear to be made of rocks from the Catahoula Formation, which is abundant in the study area just south of the Glendon Formation (Melton and Steponaitis, 2013). That said, other sources are represented as well. At least one pipe was made of a Paleozoic limestone, likely from western Arkansas or eastern Oklahoma (Steponaitis and Dockery, 2014). Several were made of Paleozoic sandstones, also from regions to the north, west, or east (David Dockery, personal communication). And one pipe, carved in a local style but found at Spiro, was made of fluorite, probably from the Ohio River drainage (Boles, 2012: 13–14). Nine pipes were made of pottery.

It is interesting to note, but perhaps not surprising, that the quality of execution in these pipes varies greatly. Many were clearly made by master carvers, who crafted depictions of stunning beauty. The makers of these pipes were extraordinary artists, probably specialists in their craft, whose work was likely known far and wide. At the other extreme are pipes that are crudely made, their subject matter recognizable but sometimes just barely. These crude pipes were often made of pottery rather than stone, and required no special skills to manufacture.

3.1. Panther (*n* = 16)

No theme provides a better starting point for our discussion than the panther, because it was this group of pipes that formed the basis for Brain and Phillips's (1996: 384–386) original “Bellaire style”—a formulation that overlaps with, but is quite different from ours. These pipes feature a snarling feline figure with bared teeth, a furrowed face, and a long tail that usually wraps around the stem hole in the creature's rump and the pipe bowl on its back (Fig. 2). Some, but not all, of these panthers are decorated with scrolls, roundels or trilobates on the body and forked eye surrounds on the face—features that, when present, tend

(footnote continued)

stone in his right hand. It allegedly was found in western Virginia. Upon first seeing it in 2016, we suspected it was fake and excluded it from our corpus. Since then, Veit and LoBiondo (2018) have made a case for its authenticity, the strongest argument being that it seems to have been collected before any prototypes for its thematic content (such as the St. Marys and Eddyville gorgets) had been published (cf., Phillips and Brown, 1978: Fig. 231). In other words, there would have been nothing available at the time for a forger to copy. If this pipe is pre-Columbian, and it very well may be, then it shares many stylistic features with Bellaire pipes but is thematically unique, strikingly different from other items in our corpus.

Table 2
Effigy pipes excluded.

Group: Designation ^a	Site	County	Theme	Museum ^b	Catalog Number	Material	Published Illustrations
<i>Nonlocal style:</i>							
Miss-Yo-S1	Sunflower Mound	Yazoo Co. MS	Crouching human	Pr		Stone	Brown, 1926: Figs. 228–229
La-X2	(unknown)	(southern Louisiana)	Raptor on human	X		Ceramic	Haag, 1971: Fig. 50; Neuman, 1984: Pl. 65f
La-Mo-SL3	Sycamore Landing	Morehouse Pa., LA	Raptor on human	NMAI	17/2842	Limestone	
Okla-Lf-S1309	Spiro	Le Flore Co., OK	Raptor on human	SNM	34Lf40/2298 [B10-14]	Glendon limestone	Brown, 1996: 2: Fig. 2.93b
<i>Cherokee Pipes:</i>							
Miss-Je-F2	Ferguson (Feltus)	Jefferson Co., MS	Bear	UPM	14305	Stone	Brown, 1926: Fig. 231
Miss-Ad-X2	Natchez	Adams Co., MS	Human	UPM	14304	Stone	Brown, 1926: Fig. 230
<i>Pre-Mississippian:</i>							
Miss-Je-F3	Ferguson (Feltus)	Jefferson Co., MS	“Alligator gar”	UPM	14327	Stone	Brown, 1926: Fig. 232
<i>Questionable authenticity:</i>							
LA-X3	(unknown)	(Louisiana)	Panther	Pr		Stone	Bernier, 1987: cover, Figs. 19–20; Anonymous, 2008: 39.
Miss-Wr-X1	near Vicksburg	Warren Co., MS	Raptor over human?	NMAI	18/6708	Limestone	
<i>Eroded or unfinished:</i>							
Miss-Ad-E6	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	Unknown (unfinished)	NMAI	00/8035	Sandstone	
Miss-Lf-SB1	Shell Bluff	Leflore Co., MS	Unknown (eroded)	Pr		Stone	Lieb, 2003
La-Mo-SL4	Sycamore Landing	Morehouse Pa., LA	Unknown (eroded)	NMAI	17/2841	Indurated clay	
Ala-Tu-M302	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	Unknown (eroded)	PMAE	48119	Glendon limestone	Moore, 1905: Figs. 2, 3

^a These designations are the same as those of [Brain and Phillips \(1996\)](#). For each pipe they did not discuss, we have created a unique designation following their conventions (marked with an asterisk).

^b Key to abbreviations: NMAI, National Museum of the American Indian; PMAE, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (Harvard University); Pr, private collection; SNM, Sam Noble Museum of Natural History (University of Oklahoma); UPM, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; X, lost or location unknown.

to occur together. There can be little doubt that this theme represents the Underwater Panther, a powerful supernatural known throughout the Eastern Woodlands and Great Plains ([Lankford, 2007](#)).

The figure is usually shown in a low crouch, with all four legs bent, and facing forward. Only one of the well-crafted examples (SE-X302) deviates from this norm; it rears up, with its front legs fully extended, and its head turned slightly to the left. Aside from the turned head, this pose is reminiscent of the “half crouch” seen in some of the human effigies described below. One of the crude pipes (La-Av-X1) has a head turned sharply to the right, as if looking over its shoulder.

The dominant raw material is limestone. All the well-crafted examples are made of this material, except for one carved from fluorite. The cruder specimens are made of pottery and sandstone.

A number of the pipes in this theme share “handwriting” traits so similar that one can reasonably infer they were made by the same carver. The type specimen from the Bellaire site (Ark-Ch-AP1) is so similar to one of the pipes from Moundville (Ala-Tu-M1) that their common authorship has long been recognized ([Brain and Phillips, 1996: 386](#)). To that same group we would add one more (Miss-X5) from along the Yazoo River in Mississippi. This pipe, although seemingly unfinished and somewhat eroded, shares a number of characteristics with the other two, including its general proportions, the details of the claws, and a distinctive vertical ridge on the neck (almost identical to the one from Moundville). A second group, from a different carver, consists of pipes from 3Wh4 (Ark-Wh-F1) and Fatherland (Miss-Ad-F2). Although both pipes are incomplete, they are linked by the distinctive treatment of the rear claws—unusually long, vertically stacked, and emerging from a double band.

It is worth noting that our one sandstone specimen (Miss-Je-L1) is so crudely done, with indistinct facial features and no limbs, that we cannot be sure of its identity as a panther. It could just as easily have been classified as a crouching human. The one feature that tipped the

balance in this case was the presence of scrolls on the body, which in our well-crafted specimens occur on felines, but never on humans.

3.2. Crouching human ($n = 15$)

This theme coincides roughly with the group of human-effigy pipes that [Brain and Phillips \(1996: 384\)](#) called the “Pascagoula style,” a set whose coherence was, in our terms, more thematic than stylistic. The central subject is always a kneeling human figure, with the torso leaning forward and the head upright and facing front ([Fig. 3](#)). The bowl is always on the figure’s back, and the stem hole enters from the rear. In most examples the crouch is extreme—what we call a “full crouch”—with the back horizontal or nearly so and the hands placed under the shins as if pulling the body forward. Other examples show the figure in a “half crouch,” with the back at a higher angle and the hands resting on the knees or crossed on the chest. Most are finely crafted from limestone, sandstone, or fired clay. A few are cruder and idiosyncratic in style. These are made of either pottery or quartzite—the latter pipes showing nothing more than a head attached to an amorphous horizontal body with no limbs.

The better-crafted examples are gendered. Male figures, which are by far the more common, are shown naked except for beaded bands on the biceps, wrists, and (usually) just below the knees. One definitive female (Miss-Ja-P1), marked with breasts, wears only a skirt; another possible female (Miss-Ok-X1), similarly marked, is unclothed. Both have beaded bands on the arms and legs, and the latter also has a beaded necklace.

While the artists gave these figures little in the way of clothing or bodily adornment, they lavished great attention to the hair. The well-crafted male figures typically have on their heads one or two coils, from which long braids descend either along the back or over the shoulders and on the chest. In the latter instance, the braid terminates in a knot.

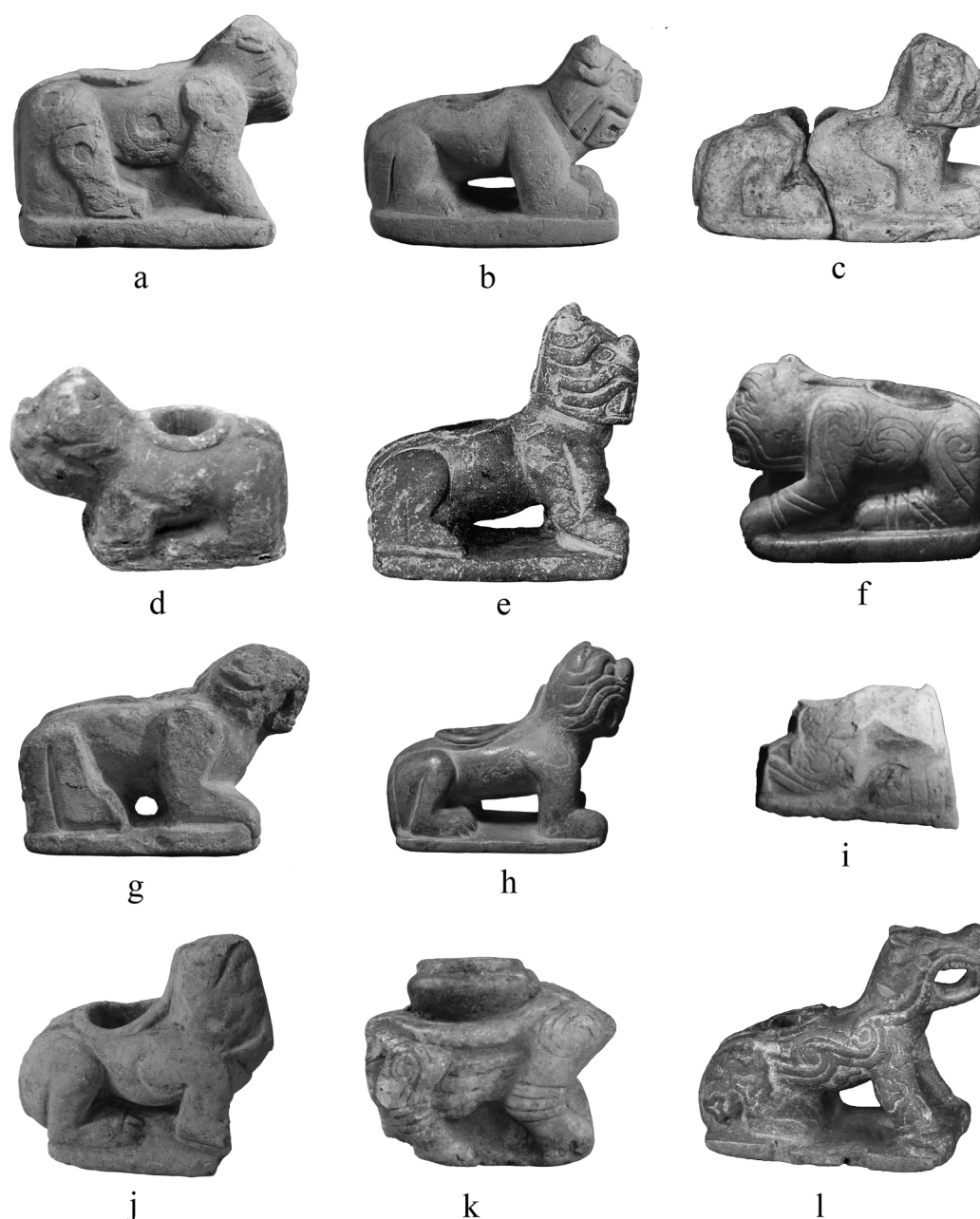


Fig. 2. Pipes exhibiting the panther theme: (a) Miss-Ad-E5; (b) Ala-Tu-M91; (c) Ala-Tu-M165; (d) Ark-Ga-HS1; (e) Ala-Tu-M1; (f) Ala-Tu-M161; (g) Miss-X5; (h) Ark-Ch-AP1; (i) Miss-Ad-F2; (j) Miss-Yo-LG1; (k) Okla-Lf-S65; (l) SE-X302. See [Table 1](#) for additional information.

Other common hair treatments on males are D-shaped, comb-like adornments placed on the top or sides of the head, and a beaded lock angling across the forehead. The hairline is often raised and so distinct that it almost looks like a helmet (and has been described as such in other contexts; see [Smith and Miller, 2009: 22](#)). By contrast, the one definitive female with the head still attached (Miss-Ja-P1) has a different hairstyle; although parts of her coif are damaged and no longer visible, she appears to be wearing a turban or wrap.

