

CONTINUITIES OF TRADITION WITHIN THE APALACHICOLA-CREEK
CEREMONIAL AND RITUAL ARENA

THESIS

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It has often been said that the North American Indians dance out their religions. Their religious convictions are expressed through the medium of dances, songs, repetitive movements- Åke Hultkrantz (1981:51).

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of This Thesis

Ritualized dancing can become a reaffirmation of the resilient bonds that tie a living culture to its past. When observing the sacred ceremonies that are practiced by contemporary Southeastern Native Americans, sacred dancing tends to be the defining feature that characterizes these seminal religious events. If combined with music and singing, this act can evoke an effervescent spiritual exaltation in the individual performer, as well as throughout the entire group of participants (West 1993:ix). Sacred dance can also embody intrinsic philosophies, values, and social identity (West 1993:ix). Moreover, to the practitioners of these traditional activities, these dances are a part of a larger interconnected cultural phenomena based on spirituality, language, medicine,

community healing, and mythological reenactment (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Sacred dance is also a creative display of ritual theater. It is through these displays and artistic expression that contemporary Native American traditions, based on ancestral life ways, can be successfully passed on to the younger generations.

To the members of the Hitchiti and Muskogee-Creek speaking Apalachicola Peace Town, *Ekvvnv Hvtke*¹ (translates from Muskogee to "White Earth"), various traditional dances like the women's Ribbon Dance, the men's Feather Dance, and the community's Turtle Dance are still and frequently incorporated into their religious *modus operandi*. To these Apalachicola-Creeks, dancing is ritual and prayer, and vice-versa, prayer and ritual is dancing. Within their ceremonial arena, or what is often referred to in the ethnographic literature as square grounds, the Apalachicola-Creeks celebrate an organized microcosm and creation beliefs through community ritual and social dancing. These celebrations are known as fire-renewal ceremonial cycles. These complex cycles of social gatherings are centered on a lunar-based agricultural New

¹In Muskogee, the 'v' operates as a short vowel and is pronounced with the tongue in a more central position in the mouth: as in the English *anon* (Martin and Martin 2000:xix).

Year, which is also timed to coincide when the first crop of green corn is harvested.

To the observer trained in the anthropological methodology, there are symbolic attributes to everything occurring within the square grounds. This can include the subtlest whispered incantation of magic, to the ritualized bubbling of the "white drink," to the scratching rites from the jagged jaw of a garfish, or to the grounds itself. Not only are these symbols embedded with inherently expressive meanings, but also these various rituals along with their attached symbology certainly function as a concrete realization of the Southeastern Native American cosmological worldview. In this sense, the act of dancing, especially if it functions as a literal reenactment of a sacred mythological account, is unassailably inseparable from the most important characteristics of Native American religious practices.

The Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance is one such ritual that incorporates and reenacts their charter myth of creation. To these Native practitioners, the Turtle Dance becomes the physical manifestation of their allegorical origin mythos, and in this communal practice they literally recreate the formation of the earth at the dawn of creation. Just as the Eucharist rite within Catholicism

maintains that the act of transubstantiation is an actual reality, the Turtle Dance reconstructs the world with a similar authenticity. The earth, as the people of *Ekvnv Hvtke* see it, is believed to be the back of the first creature, a lone mother sea turtle that found purpose and emerged from the depths of the primordial oceans of darkness.

The intention of this thesis is to demonstrate evidence of a continual relationship of ritual symbolism and meaning within the context of the ceremonies practiced by the present day Apalachicola-Creeks and that of their ancestors. More specifically, this thesis will examine the function and importance of the interrelatedness between the Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance and their Creation narrative. To support my hypothesis, I suggest that the usage of certain ethnographic resources combined with archaeological data may serve as the foundation of validation for the evidence of cultural continuity within this contemporary Native American tribal community. I postulate that the employment of the Turtle Dance, and thus the Creation narrative in tandem with the agriculturally based cycle of ceremonies conveys strong thematic underpinnings of world renewal concepts. I believe these conceptual understandings are deeply rooted to the

ideologies shared by these contemporary people to their Mississippian Period (AD 900 - 1731)² ancestors.

Furthermore, I maintain that this shared worldview largely focuses on the cyclicity of time, which was strongly influenced by the influx of large-scaled agricultural techniques, and is based on the rhythms found within the shrouded mysteries of the natural world.

More than five hundred years of cultural genocide, linguistic oppression, forced ideological shift, and physical relocation is nothing short of what most, if not all, of the Indigenous peoples of post-Columbian North America have painfully endured. For the Hitchiti speaking Apalachicola-Creeks, their present day *tvlvw*³, or town, is located immediately near their ancestral water source, the Apalachicola River (Figure 1), in Blountstown, Northwestern Florida⁴.

Still deeply rooted to their ancestral agrarian based ceremonies and traditional medicine ways, today the

² The violent annihilation of the last great Gulf Coast Mississippian culture, the Natchez chiefdom, by the French in was in 1731; this demarcated the final end of the Mississippian Period way of life and last evidence of an operating chiefdom (Reilly and Garber 2007:10).

³ In Muskogee, *t* is unaspirated, sounding is if the pronunciation was between *t* and *d* (Martin and Martin 2000:xxii).

⁴ See chapter five for a more in-depth definition of *tvlvw*.

Apalachicola-Creeks carry on a torch of resilience. This torch is embedded with flames of an ancient continuum. This continuum both shadows and illuminates the pre-existing ideological and cosmological complexities as exemplified in the iconography and architectural grammar of the Mississippian Period. The people of the community, *Ekvnv Hvtke*, are the people of "one fire."



Figure 1. The mighty Apalachicola River in Torrey State Park, Florida. Photo taken by the author in summer of 2011.

Out of all the Southeastern Native American tribal groups, the Creeks are perhaps the most well known due to their relationships with Europeans throughout the

tumultuous history of the early New World frontier. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the term "Creeks" was given by the English deerskin traders in reference to the Natives living in the Southeastern area. This was, in actuality, a placeholder title given to a large amount of distinguished cultural groups to lessen confusion to the English traders. This consolidation also allowed Georgian settlers to "rationalize violence" against the Indigenous peoples (Martin 1991:8). At the time, there were about fifty to one-hundred various tribes under the "Creek" delineation, and many of these tribal groups spoke foreign languages and practiced different customs (Wright Jr. 1988:1-6). Consequently, an alternative measure would be to call every individual tribal group by the name of its square ground. This would include the *tvlwvs* of Tuckabatchee, Hillabee, Wococcoie, Abekas, Tallapoosas, Columee, Eufaula, Coosa, Tallahassee, Apalachicola, Yuchi, Coweta, Chehaws, Hitchiti, Okfuskee, Oosoochee, Cheauhau, Cheauhoochee, Ocmulgee, Cussetuh, Coweta, Sauwoogelo, Tamathli, Oconee, Taskegee, Auputtaue, and Likatcka, just to name a few (Martin 1991:11; Foster 2007:44-71). The Creeks eventually adopted this name, as well as, the Algonquin name, Muskogee (Martin 1991:11-12).

The *Ekvnv Hvtke* square grounds are arguably descended from one of the Hitchiti speaking Lower Creek towns. These towns were located in the Apalachicola Province⁵ described by Europeans in the late seventeenth century (Hann 2006:86). More likely, the old Apalachicola Lower Creek mother town is their cultural ancestor. The people of *Ekvnv Hvtke* are the product of an extremely complex set of social changes brought on by a multitude of historical processes.

These people were once engrained into societies based on a rigidly structured social organization based on a principle known as matrilineality. Matrilineality, as anthropologists have defined it, is where lineage and clan membership were determined through the mother's kinship line; however, most of the present community members of *Ekvnv Hvtke* are now referred to as being members of the "Big Town Clan" (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Essentially, this means that even though an individual's father's lineage and clan still has a continuation, the loss of matrilineal ties will force this individual into a "catch-all" category within their society. It should be

⁵ The word Apalachicola has several implications. It can refer to a *tvlvv*, a province, and a river. To placate confusion, I refer to the people of *Ekvnv Hvtke* as Apalachicola-Creeks.

noted that not all members have lost their clan delineation (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The welcoming sign at the White Earth *tvlvw* with surviving clans, Blountstown, Florida. Picture taken by the author in April of 2009.

Together, the current members of *Ekvvnv Hvtke* represent a mixture of Hitchiti, Apalachicola, Miccosukee⁶, Overhill Cherokee, Muskogee, Yamasee, Yuchi, Natchez, and various other cultural distinctions that coalesced during the last four hundred years of Indigenous social landslides. To the Apalachicola-Creeks, their Apalachicola Tribal Town delineation refers to their continuation as a ritually driven people that has kept an “unbroken” fire tradition.

⁶ When referring to the tribe, I use the Miccosukee spelling, whereas I use Mikasuki for the language.

This unbroken fire tradition has existed since before the infamous Jacksonian Indian removal from the Southeast during the earlier nineteenth century.

As languages Apalachicola, as well as Mikasuki, are considered to fall under the Hitchiti linguistic branch, which it is related, yet distinct, from Muskogee (Hudson 1976:23). Hitchiti was often considered the "Mother Tongue" of these people and is assumed to have antiquity within the region (Swanton 1922:172). However, it must be understood that Hitchiti, Apalachicola, Mikasuki, Yamasee, and Seminole are so closely related linguistically, that as languages, they should almost be viewed as one distinct dialect (Hann 2006:7; Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). It has often been said to me that the variant of the language stock spoken at *Ekvnyv Hvtke* is closer to "Creek-osukee" than to Muskogee, Mikasuki, or Hitchiti. Having gone over this linguistic definition, I will now refer to these people as the Apalachicola-Creeks, for the purposes of clarity.

The speakers of the Hitchiti tongue fall into a category of Lower Creeks as described by ethnologists. By the 1830s, their Upper Creek relations in eastern Alabama were being forced with federal pressure to forever abandon their homeland (Figure 3). This abandonment occurred during

the Andrew Jackson presidential administration and is known collectively as the Trail of Tears. Although the majority of the Hitchiti speakers eventually deserted the homeland of their ancestors (this included several Lower Creek towns along the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley⁷ in present day Georgia), they never really left the Southeast and the vicinity of the Apalachicola River, *per se*. After Jackson's Removal policy was enforced, federal officials began threatening the remaining Creeks residing in Florida with removal. That threat was to be accomplished by turning the Native American jurisdiction over to the hands of Florida lawmakers. This caused a panicked and unorganized scattering throughout the Florida panhandle of Native nuclear families and refugees (Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:424). Hidden within the dismal swamps of western Florida, the brave remnants of an Apalachicola-Creek band secretly and silently remained and survived as a distinct people. Today, these people are recognized by the State of Florida (but not the federal government) as part of the Muscogee Nation of Florida, formerly known as the Florida Tribe of Eastern Creek Indians.

⁷ The Apalachicola is the very southern part of the great Chattahoochee River, which originates in northeastern Georgia. Just as the Chattahoochee River merges with the Flint River, it crosses the Florida state line and then becomes the Apalachicola River.

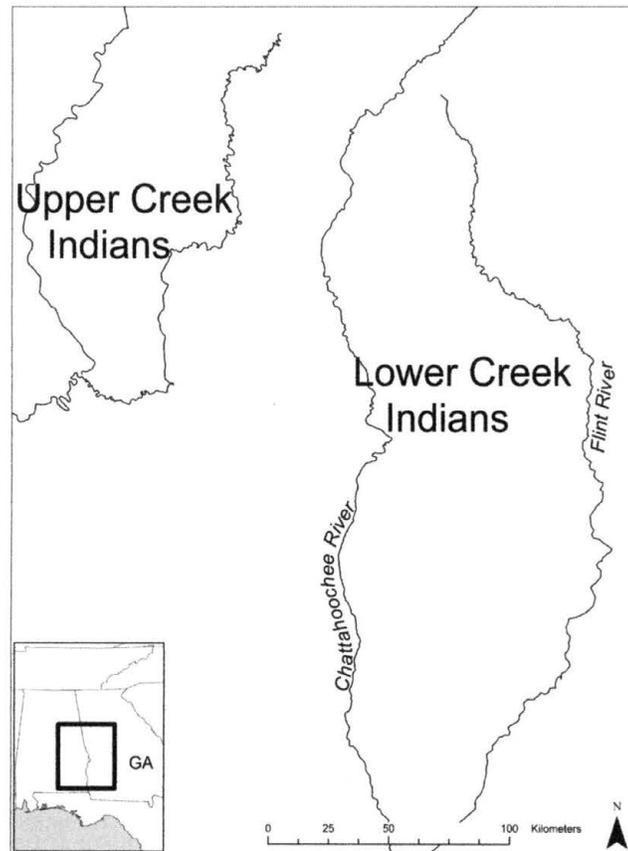


Figure 3. Map of Creek settlements between 1715 and 1830 (Foster 2004:66).

Until the last thirty years, scholars found it unreasonable to create a synthetic portrait of the ceremonial complexes and interactive spheres that occurred throughout the Southeast during the Mississippian Period. Critics argued that the original meaning behind the themes, styles, and symbols found on Mississippian art reflected a stratified ideological paradigm that has long since perished. From the final collapse of the Mississippian Period chiefdoms and the advent of European conquest,

archaeological research has demonstrated that Native American social and religious structures shifted rigorously. This same collapse caused by interaction with Europeans is also reflected in a disjunction in social systems and organizational patterns. Thus, scholars argued the level of disjuncture created no foundation on which to build demonstrable proofs of continuity based on insight from the archaeological record.

Also in the past, observations of certain ethnographic resources seemed to only recognize a pale shadow of the rich ceremonial lives of the many Southeastern Native cultures. Previous scholarship produced no tangible evidence of a continuous thread that crossed through the boundaries of time, space, and major cultural and social change between the Lower Creeks and their archaeological ancestors. The proponents who doubted and still doubt the existence of any ideological continuums rightfully identify the social vacuums brought on by disease and relocation. Other scholars point at the religious and cultural genocides practiced by the Spanish missionary systems, not to mention the United States government's Trail of Broken Treaties, fort systems, and boarding school phases. Moreover, the lack of any concrete writing systems from the pre-Columbian period is also a major cause of traditional

severance. Another problem is synthesizing a modern perception by Western scholars to fit their postulated models of the Indigenous past.

To the contrary, some researchers will dispute these hypotheses stating that the pre-Columbian ideological systems have persevered with both underground resistance and cultural persistence against the relentless forces and influx of European culture. The evidence of this resistance can be found in the oral stories, surviving botanical knowledge, ritual offices, maintenance of sacred objects and bundles, and multi-layered cosmological ideas. Yes, it is self evident that disjuncture in meaning has occurred. It is inevitable when entire chiefdoms whose political systems based on esotericism collapse. However, I present that a complex framework of medicinal and ceremonial knowledge trickled down through lineage lines, or more likely, medicine families. This same framework provided the foundation from which cultures, like the Apalachicola-Creeks, utilized as a blueprint for their ever-evolving ritual life. All cultures and religious systems change throughout time, and the Apalachicola-Creeks are no exception to this rule. Despite all efforts of extinction, their ceremonies, beliefs, and matrilineal system continue.

solus humanitas ut mos non verto est a mortuus humanitas- "The only culture that does not change is a dead culture" [Latin].

In this regard, the topic of Native American cultural continuity has recently been under the anthropological microscopic-lens. Many excellent scholars, such as Ronald Mason, James H. Howard, and Jason Baird Jackson, have added both methodology and insightful rhetoric to this area of research (Howard 1984; Jackson 2005; Mason 2006). Amongst more recent efforts of cultural recovery are meetings such as the Texas State University Mississippian Iconographic Workshops. These workshops have exemplified an interdisciplinary method combined of ethnographies, archaeology, structural analysis, and art history. This method has helped to answer many of the previously unanswered questions pertaining to both the art of the Mississippian Period and the survival of the art amongst contemporary Southeastern Native Americans. Through these Texas State University meetings, certain themes, styles, imagery, and symbols have demonstrably been defined and understood through the analogies contained within ethnographic sources and literature (Reilly and Garber 2007; Lankford et al. 2010).

Without knowing what questions to answer, the archaeological record can be perceived as an overwhelming and intimidating vastness of data. However, through proper training and patience, the erudite researcher must first scan entire databases for similarities and oppositions between ethnographic sources and available archaeological data. Only then, the recognition of similar corpuses and styles may be formulated.

Many researchers are turning to first hand written accounts from the Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletins (BAE) for a good source of ethnographic comparisons (Reilly and Garber 2007:10). Thankfully, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a new department within the United States government was formed and headed by university-trained academics. This same department acted upon, what seemed, as a sincere desperation and accumulated massive written accounts on the remaining but dying customs of the soon-to-be-moribund North American Indigenous cultures. Later in its history, the BAE sent out a team of Boasian-trained students to collect data from tribes and ethnic minorities all across the US. These ethnographers extensively produced notebooks that recorded myths, rituals, dances, and customs. John Swanton's famous *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians* (1929), Paul Radin's

The Road of Life and Death (1945), and James Mooney's *Cherokee Myths* (1900) are perhaps the best-known and cited sources for Southeastern mythological studies.

Since the early twentieth century, folklorists and students of Native American mythologies have meticulously collected and analyzed traditional oral teachings (Grantham 2002; Lankford 2008; Swanton 1926; Keyes 1994). Anthropologists working in these areas began to realize that these allegorical myths were more than just fanciful tales and stories. They were often heavily laden with complex philosophies, such as the act of Creation, astronomical events, explanations of the natural world, and ethical teachings based on an interconnected morality for maintaining social and spiritual order. As Creek myth specialist Bill Grantham states, through careful interpretations of mythological stories one can extrapolate the supernatural organization of the pantheons of deities and the order of the cosmos "through which the social order and cultural values of a society are confirmed" (Grantham 2002:3). Moreover, in John Keyes' master's thesis, he examined how Southeastern Native American myths changed over time as did the culture that produced them (Keyes 1994). Keyes further noted that within these cultures, mythologies supported the foundation for rituals and

ceremonies (Keyes 1994:29). With this approach, the application of myths to archaeological research has yielded an understanding of objects and ritual and their place within the overall cultural context.

Ronald Mason, an academic archaeologist, has made strong arguments that support the incorporation of oral stories into the reconstruction of the Native American past. Mason illustrates several points in the following list, which were taken straight from his pivotal work, *Inconstant Companion: Archaeology and North American Indian Oral Traditions* (2006):

1. Oral traditions are as valid as scientific statements about the past and should be treated equally with them.
2. Even nonliterate people are bound to know their own histories better than outsiders do.
3. Because they are *emic*⁸ phenomena, oral traditions are not challengeable on their own grounds and should be accepted as evidence accordingly.
4. Whole blocks of past time are known exclusively through oral traditions.
5. Verbal and written accounts of the past are equally valid, each simply addressing different realities.
6. In those areas where archaeology and oral traditions overlap, their combination offers a

⁸ *Emic* is an cultural anthropological term that refers to how meaning is perceived through the eyes of a given culture and is described as being "culture-bound"; *etic*, on the other hand, is a term that refers to the conclusions drawn by an anthropologist after an empirical investigation (Harris 1976:331-348).

richer view than either can alone [Mason 2006:10-11].

To offer a counterpoint to Mason's hypotheses, Native American folklorist George Lankford has made interesting points based on the destruction of esoteric knowledge. I will summarize these assumptions from Lankford's 2008 publication entitled *Looking for Lost Lore: Studies in Folklore, Ethnology, and Iconology* in the following list:

1. Esoteric knowledge is reserved for a specialized class of elites in most societies, especially in oral societies.
2. Within oral societies, complex knowledge is aided with certain mnemonic devices such as charts, songs, and sacred landscapes and objects.
3. Only the individuals who have the ability to interpret mnemonic devices have certain power over the general public, and it is the responsibility of that individual within the given society to preserve that knowledge.
4. Because a large portion of ritual theatre is performed in public, many non-elites can conceptualize a generalized understanding of religious themes and undertones. A master/apprentice method of teaching is also assumed.
5. Successful transmission of esoteric knowledge largely depends on the efficiency and stability of the master and apprentice relationship. If a culture is endangered or an important individual is lost, the overall society's knowledge will suffer (Lankford 2008:9-10).

In this thesis, I keep the dynamics between Mason and Lankford's observations in mind. Whereas Mason sheds a light of optimism when dealing with oral teachings, Lankford supplements this with an overshadowed forewarning about the problems of tying pre-history together. I believe both have merit and proceed with caution.

Outside the field of anthropology, an array of scholars from multiple disciplines and backgrounds has also attributed beneficial help in both demystifying the web of the Native American past and preserving its future. Linguistic revivalists have invested substantial effort in order to regain fluency in Native American tongues, especially throughout the contemporary younger generations (Greymorning 2004). It is hoped that this language-renaissance will spark a rogue wave of interest in Indigenous driven self-maintenance of cultural and hereditary identity. Although in some cases this surge of language recovery has proved problematic and fruitless, in other cases such as the Muscogee and Navajo, oral history and language restorations have proven both successful and pragmatic. For example, the College of the Muscogee Nation in Oklahoma offers multi-coursework in teaching Muscogee⁹

⁹*Muscogee* has a number of alternative spellings, and in Oklahoma it is preferred this way. When referring to the

language, and several other Indigenous institutions for higher learning have also followed this revitalization movement.

Many research questions, once asked, may begin to unravel these threads of continuity and slowly reveal more of the pieces to the obfuscated puzzle of Native American prehistory. Without a proper background, interdisciplinary methodology, and objective experience from participant observation, researchers will inevitably grasp at the loose threads only to reconstruct a false portrait of Native American cultural chronology, and thus end up "end up."

To what extent have these processes of traditional continuity survived in ritual dance is a question I will investigate in this thesis. Are contemporary Native American communities conservatively clinging to an ancient self-image that reflects the permanence of their traditional values, experiences, and ceremonies? Are communities reinventing an "imagined" tradition by merely going through the ceremonial motions modeled on their traditional past as interpreted by the ethnographic literature? If so, the question must be asked, are these same communities reapplying sacred meaning to symbolic

language and not the particular Oklahoma Muscogee Creek tribe, I will use the *Muskogee* spelling.

objects? Do gaps in traditional rituals represent a completely lost cultural construct? If so, then if a culture relearns a traditional ritual is it revitalization or is the practice of the ritual an imagined invention? The modern researcher must ask where is the line drawn between a living tradition and a culture in the process of revitalizing its once lost traditions?

In order to achieve the previously discussed goals, I will organize this thesis in the following manner. In the second chapter, I will discuss previous research and evaluate its importance to my own avenue of research. In the third chapter, the methodological and theoretical basis of my thesis will be expounded upon. In chapter four, I will provide a thorough overview of the pre-history and history of the Apalachicola-Creeks. Chapter five will contain an overview of Apalachicola-Creek cosmology in comparisons with the structural layout of *Ekvuv Hvtke*. In chapter six, I will discuss in detail and deconstruct both the Turtle Dance and the Creation narrative (See Appendix A). Finally, a summary as well as my conclusions is drawn in the seventh chapter.

Chapter II

HISTORY OF RESEARCH

This chapter will provide a summary of previous research on the topics of Southeastern Native American ritual dance, mythologies, as well as cultural continuity. Research on these topics begins with Spanish and French documentation of the sixteenth century. Other later sources stem from explorers, missionaries, naturalists, traders, and historians. Scholars have pointed out that these narratives often cast subtle undertones of ethnocentrism and Euro-centric biases due to a poor understanding of an alien religious system. However, the very fact that these cultures were recorded into the annals of history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is an important source of documentation.

The second part of this chapter is comprised of research conducted by scholars trained in an anthropological background with an emphasis in the methodologies of ethnographic observation. This begins with the *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletins* in the late

nineteenth century and is supplemented with twentieth century and contemporary ethnographic research on Native American ritual and myth. The final part of this chapter presents previous publications on the topic of cultural continuity. It must be noted that until recently, scant attention has been given to this latter area, and, therefore, it remains a marginal subject throughout the timeline of anthropological literature.

Euro-American Narratives

The earliest documentation of Southeastern Native Americans comes from the journals of the initial Spanish explorers, as well as missionaries and the military records of the sixteenth century. It has been speculated, that the first written observation on a Native North American, stems from 1521 when Spanish slavers on the South Carolinian coast captured a Chicora Indian (Hudson and Tesser 1994:1). This captured Indian was subsequently deemed "Francisco of Chicora" and taken to meet the Queen of Spain (Hudson and Tesser 1994:1).

Little was known about the inhabitants that lived within the Southeastern interior until the Spanish breached into the inland wilderness in 1539. The well-documented expedition of Hernando de Soto (1539-43) mentions several

Spanish interactions with Mississippian Period paramount chiefdoms, some located in the territory later occupied by the seventeenth century Lower Creeks.

Capachequi, a chiefdom situated on the present day Flint River, was mentioned briefly, but unfortunately the ritual life of these inhabitants was not in the interest of the Spanish scribes at this time (Hudson 1994:83). The accounts from de Soto's expedition were written mainly by the Spanish crown officials attached to the de Soto expedition. Incidentally, these accounts were largely focused on mortuary customs within the temples found at these chiefdoms. This documentation reveals the obsessive nature of the Spaniards' romanticized quest to find gold and other valuable resources and to Christianize these Native peoples. Mortuary temples often contained the remains of respected ancestors and sacred bundles filled with pearls and other objects. The contents of these temples were thoroughly documented in Spanish journals. It may be assumed, based on the contents kept inside, that these temples served the focus of ritual and ceremonial public or private gatherings.

Although writing much later than the actual events of de Soto's entrada, Garcilaso de la Vega, *El Inca*, compiled many sources from the original expedition, which he

published in the *Florida of the Inca* (1604). The importance of sacred spaces found throughout the Southeast is quoted from la Vega:

The temples and sepulchers are the most venerated and esteemed sites among the natives of Florida... I believe the same is true in all nations, and not without good cause for these places are monuments, I would not say of saints, but of those who have passed on, and such monuments recall the dead to us as they were while living [Garcilaso de la Vega in Seeman 2010:56].

The subsequent abortive military expeditions from the Spanish explorers Tristan de Luna (1559-61) and Juan Pardo (1566-68) contained few cultural descriptions of the isolated chiefdoms and peripheral hamlets they happened upon in the Southeast. However, these two accounts deserve some merit because they painted the last portraits of interior cultures before they collapsed. This collapse saw the entire Mississippian chiefdom system disappear from a catastrophic political dissolution in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Worth 1994:105). From 1568 until around 1670, with the settling of Charles Towne by the English, there remains a century long gap in our knowledge of the Native peoples of the interior (Worth 1994:105).

In 1564, before this gap of unrecorded history, the French government commissioned a colonial expedition commanded by Captain Rene de Laudonniere to what is now

present day Florida and coastal South Carolina (Fishman 1995:1). Accompanying Laudonniere was one of the first European artists to reach the New World, Jacques le Moyne de Morgues. Laudonniere's expedition founded Fort St. Charles, which was located on the southern shore of the St. John's River. Before abandoning Fort St. Charles in 1565 due to hostile attacks from the Spanish, Laudonniere and le Moyne had established a relationship with one of the local tribes, the Timucuas (Gatschet 1880:471). Between the ethnographic accounts of Laudonniere and the sketches skillfully produced by le Moyne, a garish picture of Timucua daily and ritual life were documented. Theodore de Bry's recreations of Le Moyne's original drawings were published in France in 1598 and serve as the earliest Native American cultural depictions (Gatschet 1880:471). An article by Albert Gatschet provides a translation of Captain Laudonniere's original notes including information on the Timucuan ball game:

One of the pastimes of their young men is mentioned the throwing of balls against a square mat made of bulrush reeds, hanging from a pole 8-9 fathoms high; the who succeeded in making the mat come down, was the winner of the game [Gatschet 1880:473].

