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DAILY LIFE ALONG the Mississippi

GEORGE S. PABIS

The Greenwood Press "Daily Life Through History" Series

Daily Life in the United States
Randall Miller, Series Editor

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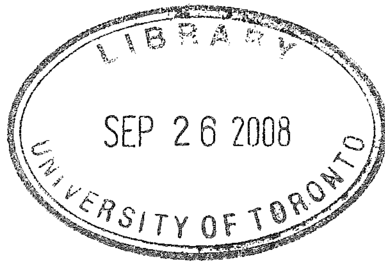

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Contents

Series Foreword vii
Acknowledgments ix
Chronology xi
Introduction 1
1. Life along the Mississippi before 1492 9
2. Native Americans, 1541–1881 27
3. Life in the Colonial Era 47
4. Rural Life during the Antebellum Era 75
5. Transportation and Urban Life in the Antebellum Era 97
6. Life during the Civil War 123
7. Life during Reconstruction, 1865–1900 141
8. 1900–1945 161
9. Life along the Mississippi, 1945–2005 183
Glossary 203
Selected Bibliography 209
Index 227

Chronology

9500 B.C.E.	Paleolithic people using the Clovis point hunted in the upper Mississippi River.
8500 B.C.E.	The Early Archaic or Dalton people hunted and lived in small settlements along the Mississippi River.
2000 B.C.E.	Archaic people living in villages buried their dead with ceremonial and personal items.
1200 B.C.E.	The ceremonial site of Poverty Point in Louisiana prospered.
600 B.C.E.	Natives cultivated squash and gourds along the Mississippi River. The Woodland people used clay pots and buried their dead in mounds in the Ohio Valley.
500 B.C.E.	Poverty Point site was abandoned.
100 B.C.E.	A woodland site in Marksville, Louisiana flourished.
600 C.E.	Late Woodland peoples built a thriving community at Koster site in Illinois. People first settled in the American Bottom near the Mississippi across from present-day St. Louis. The cultivation of corn became more common. Effigy Mound people settled in what today is Minnesota.
1000	Cahokia emerged as the largest Native America settlement in North America.

1200	Cahokia declined.
1250	Beans became a staple in the diet of Native Americas.
1300	Oneota people lived in villages along the upper Mississippi. The Dakota organized into a federation known as the People of the Seven Council fires.
1541	A Spanish expedition under Hernando De Soto wreaked havoc to native settlements along the lower Mississippi.
1670	The Dakota began trading directly with the French.
1673	The Quapaw at the mouth of the Arkansas River greeted the French explorers Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet.
1699	The French made contact with the Tunica. French missionaries settled at Cahokia.
1700	The French built Fort Boulaye on the Mississippi River.
1706	Tunica was forced to move because of attacks from the English and the Chickasaw.
1717	Beginning of mass migration of 7,000 Europeans to Louisiana.
1718	French established the city of New Orleans.
1719	A flood devastated New Orleans.
1722	New Orleans became the capital of the French colony of Louisiana.
1724	French Black Code defined the status of black slaves in the colony.
1729	Natchez tribe wiped out a French settlement at Fort Rosalie. In retaliation, a French force eliminated the Natchez as an organized tribe.
1731	Arkansas Post became a permanent French settlement near the mouth of the Arkansas River.
1752	A census showed 23 individuals living in Ste. Genevieve, the first permanent French settlement on the west bank of the Mississippi River.
1757	After being expelled from Nova Scotia, the first Arcadians arrived in Louisiana.
1763	The Spanish took control of the colony of Louisiana. Black slaves outnumbered white colonists. Pierre Laclede Ligueste chose a site for St. Louis.
1779	A hurricane devastated New Orleans.
1788	A major fire wiped out 800 homes in New Orleans.
1790	With less than a hundred people in the tribe, the Tunica left the Mississippi River and established themselves in Marksville, Louisiana along the Red River.
1794	Eli Whitney patented a cotton gin.
1795	Slave rebellion in Point Coupee was brutally suppressed.
1803	The United States acquired the colony of Louisiana from Napoleon.
1812	The first steamboat plied the waters of the Mississippi River.
1815	High-pressure engines replaced low-pressure engines on steamboats.
1818	The U.S. government forced the Quapaw to cede some of their land.
1819	The U.S. government built Fort Snelling at the confluence of the Minnesota River and the Mississippi River.
1832	After the Black Hawk War, the U.S. government forced land cessions from the Sauk and the Mesquakie along the Mississippi River.
1839	The Quapaw were forced to move from Arkansas to the Quapaw Reservation in what is today Oklahoma. Joseph Smith founded the Mormon city of Nauvoo along the Mississippi River.
1841	The city of St. Paul was founded in Minnesota.
1844	A mob murdered Joseph Smith.
1846	Brigham Young led the majority of Mormans out of Nauvoo to Utah.
1849	Two fires devastated St. Louis.
1852	Louisiana's legislature forbade the freeing of slaves by their masters.
1858	Under pressure, the Dakota ceded all their lands along the Mississippi River to the U.S. government.
1861	The Civil War began.
1862	New Orleans surrendered to Union forces without a fight. A Dakota attack killed 500 settlers in Minnesota.
1863	Vicksburg surrendered after a long siege.

1865	The Civil War ended. The defeated Southern states passed Black Codes to restrict the newly freed slaves.
1866	The U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act and the Freedmen's Bureau Act. A white mob attacked black delegates to the state convention in Louisiana.
1867	Congressional Reconstruction began.
1873	In St. Louis, Anheuser Company became to first brewery to distribute its beer nationally.
1874	A racist organization called the White League battled black policemen in the streets of New Orleans. The Eads Bridge linked St. Louis with the railroads of the east.
1877	The Compromise of 1877 ended Congressional Reconstruction. The Great Railroad Strike shut down rail transportation.
1878	An outbreak of yellow fever killed 4,000 people in New Orleans and 6,000 people in Memphis. The U.S. Congress authorized improvements to the upper Mississippi to create a minimum 4.5 foot channel.
1896	The Supreme Court case, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, legitimized segregation.
1900	The beginning of the so-called golden age of farming in the Midwest, which would come to an end in 1918. Minneapolis was the flour capital of the world. Jim Crow laws spread throughout the Southern states.
1904	World's Fair was held in St. Louis.
1912	The Krewe of Zulu staged its first parade during Mardi Gras in New Orleans.
1914	World War I began.
1917	The United States entered World War I. Passage of the Espionage Act of 1917, Enemy Act of 1917, and Sedition Act of 1918 brought government repression against immigrants of German descent.
1918	The United States and its allies won World War I.
1927	One of the worst floods in history hit the lower Mississippi.
1929	The Great Depression began.
1935	The governor of Louisiana, Huey Long, was assassinated. The first sugar harvesters appeared.
1938	The U.S. government took away tribal recognition from the Tunica.
1939	World War II began in Europe and revitalized the U.S. economy.
1945	The first of the baby-boomers were born.
1954	U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* declared that racially segregated schools were not equal.
1964	Civil rights movement's Freedom Summer took place in Mississippi. Civil Rights Act banned discrimination in public areas, education, and employment.
1965	Voting Rights Act made it illegal to require tests of voters. Herbicides and mechanical pickers were common in cotton fields. Hurricane Betsy flooded St. Bernard Parish in Louisiana.
1968	Assassination of Martin Luther King in Memphis set off race riots across the country.
1981	The U.S. government recognized the Tunica-Biloxi tribe.
1991	New Orleans' city government desegregated Carnival during Mardi Gras.
1993	The upper Mississippi flooded 20 million acres of land.
2001	Mississippi River flooded areas in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.
2005	Hurricane Katrina flooded a large portion of New Orleans, and hundreds of thousands of people were left homeless.

Introduction

No other place along the Mississippi River embodies the history of the people who have lived and worked beside its waters better than Jackson Square in New Orleans. The statue of Andrew Jackson gazing upon such buildings as St. Louis Cathedral, the Presbytere, and the Cabildo reminds us that the French, Spanish, British, and Americans arrived here as conquerors and attempted to make this river and its fertile, alluvial soil their own. Native Americans who lived along the river had to grapple with this onslaught and carve out a new world for themselves or face extermination or removal. Yet, the magnificence of these monuments in New Orleans is dwarfed by a startling fact on the opposite side of the square. A steamboat seemingly floats high above ground level, just beyond a hill. A climb to the top of the levee solves the mystery: it is springtime and the muddy waters of the Mississippi River rush relentlessly past, several feet above the rooftops of one-story buildings in low-lying areas of the city. The levee and the city of New Orleans represent the precarious triumph of humanity over nature, but only as long as the next great flood doesn't sweep it all away. The steamboat is also a symbolic relic of an era when hundreds of them docked in the wharves that lined this section of the river. This most legendary symbol of the commercial prosperity of the region has today been relegated to serving tourists who walk along a park-like riverfront, which not too long ago bristled with sweaty dockworkers and bales of cotton. The diesel-powered ocean-going vessels that pass by are a testimony that the river continues to play its timeless role as

a commercial highway and New Orleans remains a major port that links the United States to the rest of the world.

Yet, the river itself draws the attention of anyone walking along the levee. Nearly two hundred feet deep at this point, the Mississippi's strong current testifies to the power of nature. The sediment floating within its waters comes from as far away as New York, Virginia, New Mexico, Montana, and Canada. Water from a land area encompassing 41 percent of the continental United States drains into the Mississippi; only the Amazon and Congo Rivers drain a larger land area. At flood stage, 1.2 million gallons of water traveling at eighteen miles per hour pass by New Orleans each second. Even at low water, it would be foolhardy to think that one could swim across it. Despite our efforts to control and harness it, the river still runs wild.

Mark Twain called the Mississippi River and its adjacent lands "the body of the nation."[1] Similarly, Stephen Ambrose and Douglas Brinkley believed that the river "does not divide the United States in half but rather draws the country together, that it is the spine of America."[2] Because the Ohio, Missouri, and hundreds of other rivers link up with the Mississippi, the histories of the North and South, East and West come together here. "It pulses," John Barry has written, "like the artery of the American heartland."[3] The major historical currents that have shaped the story of North America were played out along this river, and so too the mosaic of day-to-day events that make up people's lives. The Mississippi River and the people who lived along it impacted each other. Jonathan Raban eloquently expressed the sentiments of many who have experienced the Mississippi, when he described it as "big and depthless as the sky itself."[4] The same can be said of the dynamic history of the people who made the river their home.

This book explores the history of the daily life of people who have lived and worked along the Mississippi River. No one to date has attempted a social and material history of the people along the entire Mississippi River that reaches from the era of Native American settlement to modern times. Drawing on the recent work of scholars, and the writings and observations of many who lived and worked along the river over several centuries, this study is a comprehensive look at the rhythms of life, the interests and activities that shaped people's everyday experiences. It is also an extension of the thought-provoking scholarship that has preceded this work. Ultimately, its purpose is not only to inform, but also to guide readers to examine the secondary and primary sources for themselves so they can further their understanding of the river and its people.

A host of related forces has shaped the daily lives of individuals along the Mississippi. The first and the most obvious is the environment, particularly the river. The Mississippi River ecosystem includes the water flowing in the channel; the water that used to flow in the channel but now forms lakes and swamps along it; the sediment deposited by floods to form alluvial lands; and the land sculpted by the water to create the channel, islands, bluffs, and other geological formations. The river attracted a host of plants, animals, insects, and fish, which in turn lured human beings to take advantage of its rich natural resources. And the fact that the water in the channel moves and is connected to a network of other rivers and bayous has allowed human beings to utilize the river as a source of transportation. Since 9500 B.C.E., people have exploited these natural resources. Of course, there is a price to be paid for this abundance. Floods create rich alluvial lands, but they also destroy, and the worst floods can be devastating. Lowlands and swampy areas along the river are perfect hosts to swarms of mosquitoes that spread diseases like malaria and yellow fever.

The second factor impacting the lives of people along the Mississippi is technology. One way archaeologists characterize prehistoric periods is by their technological development. Although there is a debate about the exact periodization, prehistoric Native American cultures can be divided into the following general categories: Paleolithic, Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian. Each of these periods had technological advances in toolmaking, food-production, and construction of buildings and ceremonial centers. The arrival of Europeans changed the technological dynamic. Native Americans wanted to utilize the new technology that Europeans possessed and traded with them in order to make their lives easier, give status to their chiefs, build kinship alliances with their neighbors, and protect themselves against their enemies. In exchange for furs, Native Americans often received guns, powder, flints, axes, knives, blankets, glass beads, and kettles. Over time, technological change drastically altered the lives of the American conquerors as well. The invention of the cotton gin fueled the expansion of the cotton empire and the institution of slavery in the South. Steamboats superseded the keelboats, but then they were eventually displaced by the arrival of the railroads and diesel-powered barges. These transportation revolutions fueled the economy, and the greater access to markets affected the lives of every person on the river. Great urban centers such as New Orleans, Memphis, St. Louis, St. Paul, and Minneapolis arose along its banks. Each was a link in a natural highway system that includes such tributaries as the Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, and Arkansas rivers. Enterprising capitalists found this transportation network ideal, and industry flourished along the river. Industrialization brought cheap consumer goods to millions of households and raised their standard of living. To protect these investments, the technology of flood control and navigation improvements evolved.