Among these pipes is one that merits special mention, perhaps the best known and most illustrated piece in our entire corpus (Miss-X4; see [Table 1](#) for references). This so-called “Kneeling Prisoner” or “Kneeling Captive” pipe has a long and interesting history.³ Its misleading name,

³This pipe now resides in the Brooklyn Museum, but was originally in the collections of the New York Historical Society. It was well known and widely published throughout the nineteenth century

(footnote continued)

(Choris, 1822: Pl. 10; Squier and Davis, 1848: Fig. 149; Schoolcraft, 1860: 5: Pl. 8, 1860: 6: Pl. 51). In his early description, Louis Choris wrote that the pipe “was found in the United States of North America, in the state of Connecticut, in an Indian tomb (mound), and sent to Baron Humboldt by Baron Hyde de Neuville” (Choris, 1822: 9). Two and a half decades later, Squier and Davis (1848: 249–250) described the same pipe and said, “It is clearly the original from which the drawing published by Baron Humboldt was made. This drawing was copied by Choris, in his ‘*Voyage Pittoresque*.’” Setting aside the dubious assertion that the pipe was found in Connecticut, which even Squier and Davis dismissed, we are still left with the intriguing claim that the pipe was once in the possession of the great explorer, Alexander von Humboldt. While Feest (1996: 63) is skeptical of this claim, we find it eminently plausible. Baron Hyde de Neuville lived in New York in the early 1800s; his wife was an artist who painted the Iroquois (Andrews, 1954; Fenton, 1954). Many of her sketches and paintings are now in the New York Historical Society’s collections. Also, Alexander von Humboldt was a prominent member of the Society (Vail, 1954: 349),

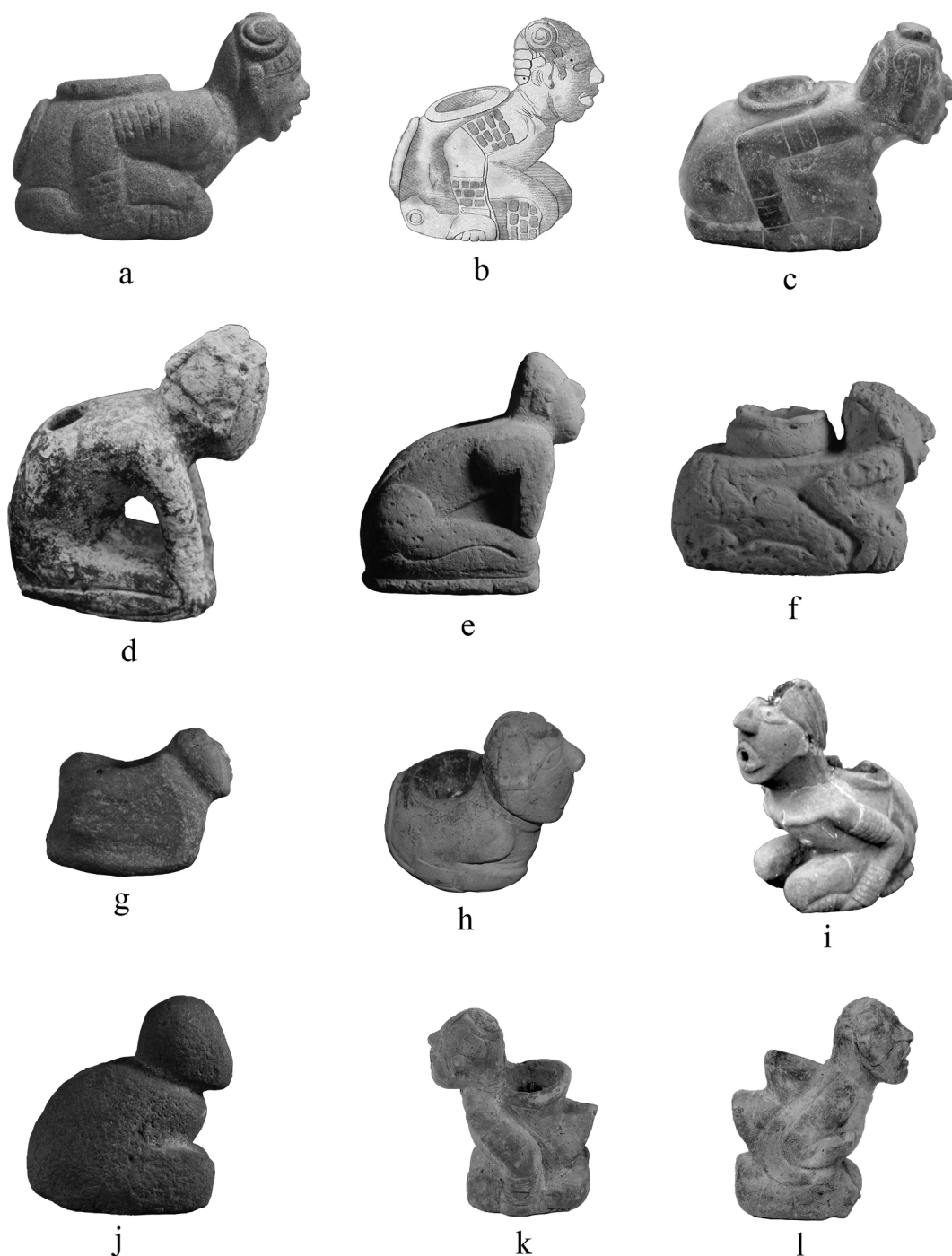


Fig. 3. Pipes exhibiting the crouching-human theme: (a) Miss-X4; (b) SE-X301; (c) Miss-X3; (d) Miss-Wr-G1; (e) Miss-Ad-E4; (f) Miss-Ws-SL1; (g) Miss-Ad-FR2; (h) Miss-Hi-P1; (i) Miss-Ja-P1; (j) La-Lf-SR2; (k-l) La-Lf-SR1. See [Table 1](#).

(footnote continued)

and his statue now stands right across the street from the Society's headquarters, in front of Central Park. Whether it was Hyde de Neuville or Humboldt who gave the pipe to the Society is unclear, but it is no stretch to imagine that the two were in correspondence and that either of them could have made the donation. Unfortunately, the Society's accession records shed no light on how and when the pipe arrived. We also have been unsuccessful in locating the drawing published by Humboldt, to which Squier and Davis allude. Incidentally, Henry Schoolcraft, who illustrated the pipe twice in his magnum opus, was also an active member of the Society and probably became familiar with the object through that connection. Twentieth-century descriptions have sometimes associated this pipe with Emerald Mound in southwest Mississippi

(footnote continued)

(Coe, 1976: 68; Coe et al., 1986: 60; Feest, 1996: Fig. 5; Ray and Montgomery, 2011: 169). There is absolutely no hard evidence to support this idea. It probably originated in an offhand comment by a visiting researcher (alluding to a general similarity to other pipes found at Emerald), which was written down on the Brooklyn Museum's catalog card, which was then picked up and published with a question mark in Coe's 1976 catalog, which was then repeatedly cited, often without the question mark, and became the received wisdom—the pre-internet academic equivalent of a rumor going viral. In reviewing early illustrations of this pipe, Feest (1996) includes a similar human effigy first published by Giacomo Beltrami in 1828 (1828: 2: Pl. 2.4). It appears in a plate showing Indian objects collected by Beltrami during his travels in the upper

first published in 1985 and repeated many times since (Brose et al., 1985: Pl. 131; Feest, 1996: 64; Dye, 2004: Fig. 8; Ray and Montgomery, 2011: Fig. 7), stems from the figure's posture and nakedness, combined with a misunderstanding of the beaded bands on its arms and legs, which were seen as ropes.⁴ Because of the quality of its carving, this piece is also the best exemplar of the iconic hair treatment associated with males in this theme. The coils, braids, D-shaped comb, and hairline all appear with extraordinary clarity. Indeed, the consistency with which these elements appear on other pipes from the LMV suggest that this hair treatment was the identifier of a specific personage or status, a point to which we will later return.

3.3. Pot bearer (n = 4)

These pipes depict a person holding a pot that doubles as the pipe's bowl (Fig. 4). The stem hole is positioned below the pot and points away from the effigy, so the smoker and effigy face each other. The two finely crafted pipes are made of sandstone, a cruder pipe is made of Glendon Limestone, and the crudest is made of pottery.⁵ Although relatively uncommon in the LMV, pot-bearer pipes are widespread across the South and are found in many different styles (Brain and Phillips, 1996: 384).⁶

(footnote continued)

Mississippi Valley from 1822 to 1823, and is identified as a "Pipe-bowl (Saukis)" in the caption. Because of its general similarity to the Brooklyn Museum pipe and the early date of publication, Feest assumes that it is yet another rendering of the same pipe, "probably based on a sketch," rather than on an object collected by Beltrami himself (Feest, 1996: 63–64). Implicit in this view is the assumption that only one such pipe existed at the time, which need not be true. Indeed, given the absence of any evidence, other than a general similarity, that Choris's and Beltrami's pipes are one and the same, we are inclined to treat them as separate instances of pipes done in the same style—hardly a stretch given the size of the corpus presented herein. Beltrami's collection is now housed at the Museo Civico in Bergamo, Italy. Unfortunately, this pipe is not among the museum's current holdings, for had it been, the matter would be settled (Vigorelli, 1986: 115–116). If indeed Beltrami's pipe is separate, there is also the question of where it was collected. Beltrami's caption identifies it as Sauk, which would imply he obtained it in the Midwest. While Beltrami is best known for his explorations of the Upper Mississippi drainage, it is important to note that he also spent time in the LMV, as he traveled by boat from St. Louis to New Orleans in 1823 (Marino, 1986: 5). One cannot help but wonder if this is another mistaken attribution analogous to the one we suspect for the Nicollet pipe, described in Note 7 below.

⁴ Even a cursory perusal of Mississippian art shows the interpretation of these bands as ropes to be implausible, because figures with the very same elements are commonly shown with their arms and legs in full motion, particularly on engraved shells (e.g., Phillips and Brown, 1978: Pl. 20). Despite such evidence, the notion of this form as a "kneeling prisoner" has gained such widespread currency that it has spawned a genre of fakes, some published as authentic, which actually do depict ropes binding the figure's arms (Anonymous, 1980; Dye, 2004: Fig. 9; Westbrook, 2008).

⁵ This theme has previously been called the "pipe holder" (Brown, 1996: 2: 514; Sievert and Rogers, 2011: 157–158). While reasonable, this name misses the fact that the pipe being held is actually the representation of a pot, and that the pot, more so than the pipe, is central to the theme's meaning. This view could be emphasized by changing the name to "pot holder," yet the ambiguous (and unhelpful) connotation of the latter term led us to prefer "pot bearer" instead.

⁶ In a recent review of these pipes, Sawyer and King (2013) name this theme the "Bowl Giver," make an interesting case that it alludes to stories about creation, and argue that the figure in these pipes is a mythic hero called the "First Man." While we are not yet prepared to take a position on the creation-story links, we will simply point out that many of the figures in these pipes are women. This is true not only of one in our corpus, but of many of the pipes with this theme from the Caddo area. One particularly good example comes from Gahagan (Moore, 1912: 515–519), clearly a woman by virtue of posture and hairstyle (see Smith and Miller, 2009: 22–29); others, whose sex is unambiguously marked by breasts or genitalia, come from Spiro (Sievert and

One of the sandstone pipes in our corpus (Miss-Je-F1), from southwest Mississippi, shows an unclothed male figure, sitting with legs folded in front and holding the pot on his lap with both hands. The most definitive gender marker in this case is the position of the legs, which is typical of males in the temple statuary of this period (cf. Smith and Miller, 2009: 26–29, et passim). The pipe is beautifully carved in the round, even showing the legs underneath in relief. The hairstyle includes a beaded forelock in front, a coiled braid on the right side of the head, and two locks hanging down on the left.

The second sandstone pipe (Ky-Fu-RL1), also skillfully carved, is said to have been found in western Kentucky. The figure is female, the gender marked by breasts and a belted skirt, sitting with legs outstretched and the pot on her lap between her hands. The hair has a knot hanging down the back, a style common on female temple statues (Smith and Miller, 2009: 22–26, et passim), but at the same time has the beaded forelock in front and beaded locks on each side of the head, features commonly seen on the male effigies in pipes.

The limestone pipe (Ala-Tu-M301) was found at Moundville and is probably male. The figure sports a bun or coil on the back of the head, similar to what Smith and Miller call a "typical male hair knot" in temple statuary (2009: 22). Even though the pipe's surface is somewhat eroded, the dearth of detail is more likely due to the poor quality of the carving.

Finally, the effigy on the ceramic pipe has a minimum of detail, just enough to identify it as human (Miss-Je-CC1). The figure is small in relation to the pot, which is equally lacking in detail. The figure's arms hug the pot and the legs hug the stem.