A pictorial rendition of a Timucua ball game scene was produced by le Moyne, which was later recreated in the form

of a wood engraving by de Bry (Figure 4). Also included in Laudonniere's accounts were written depictions of a community dance focused around a center pole and evidence of black drink ceremonialism (referred to by Laudonniere as the "cassine drink" (Figure 5):

The Timucua worshiped the sun under the image of a deer: they raised a stuffed deer-skin on a high pole and testified their reverence for it by singing and dancing rites... they seated themselves on coarse benches made of nine poles or canes running parallel, the benches forming half circles; there they held their councils of war and peace, while the women prepared food for them, or let the cassine drink make the round of the assembled warriors [Gatschet 1880:473,475].



Figure 4. Rendition of Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues' engraving of a Timucua ball game by Theodore De Bry (1585) (Fundaburk 1958:illus,36).



Figure 5. Rendition of Jacques Le Moyne de Morgues' engraving of a Timucua ritual including Black drink ceremonialism by Theodore De Bry (1585) (Fundaburk 1958:illus,29).

Fortunately, the texts produced by the English colonists and traders of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provided a little more cultural detail than that of their Spanish counterparts. In 1585, the well-known Captain John White illustrated his experiences at the Secotan village in Virginia (Figure 6). In White's painting, there is a scene where alternating Secotan men and women are engaged in a circular dancing motion around a circle made of upright wooden posts. Rattles and plants are held in the hands of those engaged dancing. To the immediate left of this dancing scene, more individuals circled around a fire are poised in a crouching position. Unfortunately, White was vague in his description of the activities set within this particular painting, but by

gauging the content, it may be assumed that these actions were ritually based.



Figure 6. John White's 1585 watercolor depiction of the ritual life within a Secotan village (Sloan 2007).

In Thomas Harriot's *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1590), de Bry depicted White's original drawing in a detailed hand-colored engraving (Figure 7). In this well executed engraving, a scene similar in composition to White's *Secoton*, which depicts dancing partners within a ritual space.



Figure 7. De Bry's hand-colored and engraved rendition of White's original drawing of Virginia Native Americans (1590) (Sloan 2007:78).

In the latter part of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Franciscan missionaries began to ambitiously and systematically build a chain of missions within *La Florida's* interior. These missions stretched from St. Augustine in a chain both north and west (Worth 1994:104). The Timucua and Apalachee were the first Indigenous groups to make contact with the Spaniards. Therefore, these tribes were the first to fall victim to the Spanish mission system (Milanich 2000:1-25). As a consequence, the Spanish missionaries documented their interactions with these Native American tribes.

Unsurprisingly uninterested in the religious customs of the Natives, many of these Franciscans focused their writing content on the political and linguistic divisions of the Southeastern tribal towns and provinces (Hann 2006:1-15).

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, England, France, and Spain were all struggling for hegemonic rule over North America. However, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the entire Spanish mission system underwent a complete and final dissolution (Ethridge and Hudson 2002:xxv). At the same time, Native American armies commanded by white Europeans were constantly at war with each other as well as foreign European empires (Moore 1988:14).

After the Indian Trade Act of 1707, which was instituted to protect and regulate trade commissions, the English sent an Indian Agent from South Carolina to represent the English trade interest. Captain Thomas Nairne was to be the diplomatic buffer between the Southeastern tribes and the South Carolina traders (Moore 1988:12). In Nairne's *Muskhogeon Journals* (1708), the author demonstrates his fascination with the social institutions and complexities of two Southeastern groups, the Chickasaw and Talapoosas. Ceremonial busks, such as the Green Corn Ceremony, were only minimally mentioned in Nairne's commentaries. It is unbeknownst to historians if Captain Nairne was allowed to participate or view such rituals, however, he did write on a coronation procession he witnessed at the Talapoosa square grounds. My comments are in brackets, and I left Nairne's spelling unedited:

The seats being full of spectators, a fire and the Cacena [black drink] pots in the middle of the square, the head warriors took up Cossitee [the newly inaugurated chief] first, and then his deputy, carryed them 4 times round the fire, most of the Company following in manner of a procession, and singing or druming a sort of congratulatory tone suitable.. to the occasion [Moore 1988:35].

From this text, it can be inferred that the Talapoosa square grounds housed an inseparably blend of political and

what seem to be religiously based activities that included dancing and singing.

Much of what scholars know about the cultural and ritual life of eighteenth century Southeastern Native Americans comes from the writings of an English deerskin trader named James Adair. In his 1775 publication, *The History of the American Indians*, Adair contributed a wealth of ethnohistorical data on Muskogee-speaking societies along with eyewitness accounts on the Green Corn Ceremony. Many researchers have pointed out that the downfall of Adair's conception of Southeastern Native Americans was his persistence to prove a relationship of these cultures to the ancient ten lost tribes of Israel (Hudson 1977:312). Nonetheless, as Charles Hudson illustrates, Adair not only documented various ritual activities, but he demonstrated, to an extent, a fundamental comprehension of certain symbolic meanings inherent within the Green Corn Ceremony (Hudson 1977:321-322). Furthermore, Adair keenly observed the botanical medicines that were used in ritual context, such as button-snake-root (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), tobacco (*Nicotina rustica*), and yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) (Adair 2005:146,147,361).

William Bartram, a renowned naturalist, traveled extensively all over the Southeast during the late

eighteenth century (1773-76). During these four years, Bartram toured through all three divisions of the Muscogulges (Muskogees), Cherokee territory, several Seminole villages, Upper Creek *tvlwvs* along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers, and Lower Creek *tvlwvs* along the Chattahoochee River Valley (Waselkov and Braund 1995:11). Bartram not only took detailed notes of various flora and fauna, but he wrote on the many Southeastern Native American societies he came across during his journeys. Although Bartram has been criticized for misunderstanding how fragile and dependent the Muskogee social order was upon their own culture (Martin 1991:17), Bartram's *Travels* (1791) provides a rare glimpse into the daily life of the eighteenth century Creeks.

During and immediately after William Bartram's experiences in Creek country, the entire Southeast was going through an era of drastic social change. This was certainly a critically intense time for the Muskogee Creeks.

Due to conflicting philosophies on how to negotiate with the newly founded US government and the influx of colonial pressures, Muskogee leadership had internally divided itself into two factions the Upper Creeks that live in, war or red towns, and Lower Creeks that live in peace

or white towns (Martin 1991:82). The massive economic system of the English deer trade on which the Creeks had greatly depended for economic stability was slowly tapering off. To make matters worse, Georgia settlers were slowly invading western territories that included Creek, Shawnee, and Cherokee hunting grounds (Martin 1991:90). In 1795, the territorial devouring state of Georgia purposefully ignored the Native American sovereignty granted by the US government, and Georgia attempted to sell millions of acres of Muskogee land to corporate interests (Martin 1991:91). After three hundreds years of cultural assimilation, the Southeastern Native American cultures, at the turn of the nineteenth century, were nothing like the previous cultural manifestations of Native cultures of the early contact period.

From 1796 until his death in 1816, Benjamin Hawkins, the US Indian agent, was initially sent to the Lower Creek town, Coweta Tallahassee, as a diplomatic intermediary amongst the Creeks, the United States government, and the encroaching settlers (Ethridge 2203:4). In 1803 Hawkins transferred his operation to the Flint River where he began the Creek Agency (Ethridge 2003:12). From his tenure as an official agent, Hawkins left a large volume of journals, letters, and records of Creek affairs. A massive quantity

of his personal notes and papers were posthumously published as *A Sketch of the Creek Country*. In this volume, he detailed several Upper and Lower Creek *tvlwvs* and included information on Green Corn Ceremonies and various other Creek social customs.

Adam Hodgson, a British missionary, traveled extensively through the Southeast during 1820. In his journals, Hodgson collected notes on a ceremonial busk (probably the Green Corn Ceremony) performed at the Kasihta *tvlvw* (Muskogee Creeks) in 1820. Hodgson references community fire-renewal rituals, a center pole, evidence of black drink ceremonialism, and ritualized dancing in the following:

Before the corn turns yellow, the inhabitants of each town or district assemble; and a certain number enter the streets of what is more properly called the town, with the war-whoop and savage yells... going several times around the pole. Then they take emetics, and fast two days; dancing around the pole a great part of the night. All the fires in the township are then extinguished, and the hearths cleared, and new fires kindled by rubbing two sticks... Many of the old chiefs are of opinion, that their ancestors intended this ceremony as a thank offering to the Supreme Being, for the fruits of the earth, and for success in hunting or war [Witthoft 1949:62].

Shortly before the 1836 removal of all Native Americans from Alabama, many travelers like Hodgson throughout the Creek Territories kept diaries of their

experiences. Through the writings of John Howard Payne, we know the details of the ritual life at the pre-removal Upper Creek *tvlvv*, Tuckabatchee (Witthoft 1949:64). Payne not only described these square grounds, but he indicated how before each Green Corn Ceremony the old surface of the square was removed and replenished anew with fresh earth (Witthoft 1949:64). In 1835, in another publication by Payne, the author thoroughly provided a description of a Green Corn Ceremony on another Upper Creek square ground (Payne 1876:68-71). Payne further mentioned that the central fire rests on an earthen mound in the middle of the square grounds (Payne 1876:71).

Just before Payne's interaction with the Creeks, the presidential administration of Andrew Jackson had passed the Indian Removal Act of 1830. This ultimately illegal act forcibly removed all the Native Americans out of the southeastern US and into the "Indian Territory" in what is now present-day Oklahoma. Immediately after Payne's accounts from 1835-36, most of the entire Native American population had been eradicated from their homelands in the southeastern United States. The Creeks had already been removed from Georgia by 1830, under the Treaty of Washington (Green 1982:122), and by 1837, around 20,000

Creeks were forced to leave their homelands in Alabama at the command of the United States army (Green 1982:185).

From 1841 to 1842, Ethan Allen Hitchcock was sent by the United States War Department to post-removal Oklahoma to investigate charges of fraud and malicious activity regarding government issued provisions and supplies (Foreman 1996:4). Hitchcock was a well-educated scholar and was praised for being a moralist. He produced a journal of field notes that was posthumously published as *A Traveler in Indian Territory* (Foreman 1996). In 1842, Hitchcock's travels through Creek territory, he, like Payne, also reported on the "square grounds" of the Tuckabatchee *tvlwv*, which included details on their council house and black drink ceremonialism (Foreman 1996:112-117).

Only a few years after Hitchcock's investigations, the naturalist Samuel Washington Woodhouse was similarly sent by the government to survey land within the newly founded Indian Territory. Like Hitchcock, Woodhouse also kept an in-depth journal of his travels, which was posthumously published in 1996 as *A Naturalist in Indian Territory: The Journals of S.W. Woodhouse, 1849-50* (Tomer and Brodhead 1996). In his travels, Woodhouse came across the square grounds of a subgroup of the Hitchiti Creeks, the Chiaha Indians. The editors make note of the scene:

Creek towns in Indian Territory were fashioned after their homes in Alabama and Georgia. A central square ground was established and maintained as a social and ceremonial center. It consisted of a ceremonial square with arbor shelters facing inward on three sides where meetings and ceremonial dances were held [Tomer and Brodhead 1996:134-135].

Ethnographic Research

The amount of ethnographic data on Native American cultures preformed by the students of Franz Boas deserves recognition. Franz Boas trained his students to write massive amounts of intensive field notes on different cultures while engaging in large periods of arduous work. To one student in particular, John R. Swanton, this author owes a solemn gratitude. For over forty years Swanton dedicated his life to the Bureau of American Ethnology and contributed literally thousands of notes and texts. Throughout his close association with the Muskogee-speaking linguistic family (Creeks, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Biloxi, and Ofo), Swanton recorded and outlined kinship patterns, linguistic formulas, oral traditions, and social organizations (Swanton 1928).

Undoubtedly, Swanton was an avid writer and has arguably gathered the most information regarding late nineteenth and early twentieth century Creek ceremonial grounds, medicine, and ritual ways. Perhaps the earliest

and most thorough documentation of the Green Corn Ceremony written by Swanton was in the previously mentioned 1928 publication. In this important ethnography, Swanton meticulously describes the structure of the Ceremony, the various dances performed, and the medicine rituals he witnessed at several different Creek square grounds. Although Swanton did not fully understand the intrinsic and symbolic meaning embedded within most of the rituals he witnessed, the information he collected lends itself to Southeastern researchers whom in turn can provide a modern interpretation based on insight gathered from the methods of participant observation and ethnographic comparison.

Swanton's *Myths and Tales of the Southeastern Indians* appeared in the 88th *BAE Bulletin* (1929). This particular document contains oral stories collected by Swanton from Native informants over his tenure as a field anthropologist between the years of 1908 and 1914 (Swanton 1929:1). Most, if not all of these myths were collected in English, for at the time of this collection no massive Creek language database had been pursued (Swanton 1929:1). These mythological allegories stem from the Southeastern tribal groups such as the Creeks, Hitchiti, Alabama, Koasati, and Natchez.

In addition to ethnographic data on ceremonies and myths, Swanton also mapped out multiple hand drawn representations of various Southeastern square grounds. These pictorial renditions include the Okfuskee, Pagan Tallahassee, Tukabahchee, Apalachicola, and Hitchiti square grounds (Figure 8). Swanton was astutely inclined to include the organization of social order based on clan structure within these diagrams and also incorporated the location of medicine pots and, when possible, the direction of ball post.

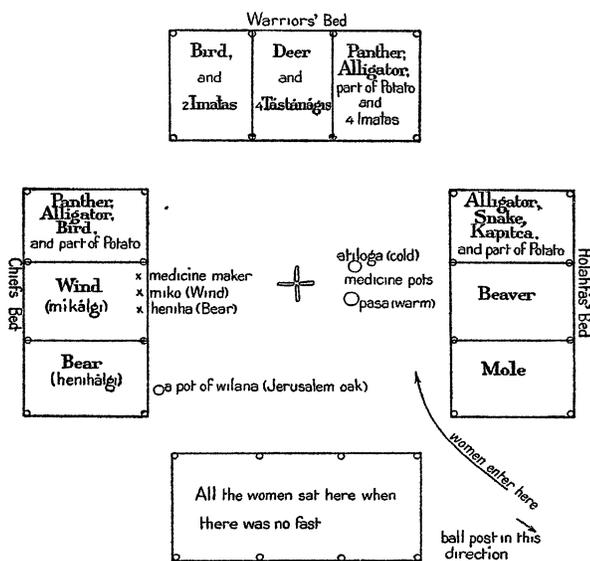


FIG 73 —Plan of the Apalachicola Square Ground (Talwa háko) (D)

Figure 8. John Swanton's rendition of the 1928 Apalachicola Square Ground in Oklahoma (Swanton 1928:270).

Frank Speck, another student of Franz Boas, has contributed a wealth of ethnographic reports on Southeastern Native Americans. Throughout 1904-05, Speck

lived with the Yuchi in the northwestern part of the Creek Nation in Oklahoma (Speck 1909:9). At this time, the Yuchi had three *tvlwvs*, Polecat, Sand Creek, and Big Pond, each with a square ground, respectively (Speck 1909:9). As a government ethnographer, Speck took precise notes on the cultures he witnessed, which included many Yuchi ceremonies. Unsurprisingly, Speck recognized the importance of the square grounds and how each one was rich with religious symbolism. The following description is taken from his ethnology:

The center of the town is a square plot of ground kept free from vegetation and trampled down smooth and hard all over... Its four sides face north, east, south and west respectively. Here is the sacred ground of the town where civil and ceremonial events take place... Three lodges [arbors] constructed of upright posts roofed with brush, open on all sides, stand on its borders, one on the north, one on the west and one on the south side of the square. In the center of the square is a spot where the fire is kept burning... [Speck 1909:79].

Additionally, Speck also hand drew a diagram of the Yuchi square grounds with notes on clan affiliations within the three arbors and placement of ritual officials (Figure 9). I will return to Speck's work on the symbolism imbued within the Yuchi ceremonial arena and its interrelatedness to the present day Apalachicola-Creek square grounds presented in chapter five.

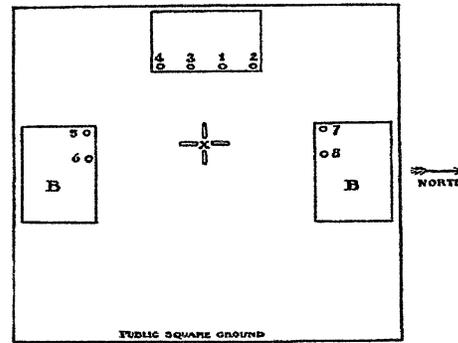


Fig 33 Diagram of Yuchi Town Square, showing seating of officials in council

A Chief	1	Town Chief	Bear Clan.
Society	2	Assistant,	Wolf Clan
Lodge	3	Chief,	Wolf Clan
	4	Chief,	Bear Clan
B Warrior	5	Sanctuary Official,	(?)
Society	6	Warrior Official,	Bear Clan
Lodge	7	(Master of Ceremonies)	Gocon, Panther Clan
	8	Warrior Official,	Bear Clan
X		Fire Place.	

Figure 9. Frank Speck's diagram of a Yuchi square ground, complete with clan and office affiliations (Speck 1909:80).

In 1949, anthropologist John Witthoft produced a synthesis of his research and personal observations of Southeastern rituals, entitled *Green Corn Ceremonialism in the Eastern Woodlands*. This document is important because Witthoft uses a comparative analysis of different Green Corn busks amongst several tribal groups such as the Delaware, Cherokee, Creeks, and Natchez (Witthoft 1949). Notably, Witthoft attempts to draw a relationship between the Green Corn Ceremonies and charter myths based on the Corn Mother; at this time the fusion of ritual symbolism and mythologies had seldom been attempted by ethnologists (Witthoft 1949:5, 52, 77-82).

In the *Bulletin 151* of the BAE (1953), anthropologist Louis Capron published a well-written ethnography based on

section on ethnobotany, where ailments, cures, and native names were given for a large corpus of medicinal plants. Because the Mikasuki Seminole were once Lower Creeks not too incredibly far back throughout their timeline of post-contact history, this work proves itself as a viable and valuable reference.

Charles Hudson published the most comprehensive book on the topic of Southeastern cultural history to date (Hudson 1976). This was the first major publication that attempted to cover the entire cosmological system and history of the Southeastern Native Americans. Another work edited by Hudson, *Black Drink: A Native American Tea* (1979), is the collaborative effort of many researchers, and, to this day, still remains the most thoroughly covered body of data on the subject of black drink ceremonialism. Undoubtedly ahead of its time, *Black Drink* contained a sparsely used methodology for Native American ethnographies: archaeological comparison for the validation of cultural continuums.

James Howard, the late and great anthropologist, conducted a life time of research on Southeastern culture and ritual. In the mid 1970s, James Howard and his wife began a study on Choctaw dance and music, which culminated in a 1990 published ethnography (Howard and Levine 1990).

In this classic work, Choctaw traditional dances, like their Turtle Dance, are depicted with precise detail on choreography, notated music, and lyrics.

The significance of the ethnographic contribution on the Oklahoma Seminoles by Howard is unparalleled in any other similar work in the field of Native American anthropology. After developing an extremely close relationship with Seminole elder and medicine maker, Willie Lena, Howard and Lena coproduced an all-encompassing work on Seminole customs, mortuary practices, botany, ceremonial life, and folklore (Howard 1984). In this book, Howard meticulously wrote on the rituals and medicine plants used at the Oklahoma Seminole Tallahassee square grounds, whilst Lena provided more accessible, yet excellent sketches (Figure 11).

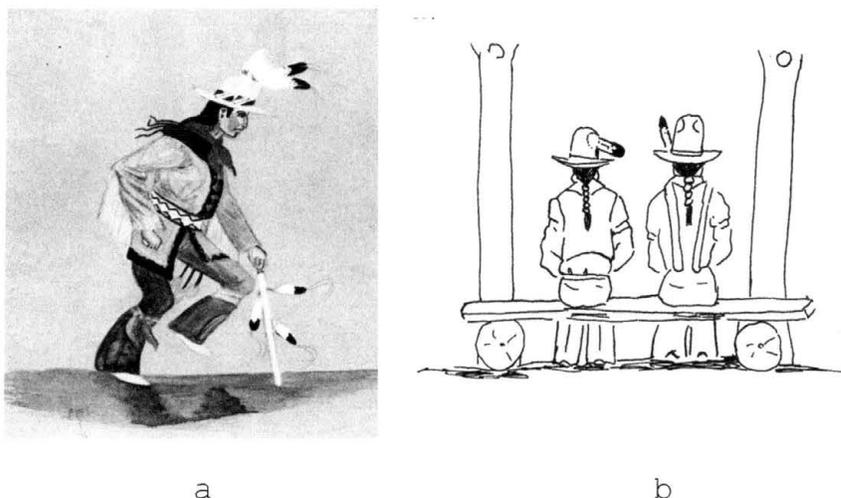


Figure 11. Oklahoma Seminole Willie Lena's 1982 hand drawn portraits of ritual life at the Tallahassee square grounds in Oklahoma. (a) Dancing the Buffalo Dance; (b) The *mikko* and his assistant sitting in the west arbor (Howard 1984:147,114).

In the footsteps of Howard's professionalism in bridging the gap between anthropologist and subject, a number of ethnographically based researchers have recently published material on the topics of medicinal plants and sacred botanical knowledge. Importantly among these works are two collaborative efforts between makers of medicine and anthropologists, *Creek Indian Medicine Ways: The Enduring Power of Mvskoke Religion* (Lewis and Jordon 2002) and *Healing Plants: Medicine of the Florida Seminole Indians* (Snow and Stans 2001). Both are revelations to the general public and Southeastern scholarship that the traditional knowledge of sacred medicine is safely within

the confines in the continuing cultures and medicine families of the descendants of both Upper and Lower Creeks.

Anthropologist Jason Baird Jackson published one of the most superlative contemporary ethnographies on Southeastern ritual observations entitled, *Yuchi Ceremonial Life: Performance, Meaning, and Tradition in a Contemporary American Indian Community* (2005). In this work, Jackson conducted extensive research on the history, society, and traditions of the Yuchi living in present day Oklahoma. Through participant observation and interviews with tribal elders, Jackson's synthesis proves highly relevant to the framework and content of this thesis, especially considering that the Apalachicola-Creeks took in Yuchi customs and religious influences throughout the last three centuries.

Cultural Continuity

Unfortunately, the topic of Native American cultural continuity has been neglected in the field of archaeology and anthropology, but the publications that are available carry considerable and precious value. This is probably due to the simple fact that they are too far and few in between. After the nativistic revitalization movement of the American Indian in the late 1960s and 1970s, the public

eye once again focused attention on Native American modes of living.

In the mid 1970s, anthropologists like James Howard and Claude Medford began to puzzle over the diminishment of ritual dances and the neglect of the younger generations to adhere to the cultural fabric (Jackson 2005:270). No matter who was to blame for the loss of transference of culture, they realized that the younger generations were failing to pick up the languages, songs, and dances. This in turn caused a social vacuum. Among these Native American groups, Howard and Medford projected that a large number of complex animal dances probably became obsolete sometime during the twentieth century (Jackson 2005:270). The difficult rhythms and esoteric meanings somehow just became lost over time, were purposefully discarded, or slowly died out (Eric Jakubowski, personal communication 2011). As author Kurt Vonnegut would say, "So it goes."

The complete loss of meaning behind the rich life of ritually incorporated Native American ideologies is, without doubt for Native Americans, a social nightmare. As Francis Le Flesche was told by the Osage elder, Saucy Calf, "Our ancestors knew not of the art of writing, but they put into ritual form the thoughts they deemed worthy of perpetuation" (Bailey 1995:62). Losing a social stomp dance

is one thing; losing a sacred dance that is based on an integral part of a culture's Creation story is in a completely different level of cultural risk.

However, there are recovery methods. The Texas State University Mississippian Iconographic meetings have achieved several successes in demonstrating the intricate nature of religious paradigms from the survivals of the Mississippian Period. These recoveries are achieved through the aid of archaeological data, structural analyses, and ethnographic comparison. Certain cosmological motifs, themes, and mythological heroes have successfully been identified in these meetings. The most recent recognition and exploration of the stylistic area, labeled the Braden Corridor, have also changed the way scholars understand the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex and Mississippian Iconographic Interaction Sphere (Lankford, Reilly, and Garber 2011).

In the museum exhibition catalog entitled *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand: American Indian Art of the Ancient Midwest and South* (2004), iconographer and anthropologist, Kent Reilly, interviewed a *heles hayv*, Tim Thompson, of the Oklahoma Muscogee square grounds, The Hickory Grounds near Henryetta, OK (Reilly 2004a). This heavy conversation was mainly on the topics on cultural continuity and traditional

preservation from an Indigenous perspective. Mr. Thompson, an excellent medicine teacher, at one point in the interview, almost contentiously discredits the authenticity of any Lower Creek relationship to a pre-removal fire (Reilly 2004a:38). If this linkage is severed or the language is no longer used, Thompson argues, then the culture is completely lost. Thompson's point may have merit, however, there are problems to Thompson's hypothesis when dealing with cultures that have suffered from linguistic annihilation. Need I remind the reader that Hebrew and Latin are two ritual languages that have literally been brought out of extinction, or back from the dead? Yet, still both Judaism and Catholicism are viewed as religions that are predominantly traditional in nature. To me this is an interesting point of a behind-the-cultural-curtain view of an internal bias between two modern Southeastern Native American groups. These biases might be indicative of a long dichotomous relationship between the Upper and Lower Creeks.

In Bill Grantham's *Creation Myths and Legends of the Creek Indians* (2002), the author dissects several Upper Muskogee Creek and Lower Creek Creation myths and defines certain aspects of Creek cosmology, values, and ways. These stories include Creation Myths, Earth Diver Myths,

Emergence stories, Migration stories, and miscellaneous legends on deities of non-human origin. The Apalachicola-Creek Creation Story is referenced and provided by Grantham in the index.

Grantham concluded that the Creeks, both Upper and Lower, shared a diverse set of cosmogonies based on varied experiences as distinct cultures. For instance, the origin of corn mythologies were more prevalent in the Alabamas and Muskogee and more absent within the Yuchis and Hitchitis; this was indicative of the amount of production and enculturation of agricultural techniques among the former tribes as opposed to the latter (Grantham 2002:83). Furthermore, by cross analyzing several different tribal places or origin, Grantham found that the Apalachicola-Creeks were the only culture out of thirteen different Southeastern groups to claim a Turtle as their starting point (Grantham 2002:84). I believe this is why today *Ekvnv Hvtke* is referred to as a Turtle Town.