But there are limits to technology. The very steamboats that brought such prosperity to the region also killed thousands of people in accidents. Steamboats spurred the growth of the cotton kingdom in the South, which only entrenched the institution of slavery. As one technology superseded another, jobs were lost and the character of life changed, not always for the better. The rapid expansion of industry brought thousands of high paying

jobs to the region, but pollution made the region between Baton Rouge and New Orleans a toxic nightmare. Flood control structures were prone to failure, as the flood of 1993 on the middle regions of the river demonstrated when it wiped out 55,000 homes. Improving the navigation of the upper river with dams changed the low-water ecosystem, which interfered with the spawning of many species of fish. As the United States moved into a post-industrial era, many of the industries that provided jobs left the area. Cities and small towns have struggled to find new opportunities.

Economic change is the third factor that influences the lives of people along the Mississippi. Fur traders were the vital link between the Native American and the transatlantic economies. A frontier economy developed where neither the Europeans nor the Native Americans had the military edge, which forced both sides to depend on each other. The trade caused strife as tribes competed over hunting lands to supply the European market with furs and establish kinship relationships with one European power or another to maintain the supply of valuable gifts and goods. But a new threat arose when the United States took control of the river after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. The settlers replaced gift-giving with a credit system that put Native Americans in debt, which could only be paid off by land cession. Indian removal during Andrew Jackson's administration in the 1820s put an end to significant Native American participation in the southern economy along the lower and middle river. By 1851 the Eastern Dakotas gave the United States sole possession of the upper river.

The need to satisfy the domestic and international demand for agricultural products shaped the daily work life of American farmers, planters, slaves, and sharecroppers. Laborers on keelboats, steamboats, railroads, and tugboats made their living moving these products to transit and distribution points, which became the towns and cities along the Mississippi. Racism shaped this market economy, especially on the lower Mississippi. With a few exceptions, slavery and later the Jim Crow laws created a segregated world of work, limiting the opportunities for African Americans. Although a black middle and upper class existed in New Orleans and other cities, their opportunities for economic advancement were severely restricted. Not surprisingly, some African Americans used the Mississippi to flee to the North in a massive wave in the early twentieth century. Similarly, gender boundaries limited the economic opportunities of women along the entire Mississippi. Despite this discrimination, a few women managed to forge an economic identity, especially in the booming cities and towns along the river. Everywhere, the difference between owners and those who worked for them was real. Most workers faced the fickleness of a cyclical market economy, and when the country fell into depression, workers and their families faced terrible hardships. After 1945 industrial development along the lower river provided employment opportunities for people at the cost of environmental deterioration and negative health risks.

The history of the rural economy is central to the story of the Mississippi because the river links the agricultural heartland of the United States with the rest of the world. The cultivation of crops was a vital component of the Native American household economy, and even more so when many tribes attempted to adapt to the European and American pressures for assimilation. But as Americans took political control of the area, a new agricultural economy arose. In Louisiana south of New Orleans, sugar became the staple crop. The alluvial lands north of New Orleans all the way to Memphis provided the foundation for a plantation economy with cotton as its chief product. Impressive plantation houses attested to the wealth of the region, but behind these mansions, the slave quarters and later the sharecroppers' huts bore witness that prosperity came from exploiting the back-breaking work of African Americans. After the Civil War, social and legal discrimination trapped many blacks in an unwelcome servitude. Falling cotton prices caused a slide into debt that few sharecroppers could avoid, and many black and white farmers tumbled into tenancy behind them. In contrast, on the upper Mississippi yeomen farmers created a thriving agricultural system based on wheat and corn. European immigrants flocked to these bountiful lands to the river north of Memphis and set up farms. The daily lives of all these people were tied to the rhythms of the seasons, the advances of technology, and the fluctuating market prices of the agricultural products.

Another factor shaping the daily life along the Mississippi was community: the agglomeration of social ties that bound individuals to everyone else. Native Americans based their societies on kinship ties that extended to outsiders through the exchanges of gifts and creation of fictive relationships. In most native societies, the chief was never more than a figurehead who took care of his people by distributing food and goods to those submitting to his authority. For the American conquerors, homes, churches, schools, courthouses, county stores, and taverns were places where people met and formed social bonds that enforced or resisted race, class, and gender boundaries. The family was the central entity for establishing identity, raising children, and ensuring the economic survival of its members. The education of children was a constant struggle for the lower classes, but disenfranchisement of African Americans made matters worse. The river provided for families, but it could take everything away in a flood, and it often did.

Ethnicity was also a key feature in people's lives. Immigrants to the Mississippi Valley brought with them ethnic traditions and languages that intermixed with native customs. The struggle to maintain the so-called old ways in the face of assimilation defined generations of immigrants. Thousands of Irish laborers were employed to work on levees. Jews settled in cities along the river and forged distinctive communities. After the Civil War, over a thousand Italians moved to the Mississippi-Yazoo Delta in a failed experiment in which planters attempted to encourage European

immigrants to live as sharecroppers. Along the upper Mississippi, German and Scandinavian immigrants bought farms and prospered. Each ethnic community left its imprint on the history of the Mississippi River.

Culture is the last piece of the puzzle. In this study, culture refers to the kaleidoscope of intellectual constructs that played the duel role of justifying and reinforcing power relationships, but at the same time making the lives of people richer, deeper, and more rewarding. Race, gender, religion, and class molded every aspect of the daily lives of individuals, families, and communities along the Mississippi River. Race bound the lives of whites and blacks and defined their interaction with the rest of society. Within this framework, blacks over time created an identity for themselves and formed a world in which they could survive with dignity in an oppressive social and political arena. Similarly, gender defined the boundaries of what was acceptable in daily life. Within Native American and European societies, patriarchal systems were in place, but there were significant differences. For example, Native American women cultivated the fields. In contrast, until the twentieth century, European and white American women were generally placed in subordinate positions in terms of market forces. Despite these limits, women shaped meaningful lives in the households, and in myriad community and religious concerns, and many women fought to expand their influence beyond the limits proscribed by the men in power. Class refers to the economic power that comes from the control of the resources and technology that create wealth. Along the Mississippi River, there was the struggle between master and slave, the poor farmer and planter, industrialist and worker, and landlord and tenant farmer or sharecropper. Another vital component of culture is religion. Birth, life, and death made sense to people when they turned to their religious beliefs. Most importantly, religion provided the moral and ethical framework that molded every human interaction.

If you leave New Orleans and head up River Road that runs along the eastern bank of the Mississippi toward Baton Rouge, you will be startled by the inequities among the people living along the river. Inhabited broken-down shacks stand within eyesight of massive petrol-chemical plants. Historic mansions that have been converted to museums greet visitors, but so do the odors of chemical fumes. Pollution has been detrimental to the health of people along the river, causing many to question the long-term benefits of industrialization and the use of chemicals in agriculture. While the upper Mississippi appears to be deceptively tame because dams have slowed the current, the middle and lower Mississippi River still pose a danger to rich and poor. After the flood of 1993, the federal government provided funding for eight thousand households to leave the alluvial banks on the middle river so the river can reclaim its alluvial lands and reduce the pressure on the lower river during flood time. In 2005 Hurricane Katrina refocused national attention on the relationship of the Mississippi River and the wetlands that protect the coast. With every rain, people all along the river check the news for the latest gauge reading of the Mississippi's height, in anticipation of the next great flood. The lives of people along the river and the seasonal rhythms of the Mississippi are forever linked.

NOTES

1. Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi* (New York: New American Library, 2001), v.
2. Stephen E. Ambrose, Douglas G. Brinkley, and Sam Abell, *The Mississippi and the Making of a Nation: From the Louisiana Purchase to Today* (Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2002), 3.
3. John M. Barry, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 21.
4. Jonathan Raban, *Old Glory: A Voyage Down the Mississippi*, Vintage Departure Edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 11.

1

Life along the Mississippi before 1492

More than eleven thousand years ago, the first Native Americans hunted along the banks of the Mississippi to take advantage of the natural bounty of the river. The alluvial lands along the banks provided a rich habitat for plants and animals and the waters of the river supplied natives with fish and other aquatic animals. The river also served as a transportation network for trade and the maintenance of kinship ties. Over time, Native American cultures borrowed ideas and technology from one another. Each culture was characterized by ever more sophisticated tools, social organization, religious ceremony, and a greater capacity for exploiting the environment. By 1000 C.E., Native Americans were planting fields of corn along the Mississippi River and thousands of people lived in a huge ceremonial center at Cahokia, just across from present-day St. Louis. However, excessive use of the forests and fields around Cahokia led to an environmental depletion that weakened the most impressive society that the natives of North America ever produced. The struggle between humanity and nature was already thousands of years old by the time Europeans entered the Mississippi Valley.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE RIVER

Imagine the Mississippi River before human beings changed it. Think of it without modern cities, towns, plantations, and farms lining its banks. No barges, steamboats, or keelboats traversed its waters. No artificial levees, dams, or bridges manipulated its channel. The river began as a tiny stream

at Lake Itasca, but tributaries added their water to the main channel. Near present-day St. Paul, Minnesota, the river flowed over a cliff that was once 175 feet high and 2,700 feet across. The melting of snow and heavy rainfall in the spring months caused the river to overflow its banks and deposit silt that built up over time to create natural levees. Sometimes these levees were strong enough to resist the next flood and sometimes they were swept away. Fish spawned in the flooded areas, and waterfowl searched for food. Over the centuries, the river meandered and changed its channel, and in the process it sculpted the land and created new islands, lakes, and bluffs. During the most severe floods, the river expanded into a temporary fresh water sea that spread out over hundreds of square miles.

A seemingly endless cycle of high water and low water marked the seasons. Deciduous forests, prairies, and swampy areas lined its banks. River after river joined the Mississippi, making the waters deeper and the current stronger. When the clear waters of the Ohio River mixed with the muddy waters of the Mississippi, the river entered the Lower Valley. As the Arkansas and the Yazoo rivers added their waters to the channel, the Mississippi channel became a torrent of power. The river's current was calmer near its edges, but in the center of the channel, the force of the river swept everything away. Floating branches and logs went by where the Mississippi had caved in a bank and undermined the roots of trees. The Mississippi drained a portion of its waters into bayous in what today is Louisiana. At the mouth of the river, no jetties confined the channel, which meant that the force of the current was slowed down as the waters of the Mississippi broke company and spread over three wide passes, dropping sediment in the process. By the time the river reached the Gulf of Mexico, it resembled a broad lake of freshwater with hundreds of islands.

THE PALEOLITHIC AGE

The first humans moved into the Mississippi River Valley just as the last Ice Age neared its end around 9500 B.C.E. Archeologists call them the Paleolithic or the Clovis people for the fluted stone projectiles they used on their spears. Through the fog of time, we have to admit that we know almost nothing about them. They left neither dwellings nor campsites along the banks of the river, and the flooding of the river probably erased any trace of their presence long ago. We can only guess that they lived a nomadic existence as small bands of gatherers and hunters, building only temporary shelters as they migrated sometimes in search of game animals, sometimes in search of better foraging prospects. Since the Ice Age was nearing its end and most of the giant mammals of that era had already become extinct, the Clovis people hunted the diverse number of species that existed in the river valley environment, especially white-tailed deer. What archeologists know about Paleolithic people comes from the technology they left behind at their animal kill sites. They used chipped

stones to scrape clean the hides of animals and cut the meat. For hunting, they used a spear with a stone fluted point, the Clovis, tied to a straight wooden stick. At the kill sites, archeologists have also found other tools made out of wood, and baskets and nets made out of plant fiber. Although no Clovis bone or ivory tools have been found in the Mississippi Valley, we know that such items were widely used in other regions of North America.

What archeologists find at the kill sites tells us almost nothing about Paleolithic society along the Mississippi. Since the Clovis point was used throughout North America and only certain rocks in particular geographic regions were used to make them, the Clovis people must have engaged in some form of exchange to acquire the necessary raw materials for tool making. Most likely, the Clovis people lived in bands of 25 related members. Marriage with the women of other bands prevented inbreeding and also created marriage alliances with neighbors. Surely, they were excellent hunters who understood the behavior of their prey and moved with herds of animals. There is no evidence to suggest that women, especially those without children, were not hunters as well. And women with children may have hunted small animals with snares and nets. Women cleaned the dead animals and most likely would have had to sharpen the Clovis scrapers when they became dull. As Elizabeth S. Chilton writes, "when we can imagine a life of smoky campfires, turtle soup, wild grapes, crying babies, dreams of the hunt, and a variety of social tensions and diversions, we have made one small step toward understanding the lives of Paleo-Indians."[1]

THE ARCHAIC PERIOD

By 8500 B.C.E., the Clovis point disappeared for reasons unknown. Instead, people along the river began using the Dalton point, an unfluted projectile that could be resharpened several times and used as a hunting weapon, a serrated knife, or a saw. For the next 1,500 years in a period known as the Early Archaic or Dalton, significant technological and social changes affected daily life. The general drying of the climate, which archaeologists call the Hypsithermal, strained the natural resources of upland areas and forced people to migrate into the river valleys. Unlike the Clovis people, Dalton people lived in more stable settlements. There are at least a thousand sites in the Central Mississippi Valley alone, most in the Arkansas lowlands north of what today is Memphis. The population of the area increased dramatically, and the Dalton peoples lived in small bands of 20 to 50 people. About three hundred people resided in the Central Valley of the Mississippi River at any given time. For their prey, these hunters focused exclusively on smaller animals such as deer, raccoons, squirrels, and rabbits. They also gathered nuts, fruits, and edible plants. Religious and cultural changes were occurring because they were burying their dead in a cemetery near their settlement. The Dalton people used the adz,

a tool to trim and smooth wood and house timbers and carve out wooden utensils, as well as bowls, dugout canoes, and grave markers. They also used end scrapers, awls for making holes in wood, bone needles, edged-abraded cobbles for chopping, and grooved abraders.