3.4. Pot (n = 8)

Eight effigy pipes have a pot as their main thematic element. Typically this pot is globular in shape with a wide mouth and a neck, the latter indicated by either a short vertical rim or an incision just below the lip (Fig. 4). The pot always constitutes the pipe's bowl, in which the material being smoked was placed. Six are elbow pipes, with horizontal protrusions for the stem, while two have stem holes that are drilled directly into the pot itself. In three of the elbow pipes, the pot rests on a plinth.

Six of these pipes are made of sandstone, one of Glendon Limestone, and one of pottery. The level of workmanship varies but is generally high. More than half the pipes are decorated with incisions, usually forming scrolls or festoons on the body of the pot. One pot (Mo-St-L1) is decorated with crosses.

Given the centrality of the pot and the similarities in form, it is hardly a stretch to suggest that this theme relates closely in its meaning to the pot bearer. Indeed, a religious practitioner holding such a pipe or offering it to a companion might have been re-enacting the pot bearer's role—more about which will be said later. If one envisions smoke rising from this pot while the pipe is in use, connections can also be seen with the imagery on shell gorgets from Spiro (Phillips and Brown, 1984: Pls. 126–127). Note that the pots in these Spiro gorgets are decorated with crosses and festoons, not unlike those found on our pipes.

3.5. Raptor (n = 3)

Pipes that fall in this category are all beautifully carved. The two complete specimens are representations of the head only, one made of Glendon Limestone, and the other of sandstone (Fig. 5).

(footnote continued)

Rogers, 2011: 157–158; Hamilton, 1952: 35–36, Pls. 13–14). We also note that the pot-bearer theme may relate to the same story that inspired the Keesee Figurine, a recently rediscovered flint-clay figure carved in the Classic Braden style (Sharp, 2014). This statue depicts an unclothed male figure kneeling immediately behind a pot, rather than holding it.

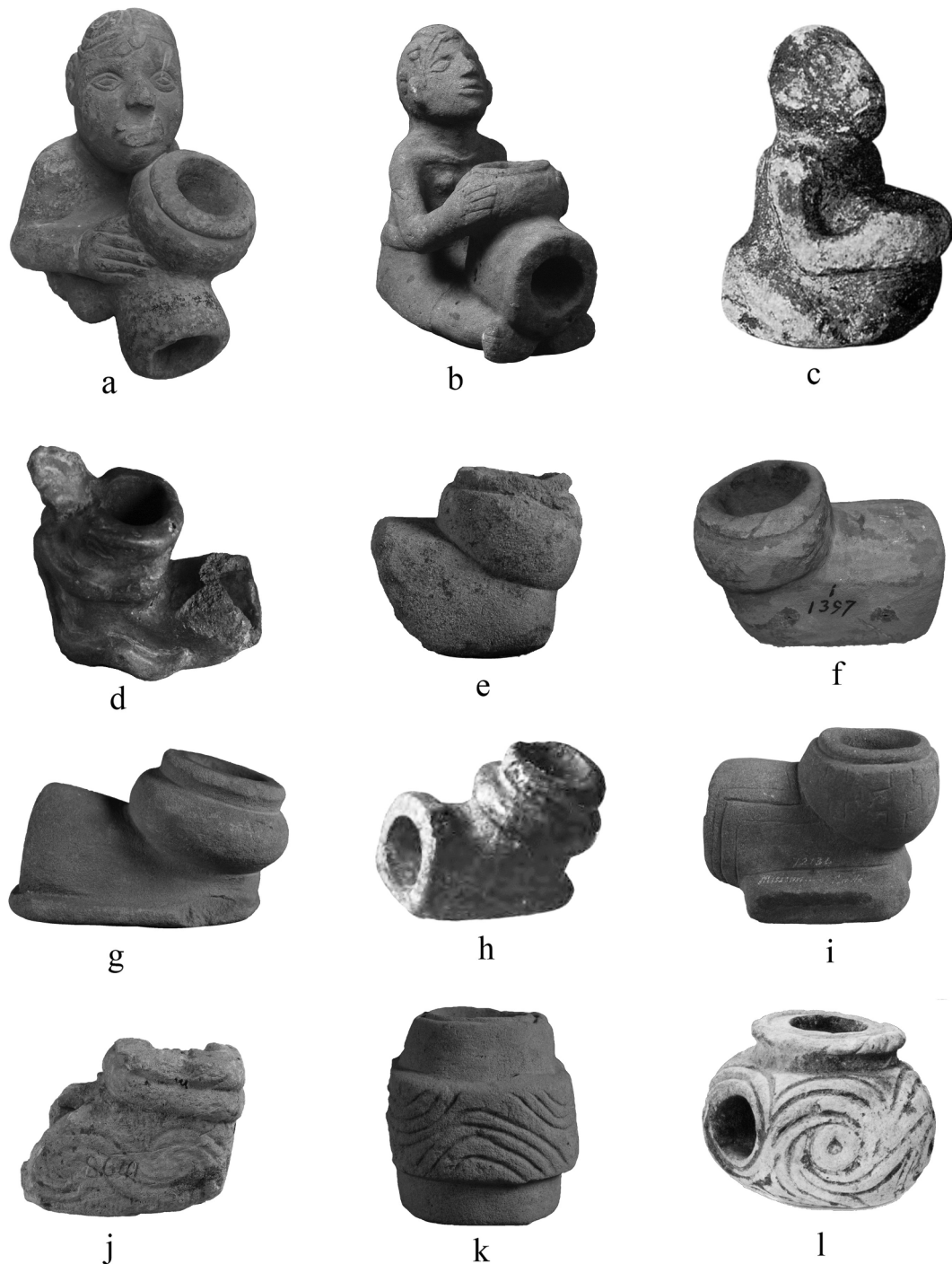


Fig. 4. Pipes exhibiting the pot-bearer and pot themes. Pot bearer: (a) Miss-Je-F1; (b) Ky-Fu-RL1; (c) Ala-Tu-M301; (d) Miss-Je-CC1. Pot: (e) Miss-Je-CH1; (f) Miss-Md-X1; (g) Miss-Ad-FR1; (h) Miss-Ad-X1; (i) Mo-St-L1; (j) La-Md-S2; (k) La-Ct-M2; (l) Ala-Tu-M303. See [Table 1](#).

The limestone pipe (La-Mo-SL1) was found by Moore at Sycamore Landing, in the same burial as the rabbit pipe described below. Each eye is surrounded by a loose swirl that suggests, but does not replicate, a classic forked eye. The base of the beak is outlined by three parallel bands. And the pipe's overall decoration exhibits an asymmetric dualism: one side of the head is covered with trilobate motifs, and the other side is not.

The sandstone pipe (SE-X24) was collected early in the nineteenth century and its provenience is uncertain.⁷ It too has a loose swirl

(footnote continued)

as part of a collection of American Indian artifacts that had once belonged to Joseph Nicolas Nicollet (also known as Jean-Nicolas Nicollet), a French mathematician who arrived in the United States in 1832 and remained in this country until his death in 1843. He is best known for his work in exploring and mapping the upper Mississippi and Missouri drainages between 1836 and 1839, but before undertaking that work he also spent considerable time in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas (Bray, 1969, 1970). A paper label on the bottom of this pipe reads "Indian Pipe from Upper Mississippi from Nicollet's Expedn." While it is not beyond the realm of possibility that Nicollet actually collected this pipe somewhere in the northern Midwest, it seems far more likely that he obtained it during his southern travels and that the paper label was added by a

⁷ This pipe was acquired by the American Museum of Natural History in 1869,

around each eye, the multilinear band at the base of the beak, and trilobates, in this case on both sides. The head is tilted at a peculiar angle, with the beak protruding from the top corner of the pipe and the eyes located well below.

The third specimen (Miss-Ad-A2), also made of Glendon Limestone, is represented by a fragment that shows nothing but the bird's tail, which is realistically carved showing individual feathers above and below. Unlike the other two pipes in this category, this bird was seemingly depicted in full, more like those in the raptor-on-human theme described below. Indeed, this fragment may well be from such a pipe, lacking the human only because the piece is so small. Another possible analog, albeit not in our corpus, is a limestone raptor pipe from Moundville (Moore, 1907: Figs. 80–86).

3.6. Raptor on human ($n = 2$)

This theme is represented in two pipes, a whole specimen from Esperanza Place and a fragment from Anna, both made of Glendon Limestone (Fig. 5). The former (Miss-Is-EP1) shows a raptor with a forked eye-surround, open beak, and extended tongue grasping a human head in its talons.⁸ No human body appears underneath the bird. Wing feathers are horizontal, and the tail feathers are folded up over the top. Interestingly, the top of the bird's head is covered with a knobby mat, which is sometimes used as a hair treatment on human effigy pipes from regions to the north (e.g., McGuire, 1899: Fig. 159; Thomas, 1894: Figs. 138–140, 1898: Fig. 44 [all from the same pipe]). On humans these knobs seem to be a conventionalized representation of multiple beaded locks hanging side-by-side (see Brown, 1926: Figs. 228–229), but whether they mean the same on this bird is an open question.

The second, fragmentary specimen (Miss-Ad-A1) shows a portion of the wing on the bird's side, the tail feathers folded down in the back, and a human foot underneath, its toes carved in relief with extraordinary realism.

A rarity in our area, this theme is much more common in the Trans-Mississippi South, albeit carved in a different and equally distinctive style (Steponaitis and Dockery, 2014: 41). A number of examples are known from both Spiro (Hamilton, 1952: Pl. 6; Brown, 1996:2:Fig. 2.93b-c) and Crenshaw (Durham and Davis, 1975: Figs. 31, 36).⁹

3.7. Panther-Raptor-Snake ($n = 2$)

The two pipes in this category (Miss-Ad-E1, -E2) are both part of the Perrault cache (Fig. 5). Both are somewhat eroded, one more severely

(footnote continued)

later owner—an understandable guess given the source of Nicolle's fame and the fact that other objects in the collection were indeed from the upper Mississippi basin.

⁸ A published description of this pipe says it was found at the Winterville site in Washington County, Mississippi (Dye, 2004: Fig. 15). This attribution, however, conflicts with information in the Gilcrease Museum's accession records, specifically the catalog of Judge Harry Lemley, from whom the pipe was purchased in 1931: "Plowed up on the Esperanza Plantation ... in the year 1917 ... located on Lake Washington, Mississippi on the Mississippi River, several miles out from Glen Allen, Miss., and not a great distance from the Chicot County, Arkansas line." Esperanza Plantation was located in Issaquena County, about 55 km south of Winterville (Princella Nowell, personal communication).

⁹ The story to which the raptor-on-human theme relates is unknown, but one can fairly say it has great antiquity in Eastern Woodlands. At least one Ohio Hopewell platform pipe illustrates the same idea: a carved raptor (with the bowl in its back) pecks at a human head engraved on top of the platform on which it sits (Gilcrease Museum, 6124.1136). A tubular pipe, also said to be from Ohio, also shows this theme carved in the round (Gilcrease Museum, 6124.1097). Its form suggests an Early or Middle Woodland date, but whether this pipe is authentic we are not prepared to say.

than the other, but so far as one can tell they are nearly identical in size, shape, material, and details—certainly made by the same hand. The creature depicted has a feline head with snarling mouth and fangs, four legs with taloned feet, wings whose flight feathers are marked like snakes and end in rattles, and a long, cat-like tail that goes up the back, curls around the pipe bowl, is marked like a snake's body, and also ends in a rattle. It also has trilobate markings on its back. Iconographically, this appears to be a particularly monstrous version of the Underwater Panther or Great Serpent (Lankford, 2007). Reilly (2011: 131–133) has aptly labeled this morph the "serpentlike Underwater Panther."

3.8. Owl-Fish ($n = 1$)

This theme is uniquely represented by a limestone pipe (Miss-Ad-E3) that was also part of the Perrault cache (Fig. 5). Beautifully carved and well preserved, it has the head and wings of an owl, combined with the tail of a fish.

3.9. Rabbit ($n = 1$)

The only pipe depicting this subject (La-Mo-SL2) was excavated at Sycamore Landing, found in the same burial as one of the raptor pipes (Fig. 5). Carved from a Paleozoic sandstone, it depicts a mammalian creature with big ears, no snout, prominent incisors, a cleft lip, and no discernable tail. Moore (1909: 115–116) called it a rabbit, and we cannot improve on his guess. The pipe is asymmetrically decorated, with curvilinear incisions on one side and a cross on the other. The cross is surrounded by an outline with rounded ends, similar to those found in trilobate motifs.

3.10. Quadruped ($n = 3$)

This is a small and heterogeneous group, really a catchall for mammalian zoomorphic pipes that cannot be further identified (Fig. 5). All are crudely made, two of sandstone and one of pottery. The only recognizable features tend to be a head and four legs. The pottery specimen (Miss-Yo-LG2) also has crude eyes, teeth, and a tail. Moore said it was probably a "wolf or a dog" (1909: 592). Others might guess it to be a panther, but we have not gone quite that far.