Remiss is the failure of anthropological research libraries to include more books that illustrate the cosmological perspective and traditional ways of life from the Indigenous perspective. A Muscogee Creek woman, Jean Chaudhuri, spent her lifetime gathering information on the life ways of the Creeks. In *A Sacred Path: The Way of the*

Muscogee Creeks (2005), she articulates on the internal structure and values of the Southeastern Native American life. Moreover, because the Apalachicola-Creeks use Muskogee Creek as a ritual language, certain concepts and defining elements from Chaudhuri's research of the Muskogee worldview also lend a philosophical framework to this thesis.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY AND THEORY

Having illustrated a history of research, now the theoretical and methodological approaches to this thesis must be commented upon. To obtain both an effective and objective organization of research, the applications of several schools of thought will be merged together. Theories will stem from cultural anthropology, cognitive anthropology, and semiotic/symbolic anthropology. I also will utilize the San Marcos four-fold approach to archaeological-iconographic interpretation, which has proven itself a reputable methodology for deciphering the ideological imprinting of the ancient past.

Before assessing the methodology, basic terminology must be defined, or redefined, when necessary. Terms that will be used include "culture," "tradition," "ritual," and "myth." Also included are certain Muskogee words that label ceremonial roles and basic botanical medicinal terminology. "Culture," as defined by Sir Edward Burnet Taylor, is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art,

morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (McGee and Warms 2008:28). I find great difficulty in defining such an infinitely ineffable concept such as culture. Nevertheless, I believe Sir Edwards's definition provides an insightful view to the rituals I will further discuss.

Using the work of Clifford Geertz, I will demonstrate that cultures are identified as constructs, as well as constructions, of their own realities; thus, their material culture and traditions should express an inherent meaning particular to their experience and historical identity (1973:5). Elaborating further on this definition, cultures are "webs of significance," which humanity has spun for itself (Geertz, 1973:4), but just as all organic materials change over time, so do these culturally constructed webs. The elaborate design within these webs merely reflects a synchronistic snapshot in time (Glassie, 1995:399), and as time passes, these webs will slowly change and become altered by their designers and creators. Undoubtedly, these changes reflect the circumstance of evolving time and human interaction.

In conceptualizing a definition of "tradition," I turn again to the scholar Henry Glassie in his essay "Tradition" (1995). Glassie explores this term, tradition, as an

animated entity that is key to understanding historical knowledge (1995:396). Glassie states that the character of a tradition is more of a continuity than a stasis. He defines tradition as a "distinct style of volitional, temporal action" (1995:396) and a peoples' "creation of the future out of their own past" (1995:395). If cultures are synchronistic, then traditions are asynchronistic, or temporally diffuse. Glassie further posits that if change and tradition are synonymous, then the polar opposite of tradition is oppression, or the instrument manipulated by imposing forces that severs the growing "course of development" (1995:396).

Anthropologists have identified "ritual" as a stylized repetitious act that involves the manipulation of religious symbols and often interfaces with the supernatural (James Garber, personal communication 2011). Rituals may also carry a pedagogical objective. In his writings on the Osage religion, Frances Le Flesche noticed how Dighen-Souian speakers transferred and preserved the wisdom and knowledge from their ancestors through the mechanisms of ritual (Bailey 1995:62). For the Osage, rituals may take many different forms and stylistic variations.

The rituals in which the Apalachicola-Creeks partake are comprised of a plethora of symbolic performances,

dances, and techniques, all particularly significant without apparent ideological contradiction. By maintaining a semiotic approach towards understanding their symbolic ritual regalia and ritual behavior, I have borrowed methods from both interpretive and hermeneutic anthropology. Symbolic anthropologists Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner described symbols as carriers of meaning, and within each symbol multiple stratified layers of meaning can coexist and contribute to the overall morality of the social order (Deflem 1991:6).

Certainly, Turner emphasized heavily the importance of symbols within ritual context. However, Geertz argued that symbolic rituals were derivatives within the existing social order. The interpretations thereof will result in an unveiling of a structural embodiment of cultural meanings (Deflem 1991:9,17). These meanings may incorporate social identity, ancestral lineage, and religious, political, or artistic expression.

In Geertz's essay "Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight," he interprets his observations of a ritualized social event, the cockfight, as a multi-layered reflection of Balinese social ideologies (Geertz 1973). Geertz used his method of "thick description" ethnography to analyze layer after layer of hidden symbolic meanings that he

witnessed at the cockfight. The deeper he delved into the stratified layers of hidden symbolism, the deeper cultural significance he found imbued within those meanings.

If rituals can contain strata of symbology, then certainly sacred art media and ritual objects may operate similarly. Using art historical theories, Robert Payton discusses the representational and multi-leveled qualities of art that presents meaning within its imagery (Layton 1991:22-41). Layton further denotes that it is the goal of the anthropologist to gain insights into these meanings by analyzing the layers of intrinsic subject matter in order to understand the cultural significance and context in which objects of art were produced.

Because religion plays such an integral socio-political role in many societies operating at a chiefdom, tribal, or band level, the underlying iconology of art is often embedded within the religion of cultures existing in those levels of organization (Layton 1991:85). In any culture that lacked a form of writing system, pre-Columbian North Americans to be no exception, the implementation of religious ideologies through the vehicle of art media can be a very effective tool for distributing complex subject matter. This is especially true when supplemented with an indoctrination of mythologies. In this regard, Layton's

theories are applicable to the comparison of Mississippian Period art and to the ritual objects and rituals performed by the present day Apalachicola-Creeks.

Myths, as John Keyes defines, are "any story attributed to an aboriginal storyteller, which contains incidents or interpretations of incidents of supernatural nature" (Keyes 1993:18). Keyes also postulated that motifs were the building blocks of myths. Because motifs were so firmly rooted into these mythic foundations, this is why thematic commonalities are so prevalent throughout such diverse cultures, and why the incidents and stories occurring within Native American myths are so similar (Keyes 1993:71). It must be kept in mind that the word "story" should not connote fiction. Expounding further on this, Native American religious specialist Elisabeth Tooker states that myths are not to be viewed as fictitious, even if the characters may have non-human qualities or be persons of "other-than-human-type" (Tooker 1979:25).

The scholar and writer on world religions, Joseph Campbell, once stated that myths are "clues to the spiritual potentialities of the human life" (Campbell 1988:5). Campbell also expressed how mythologies are shaped by a culture's experience of meaning (Campbell 1988:5). Myths often describe a sacred time, which is not to

confused with the ordinary temporal duration of profane time. This sacred time may be accessed through the precise manipulation of objects of power, incantation, and ritual space (Grantham 2002:7; Eliade 1957:68).

By studying the rhetoric put forth by scholars such as Campbell, Tooker, and Keyes, I have come to the following conclusions. Religions are comprised of mythologies, which are comprised of metaphors. Metaphors can be based on past realities or un-realities, and, in turn, they are comprised of symbols. Symbols are used to express ideologies based on particular cultural experiences. This symbolic expression can take various forms of artistic measure. Tangible art media, such as sacred objects, song, or ritual dancing may easily fulfill that role.

Now that I have established the defining qualities incorporated with the term "myth" for this thesis, I would like to substitute it with the term "narrative" when applicable. This is to avoid to the negative and flippant connotation that may occur when discussing oral traditions of origin. Imagine how conservative Christians would respond if I referred to the Bible as a book of myth and the little Lord Jesus as a mythological deity that was born the product from an unexplained spiritual impregnation of a young married virgin? I believe the phrase "Creation

narrative" better fits this situation and will hereby use it in the context of the Apalachicola-Creek first beginnings.

As I will further explain in chapter four, throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, the Lower Creeks took in a plethora of other indigenous cultures and their customs, including Upper Creeks, or Muskogee speakers. The language of Muskogee is the sacred ritual language spoken at *Ekvuv Hvtke*. This might be indicative of the amount of religious control and/or influence exercised by Mississippian Period giant chiefdom centers, like Moundville or Etowah, over its hegemonic allies on the Gulf Coast periphery. Or was Muskogee the Mississippian Period ceremonial *lingua franca*? It has been argued that yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) and the black drink cult originated from coastal Florida and was traded up into the interior in exchange for exotic materials and even sacred and ritual knowledge (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011; Jones et al. 1998:242-246). The multiple cached assemblages of *Busycon* shell dipping cups exhumed from the mounds at the Woodland site of Crystal River, located on Gulf coastal Florida, helps support this hypothesis (Weisman 1995:22).

Nonetheless, several Muskogee words must be defined for the purpose of this thesis. *Ekvvnv Hvtke*, as previously mentioned, means, "earth white." *Ibofanga* is the Creek Creator and is often called the Master of Breath, or One Above by the Apalachicola-Creeks (Chaudhuri and Chaudhuri 2009:15; Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). *Ibofanga* is also the great universal spirit of life (Chaudhuri and Chaudhuri 2009:15). The Muskogee word for medicine is *heleswv* (Lewis Jr. and Jordan 2002:44), and the word for the yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) concoction, which is erroneously referred to in the ethnographic literature as "the black drink," or *vshe hvtke* (white drink) in Muskogee. *Pvsv*, made of snake-button root (*Ergynium yuccafolium*), is the symbiotic counterpart to *vshe hvtke*, and is known as the war, or warrior's medicine. The two original busk medicines, willow-red root, or *micco hoyanidja* (*Salix humilis*) and ginseng root, or *heles hvtke* (*Panax quinquefolius*), are also highly regarded because these two plants were given to the Creeks by the first medicine person (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

The maker of medicine, or *heles hayv*, is a little more difficult to definitively define, for the term represents a social institution of great complexity. Although the Apalachicola-Creek *heles hayv* is not viewed or considered a

"shaman," this ritual office occupies a role that has overlapping responsibilities and powers with that of a shaman, at least the definition of "shaman" in anthropology. For the Creeks, the *heles hayv's* main social responsibilities are gatekeeper of the ceremonial grounds and rituals and to make the medicine that heals the community and balances their relationship with the natural world and the Creator. Beyond having an obvious connectedness with medicinal plants, the maker of medicine also has a unique relationship with animal and totem spirits. The *heles hayv* is the leader of ritual and the harnesser of various upper and lower world powers. In addition, the other roles of the maker of medicine include vision interpretation, maintenance of sacred bundles, leading sweats, and officiating grievance situations (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011; Chaudhuri and Chaudhuri 2009:118-123).

The Western mind has persistently grasped at understanding the enigmatic complexities enveloping the nature of the shaman and his manipulation of power through knowledge, medicine, and ritual. I smile when I think of how author Allan C. Weisbecker refers to these types of activities, with a tongue-in-cheek of course, "arcane proclivities" (Weisbecker 2001:92). Documented as the

earliest possible form of religious concentration (Smith 1994:236; Eliade 1964:3), shamanism has ubiquitously occurred within all traditional cultures, regionally unconfined throughout the planet. To avoid the inscrutable vagueness and misconceptions that often surround these concepts and for the purpose of this thesis, shamanism and its contiguous lexicon must be specifically redefined for this occasion.

The etymology of the word "shaman" originates from the eastern Siberian language Tungusic, otherwise referred to as Manchu-Tungus. The Tungusic term *saman*, which as a noun means "one who is excited, moved, raised" or as a verb means "to know in an ecstatic manner" (Jolly 2005:127), may have been influenced from the Pali word *samana*. This indicates a possible connection and ideological stimulation by the Tungus' southern neighbors, the Pali practitioners of Buddhism (Eliade 1964:4).

Mircea Eliade, a leading authority on the topic of shamanism, defines shamanism as the "archaic techniques of ecstasy" (Eliade 1964:4). Terence McKenna, ethnobotanist and expert on psychedelic shamanism, furthers this argument stating that shamanic ecstasy refers to the out-of-body experience where the shaman can journey to different cosmological realms (McKenna and McKenna 1975:11). The

ecstatic experiences of the practicing shaman are achieved through various specializations of idiosyncratic methods and techniques used to promote healing, retrieve knowledge, evoke trance, or to ascend or descend into the upper and lower worlds.

For Eliade, the shaman is a medicine man and a magician, a doctor and a healer, a psychopomp, priest, poet, mystic, ethnobotanist and psychoanalyst (Eliade 1964:3-5). The shaman also has a distinct relationship specifically with the "helping spirits" and with the "spirit world" in general (1964:6). These spirits may refer to the souls of the dead, natural energies, totemic entities, or other shaman's souls (1964:6). For the shaman, there exists a nonchalant organization and division within the animal/human/plant/rock/air world, and in certain situations, these entities may "exchange forms and convert to their original numbers" (Smith 1994:238). The propitiation of spirits and the ability to access the sacred inaccessible allows the shaman a highly unique social position. In the Apalachicola-Creek society, this concept is self-evident; the individual who occupies the position, *heles hayv*, has a numerous amount of responsibilities owed to his community including a maker of

botanical medicine, healer, seer, knower, psychoanalyst, and officiate over ritual activities.

A few years before Mircea Eliade published his groundbreaking book on shamanism, Levi Strauss (1949) stated in an essay that the shaman created order from chaos; he transformed "incoherent and arbitrary pains" into "an ordered and intelligible form" (Narby 1998:15; Levi-Strauss 1963:186-205). Breaking away from the previous popular misconstructions in anthropology that all shamans were neurotics and schizophrenics, Levi-Strauss paints the picture of an inter-world mediator. This definition for shamanism comes from Pieter Jolly:

[Shamans are...] religious functionaries who draw on the powers in the natural world, including the powers of animals, and who mediate, usually in an altered state of consciousness, between the world of the living and that of the spirits- including the spirits of the dead [Jolly 2005:127].

Terence McKenna builds further on Jolly's argument and adds concepts originating from psychiatrist, Carl Jung:

The shaman is able to act as an intermediary between the society and the supernatural, or to put in Jungian terms, he is an intermediary to the collective unconscious. Through the office of the shaman, the society at large is brought into close and frequent encounter with the numinous archetypal symbols of the collective unconscious... The shaman does more, however, than just *recite* the myths or express the religious

symbolism in making ritual artifacts; the shaman *lives* the myths [McKenna and McKenna 1975:12].

McKenna's notion of ritual participation by the shaman in sacred times is an important hypothesis within this thesis. In order for the Apalachicola-Creeks to be able to relive a sacred time, it requires a specialized access to and from unordinary temporal states. I believe the Apalachicola-Creek *heles hayv* occupies a significant role that allows the ritual dancers and chanters access to live their Creation narrative. Eliade described time according to the experienced religious man, as being broken into two forms, sacred and profane (Eliade 1987:20). In profane time, or ordinary temporal duration, space "is homogeneous and neutral" (1987:22), and as profane time passes, it cannot be relived or reclaimed (Grantham 2002:5). Sacred time, however, happens in the "nonhomogeneity of space" and is of "primordial experience" that can be reclaimed and relived (Eliade 1987:20; Grantham 2002:5). This time before time is referred to as the "mythical, paradisiacal condition that existed before the fall" (McKenna and McKenna 1975:13). Bill Grantham further describes sacred time as "the time in which cosmos is brought from chaos; that is, order is brought from disorder, existences from non-existence, the world from nothingness. It is the time

of the original creation" (Grantham 2002:5). Through the ritual process, one can travel to these sacred realms to actually relive these experiences, and thus gain insight on the ancient methods and procedures that were used in the formation of the universe. Within the Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance, ritual participants emerge from historical time and reenter into a dimension of sacred space and time in order to relive the creation of order from chaos (Eliade 1987:90).

When delineating different realities of space and time, one cross-cultural analogy may assist in furthering this understanding. In Bruce Chatwin's bestselling novel, *The Songlines* (1988), he fruitfully describes the concepts of Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime. To Chatwin, Dreamtime contains many applications with various interwoven meanings. Dreamtime refers to the sacred time before human culmination when the "Ancients" (ancestors) awoke to the galaxies becoming set into motion and when the sun and moon "awakened" the primordial slumberous beings with a dawning of self-realization of consciousness (Chatwin 1988). As the Ancients "hunted, ate, made love, danced, [and] killed", they sang songs of that created the "rivers and ranges, salt-pans and sand dunes" (Chatwin 1988:73). After the Ancients sang these songs, trails of music were left in

their tracks, which soon would cover the entire earth in a web of Songlines (1988:72-73). After this, the Ancestors then grew tired and went "back in" to their various hiding spots and homes after feeling the "frozen immobility of the Ages" (1988:73). Thus, began the existence of humans.

By learning the Songlines, one is subjected to the Aboriginal cosmological map of how they systemize and order their universe. This same song-map contains the Ancients' songs of creation, mythological stories, and a guide for survival and maintenance of their inherited ancestral lands. Just as the Australian Aborigines transcend profane time through Songlines, the Apalachicola-Creeks, through the initial ritual lead set by the makers of medicine, transcend time through the vehicle of the Turtle dance. In doing so, they return to the time of origin, which their ancestors have repeatedly visited throughout the history of their cyclical ritual calendar.

To the Apalachicola-Creeks song, dance, and music exist in an indissoluble web. The songs that accompany the many ritual dances of the Apalachicola-Creeks are a stylized cant that are comprised of carefully chosen sacred words of prayer. These prayer songs are magically charged with healing properties, and they also can open doorways and allow temporal transcendence by the ritual

participants. The tone of vocalization is typically pushed with sufficient air through the lungs, and each individual song is dynamically expressed based on the content, subject matter, and choreographed construction. Call and response is a typical form and is usually led by the ceremonial leadership. These songs are mainly sung in the Muskogee language, although it is unknown by the author how many traditional Hitchiti songs are still known and used.

Many of Apalachicola-Creek dances and songs are associated with plants, animals, and animal powers. In the Creek belief system, there exists a dichotomy that must be balanced between the biological and zoological realms (Chaudhuri and Chaudhuri 2002:32). It has been said that botanical medicine, musical instruments, and medicine songs were given to the Native American peoples to combat the natural diseases of animals that are susceptible by the human organism (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011; Chaudhuri and Chauhuri 2002:32).

Songs can be taught through master and apprenticeship, through the community, or are learned through individual divination. For instance, plants can teach *heles hayvs* certain medicine songs, and these songs can be "owned" by individuals that may or may not have to be passed along (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). The Turtle Dance

and ritual song are owned by the entire Apalachicola-Creek community; this includes all the ancestral, present, and future generations.

A systematic and multifaceted methodology must be employed in order to bridge the gap between deciphering the ancient cultural past as revealed by archaeological research and conveying meanings from the traditions of the contemporaneous present. The methods employed in this thesis are based on the styles of previous investigations of Native American ethnographic literature, ethnological cross-cultural comparisons, and close first hand experiences through participant observation.

Because art and religion tend to be inseparably woven together and encompassed within native ritual objects, the archaeological record provides a base of archaeologically derived data. In the past, there did not exist a sufficient methodology that demonstrated any association between pre-Columbian and historic/present ideologies. However, in the early 1990s, Linda Schele and colleagues conducted a series of Mayan Iconographic Workshops at the University of Texas, which undoubtedly proved highly successful in establishing such a methodology. Reinventing the momentum from the old Mayan Workshops, Schele's student, F. Kent Reilly III, brought the methodology and enthusiasm to the field of

Mississippian iconography by starting the Texas State University-San Marcos School of iconographic interpretation. This methodology employed by Reilly and his colleagues uses a four-fold interdisciplinary approach, including recognition of style regions, visual structural analysis, archaeological data, and an ethnographic analogy (Reilly and Garber 2007:6). The work produced from these iconographic meetings has already been published in three books (2004, 2007, 2010), and there is currently a publication of a fourth in the process (2012).

In order to incorporate this methodology into this thesis a brief overview of the four-fold approach must first be examined. Recognition of the numerous styles and themes throughout the Mississippian Interaction Sphere (MIIS) is the first method of the San Marcos School approach. Basing the historic factors of the Lower Creeks' relocation and ideological assimilation from neighbor cultures, settling on one style region is problematic. Several diverse style regions from disparate geographical locales were represented in the Apalachicola Province by the mid-eighteen century. Therefore, I find it wise to incorporate the styles of the Lower Mississippi area, Gulf Coast, Middle Cumberland, Braden Corridor, and Southern Appalachian. A number of ceramic stylistic variations will

be used as well (Deptford, Santa-Rosa-Swift Creek, Swift Creek, Abercrombie, Lamar, Ft. Walton, etc...).

The next step of my proposed iconographic interpretation is a thorough visual structural analysis. This method has alone led to the recognition of various categories of preternaturals as well as the recreation of cosmic models (Reilly and Garber 2007:7). This form of visual structural analysis stems from the techniques of art historian Erwin Panofsky and his threefold method of iconographic interpretation (Panofsky 1955). Instead of focusing on form, Panofsky's method concerns itself with a deep interpretation of the actual subject matter and meaning behind works of art (Panofsky 1955:26). Because of the difficulty involved in getting into the cognitive mindset of the artist and the factors that shaped the products of artistic expression, Panofsky's methodology serves as a tool of decipherment for archaeologists and art historians alike.

The first level of Panofsky's three-fold method is the identification of primary or natural subject matter. These subject matter identifiers are purely descriptive and would be considered a pre-iconographical identification. This level is divided into factual and expressional subdivisions. Because expressional qualities, pure forms,

mutual relationships, and blunt descriptions would all be considered "carriers of primary or natural meaning," they are called "the world of artistic motifs" (Panofsky 1955:28). Motif is defined for this thesis as a usual occurring thematic idea or symbol.

The second level of analysis consists of secondary or "conventional subject matter as opposed to form" (Panofsky 1955:29). Some knowledge of the culture that produced the art was produced is necessary for this level of interpretation. This includes knowledge of literary sources as well as a familiarity with some cultural concepts. This is also where "iconography" is preformed, where a "formal analysis" and identification of certain motifs, themes, and imageries may begin (Panofsky 1955:29-30). For the purpose of this thesis, I have defined theme, as a pattern comprised of motifs.

The third and most difficult level of interpretation focuses on the intrinsic meaning and content within art. At this level, the interpreter uses synthetic intuition. Synthetic intuition means there is a great familiarity with the cultural influences and psychological inspiration behind the artist's expression. As Panofsky defines it, the achievement of the third level of iconological interpretation is by "ascertaining those underlying

principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion" (Panofsky 1955:30). Thus, interpretation is the final step of Panofsky's methodology.

The third method of the San Marcos four-field approach is using samples from the archaeological record for systematic comparisons. Archaeology does have a benefit over written records due to its unbiased nature. Several pre-Columbian Mississippian Period mound sites in the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley will be discussed. Additionally, the archaeological sites Lake Jackson, Etowah, and Ocmulgee will be presented. Data will also be used from a few Woodland sites such as Kolomoki and Crystal River. As archaeologists John Blitz and H. Thomas Foster have demonstrated, both historic and pre-historic analyses of ceramic types and settlement patterns can lend guidance and structure for measuring social and political integration.

The last method is one that has already been mentioned and reviewed in this thesis. The method of ethnographic analogy is imperative in dealing with questions of interpreting Mississippian artistic material and relating conclusions derived from this material into a demonstration of cultural continuity. The ethnographic literature on Southeastern ideological and ritual activity contains a

large body of detailed information on Native American traditions, oral histories, and descriptive observations. Ethnographic literature can provide helpful insights into Mississippian cultural traditions and practices, and it records massive amounts of oral histories (Sawyer 2009:65). It has been acknowledged that oral cultures are not static and change over time, so caution in interpreting the value of cultural literature should be extensively used.

I also have produced my own personal ethnographies. From the spring of 2005 to the summer of 2011, I have generated a large compilation of field notes from my participant observations of the Apalachicola-Creek ceremonial cycles at *Ekvvnv Hvtke*, in Blountstown, Florida. I also conducted a number of interviews with the ceremonial leadership, various members of *Ekvvnv Hvtke*, and the matriarch, Doris Adams (*Emv*), of the square grounds. I am forever grateful to my informants for the experiences and the fruitful information they revealed in this process. Throughout my field experiences, I not only gained an in-depth close look at the Apalachicola-Creek cosmological world, but I was allowed to participate in the ceremonies of these people.

By occupying positions within this ceremonial context, which to my knowledge has seldom been documented in the

ethnographic record, my observations within Apalachicola-Creek ceremonial life have an extremely unique significance. As previously mentioned, my interpretations of the actions and elements within *Ekvvnv Hvtke* were drawn from various ethnographic methodologies and anthropological cultural theories. Because it is an accepted fact that any ethnographer will ultimately taint conclusions of cultural studies with even the slightest subjectivism, I attempted to keep firm objective goals. Amongst these goals was avoidance of an observer bias and representation of the Apalachicola-Creeks as they view themselves. In fact, unlike many past ethnographic accounts, my relationships with my informants were of a symbiotic nature; all records compiled by me have been thoroughly proofread and edited by my major informants.

Overall, the comprehensive methodology of this thesis provides a well-rounded approach for analyzing the history of a culture that maintains its traditions into present times. I have incorporated these applications into my ethnographic field research and my personal observations. My aim is to represent the philosophical discourse and ideological framework of these people as close as possible to the perception of my informants. As Stephen Tyler posited in his essay "Post-Modern Ethnography: From

Document of the Occult-to-Occult Document," the goal of ethnography should not be presented as an "observer-observed" monologue. It should carry a mutually cooperative dialogue between two equally collaborative parties (Tyler 1986:126).

Chapter IV

A PRE-HISTORICAL AND ETHNO-HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE APALACHICOLA-CREEKS

The Apalachicola-Creeks, as well as all the Creek members of the Confederacy, have had an interesting history full of removals, migrations, idiosyncrasies, and atrocities. Thus, tying their past together has proven in itself a difficult task. This is primarily because several periods that represent lost gaps shadow the written records.

I have divided the content of this chapter into two parts: pre-historical and ethno-historical investigations. This chapter is an amalgam of collected information derived from Spanish journals, English traders, naturalists, government agents, ethnohistorians, ethnographers, archaeologists, and anthropologists. Through the process of *upstreaming*¹, I will investigate ceramic and archaeological

¹ Also referred to as the "direct historical approach," *upstreaming* has been defined by archaeologist James A. Brown as making "the logical inference that textually

analyses. This will allow me to identify, at least archaeologically, the pre-history of the descendants of the modern Apalachicola-Creeks. In the latter part of this chapter, a brief historical overview of the Lower Creeks is provided from the first era of European contact up until the present day ritual life at *Ekvuv Hvtke*.

Pre-historical Investigations

The best-known methods of measuring the temporal chronology and spatial integration of pre-historic (and historical) cultures are through measuring and systematically comparing the distribution of artifactual remains (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:22). These remains include shell, stone, copper, and, most relevant to this research, ceramics. Ceramics seem to be the most plausible candidate of tangible material to work with because of its ubiquitous nature of distribution (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:23). This ubiquity is most likely based on its utilitarian functionality. Additionally, during the early stages of production, clay ceramics have a soft malleability, which serves as a perfect medium for artistic expression and, therefore, style recognition (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:22).

established forms have retained an older meaning" (Brown 1997:471).

The specific attributes of ceramics (i.e., stamped, incised, and impressed patterns, etc.) can serve as "highly sensitive" chronological identifiers, so the process of dating archaeological periods representing differing cultures has become easier with the aid of ceramic analyses (Anderson and Mainfort Jr. 2002:2). Archaeologist Gordon Willey explained that cultural "periods" are used as a standard classificatory means to measure material and non-material forms throughout the boundaries of time and space (Willey 1998:4). The application of these periods to archaeologically identifiable cultures is only successful, Willey argues, if the assumption is accepted that, throughout time, cultures must maintain non-stasis and consistently change (Willey 1998:4).