During the Middle and Late Archaic Period, from 7000 B.C.E. to 600 B.C.E., the total population of Native Americans grew and settlements became larger. Along the American Bottom, which is just north of the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers in the area of today's St. Louis, native peoples lived in four different types of sites: base locales, base camps, residential extractive camps, and extractive locations. The least common were the base locales, which were permanent settlements that covered many acres of land and contained clusters of dwellings, areas for specialized work, and cemeteries. Base camps were smaller and more common. Their inhabitants lived in dwellings and dug exterior storage and processing pits, but there is no evidence of specialization of activities such as tool making. Bands of related people occupied these camps for a season, and then moved on. Residential extractive camps were temporary camps of one or more extended families whose purpose was to extract a local resource. Extractive locations were areas where a few persons exploited a resource for a short period of time, and left without building any shelters. Except for some artifacts of tools and evidence of tool maintenance, there are no other signs of residency. Overall, Archaic settlements reflected a more sedentary population compared to the Clovis people.

What people ate changed as well. Seed gathering became increasingly more important as a food source. Small bands of people moved from one camp to another in a migratory seasonal pattern to take advantage of abundant food resources. They hunted waterfowl and caught catfish and largemouth bass in the backwaters of the major river valleys, but deer, raccoon, and turkey were the principal meat sources. As food supplies became more stable, the population of the Central Valley of the Mississippi increased by five to ten times compared to the Dalton period.

At Labras Lake in the American Bottom, Native Americans collected a variety of nuts that were plentiful in the area: shagbark hickory, shellbark hickory, hazelnut, and acorns. Women roasted hickory shells in a pit. They also gathered edible seeds such as knotweed, hawthorn, and sumac. The wood fuel for their fires consists of hickory, ash, oak, elm, red cedar, maple, walnut, and honey locust. About fifty people lived in seasonal camps at any given time. By 600 B.C.E., these people cultivated squash and gourds—both imports from Mexico. The women in the camps cleaned and dried gourds, which they turned into "dippers, ladles, cups, bowls, bird houses, rattles, and masks."[2]

On Modoc Rock in southern Illinois along the Mississippi River, Native Americans had access to several ecological environments within five kilometers of their settlement, including forests, creeks, lakes, marshes, and the Mississippi River itself. Together, these varied environments provided

a wide range of animal species for them to hunt. The Native Americans on Modoc Rock ate more small mammals than larger ones, including chipmunks, mice, muskrats, and cotton tails. Over time, they learned to fish with nets. They walked along the shallow pools along the river and gathered freshwater mussels and snails, and trapped crayfish. Eventually, they got better at hunting white-tailed deer, which would become their principal source of meat.

The Native Americans in the Illinois and Mississippi River Valleys occupied the same site every season and buried their dead in cemeteries, often in high level areas such as bluffs. A village of Archaic peoples consisted of kin groups. If they did have to move in search of prey or because of severe flooding on the river, they carried the decomposed bodies of their dead in bundles until they could be properly buried in a permanent cemetery. At Carrier Mills in southern Illinois, archeologists have found 157 burials, but the villagers placed tools and other items in 27 graves. The villagers were not differentiating between women and men, and none of the items buried could be characterized as valuable goods that denoted a high rank. Eight individuals did have clay placed over their burial sites, which may indicate that they were important in some way. One grave contained a man buried with eagle talons and bear's paw bones, which may denote that he was a shaman. At three other sites, the ill or injured were buried in separate cemeteries from those that were healthy.

Around 2000 B.C.E., increasing numbers of Archaic villagers buried some members of their society with ceremonial or personal items such as gorgets, hematite pestles and plummets, and tubular pipes. These valuable materials and adornments may indicate that these individuals held a higher social rank compared to others who were buried with only utilitarian items such as tools. At the Indian Knoll site in Kentucky, 1,000 people were buried in a cemetery, but only 300 had grave artifacts. And only a few of them had such exotic goods as copper that came from Lake Superior or sea shells that originated in the Gulf of Mexico. These valuable goods were interred with adults of both sexes as well as some children. The villagers may have been denoting rank not just for the achievements in one's own lifetime, but for the accomplishments of one's ancestors or immediate family.

During the Archaic period, Native Americans exchanged goods between kin groups. Bands came together to trade valuables such as marine shells from the Gulf of Mexico, copper from the areas around Lake Superior, or jasper from what today is Pennsylvania. As in earlier eras, exchanges of flint and perishable goods were common. Red ocher, a red iron deposit, was ground up and used for ceremonial functions up and down the Mississippi.

At the Koster site in Illinois, Archaic people made bone awls, which were pointed instruments for piercing materials such as leather, and bone needles made out of deer that were used in basket making. They allowed

dead members of the community to decompose before they were buried in oval pits with their knees placed near their chest. In one burial, an 18-month-old infant had been dusted with red ocher before being interred. Archeologists have found three dogs buried in the village cemetery, which indicates the special affinity such Native Americans had toward domesticated canines. Within the village at Koster, 100 to 150 people resided in huts scattered over five acres. Some individuals lived into their sixties and suffered from arthritis, so their younger siblings must have taken care of them.

At Poverty Point in northeast Louisiana, the most sophisticated culture of the Archaic period arose. First settled around 1700 B.C.E., Poverty Point reached its height of influence from 1200 to 800 B.C.E. Its technologies and religious ideas spread to over 100 settlement areas in southern Arkansas, eastern and southern Mississippi, and as far north as Missouri and Illinois. These people built their villages on high ground overlooking rivers and coastal areas near lakes and marshes. The Poverty Point site was the largest at over 500 acres while the smallest sites were no more than one-fourth of an acre. The smaller sites along rivers were arranged linearly, parallel to the streams. The larger centers were organized in a semicircle. Poverty Point consisted of a series of six concentric elevated ridges. None of the sites had earthworks for protection, such as walls or fortifications, but the sites were compact, which made them defensible.

The Poverty Point site in Louisiana was distinguishable from any other Archaic site by its three monumental mounds that were built between 1000 and 800 B.C.E., just outside the six concentric ridges. Mound A, which is 70 feet high, and Motley Mound, which stands at 51 feet, include a ramp and projecting platform that served ceremonial and religious functions. Archeologists have found no burial sites at Poverty Point. The people of Poverty Point cremated some of their dead at Mound B. There are no permanent dwellings at Poverty Point, which means the site served only a religious function, and people lived in surrounding areas.

The people of Poverty Point cooked in baking pits or earth ovens, one to two feet in diameter and 9 inches to 20 inches deep. Most of the cooking took place in the northern and southern portions of the site, so the women could have ready access to water. One of the technological innovations of the Poverty Point culture involved cooking. These people heated up pebbles or balls made out of clay pottery and placed them around the food in a pit or in a leather or woven basket in order to cook it. The clay balls could be reused about ten times before they cracked. Women cooked fish, turtles, snakes, squirrels, and birds and gathered hickory nuts, walnuts, pecans, acorns, persimmons, wild grapes, chenopodiums, knotweed, doveweed, aster, hackberry seed, and squash. The women also cultivated squash and chenopodium, but these were not significant parts of the diet. Since all Poverty Point sites were located near rivers and lakes, fish were the principal source of protein.

At Poverty Point, we find other technologies that distinguish these people from those who came before, including lamellar blades and scrappers, steatite vessels, two-hole gorgets, hematite and magnetite plummets, adzes, and hoes. Ceremonial and social status items such as beads, pendants, pipes, and figurines were made from copper, fluorite, calcite, quartz, obsidian, galena, and mica. These exotic raw materials were not native to the region and had to be exchanged with other peoples using the extensive river system of the Mississippi Valley—obsidian came from the Rockies, steatite from the Appalachian Mountains, and copper from Lake Superior. The style of the figurines as well as the religious ideas for mound building and related ceremonies may indicate that the people of Poverty Point had contact with the contemporaneous Olmec culture of Mesoamerica. The residents of Poverty Point spread their technology to far-off areas as well: the baked clay balls were used by people who lived in what is today Clarksville, Indiana, and along the St. Johns River in Florida. Pottery techniques such as podal supports, punched-through nodes, clay-grit temper pottery, and rocker stamping on pottery were being copied throughout much of the southeast.

At the Poverty Point site, some form of social hierarchy must have organized construction on the site. The concentric semicircle ridges lined up perfectly behind one another, and the mounds were placed in a solar orientation. Artisans worked on the raw materials imported from other regions to create ceremonial and utilitarian objects that the elites could collect and trade. Archeologists have found no evidence of any military activity in the region. Smaller communities around Poverty Point maintained an exchange network in which they supplied the ceremonial center with food while depending upon Poverty Point for religious and civil leadership. The outlying village communities were independent and had their own elites who probably maintained kinship ties with the leaders of Poverty Point.

For unknown reasons, the Poverty Point culture declined after 800 B.C.E. Archeologists have found no evidence of an invasion or an ecological disaster. Perhaps the ceremonial site was undergoing a religious crisis and losing its relevance for people in neighboring areas that had previously supported it. People in the region continued to maintain communities along the nearby Bayou Macon, but by 500 B.C.E., Poverty Point was totally abandoned.

From 600 B.C.E. to 400 C.E., Native Americans along the Ohio River created a series of cultural and technological innovations that archeologists call the Woodlands or Marksville Period. The two most important Native American cultures of this period, the Adena and Hopewell, developed in a region centered in Ohio, but their influence spread throughout the Mississippi River Valley and from Canada to Florida. Although more settled than their predecessors, the Woodland people still migrated to areas with better food sources. They built extensive earthworks in their communities

and became increasingly dependent on horticulture as an important source of food. Using hoes, they cultivated pumpkins, gourds, and various other plants. By 400 C.E., Woodland people had adopted the bow and arrow for hunting, which allowed them to kill their prey at longer ranges. Although the first known pottery in North America was crafted in South Carolina about 2515 B.C.E., it is not until the Woodland period that it reached the Mississippi Valley. Whereas the people of the Poverty Point culture had heated up clay balls and then put them into a leather or basket container to cook the food, Woodland people were able to heat their food in clay pots that they placed directly over a fire. Different types of settlements during this period reflected the changes in Native American society. Most Woodland people still lived in base camps as their ancestors did, but now they also lived in harvesting camps where they collected and processed the crops they planted. They created regional exchange centers where trade occurred and kinship ties strengthened.

The most distinguishing feature of Woodland people was their extensive mound building. From 600 B.C.E. to 200 B.C.E., the Adena people created the first society in the Ohio valley that practiced an elaborate burial ceremony, lived in permanent houses, made extensive use of pottery, and developed horticulture. Adena people resided in circular houses with single wall posts and a fire pit in the middle of the floor. They were still mainly hunters and gatherers, but they experimented with intensive cultivation of plants such as gourd, pumpkin, squash, and sunflower. They constructed between three and five hundred burial mounds in what is today Indiana and Ohio. At first, the burials were simple and showed very little evidence of rank and social status. They painted the dead body with red ochre and sprinkled some of the pigment over the grave. A dead body was buried in its entirety or allowed to decompose on a platform. The Adena people dissected or cremated other bodies before they placed the remains in a shallow pit that was lined and covered with bark and soil. As they added more bodies, a mound would form. In earlier times, they placed more utilitarian tools than ornamental objects in the burials, but this changed. Burials for those of higher social status became more elaborate—they were buried in tombs that were lined with logs, and luxury items were placed with them. At Cresap Mound near the Ohio River, villagers placed the following objects with the dead who had higher rank: round stone balls; gabbro, diorite, and hematite axe heads; gorgets of stone and copper; hematite and barite hemispheres; sandstone and fireclay pipes; a turtle effigy tablet made of fine-grain sandstone; various types of stone knives; bone awls; beads made from bone, shells, and copper; turtle shell cups; textiles and baskets; and red and yellow ochre.