3.11. Frog ($n = 2$)

The two frog effigies in our sample could not be more different (Fig. 5). One (La-Ct-M1) is small and made of clay, while the other (Miss-Cb-PG1) is large—by far the largest pipe in our corpus—and made of sandstone.¹⁰ The latter is cruder in its style than the former, but neither is a product that required special skill.

4. Styles

Using our adopted criteria, roughly two-thirds of pipes in our corpus are assignable to a single style that we call Bellaire. The Bellaire style was originally defined by Brain and Phillips (1996: 384–388) based on 20 pipes, largely but not exclusively depicting panthers, all but two of which are included in our present corpus. Brain and Phillips were the first to point out the concentration of these pipes in the Lower Mississippi Valley, and to identify the panther pipes from Moundville, Alabama as belonging to that style group. In this paper, using somewhat different criteria, we have considerably expanded Brain and Phillips's delineation of Bellaire, to include the crouching human pipes of their Pascagoula style (1996: 384), plus a variety of other objects that we feel cohere stylistically.

¹⁰ A brief account of the sandstone pipe's discovery in Claiborne County, Mississippi, in 1830 is provided by Headley (1976: 7–8).

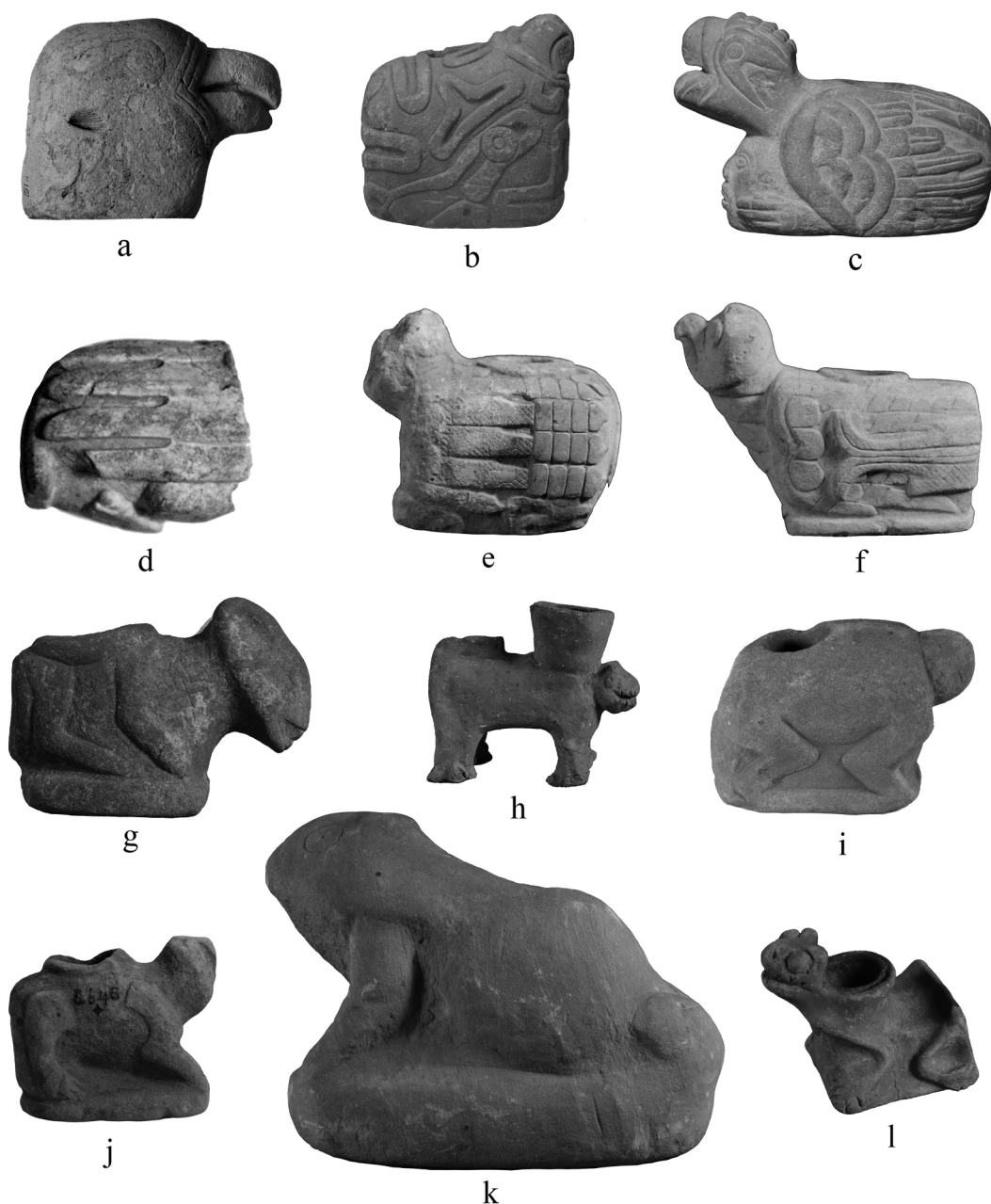


Fig. 5. Pipes exhibiting various zoomorph themes. Raptor: (a) La-Mo-SL1; (b) SE-X24. Raptor on human: (c) Miss-Is-EP1; (d) Miss-Ad-A1. Panther-raptor-snake: (e) Miss-Ad-E1. Owl-fish: (f) Miss-Ad-E3. Rabbit: (g) La-Mo-SL2. Quadruped: (h) Miss-Yo-LG2; (i) Miss-Ad-Q1; (j) La-Md-S1. Frog: (k) Miss-Cb-PG1; (l) La-Ct-M1. See [Table 1](#).

4.1. Definition

Bellaire is a representational style confined, as presently known, to the genre of smoking pipes, or more accurately to smoking pipe components, as in use these were fitted with perishable stems inserted into flared stem holes. In defining Bellaire as a sculptural style, we do not dismiss the possibility of stylistic relationships with contemporaneous two-dimensional forms. For example, [Brain and Phillips \(1996: 192\)](#) have pointed out the compelling resemblance of certain embossed copper plates featuring panther heads in frontal view to the facial features of Bellaire-style panther pipes.

In Bellaire pipes, structural features—the stem hole and bowl—are well integrated with the depicted subject and are subordinated to it visually. The style has a compact, bulky aspect, with animate subjects posed in stiff, compact positions. Many features are rendered in crisp,

low relief relative to the core. All surfaces of the piece, including the base, may carry carved representational elements. Limbs and necks tend to be short and thick. Bellaire-style pipes have broad, stable, flattened bases. It may be said that there are no asymmetrical design structures, although, as already seen, there are asymmetries of carved detail that are significant. The scale is fairly consistent, with few pipes having a maximum length or height less than 10 cm or greater than 17 cm. Thus unlike other styles, objects of the Bellaire style were neither miniaturized nor upwardly scaled as larger sculpted objects. They often show wear from extensive use, particularly on the distal end of the base, and they were occasionally reworked after breakage.

Each pipe depicts a single subject, one of a small number of conventional themes reviewed above. In most cases the full-bodied subject is depicted, but in others (as in some panthers and raptors) only the head is given, or in the case of the pot-bearer theme just the pot,

arguably *pars pro toto*. The carved details can be small and sometimes even hidden beneath the subject; such details were no doubt meant to be appreciated at close range. In general, Bellaire can be grouped among the “perspective” styles in which basic aspects of the depicted subject are reproduced in rough proportion to what the eye might see from any given angle, with neither exaggeration nor omission, with the exception of heads, which tend to be large relative to torsos and limbs. Difficult-to-carve extremities like panther tails are handled by the common strategy of folding them back creatively onto the body.

A number of Bellaire style features are particular to certain animate subjects. For example, human heads tend to be somewhat elongate and tapered in profile view. Panthers have short muzzles and strongly furrowed facial features above and below the eyes that trail rearward, streamer-like. As already noted, panther tails curl upward, once around the bowl, ending at the top of the head. Bird feathers are notched along one edge and usually include the shaft as a narrow central ridge.

4.2. Stylistic unity across themes

Other details crosscut themes in ways that reinforce the unity of the style. For example, panthers and humans share a distinctive eye form, lenticular in shape, bordered by a narrow, raised ridge. Another stylistic feature that connects many pipes of several themes is the presence of a raised, donut-like ring defining the rim of the bowl or the stem hole. In a large proportion of our sample, the broad, flat base characteristic of the style is accentuated by raising the subject upon a short plinth. Whole-bodied Bellaire panthers are always posed upon such plinths, but so are a variety of monstrous composite creatures, some crouching humans, and a number of pipes of the pot theme. In all cases, the subject generally crowds the upper surface of the plinth, using all available space. In Bellaire panthers it is common to depict the front claws as draped over the front edge of the plinth.

While most of the crouching-human pipes lack a plinth, a similar effect—that of a broad rectangular base—is visually achieved by posing the lower legs parallel to one another and flat against the basal plane. The feet are turned to accommodate the flat plane of the base.

To illustrate how Bellaire stylistic features crosscut subject matter, Fig. 6 compares the head of a Bellaire crouching human (Miss-Ad-F1) to the head of a Bellaire panther (Ala-Tu-M1) at the same scale. These heads are comparable in size and overall shape, sharing a tapered profile, but the comparisons extend to more specific features. These include the form of the eyes, the manner in which the two hair buns of the human mimic the ears of the panther, and the way the undulating hairline of the human mimics the furrowed brow of the panther. The hair locks descending the back of the neck of the human are treated much like the tip of the panther's tail, which ascends the same area. Finally, the pieces share a nearly identical ridge at the front of the neck, which represents the human's laryngeal ridge and the panther's wattle.

A further illustration of the unity of the style across subject matter is gained by examining the five Bellaire-style pipes that were found together in the Perrault cache (Brown, 1926: Figs. 218–222). Although there are four subjects represented in this group, when viewed together their unity of form can easily be appreciated in such matters as common size and proportions, the arrangement of the bodies of the figures upon plinths, and the attitude of the heads relative to the bodies.

4.3. Bellaire A and B

Among the Bellaire pipes fitting the general description given above, a distinction can be made between the more rounded examples and the more blocky. Exploring this distinction in greater depth has resulted in our identification of two substyles, which we have named Bellaire A and Bellaire B. Fig. 7 illustrates how a variety of subjects are rendered in both styles. This difference can be captured by a series of contrasts:

- Bellaire A pipe carving is somewhat more true to life, more dimensional, with more attention paid to proportion and perspective. On animate subjects, body parts including limbs, heads, and torsos are rounded in cross-section. Bellaire B pipe carving is less dimensional and decidedly more blocky, with flattened surfaces perhaps, for stone pipes, retaining some of the character of the preform block of parent material.
- In Bellaire A, where needed, openings are created in order to carve elements in the round, as between limbs, between the torso and the plinth, and between the pot and the bearer in the pot-bearer theme. In Bellaire B, such openings are absent or only partial, leaving features such as limbs in a flattened state, at the extreme merely incised in outline on a flat surface.
- Bellaire A facial features wrap around the head from one side to the other. Bellaire B faces tend to have a frontally flattened aspect, with facial features confined mainly to the frontal surface. Thus, Bellaire B eye and mouth features cannot be easily seen from a side view of the piece.
- In Bellaire A, more attention is paid to the rounded relief carving of small details, such as the flowing furrows of a panther's upper lip and brow, or the ornamentation of a human's hair. Much less attention is given to carved detail in Bellaire B, where the same features tend to be more rudimentary, sometimes fashioned by simple incising.
- In Bellaire A, where a functional pipe bowl appears on the back of an animate subject, the bowl rim is made to protrude only a little, or not at all, above the plane of the back. In Bellaire B the rim, and sometimes also the body of the bowl commonly protrudes well above the plane of the back.
- In Bellaire A, bodily decoration consisting of elements extraneous to the subject is absent. In Bellaire B, such bodily decoration, such as scrolls, roundels, or trilobate motifs, is common.

The cohesiveness of these two substyles and our ability, in some cases, to identify a common carver of multiple pipes leaves us with the definite impression that only a few master pipe carvers are responsible for most of the output. Considerable skill was involved in the carving, perhaps passed from carver to apprentice carver at the larger Plaquemine centers such as Emerald, where the Perrault pipes, mentioned above, were discovered. If the number of carvers was as small as we think, the dispersal of Bellaire-style pipes to many settlements within and beyond the Plaquemine region is a phenomenon needing explanation.