Aside from measuring temporal sequences, ceramics can also tell us about linguistic divisions, cultural boundaries, and migratory patterns. In a work that focused on the sociopolitical integration of the Mississippian Period polities along the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley, archaeologists John Blitz and Karl Lorenz stated that "the prehistoric peoples who inhabited archaeological sites exhibiting a shared ceramic style must have belonged to a social group with a common history of regular and sustained interaction" (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:23). Furthermore, the

recognition of similarity in ceramic styles has proven to demonstrate commonalities in cultural beliefs as well as geographical and economic ties (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:23-24).

In a 1994 article entitled "The Formation of the Creeks," Vernon James Knight, Jr. applied Julian Steward's methodology of a "direct historical approach," or *upstreaming*, to tracing the archaeological pre-history of the Creek Indians (Knight 1994:378; Steward 1942). This method first included the establishment of a relationship between the Historic Creeks and their archaeological remains; then the researcher can begin to identify ceramic continuities, step by step, backwards through time and space (Knight 1994:378). Noting the applicability of Knight's model, I utilize this methodology to this research.

The pre-historic ancestors of the Lower Creeks are thought to have originally inhabited the Lower Chattahoochee Valley near present day Columbus, Georgia (Hann 2006:4; Worth 2000:267). Knight, when observing cultural assemblages from various Upper and Lower Creek Historic sites, stated that the Historic Creeks' "material culture are continuous with earlier South Appalachian Mississippian cultures" (Knight 1994:378-380; Hann 2006:5).

Furthermore, Knight identified the appearance of several foreign ceramic variants in the later decline of the Mississippian Period in the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley (Knight 1994:384; Hann 2006:17). This influx of alien styles, Knight argued, probably represents migratory Muskogee populations and their subsequent habitation among the Lower Creeks within the Apalachicola Province.

I believe there exists a continuation of certain ceramic variations indigenous to the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley, which is separate, stylistically, from the ceramics produced by the Muskogee immigrants from the northwest and west. This sequence of ceramic styles demonstrates an unbroken territorial continuum of habitation that can be traced beyond the Middle Woodland Period (200 B.C. - A.D. 400). These early Lower Creek predecessors lie at the heart of the Deptford, and later Swift Creek, cultures that have been archaeologically identified in present day Georgia.

Deptford and Swift Creek are terms used to classify two separate, yet similar, archaeological cultures and ceramic styles that existed in the Middle Woodland Period. These terms originated as the site names for the Deptford type site (9CH2), located on the Atlantic Coast near Savannah, GA, and the Swift Creek type site (9B13), located

on the Ocmulgee River near Macon, GA (Stephenson et al. 2002:318). These sites were originally excavated during the Great Depression era New Deal programs, and since then, these two site names became the identifying nomenclature for two specific ceramic styles. Both of these ceramic styles have a widespread distribution throughout the Woodland Southeast that included Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida.

Deptford style ceramics date before its Swift Creek style counterpart, but share with Swift Creek a temporal overlap in Southwestern Georgia from around A.D. 100 to A.D. 300 (Stephenson et al. 2002:318). Deptford is thought to have originated in South Carolina as early as 1000 B.C. but appeared in Florida, at a much later date, circa 500 B.C. (Stephenson et al. 2002:318). The ceramics of the Deptford style ceased around A.D. 300 and was succeeded by its predecessors, the Swift Creek and Santa-Rosa Swift Creek styles (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). The Deptford assemblages are marked by several variations, but the most common features are uniquely designed check-stamp patterns, simple-stamped patterns, and cord-marked decorations (Stephenson et al. 2002:350).

Archaeological evidence has led archaeologists, like Jerald Milanich, to hypothesize that the peoples of the

Deptford cultures built large earthen and sand mounds (1998:65). A Deptford archaeological site, located in Franklin County, Florida, is where several ritual accoutrements were exhumed from a large pyramidal mound that included shell dipping cups, sacred vessels, and wolf and panther teeth (Milanich 1998:65). Because these objects were found in provenience directly adjacent to a fire hearth, Milanich suggests that this might be evidence of an early form of black drink ceremonialism (Milanich 1998:65). Building upon Milanich's argument, Dan Penton believes these faunal dental remains were likely used in an early form of scratching rites, similarly to how the modern Apalachicola-Creeks use gar jaws as ritual scratchers within their ceremonial cycles for their respected clans (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

Swift Creek represents the earliest complicated ceramic vessels produced in the southeastern United States and is recognized by the elaborately stamped design it carries (Figure 12) (Stephenson et al. 2002:333). This distinct style originated in Georgia and northwestern Florida, and the scope of its cultural material is associated with the Middle and Late Woodland Periods from around A.D. 100 to A.D. 750, or perhaps as late as A.D. 800 (Williams and Elliot 1998:1; Stephenson et al. 2002:333).

William Henry Holmes noted in 1903 that the Swift Creek style was a part of the Southern Appalachian ceramic and cultural tradition of dentate, check-stamped, and simple stamped ceramics (such as Deptford); this tradition, Holmes argued, may have stretched back in time to 1000 B.C. (Anderson 1998:277).

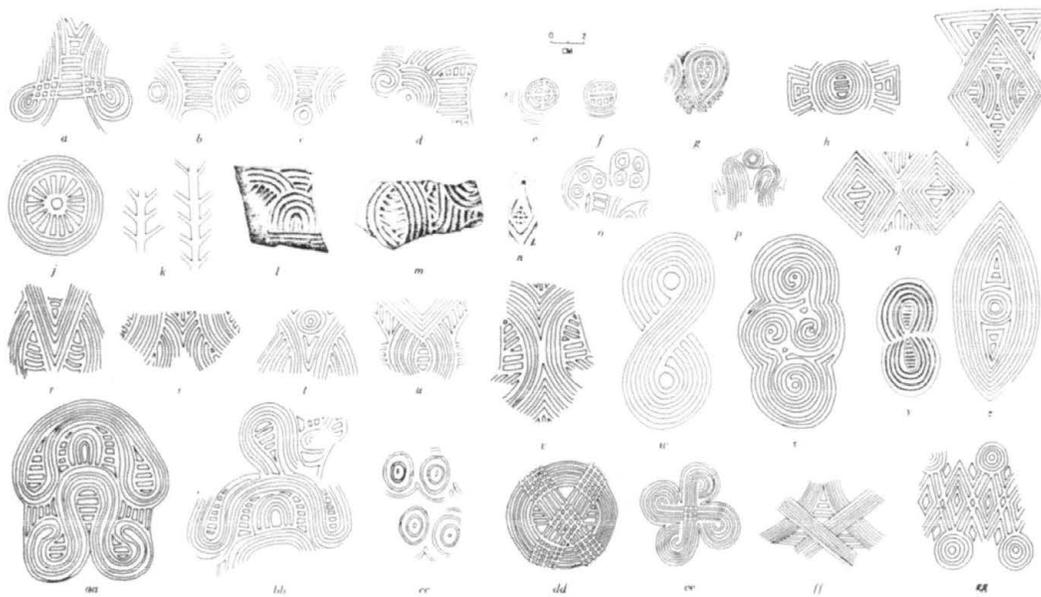


Figure 12. Early Swift Creek ceramic designs. (Wauchope 1966:56).

The archaeological work of Milanich, B. Calvin Jones, Daniel T. Penton, and Louis Tesar has demonstrated a continual relationship between the Swift Creek and Deptford settlements and ceramic cultures with their antecedents, the Weeden Island cultures (Milanich 2002:353; Jones et al. 1998:222-246). The Block-Sterns site (8LE148), a regional Middle Woodland mound center located southeast of

Tallahassee, Florida, is one of only seven interior Swift Creek sites within the Tallahassee Hills (Penton 1974:4; Jones et al. 1998:223). The importance of Block-Sterns is that a developmental sequence based on ceramic cultural assemblages has been established through excavations linking Deptford to Swift Creek to Weeden Island, all with gratuitous overlapping (Jones et al. 1998:222).

The Weeden Island cultural region spread from southwest Gulf Coastal Florida across the Gulf of Mexico to Mobile Bay, thus it extended from southeastern Alabama to southwestern Georgia (Milanich 2002:352). The archaeological cultures that produced that Weeden Island ceramic style lasted from A.D. 200 to A.D. 1000, and researchers suggest that some evolved into Mississippian Period mound-building cultures (Milanich 2002:353). Weeden Island cultures did not practice large-scaled agriculture techniques; however, they did utilize local resources and maritime sustenance for subsistence strategies (Milanich 2002:361). These peoples built large mound-centers around which villages would nucleate. These mounds were built in successive stages and were incorporated into a mortuary complex ruled by members of various lineages and kin groups. Governances within this mortuary complex were often based on hierarchical organization. Kolomoki, a Middle

Woodland Period mound site east of the Chattahoochee River (Figure 13), has been the most closely investigated of all Weeden Island sites (Sears 1956). Other notable mound sites worth mentioning include the Crystal River site, which has overlapping Deftford, Swift Creek, and Weeden Island periods, and the McKeithen site (Weisman 1995; Milanich 2002:359).



Figure 13. The 57 feet tall temple mound at Kolomoki, Georgia. The Kolomoki site is associated with the Weeden Island Cultures. Picture taken by the author in 2011.

With the advent of small-scaled corn cultivation, the Weeden Island Wakulla culture (also referred as Weeden Island II) began to develop in hamlets within the eastern Florida panhandle after A.D. 750; this culture then subsequently spread north up the Chattahoochee, Apalachicola, and Flint River drainage systems in Georgia

and Alabama (Milanich 2002:361-362; Milanich 1998:82). The Wakulla ceramic style is marked by "distinctive check-stamped village pottery" (Milanich 2002:362). This culture did not extend east past the Aucilla River in north Florida (Milanich 2002:362). Oddly enough, the Mississippian Period cultures also did not extend past the Aucilla River (Milanich 2002:364). However, the non-Wakulla Weeden Island culture located east of the Aucilla was replaced by the short lived Suwannee Valley ceramic culture (Milanich 2002:363). As Milanich posited, the lack of suitable soil for large-scaled agriculture probably became a major factor in delineating boundaries for the Mississippian Period periphery (2002:365).

The late Weeden Island Wakulla (A.D. 700 - A.D. 1000) and Averett (A.D. 900 - A.D. 1300) ceramic phases have been defined as being "products of indigenous populations without evidence of social ranking, [and] have distinct styles with continuity from antecedent pottery traditions" (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:101,136-137). If this statement holds validity, then the identification of the heirs of both the Wakulla and Averett cultures should lend clues to researchers as to the longevity of these local ceramic continuums. Just after the turn of the twelfth century, the Mississippian Period began to cast the shadow of its socio-

political presence in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley through the catalyst of non-local immigrant populations. This is where the pre-history becomes obfuscated due to the amalgamations of multiple non-local and local ceramic stylistic influences.

Around A.D. 1000, in the geographical region between the Aucilla and Apalachicola Rivers already discussed, local indigenous peoples began to implement farming and agricultural strategies for subsistence (Milanich 1998:73). Unlike the areas just west of this region, the soil was suitable for maize cultivation. The life ways associated with maize, by this time, had spread out from the Mississippi River Valley to the cultures of the Florida panhandle.

This agricultural renaissance led to surplus, which inevitably led to an enormous population explosion. Undoubtedly, questions of social sustainability were abounding. With the advent of this surplus came a sudden need for new methods of intensive and productive agricultural techniques. Consequently, these new techniques were accomplished with specific ideologies that were conveyed in art objects and styles that intimated a linkage to the emergent Mississippian cultures to the north and northwest of Florida (Milanich 1998:82).

To combat the social pressures that come with maintaining control over a large population, new administrative and bureaucratic powers were needed. In this newly derived maize based hierarchy, new regional centers formed and functioned as "civic-ceremonial capital[s]" (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:2). In this well suited definition for Mississippian mound centers, Blitz and Lorenz escaped the theoretical pigeonholes that come with a term like chiefdom.

Unfortunately, the anthropological term, chiefdom, has become antiquated due to its overly used application regarding the classification of Mississippian Period political units. By labeling distinct political units as chiefdoms, researchers tend to stereotype the inherent complexities engrained within these organizations of government. In a 1981 paper, anthropologist Robert Carneiro defined the term chiefdom as "an autonomous political unit comprising a number of villages or communities under the permanent control of a paramount chief" (Carneiro 1981:45). If it is accepted that chiefdoms operated with a consolidated singular political authority, then it is assumed that leadership positions were hereditarily based on ranked kinships and lineages (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:4).

When investigating the organization of these Mississippian centers, I find it prudent to veer away from the Marxist theoretical approach that forcedly and rigidly projects modern divisions of social classes, the have's and have-not's, upon these ancient societies. Moreover, I find it problematic to use the anthropological term, sociopolitical, when defining the structural organization of these complex polities. Herein lies the problem: an integral part of the phrase is missing, "religious."

In a 1986 article by Vernon James Knight, Jr., entitled "The Institutional Organization of Mississippian Religion," the author re-conceptualizes how the role of cult institutions influenced Mississippian Period polities. Using Anthony F.C. Wallace's definition, Knight states that cult institutions are "a set of rituals all having the same general goal, all explicitly rationalized by a set of similar or related beliefs, and all supported by the same social group" (Knight 1986:675). Knight then illustrates that cultic institutions are "the religious component of an institution of government" (1986:675). The author further states that political organization and cult institutions "are so closely intertwined and congruent among ethnographically comparable societies that it makes little

analytical sense to treat them as separate domains" (Knight 1986:685).

Contradictory to the hypothesis that paramount chiefdoms once ruled the entire Mississippian Southeast, Kent Reilly suggests that these core centers may have functioned more closely to theatre states (Kent Reilly, personal communication 2011). I believe Reilly's hypothesis can, seemingly without contradiction, coexist with Knight's theories on cult institutions. Moreover, both Knight and Reilly agree that mound centers were the centralized heart of ritual action during the Mississippian Period (Knight 1986:677-679; Kent Reilly, personal communication 2011).

The Fort Walton Period culture (A.D. 1000 - A.D. 1500) represents the most southeasterly expansion of the great Mississippian Period mound sites (Williams and Shapiro 1990:73-74). The two Fort Walton pottery types are Fort Walton Incised and Pensacola Series (Willey 1949:452). This culture has a similar distribution as the earlier Wakulla cultures, and, like the Wakulla cultures, it spreads west of the Aucilla River expanding to the Pensacola area (Milanich 1998:84). The Fort Walton Temple Mound, located in Ft. Walton, Florida is a single mound site that represents the largest basket loaded earthen construction of any coastal region.

Archaeologists have argued about the origination and termination of the Fort Walton Period peoples. In an archaeological report of Gulf Coastal Florida (1949), Willey indicates that there is no continuity between Weeden Island types and Fort Walton types, other than Wakulla Check Stamped in a small number of Fort Walton Period middens (Willey 1949:452). However, a recent investigation has led Milanich to believe that Fort Walton Incised might have partially evolved out of the southern end of the Wakulla culture that was nestled in the panhandle of Florida at this same time (Milanich 1998:82). Other scholars have proposed that the Fort Walton culture developed from the combination of both local Wakulla and non-local Mississippian cultures (Marrinan and White 2007:294). The Apalachees, linguistic cousins of the Hitchiti-Creeks, have been suggested as their antecedents; John H. Hann believes that the immediate neighbors of the Apalachee, the Amacano, Chine, and Pacara, might have represented the surviving remnants of the Fort Walton mound-builders (Hann 2006:20-21).

Situated near the southwestern edge of an enormous lake that is, in reality, several fresh water sinkholes, the Lake Jackson Mound site is the largest expression of the Mississippian Period culture on the periphery. This

multi-component site consists of six large pyramidal truncated platform mounds surrounding a large plaza (Jones 1982:4). Mound 3 alone yielded twenty-four burials and one feature, which plausibly might be another burial (Jones 1982:10).

Although completely lacking stamped ceramics, the majority of ceramic debris that has been archaeologically recovered from Lake Jackson represents a mixture of type varieties from Fort Walton Incised, Cool Branch Incised, and Marsh Island Incised (Williams and Shapiro 1990:74). In addition to a large corpus of ceramic vessels and potsherds, finely crafted artifacts such as carved shell gorgets and repousse copper plates have been exhumed from Mound 3 (Jones 1982:222). These plates and shells display iconography linking the Lake Jackson site to other large Mississippian centers like Moundville, Etowah, and Spiro (Jones 1982:222). Also prevalent at Lake Jackson are several copper plate art media with imageries depicted in the Braden Style.

Throughout the later Mississippian Period, from A.D. 1100 to A.D. 1650, twenty-eight large platform earthen mounds were built in the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley (Figure 14) (Blitz and Lorenz 2006). Mound polities were non-existent in the area from A.D. 900 to A.D. 1100 (Blitz

and Lorenz 2006:136). However, shortly after this period, around A.D. 1100 to A.D. 1200 in the middle of the Mississippian Period, a large emigrant population settled along the northern end of the Valley and began mound construction at least three large centers (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:137).

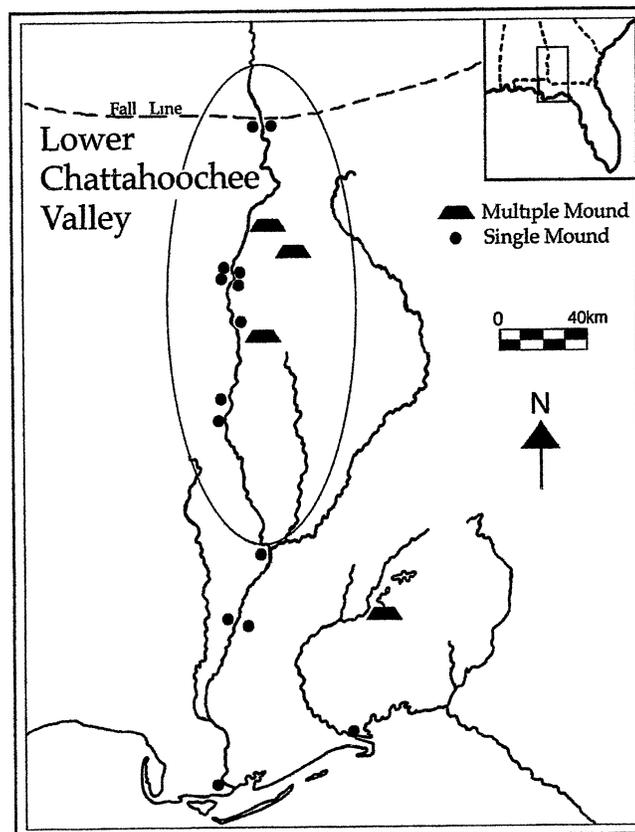


Figure 14. The distribution of Mississippian Period (A.D. 1100 - A.D. 1650) ceremonial mound centers in the Lower Chattahoochee Valley region (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:3).

This non-local mound-building culture, named the Rood phase, settled in the vacant vicinity between the Averett and Wakulla cultural regions and introduced Mississippian

style architecture and material remains (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:137). The shell tempered Moundville Incised pottery type is the dominant style during this time (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:31,68). Beginning in the later Rood phase is the first introduction to the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley of the Lamar Plain style (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:31). This Rood cultural affiliation dominated the area from A.D. 1200 to A.D. 1400, but then the Rood cultures subsequently abandoned the entire region (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:137). It has been suggested that environmental change, such as the lack of rainfall and crop failure, ultimately led to this collapse and the political dissemination of large Mississippian centers across the entirety of the southeast (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:131-132). During this time, several mound sites were built, abandoned, moved and re-erected, only to be finally deserted.

Also during this same period, the local Wakulla and Averett populations constructed mound centers of their own. Amongst the centers are the Kyle mound and the Abercrombie single mound, located on the Chattahoochee River far north of any Rood phase settlement (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:137). Likewise, the Wakulla built Early Fort Walton mound centers that were just south of the now Rood occupied "no man's

land," that once separated the Wakulla from Averett (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:137).

During this two hundred year period, there existed little shared ceramic styles between these riverine cultures; this surely demonstrates scant interaction between the local and newer non-local groups (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:136-138). Finally, around A.D. 1300, the Abercrombie site was abandoned. The Averett style of ceramics display the complicated stamped design, which is shared with several Upper Chattahoochee River Valley sites, so scholars have suggested that the Averett culture assimilated into their neighboring cultural groups to the north (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:136-137).

Shortly after A.D. 1400 during the Singer phase (A.D. 1400 - A.D 1450), the Singer ceramic style replaced Rood ceramic styles (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:70). This replacement represents a break with the previous Mississippian traditional ware patterns (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:70). This replacement likely signifies the political disintegration of the Rood phase mound sites and the succeeding expansion of ceramic types that were tied to pre-existing Indigenous populations (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:120). Currently, there is no evidence for the continuation of Rood in this region after this major social dissolution. After the Rood

departure, the inhabitants of the Lower Chattahoochee Valley retained a newly unified expression of social identity through the vehicles of locally infused ceramic types (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:120). Also in the Singer phase, two distinct ceramic types are introduced into the archaeological assemblages: Fort Walton Incised and Lamar Complicated Stamped (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:70). Both types represent a continuous linkage to pre-Rood heredity, and, ultimately, for the first time their cultural traditions were fused together and the distinction between their respected style zones were dissolved (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:119).

Pinpointing the time and place of the origin of the Lamar phase style has often been debated, but scholars have suggested that the cradle of this ceramic culture was in Georgia around A.D. 1350 (Williams and Shapiro 1990:4). Lamar has a fairly large distribution that covers all of Georgia, northern and panhandle Florida, eastern Alabama, and most of South Carolina (Williams and Shapiro 1990:4-5). In northern Florida, however, Lamar does not appear until A.D. 1540 (Williams and Shapiro 1990:4).

The Lamar cultures were products of the later South Appalachian Mississippians. This style is identified by finely crafted stamped designs and loops (Figure 13)

(Williams and Shapiro 1990:6). It is a well-established truth that the material culture of the Lower Creeks of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were heavily associated with Lamar style ceramics (Worth 2000:266). Lamar was influenced by several indigenous and foreign styles. As archaeologist Frankie Snow argues, the punctuation in the incised motif found in southern Lamar styles is strikingly similar to the Fort Walton Incised style found in southwest Georgia (Williams and Shapiro 1990:89). It is also argued that the Swift Creek style influenced Savannah Complicated Stamped; Savannah Complicated Stamped, in turn, inspired the Georgia coast variant of Lamar, the Irene filfot stamped (Chase 1998:59; Braley 1990:94). I believe certain iconographic elements and motifs found within Lamar Incised are extremely reminiscent of the earlier Swift Creek designs (Figures 12 and 15). These similarities suggest a preference by local populations to tie their cultural material back to ancestral pre-Mississippian influenced iconographic styles. The use of these ancestral styles implies an indigenous and regionally united and deeply rooted social identity.

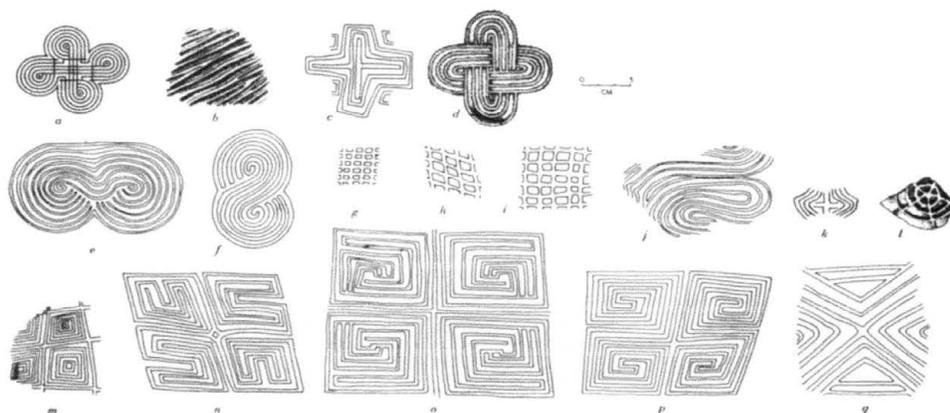


Figure 15. Lamar ceramic stamped designs (Wauchope 1966:82).

The Bull Creek phase (A.D. 1450 – A.D. 1550) marks the appearance of a post-Singer style that contains larger amounts of coexistent Fort Walton Incised and Lamar Complicated Stamped ceramics (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:70-71). Archaeologist Frank Schnell has suggested that the high percentage of complicated stamping designs predominates any other ware style (Williams and Shapiro 1990:67). However, little is known about the Bull Creek inhabitants. During this time, only three mound polities were functioning: the Lampley mounds, the Shorter mounds, and the Omussee Creek mounds (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:70-71).

During the Stewart phase (A.D. 1550 – A.D. 1600), only one multiple mound site, located in the center of the Lower Chattahoochee Valley, Rood's Landing, was functioning (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:33-34). This period is marked by

high frequencies of the Lamar Complicated style with an overlapping decline of the usage of Fort Walton Incised. Lamar Plain dominates the assemblages during the Stewart Phase, while Fort Walton Incised begins a rapid decline in site frequencies (Williams and Shapiro 1990:67-68). Most of the Lamar ceramics from the Stewart phase are grit tempered unlike earlier Mississippian ceramics that were shell tempered (Foster 2004:79). Also, the first appearance of Rood Incised, a bold-incised and carinated bowl, makes its way into the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:71-72).

During the Abercrombie phase (A.D. 1600 - A.D. 1650), only the few mound centers along the Chattahoochee River Valley, the Kyle and Abercrombie mounds, survived the dire wake of sweeping European derived epidemics that occurred the century before (Worth 2000:270; Blitz and Lorenz 2006:72). It has been estimated that an overwhelmingly 90% decline in Chattahoochee River Valley site frequencies had occurred between the Stewart and Abercrombie phases (Knight 1994:383). Knight defined the two remaining Abercrombie sites, located on the Chattahoochee River south of Columbus, GA, as "stable political and population centers" (Knight 1994:384).

The Abercrombie ceramic assemblages are almost evenly split between Rood Incised and Lamar Complicated Stamped, while Fort Walton ceramics almost completely disappear from the Lower Chattahoochee region (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:72). The advanced technique of shell tempering begins to reappear during the Abercrombie phase and is evident in the Abercrombie Incised type that is similar to Rood Incised (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:72). Besides Incised, other new Abercrombie shell tempered varieties share similar attributes with Dallas, McKee Island, and Alabama River ceramics (Worth 2000:268).

Several authors have explained that the overall reduction in site occupation and material culture during the Abercrombie Phase was a result of the epidemics that spread through these areas, shortly after the first European contact (Worth 2000:267; Knight 1994). The Spanish missions went through several catastrophic periods of disease, starting in 1595, then in 1612-1617, 1649-1650, and 1655-1656 (Milanich 1998:171). Without a doubt, these highly communicable maladies spread rampantly through the entire southeastern area, causing a domino effect of population decrease that caused an estimated 80% death rate (Wesson 2008:xiv). This hypothesized population decrease would also explain why several extralocal and migratory

groups suddenly materialized along the Chattahoochee River, most of these refugee groups being from a vast linguistic disparity (Hann 2006; Foster 2006; Worth 2000).