Influenced by the Adena, the Hopewell people in the Ohio River Valley built an extensive number of burial mounds and elaborate earthen ridges that took animal and geometric shapes. Their villages had wall embankments. Their artisans made platform pipes, copper objects, ear

spools, and tools and ornaments made from galena, obsidian, mica, and pearl. Hopewell people knew how to weave fine fabrics. To gain access to exotic raw materials, they participated in an elaborate exchange network. The tools made from obsidian originally came from the northern Rockies. Copper was used to make axe blades, headdresses, bracelets, ear spools, and ornaments in the shape of circles, fishes, bird's heads, serrated edges, antlers, bear teeth and paws, and intricate geometric designs. Hopewell artisans carved out effigy and flat platform pipes for the smoking of tobacco. In their religious ceremonies, they used animal and human effigies made out of antlers.

Hopewell's impact on the Mississippi Valley was cultural. Other Native Americans adopted their techniques to make pottery, mound burials, and other earthworks. Whereas the Hopewell people of the Ohio created elaborate mounds in geometric patterns, mounds in Illinois and on the Lower Mississippi River were a simpler conical shape. At Red Wing, Minnesota, the Effigy Mound people built over 2,000 mounds and earthworks that ranged from three to ten feet high and six to forty feet in diameter. Some of these mounds were the shape of animals such as birds and lizards. Near Helena, Arkansas, one mound contained a tomb of a female adolescent buried with the following items: a copper-and-silver covered cane panpipe, a necklace, armbands, wristbands of pearl and conch-shell beads, a belt of wolf canine teeth and shell beads that went around the waist, and bicymbal copper ear spools. Since she was so young, she must have obtained status because of her kin or marriage relations.

From 100 B.C.E. to 400 C.E., at Marksville in Louisiana, Woodland peoples lived on the edge of a high prairie near the Red River and Mississippi River. The prairie offered them prey such as rabbits, squirrels, opossum, deer, snakes, and songbirds. The floodplain added fish, waterfowl, white-tailed deer, black bear, raccoon, bobcat, red squirrel, grey fox and swamp rabbit to their diet. The Marksville site contained one large semicircle embankment that was three to seven feet high and over three thousand feet long with three large and two small openings. The Native Americans at Marksville constructed five mounds within the larger semicircle and several others outside it. Alan Toth has described the distinguishing characteristic of Marksville pottery as "small, squat tubby pots," often marked with various designs including a bird of prey, bands, and parallel lines.[3]

At the Koster site in Illinois, Middle and Late Woodland people wore down their teeth faster than modern people do. Dirt must have gotten into their food, and they probably used their teeth as tools in their day-to-day tasks. Late Woodland people also had more cavities than earlier ancestors had because they ate sweet corn, whose cultivation was introduced into the Mississippi Valley after 600 C.E. Elderly people showed evidence of arthritis, but there are differences between higher- and lower-status men. Upper-status elderly men had arthritis in the elbows, which suggest that they must have spent a great deal of time practicing throwing a spear or

pulling the string on a bow. In contrast, elderly men of lower ranks had arthritis in the wrists because they worked as artisans and tool makers. Another difference between high- and low-ranking individuals was that higher-ranking men had higher frequencies of bony tumors in the cartilage of the ears. In modern medical cases, these tumors are found among frequent swimmers. Woodland men of high social status were probably the ones who dove for mussels and collected their pearls. Young men and women suffered from an epidemic of blastomycosis, a fungus that people caught from contact with the soil. As Woodland people relied more and more on the cultivation of crops, they were more at risk of contracting this disease, which leaves lesions on the spine and shortens the lifespan.

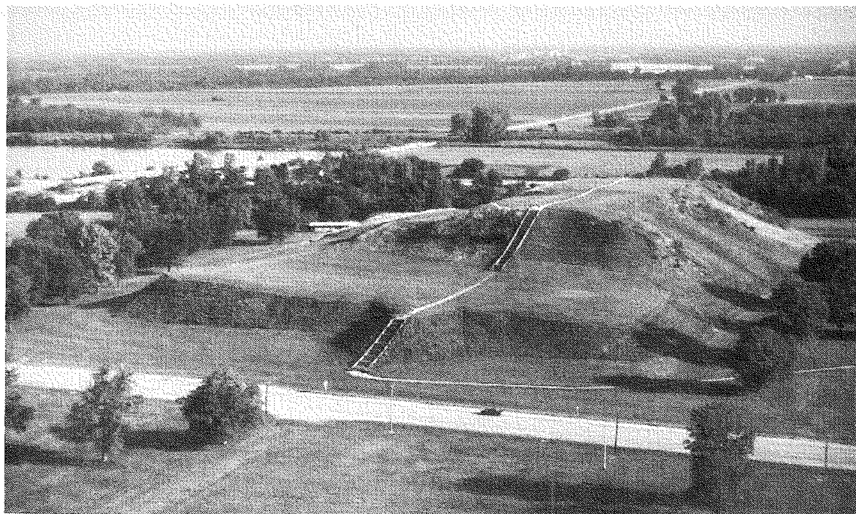
THE MISSISSIPPIAN RENAISSANCE

In the Central Mississippi Valley, the most dramatic technological, political, religious, and social transformation in Native American prehistory occurred from 700 to 1400 C.E. Mississippian culture spread from northwestern Florida to southern Illinois and from the Carolinas and Georgia to Oklahoma. Some remnants of Mississippian culture, like the Natchez and the Apalachee, lasted into the era of European contact. For the first time, Native Americans cultivated crops in fields, lived in large ceremonial centers filled with thousands and even tens of thousands of people, constructed great mounds with the residences upon them, divided their societies into rigid higher or lower ranks, and participated in elaborate religious cults. The Mississippians grew many varieties of crops, but they depended on maize for most of their calories. Generally, they ate better than their ancestors and managed to produce a surplus of grain, which contributed to the concentration of human settlement, an increase in population, and the rise of religious centers where elites gained political power. Artisans produced valuable items such as copper plates and engraved pendants and cups that elites exchanged for other luxury items and raw materials. Elites used these valuable items to legitimize their own authority and status among the general population as well as make alliances with other chiefdoms.

The emergence of the Mississippian culture was not sudden. Around 600 C.E. in the American Bottom near St. Louis, Woodland people settled in stable villages. The American Bottom is a rich alluvial plain near the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers that is 25 miles long from north to south and 11 miles at its widest. On this fertile land, Native Americans built huts with foundations below ground so as to provide coolness in the summer and warmth in the winter. In the next couple hundred years, in what is known as the Emergent Mississippian period, a plaza became the central feature in the village of Cahokia. People built their dwellings around it. Near the center of the plaza, the villagers dug storage pits and constructed a large communal building. From 950 to 1000 C.E., the village became more densely populated and the central plaza was broken up into several smaller courtyards. Single households built structures with wall trench foundations and storage pits around their courtyard. The courtyard included a cooking and food processing area with hearths and firepits and racks for the drying of meat. The residents of the village shared communally in food preparation, storage, and rituals. They all used the centrally located cooking and processing area, the lone pit oven, a single butchering facility, granary, and sweat bathhouse. Gradually after 1000 C.E., villages in the American Bottom dissolved and Mississippian peoples either moved to individual homesteads or to religious centers that elites controlled.

In the next few hundred years, Cahokia became the largest Native American settlement in North America. Between 10,000 and 20,000 people lived within the settlement and thousands of others lived in communities nearby. The ceremonial center's population doubled or tripled during religious festivals. Cahokia encompassed five square miles, of which 2,000 acres were residential. It had a close relation with settlements within a 60 to 90 square mile area and may have had political influence over them.

The Grand Plaza and Monk's Mound were the central features of the community around which the rest of Cahokia developed. Since the planned site of the plaza originally contained residential dwellings, the elites of the ceremonial center compelled these residents to resettle away from the sacred space. Hundreds of people over the years worked to flatten a rolling hill terrain and fill in holes. The planners made sure the ceremonial



The 100 foot-high Monk's Mound at Cahokia Mounds, Cahokia, IL. Courtesy of Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site.

plaza had a slight slope to the south that allowed rainwater to drain away. Eventually, the elites called on the population to construct massive stockade walls that divided the ceremonial center from the rest of the community. Workers dug a four foot trench and then placed logs upright into it. The thickness of the logs allowed them to support raised platforms or bastions. The palisade's length reached 1.75 miles, and it enclosed a ceremonial area of 200 acres and 18 mounds. The Native Americans of Cahokia used 80,000 logs to build the four palisades. In the long run this destruction of surrounding forest would have devastating consequences to the ecology of the region.

The people of Cahokia built at least 120 mounds. The most impressive is Monk's Mound, the largest man-made structure in North America before the arrival of Europeans. It had a larger circumference than the greatest of the pyramids in Ancient Egypt. During its construction over two centuries, Mississippians used hoes to dig long pits, and then they filled baskets with the sediment, and took them to the mound site. Monk's Mound contained 22 million cubic feet of clay and dirt, which required the filling of more than 14 million baskets that held 1.5 cubic feet or 55 pounds of dirt each. The mound covered 16 acres. The people of Cahokia added terraces later. On top of the mound platform, the house of the chief of Cahokia stood as a symbol of his family's prestige. A ramp allowed access to the top of the mound, but most likely only a few people were allowed to visit. Since the mounds had no grass or other vegetation on them to keep the soil from sliding off during rainstorms, maintenance of the mounds was a constant concern.

In residential areas, the people built, repaired, and rebuilt ever larger and more architecturally diverse huts on the same lots. Families appeared to have claims on certain choice locations. These households continued to build with wall trenches, but they eventually included an indoor hearth to keep the hut warm in winter. In interior bell-shaped storage pits, they placed food, tools, and personal items. Each household complex had exterior hearths and fire pits as well. A post among the household dwellings advertised the social status of the household to the rest of the community. On the outer corner of the household complex was a small structure that may have been the women's hut where they isolated themselves during menstruation and childbirth. Overall, the houses got bigger over time—houses were 10 square meters when Cahokia was but a village, but they grew to 15 square meters in the Middle Mississippian period and as large as 20 to 40 square meters at Cahokia's height. Community sweatlodges could be as big as 100 meters square. Elites built their houses on the best lands, but as Jon Muller explained, "it seems just as much the case that the best lands *produced* the elites!"[4] Some households had sweatlodges within their household structures, and these could have been used to entertain guests and strengthen kinship ties.

Politically, Cahokia developed into a type of government known as a chiefdom, in which elites had the power to manipulate the production and exchange of surplus goods. The elites also oversaw the construction of mounds to reinforce their special kinship lineage. The people of Cahokia believed that their chiefs and his ancestors were mediators between this world and that of the cosmos. People submitted to the authority of the chief for religious reasons.

At Mound 72, archeologists have found the burial site of an elite male from a distinguished family of Cahokia. His body was placed on a platform of 20,000 shell beads that were laid out in the shape of a falcon. They also buried nearby the bodies of four females between the ages of 20 and 30 who had been sacrificed to accompany the male to the otherworld. Valuable exotic items such as a sheet of copper, bushels of mica, and hundreds of finely made arrowheads that point in one direction were included in the burial to make it known to all in the community that this individual was special. Four headless and handless bodies of men were also added to the burial. Later, the bodies of 50 women, all between the ages of 18 and 23 were placed in the mound, over time, three more mass burials of females occurred. Sixty percent of the bodies in Mound 72 were sacrificial. The women may have been tribute paid to Cahokia from distant villages it dominated. The mound and the burials symbolized to the community that this was a distinguished ancestor who gave legitimacy to the power of the elite family who resided on the platform mound.

Another way the chief and other elites kept their high status was by continually establishing and maintaining kinship ties with lesser ranking people through the exchange of valuable items. In return, people of lower rank participated in major building projects. At Cahokia, both high-ranking and low-ranking people kept a cache of valuable goods, such as pottery, hoes, and marine-shell beads that could be used if needed to improve their social standing in an exchange. Ceramics produced or inspired by Cahokia's artisans were traded as far as what today are the states of Iowa, Minnesota, Indiana, Michigan, and Mississippi. The chief did not militarily dominate any of these areas, but the exchange network provided a form of kinship ties that bound elites in a village or another chiefdom with Cahokia.

Individual farmsteads spread up and down the Mississippi and other tributaries from Cahokia for a hundred miles. These farmsteads were permanent residences of one to two buildings. Their inhabitants grew their own food and stored their surpluses in interior pits. Politically, they owed allegiance to a local chief at a mound center. Some of these small farmsteads decided to join other farmsteads to form small villages of up to fifteen households. In day-to-day activities, the people living in farmsteads were more autonomous than those Mississippians residing in or immediately around mound centers.

The emergence of agriculture was one of the most important innovations of the Mississippian period. This was especially true in Cahokia, where its people depended on maize as the principal source of their calories. Maize had several advantages over other potential crops: it had high yields and could be stored longer than oily seeds such as nuts. Agriculture techniques varied depending on the settlement. Mississippian people living in rock shelters in what today is Illinois cultivated plants in small gardens. Those in the upland areas practiced slash-and-burn agriculture in which they burned a part of the forest or prairie and planted seeds in the ashes. When the soil became infertile after a few seasons, they moved on. The people of Cahokia cleared large arable fields and planted their crops in the same fields for generation after generation. These large fields were just outside the settlement area on alluvial lands. In Cahokia itself, people worked on gardens that contained a variety of plants, including squash and gourds. Even at its height, 90 percent of the land within Cahokia did not have structures on it so there was ample space for gardening.