4.4. Bellaire unspecified

While Bellaire A and B identify distinct substyles, there are yet other pipes that do not conform to either substyle and yet still clearly belong to the broader Bellaire group. All these are listed in Table 1 as Bellaire unspecified (“Bellaire U”). Some of these pipes have forms that appear transitional, such as the crouching human from Glass (Miss-Wr-G1), which combines the carved openings between rounded limbs and torso characteristic of Bellaire A with a flattened face and blocky, rudimentary lower limbs seen in Bellaire B. Yet another such case is the unusual panther in the Musée du quai Branly, with the rounded body and carved openings of Bellaire A and the body decoration of Bellaire B. Also assigned to this category are pipes that are generally consistent with the style but lack the more specific identifiers of each substyle, either because they are fragmentary (as with the two pipes from Anna), or because they portray themes that often do not incorporate these identifiers (such as the pot or raptor-on-human pipes).

4.5. Chronology

With two substyles defined, the question arises, is the difference between them chronological? Answering this question is complicated

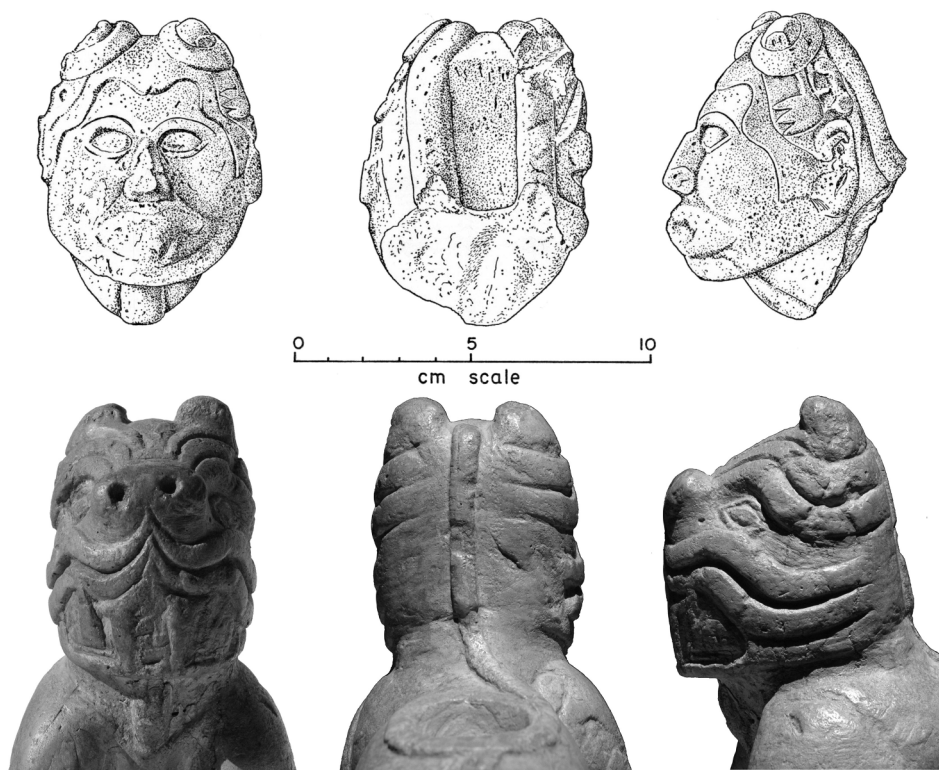


Fig. 6. Heads on a crouching human (top, Miss-Ad-F1) and panther (bottom, Ala-Tu-M1), likely by the same carver. Note the similarity in the size and proportion of the heads, the similar placement of hair coils and ears, respectively, and the presence in both of a laryngeal ridge on the neck. (Drawing of Miss-Ad-F1 reproduced from Neitzel, 1965: Fig. 15.)

by two factors. First, many of the pipes in our corpus lack good provenience; some cannot even be assigned to a specific site, which means they cannot be independently dated by context. Second, finely-crafted objects with social or religious value are likely to remain in circulation for decades or even centuries before finding their way into the archaeological record, a process that has been observed repeatedly in the Mississippian world (James A. Brown, 1996: 98–103; 2007). This creates the so-called “heirloom” effect, in which the date of deposition may be far removed from that of manufacture. So the best we can do under these circumstances is to narrow our sample to the subset of pipes that come from sites with at least some degree of chronological control, and to focus especially on the *ending* dates of each site’s occupation, which should provide a *terminus ante quem* for a pipe’s manufacture. Because of the possibility of heirloom, a site’s starting date cannot reliably be used as a *terminus post quem*.

Table 3 summarizes the dating of the sites at which pipes assigned to Bellaire A and B were found. Not surprisingly, the date ranges of these sites show considerable overlap, and the dates associated with each substyle are quite variable. Even so, one can see a pattern: the terminal dates of sites with Bellaire A pipes tend to be earlier than those with Bellaire B pipes. About half the Bellaire A pipes have a *terminus ante quem* of AD 1350 or earlier; one such pipe was found at a site whose occupation ended around AD 1100, which suggests that this substyle had originated at least by then. All the Bellaire B pipes, by contrast, have a *terminus ante quem* of AD 1400 or later, which pushes this substyle at least into the 1300s, but we cannot say how much earlier its start may have been.

In sum, there does appear to be a temporal difference between the substyles. Our best current guess, based on the limited data available, is that Bellaire A dates roughly between AD 1100 and 1350, while Bellaire B falls somewhere between AD 1300 and 1500.

A brief comparison with other, related Mississippian styles is instructive in evaluating these temporal ranges. The figural representations in the Classic Braden style—particularly the red, flint-clay statues—have much in common with Bellaire A in the naturalism of the depictions, the postures, and the “roundness” and proportionality with

which the human body is portrayed. James A. Brown (2004: 112–115, 2007: 221–226) dates the beginnings of Classic Braden, centered at Cahokia, to about AD 1100 and its florescence to the AD 1200s, a dating consistent with our estimate for Bellaire A. The recently defined Holly Bluff style, believed to be native to the northern LMV, is more difficult to compare, as it has very little overlap with Bellaire in media and themes (Knight et al., 2017). That said, the ophidian features of the two pipes in our panther-raptor-snake theme lend themselves to such comparison, as the Holly Bluff artists were mainly concerned with depicting snake-like beings. And here, the closest ties clearly lie between Bellaire B and the later variants called Holly Bluff II and III, by virtue of the presence of rattles, multi-pronged eye surrounds, and stepped ventral elements (Knight et al., 2017: Fig. 4). Indeed, one Holly Bluff II shell cup has been directly compared to our Bellaire B pipes because of their striking thematic similarity in depicting a being whose wings are adorned with rattles (Knight et al., 2017: 103–105; Reilly, 2011: 131–133). Knight et al. (2017: 106–108) tentatively date the Holly Bluff style as a whole from AD 1200 to 1450, which places Holly Bluff II–III roughly at AD 1300–1450. Again, this is perfectly consistent with our dating of Bellaire B.

When one divides our Bellaire pipes into the two substyles, some interesting thematic trends emerge (Table 4). Bellaire A is dominated by anthropomorphs, with crouching humans (8) and pot bearers (2) together forming the majority; the only other themes represented are the panther (4) and the pot (2). Bellaire B sees the numerical dominance shift to zoomorphs, as represented by panthers (8) and raptors (2), as well as the panther-raptor-snake (2) and owl-fish (1) monsters. The last three zoomorphic themes occur only in Bellaire B. The absence of the raptor-on-human pipes in both substyles is simply a matter of our inability to confidently assign the pipes in this theme to either group, a shortcoming that we hope will be resolved with further research.

Beyond the characteristics that define each substyle, one also sees some changes through time in the details of how the crouching human theme is rendered. The Bellaire A pipes all show the human figure in a full crouch, with hands placed on the shins, and limbs adorned with beads. Bellaire B pipes can have the figure in either a full or half crouch,

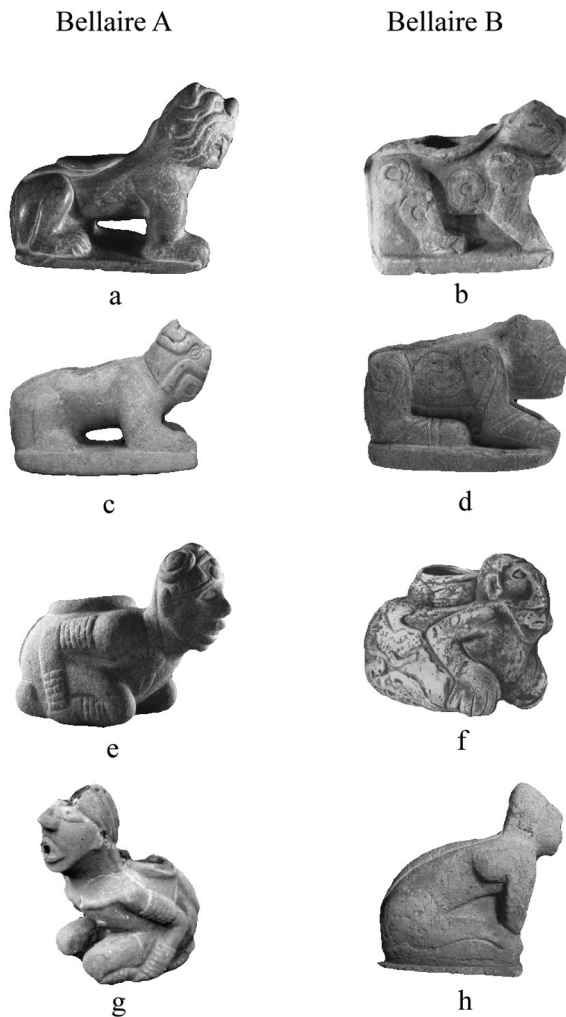


Fig. 7. A comparison of pipes in the Bellaire A and B substyles. Bellaire A pipes on left: (a) Ark-Ch-AP1; (c) Ala-Tu-M91; (e) Miss-X4; (g) Miss-Ja-P1. Bellaire B pipes on right: (b) Miss-Ad-E5; (d) Ala-Tu-M161; (f) Miss-Ws-SL1; (h) Miss-Ad-E4.

with the hands on the knees or chest, and no beads at all. Whether these trends will hold as new pipes emerge remains to be seen.

Finally, it is worth noting that the frog and the quadruped themes occur only among the idiosyncratic pipes that represent individual styles, and never on Bellaire pipes. Where these fall along the chronological continuum we are not prepared to say, but their overall crudity, especially compared to the Bellaire pipes, suggests that they were not made by expert carvers. It would therefore be unsurprising to find them scattered throughout the sequence.

4.6. Individual styles

About one-third of the pipes in our corpus are not assignable to the Bellaire style. As already noted, we omitted from our corpus certain pipes that belong to known nonlocal styles, so this leaves us with a diverse group of non-Bellaire pipes that we presume were both made and used in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Some, like the two frog pipes (Miss-Cb-PG1, La-Ct-M1), were not part of the standard roster of Bellaire subjects. More commonly members of this extraneous group show a familiarity with Bellaire subjects but are inexpertly crafted, and moreover are disproportionately made of sandstone and fired clay as opposed to the preferred Glendon Limestone of the Bellaire pipes. These include a number of crouching humans, certain unidentifiable long-legged quadrupeds, a pot-bearer, and two pipes of the pot theme. These

one-off pieces strike us as examples of works by individuals outside the narrow sphere of Bellaire competency; as pipes made occasionally on an ad hoc basis by untrained pipe-makers. Thus they have the flavor of idiosyncratic, “individual” styles.

5. Meaning and use

Since the stone pipes that have been presented here represent a significant portion of the non-ceramic art of the Lower Mississippi Valley, it is fair to conclude that they must have had an important role in the cultural life of the various tribal groups. While any conclusions about that role must be conjectural, we can suggest interpretations of their meaning in accord with the logic of shamanic practice in the Eastern Woodlands, and these interpretations can yield testable implications.

The very fact that the corpus of pipes is unique to the LMV suggests that they should be interpreted as representatives of a single social institution. The relatively small number found indicates that these were not objects of universal use. The most obvious function of them—that they are pipes for smoking—argues that they were most likely associated with one or more religious organizations. The existence of different themes in the art of the pipes (several subtypes of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic images) hints at multiple religious orientations and structures, but that impression is called into question by the five pipes found together in the Perrault cache. For such a variety of different personages to be gathered together into a single collection suggests that they were understood to belong together in some way.

These general observations lead to the hypothesis of a single religious system indigenous to the LMV, characterized by the use of smoking pipes related to different personages, and possibly reflecting a traditional master-apprentice structure for the communication and perpetuation of the cult. This hypothesis will be explored and enlarged on the basis of internal evidence and comparisons with similar religious structures outside the LMV.

The zoomorphic pipes have been described in detail individually, but attempting to characterize them as a group leads to some important observations. First, they are not images whose meanings are likely to be found by linking them to the animals of this world. Neither their appearance nor their hinted behavior seems “natural.” Second, they appear unusual as a group in that they appear to point toward the Beneath World. The long-tailed panther image of the Great Serpent is clearly the dominant zoomorph, and it is a familiar “water spirit” religious character known far beyond the LMV (Lankford, 2007). The other pipes offer “monstrous” composites that challenge the viewer to reach for more esoteric understandings—perhaps images of lesser known Beneath-World divinities or different nuances of signification beyond identification as characters. The zoomorphic pipes, taken together, make it clear that their realm is far beyond nature, but located in the cosmos.