The Blackmon phase (A.D. 1625 - A.D. 1715) is historically associated with the Lower Creek Apalachicola Province and is considered "Lamar derived" (Williams and Shapiro 1990:69). Most of the Lamar assemblages from the Blackmon phase, however, lack certain Lamar defining characteristics, such as complicated stamping (Williams and Shapiro 1990:29). During the beginning of this phase, small villages began a prolonged population expansion near the resilient Abercrombie phase mounds (Knight 1994:384). Knight believes that the stability produced from this nucleus provided the necessary foundation for the population growth that inevitably led to the formation of distinct provinces amongst the later Lower Creeks (1994:384).

These provinces, or *provincias* known to the Spanish, were basically chiefly centers under which several subordinate towns were in alliance. These provinces were also the largest and strongest forms of political organization in the interior during the eighteenth century and were certainly reminiscent of the Mississippian era of chiefdom modes of government (Knight 1994:385). Principal

chiefs directed the affairs within each province, such as Emperor Brimms from the Coweta *tvlvv* at the Apalachicola Province (Knight 1994:387). It was these provincial nuclei during the Blackmon phase, not the later Creek Confederacy of the eighteenth century, that allowed for the influx and settling of various Native American refugee groups (Knight 1994:385).

The Lawson Field phase (A.D. 1715 - A.D. 1835) denotes an era when shell tempering decreases from the previous Blackmon phase (Foster 2007:77). Because of the heavy enculturation of Indigenous groups with European traders during the Lawson Field duration, burials and site assemblages are unsurprisingly strewn with a large frequency of Euro/American artifacts. Also during this phase, variations in pottery characteristics changed very little (Foster 2007:258-259). Large cooking pots called Chattahoochee Roughened as well as red painted wares called Mission Red Filmed dominated the assemblage frequencies and were both "equally occurring decorative features on pottery in use by the Lower Creek Indians during the eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries" (Foster 2007:259).

In a 2006 article by Creek scholar, Thomas Foster, the author established a relationship between the Hitchiti speaking Lower Creek towns located in the center of the

Lower Chattahoochee River Valley and the utilization of shell for pottery tempering (Foster 2006:65-84). Foster suggests that by the Lawson Field phase, the Muskogee speaking towns within the Apalachicola Province had little to no frequencies of shell tempered ceramics (Foster 2007:92). Foster's conclusion was that the Lawson Field phase usage of shell tempering was associated with Hitchiti customs, and the overall decrease of shell tempering during the middle of the Lawson Field phase directly correlates with the southwardly migration of Hitchiti speakers into Florida (Foster 2007:94). This cultural custom, Foster argued, could have been an ethnolinguistic trait that was picked up over time.

Ethno-Historical Investigations

From the accounts written by the de Soto expedition during the sixteenth century, we know that Hitchiti-speakers were living along the Chattahoochee, Ocmulgee and Flint Rivers (Wright Jr. 1986:7-8). The Hitchiti people were universally referred to as an ancient culture. In fact, it was commented that they were the "elder brother" of Southeastern Native Americans (Wright Jr. 1986:7). John Swanton also noted that as a language, Hitchiti was considered "The Mother Tongue" (Swanton 1922:172). This may

imply that the Hitchiti-speaking people may have once had complete domination, at least linguistically, over the Chattahoochee River Valley or, perhaps, even over the entire southeastern area of present day Georgia.

At the time of first European contact by the Spanish, circa the late 1630s and 1640s, the Apalachicola Province was assumed to be a distinct cultural group (Worth 2000:267). This was approximately four score years before the first of what would be many migrations (Foster 2007:258). Basing his arguments on information extrapolated from Spanish documents and ceramic analyses during the Stewart, Abercrombie, and Blackmon phases, John Hann hypothesizes that the Lower Creeks had two distinct linguistic subdivisions, Hitchiti and Muskogee, as early as 1675-1686 (Worth 2000:271). In fact, it was not until 1675, that any independent *tvlwvs* within the Apalachicola Province were cited in Spanish accounts except for the Muskogee speaking town of Casista (Hann 2006:81). Nevertheless, the Hitchiti speaking towns, Hitchiti and Apalachicola, were most likely the two dominant hubs in this region; the latter *tvlwv* was considered the oldest and most venerated within the Province (Foster 2007:258).

The number of *tvlwvs* identified as belonging to the Apalachicola Province varies throughout time, but there

exists three early official listings from the Spanish in the years 1675, 1685-1686, and 1716 (Table 1) (Hann 2006:87). The last year in the table represents the reestablishment of settlements following the post-Yamasee War migration back to the Lower Chattahoochee Valley. In 1675, Bishop Diaz Vara Calderon listed thirteen *tvlwvs*, and in 1685-1686 that number had increased to fourteen. However, sources have indicated that two of the named sites (Talipasle and Alape) may be satellite settlements, and the actual number of total *tvlwvs* for 1685-1686 might be twelve (Hann 2006:87). On the 1716 list, the number drops to ten, and two towns (Uchi and Chauagale), which were not on the earlier listings, make their first appearance in the Valley (Hann 2006:87). These late additions were the product of tribal amalgamations. These amalgamations will be explained later in this chapter.

Table 1. Late seventeenth and early nineteenth century town lists for the Apalachicola Province, sourced from Spanish documents and compiled by John Hann (adapted from Hann 2006:87).

1675	1685-1686	1716
Chicahuti	Sauocola chicasa	Chilacaliche
Sabacola	Talipasle	Sauocola
Oconi	Oconi	Apalachicolo
Apalachocoli	Apalachicoli	Achito
Ylapi	Alape	Ocomulque
Tacusa	Tacussa	Uchi
Vsachi	Osuchi	Tasquique
Ocmulgui	Ocmulque	Casista
Ahachito	Achito	Cauetta
Cazitho	Casista	Chauagale
Colomme	Colone	
Cabita	Caueta	
Cuchiguali	Tasquique	
	Ocuti	

Based on the Spanish documents from 1682 and 1686, we know that the chief from the northernmost *tvlwv*, Caueta (spelled Cabita in the 1675 list), declared hegemonic control over the rest of the eleven towns within the Apalachicola Province (Hann 1996:66). We know from sources that the Caueta *tvlwv* was an immigrant Muskogee-speaking red town, and the Spanish referred to their Caueta chief as Emperor Brimms (Hann 1996:66). Although Emperor Brimms held considerable power as a leader and this certainly was reflected upon the political influences of Caueta, the Apalachicola *tvwlv* functioned as the "capital" and housed the focus of conferences and affairs amongst the entire

Province (Holland Braund 2008:141). This was due to Caueta's red town designation, whereas Apalachicola's white town designation was better suited to host both war and peace leaders (Holland Braund 2008:141).

There lacks sufficient evidence to validate or nullify the existence of Muskogee-speaking towns in the Apalachicola Province during the first course of interaction with the Spanish (Hann 2006:81). In the 1685-1686 list, the most northern towns of the Province included Casista (in English, Kashita), Colone (Kolomi), Caueta (Coweta), and Tasquique (Tuskegee) and Ocuti (Ocute). John Worth believes these towns, minus Ocuti, were most likely immigrant Muskogee-speaking war, or red towns (Worth 2000:271).

In contrast to Worth's hypothesis, Hann has demonstrated that it is likely that in 1686 the northern towns of Tasquique and Ocuti spoke Yamasee, a language almost mutually intelligible to Hitchiti (Hann 1996:66-68). Hann further noted that all the southernmost towns in the Province spoke Hitchiti, minus Sabacola (Figure 14) (Hann 2006:91). Sabacola, also spelled Savacola, evidently had a distinct language from the rest of the Province and fell under the jurisdiction of the Apalachee chief of San Joseph de Ocuya (Hann 2006:91). By 1675, the Sabacola Indians

divided themselves into two groups, which Bishop Diaz Vara Calderon referred to as Sabacola the lesser and Sabacola the greater (Hann 2006:92). The people of Sabacola the lesser, by this time, were living at the Spanish Mission named Santa Cruz de Sabacola the lesser, which was situated just southwest of the confluence of the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers (Figure 16) (Hann 2006:93).



Figure 16. Late 17th century Apalachicola Province along the Chattahoochee River and surrounding villages (Hann 1996:69).

The Sauocola Mission was established in 1674 and represents the first attempt at the formal conversion of the Apalachicola by the Spanish; the second attempt began in 1679 (Hann 2006:95). The second mission was named Santa Cruz Chuba, however, its location remains unclear. This is

partly due to the fact that this mission attempt was short lived.

In 1679, several Apalachicola warriors raided an Apalachee village, which resulted in two deaths (Hann 2006:100). These murders resulted in the abandonment of Santa Cruz Chuba (Hann 2006:100). Out of dire consequence, five Hitchiti-speaking chiefs, including the head chief from Apalachicola, were forced to visit St. Augustine and testify in front of the Spanish governor, Juan Marquez Cabrera (Hann 2006:100-101). At this meeting, the Apalachicola chiefs denied liability for the atrocities and demonstrated a great disinterest in becoming Christians through the process of the mission system (Hann 2006:101). The Apalachicola peace chiefs then blamed Brimms, the chief of Caueta, for the responsibilities of the Apalachee village killings and the friar's resultant withdrawal (Hann 2006:101).

By the 1670s, the English had colonized most of the Carolina eastern seaboard, and they realized the potentiality of lucrative trade with Native Americans in the area (Milanich 1994:284). Slaves, both Native American and African refugees, and deerskins were the objects of English trade interest, while the Native Americans desired European trade goods, including guns and powder, knives,

whiskey, beads, and various material items (Martin 1990:51). The Spanish, on the other hand, underestimated the profitability of the deerskin trade and primarily focused on missionizing the Native Americans instead of using the English trading approach for maintaining friendlier relations.

By the mid 1670s, there began a three decade long contentious struggle by the Spanish and English colonies for territorial dominance over the entire southeast. This antagonistic feud began with an assault by the Spanish military against the English colonies of Charles Town and, later, Port Royal (Milanich 1994:284). This caused a vengeance-fueled retaliation by the British along with their Native American allies that led to several counterattacks against numerous Spanish missions along the Georgia coast that included Jekyll Island and St. Catherines Island (Milanich 1994:284).

In the early 1680s, the Carolina settlers, in league with the Savannah Indians, annihilated the feared Westo tribe, which resulted in the opening of a direct and safe trade route stretching from Charles Town to the Apalachicola Province (Hann 2006:106). Undoubtedly, these campaigns became a further frustration to the Spaniards who desperately attempted to maintain a favored alliance with

those groups that would become the Lower Creeks. Then in 1685, a sizeable assemblage of Yamasees, in coalition with the British, attacked and sacked the Timucua mission of Santa Catalina de Ajoica, capturing and enslaving all the mission's Christianized Indians (Hann 2006:106; Milanich 1994:286). Because the Yamasees spoke a linguistic variant of Hitchiti, this likely sparked a sequence of hostilities conducted by the Spanish towards the Apalachicola Province in the subsequent months.

In 1685, following the wake of the colonial and Indigenous battles over the southeastern frontiers, the governor of Florida and his newly appointed Apalachee lieutenant, Antonio Matheos, heard the startling news that the Apalachicola Province had warmly welcomed English traders (Hann 2006:106; Hann 1996:73). Upon hearing that the English had built two palisaded structures on the northern end of the Province, an enraged Matheos engaged in several military expeditions through the Apalachicola Province beginning in the fall of 1685 (Hann 1996:74).

On his first campaign through the Province, Matheos discovered that most of the *tvlwvs* had been quickly abandoned due to Chickasaw spies who were spreading rumors throughout the *tvlwvs* within the Province (Hann 1996:74; Hann 2006:108). The Apalachicola chief, Pontocolo, met with

and attempted to placate Matheos by stating that he had uncertainty as to the whereabouts of or knowledge concerning any English traders (Hann 1996:76). Unconvinced by Pontocolo's plea, Matheos returned to Mission San Luis but left behind two of his own Native American undercover spies (Hann 2006:113). When these spies passed along information regarding the continuance of trading relations between the Apalachicolas and the English, Governor Marquez Cabrera ordered Matheos to return to the Province in November of 1685 with a larger force of both Spanish soldiers and Native American warriors (Hann 2006:113-114).

Matheos arrived in Caueta on January 8, 1686 only to find that, yet again, the town was completely abandoned (Hann 2006:114). After waiting for 22 days without any sign of the chiefs with whom he was to negotiate, Matheos told chief Pontocolo that if the village leaders did not show up within seven days, he would be forced to destroy their *tvlwvs* (Hann 2006:114). On the seventh day, Pontocolo returned with the chiefs and leading men from Oconi, Achito, Alape, Tacussa, Ocuti, Osuche, and Ocmulque (Hann 2006:114). Completely missing from Pontocolo's entourage were the chiefs from the four most northern towns, and an irritated and short-fused Matheos burned down the towns of Caueta, Casista, Tasquique, and Colone (Hann 2006:114-115).

Just as Matheos had warned the Native Americans, this annihilation was a punitive action against the Province for continuing their economic affiliations with the English (Hann 2006:114). Sources indicate that the people of Caueta rebuilt their village shortly after Matheos' destruction, but this new settlement was short-lived (Hann 2006:122). This is likely because a Scots trader, named John Stewart, mentioned that both Caueta and Casista had moved to central Georgia in early 1690 (Hann 2006:122).

To make matters worse, in 1689, the Spanish, under the guidance of Matheos, built a palisaded garrison within the immediate vicinity of the Apalachicola Province that was armed with 21 soldiers and 20 Apalachee warriors (Hann 2006:106-107). The importance of this Spanish militaristic presence quickly led to the overturning of the neutrality once promised by Pontocolo and, thus, the entirety of the Province (Hann 2006:121). In 1691, as a counteractive measure to the creation of the fort, the Apalachicola ignited a series of hostile attacks, beginning with sieges upon the San Juan Guacara and Tarihica missions (Hann 2006:121). Unwilling to sustain more casualties and expenses, the Spanish quickly ordered the fort to be demolished (Hann 2006:122).

The Eastward Migration

In 1691, shortly after the Apalachicola assaults on the San Juan Guacara and Tarihica missions, a massive Indigenous migration to the east began to manifest. The brutal hostilities practiced by the Spaniards were too much to bear for the inhabitants of the Apalachicola Province. Additionally, the incessant attempts of religious conversion by the Spanish friars caused the Apalachicolas great distrust, and these doubts led to Indigenous skepticism that a peaceful coexistence with the Spanish could be achieved. Moreover, the promising economic stability of the deerskin trade and overall friendly alliances to the English colonists were convincing enough reasons for the forebears of the Lower Creeks to abandon their Chattahoochee homeland and relocate east.

It is the belief held by Worth, that the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley was completely abandoned sometime between 1692 and 1715 (Worth 2000:279). Worth bases his opinion off of two sources. In a Spanish document from 1692, a military commander explicitly references depopulation in the Apalachicola Province, and a British overview of trading interests in 1708 makes no insinuation of a "mother town" throughout the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley (Worth 2000:279).

The new settlements in the Apalachicola Province were moved to the geographical area between the Ocmulgee and Savannah River drainages in central and eastern Georgia (Foster 2004:66). At this time, Carolina traders considered the Ocmulgee River the "Ocheese Creek," and to lessen the confusion, English colonists often preferred using this geographical reference to identify these groups of diverse Indigenous peoples (Ramsey 2008:106). Over time, the "Ocheese" was dropped from the nomenclature and "Creeks" became the usual identifier for these peoples (Ramsey 2008:106).

The ancient mound site of Ocmulgee Old Fields (constructed between A.D. 950 - A.D. 1100), near Macon, Georgia, became the new major center of economic activity for the Apalachicola Province between the years of 1690 and 1715 (Ramsey 2008:107). A heavily fortified English trading post, complete with stockade and moat trench, was strategically positioned in the middle of the Ocmulgee mound site (Mason 2005:34-39). This trading house likely served as the hub and main storage facility for deerskins, ammunition, and various other merchandise (Ramsey 2008:108).

Based on research conducted by John Worth, most of the Lower Creek archaeological sites of the Blackmon phase

(also called the Ocmulgee Fields phase) have been correctly identified (Worth 2000:280-281). To support his arguments, Worth used cross-examinations of ceramic analyses in tandem with an anonymous 1715 English map that roughly depicts the locations of the post-migration *tvlwvs* (Figure 17) (Worth 2000:280-281).

Although not located within the immediate vicinity of the Ocmulgee Fields cluster, there is a description of an apparent satellite Creek town named Palachocola (also spelled Pollachuculaw) (Worth 2000:285). The consummate scholar, John Swanton, mentioned that the Palachocola of the late seventeenth century was situated on the Savannah River, 50 miles from its mouth, in present day Stokes Landing, Hampton County, South Carolina (Swanton 1922:131; Worth 2000:385). Several scholars argue that this locality is the post-migration transitional site before the Apalachicola *tvlvw* relocated back to the Lower Chattahoochee River in 1716 (Ramsey 2008:109; Worth 2000:385; Foster 2007:45-46). Archaeological evidence and ceramic analyses further attest to the hypothesis that the inhabitants of the site of Palachacola Town are, indeed, the "former residents" of the Apalachicola *tvlvw* (Ramsey 2008:109). Also settled near the Palachacola Town were the Hitchiti-speaking Oconees and the refugee settlement of

Savano Town (Ramsey 2008:110). William L. Ramsey described Savano Town as a "far-flung collage of interrelated villages" that was comprised of exiled Savannahs (Shawnees), Apalachees, and Yuchis (Ramsey 2008:110; Wright Jr. 1986:112).

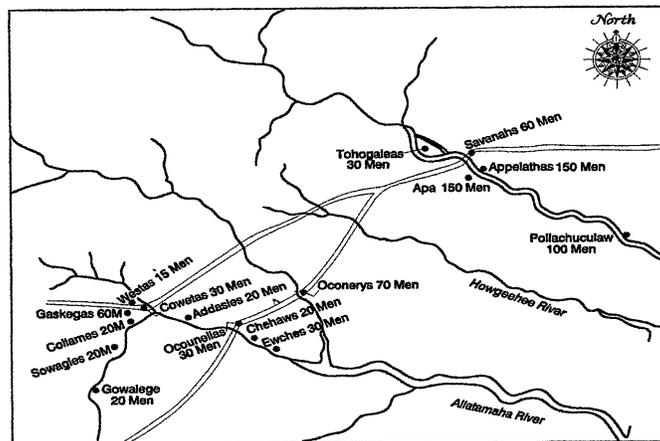


Figure 17. John Worth's rendition of a 1715 anonymous map of the Lower Creek settlements and trails on the Ocmulgee, Oconee, and Savannah Rivers (Worth 2000:280).

Between the years of 1695 and 1708, the Apalachicolas, Yamasees, and several other Southeastern tribes assisted the British in the systematic destruction of the remaining Spanish missions in *La Florida* (Milanich 1994:186). These missions stretched from Amelia Island west to San Luis to all the way southeastward to St. Augustine (Milanich 1994:186; Hann 1996:77). It has been estimated that these raiding parties took nearly 10,000 Christianized Indians as slaves during the course of these forays (Milanich 1994:186).

Less than a decade after the military campaigns against the Spanish, the alliance between the British and the Yamasees began to disintegrate. This was mainly a result of the exploitative nature of the English system. During the early eighteenth century, the Yamasees had settled in the vicinity of the Savannah River in hopes of facilitating success in the deerskin trade with Carolina (Braund 2008:34). As time passed, the Carolina traders slowly monopolized the deerskin market pushing the Yamasee and Creek traders deeply into debt (Braund 2008:34). Other factors that negatively affected the Yamasees included the constant encroachment of settlers, decimated deer populations, neglect and abuse of trade regulations by the British, and the number of slaves were diminished (Ramsey 2008:1-4; Braund 2008:34). Needless to say, the Indigenous commercial debt became rather outstanding. One source estimates that by 1711, the amount of debt owed by the entire collective unit of the Ocheese Creeks living in central Georgia amounted up to one hundred thousand deerskins (Hahn 2002:98).

In the middle of 1715, the Yamasees took up arms with the Creeks and Choctaws against the Carolina British and their allies, the Cherokee, which sparked the Yamasee War (Hann 2006:137). Indian Agent Thomas Nairne (see Chapter

II), along with several officials, was sent to negotiate by the colonial government. These negotiations took place in the Yamasee town of Pocotaligo, which was located about sixty miles south of Charles Towne (Ramsey 2008:1). The meeting presumably went well until the following sunrise. By the next morning, the Yamasee warriors had murdered the entire group of Carolinians in their sleep (Ramsey 2008:1). Nairne suffered the worst fate as he was roasted alive over the course of several days "before he was allowed to die" (Ramsey 2008:1). A bloody massacre of English traders across the region followed (Braund 2008:34). The British retaliated and crushed the Yamasee and their allies, and the war ended in 1717 (Braund 2008:35).

The Yamasee War ended with a large amount of human casualties for both the Native Americans and the British. On a lighter note, however, the war resulted in a new system of closely monitored trade regulations and a large decline in the Indian slavery aspect of the trade (Braund 2008:40; Ramsey 2008:171-173). Lacking the European supplies that were readily available through trade prior to the onset of the war, a large group of defeated Yamasees, along with several bands of pro-Spanish Creeks, migrated back to the vicinity of St. Augustine (Hann 2006:146). The Spaniards were pleased to reestablish relations with their

Yamasee and Creek neighbors. Emperor Brimms visited St. Augustine in 1715, and this visit renewed the overall relationship between the new Spanish Governor, Corcoles y Martinez, and the forebears of the Lower Creeks (Hann 2006:148-149).

The Westward Migration

By the closing stages of the Yamasee War, most of the Ocheese Creeks were significantly disappointed by the English trading policies and, without question, felt the immediacy of territorial pressures from the expanding Carolinian settlers. In 1716, most of the tribal and refugee towns living amid the Ocmulgee, Oconee, and Savannah Rivers abandoned their settlements and migrated back to the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley (Hann 2006:148).

The newly appointed governor of Florida, Corcoles y Martinez, soon began friendlier negotiations with the recently transplanted Lower Creeks as a means to entice these groups into moving into the abandoned Apalachee zones in the panhandle of Florida (Hann 2006:166-169). In an effort to assure Spanish allegiance, Lieutenant Diego Peña was sent to the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley, where he comprised a list of all independent towns in the

reformulated Apalachicola Province (Covington 1968:344). Peña's 1716 list included the towns of Chilacaliche, Sauocola, Apalachicolo, Achito, Ocomulque, Uchi, Tasquique, Casista, Cauetta, and Chaugale (Table 1) (Hann 2006:87,148).

Interestingly, Peña's list included a town named after a chief from the pro-Spanish faction Apalachicolas, whom went by the name of Cherokee Leechee, or Chislacaliche (Hann 2006:148). Towards the end of the Yamasee War, in 1716, Chislacaliche led his splinter group of followers from the Palachocola Town and evacuated their Savannah settlements and returned to the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley (Hann 2006:147; Swanton 1922:131). Here Leechee established a new *tvlvw*, which bore his name, Chislacaliche (Cherokee Leechee's tribal identity) (Hann 2006:148). This settlement is not to be confused with the Apalachicola *tvlvw* mentioned on Peña's list, which was located near present-day Columbus, Georgia. Chislacaliche's newly established town (sometimes referred to as Apalachicola Fort) was located near the old Spanish Fort at the convergence of the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers (Swanton 1922:131). The Cherokee Leechee, along with the Christian Apalachee chief, Adrian, and another pro-Spanish Creek chief, Ysipacafi (known as Seecoffee to the English),

assumed the roles of Provincial representatives to the Spanish government, which were similar to the position once held by chief Pontocolo several years beforehand (Hann 2006:146-149). This alliance can be contrasted against the neutrality maintained by Emperor Brimms in his relationship to the Spanish at the very same time (Covington 1968:345). This ultimately would cause a rift between some of the lower pro-Spanish *tvlwvs* and the rest of the Apalachicola Province (Hann 2006:146-149).

In 1718, the Spanish built and established Fort San Marcos de Apalache located in present day St. Marks, Florida (Covington 1968:345). The erection of this fort was an attempt by the Spanish to lure away several *tvlwvs* from the English. However, this effort failed, since the Spanish lacked sufficient funding to supply the Native Americans with gifts or food (Covington 1968:345; Hann 2006:168).

British authorities in Charles Towne broke their 1721 peace agreement made with Spain and began to reward those Native American allies that attacked the Yamasee and other pro-Spanish Indians residing in East Florida (Hann 2006:170). As a direct outcome of these hostilities, in 1723, Chislacaliche's Apalachicola people and the Tamasle (Yamasee) people abandoned their towns and sought refuge with the Spanish at Fort St. Marks (Hann 2006:175).

However, the Spanish created a list of all the Lower Creek *tvlvws* that received gifts from King Philip V in 1738. This list included Tamaxle the Old, Chaschdue, Chalaquiliche, Jufala, Sabacola, Ocone, Ayfichiti, Apalachicole, Ocmulgee, Osuchi, Chioga, Casista, Cabeta, and Tamaxle New (Hann 2006:181). It appears that by 1738, both the Tamasle (Tamaxle) and Chislacaliche (Chalaquiliche) groups had returned to the Province.

In 1733, James Edward Oglethorpe formally established the colony of Georgia, which extended Britain's territory as far south as the St. John's River (Hann 2006:182). As a consequence of this newly founded colony, a steady influx of English settlers began to invade the lands of Georgia. This intake of colonists into Creek hunting grounds resulted in a large-scaled migration of several migrant Creek families and bands into Florida (Covington 1968:346). Not all Creeks fled, however. The Southeastern Native Americans that stood their ground within the interiors and frontiers of Georgia and Alabama were forced to formulate a dependable system of governance or face a radical dissolution as a sovereign people.

The Formation of the Creek Confederacy

As John Hann remarked, the transition that inevitably led the groups living along the Chattahoochee River Valley to the coalescent and composite tribal body known as the Creek Confederacy was through a complex "series of poorly understood processes" (Hann 2006:1). Briefly, before the emergence of this eighteenth century phenomena, the forebears of the Creeks, both Upper and Lower, were in a state of constant geographical unsteadiness. Indubitably, as previously discussed, external colonial pressures from both the Spanish and the English brought about this precariousness. Consistent relocations, Christianization attempts from Spanish missionaries, and internal strife are all integral factors that influenced the formation of the Creek political alliances.

Due to additional forces of societal detriment, such as disease and political dissolution, Southeastern tribes often coalesced together. As already mentioned, several pre-Confederacy nascent groups began to experience expansive population explosions after the wake of the epidemics that spread through the southeast during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This population expansion, Knight argued, set the stage for the foundation

of the sixteenth century provinces and, later, the eighteenth century Creek Confederacy (Knight 1994:384).

By the early eighteenth century (post-Yamasee War), the Lower Creeks living in the relocated Apalachicola Province back on the Chattahoochee River represented a collective embodiment of sundry ethnicities. Most were from differing linguistic backgrounds. This tribal concatenation was comprised of a mixture of uprooted and local groups that included the Muskogee Upper Creeks, Hitchiti Lower Creeks, Chickasaw, Shawnee, Overhill Cherokee, Apalachee, Alabamas, Natchez, Yamasee, Yuchi, and African American slave refugees (Wright Jr. 1986:112-113; Braund 1991:604).