Although Mississippian people depended on agriculture for a significant portion of their diet, they still hunted animals for protein. Mississippians ate white-tailed deer, raccoon, fish, waterfowl, turkey, beaver, opossum, swamp rabbit and cottontail rabbit, snapping turtles, dog, fox and gray squirrel, black bear, and elk. Generally, Mississippians were healthier than peoples of earlier times. But infant mortality was higher in Mississippian societies than in the Archaic era because the people of Cahokia weaned their babies with corn mush that was not very nutritious. Nonetheless, Mississippian adults did live longer than Archaic peoples, and they were also less likely to fracture their bones during their lifetimes than those of earlier eras. Interestingly, Mississippian elites were only slightly healthier than those who ranked below them. This indicates that in terms of work and food, the daily lives of people of higher and lower rank were very similar.

One of the important sources of raw materials for tool-making in Mississippian communities was in southern Illinois, near the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, not far from Cahokia. Several families established a village at Mill Creek to quarry for chert, the favored stone used to make hoes. A mound center southwest of the site housed artisans who manufactured the hoes, and smaller mining sites and manufacturing workshops dotted the surrounding area. Native Americans traded the finished hoes with other mound centers, including Cahokia. Women were the principal users of the hoes in agriculture and may have been involved in the trade. At Cahokia, an artisan carved a figurine depicting a woman using such a hoe with her right hand. Hoes were useful as tools for digging trenches for dwellings, mounds, moats, and embankments. Mill Creek chert is also used for common tools such as chisels, adzes, picks, and ceremonial items like celts, maces, stone swords, and fine knives. Mill Creek chert was popular because it was speckled and came in a variety of colors. When mined, the chert nodules were large and could be made into tools of various sizes. It often came in preformed shapes that lent themselves to tool formation. The chert's edge was very resilient to heavy usage, and when it did break, it chipped into small, sharp reusable pieces. Whereas most of the exchange items in Mississippian times were ceremonial items, like copper and marine shells, hoes served a very utilitarian and vital purpose for a society based on agriculture. Not surprisingly, Mill Creek hoes were traded widely as far as Michigan, Wisconsin, Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky, Iowa, Arkansas, and Mississippi.

The Native Americans of Cahokia considered the ceremonial center of their settlement sacred. The four plazas that surrounded Monk's Mound were laid out in the four cardinal directions—north, south, east, and west—to symbolize a four-cornered world. During the summer and winter solstice when the sun reached its most northern and southern point in the sky, a series of wooden posts in Cahokia and some of its mounds aligned with the rising sun on that particular day. Mississippian people believed in a dual world: the upper and the lower. The chief was the mediator between the two, and his family controlled the temples where sacred fires were constantly kept going. He also oversaw the production of fertility cult figurines that were exchanged with other mound centers and villages. Keeping the two worlds apart was very important in the lives of Mississippian people, for there would be chaos if the two ever crossed. The chief and other elites lived on mounds closer to the world above in contrast to the common people who lived at ground level on the flat terrain of the American Bottom. The iconography that appeared on artifacts reflected these dual worlds. The sun's rays or birds of prey represented the upper world, and snakes, frogs, and fish corresponded to the lower world. Mississippian people believed that beavers, owls, and cougars inhabited both worlds.

This dualism was found within the burial site at Mound 72. The people of Cahokia had placed the body of an elite person on the platform of beads in the shape of a falcon, the symbol of the upper world, with his face upward toward the sky. Right beneath him was another body who was facing downward. The four headless and handless male bodies buried near him may represent the cardinal directions. It is unclear whether Mississippians practiced the Green Corn Ceremony, a harvest festival originating in Mexico that involved fire and the sacrifice of four victims. The four headless bodies may be such sacrifices, but if the ceremony was done every year, there should be hundreds of such sacrifices, but only one group of four has been found. Nevertheless, Mississippians practiced some form of communal fertility cult tied to their agricultural practices.

Other major Mississippian chiefdom centers appeared in Spiro on the Arkansas River, in Moundsville in Alabama, and Etowah in Georgia. Each developed independently of Cahokia out of the local Woodland tradition, and only a few items of pottery from Cahokia reached them. In fact,

Cahokia never had political dominance over any of the other chiefdoms nor of villages and farmsteads outside the northern and central areas of the American Bottom.

Cahokia had more frequent exchanges of goods with Mississippian villages to its north. One such trading relationship was established with Native American people of the Red Wing area near today's St. Paul, Minnesota. The Red Wing area was an alluvial bottomland of several miles where the Chippewa River met with the Mississippi River. The alluvial land was ideal for the growing of maize. Since the Woodland period, the Effigy Mound peoples had settled in the region. As traders, hunters, and migrant families moved from the South into the area, exchanges of goods became more frequent with Cahokia. The Effigy people had grown maize as early as 400 C.E., but they became more dependent on it as a principal source of their calories over time. Their pottery showed a mixture of Woodland and Cahokian styles. But they never developed a ceremonial center on the model of Cahokia—there were no mounds on either side of a plaza. Rather, they built their mounds in a semicircle outside their villages. They lived in a fairly egalitarian village society with no rigid social hierarchy. Although they had no political connection to Cahokia, the Mississippian culture of the Red Wing region went into a decline at the same time Cahokia did. The climate got colder season after season and did not allow the full 140 days of warm temperatures necessary to produce a good harvest of maize. War between neighboring villages also disrupted life. Eventually, the Oneota peoples moved into the area and absorbed the local population.

By 1200 C.E., Cahokia's influence began to fade as its population decreased by roughly 40 percent. Households in Cahokia moved to the highest levels at the site, and there was no effort to erect new mounds or fix the existing ones. The dead were now buried in small stone boxes in cemeteries. The reasons for this decline are still unclear, but the population may have overexploited the wood resources of the area. Increased water runoff most likely caused sediment to block the waterways that connected Cahokia with the Mississippi River. The people of Cahokia may have cut down all the trees in a 10 to 15 kilometer radius of the town for fuel and construction. Flooding was always a problem, but now it only worsened and made agriculture in the area less productive. The region also suffered through a series of droughts between 1090 and 1100 C.E. Perhaps the lower-ranking chiefs of the settlements around Cahokia asserted their independence when the chief at Cahokia was weak because there is evidence of warfare in Illinois at this time. Several bodies have been found that were scalped. About 1300 C.E., a band of Oneota settled temporarily near Cahokia. By then, the population of Cahokia had decreased by another 35 percent. A hundred years later, Mississippian people abandoned the Cahokia site altogether. For another century, a few people clung to farmsteads in the American Bottom.

As Mississippian culture declined, the diet of people in the American Bottom actually changed for the better. The common bean became a staple of the diet of Native Americans after 1250 C.E. The bean provided people with a good source of quality protein, and in combination with maize gave people a better balance of amino acids. The bean may have allowed individual households to be more productive, and thus weaken their reliance on elites. Mississippian peoples still gathered food. The nuts they used included hickory, acorns, pecan, and less frequently walnut. Besides gourds, squash, maize, and beans, the people of the region also domesticated amaranths, marsh elder, knotweed, and chenopods, maygrass, and a little barley. They continued to gather hawthorn, blackberries, persimmon, and grapes.

Although the Mississippian world was waning, in the Upper and Central Mississippi Valley, Oneota culture was coming into its ascendancy. The Oneota people spread to Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska. They lived in villages that occupied 10 to 20 acres with about 50 huts randomly placed within each settlement. There were no plazas. Wall trenches were no longer used in house construction. Instead, the huts had a wooden pole frame, and bark was tied to it to make the walls. Oneota people cultivated maize, but they did not have large fields. Whereas Mississippian people had cleared large trees by cutting them down, the Oneota people killed large trees by cutting a deep grove in the bark and then left them standing to fall down naturally. Oneota people used bone scapulas of buffalo as hoes instead of mining for chert. The women continued to gather nuts, fruits, and fresh water mussels, but the exterior storage bins were often reused as trash bins. During the summer, the Oneota people nearly abandoned their villages, as most of the men and women traveled across the prairies to hunt for bison. They buried their dead in cemeteries on ridges or mounds that were constructed during the earlier Woodland or Mississippian eras, but only a few individuals were buried with ornamental goods and tools made from copper, stone, and bone. Oneota pottery was shell-tempered, soft and easily broken, with a smooth surface that had geometric decorations etched into it. However, Oneota bone and stone tools and pipe ornaments were well made and showed a high level of craftsmanship.

CONCLUSION

For nearly ten thousand years before European contact, native peoples had hunted and settled along the Mississippi River. Although the Paleolithic people left few signs of their passing, they were the first human beings to take advantage of the rich fauna and flora along the river. Archaic peoples began to cultivate crops and create more permanent settlements. Poverty Point represented the apex of Archaic ceremonial and religious life with its mounds and concentric ridges. The impact of the Adena and

Hopewell cultures changed the religious culture of the people of the Mississippi Valley. Burial mounds became a common sight near every village, and the exchange of goods to develop kinship relations with neighbors flourished. Settled life reached another plateau with the emergence of Cahokia and other chiefdoms. Cahokia developed a social hierarchy and a sophisticated sacred landscape that supported a population of over ten thousand people. Mississippian culture spread through much of the southeastern North America. Cahokia's overexploitation of the natural resources of the Mississippi River Valley shows how fragile the relationship between human beings and the environment can be. Native American culture survived with the spread of Oneota culture, which effectively used the technologies of the past to mold a new world of village life. And then in 1541, the Spanish explorer Hernando De Soto and a small army of Europeans entered the Mississippi Valley. The world of Native Americans was about to change forever.

NOTES

1. Elizabeth S. Chilton, "Beyond 'Big': Gender, Age, and Subsistence Diversity in Paleoindian Societies," in *The Settlement of the American Continents: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Human Biogeography,* ed. C. Michael Barton, Geoffrey A. Clark, David R. Yesner, and Georges A. Pearson (Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 2004), 172.
2. Lynda Norene Shaffer, *Native Americans Before 1492: The Moundbuilding Centers of the Eastern Woodlands* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1992), 24.
3. Edwin Alan Toth, *Early Marksville Phases in the Lower Mississippi Valley: A Study of Culture Contact Dynamics,* Archeological Report No. 21 (Jackson: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1988), 48, 53.
4. Jon Muller, *Mississippian Political Economy* (New York: Plenum Press, 1997), 192.

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Native Americans, 1541–1881

The intrusion of Hernando De Soto and his army into the Central Mississippi Valley in 1541 brought a tide of change that dramatically altered the daily lives of Native Americans along the river. The natives encountered new technologies, new animals, and new diseases, and whether by choice or circumstances, natives adapted to the new realities in their interaction with Europeans. Their connection to the Atlantic market economy brought items that made some aspects of their lives easier, such as guns, copper kettles, metal knives, and axes. Yet, there were terrible costs. Alliances with the European powers generated tension within tribal societies between those who wanted to preserve the world that once was and those who embraced change. Tribes warred against each other to win the favor of a European power and access to new markets. Throughout the entire period of contact, diseases ravaged the native populations. Still, some native tribes managed to prosper even as others became extinct. With the victory of the United States in the War for Independence and the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the geopolitical map changed fundamentally along the river. Native Americans faced a new peril to their existence from an aggressive United States and its land-hungry citizens. Within a century, nearly all Native Americans along the Mississippi had lost their land and only a few managed to hold on along the margins of American society.

Discovering the daily life of Native Americans at the moment of contact with European culture is problematic. The fog of time, the biases and inaccuracies of the Spanish explorers who reported on the natives,

and the limits of archaeology warp our knowledge of this period. The 132 years between this first contact and subsequent European exploration is known as the protohistoric period. Almost nothing is known about the seemingly cataclysmic changes that swept the Native American world in the Mississippi Valley, following that first contact with Europeans. Not until the French period in the eighteenth century do the natives once again appear in the written record. Through eyewitness accounts, historians have been able to get a detailed, if also still skewed, picture of natives' lives. This chapter focuses on four tribes—the Tunicas, Quapaw, Natchez, and the Eastern Dakota—to suggest, by way of representative examples, the basic patterns of Native-American life along the Mississippi River. By the nineteenth century, the pressure of American migration into the region coupled with a U.S. policy that sought the removal of the natives raised havoc within these communities. Their daily lives resembled the ways of their forbearers less and less. Still, some members of tribes prospered as they adopted American agricultural practices and participated in the burgeoning market economy, but the majority became increasingly dependent on American products and government subsidies for their very survival. Eventually, they lost their ancestral lands and their freedom.