Like the zoomorphs, the anthropomorphs may also have represented either otherworldly beings, or humans in communication with such beings. Three things stand out in our corpus of human effigies: First, they are all in crouching postures, often in a “full crouch” that is both unnatural and difficult to maintain. Second, they are generally naked, with males wearing nothing but shell beads and females wearing similar shell beads and a skirt. And third, they possess highly elaborate and specific hair arrangements, together with beaded bands on their arms and legs. Let us consider the possible meaning of each aspect in turn.

The postures of the figures on the pipes undoubtedly communicated social meaning to contemporary observers. Ethnographic accounts of shamanic behavior often mention contorted postures (Fig. 8). Taking her cues from ancient art, Felicitas Goodman spent decades exploring the relationship of physical postures and the experience of ecstasy in trance states. She reported that “each posture predictably mediated not just any kind of vision but a characteristic, distinctly different

Table 3
Chronological Assignments for Pipes from Known Sites.

Style Group: Designation ^a	Site	County	Theme	Date	Comment	References
<i>Bellaire A:</i>						
Ark-Ch-AP1	Anderson Plantation (Bellaire Mound)	Chicot Co., AR	Panther	–	Phillips sets up a Plaquemine “Bellaire phase,” but Jeter says there’s no good evidence to support it	Phillips, 1970; Jeter, 2007
Ala-Tu-M1	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	Panther	1300–1500	Moore says the pipe was found near Mound M. This mound was built in M1, but most burials in this area date to M2 and M3	Moore, 1905; Knight & Steponaitis, 1998; Fig. 1.3; Steponaitis, 1983: Figs. 35–36
Ala-Tu-M91	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	Panther	1400–1500	Found with Bu 33/NR/M5. ME bottle with indentations (NR21/M5) definitely associated; ME Hemphill simple bottle with Winged Serpent (NR17/M5) probably associated. Steponaitis dates this burial to M3 based on the latter; indentations on the former (not considered in diss) suggest EM3	Steponaitis, 1983: 270, Table 35; Moore, 1905: 126, 128, 236–238
Miss-Ad-F1	Fatherland	Adams Co., MS	Crouching human	1500–1730	Found in Md C, Square S670-680, W260-270, about 5 feet SW of Bu 3 (Neitzel, 1965: 48–49). Mound dates to the Emerald-Natchez phases, based on the pottery in Neitzel’s Fig. 13	Neitzel, 1965
Miss-Hi-P1	Pocahontas	Hinds Co., MS	Crouching human	1000–1300	Assigned by Steponaitis to the Dupree and Chapman phases, based on illustrated pottery from Md A	Ford, 1936: 123–125; Rucker, 1976; Nelson et al., 2013: 39–47; Steponaitis, 1991: 219
Miss-Ja-P1	Singing River (Pinola)	Jackson Co., MS	Crouching human	1200–1350	Assigned by Blitz and Mann to the Pinola phase, based on their excavations at the presumed find spot	Blitz & Mann, 2000: 52–53
Miss-Je-F1	Ferguson (Feltus)	Jefferson Co., MS	Pot bearer	1000–1100	Site dates 700–1100; the pipe could plausibly come only from the late end of that range	Kassabaum, 2014 (radiocarbon dates)
<i>Bellaire B:</i>						
Ark-Wh-F1	3Wh4	White Co., AR	Panther	1400–1550	Akridge & Akridge, 2000 place the site in the first half of the Little Red River phase	Akridge & Akridge, 2000
Miss-Yo-LG1	Lake George	Yazoo Co., MS	Panther	400–1550	Span of the site’s main occupation	Williams & Brain, 1983
Miss-Ad-F2	Fatherland	Adams Co., MS	Panther	1500–1730	Found in outwash of Mound C, in Sq. S660-670, W260-270 (Neitzel, 1965: 48). Mound dates to the Emerald-Natchez phases, based on the pottery in Neitzel’s Fig. 13	Neitzel, 1965
Ala-Tu-M161	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	Panther	1100–1500	Span of the site’s main occupation	Knight & Steponaitis, 1998
Ala-Tu-M165	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	Panther	1300–1500	The burial with this pipe intrudes a palisade line radiocarbon dated 1262–1275, which provides a terminus post quem. Burials in this area are believed to date to Moundville II-III phases	Scarry, 1995: 198–200, 1998: 76–87
Okla-Lf-S65	Spiro	Le Flore Co., OK	Panther	ca. 1400	Hamilton includes this pipe in his compilation of objects from the Great Mortuary, which Brown dates to ca. 1400	Brown, 1996:1: Figs. 1–51
La-Mo-SL1	Sycamore Landing	Morehouse Pa., LA	Raptor	1200–1650	Weinstein et al. say the site spans Paragoud, Kinnaid, and Glendora I phases (see Fig. 4 on p. 12 for dates)	Moore, 1909: 112–120; Weinstein et al., 2003: 36–37
Miss-Ad-E1	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	Panther-raptor-snake	1400–1600	The Perrault cache likely came from a group of disturbed burials found in Zone2 I at Location 1. Zone 2 was built in the Foster Phase and capped in the Emerald phase	Steponaitis, 1974; Brain et al., 1995
Miss-Ad-E2	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	Panther-raptor-snake	1400–1600	(ditto)	(ditto)
Miss-Ad-E3	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	Owl-fish	1400–1600	(ditto)	(ditto)
Miss-Ad-E4	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	Crouching human	1400–1600	(ditto)	(ditto)
Miss-Ad-E5	Emerald	Adams Co., MS	Panther	1400–1600	(ditto)	(ditto)
Miss-Ws-SL1	Shadyside Landing	Washington Co., MS	Crouching human	–	The one vessel illustrated in Fig. 14 is not diagnostic as to phase	Moore, 1911: 388–391
<i>Bellaire U:</i>						
Miss-Ad-A1	Anna	Adams Co., MS	Raptor on human	1200–1500	The site principally dates to the Anna and Foster phases	Cotter, 1951; Brain et al., 1995
Miss-Ad-A2	Anna	Adams Co., MS	Raptor	1200–1500	The site principally dates to the Anna and Foster phases	Cotter, 1951; Brain et al., 1995
Miss-Wr-G1	Glass	Warren Co., MS	Crouching human	1200–1650	The site principally dates to the Anna, Foster, Emerald phases	Moore, 1911: 381–388; Brain et al., 1995; Downs, 2011
Mo-St-L1	Lakeville	Stoddard Co., MO	Pot	600–1400	The site dates from Late Woodland to middle Mississippian; late Mississippian is absent	James Krakker, personal communication
<i>Individual:</i>						
Miss-Je-L1	Lookout	Jefferson Co., MS	Panther?	1000–1350; c.1700	The Gordon, Foster, and Natchez phases are best represented	Brown, 1985

(continued on next page)

Table 3 (continued)

Style Group: Designation ^a	Site	County	Theme	Date	Comment	References
La-Ct-M1	Mayes Mound	Catahoula Pa., LA	Frog	1200–1350	Weinstein et al. place the site in the early Plaquemine; Kidder dates the Mayes phase to AD 1200–1350	Moore, 1913: 21–31; Kidder, 1992: Fig. 8.2; Weinstein et al., 2003: 121–123
La-Mo-SL2	Sycamore Landing	Morehouse Pa., LA	Quadruped	1200–1650	Weinstein et al. say the site spans Paragoud, Kinnaird, and Glendora I phases (see Fig. 4 on p. 12 for dates)	Moore, 1909: 112–120; Weinstein et al., 2003: 36–37
Miss-Yo-LG2	Lake George	Yazoo Co., MS	Quadruped	400–1550	Span of the site's main occupation	Williams & Brain, 1983
Miss-Bo-SI	Stoneface	Bolivar Co., MS	Crouching human	1200–1500	The main occupation dates to the Winterville and Lake George phases (p. 7–319). Terminal CC and early Wasp Lake also present	Ryan et al., 2003
Ala-Tu-M301	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	Pot bearer	1100–1500	Span of the site's main occupation.	Knight & Steponaitis, 1998
Ala-Tu-M303	Moundville	Tuscaloosa Co., AL	Pot	1100–1500	Found in a ditch west of Md P. Burials in that area date M1–M3	Knight & Steponaitis, 1998; Steponaitis, 1983: Figs. 32, 35–36
La-Ct-M2	Mayes Mound	Catahoula Pa., LA	Pot	1200–1350	Weinstein et al. place the site in the early Plaquemine; Kidder dates the Mayes phase to AD 1200–1350	Moore, 1913: 21–31; Kidder, 1992: Fig. 8.2; Weinstein et al., 2003: 121–123

Table 4

Themes by Bellaire Substyle.

Theme	Bellaire A	Bellaire B	Bellaire Unspecified
Panther	4	8	2
Crouching human	8	2	1
Pot bearer	2	–	–
Pot	2	1	3
Raptor	–	2	1
Raptor on human	–	–	2
Panther-raptor-snake	–	2	–
Owl-fish	–	1	–
	16	16	9

experience” (1990: 20). She claimed that as many as thirty postures could be used for inducing a trance experience, but the particular postures on the LMV pipes are not in the list. The closest are prone positions, either face up or face down, that produce a vision of (in?) the Beneath World (1990: 76–81). Goodman’s research does not exactly dovetail with the pipe postures, but it does raise the issue of a special function for them that is not yet known in our studies.

There is also a widely known tradition of “ritual nudity” for shamans. Mircea Eliade, commenting upon Arctic shamanism, pointed out that “The shaman bares his torso and (among the Eskimo, for example) retains his belt as his only garment.... In any case, whether there is ritual nudity ... or a particular dress for the shamanic experience, the important point is that the experience does not take place with the shaman wearing his profane, everyday dress” (Eliade, 1964: 146). Victor Turner, examining the frequent nakedness of new shamanic initiates, took the interpretation even further. “The neophytes are likened to or treated as embryos, newborn infants, or sucklings by symbolic means which vary from culture to culture.... [T]hey have nothing. They have no status, property, insignia, secular clothing, rank, kinship position, nothing to demarcate them structurally from their fellows. Their condition is indeed the very prototype of sacred poverty.” He pointed out the dual symbolism of the liminal state of nakedness, “which is at once the mark of a newborn infant and a corpse prepared for burial” (Turner, 1964).

The use of hairstyles as indicators of participation in particular groups such as clans or age grades is known from several historic-period Indian groups, and was likely a standard cultural practice across North America. One particularly apt example comes from the Great Plains (Curtis, 1928, Pl. 640; Ewers, 1958: 172), where Blackfoot religious practitioners, the keepers of medicine pipes, would wrap a long braid into a coil atop the head as a sign of their position (Fig. 9).¹¹ The Winnebago use of hair locks worn long (“horns”) is reflected in the identification of mythic figures as “Blue Horn,” “Red Horn,” and “Two Horns” (Dieterle, 1999). The use of multiple strings of beads as necklaces and bands on arms and legs is well known from prehistoric Mississippian art, and shell beads as found in burials have long been interpreted as sumptuary items, although specific meanings as status indicators have not been clarified.

We therefore conclude that the posture and nakedness of the pipe

¹¹ Variants of the coiled braid or topknot, sometimes called a “horn,” can be found in many nineteenth-century portraits of shamans and warriors from the Great Plains. Among these are the George Catlin’s paintings of Tché-dee or Tobacco (Oglala), Eh-toh’k-pah-she-pée-shah or Black Moccasin (Hidatsa), and Mah-tó-che-ga or Little Bear (Hunkpapa), all of which reside at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and can be found on its web site (americanart.si.edu). Karl Bodmer’s portraits with these hairstyles include Pioch-Kiäiu (Piegan), Mexkemahuastan (Gros Ventres), and Niatohsa (Atsina); the first two are accessible on Wikipedia (commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Karl_Bodmer) and the last can be found in Allen (1989: Fig. 3.15). Also see Wied (1839: Atlas: Pl. 20) and Catlin (1841: Pls. 72, 273). We are grateful to Garrett Cummings and Winfield Coleman for bringing these images to our attention.