The Creek Confederacy arose out of an interrelated aggregation of independent "provincial polities" (Knight 1994:388). By the later eighteenth century, a highly organized and centralized assembly called the National Council governed the Creek Confederacy, and this Council was led by a National Chief (Knight 1994:375). Various chief delegates from independent *tvlwvs* met at the Council, which, depending on the situation and time, met at the Upper Creek *tvlwvs* of Tuckabatchee, Hickory Ground, Coweta, or elsewhere (Wright Jr. 1986:116-117). *Tvlwvs* were "mutually dependent" and had the option to "dissent and abstain from the action of any larger body" (Knight

1994:387). During and shortly after the Yamasee War the Apalachicola *tvlvv* lost its prestige as a political capital to the Muskogee-speaking Coweta *tvlvv* (Knight 1994:389). Knight hypothesizes that language might have played an important role in this political shift (Knight 1994:389).

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact formation of the Confederacy. However, certain documented accounts lend themselves to the decipherment of this confusion. In early 1682, the Caueta leader Brimms blatantly expressed to the Spanish that his reign of power did not extend beyond the boundaries of the Apalachicola Province, which at the time consisted of twelve *tvlvvs* (Hann 1996:68). In his letter to the Spanish King dated April 18, 1717, Juan de Ayala y Escobar described Emperor Brimms as the "Great Chief of Caueta who represented one hundred and forty-nine settlements" (Hann 2006:103). This immense expansion of Brimms' political ascendancy may have been a result of the formation of the Creek Nation as documented in the later eighteenth century.

The Southward Migration

Most of the early Native American immigrants to reach Florida were primarily comprised of Hitchiti and Mikasuki-speakers; these people would later evolve into the

Seminoles (Covington 1968:348). These Lower Creek peoples began to occupy the regions east of the Apalachicola River in the Tallahassee area, in former Apalachee territory, and towards Alachua, Florida, in former Timucua territory (Grantham 2002:9; Howard 1984:4). However, after 1750, an incursion of Muskogee-speakers trickled into Florida that included quantities of Upper Creek refugees from the Alabama, Coosa, and the Tallapoosa Rivers (Covington 1968:348).

Unfortunately, little is known of the inhabitants of panhandle and interior Florida from the years 1740 to 1763 (Weisman 1999:9). As negotiated in the 1763 Treaty of Paris, Spain ceded *La Florida* over to the British in an exchange for a return of Havana, Cuba (Hoffman 2002:174). The abolishment of the Spanish political domain in Florida suddenly appealed to several pro-British Lower Creek bands. By 1764, Hitchiti-speaking runaways from the towns of Apalachicola, Sawokli, and Chiaha had deserted their ancestral Lower Chattahoochee Valley homes and inhabited the vast and vacant area between the Alachua prairie and the St. John's River (Howard 1984:5). Here, they established their own splinter towns, or "daughter towns²,"

² "Daughter" towns, as explained by Vernon James Knight, Jr., were settlements on the periphery "of lesser

that often carried the same names of their former respected *tvlwvs* within the Apalachicola Province (Howard 1984:5).

Shortly before the Spanish relinquished their control over Florida to the British, several notable groups had also found asylum within the Florida interior. The fertile land and roaming wild cattle and bison along the Alachua prairies attracted the pro-British and Lower Creek Oconee leader, Cowkeeper (Hann 2006:183). Cowkeeper and his Hitchiti-speaking band were one of the first and largest Lower Creek parties to establish a permanent settlement, Cuscowilla, in Florida at this time (Hann 2006:183; Covington 1968:346). Similarly, Emperor Brimm's son, the pro-Spanish Seecoffee, and his people were also early immigrants arriving in Florida during this era (Weisman 1999:25). Both of these groups came to Florida as Lower Creeks and died there as Seminoles.

The term Seminole is a bastardization of the Spanish word "*cimarron*," which means "wild" or "untamed" (Howard 1984:3). Because the Hitchiti language lacks an "r" sound, the "r" became an "l" sound, and then, over time, became "Seminole" (Wright Jr. 1986:4). Seminoles were essentially runaway Lower Creeks that spoke the Hitchiti subdialect,

rank split off from the core towns, plus attached refugee groups and adopted communities" (Knight 1994:374).

Mikasuki; although later on many African American slave refugees and Upper Muskogee Creeks eventually joined these exiled Florida bands (Braund 1991:605).

Cowkeeper and his people were the first to identify themselves as "Seminoles" to the British (Weisman 1999:14). In order to discuss new authoritative measures, the newly appointed British governor of East Florida, James Grant, had called a meeting in 1765 in Picolata, which was located near St. Augustine on the St. Johns River (Weisman 1999:14). At this meeting, fifty Lower Creek chiefs were assembled to hear Governor Grant and his superintendent Indian Agent, John Stuart, enlighten them of their new mandatory 2,000,000 acre land cessions to the British (Weisman 1999:14; Buffington 2009:19). Although Cowkeeper neglected to attend this meeting, he later met individually with the Governor and used the name "Seminole" to identify his band; by using this gesture, Cowkeeper deliberately separated himself from the other fifty Lower Creek chiefs and, thus, earned respect from Grant (Weisman 1999:14).

During the Revolutionary War, the Seminoles and Creeks residing in Florida were caught in the middle of opposing forces that were represented by the Americans, the British, and the Spanish. All of these nation states wanted the use of the military support from the Seminoles and Creeks. This

was another critically intense time for the southeast. Between 1775 and 1778, the Georgia and East Florida border was experiencing an ongoing violent onslaught of guerilla style warfare between both Cowkeeper's Seminoles and Georgian white raiding parties (Covington 1968:354; Wright Jr. 1986:114).

Unfortunately, for the Lower Creek bands in Florida that wished to keep their individual tribal designation, John Stuart wrote a letter to the British General Thomas Gage at the beginning to the War of Independence that "designated all East Florida Indians as Seminole Creeks" (Wright Jr. 1986:4). Eventually, Stuart's title stuck. Thus marked the beginning of the invisible transformation of Lower Creeks to Creeks, then to Seminoles. This also sparked a major rift that inevitably created the ultimate division between the Florida Seminoles and the rest of the Creek Confederacy.

After the British lost the American Revolutionary War, Florida was relinquished back to Spain in 1783. It remained under Spanish rule until 1821, when it became a U.S. territory. This was a time plagued by constant shifting alliances for the Creeks. The métis son of a Scots man and a Creek woman, Alexander McGillivray, was accepted as the (self-promoted) leader of the Creek Confederacy in the

1780s. McGillivray was both a "silent partner of the largest deerskin trading company," Panton, Leslie, and Co., and he also served as the Spanish government's "main agent among the Muskogees" (Martin 1990:82).

McGillivray was a strong advocate for the centralization of all Creeks, Upper, Lower, and Seminoles to join arms in the Creek Confederacy (Wright Jr. 1986:117). Though the Seminoles did send representatives to the National Council meetings at Tuckabatchee during this time, the Seminole's push for autonomy prevailed over McGillivray's quest for his authority (Weisman 1989:82; Howard 1984:5-6). Around 1785, both the British and Spanish governments acknowledged the autonomy of the Seminoles living in the Apalachee zones (Weisman 1999:25).

The U.S. government, from the end of the Revolutionary War until the Creek War of 1813, was in favor of the pro-American Creek Nation. Through this National Council, the government sought to "acculturate the Creeks and acquire their lands" (Wright Jr. 1986:146). By the end of the prophetic rebellion of the red stick Upper Creeks in 1814, the entire Creek Nation had dissolved into numerous decentralized factions. Because of the unruliness of an Upper Creek minority, the U.S. government finally had a

reason to expel the entirety of Native Americans from the southeast.

Soon after the United States government gained the Florida territory in 1821, Thomas Forbes, of the corporate empire, acquired from the Creeks for unpaid trade goods 1.5 million acres that included the Apalachicola River basin (Eidse 2006:8). Forbes then sold the land to Colin Mitchell, who, in turn, parceled out the land to settlers in 1835 (Eidse 2006:8).

The Disintegration of the Apalachicola Mother Town

Throughout the length of the eighteenth century, the Hitchiti-speaking people of the Apalachicola *tvllw* went through a series of turbulent incidents that ultimately led to the complete abandonment of the original core town. These abandonments resulted in the formation of several peripheral daughter towns in panhandle and East Florida and southwestern Georgia. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Apalachicola, once the capital of the entire Apalachicola Province, had completely lost its once highly esteemed reputation as both a "Big Town" and a "White Town." The task of tying together a timeline of when and how the fall of the prestigious Apalachicola *tvllw* occurred has proven itself to be rather perplexing and difficult.

Based on the work of John Swanton, we know that at a Spanish council meeting that occurred in St. Marks in 1738, the Apalachicola chief, Quilate, spoke on behalf of the entire Lower Creeks (Swanton 1922:129). Swanton also noted that on September 18, 1768, a Lower Creek spokesman responded to a speech given by the British Indian Superintendent John Stuart by mentioning the reverence and political importance of two Apalachicola chiefs (Swanton 1922:129). That speaker said:

There are four head men of us have signed our Names in the presence of the whole lower Creeks as you will see: Two of us out of the Pallachicolas which is reckoned the Head Town of upper & lower Creeks and two out of the Cussitaw Town, which are friend Towns, which two towns stand for in behalf of the upper and lower Creeks [Swanton 1922:129].

Swanton's research demonstrates that the Mother Town was still representing the peace delegates from Apalachicola in tandem with war delegates from Coweta as late as 1768.

Perhaps, William Bartram, the naturalist, provides the best account of the dramatic events that took place in the former mother capital. In July of 1775, Bartram traveled along the Lower Chattahoochee River and came across the Apalachicola Province, which he described as "a beautiful landscape diversified with groves and lawns" (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91). While visiting the Apalachicola *tvlwv*,

Bartram mentioned that this esteemed "mother capital" is an asylum of peace and "when a general peace is proposed, deputies from all the towns in the confederacy assemble at this capital, in order to deliberate upon a subject of so high importance or the prosperity of the commonwealth" (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91). Bartram goes on to state that within the confines of this capital "no captives are put to death or human blood spilt" (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91). This description of Apalachicola is dichotomous to the bloody town of Coweta "where the Micos chiefs and warriors assemble when a general war is proposed, and here captives and state malefactors are put to death" (Waselkov and Braund:91).

An Apalachicola chief took Bartram one and a half miles south on the river to see the "Old Town" (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91). The former settlement contained several artificially raised mounds and terraces, upon which once stood their rotunda, or town house. Another earthen embankment surrounded a sunken depression of earth, which possibly might be the Chunkey yard (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91).

This old capital was abandoned, Bartram noted, about twenty years prior to his arrival, making that date somewhere around 1755-1760 (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91).

According to Bartram, the inhabitants evacuated the old town, because an unjustified occurrence had shadowed the people with "vengeful spirits" and unpleasant dreams (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91). The following was taken from Bartram's Travels:

Almost all the white traders then in the Nation were massacred in this town, whither they had repaired from the different towns, in hopes of an asylum or refuge, in consequence of the alarm, having been timely apprised of the hostile intentions of the Indians by their temporary wives, they all met together in one house, under the avowed protection of the chiefs of the town, waiting the event; but whilst the chiefs were assembled in council, deliberating on ways and means to protect them, the Indians in multitudes surrounded the house and set fire to it; they all, to the number of eighteen or twenty, perished with the house in flames [Waselkov and Braund 2002:91].

In 1772, the British sent a Scots surveyor to the Creek Indian Territory along the Chattahoochee River by the name of David Taitt (Foster 2007:48). During his journey, Taitt spent more than two weeks in Pallachocola (Apalachicola) where he surveyed the abandoned Apalachicola Town that "formerly stood about a mile and half below [Apachicola]" (Mereness 1961:557). Interestingly, Taitt's entry for Pallachocola on May 22, 1772 reads, "This morning the Coweta people Returned from War and brought a Chactaw Scalp into their Town" (Mereness 1961:558).

By gauging the overall context of Taitt's accounts, it may be assumed that he was referring "their Town" to the Apalachicola *tvlvv*. However, the act of bringing a fresh scalp into the *tvlvv* goes directly against Bartram's declaration that no human blood may be spilt within the alleged peace town. I believe that the politically dominant Cowetas, a Muskogee red town, may have brought this war trophy into the Apalachicola town either as an antagonistic gesture or as a reminder of the crimes that were committed fifteen years prior. The act of warriors bringing trophy scalps back from raids was a common, if not, an inherent part of the Southeastern Native American culture (Hudson 1976:251). These scalps were often hung and displayed on erected red, or "scalp-poles," as mentioned in the famous Kasita migration legends (Gatschet 2010:121).

Another document comprised by the Indian Agent, Benjamin Hawkins describes the Province and the degraded status of the Apalachicola *tvlvv* (spelled Palachoocla) at the turn of the nineteenth century. In *A Sketch of the Creek Country: In the Years 1798 and 1799*, Hawkins lists twelve Lower Creek towns that were situated on the Chattahoochee River (Hawkins 2003:25s). These towns include Cowetuh, Cowetuh Tallauhassee, Cussetuh, Uchee, Ooseooche, Cheauhau, Hitchetee, Palachoocla, Oconee, Sauwoogelo,

Sauwoogelooche, and Eufaulau (Foster 2003:25s). Hawkins specifically remarked on the Apalachicola *tvlvv*, and the following is taken directly from Hawkins' *Sketch*:

[Apalachicola] is on the right bank of [the] Chat-to-ho-che, one and a half mile below Che-au-hau, on a poor, pine barren flat; the land back from it is poor, broken, pine land; their fields are on the left side of the river, on poor land. This was formerly the first among the Lower Creek towns; a peace town, averse to war, and called by the nation, Tal-lo-wau thluc-co, (big town.) The Indians are poor, the town has lost its former consequence, and is not now much in estimation [Foster 2003:65s].

Agent Hawkins' despondent portrayal of the late eighteenth century Apalachicola town is nothing like its previous seventeenth century reputation. According to anthropologist Robbie Ethridge, there were only ninety inhabitants living in the former Big Town during the time of Hawkins' tenure (Ethridge 2003:63). Hawkins further mentions seven Florida Seminole "daughter" towns that were comprised from former Lower Creek *tvlvvs* such as Apalachicola and Hitchiti (Foster 2003:26s).

According to Apalachicola-Creek legends, the spilling of blood that occurred within the old Apalachicola mother town resulted in several major repercussions. In able to fully comprehend these ramifications, one must understand the ancient Creek social organizations. As I briefly

explained in chapter one, by the eighteenth century, most Creek *tvlwvs* were divided into two moieties that were based on clan lineages: red towns and white towns (Wright Jr. 1986:16). White towns, as James Adair explained, were "ancient" and "holy" sanctuaries of refuge³ (Adair 2005:192). Red towns, on the other hand, functioned as an antithetical binary to the aforesaid *tvlwvs*, where war leaders gathered and war captives were held and tortured (Waselkov and Braund 2002:91).

By occupying the role of a white, or peace town, the eighteenth century Apalachicola *tvlwv* had important institutionalized restrictions and taboos regarding acts of violence, mishandling of spiritual powers, and pollution (Martin 1990:36-37). Because of these unique social restraints, peace towns could function as sanctuaries that offered solacement for injured enemies, refugees, and homeless (Chaudhuri and Chaudhuri 2001:81).

One of the best examples of how peace towns served as consolatory environments comes from an account involving the Apalachicola *tvlwv* from 1725. Captain Tobias Fitch, the British appointed Indian Commissioner for South Carolina,

³ Adair further states that "it is not in the memory of their oldest people, that ever human blood was shed in them [white towns]; although they often force persons from thence, and put them to death elsewhere" (Adair 2005:193).

came across a runaway African American slave sitting in the square grounds of the Apalachicola town "in a Bould Maner" (Braund 1991:611). Fitch and his five men took the "Negro and had him, but the King of the Town [Apalachicola] Cutt the Rope and threw it into the fire and the King of sd [said] Town told the White men that they had as Good Guns as they, and Could make as good use of them; upon which the white man Returned unto me" (Porter 1948:72). Because this slave was within the peaceful confines of the Apalachicola square grounds, he was literally "untouchable" from the harm of the outsider British officers.

Supposedly, the act of violence described by Bartram resulted in a declaration by the Creek National Council that forcibly stripped the Apalachicola *twlwv* of its "Big Town" designation (Daniels 1995:64; Waselkov and Braund 2003:65s). Additionally, the Apalachicola *tvlwv* was forced to surrender its peaceful white town delineation and switch ceremonial delineation to a war red town, which meant that an erected war post was required in their square grounds (Daniels 1995:64). These punishments were to be served for ten generations (Daniels 1995:64).

Until 2001, the former square grounds of the Apalachicola-Creeks, the Pine Arbor Tribal Town, was the only Red Town in the entire southeast. In the fall of 2001,

roughly 250 years after the massacre at the Old Apalachicola Town, Pine Arbor was ritually extinguished and the White Earth Tribal Town was born anew. The war post would no longer be erected and the prisoner posts were decommissioned at the new Apalachicola-Creek square grounds (Dan Penton personal communication, 2011). Today, the "granddaughter" square grounds at *Ekvvnv Hvtke* Tribal Town retains the peaceful roots that were once held by its old respected Province mother town.

A New Apalachicola Emerges

In the early nineteenth century, two well-known Creek chiefs, or *miccos*, Tuskie Hajo Cochrane and John Blount, were a part of a large migration of Native Americans that vacated the Upper Creek *tvlvv*, Tukabahchee, located in present day Alabama (Ramsey 1991:2). This exodus led these chiefs and some of their peoples to the empty region along the Apalachicola River in northwestern Florida, just south of Historic Lower Creek territory (Wright Jr. 1986:209). Blount had just recently fought with Big Warrior against militant Red Sticks at the siege of Tuckabatchee in 1813 and then served under General Jackson during the Creek War of 1813-1814 and the First Seminole War of 1816-1818 (Wright Jr. 1986:209). Blount's prior affiliation with

Andrew Jackson would inexorably cause an incongruity amongst the Hitchiti and Mikasuki⁴-speaking members that lived on his future reservation (Ramsey 1991:4).

By 1812, there was a mixed population of around 1,000 Native Americans and escaped slaves living along the Apalachicola River between the Apalachicola Bay and the Georgia border (Riordan 1996:41). By 1816, after Colonel Clinch bombarded the Seminole occupied Fort Apalachicola (also called the Negro Fort), killing 270 men, women, and children, the hostile Creeks vacated the area (Hudson 1976:465; Wright Jr. 1986:209). Moreover, the availability of unoccupied land along the Apalachicola River Valley at this time was an indirect consequence of the depopulation of the original inhabitants of this region, the Apalachee Indians⁵.

By 1816, both Blount and Cochrane had established permanent settlements along the Apalachicola River in what

⁴ From here on, to establish clarity, I use the spelling Mikasuki to refer to the speakers of this Hitchiti variant and Miccosukee to refer to the peoples that inhabited the settlement located off of Lake Miccosukee. At this time, Miccosukee had over 300 homes and stretched for several miles (Wright Jr. 1986:204).

⁵ In 1704, most of the remaining Apalachees had been forcibly removed to South Carolina by the governor of South Carolina, James Moore, along with fifty soldiers and 1,000 Lower Creeks (Covington 1968:340). Other Apalachees either perished from disease or were captured as slaves by the Upper and Lower Creeks (Hann 1988:294).

is present day Calhoun County, Florida (Ramsey 1991:2). Sometime before 1818, John Blount's newly founded town was decimated by antagonistic Seminoles as a punitive action for not allying with these militant Creeks against Jackson's invading armies during the first Seminole War (Ramsey 1991:2). Cochrane's town was spared due to his friendlier alliances with the Seminoles (Ramsey 1991:2). Cochrane's saving grace may have been because he was married to Polly, his Miccosukee wife, and together they had a Mikasuki-speaking daughter, Polly Parrot (Ramsey 1991:5). This may have caused a sympathetic disposition with the hostile Miccosukee-Seminoles.

In the course of the Seminoles' destruction of Blount's town, the chief's family was taken captive by his enemies and was never to be seen again. Following this traumatic incident the lugubrious Blount fled to Fort Scott then located on the Flint River in Georgia. Here, Blount met up with and rejoined his former ally, General Andrew Jackson, and his army (Ramsey 1991:2).

In the final year of the first Seminole War (1814-1818), Blount served as a guide under General Jackson (Ramsey 1991:1). During Jackson's 1818 military campaign, Blount led Jackson to the Lower Creek Miccosukee *tvlvv*, where Jackson and his army destroyed the town killing many

(Ramsey 1991:1). It should be noted here that during the course of these violent raids, Andrew Jackson illegally invaded Spanish Florida, which at the time was foreign soil. The Miccosukees that escaped Jackson's gruesome obliteration fled to neighboring Native American communities to the east, south, and west. Mary Musgrove, the great-great-grandmother of the present day Apalachicola-Creek *micco*, Dr. Andrew Boggs Ramsey, was one Miccosukee who remained behind (Ramsey 1991:1). Musgrove eventually took refuge at Blount's town on the Apalachicola River and married John James William Joseph Boggs, the son of Polly Parrot (Ramsey 1991:1-2).

After the First Seminole War, the contentious Seminoles no longer posed a threat to John Blount and his people, so they reestablished another town, called Ocheese-ulge (Ramsey 1991:2). Ocheese-ulge was situated along the east bank of the Apalachicola River (Ramsey 1991:2). This name may have been chosen as a tribute to their ancestral Ocheese Creek settlements in Georgia during the early eighteenth century.

In 1821, the Spanish relinquished their political control over *La Florida* and then it became an official U.S. territory. This territory instantly attracted land hungry southbound white settlers. The intake of whites would once

again jeopardize these Native American's land holds, and, concomitantly, pressures weighed on the U.S. government for a mass removal of all Creeks and Seminoles from Florida.

The Treaty of Camp Moultrie was signed in September of 1823 between a number of Creek, Seminole, Apalachicola leaders, and federal representatives (Covington 1963:125). This treaty had several major implications that resulted in drastic social change for the remaining Native Americans still residing in Florida. The formation of the Apalachicola bands in panhandle Florida was a direct result of the Treaty of Camp Moultrie (Covington 1963:125). Another result was the beginning of a lengthy and massive forced exodus of Native peoples from their newly inhabited swamplands deep within the interior to a government reservation.

In the first draft of the Camp Moultrie Treaty, the government required a mandatory removal of all Seminoles to a 4,032,920-acre reservation between the Peace and Withlacoochee Rivers (Covington 1963:125). However, in the second draft, an amendment was added that guaranteed special permissions for six individuals and their

communities to settle on smaller reservations⁶ on the Apalachicola River in northwestern Florida (Figures 18 and 19) (Covington 1963:125-126; Ramsey 1991:78; Buffington 2009:35). These individuals included the principal negotiator, Neamthla, and five chiefs: Yellow Hair, the Mulatto King, Econchattimicco⁷, Emathlochee, and John Blount (Covington 1963:126). Blount and Yellow Hair were given specialized treatment due to their friendlier affiliations with the whites, specifically their involvement with Andrew Jackson during the Creek Wars and the First Seminole War (Covington 1963:126). At the time of the signing of the Treaty, Blount listed "Iolee" as his town of residence (Ramsey 1991:2).

⁶ These reservations set aside for the Apalachicolans were "small rectangular sections averaging four to eight square miles in size" (Wright 1986:234).

⁷ Econchattimicco was the Seminole warrior Osceola's father-in-law, and his reservation was located on the west side of the Apalachicola River in present day Jackson County (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

Townships 1 North. 1 South. Range 8 West.
Blunt's and Tuskegee
Reservation

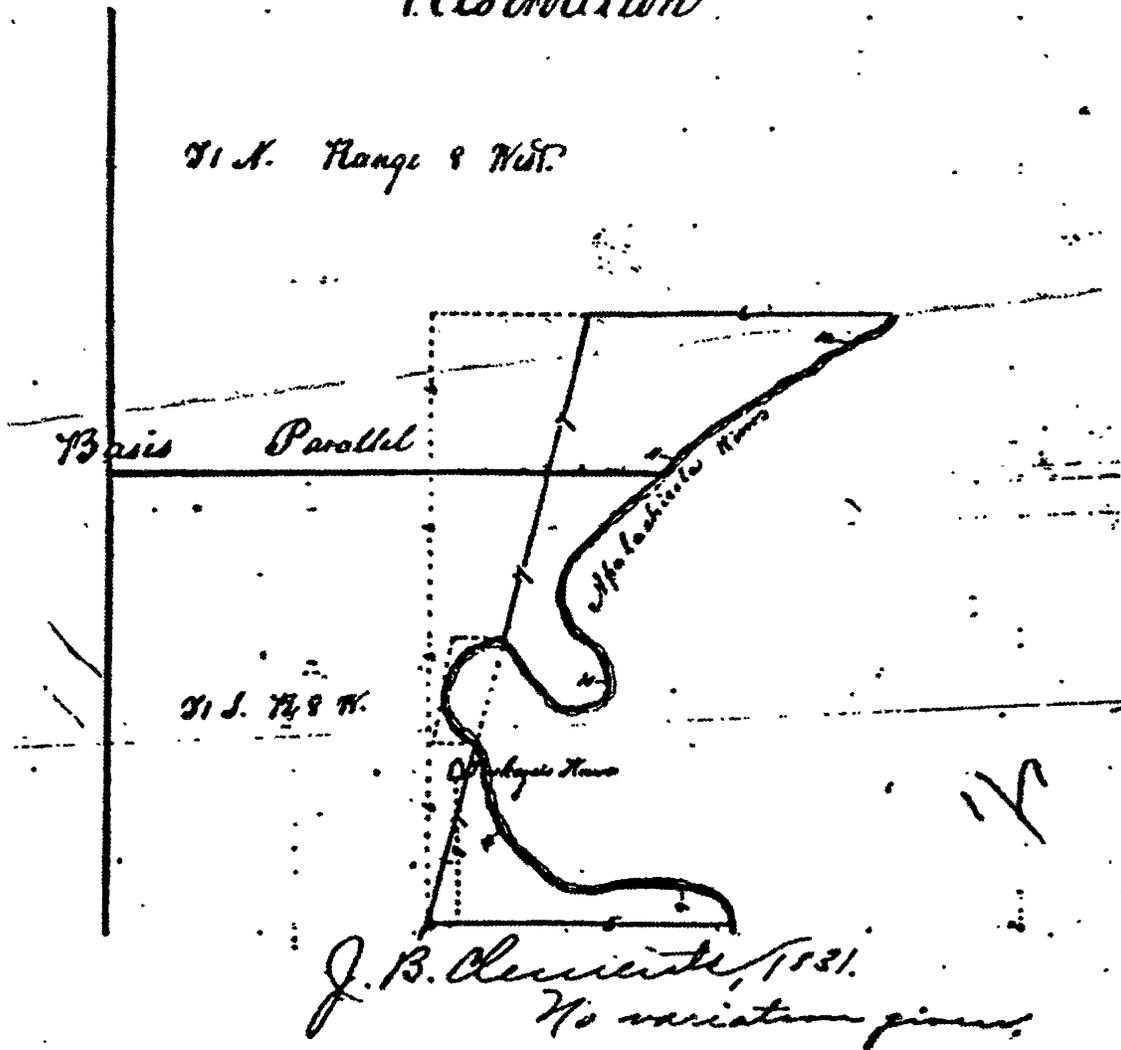


Figure 18. An official survey map from 1831 on the Blount/Cochrane Reservation on the Apalachicola River (Ramsey 1991:78).