ORIGINS OF THE TUNICA

In what today is northwestern Mississippi, the ancestors of the Tunicas lived in Quizquiz, a chiefdom of several villages that paid tribute to the larger chiefdom of Pacaha from across the Mississippi River. The main village of the Tunica was organized around a central plaza and four mounds. One mound held a temple with a sacred fire that was never allowed to be extinguished. The dead were buried in nearby cemeteries. Unlike most tribes in the southeast where women worked in agriculture, the men of Quizquiz were the principal farmers, growing large surpluses of grain. Women gathered persimmons, pecans, and other fruits and nuts from the surrounding alluvial lands. The men supplemented their family's diet with fish and meat, especially deer, from the hunt. In case of war, the chief could call upon a fleet of 200 canoes, each carrying 80 men armed with bows and arrows and shields.

In the spring of 1541, De Soto and his army spent two months in the Central Mississippi Valley in search of wealthy native kingdoms to plunder. They raided Quizquiz and took its elderly men, women, and children hostage when the other adult men were working in the fields. De Soto freed his hostages as a gesture of good will, but the hostile act created tensions. Since the Quizquiz chief refused to submit to Spanish authority, De Soto was forced to withdraw to the chiefdom of Casqui across the Mississippi. There, the Spanish helped the Casqui attack and sack Pacaha, whose population had fled the town before the onslaught. Then, De Soto moved westward to continue his search for riches.

What occurred in the next 141 years is uncertain. When the French arrived in the area in 1673, the chiefdoms of what is today northwestern Arkansas and northeastern Mississippi were gone. Only the villages of the Quapaw at the mouth of the Arkansas River and the Tunica on the upper Yazoo River remained. Mound building stopped in northeast Arkansas, and burial sites no longer contained copper and shell ornamentation. De Soto's army very likely had cut into the food surplus of the natives. Such an act would have destabilized the political structures of the chiefdoms of the region whose leaders had been responsible for distributing surpluses of grain to the population in return for loyalty. Archaeologists are uncertain how much of a role disease played in the disruption. Smallpox spread among European children, but De Soto's expedition consisted of adults, none of whom were recorded to have smallpox nor any contact with European children for at least two years. Therefore, a smallpox epidemic was most unlikely at this time, and probably did not create catastrophic losses in the Native American population until the 1600s when more permanent European settlements appeared on the Atlantic coast. Other diseases, such as measles and typhus, may have spread to the locals from the De Soto expedition. Moreover, the natives adopted horses almost immediately after European contact, which may have exposed them to the diseases these animals carried. Or did the population simply migrate out of the region, as the Tunica had done when they moved from Quizquiz to the lower Yazoo River? We just don't know. Whereas the population of northeast Arkansas may have numbered in the tens of thousands or perhaps as many as 50,000 before the encounter with De Soto, when the French arrived a century later, there were only 2,500 to 4,000 Quapaw in the region, and there is evidence that they were recent migrants. Whatever the case, the Native American world that had existed in the Central Mississippi River Valley was no more by the late 1600s.

From 1673 to 1803, Native Americans along the Mississippi River became intrinsically linked to the European world. They were powerful enough, and the European powers, especially France and Spain, were sufficiently weak enough to forge a so-called middle ground where both cultures interacted with each other on a relatively equal footing. But this so-called middle ground could be dangerous for the Native Americans, as the Natchez learned when they were nearly exterminated by the French. And the situation was fragile—for as long as the Native Americans could play one European power against another, many tribes managed to remain autonomous. Still, during this entire period, Native Americans became increasingly dependent on European technologies, which they could not reproduce themselves. In these turbulent times, the daily life of four tribes irrevocably changed.

THE TUNICA

In 1699 the French encountered a Tunica world that still resembled that of the ancient Mississippians. The Tunica were one of the last native societies

to continue to build mounds. Theirs were up to 10 meters high around a ceremonial plaza. On one of the mounds, they constructed a temple that contained a sacred fire and effigies of a woman and frog, which represented the sun and the earth. The Tunica worshipped nine deities: the sun; thunder; fire; the cardinal directions of east, west, north, and south; earth; and the heavens. Generally, they treated Christian missionaries with respect even when the missionaries entered the Tunica sacred temples to smash the statues of what by Christian standards were considered idols. Despite the pressure to convert to Christianity, the Tunica maintained their religious traditions into the nineteenth century.

The Tunica numbered about a thousand people. They were three separate villages, each made of round huts built from a frame of wooden poles interlaced with cane and plastered clay walls. There were no windows on the huts so the door provided the only source of ventilation. The women cooked outdoors in a hearth. Each family maintained a granary outside their hut. During the summer, men wore only a loin cloth and women wore a woven skirt, while their children remained naked until puberty. Both sexes wore their hair long. For cosmetic purposes, women displayed tattoos on their bodies, blackened their teeth, and wore earrings and other ornaments. On colder days, both sexes wore clothes made from animal skins or mulberry bark. They lived under the authority of a civil chief and a war chief. Warriors achieved status through their bravery in battle, which was recorded on their bodies with tattoos. Some men had more than one wife, and couples could easily end their marriages in divorce. The Tunica excelled at pottery, which they tempered with crushed live mussel shell. We know very little about their stone tools because the Tunica quickly adopted European metal tools and guns as early as 1700, only one year after they first came into contact with the French.

The Frenchman Jean-Bernard Bossu described the Tunica as "an Indian tribe which has always been very friendly to the French" and whose leaders "have always eagerly joined us in war."[1] The Tunica believed that the economic prosperity of their tribe depended on a close alliance with the French against the English. As Chief Perruquier told a French official in 1764, "the British have always corrupted the ways among all the tribes. They have given them liquor to drink which has killed them."[2] The Tunica had been active traders of salt before the Europeans came, and not surprisingly, they found a niche in the developing colonial market economy by supplying the French with food staples.

In 1706 military pressure from the English and the Chickasaw forced the Tunica to move to an abandoned Houma village near the mouth of the Red River on the east bank of the Mississippi at Portage de la Croix in order to be closer to the French. The location allowed them to continue to trade on the Mississippi River and gave them easy access to the Red River valley. Again, the Tunica built three villages, with the largest containing a square plaza with mounds upon which the temple and the house of

the chief stood. Some of their huts were round while the ones that had been once used by the Houma were square. In 1721 Chief Cahura-Joligo dressed in the French fashion, practiced Catholicism, and encouraged his tribe to trade salt, horses, poultry, and maize with the French. Unlike other tribes in the region, the Tunica ignored the deerskin trade. The friendliness of the Tunica encouraged 48 French people in 1726 to settle near their villages. Although the Tunica could only provide 120 warriors by then, the French still relied on them as allies in their struggles with the English and the Chickasaw, and other hostile Indians. Although French missionaries had baptized dozens of Tunica children, Tunica religious customs remained strong.

During the Natchez War of 1729, the French attacked and destroyed Natchez villages in retaliation for the deaths of hundreds of its citizens after the Natchez had decided to drive Europeans from their land. The Tunica welcomed 150 Natchez refugees, who were fed and allowed to settle near the main Tunica village. After celebrations that first night, the Natchez attacked the Tunica, who had sided against them in past disputes, killing Chief Cahura-Joligo and dozens of others. Another war chief rallied the Tunica warriors and drove the Natchez out five days later, but their village had been torched, their food and ammunition stolen, and one-fifth of their population killed. Instead of rebuilding, the Tunica moved to the eastern side of the Mississippi near Tunica Bayou where they built only one village, which was known as Trudeau. Their population had decreased from 375 before the Natchez attack to only 150 people in 1737. Their village was still arranged around a central plaza, but they used a natural bluff to serve the function of a mound. Because Chief Cahura-Joligo had banned the eternal fire, a temple was no longer necessary.

Amazingly, the Tunica continued to prosper economically. Excavations in 1972, 1980, and 1981 at Trudeau reveal how thoroughly the Tunica had left the material world of their Stone Age ancestors. Metal tools of every type were in use, from the latest guns to nails and axes. While Tunica women and men still wore traditional shell ornamentations and used ochre to color their faces, they also cherished glass beads, metal balls, and medals. They cut damaged brass and copper kettles into strips and made ornaments out of them. In their daily dress, they mixed traditional and European fashions. Some Tunica used the heavier and more durable iron kettles that were being traded up and down the Mississippi River. Although native pottery continued to thrive, wooden chests and glass and ceramic containers were being used. The Tunica also enjoyed a varied and high protein diet that included deer, bear, bison, and domesticated chickens. They still supplemented corn with wild fruits and nuts. Unfortunately, many Tunica were acquiring a taste for European alcohol. The scarcity of Christian symbols in burials of this period show how marginal Christianity remained even though 27 children were baptized in 1740.

When the English acquired Louisiana, the Tunica fired upon an expedition of English troops in 1764. Consequently, they were forced to flee to Mobile, Alabama. The French officer in charge of the transition from French to British sovereignty allowed them to settle back on the Mississippi River, and eventually they established a village near Point Coupée on its east bank. Unfortunately for archeologists, the site has been destroyed by the Mississippi River. From historical accounts, we know that the traditional village pattern of the past was totally abandoned for two rows of 30 huts along the river. The Tunica numbered about 80 people in 1764 and only 60 people in 1783. They supplied meat to European colonists from the animals they hunted. Luckily, the English and the Spanish gave the Tunica presents to try to win their loyalty, which allowed the Tunica to remain economically prosperous. At the same time, the Europeanization of Tunica material life continued.

By the early 1790s, the Tunica had left the banks of the Mississippi River and established a village at Avoyelles, what is today Marksville, Louisiana, along the Red River. To survive, the tribe united or intermarried with other Indians as well as whites and blacks. Cultural assimilation continued to such a point that tribal recognition was taken away by the U.S. government in 1938. In 1981 the U.S. government recognized the Tunica-Biloxi tribe. Although their language is no longer spoken and they live in houses that resemble the homes of other rural Louisianans, as of 2006, the Tunica remain a vibrant community with 1,018 members.

THE QUAPAWS

In the 1600s, Dhegihan people had fled the Ohio River Valley because of Iroquois attacks and moved into the Mississippi River Valley where they split into two groups. The so-called upstream people moved north and then northwest along the Missouri River, eventually becoming known as the Omaha tribe. Another group migrated south and became known as the downstream people or Quapaw. The French had first encountered the Illini peoples, who referred to Quapaw as the Arkansas. When the French explorers Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet reached the Mississippi River in 1673, they came into contact with the Quapaw, who were living on both banks of the Mississippi near the mouth of the Arkansas River.

The Quapaws greeted visitors with the calumet, a peace pipe often made out of a reed. By participating in a calumet ceremony, strangers became fictive relatives who were now bonded with the Quapaw in reciprocal obligations. The Quapaw carried their guests on their shoulders to the center of their town and placed them on a roofed platform, where the people of the village would feast and dance to music played with rattles, drums, bells, and reed flutes. For the Quapaw, every relationship was imbued with sacred meaning and the special bonds of kinship. A Quapaw traced his or her clan descent down the father's line. Each of the 21

clans possessed a guardian spirit, often a wild animal. The 21 clans were divided into two groups, each possessing different ceremonial functions: the Sky People performed rituals that assisted in maintaining relations with the spirit world, while the Earth People were in charge of rituals that insured the material prosperity of the community. Sky People could only marry members of the Earth People, and vice-versa.

The Quapaw lived in villages that were surrounded by cultivated fields. One of the villages may have had a palisade around it. Around a central plaza, they built long rectangular loghouses that were large enough for several families. The frames of the buildings were made of two rows of poles that had been driven into the ground and bent to be tied at a center point to bent poles from the opposite row. Pieces of bark covered the outer walls. Within the houses, family members would sit and sleep on raised wooden platforms around a hearth in the middle of the room. The chief had two structures: an open-sided building where the Quapaw council met and guests were entertained in warm weather and a loghouse not much different than that of the other members of the tribe.

André Pénicaut described Quapaw women as "[q]uite pretty and white-complexioned" who did "the work here [in the village] rather than the men."[3] In the summer, the women wore only deerskin skirts. Married women wore their hair loose, while unmarried women tied their hair into two braids that were rolled up behind their ears and decorated with ornaments. Although the animals that the men hunted were an important part of their diet, Quapaw women grew maize, beans, squash, gourds, melons, sunflowers, peaches, and grapes that provided the mainstay of the tribe's caloric intake. The women also gathered wild fruits, nuts, and roots, butchered animals, and prepared their hides for domestic use or to trade with the Europeans. They were responsible for managing the household, including cooking and taking care of the children. French visitors found the meals that the Quapaw women made to be delicious and creative. Women also wove baskets and mats, and made pottery. In other words, Quapaw women managed as well as produced nearly every aspect of the household economy. Intermarriages between Quapaw women and French traders were encouraged to foster kinship relationships, but sexual relations outside of marriage were discouraged.

Jean-Bernard Bossu observed that Quapaw men were "tall, well-built, brave Indians" who were "good swimmers and skillful hunters and fishermen."[4] Pénicaut described them as "very warlike, and they are great hunters," with most of them being "heavy and thickset."[5] Quapaw men wore buckskin loincloths, leggings, moccasins, shirts, and buffalo robes during the winter. They also decorated themselves with tattoos and strings of beads in their ears and noses. During ceremonies, the men painted their bodies red and black and wore headdresses decorated with feathers, buffalo horns, animal furs, or wooden masks. Although agriculture was within the women's sphere of daily duties, the men would assist in

clearing land. As in all Native American societies along the Mississippi River, men held all the political power within the tribe. A council governed the Quapaw. The chief's authority rested on his ability to convince others in the council that his opinions were in the best interest of the tribe. He was in charge of ceremonial functions. The French tried to manipulate the chief by lavishing him with gifts of medals and gorgets.