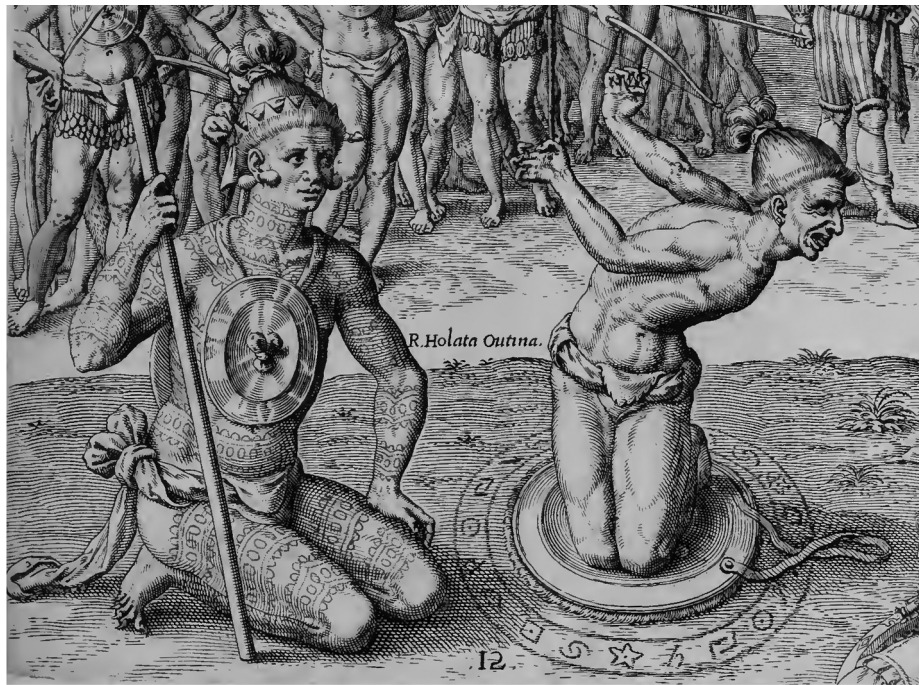


Fig. 8. A Timucua diviner (right) pictured in trance state discerning the location of the enemy (Milanich, 1996: 179; illustration from *Le Moyne de Morgues and de Bry*, 1591: pl. 12).

figures suggest connections with shamanic religious practices, and that their hair styles and beads would have indicated a recognizable character and role.

As to function, we are struck by several indications that part of the message may be about tobacco use itself. Europeans quickly became aware of the ritual use of the tobacco pipe in the form of the calumet. It should be noted, though, that they also observed shamanic use of smoking that was of a different nature from the greeting ritual. One instructive example was recorded by a French observer in the eighteenth century, and is particularly relevant to this study because it occurred in a Naniaba town on the Mobile River system just east of the LMV:

One day, arriving May third at the house of a man named Fine Teeth, chief of the Naniabas, returning from the Chicachas and being in need of tobacco, I asked some of this chief, who hunted in his chest where he had placed three twists in order to give me some, but could not find them. He thought it was I or some one of the French whom I had with me who had hidden it from him, but when he had learned that it was not, I saw him dress and daub himself as if he were going to a dance, after which, having gone to an open space a gunshot distant from the house, we saw him fill his pipe, strike the flint, light it, and smoke it with many gesticulations, as if he were disputing with someone. When he had smoked it half up it seemed to us that he gave it to someone else to smoke, without, however, our seeing anyone, except that he held his pipe at a distance from himself, and the smoke which came out in puffs (peletons) as if someone smoked it. He returned to us immediately and told us, all of a sweat, that he knew who had taken it, and continuing on toward a cabin opposite his own, whither I followed him, he sprang at the throat of a savage, demanding of him the three twists of tobacco which he had taken from him at such an hour in such a manner, in short explaining to him the method which he had employed in accomplishing his theft. The poor savage, all of a tremble, admitted his crime and returned his tobacco [Swanton, 1918: 62].

This account of smoking is probably best interpreted as a description of the technique of communicating with the tutelary spirit who

guides the shaman. The pipe is presented as a tool of divination.

Such use of the pipe by a shaman is almost certainly not the only function, however, because the relationship between shaman and Power must first be established before the pipe can be used to wield that power. The role of the figure on the pipes of this study is not clear, because, as already noted above, there are two very different treatments of the figure in relation to the bowl. In most of our pipes, the bowl arises from the body of the figure, who looks in the same direction as the smoker. In a few others, notably those with the pot-bearer theme, the figure faces the smoker and holds the pipe bowl as if supporting it or even offering it to the smoker. In either case, the figure is involved in the smoking activity, rather than simply being a decorative addition to a pipe.

The concept of a relation between the carved figure on the pipe and the human user of it has not escaped notice. Ted Brasser argued on the basis of Iroquoian and Algonkian ethnography that when the figure faces the user in a “self-directed” orientation, “a sort of magical duel went on,” one in which the two communicate and power and knowledge are transferred (Brasser, 1980: 95–96; von Gernet, 1995: 69). Alexander von Gernet’s study of Iroquoian smoking led him into a long-term project that produced a collection of all of the known ethnographic references and delineated a continental (or even hemispheric) smoking complex rooted in the most ancient forms of shamanic religion.

If the vestigial residues found in more recent times are any indication, the pre-horticultural ancestors of modern Iroquoians had a shamanistic ideology typical of hunter-gatherers throughout the continent. This ideology emphasized gaining access to a cosmos peopled with other-than-human beings and valued any means of either communicating with this cosmos, or being transformed into the powerful beings who inhabited it.... Among the most valued power-laden plants were narcotics and hallucinogens, since the ingestion of these appeared to facilitate the flights of the free soul, the traversing of boundaries between center, upper and lower realms, and the acquisition of the *orenda* required to assume the attributes of spirits, gods, and other potencies [von Gernet, 1992: 177–178].

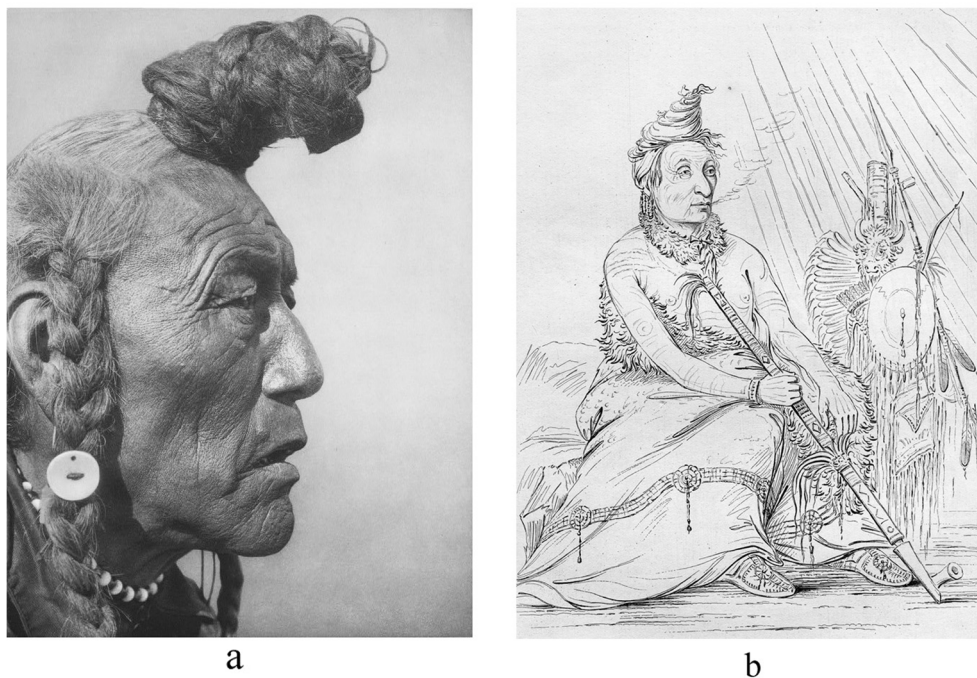


Fig. 9. Traditional hairstyles of Native pipe keepers from the Great Plains, with the distinctive coiled braid or “horn”: (a) Bear Bull, Blackfoot (Curtis, 1928: Pl. 640); (b) Black Moccasin, Hidatsa (Catlin, 1841: Pl. 72).

On the basis of “343 passages by nearly 100 eyewitnesses describing tobacco, smoking, or both among 50 different aboriginal groups” von Gernet (2000: 59) was able to conclude that all pre-1660 references to tobacco were to varieties of *Nicotiana rustica* (2000: 65)—a much more powerful form of tobacco than that commonly smoked today. The list of earliest references includes the Karankara of the Texas coast (observed by Cabeza de Vaca in 1528–1536), Carolina Siouans (1521–1526), Timucua (1564–1565), and Carolina Algonkians (1585–1586) (von Gernet, 2000: 61–63). The Texas case is of great interest to the present study because of its proximity to the LMV. An account of the 18th century Caddo on the western periphery of the LMV is also instructive, for prospective shamans were seen to “consume great quantities of tobacco,” which:

causes them to lose their senses, to make faces, and to fall upon the ground like drunken men. Here they remain either really senseless or pretending to be, for twenty-four hours, as if dead, until they decide to come to and begin to breathe. They then relate what they have dreamed or whatever their imagination suggests to them. They say that their souls were far from them [Hatcher, 1927: 167, cited in von Gernet, 2000: 176].

From the Caddo to the Mobilian accounts, the historical narratives reveal the LMV to be embedded in a context of what von Gernet and others have identified as an ancient prehistoric religious complex focused on smoking *N. rustica*, possibly mixed with other psychoactive substances (see Knight, 1975 for an ethnographic list).

Who, then, is the figure on the LMV pipes? If the pipes are for assistance in seeking a vision, the figure may represent either or both of two figures. On the one hand, the figure may be a divinity, for it appears that divinities are shown smoking pipes in other late prehistoric contexts (Fig. 10). The depicted figure is possibly a patron of such behavior, in which case the human smoker is establishing some sort of relationship with a tutelary “companion” or spirit power who is shown as the figure on the pipe. The other possibility is that the naked figure crouched in a ritual posture is himself a vision-seeker who has achieved a state of trance via ingestion of tobacco. The pipes with the crouching figure may depict the ritual posture appropriate for the supplicant,

modeling the way it is to be done.

These two possibilities, divinity versus vision-seeker, are not mutually exclusive, for the vision-seeker may be the culture hero who was responsible for the original relationship made with a Power by means of smoking. The distinction between a culture-hero and a divinity is conceptually ambiguous. In that case, the actual smoker may have been expected to re-enact the ritual portrayed by the figure, whether culture-hero or Power, perhaps even attempting to “become” the figure. The belief in transformation of the human shaman into a greater Power is common in the shamanistic sphere, and it is linked to “the notion that tobacco was an empowering substance which (during altered states of consciousness) made one feel, speak, and act like an other-than-human being” (von Gernet, 1992: 179).

In light of this idea, it is worth noting that one crouching-human pipe (Miss-Ja-P1) in our corpus has a small passage that leads from the bowl to the effigy’s mouth, so that the figure itself appears to smoke when the pipe is in use. Yet another pipe aptly called “The Smoker,” in a related style but not in our corpus, depicts a crouching human in the usual pose, but in this case smoking, through a long stem, a frog-effigy pipe that sits on the ground in front (Fig. 10; Brown, 1996: 2: Figs. 2–95). Both of these examples, each in a different way, suggest a recursive relationship between the pipe and its user, as if the latter is emulating the former. If this interpretation is correct, there should be an accompanying charter story recounting the discovery of this path to enlightenment by a culture hero of whatever status. The novice begins the journey, under apprenticeship to a master, by re-enacting this story.