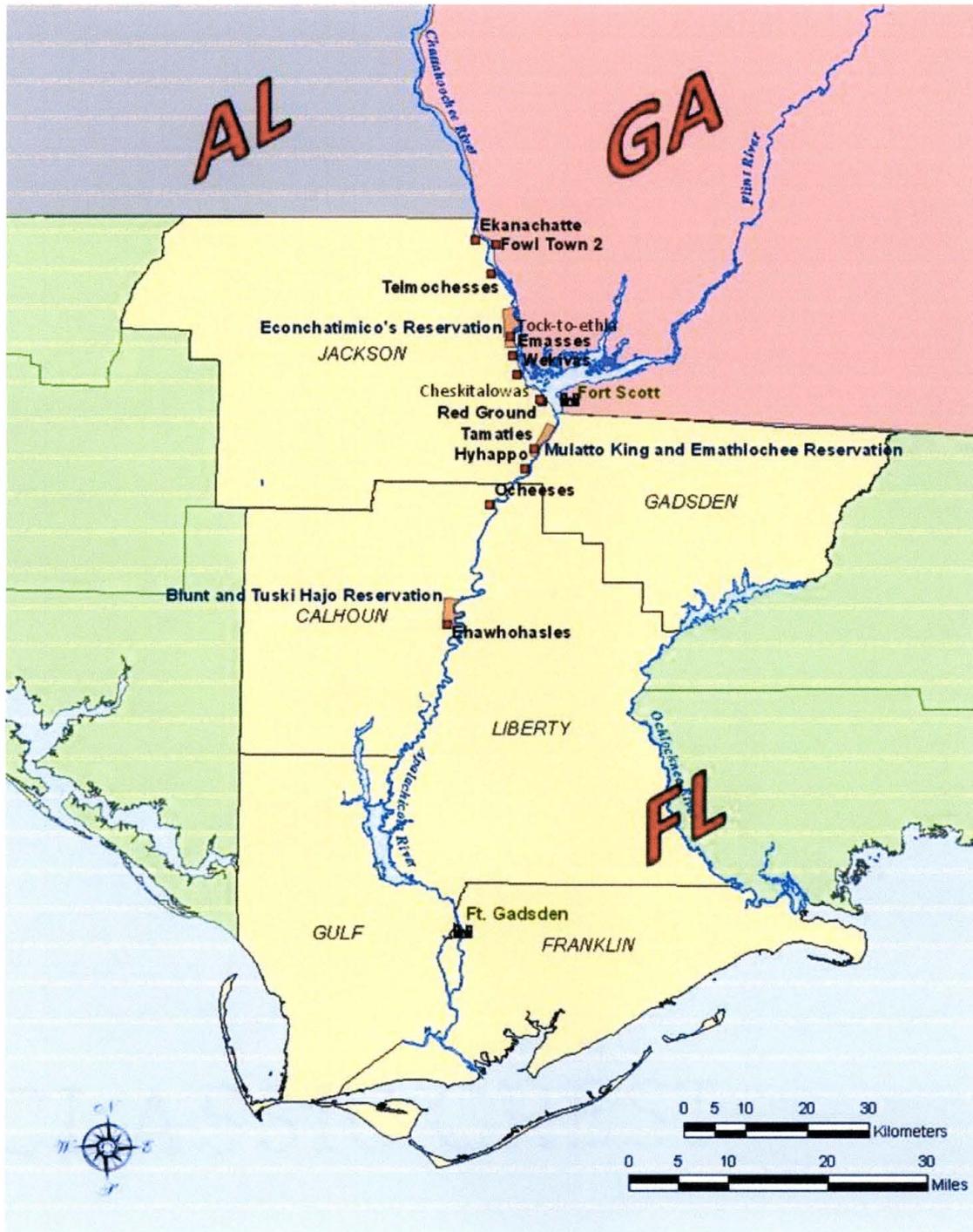


Figure 19. April J. Buffington's map of several historically recorded sites and the Apalachicola reservations that were created by the 1823 Treaty of Camp Moultrie (Buffington 2009:35).

In 1825, after a throng of angry Upper Creeks murdered the Creek leader, William McIntosh, Blount began to worry about his own safety (Wright Jr. 1986:238). McIntosh, like Blount, had maintained friendly alliances with Jackson and accompanied him at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend during the Creek Wars of 1813-1814 and also into Florida during the First Seminole War (Wright Jr. 1986:238). Blount was caught in the crossfire of both dangerous reds and whites.

During this post-Creek War period, more than 2000 red stick, or militant, Upper Creeks were emigrating from their previous lands into Florida where they joined the Seminoles (Covington 1968:354). Many of these Upper Creek immigrants caused havoc in Florida raiding both whites and Apalachicola bands (Covington 1968:354). Yet, Blount's options were limited; surely if he stayed on the Apalachicola River, he would again risk the loss of his family and settlement. Moreover, Blount knew that if he and his people were forced back to Alabama, his fate would be akin to his late ally, McIntosh (Wright Jr. 1986:238).

According to official documents, Governor William P. DuVal visited the Apalachicola reservation in November of 1824 and was pleased at what he saw. In a letter of correspondence to Vice-President John C. Calhoun, DuVal wrote, "The houses and fields of these people

[Apalachicolas] are equal to the best of the improvements among the white people in this section of Florida" (Figure 20) (Covington 1963:128). In the summer of 1826, DuVal assisted the Apalachicola band, which had been harassed by local whites, and established an official sub-agent station near their reservation (Covington 1963:128). John Phagan was to serve as the sub-agent, and his official presence in the region ended the raids. Phagan's tenure was short lived, because in 1832, his command was dismissed under charges brought against Phagan of fraud, embezzlement, and several accounts of misdeeds and neglect to provide the Apalachicolas their obligatory payments as stated in and secured by the Moultrie Treaty (Covington 1963:129).

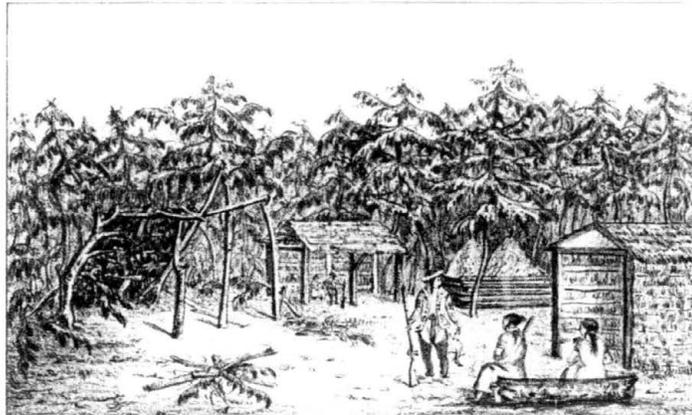


Figure 20. Francis Castelnau's depiction of a Seminole village on the Apalachicola River in 1842 (Courtesy of Florida State Archives, Tallahassee).

After Andrew Jackson was elected as President in 1828, the complete removal of all Native Americans from Florida,

as well as the entire southeast, was imminently near. In 1830, only two years into his presidency, Congress passed Jackson's infamous Indian Removal Act. At this time, the Apalachicola bands along the Apalachicola River numbered around 800 (Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:422).

In May of 1832, Seminole leadership and federal representatives met at Fort Gibson and consulted over the stipulations of the Treaty of Payne's Landing. This treaty stated that the Seminoles had to move to a reserved allotment within Creek land in the newly founded Indian Territories in Oklahoma. In March of 1833, this agreement was signed by a Seminole delegation that included Coihadjo, Yahadjo, Charley Emathla, John Hicks, Holahte Emathla, Nehathoclo, and Jumper (Covington 1963:131).

In July of 1832, James Gadsden, under the direction of President Jackson, was sent to negotiate with the Apalachicolas and offered compensation up to \$30,000 for their small parcel of river front property (Covington 1963:131). At a meeting held in Tallahassee, the compromised and final sum of \$13,000 was promised by the United States government to John Blount and Davy Elliot (Cochrane's son and Polly Parrot's brother) for their reservation on the Apalachicola River (Covington 1963:132). However, both parties slowly acted upon this agreement, and

it would eventually take five additional years before Blount left his home.

The years between 1833 and 1838 were extremely hard on the Apalachicolas. The Second Seminole War was well into its course by 1835, and raids on the Apalachicolas were accomplished by several bands of Seminole warriors led by the great former Creek, now Seminole, warrior, Osceola (Covington 1968:139). Furthermore, in 1833, Blount was severely beaten and robbed of cattle and hogs by three white men and Upper Creeks from Alabama (Covington 1968:135). Also in May of 1833, while Blount was on a expedition looking for lost cattle, three white men broke into his homestead, threatened his wife, and made off with \$700 of his personal cash (Covington 1968:135). By the mid 1830s, several families on Blount's reservation had left and either joined the Creeks in Alabama or the Seminoles in southern Florida (Covington 1968:133). The culmination of these incidents was, undoubtedly, devastating to Blount and likely influenced his willingness to leave his reservation in lieu for the land set aside for him on the Trinity River in Texas.

By 1838, all the remaining bands of Apalachicolas agreed under pressures from federal authorities to once and for all abandon their lands on the Apalachicola River and

migrate west (Covington 1963:140). On October 28, 1838, one steamer and two schooners departed from Florida, carrying aboard the remnants of the conquered Apalachicola Seminoles and a few Creeks from panhandle Florida (Covington 1963:141). The conquered Chief John Blount, along with two hundred of his people, were in this convoy. Shortly after his arrival in Texas, Blount passed away (Covington 1968:136). In the late nineteenth century, Blount's Apalachicolas finally moved to Oklahoma where they kept a fire at Apalachicola Rakko square grounds as recorded by Swanton (1928).

Contrary to the U.S. government's treaty negotiations, several bands of Apalachicolas remained behind. These Miccosukee bands were deemed the "Boggs" or "Bogot" people, which meant "the last people and their last refuge" (Eidse 2006:13). For the most part, the Boggs were descendents from Mikasuki-speaking Lower Creeks, although they were also comprised of Muskogee-speaking Upper Creeks and Cherokees (Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:433). This dissident band of refugees was led by the Miccosukee matriarch, Polly Parrot, who lived from 1784 to 1897 (Eidse 2006:13; Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:433).

During the 1850s, Parrot and her band hid near the Chipola River in a Calhoun County wilderness that was

called *Boska Bokga*, which then became Boggs (Ramsey 1991:8). Parrot's hideout in Boggs Pond is located about 15 miles northwest of their former reservation in Blountstown (Eidse 2006:13). Boggs Pond is also known as the Boggs Indian Refuge Lands (Ramsey 1991:5).

Secluded from the outside world, the Cochrane-Boggs-Parrot peoples subsisted on small-scaled agriculture and free range livestock (Ramsey 1991:5). Collectively, these people dredged the black and fertile soil from the bottom of Boggs Pond and used it to amend the sandy loam within their cultivated fields (Ramsey 1991:5). The Boggs bands eventually assimilated into the surrounding white American "progressive" cultures (Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:433; Ramsey 1991:5).

Around the turn of the twentieth century the Boggs family had moved into the city of Blountstown from their Boggs Pond location⁸. In 1908, James Daniel Boggs, the great-grandson of Polly Parrot and her Cherokee husband John Boggs Jr., saved enough money from his log rafting jobs to establish a general store in Blountstown located near the old Apalachicola reservation (Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:433; Eidse 2006:20). Though the business eventually failed due to financial setbacks in the midst of the Great

⁸ See Appendix B for the Boggs' family descent chart.

Depression, J.D. Bogg's son James Joseph Boggs (Figure 21) repurchased the store and eventually operated it under the Piggly Wiggly food chain (Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:434).



Figure 21. James Joseph Boggs on a street in Blountstown, Florida sometime in the early twentieth century (Ellsworth and Dysart 1981:439).

Today, Dr. Andrew Boggs Ramsey (in Muskogee, Tuskie Mahaya Hajo) (Figure 22), the grandson of J.J. Boggs, the great-great-great grandson of Mary Musgrove, and the great-great-great-great grandson of *micco* Tuskie Hajo Cochrane, presently runs the same Piggly Wiggly store. He has a Ph.D. in child development, and since 1962, Ramsey has been serving in the proud position of *micco* to the Miccosukee band of Apalachicola-Creeks as recognized by the Muskogee Nation of Florida. In the 1980s, Ramsey sat on the Florida Governor's Council of Indian Affairs and has been

fighting hard for federal recognition for his people for many decades. Today, he is an esteemed and influential member of his community.

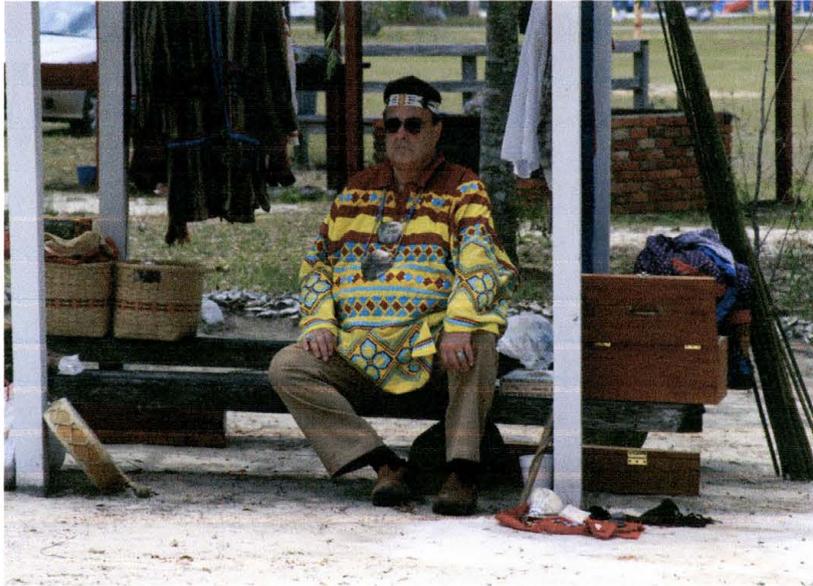


Figure 22. *Micco* Tuskie Mayaha Hajo, Dr. Andrew Boggs Ramsey sitting in the west arbor at *Ekvnyv Hvtke* in April of 2010. (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler).

Micco Ramsey, a Muskogee, Mikasuki, and Hitchiti speaker, is from the Wind Clan and was raised by his mother's brothers, which is typical for Native American matriarchal societies (Eidse 2006:13). Ramsey's uncle was a *heles hayv* at the early twentieth century Pigpen square grounds located near Cochrane's former town on the Apalachicola River (Eidse 2006:13; Andrew Ramsey, personal communication 2011). *Micco* Ramsey grew up going to the Pigpen square grounds, just as his grandmother and great-

grandmother used to attend the Boggs Pond square grounds in the nineteenth century (Eidse 2006:21).

The first official bi-lingual (English and Muskogee) state sign in Florida attests to *micco* Ramsey's traditional and unbroken lineage. Located in front of the Blountstown Courthouse, this historical marker, entitled "COCHRANETOWN - CORAKKO TALOFV" reads:

Their unbroken line of titled chiefs is Tuskie Hajo Cochrane-1832; Polly Parrot, regent matriarch 1833-1898; Tuskie Hajo John James William Joseph Boggs-1900; Tuskie Hajo James Daniel Boggs-1920; Alice McClellan Boggs, regent matriarch 1933-1961; Tuskie Mahaya Hajo Dr. Andrew Boggs Ramsey-1962 [Ramsey 1991:8].

Tracing the Square Grounds

The sacred fire that still burns at the present day tribal town, *Ekvvnv Hvtke*, represents an unbroken continuation of tradition that has been carried on by generations of Native American families since before the removal from the Apalachicola Province. Many of these families⁹ belonged to medicine lineages like *micco* Ramsey's ancestors, the Boggs-Parrot, and the *heles hayv* at *Ekvvnv*

⁹ Other Native American families in panhandle Florida include the Scott, Hill, Copeland, Conyers, Johnson, Jacobs, Oxendine, Kever, Chason, Brown, Potter, Porter, Blanchard, Patterson, Canty, Ayers, Martin, Stafford, Laramore, Jones, Mainer, Larkins, Holly, Lollie/Lolly, Bunch, Perkins, Stephens, Williams, Moses, Mayo, Goodson, and Goins (Sewell 2009:1).

Hvtke, Daniel T. Penton's ancestors, the Godwins, the Nelsons, Smiths, and the Wards. In times when there were no "official" square grounds, or even community busks, makers of medicine like Sanky Godwin, Penton's grandfather, took the burden of maintaining ritual responsibilities in his own home (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). In an interview on the topics of sacred medicine and cultural continuity with Christopher Bolfing in 2011, Penton states, "our grandfather held court from his porch. His fire was in the backyard, and the alignment of the structures, the trees, and the activity areas reflected exactly what you would expect based on the directions" (Bolfing 2011:252). Thus, Godwin and other highly trained *heles hayvs* continued the flame of the fire that burned since the time of his ancient ancestors. After all, continuing these traditional rituals is the obligation of the makers of medicine to both the sacred fire and to the Creator (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

For many years, ceremonial busks would alternate among several small "daughter" square grounds around southern Georgia, east, and panhandle Florida (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). These locations included South Georgia, Jacksonville, Antioch near Bruce, Tallahassee, and the Wakulla county area, Florida (Dan Penton, personal

communication 2011). The names of these square grounds often changed throughout their own particular histories and were sometimes named after the previous maker of medicine. These square grounds included *Tvlwvhasse* (translates from Muskogee as White Town), *Atapaha*, Alligator Ground, *Hvpo-hvse* (Sun Camp), *Cukonekre* (Council House Burn), *Ekvnsumke*, *Locvtvlwv* (Turtle Town), and *Pvlvcekolv* (Apalachicola) (Daniels 1995:79).

Around the turn of the twentieth century, there were square grounds called the Antioch grounds, near Bruce, Florida (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). However, around 1916, many of the young Creeks that attended this square ground joined the Bruce Methodist Church (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Their new membership would allow them to congregate in public and continue to practice their ceremonial busks, which were now cloaked in the respectability of Christianity (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

In the 1940s, there was a large dispersal of attendance from the ceremonial scene due to drinking problems and loss of traditional interest (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). It was during times like these that the responsibilities of maintaining the sacred fires and traditional obligations were almost exclusively

held by makers of medicine and their immediate families (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Through the late 1950s to the mid 1960s, an interest slowly picked up again by the Native American peoples in northwestern Florida.

Many former square grounds were then consolidated into the Oak Hill square grounds, which was located on private property in Leon County (Daniels 1995:79). Due to the progressive construction of Interstate 10, the grounds temporally were moved to a Tallahassee suburb, Benton Hills, for a Harvest Busk (Daniels 1995:79). In 1977, the Apalachicola-Creek matriarch, Johnnie McKenzie and her husband Oral, allowed the square grounds to relocate to their property located in South Tallahassee (Daniels 1995:79). The name Pine Arbor was chosen as the permanent name for the square grounds during the ceremonial year of 1977 (Daniels 1995:79). In 1983, with the help of Dr. Andrew Boggs Ramsey, the Pine Arbor Tribal Town was finally settled at a city park near the old Blount and Cochrane reservation in Blountstown, Florida. (Daniels 1995:79). Then, in 2001, the previous *heles hayv* and a handful of followers splintered off and moved the Pine Arbor Tribal Town near Havana, Florida where they continued their ceremonies. This was also when the White Earth Tribal Town was born. Today, *Ekvnv Hvtke* is one of many ceremonial

square grounds in present day Florida but serves as the
"granddaughter" *tvlvv* to the original Apalachicola mother
town.

Chapter V

APALACHICOLA-CREEK COSMOLOGY AND *EKVNV HVTKE*

In this chapter, I closely look at the cosmology of the Apalachicola-Creeks according to how they view it as a culture. Here, I define cosmology as a 'system of meaning derived from an emic-based perception and understanding of the organizational qualities of the universe.' The bulk of this research was extrapolated through either my own personal ethnographic research conducted with the Apalachicola-Creeks or from the ethnographic sources and literature relatively akin to my own experience. I am grateful for the many "long talks" I took part in at *Ekvvnv Hvtke* that were led by the ceremonial leadership. These leaders included *heles hayv* Daniel T. Penton, and his ceremonial lieutenants, Eric Jakubowski, and Doug Alderson, all of whom are insightful teachers of Native American wisdom and are cultural and spiritual "knowers."

I will then provide a structural analysis of the present day square grounds, *Ekvvnv Hvtke*. Through this structural analysis, I will then demonstrate that this

ceremonial arena functions as a cosmogram of the Apalachicola-Creek universe that retains the life force of their entire cultural past, present, and future. Last, I will describe the cultural significance of the Apalachicola-Creek fire renewal ceremonial cycles and its interrelatedness to their cosmology and cosmogony¹.

Cosmology

The Apalachicola-Creeks view themselves and their culture as being firmly embedded and intertwined with the natural world. Unlike most common western perceptions, Southeastern Native American philosophy does not recognize nature as an external force to be conquered. Comprehending this understanding is often difficult for those who were raised hearing Genesis 1:27-28:

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

Contrasting these very foundational philosophies upon which Christianity is based, the Apalachicola-Creeks

¹ Cosmogony, as Bill Grantham defines, is a culture's myth of creation, which explains, "how chaos or disorder is transformed into cosmos or order" (Grantham 2002:14).

believe that they are just as much an internal part of the natural cycle of life and death as are all the plants, animals, rocks, insects, and seasons of this earth. All of these forms belong to a natural order, however, because humans possess a natural inclination to digress over time, their role in harmonizing a balance within the powers of the universe must constantly become restored. These spiritual restorations can exist on both an individual and community level. In a 2001 article by *heles hayv*, Daniel T. Penton, he discusses the Native American concept of power.

Penton remarks:

As a basic part of their belief system, many native peoples think of power as an impersonal force that permeates all of creation. This force is present in both natural and cultural communities and phenomena and is often represented as circles or spirals. These symbols represent observations of natural phenomena—the spiraling of birds in flight, rising smoke or the effects of wind upon clouds and water. Maintaining a proper balance of power was, and is, important in the daily lives and ritual actions of many native peoples [Penton 2001:34].

If obtaining balance and harmony are the mechanisms that restore order to the Apalachicola-Creek cosmos, then the rituals they perform function as the keys that “open” these mechanisms. Following this analogy, if rituals are the keys that open the pathways to balance, then the maker of medicine, the *heles hayv*, would occupy the essential

role of the sacred key master. It is through the correct performance of these rituals that the *heles hayv* is able to access and retrieve the sanctified powers that are innately invested within the spirits of the ancestors, animals, or spirits of non-human origin (Reilly 2004:127).

These all-pervasive and sanctified powers are constantly in motion and are reflected in the predictive movement of the natural world (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). However, these sacred powers cannot be carelessly manipulated or contrived. Only through specialized medicine training and awareness, can power be properly harnessed and guided.

The cosmological world of the Apalachicola-Creeks is a complex and organized body of knowledge readily accessible to interpretive anthropology. This worldview consists of a multi-layered model of three worlds stacked one upon another. This includes an Upper, Middle, and Lower Worlds. As Muskogee scholar, Joel Martin, aptly noted, "this tripartite division was immensely important for it delineated three classes of sacred beings, three basic kinds of sacred power, and three modes of symbolizing the sacred" (Martin 1990:24).

To the Apalachicola-Creeks, each worldly level contains distinct characteristics that define the nature of

its own separate reality. The male oriented Upper World is characterized by order and perfection (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). The Sun is the dominant force in this realm. In *Looking for Lost Lore* (2008), George Lankford said it best when he states that "The Upper World is easily distinguished by the regularity of the celestial phenomena; anything that is cyclical and predictable in human life could easily be connected with the order of the heavens" (Lankford 2008:95).

If the Upper World is exemplified by perfection and structure, then the Lower World is the dominion of fertility, chaos, and disorder (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Creativity is also associated with this female oriented realm. As I will discuss later, the ultimate Act of Creation occurred within the primordial oceans of darkness of the Lower World, in the lost time of 'nowhere-ness' (See Creation narrative in Appendix A). The Piasa, or Lord of the Underworld, is the dominant entity within this realm; much has been written on the Piasa in the anthropological literature (Reilly 2004; Lankford 2007b). This chaotic domain is also the home of the ancestors, or what anthropologists commonly refer to as the spirit world.

Both the Upper and Lower Worlds are conceptualized as circular stony dome-vaults that rest upon one another, and at the very center of these vaults sits the Middle World, or earth-disc (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). This is where the human beings reside. The Apalachicola-Creeks perceive this earth-disc to be a female sea turtle, which is either floating or swimming in the cosmic seas (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Located upon back of this sea turtle is the natural world that is home to all the earth anchored zoological, botanical, and geological forces and beings.

The Middle World acts as a buffer zone where the opposing forces from the two alternate dome worlds meet and manifest themselves: in other words, where the disorderly powers of the Under World meet the orderly powers of the Upper World (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Both the Upper and Lower Worlds are ethereal, yet they share with one another a polemical relationship of balanced resistance (Eric Jukabowksi, personal communication 2011). It is through these ordered sets of polarities that comes duality.

Everyday, as the sun sets at dusk, its Upper World dome vault immerges beneath the earth-disc, and the Under World dome vault rotates above, eventually taking its place

in the sky (Reilly 2004:127). As the sun finishes its rotation, it slips in the crack between the two dome vaults in the west and enters the mouth of the great Turtle (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Here, the sun continues its circular journey, its lights completely unseen until the morning (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). As the sun emerges from the back of the Turtle at the break of dawn, the Lower World rotates back under the Middle World, allowing the Upper World to complete its course, in turn, above (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

The Middle World is composed of two convex sides, much like the shells of the Turtle (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Each side reflects the mysterious powers of the two ethereal realms. One side is always illuminated and one is veiled in various shades of darkness depending on the illumination of the night sun, or moon (Eric Jukabowski, personal communication 2011). The darkened underside of the Middle World overlaps with the Under World in both reality and in space, thus creating a mirrored image between the two realms (Bolfing 2010:17). It has been said to me that when an individual dances on the square ground, there is an identical reverse mirrored image

of said individual beneath this Middle World reality (Eric Jukabowski, personal communication 2011).

This dualistic reality concept is not unique to Native American belief systems. Black Elk, an Oglala Souix Medicine Man, in conversing with John Neihardt, explained that the spirit world "is the real world that is behind this one, and everything we see here is something like a shadow from that one" (Hall 1997:169; Neihardt 1972:71). William Bartram adds to this concept that "a pattern or spiritual likeness of everything living, as well as inanimate, exists in another world" (Swanton 2000:515).

It is believed that the Middle World and Upper World are tied together with four elastic cords (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). These cords reside at the ends of the four cardinal directions on a watery surface (Eric Jukabowski, personal communication 2011). There are also four cords that connect the Turtle World to the Under World in the four ordinal directions. Here the ropes are not beams of light, but are abysmal strings of darkness (Eric Jukabowski, personal communication 2011). Because they are naturally unbalanced, these Lower World "anchors" may snap and are responsible for creating meteorological and climatological natural disasters such as tornadoes and earthquakes (Eric Jukabowski, personal communication 2011).