The Quapaw believed in a life force, the *Wah-kon-tah,* which existed in every material object in the world. Before the sunrise on the day of a corn harvest ceremony, the tribe separated into three groups. As archaeologist Samuel D. Dickinson has explained, when light appeared over the horizon, "the warriors lifted up their weapons, the young men and women offered ears of corn and branches and women with babies" would show their children to the sun. Afterwards, the tribe prayed for "protection against their enemies, for sufficient food, and for an increase in population."[6] Holy men within the Quapaw village performed religious rites. Christian missionary activities were generally a failure until the nineteenth century.

Historian Morris S. Arnold described Quapaw warfare as a "potentially endless chain of reciprocated homicides, each of which was regarded as a just and required retaliation for ones that had preceded it."[7] Disputes with neighboring tribes usually involved control over hunting territories. The preparations for war began with a feast in which the main dish was dog, which the warriors considered brave. After the feast, the chief called a war council and explained the wrong committed against his people and what needed to be done about it. The warriors who wanted to participate in the raid would take a twig from a bundle held by the chief to symbolize their enlistment. After painting a war club red, one of the Quapaw warriors would slip into enemy territory and paint in red two crossed arrows to let the enemy know that the Quapaw would seek revenge. Then, the warriors participated in a war dance in which they were painted in red. Traveling light with only a few days' rations, the warriors left for battle. If they were successful, they brought back scalps of the enemy or prisoners. Quapaw women who had lost a husband or son could adopt one of the prisoners and make them a full member of the tribe. Otherwise, the prisoners were tortured and burned alive.

Before they had ever seen Europeans, the Quapaw had acquired European-made knives, hatchets, and beads by trading with other tribes, probably the Illini. Throughout their history, the Quapaw were eager to establish trade relationships with the Europeans, and at the same time, they tried to stymie any trade between the Europeans and their enemies further up the Arkansas River. Although friendly, the Quapaw were known as great warriors and hunters and were very interested in acquiring guns to defend themselves against the aggressive Chickasaw, who had already been armed by the English. By 1687, when the French visited Quapaw villages, the natives already possessed large quantities of guns and horses. With Quapaw permission, the French established a trading fort that they called

the Arkansas Post. Items which the French kept on hand to trade with Quapaw included guns and related accessories such as powder and flint. Salt, flour, biscuits, and, illegally, rum and brandy were in demand. The Quapaw were also interested in lead, blankets, trade shirts, woolen cloth, breechcloths, and wool ribbons to supplement the animal skins that they wore. The Arkansas Post also kept tools such as metal awls, knives, and nails in stock. The French supplied white and blue paint that was used by the Quapaw in their ceremonies. In return for these European goods, the Quapaw supplied the French with meat and tallow from the buffalo they hunted in Arkansas. They also processed bear oil, which was used in cooking. Unlike the tribes of the upper Mississippi, the Quapaw did not trade much in deer and small mammal skins.

One of the main reasons why the Quapaw maintained their alliance with the Europeans was because they expected to receive annual presents of European goods. In 1769 the French spent four times more on the presents for the Quapaw than on any other tribe in Louisiana. During the short Spanish administration of Louisiana, the Spanish officials sent the Quapaw guns and gun-related accessories, knives, axes, kettles, and hoes. They also gave them gifts of clothing such as hats, handkerchiefs, coats, shirts, dresses, loincloths, and blankets. Everyday tools and accessories included scissors, awls, needles and thread for sewing, strike-a-lights, kettles, and pots. They also enjoyed luxury items such as mirrors, brass wire, tobacco, and brandy.

A look at the above products shows how deeply European goods had penetrated into the daily lives of the Quapaw. Before the Europeans came, the Quapaw had been a self-sufficient people who traded for chert and other raw materials, but made most of their tools in their own villages with their own hands for their own uses. The European goods could not be reproduced at home, so the material gains were offset by the loss of skill. Still, the Quapaw, like other natives, were rational people who realized that European items made life easier. Guns could kill prey and enemies at longer ranges. Steel hoes allowed a Quapaw woman to cultivate even the hardest soil. Copper pots and kettles were less fragile than clay pots and gave women the ability to cook directly over fires for extended periods. European clothes were lighter, thinner, and cooler than animal skins. Each generation of natives became more dependent on these goods as wants became needs. Unfortunately, when the buffalo were wiped out of Arkansas by the late eighteenth century and bears became less numerous, and the number of warriors that the Quapaw could field decreased, they had little to bargain with for these goods except their land. The U.S. government was not interested in continuing to give annual presents unless these annuities were tied to land cessions. This spelled doom for the tribe.

After European contact, the Quapaw suffered severe losses in population. Epidemics of smallpox and other diseases hit the Quapaw in 1690, 1699, 1721, 1748, 1752, 1777, and 1781. Whereas in 1699 the Quapaw

numbered between three to ten thousand people, in 1806 their population was down to about nine hundred individuals. In 1818 and 1824, the U.S. government successfully pressured the Quapaw to cede their lands, and in 1839 the Federal Government established a Quapaw Reservation in the Indian Territory known today as Oklahoma. About five hundred Quapaw migrated there, and many of their descendents live there today.

THE NATCHEZ

Between 1000 and 1500 C.E., the Natchez moved to the region along the Mississippi River that today bears their name and set up one of the most sophisticated chiefdoms in the historic era. M. Le Page du Pratz said that the Natchez's "manners were more civilized, their manner of thinking more just and fuller of sentiment, their customs more reasonable, and their ceremonies more natural and serious; on all which accounts they were eminently distinguished above the other nations."[8] André Pénicaut believed that "of all the savages they are the most civilized nation."[9] The Europeans found a hierarchical society much like their own with a chief who had absolute power and a strict caste system that determined social relations. In 1700 the Natchez were a power in the Mississippi Valley. They numbered over 4,000 individuals and could amass an army of over 1,000 warriors. The Natchez had several subservient or allied tribes living near them that they could incorporate into their society to keep their population stable. The Natchez lived in five villages, but the most impressive was the Grand Village with its three mounds, palisade, and temple.

Natchez society was divided into four groupings: Suns, Nobles, Distinguished, and Commoners. The Suns held all the leadership positions in the society. The Natchez believed that the Grand Sun Chief was descended from the Sun deity, who had come down to earth and given their people a moral code and commanded them to obey his children, the Suns. Unlike any other tribe in the Mississippi Valley, the Grand Sun Chief of the Natchez ruled absolutely and possessed the highest respect from the rest of the tribe. Since the Natchez traced their lineage from the mother's family, the next Grand Sun chief would not be his son, but his sister's son. Each of the other Natchez villages had a subordinate Sun Chief. The families of the Suns lived in huts that were slightly elevated from those of the rest of Natchez society. A unique feature of their society involved marriage. Each member of the Suns had to marry a Commoner. When a Sun mother married a Commoner, their offspring would be a Sun. When a Sun male married a Commoner, their children would be Nobles. Noble females marrying a Commoner would produce Nobles, but a Noble male fathering a child with a Commoner would produce a Distinguished. In other words, a child would inherit the status of their higher ranking mother, but if their father was of higher rank than their mother, the children would be one class lower than the status of their father. The population of Commoners

was replenished by admitting refugees and weaker tribes of the area into Natchez society.

The most sacred ceremony of the Natchez and the one that spurred both the curiosity and horror of Europeans was the funeral practices for the Grand Sun Chief and his sister. When the Grand Sun chief's sister died, her oldest son would strangle her husband. He would then select a dozen Commoner infants, who would be strangled by their parents and placed around the body of the sister of the Grand Sun Chief in her house. Her son could pick out as many other people as he desired to join his mother to the afterlife if he believed the number of volunteers already committed to accompany her was not enough. A person who volunteered brought honor to their families, and if they were Commoners, their families would be promoted to the rank of the Distinguished. On the day of the funeral procession, the parents of the strangled children would take their bodies and join the march, followed by the volunteers and the relatives of the Sun female, whose kin had cut their hair in mourning. The dead female Sun was carried out of her house by four men, and her house was immediately burned down. The fathers of the dead children would put their children down in front of the four men carrying the dead female so that the four men would step on them. Then, the fathers would pick up their trampled children and lay them before the procession again until they reached the temple. The volunteers who would accompany the female to her grave would undress, sit on the ground, and allow one person to sit on their knees and another behind them to place a deer skin over their head. A cord, which the volunteer had made, was wrapped around their neck. The volunteers swallowed three tobacco pills with some water, which caused them to lose consciousness. The relatives of the dead female Sun would pull the cord and strangle each of the volunteers. When the task was done, all the dead would be buried together. The death of the Grand Sun Chief could mean the death of 100 of his subjects, including his nurse maid.

Other social customs of the Natchez intrigued the Europeans. They were astonished to witness the sexual freedom practiced by unmarried Natchez women. Natchez society actually encouraged these women to engage in sex and keep track of the number of their sexual encounters. Their society saw nothing wrong that these young women received gifts or money for sexual favors from Natchez men or French traders. In fact, Natchez men wanted to marry women with extensive sexual experience. However, once a woman was married, she was to remain faithful to her husband. The Natchez ritual of marriage was common to many Native American tribes: the male gave presents to the parents of the young woman he intended to marry. The great-grandfathers of both families met and made sure that the couple was no closer than third cousins. Then, both sets of parents had to approve of the marriage. Males were usually not allowed to marry before they were 25 years old because they were seen as inexperienced and physically weak.

In 1704, Pénicaut visited the Grand Village and was impressed with its material wealth:

In this village one finds every amenity conducive to association with this nation, which does not at all have the fierce manner of the other savages. All the necessities of life are here, such as buffaloes, cows, hinds, harts, roes, chickens and turkeys, and an abundance of geese. There are also fish in abundance, all kinds of them; there are carp weighing more than twenty pounds, which are of an exquisite taste. As for fruit, there is more than in any other place in Louisiana. They have many cherries, which grow in bunches like our grapes in France; they are black and have a touch of bitterness, but are excellent in brandy, in which they put many of them. In their woods everywhere are many peach trees, plum trees, mulberries, and walnuts. They have three kinds of walnut trees: there are some that bear nuts as big as one's fist; from these they make bread for their soup. But the best are scarcely bigger than one's thumb; these they call *pacanes*.[10]

By all accounts, the Natchez lived in an environment of abundance where agriculture thrived and prey was numerous. Deer was by far the most common source of protein for them with alligator gar, a large fish, coming a distant second. Unfortunately for the Natchez, the French recognized the bounty of this land and wanted to procure some of it for themselves.

Still, the Natchez were interested in developing relations with the French to satisfy a growing taste for European goods. Archeologists have found the burial site of an important Natchez individual in the mortuary mound of the Grand Village. Some of the European items in this grave include a brass dutch oven, tinned brass pan, three-legged iron pot, flintlock pistol, iron hoe, brass dressing pins, four iron buckles, three iron and one brass coil springs, an iron hatchet, white glass beads, and brass buttons. The majority of items in the burial were of European origin. Although this burial was not representative of the rest of the people interred in the mound, whoever this Natchez male was, he had found meaning and status in accumulating European goods. Moreover, his family found it important to bury him with the objects that he could use in the afterlife. In other words, European goods were making their way not only into the daily lives of the Natchez in this world, but also in the afterlife.