How does this interpretation help explain the zoomorphic pipes that are part of the same artistic corpus? If they were part of the same shamanic religious system, the animal pipes may represent different paths to visions or perhaps to different levels of achievement. The zoomorphs are, in this view, Beneath-World deities to be encountered in personal vision experience, in successive journeys and with additional training. If so, the pipes associated with higher levels of shamanic achievement would have been used less often, and thus be fewer in number. The “monster” pipes comprising the panther-raptor-snake and owl-fish themes are indeed much less common than the crouching human or panther pipes. Victor Turner read these complex “monsters”

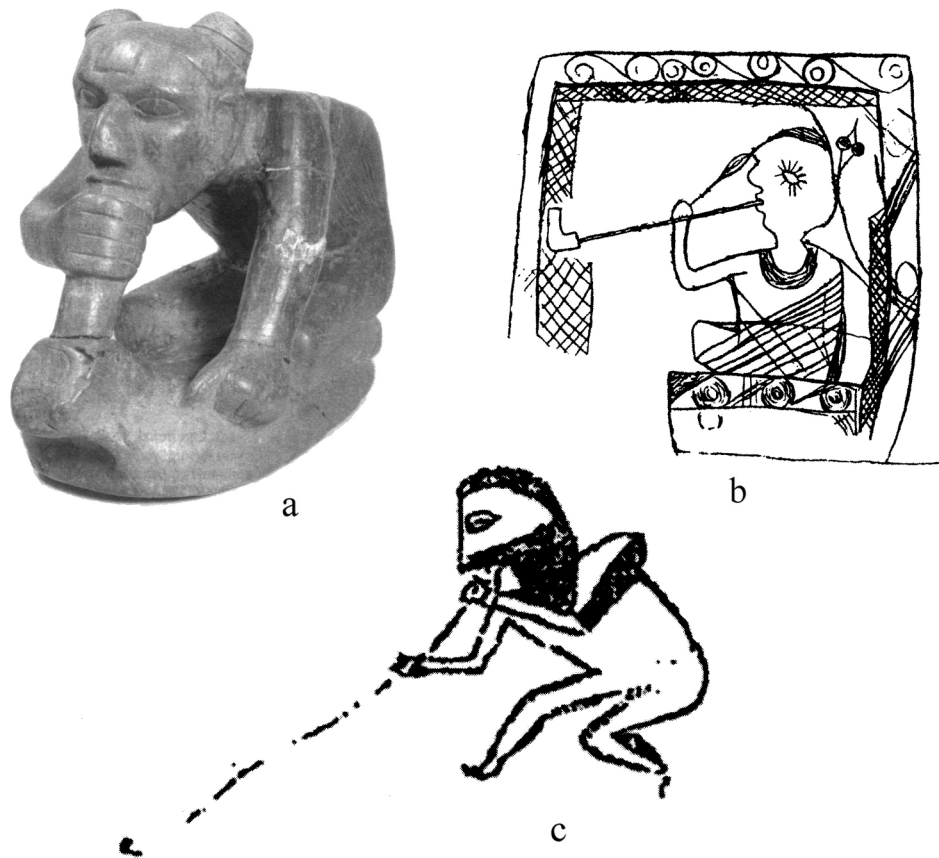


Fig. 10. Images of divinities smoking pipes: (a) effigy pipe from Spiro called “The Smoker” (after Brown, 1996: 2: Figs. 2-95); (b) engraving from the Thruston Tablet (after Steponaitis et al., 2011: Fig. 7.9); (c) pictograph from the Gottschall Rockshelter (after Salzer and Rajnovich, 2001: Fig. 23).

as instructional tools:

[M]onsters are manufactured precisely to teach neophytes to distinguish clearly between the different factors of reality, as it is conceived in their culture.... Elements are withdrawn from their usual settings and combined with one another in a totally unique configuration, the monster or dragon. Monsters startle neophytes into thinking about objects, persons, relationships, and features of their environment they have hitherto taken for granted [Turner, 1964: 172].

In this view, the combination of identifiers making up the “monster” pipes represents the sort of multi-power divinities who would together be patrons of only the most highly accomplished shamans. The Perrault cache with its different personae on similar pipes makes sense in this light, for the collection becomes not a set of alternatives, but a progression of power, perhaps signifying different levels of shamanic knowledge or achievement, such as those found among the Midewiwin, initiates of a powerful medicine society active in Siouan and Central Algonkian communities of the eastern Great Plains and western Great Lakes (Lankford, 2016: 76-79).

And how might the two most common themes—panther and crouching human—be related? The most striking thing that emerges in comparing these two themes is their parallelism in form. Both show figures in similar postures, ranging from a full to a half crouch (which in the panther’s case would be described as a “rearing up”). As previously noted, human and panther heads sometimes show very similar proportions, with the human’s hair coils substituting for the panther’s ears (or vice versa), and the human’s laryngeal ridge (on the front of the neck) substituting for the panther’s wattle.¹² Just as intriguing is a

panther (Miss-Ad-E5) with rear legs that look somewhat human (see Fig. 2a). This could, of course, be the result of careless carving, but in light of the other parallels it remains intriguing. Absent a pipe in our corpus that shows a more definitive mixture of human and feline traits, it is difficult to argue definitively that these parallels reflect ideas about shamanic transformation into spirit beings—a common feature of shamanic practice (VanPool, 2009)—but the hypothesis merits further study. And if a “smoking gun” to support this hypothesis were to appear, it would probably look very much like the image on the so-called Piasa gorget from Moundville, which shows a composite human-feline figure in a crouching posture not unlike that seen in our pipes (Fig. 11). This gorget was found in Alabama, but, as two of us recently noted, it seems stylistically “much more at home in the Mississippi Valley or parts west” (Knight and Steponaitis, 2011: 235).¹³

6. Production

Given the interpretations just set forth, we believe these pipes were not everyday objects, but rather spiritually powerful objects used by

(footnote continued)

human figures carved in stone that are found in Tennessee and Georgia (e.g., Smith and Miller, 2009: Figs. 3.6–3.8, 3.36, 4.2).

¹³ The only Mississippian effigy pipe of which we are aware that explicitly shows a human-animal combination—and perhaps a transformation—is the so-called “Half and Half” found at Spiro (Hamilton, 1952: 34, Pl. 8; Sievert and Rogers, 2011: Fig. 8.14). When viewed from the left, it appears as a crouching human with a hand resting on the knee. From the right, it looks like a raptor, with a wing and a taloned foot in place of the hand. The head is human in shape but lacks facial features and is adorned with a V-shaped incision that suggests a beak. It is carved in a style related to, but different from, Bellaire, and is made of limestone.

¹² Laryngeal ridges are also sometimes seen on Mississippian temple statues,

healers or priests. It is also clear that many of these objects—particularly the stone pipes assigned to the Bellaire style—were made by master carvers. We strongly suspect that these religious practitioners and master carvers were not the same people, and that the former obtained the pipes from the latter. Or, to put the matter somewhat differently, the religious system that demanded the pipes and the artistic system responsible for their manufacture were not necessarily congruent. Having just explored the former, we are now in a position to consider the latter.

Let us begin with the finely-crafted Bellaire pipes. The rarity of these pipes, the stability of the Bellaire canon, and the relatively high incidence among these pipes of sets made by the same hand, all suggest that the master carvers working in this style were few, perhaps concentrated in even fewer centers of production. These carvers favored distinctive raw materials, usually limestones and sandstones, which were sometimes obtained from distant sources.

A closer look at the relationships among themes, raw materials, and individual hands seen in our Bellaire corpus provides valuable clues as to how this system of production was structured. The pipes show a clear correlation between theme and raw material (Table 5). Panthers were almost always made of limestone, while anthropomorphs and pot effigies were usually (but not always) made of sandstone. One possible explanation is that different artists specialized in different themes and preferred to work with different materials. A second possibility, not inconsistent with the first, is that the certain raw materials had symbolic connotations that led to their choice for particular themes.

It is also of interest to note that we have at least one case in which pipes carved by the same artist, with the same theme (panther), were made of limestones that came from very different, widely separated sources (Steponaitis and Dockery, 2014). One was made of Glendon Limestone from around Vicksburg, Mississippi, while the other was carved from a Paleozoic limestone that may have come from western Arkansas, eastern Oklahoma, or even farther regions to the north and west. So it is clear that this artist's materials were not always confined to a single source, or even to a single region.

How do we explain these patterns? In a previous paper dealing with the two pipes just described, one of us proposed a working model that we still find plausible when applied to the Bellaire corpus as a whole:

[A] religious practitioner who needed a pipe would commission one from a well-known carver. In some cases, the practitioner would also supply the material to be used—a rock that had spiritual power, perhaps obtained as a result of a vision or in a place that had otherworldly connections. Indeed, outcrops of Glendon Limestone may well have had such connections (Steponaitis and Dockery, 2011: 354). The secluded ravines with pools of water where this rock could be found were exactly the kinds of places the Underwater Panther was known to inhabit. And not far downstream from the Glendon outcrops along the Mississippi River was a giant, standing whirlpool that the French described in the eighteenth century; such whirlpools and any kind of turbulent water were considered hallmarks of this supernatural being. Perhaps the Paleozoic limestone in the Gilcrease panther came from a similar, but much more distant place [Steponaitis and Dockery, 2014: 44–45].

As support for this model we can add a particularly good ethno-historical example of a spiritually powerful pipe being commissioned in this way. In 1792, a U.S. government interpreter named James Carey wrote a letter describing an episode in which a Cherokee leader, having learned that an important war pipe had been destroyed, reacted as follows:

He then requested the Warrior's Son, the Standing Turkey, and the Half Breed, to go to a pipemaker, who lived about twenty miles from Estanaula, and have a pipe made, as near like that which was destroyed as possible, that he might have it to show to the Northwards, whom he daily expected at the Lower towns [Blount, 1832: 327].

We suspect that the master carvers who worked in the Bellaire style were very much like the “pipemaker” in this account.

What, then, do we make of the pipes in our corpus that were not part of the Bellaire group, but which are assigned to our so-called “individual” styles? These pipes point to a very different system of production which was more widely dispersed and less technically competent. These idiosyncratic pipes often mirrored the themes seen in the finely-crafted examples, but were poorly made and typically relied on the more common, locally available raw materials, such as pottery, quartzite cobbles, and sandstone. We suspect this system was more localized and played out in a manner akin to Sahlin's (1972) “domestic mode of production,” that is, people making pipes for themselves or their neighbors. Beyond that, little more can be said.

7. Concluding thoughts

There can now be little doubt that the LMV was home to a considerably body of representational art during Mississippian times. In redefining the Bellaire style, we have now recognized a distinctive group of effigy pipes that were native to the southern LMV and were very much embedded in a broader set of artistic themes and religious practices that spanned the Eastern Woodlands. Along with the recently recognized Holly Bluff style from the northern LMV (Knight et al., 2017), we now have two distinctive representational styles tied to this area, and future research is likely to reveal more.

One might wonder why it took so long for archaeologists to recognize these styles and associate them with the LMV. One reason, and perhaps the major one, is the absence of any “blockbuster” sites in this area where examples of this art were concentrated. It is no accident that the Moundville, Spiro, and Etowah sites played such a major role in the definition of what was once called the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex. Each produced a large and impressive corpus of Mississippian imagery which provided grist for the archaeologists' mill. But it took a long time for archaeologists to realize that the art at each of these sites was a complex palimpsest of objects that originated in different places—i.e., that not all were local to the place where they were found. And it is only in recent years that detailed stylistic and geochemical studies have started to sort these palimpsests into different regional styles (e.g., Townsend and Sharp, 2004; Reilly and Garber, 2007; Lankford et al., 2011). There seem to be no large Mississippian cemeteries or mortuaries in the southern LMV, and large-scale excavations, even during the Great Depression, were few and far between. As a result, the pipes described in our study were scattered across dozens of sites, many of which are poorly known and unpublished. All this made the size and stylistic coherence of the corpus difficult to see.

We believe the effigy-pipe complex in the LMV was connected with shamanic practices, and that these practices were oriented largely toward the Beneath World. The prominence of the Underwater Panther in this corpus points clearly in this direction, as does the presence of Piasa-like monsters with the attributes of snakes, cats, fish, and birds of prey. While birds, of course, may connote the Above World, it is surely significant that almost all of our representations with avian features are either monstrous, Beneath-World hybrids like those just described, or marked with symbols that have strong Beneath-World connections. For example, the hawks depicted on both pipes assigned to our raptor theme have trilobates prominently displayed on their heads. On shell artifacts from Spiro, trilobates are associated with snakes (Phillips and Brown, 1978: 156). And while some of the Bellaire style's themes, like the crouching human and pot bearer, commonly appear on pipes of many different styles from across the Mississippian world, the panther and its monstrous relatives do not. Rather, when rendered in the form of pipes they seem to be a regional specialty, made almost exclusively by the Bellaire carvers.

This Beneath-World emphasis, while distinctive, is not unique. The Hemphill style, centered at Moundville to the east, shows a corresponding preoccupation with Beneath-World imagery, albeit one that is



Fig. 11. Comparison of panther and human-like imagery: (a) panther pipe from Emerald (Miss-Ad-E5); (b) Piasa gorget from Moundville (after Moore, 1907: Fig. 98).

Table 5
Themes by style and raw material.

Theme	Limestone	Sandstone	Fluorite	Pottery	Quartzite	Unknown Stone
<i>Bellaire Style:</i>						
Panther	13	–	1	–	–	1
Crouching human	5	2	–	3	–	1
Pot bearer	–	2	–	–	–	–
Pot	1	4	–	1	–	–
Raptor	2	1	–	–	–	–
Raptor on human	2	–	–	–	–	–
Panther-raptor-snake	2	–	–	–	–	–
Owl-fish	1	–	–	–	–	–
	26	9	1	4	0	2
<i>Individual Styles:</i>						
Panther	–	1	–	1	–	–
Crouching human	–	1	–	1	2	–
Pot bearer	1	–	–	1	–	–
Pot	1	1	–	–	–	–
Quadruped	–	3	–	1	–	–
Frog	–	1	–	1	–	–
	2	7	0	5	2	0

focused on different themes (Knight and Steponaitis, 2011), as does the Holly Bluff style to the north (Knight et al., 2017). Both contrast sharply with yet other styles from even farther east, such as Hightower and Williams Island, which emphasize imagery associated with the Middle or Above Worlds (King, 2011; Steponaitis et al., 2011: 173). These similarities and contrasts hint at broader religious patterns among Mississippian peoples in the ancient American South that are gradually coming into view and will continue to be refined as studies of style, geological sourcing, and iconography proceed.

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