The Grand Village was built around three mounds. On one of the mounds stood the Temple of the Natchez, which contained a sacred fire watched over by four guards whose duty it was to make sure it never went out. The Temple had two parts: an enclosed area 40 feet wide and 37 feet long that contained the main hearth in which the eternal fire burned and a roofed opened area or portico of 28 feet wide and 30 feet long where meetings were held. On a second mound stood the house of the Grand Sun Chief, a structure that was 25 feet wide and 45 feet long, and eight other huts, which held his relatives. Pierre F. X. Charlevoix left one of the few contemporary European descriptions of the Natchez houses. Within

the house of the Grand Sun Chief, he only found "a bed of planks very narrow, and raised about two or three feet from the ground; probably when the chief lies down he spreads over it a matt, or the skin of some animal."[11] Charlevoix described the huts of the rest of the Natchez as having "the form of square pavilions, very low, and without windows. Their roofs are rounded pretty much in the same manner as an oven. Most of them are covered with the leaves and straw of maize. Some of them are built of a sort of mud, which seemed tolerably good, and is covered outside and inside with very thin mats."[12] He adds that the buildings "have no vent for the smoke, notwithstanding those into which I entered were tolerably white."[13]

Hostility between the Natchez and the French had surfaced on two occasions when the Natchez believed that the French had insulted them. Like most Native American tribes, the Natchez feuded among themselves over how to deal with the European intrusion onto their lands. In 1729 a French official with ambitions to create plantations on the rich agricultural soil around the Natchez ordered the people of one of the Natchez villages to move out. In a war council, the Natchez decided to launch a surprise attack on the French at Fort Rosalie, which had been built near the Grand Village. Secretly, they called on other native tribes to join them. One of the elders made a speech whose substance must have been repeated by Native American councils up and down the Mississippi River for decades to come:

We have noticed for a long time that having the French as neighbors has done us more harm than good. We old men see it, but the young men do not. The supplies from Europe please them, but of what use are they? To seduce our women, to corrupt our nation, to lead our daughters astray, to make them proud and lazy. Our boys are the same. Young married men must work themselves to death to keep their wives in luxury. Before the French came into out lands, we were men, we were happy with what we had, we walked boldly upon all our paths, because then we were our own masters. But today we thread gropingly, fearing thorns. We walk like slaves which we will soon be, since they already treat us as though we were. When they are strong enough, they will no longer treat us with consideration. They will put us in chains. Has not their chief already threatened us with this affront? Is not death preferable to slavery?[14]

On the first day of the Natchez attack, 237 French were killed including 36 women and 56 children. About 300 slaves and 50 women and children were taken hostage. Unfortunately for the Natchez, other tribes did not join them against the French. The subsequent French response wiped out the Natchez as a tribe. The Natchez villages were burned down after a siege, and about five hundred Natchez men, women, and children were shipped to the Caribbean as slaves. Hundreds of others fled to neighboring tribes, such as the Creek and Chickasaw. Sporadic Natchez raids on

French settlements continued for at least another decade. Eventually, those Natchez who joined the Chickasaw or the Creek were moved with the rest of the tribes to Oklahoma. But the Natchez as a people with a unique world of their own were no more.

THE DAKOTA

About 800, C.E. ancestors of the Dakota arrived in central Minnesota and eventually became part of the Oneota culture that was flourishing around them. The Dakota spoke a language that was a member of the Siouan family. Around 1300 C.E., the Dakota organized into the loose federation called the People of the Seven Council Fires, which included the Mdewakanton, Wahpekute, Wahpeton, Sisseton, Yankton, Yanktonai, and Teton. They centralized the location of their permanent villages, built wooden palisades to protect themselves from attack, and placed a mound in a ceremonial center. After driving out other tribes from their territory, the Dakota staunchly defended their lands from any intruders. They and their neighbors maintained a buffer zone to the north where neither was allowed to settle. Unfortunately, warfare continued and eventually dissolved the Seven Council Fires. As a consequence, the Dakota became more mobile. Men and women had to adjust to a life of seasonal migration. The Yankton, Yanktonai, and Teton migrated westward and lost close contact with the other Dakota tribes that moved southward. At the same time, Siouan speakers such as the Iowa and Oto migrated into the Great Plains and competed with the Dakota. In the 1640s, when the Iroquois launched attacks on the tribes of the Great Lakes Region, tens of thousands of people fled before the onslaught. The Sauk, Mesquakie, Potowatomi, and Ottawa pushed into what is today Wisconsin. The Illinois and Cree migrated to Illinois. Over the next century, the Eastern Dakota successfully defended themselves against each of these invaders, but at the cost of abandoning their hunting lands in Wisconsin and Illinois.

In the face of these constant threats, the Dakota evolved into a warrior society that lived in semi-permanent settlements and adhered to strictly defined gender roles. Men gained status and economic goods though their achievements in war. Their weapons consisted of bows made out of hickory, ash, or black locust, and war clubs. Warriors would spend considerable time honing their skills in hand-to-hand combat that involved attacking their enemies from a crouching position and moving quickly from side to side to avoid being hit. Every summer, the men organized hunting expeditions to the western and southern prairies in search of buffalo. For the rest of the year, they hunted deer, elk, and small mammals. In contrast, women gathered wild rice, nuts, and fruits, learned to tap the maple trees for syrup, maintained the huts, and took care of the children. Women who accompanied their men on the hunt put up and took down the temporary shelters called tipis. It was also the task of women to clean the animal skins and cook the meals.

The lives of Dakota men and women changed when they came into contact with European goods. They first exchanged furs with the Huron for guns and powder. After 1670, the Dakota traded directly with the French. Kinship governed this frontier economy. In Dakota society, either a person was a kin or an enemy. The Dakota created fictive kin relations with strangers by the smoking of the calumet or peace pipe and a feast to celebrate the occasion. The military strength of the Dakota and their control of vast territories with fur-bearing animals forced French traders to accommodate the Dakota by developing and maintaining kinship ties with them. The Dakota encouraged the marriage between French traders and Dakota women in order to develop blood ties. Since the care of children was the responsibility of the woman and her family, French traders were not obligated to settle among the Dakota to raise a family. Although French officials and Christian missionaries looked down upon the practice, both the Dakota and the French traders realized the advantages of these marriages. The Dakota would get a ready supply of European goods, while the French traders got access to furs and the protection that the Dakota provided. In a kinship relationship, both sides had to meet their obligations and share their resources; otherwise, the relationship turned hostile. The French and English traders understood this, but after the Louisiana Purchase, the U.S. government wanted land cessions in return for annuities and debt repayment and were not at all interested in developing kinship relations with the Dakota. Increasingly, the American traders did not partake in the obligatory gift giving that had marked trade in the past. Instead, they kept account books that listed all the items purchased by the Dakota on credit and demanded repayment. Whereas the French had banned the trade of alcohol, the American traders openly sold it. For many Dakota, these changes in trade were a betrayal of kinship ties. Some advocated tolerance or movement west—others called for active resistance.

In 1650 the Eastern Dakota in the Upper Mississippi Valley may have numbered about 38,000 people. Conflict with tribes such as the Ojibwe in the north and the tribes who had fled from the Iroquis in the 1640s caused mounting losses in battle for the Dakota. European diseases also took their toll, especially the smallpox epidemics of the 1730s and 1780s which killed thousands of them. By 1805 the Eastern Sioux had been reduced to 25,000 people.

In 1819 the U.S. government built Fort Snelling at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. The fort had several purposes: to keep the Dakota and their neighbors the Ojibwe at peace, stop further intrusion of white settlers into Dakota territory, and prepare the Dakota for assimilation into American society. Assimilation meant getting the Dakota to learn how to read and write English as well as converting them into a

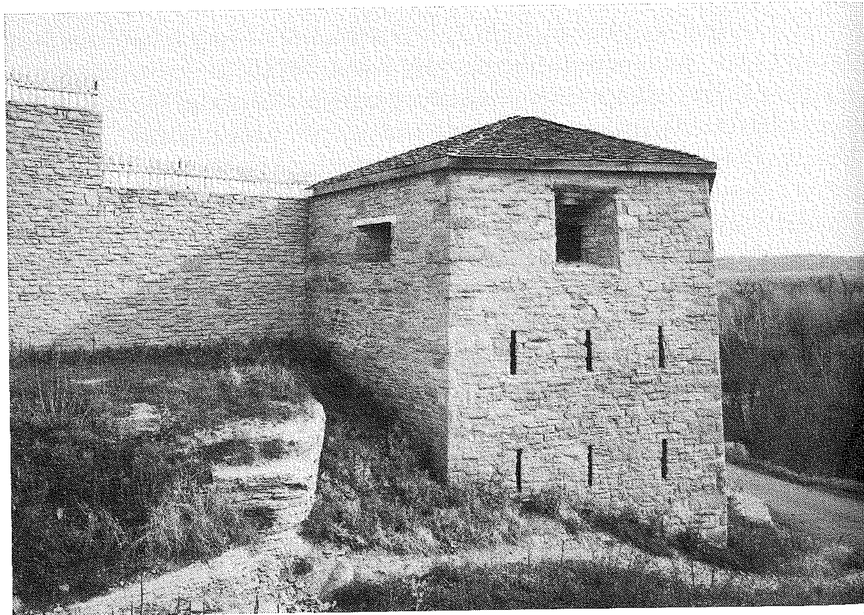
nation of Christian farmers. Missionaries served as the instruments of this change.

In the 1830s, the artist George Catlin described the condition of the Dakota who still lived in the Mississippi Valley:

> The Sioux in these parts, who are out of reach of the beavers and buffaloes, are poor and very meanly clad, compared with those on the Missouri, where they are in the midst of those and other wild animals, whose skins supply them with picturesque and comfortable dresses. The same deterioration also is seen in the morals and constitutions of these, as amongst all other Indians, who live along the frontiers, in the vicinity of our settlements, where whisky is sold to them, and the small-pox and other diseases are introduced to shorten their lives.[15]

But Catlin also noted other changes as well that were a tribute to the adaptability of the Eastern Dakota. He observed that they "exhibit considerable industry in their agricultural pursuits, raising very handsome cornfields, laying up their food, thus procured, for their subsistence during the hard and tedious winters."[16]

The Dakota's connection to the fur trade for over a century had profound consequences for their environment. They killed beavers by the tens of thousands every year—the very beavers that created the dams that caused ponds to form that eventually turned into meadows that brought



Fort Snelling. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

in the deer, elk and, other animals that the Dakota hunted for meat. By the 1800s, the beavers were nearly all gone, and the Dakota had to trade muskrat pelts, which were worth less. Salted pork that they bought from American merchants became the mainstay of their diet. Alcoholism was rampant. Continual waves of American immigrants to Minnesota and pressure from government officials and their Indian agents forced the Eastern Dakota to sign a series of treaties in 1837, 1851, and 1858 by which they ceded all their lands along the Mississippi to the U.S. government. In return, they received annual annuities and reservations along the Minnesota River in the western parts of the state. American merchants got the first cut of the annuity payments for outstanding loans every year, so not much of the payments actually got to the Dakota. Tension mounted between those Dakota who decried the exploitation by federal officials, the loss of land and traditional ways, and the migration of white settlers. The Eastern Dakota rose up in 1862, killing over 500 hundred American settlers before several thousand federal troops arrived and dispersed them. After executing dozens of Dakota in the largest mass execution in U.S. history and jailing many others, the federal government forced the rest of the tribe to move to reservations in the Dakota Territory.

CONCLUSION

Dozens of other tribes made the Mississippi Valley their home at some point in their history. On the upper Mississippi River, the Ojibwe migrated into northern Minnesota and pushed the Dakota south. By maintaining peaceful relations with the English and the Americans, they managed to stake out a life along the river. Today, they are one of the few Native American tribes to maintain a reservation there. The Mesquakie or Fox fled from the Iroquois onslaughts and established themselves near the headwaters of the Des Moines River. But war with the French and surrounding tribes forced them to join with the Sauk when their numbers reached less than a hundred. The Black Hawk War of 1832 was a disaster for the Sauk and the Mesquakie. It gave the federal government the excuse to force land cessions from the Sauk leadership, who were actually giving away the traditional lands of the Mesquakie. Both tribes were forced to move to western reservations.

The Ioway were descendents of the Oneota. As an agricultural people who supplemented their diet with hunting, they established villages along the Mississippi River in what is today Iowa and northern Arkansas. They maintained a strict social hierarchy of Chief, Noble Warriors, and Commoners in which members had to marry within their social class. The Ioway engaged in trade with the Europeans, but their numbers declined rapidly from disease and war. The great enemies of the Ioway were the Chickasaw, whose hunting and war parties patrolled a huge amount of territory that bordered on the Mississippi. By the 1830s, only 1,400 Ioway

Objibwe children and white settlers, ca. 1895 Courtesy of Pennington County Historical Society.

remained. They lost much of their autonomy when American Indian agents used annual annuity payments to control the tribe's chiefs, who were eventually compelled to sell their tribe's land and move to western states.

In Louisiana, refugees from the Choctaw tribe settled near New Orleans in the 1800s, but they were quickly absorbed by other tribes. Smaller tribes such as the Houma and the Bayogoula, and several others, carved out a living among the French. They found an economic niche by selling meat and wild fruits and nuts and later agricultural products in the open markets of New Orleans well into the nineteenth century. Most were absorbed into other tribes or became so mixed with European and American blood that they disappeared into American society.

The daily lives of Native Americans along the Mississippi River were dramatically altered when De Soto and his men arrived. In the next three centuries, they struggled to maintain their identity and their land in the face of European and American expansion. Trade with the invaders improved the material life of some natives, but it also bred a dependence that eventually led to the loss of their ancestral homes. Many of their descendants survive today in independent and autonomous regions far away from their ancestral homes. Some have left their reservations and moved to cities along the Mississippi River. Since the 1980s, the United

States government has actively sought to strengthen tribal identity by recognizing the special status of tribes, instead of trying to weaken them as they did in the 1890s and 1950s, but what federal policy will be in the future is uncertain. Economically, casinos have provided new sources of revenue for native tribes throughout the United States, generating 22 billion dollars in 2005. The Tunica-Biloxi, Ojibwe, Chickasaw, Ioway, Quapaw, and Dakota run successful gambling operations. But the age-old tensions within tribes remain between the need to preserve their heritage and the desire to assimilate and prosper in the American economy.

NOTES

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