George Lankford duly noted that this rope concept is not shared by any Muskogee-speaking group (Lankford 2007a:22). However, James Mooney recorded that the Cherokee believed that four celestial ropes anchored the earth, and Charles Hudson found that the Cherokee are unique in this belief (Mooney 1900:239; Hudson 1976:122; Lankford 2007a:22). Being that the Apalachicolas took in Overhill Cherokee refugees throughout their history, this cosmological adoption certainly would have a source.

According to Apalachicola-Creek legend, in the ancient past the four Original Teachers², the *Hayvhlke*, came down to earth on these beams of light from the Upper World to teach the Native American people their sacred ritual ceremonies, medicine knowledge, and scratching rites (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Yahola, the teacher and guardian of the Green Corn Ceremony, is the most remembered and revered of the Original Teachers. This belief is very similar to John Swanton's research on the Creeks in Oklahoma and their concept of the "Hi-you-yul-gee" (Swanton's spelling) and Yahola (Swanton 2000:485).

The most defining feature of the night sky, the Milky Way, is identified as the "Dog's Road," or the path one's

² These Teachers are also referred to as "Beings of Light" (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

soul must journey across to rejoice in the land of the ancestors (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). This "Path of Souls," as George Lankford suitably labels (2007c), consists of a watery obstacle laden path on which the traveler must overcome certain feats to reach their ancestral clan (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). The stars in the night sky, or Lower World, are perceived as the "campfires of the ancestors," and the world of spirits is the eventual end-goal of the newly deceased (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

As do most Native American groups, the Apalachicola-Creeks also believe in the concept of soul dualism (Hultkrantz 1997). The "warm soul," or "breath soul," resides in the lungs and is associated with the animated life force of all living creatures (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Originally from the Upper World, the warm soul, or breath of life, ascends and returns to the Creator at the moment of death (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

The opposing soul, which is connected to rationality, creativity, and animation, is referred as the "cold soul." This soul resides in the liver and at some point after death, usually four days, it sojourns back to its origins located in the Lower World (Dan Penton, personal

communication 2011). The cold soul is associated with the ego-consciousness and may leave the human body during dreams, soul-loss, and drunkenness (Hultkrantz 1997:26; Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). It is a belief held by the people of *Ekvnv Hvtke* that butterflies, moths, hummingbirds, and dragonflies act as the transport vehicles that carry the souls up through the great Blow-Hole near the Pleiades to their final destination (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

The Apalachicola-Creeks' notion of temporality is of an infinite cyclical nature (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). This essentially means that the past, present, and future are situated on a fixed wheel or hoop, and will rotate its cogs in an endless sequence. This complex philosophy contrasts with the western theory of time that is linearly based. The concept of cyclical time is founded upon empirical observations of the rhythms in the natural world. These regularities include phenomenae such as the twenty-eight day lunar cycle, the changing of the seasons, the ebb and flow of the tides, the movement of the stars, or even the pulsating beat of a living heart (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

Much like the Aboriginal concept of Dreamtime, the realities within the Native American cycle of temporality

are dualistic and divided into two levels, "the sacred inner reality and the profane outer reality" (TenHouten 1999:128; Rudder 1993). Germane to this idea is Mircea Eliade's proposition that sacred time is an ontological phenomenon that is both "indefinitely recoverable and repeatable" (Eliade 1987:68-69). When applying Eliade's theory to the Apalachicola-Creeks' ritual life, the inference is made that through ceremonial accession, the Turtle Dance is always performed in an unchanged and eternal dimension within the primordial experience (Eliade 1987:70-71). Therefore, their Moment of Creation is an ongoing, active process.

Structural Analysis of Ekvnv Hvtke

Certainly, the cosmology mentioned above is linked to the square grounds. Not only is *Ekvnv Hvtke* rich with architectural grammar and iconographic and symbolic metaphors, the grounds and their attached symbolism unquestionably offer an understanding of the Southeastern Native American cosmological model. Through this model the researcher can extract various components of Native American perception, ideological meaning, and worldview.

To reiterate, *Ekvnv Hvtke* is a *tvlvv*. In Muskogee, *tvlvv* loosely translates into "tribal town" where

individuals identify one square ground, and thus only one sacred fire (Lankford 2008:76). However, the implications from the word *tvlwv* go beyond the over used anthropological jargon of an "autonomous socio-political organization" (Blitz and and Lorenz 2006:18). *Tvlfwvs* did operate as autonomous political entities, but there is more to that designation. *Tvlfwvs* can incorporate numerous social institutions, philosophies, idiosyncratic ritual drama and beliefs, as well as kinship (Nabokov and Easton 1989:109; Daniels 1995:60).

The White Earth *tvlwv* is a sanctified place of worship, where a multi-leveled cosmos is accessed through precise ritual manipulation in order to create portals of preternatural³ communication, healing, knowledge obtainment, and balance. It is also where the Green Corn Ceremony and various other ceremonies, or busks, are held throughout the year. The word busk, is an "English-ized" bastardization of the original Muskogee word *posketa*, which means "to fast" (Martin and Martin 2000:100). Historically, the Creeks also used this word to refer to the Green Corn Ceremony (Hudson 1976:338).

³ To the Apalachicola-Creeks, there is no "supernatural." Although science may not provide adequate or explanatory reasoning, every force, power, and form in this universe originates in and follows a natural order (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

Ekvvnv Hvtke is referred to by other Southeastern *tvlvvs* as a "Turtle Town." This is in reference to their ritual maintenance of the Turtle Dance and Creation Myth. No member of this Tribal Town may ever kill or injure a turtle, and this is reinforced with a strict social taboo. Turtle shells for ritual purposes may be traded only, and these creatures must have been taken in the proper manner by a reputable person (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

The architectural layout of the *Ekvvnv Hvtke* square grounds makes a circle and cross (Figure 23). This circle and cross is a common, if not ubiquitous, motif across the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (Brain and Phillips 1996). Several scholars have commented on the cosmic centering qualities that are attached to this circle and cross symbol and its quadripartite attributes (Brown 1997:476; Howard 1968; Hall 1997; Lankford 2007a). The diameter of the grounds is approximately thirty yards. The surface of the square grounds are habitually kept free from debris, except for naturally occurring trees, some of which are a part of the seven sacred trees of the Apalachicola-Creeks'⁴ cosmological worldview. Additionally, several *pvsv*, or

⁴ The seven sacred trees are cypress, sycamore, cedar, dogwood, sweet gum, white oak, and pine (Penton personal communication, 2011).

button-snake root, plants are permitted to germinate on the grounds due to its highly regarded status as a sacred medicine plant.

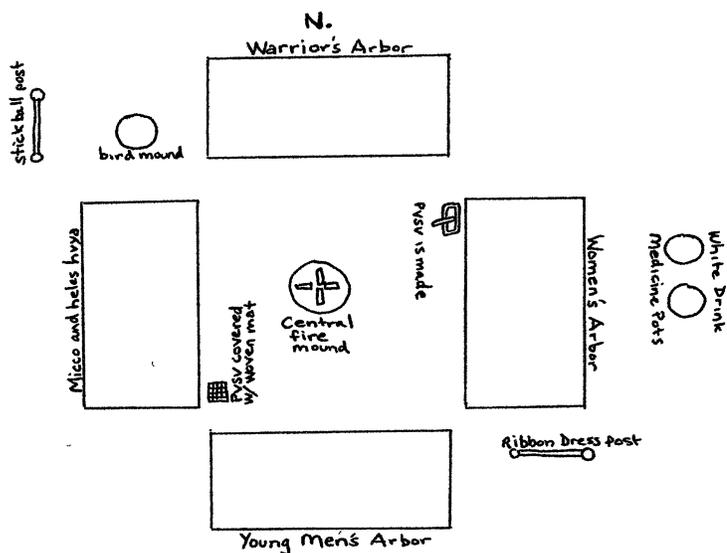


Figure 23. The plan at the Apalachicola Peace Town, the White Earth tvlwv.

Located in the four cardinal directions are the brush arbors. These arbors resemble small buildings or open-air cabañas and typically consist of six upright wooden posts connected to a framed open roof (Figure 24). Large full willow boughs are placed on top of these roofs directly before ceremonies and remain intact throughout the annual cycle of the ritual year. Traditionally, most Muskogee square grounds have three and four arbors, but two, or even one arbor, is not too uncommon (Swanton 1928). White Earth follows the Muskogee majority and has four arbors.



Figure 24. The east, or women's arbor, at White Earth square grounds in April of 2011 (Picture taken by the author).

Traditionally, ritual participants had designated positions within the arbors that were based on clan and lineage membership. Because most of the Apalachicola-Creeks today are members of the all-encompassing Big Town Clan, due to a break in their matrilineal line, this is no longer a deciding factor. However, the tradition of organization by social ranking still negates seating preferences. Women sit in the east arbor, and young men sit in the south arbor. Warriors belong in the north arbor, and the *micco* and *heles hayvs* reside in the west arbor.

The west arbor also contains the sacred bundles⁵ filled with objects of power and ritual accouterments that are used in the ceremonies. These items, as well as the grounds itself, are owned by the women in the community. Both items

⁵ The medicine bundles are divided by agricultural and celestial seasons (Eric Jakubowski, personal communication 2011).

of war and peace are on display during these social ceremonies. This display includes conch shell dipping cups and trumpets, deerskin hides, rattles, flint blades, feathers, tobacco pouches, crystals, cloth, male and female turtle shells, gar jaws, and medicine sticks⁶.

A non-stationary, yet, essential component of the square grounds is the medicine. Interestingly and unsurprisingly, the Apalachicola-Creek cosmological concept of duality is apparent in the medicine, which is divided into two parts, both war and peace. These medicines are used by the entire community for their renewal, cleansing, and healing powers.

The peace concoction is made from the leaves of yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*), and is otherwise known by anthropologists as the Black Drink. However, the Apalachicola-Creeks refer to this as the White Drink, not because the content of this dark liquid resembles Oriental oolong tea, but because of the white froth that is produced from the ceremonial *heles hayv's* ritualized bubbling of the medicine through a river cane bubbling tube, or *kohv*. This bubbling becomes bestowed with the breath of the Creator,

⁶ Medicine bundles typically have items representing the celestial quadrants of the cosmos that include the Milky Way, Big Dipper, Turtle, Bear, and Underwater Panther constellations (Eric Jakubowski, personal communication 2011).

the medicine maker as its spiritual catalyst, and this froth is used to impregnate the four daughter logs during the Green Corn Ceremony fire renewal ritual.

The yaupon leaves are typically gathered and brought by the ceremonial leaders and other respected elders before the busks. However, it is the north arbor warriors that cook the peace medicine behind the west arbor during the diurnal portion of the ceremonial. After the White Drink is made, the containers along with several shell dipping cups are moved behind the east arbor (Figure 21).

The war medicine, or *pvsv*, is made from the crushed and meaty-root of button-snake root (*Eryngium yuccifolium*). Young men from the south arbor grind up these roots with a stick on a wooden palette that resembles a *metate* (Sawyer 2010). This grinding takes place in the Women's east arbor also during the time when the White Drink is being made. *Pvsv* acts not only as a diaphoretic, but when combined with naturally occurring caffeine properties in yaupon holly this war medicine may increase mental efficiency and physical prowess (Sawyer 2010). After the White Drink is placed behind the east arbor, the *pvsv* is stored in front of the west arbor and is covered with a woven cane mat and the bubbling tube. The dichotomy of the color coordination of the medicine plants also brings about a dualism: the

white roots make the war, or red medicine, and the leaves of a plant that produces red berries make the peace, or white medicine.

The central most integral feature of the grounds is a cardinal-directionally oriented fire that is positioned on top of a small and circular truncated mound (Figure 23). This fire functions as the centralized focal point of all the ceremonies. This sacred fire is perceived as a living and breathing entity through which this community identifies itself as a cohesive and spiritually connected social unit. James Howard noted that this entity is an "earthly embodiment of the sun" (Howard 1984:132). The fire also functions as a conduit to the Creator (Alderson 2007:221).



Figure 25. The central fire mound at White Earth square grounds in April of 2011 (picture taken by the author).

It has been reported that buried within this central mound and not apparent to the eye are several ritual items

worth mentioning. This includes various organic raptorial pieces, which, therefore, symbolically links this fire mound to the Upper World. Under these avian accouterments are several stones. These stones represent different cosmological levels and include meteorites, river stones, and earth stones (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). These highly significant stones symbolize the first Turtle's eggs that are laid for incubation into the mound during the Turtle Dance ritual. The fertility symbolism imbued into these sacred rocks is integral to understanding the functionality of the Apalachicola Creation narrative and Turtle Dance, which I will further explain in chapter six. It was noted by James Howard and Willie Lena that there are four stones buried in the fire mound at the Seminole Tallahassee square ground in Oklahoma (Howard 1984:114).

Before the new fire is kindled, four "daughter" logs, usually oak, sweet gum, or dogwood, are carefully placed upon the central mound facing the east, west, north, and south, respectively (Figure 24). Three additional directions are also presented within the mound, making the total number seven, a sacred number in the Muskogee world. The smoke of the fire spirals upward to the Upper World, the base of the mound points towards the Under World, and

the fire occupies the center, or Middle World (Chaudhuri and Chaudhuri 2001:53).



Figure 26. The four daughter logs, cedar, and tobacco make the circle and cross at *Ekvvnv Hvtke* (Picture courtesy of Dan Penton).

One of the world's leading authorities on shamanism, Mircea Eliade, described a phenomenon of how certain trees, ladders, and sacred space can symbolically serve as an *axis-mundi*, or the thread that strings together different realms of cosmology (Eliade 1964:120). To the religious practitioner, the Axis of the World literally would become the Center of the World, or in the case of White Earth, the sacred fire and/or the ball pole would become the center of the entire Apalachicola-Creek Universe (Eliade 1964:120). This center would include the Lower, Middle, and Upper Worlds (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

The central mound is rebuilt at every Green Corn Ceremony using a common Southeastern mound centering

technique (Figure 27). The ashes from the busk prior are collected from the central mound and placed onto a smaller mound, called the bird mound, which is located in the northwest ordinal in the square grounds between the north and west arbors. Also during this time, additional refuse ash is distributed evenly around the entire perimeter of the square grounds. The bird mound is essentially a smaller rendition of the sacred fire mound, except the former has a ring of conchs and various shell ornaments surrounding it.

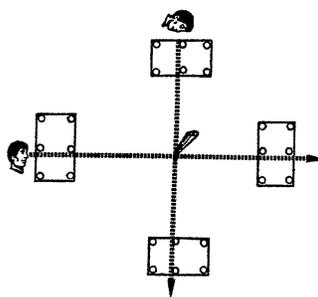


Figure 27. Willie Lena's drawing of the method for centering the sacred fire, which is also used at *Ekvnv Hvtke* (Howard 1984:132).

The floor of the open space enclosed with the square grounds is covered in white sand. Under this white sand is a red clay capped base. I will explain the significance of these layers in the next section of this chapter. The entirety of the square grounds is engulfed by a shell "spiritual retaining wall," which gives the grounds a heightened sense of sacredness and consecration (Figure 28). In the Southeastern Native American worldview, shells

have obvious associations with the Under World. Archaeologically, shell rings have been found in the context of site layout such as in the Great Mortuary at Spiro and at the Crystal River site in Florida.



Figure 28. The ring of shells delineates the sacred boundaries of the square grounds at *Ekvvnv Hvtke*, with the west arbor in background. (Picture taken by the author in 2011).

Today, the Apalachicola-Creeks play the stickball game at every ceremonial busk throughout the year; so, therefore, the game, as well as the ball pole itself, are inseparable from their sacred architecture and ritual life. The tall ball pole, made from a healthy pine tree, has a symbiotic relationship with the central fire. The ball pole functions similarly to the sacred fire by symbolizing "the existence of an autonomous *tvlvw*" (Wright 1986:31). The pole at White Earth is equipped with a wooden fish effigy

at its zenith and rests in the ground above various buried ritual objects that include a buffalo skull and tobacco (Figure 29).



a

b

Figure 29. (a) The ball pole at White Earth Tribal Town, during the Berry Busk in April, 2010 (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler); (b) The upside-down mudfish effigy at the ball pole's zenith (Picture taken by the author).

The Ekvnv Hvtke Square Grounds as a Cosmogram

Many scholars have recognized and commented on how the explicit symbolism, sacred motifs, and cosmic directionality embedded within the Southeastern square grounds formulate the cosmogram of a Creek universe (Howard 1968; Lankford 2004; Nabokov and Easton 1989:111; Waring 1968). The ceremonial arena at the Apalachicola-Creek Tribal Town is no exception to these analogies. To illustrate this, I have constructed a hypothetical cosmological model (Figure 30). Additionally, through an

art historical lens, I will deconstruct several symbolic layers of meaning.

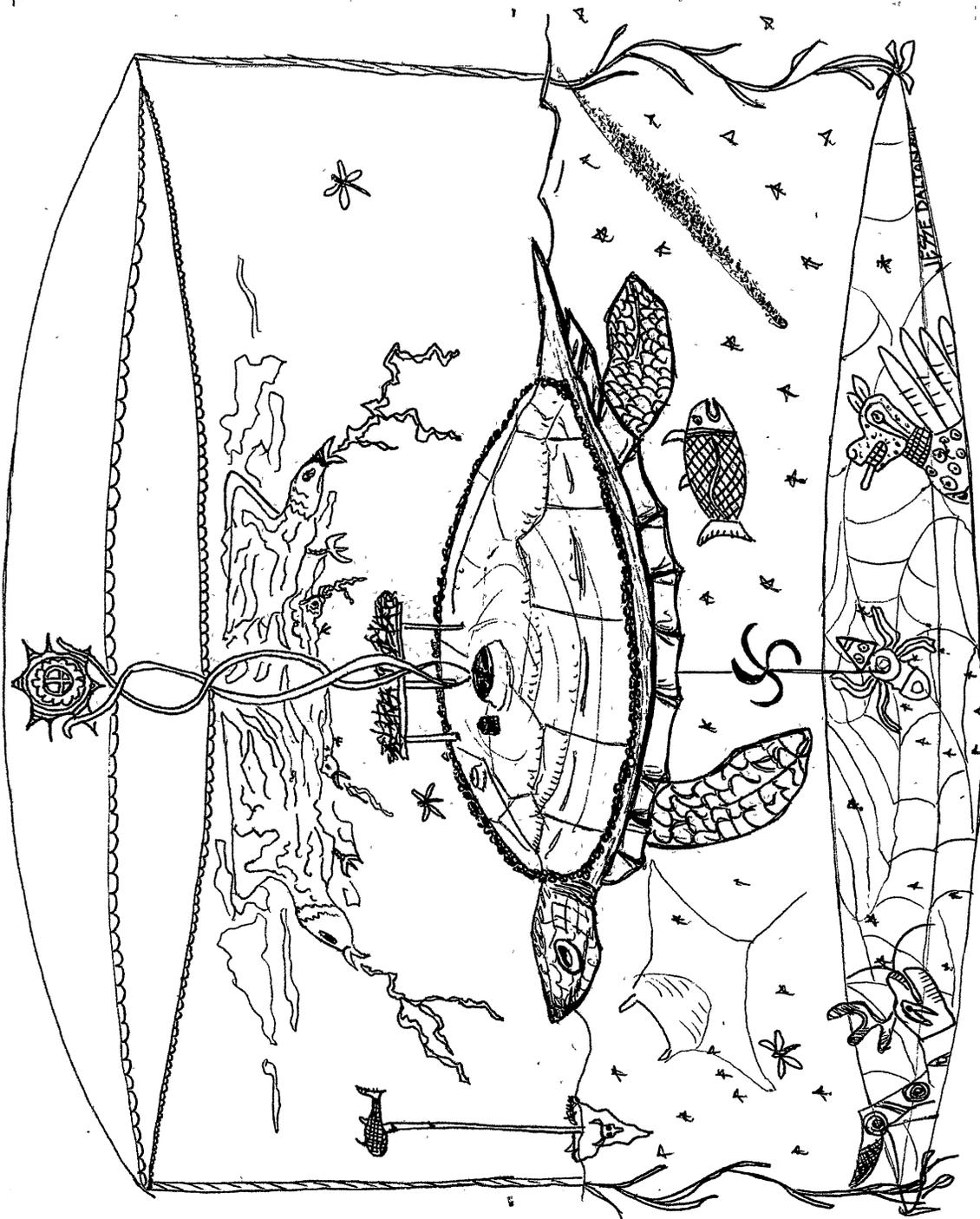


Figure 30. A hypothetical rendition of the Apalachicola-Creek cosmological model.

The tripartite worldly divisions are apparent within the layout of the grounds. The Middle World is represented in the earthly flat circular plane of the grounds. The Upper World is represented by the willow covered arbors and the centrality of the sacred fire mound. The encompassing ring of shells delineates the boundaries of the square grounds as resting in the cosmic seas of the primordial oceans. The conjunction of the two color coordinated layers within the earthen floor of the grounds undoubtedly references the dualistic "union of the two worlds" (Lankford 2007a:30-31). The red clay capped layer that serves as the foundation of the grounds is symbolically linked to the Under World just as the top layer of white sand is linked to the Upper World⁷ (Lankford 2007a:30-31). As previously mentioned, the *axis-mundi* qualities of the sacred fire and mound tie these three worlds together.

Apart from the actual periphery of the square grounds, the ball pole also functions as an *axis mundi*, but this portal opens "up" to the Under World. The fish resting upon its zenith subtly hints as a locative for this cosmic door. Specifically, this species is a mudfish, or bottom feeder,

⁷ Several Mississippian mound sites from the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley, such as the Cool Branch Site (9QU5), contain overlain layers of alternating red clay and white clay-silt (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:208-209).

that inhabits the deepest and darkest depths of its under water habitat. Just as the ball pole is the male equivalent to the female night sky, the fire mound acts as the female equivalent to the male day sky.

The quadripartite directionality of the universe is visually omnipotent within the square ground symbolism. The four cardinal directions are assumed to have great weather powers related to the wind and other Upper World attributes (Lankford 2007a:24-25). Each direction has a different color assigned, each with purposeful meaning. East is the where the life giving force of the sun is brought up from the underworld, so yellow represents this direction. However, in this case, yellow was chosen not solely because of the color of the sun. It was also chosen because it represents a stage in the cycle of natural organic life (yellow, green, and brown) (Dan Penton, personal conversation 2011). The opposite direction, west, is the path where the sun habitually goes to the Under World every evening. Therefore, it is also the direction of death, old age, and wisdom. Black is the color of west. Red is the color of the North and represents the warriors of this arbor. Finally, the south arbor is the color of white. This represents youth, innocence, and the upcoming generations.

The Apalachicola-Creeks refer to their square grounds as the "Big Rainbow House." According to the belief, there is an identical square grounds residing in the Upper World where the spirits perform their ceremonials (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). An examination of this custom has led me to believe that this is a cosmological adoption from the Yuchi. Frank Speck's research of the Yuchi from 1909 validates this hypothesized cultural loan:

It has been said that the square-ground symbolizes the rainbow. In this sense it represents the rainbow as the town square of the supernatural beings, the idea having brought to earth, with instructions to perpetuate it, by the tribal deity, the Sun. In emulation of the supernatural beings who were holding a meeting upon the rainbow in the world above when the Sun himself was born, the earthly people now congregate upon the earthly rainbow shrine for their communal events [Speck 2004:81].

The Apalachicola-Creeks believe that the heavenly embodiment of their Big Rainbow House is actually a snare trap in which their ancestors are caught and brought down to the earthly realm of the square grounds (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). An etymological assessment of certain Dighean Souix terms may indicate the origin, or at the least, the extent of the widespread distribution of this concept. Interestingly, the Osage word for the quartered circle is *Ho'-e-ga* (Hall 1997:56). However, in

Osage this word has many different meanings. *Ho'-e-ga* is also the ritual name for the earth, or the bare interior of an organized Osage camp, as well as, 'snare' or 'trap' (Hall 1997:56). As Robert Hall's research has demonstrated, both 'snare' and 'trap' are commonly used words for the rainbow in various Plains cultures, such as the Lakota and Cheyenne (Hall 1997:56,100). Furthermore, the Cheyenne word, *no nun'o* means 'snare, trap, fishline, rainbow' (Hall 1997:56). Here, again, is a relationship between an Under World symbol, the fishline, to the Upper World phenomena, the rainbow. It is difficult to trace the movement of cosmological ideas across disparate cultures; however, it is, at the very least, interesting that these ideas are similar in focus.

The Fire Renewal Ceremonial Cycles

The annual ceremonial cycles performed at the Apalachicola-Creek square grounds consist of a complex series of four community oriented busks that occur throughout a 365-day year. These four busks include the Green Corn, Little Green Corn, Harvest, and Berry. Based on the lunar and agricultural events and timed to coincide with the new moon, these calendrical rituals mirror and symbolize the four most (and foremost) recognized stages of

the Creek life cycle: birth, adolescence, maturity, and old age. In this series of ceremonies, these people's social acceptance of the fragile and precious nature of the cycle of life is cleverly woven into their tapestry of ritual symbolism.

Emblematic of the sequence of life and death symbolism are the overarching concepts of fire renewal, purification, and expressions of collective social solidarity. The meanings derived from these ceremonials not only perpetuate the Apalachicola-Creek traditional society as a whole, but it brings the balanced harmony that is needed to restore the peaceful order to their universe.

The entire Apalachicola-Creek ceremonial and calendrical year is divided into two gender-based associations (Table 2). The female duration coincides with the seasons highly favorable for agricultural production (spring to late summer), whilst the male duration (fall and winter) coincides with the seasons of which subsistence is depended on heavy hunting and foraging. The agricultural season has obvious symbolic connections to fertility, growth, and nourishment, and the hunting, or male, season has connections to male dominated activities.

Table 2. The interrelatedness of the agricultural seasons and subsistence strategies to the ceremonial calendar at *Ekvnyv Hvtke*.

Busk	Green Corn	Little Green Corn	Harvest	Berry
Season	Summer	Late Summer	Fall	Spring
Age of Fire	Newborn	Adolescent	Mature	Elderly
Sexual Division	Female	Female	Male	Female
Subsistence	Agriculture	Agriculture	Hunting/Foraging	Agriculture

The Apalachicola-Creek New Year is ritually inaugurated at the Green Corn Ceremony. This ceremonial has ancient agricultural associations, and, in the past as it is now, is timed to correspond with the ripening of the first major crop of fresh corn, or maize (Hudson 1976:366). The Green Corn Ceremony is characterized by its inherent renewal and purification processes.

The evening before the main day of ritual activities marks the ending of the old year, and throughout this night, the sacred fire is allowed to self-extinguish, dying a "natural death." There are multiple reasons for this action, and Hudson offers a plausible explanation, "they extinguished the old fire which had become polluted through man's inability to live up to his higher social ideals" (Hudson 1976:375). This is the only time throughout the entire year that the Apalachicola-Creeks are without the

fire; therefore, this is a dangerous time for both their culture in particular and their universe in general.

Traditionally in the past, during this time all the individual fires in the town were extinguished and houses were burnt down or repaired, swept, and washed (Witthoft 1949:64). Tradition also has it that the end of the old year was "marked by the cessation of all enmities" and pardons were given to criminal offenders, except for the act of murder (Witthoft 1949:64). This tradition is carried over to the present form of the social court practiced by the people of *Ekvnv Hvtke*. On the evening that the fire is ritually extinguished, grievances and contentious feelings toward one another are solved in the setting of a community atmosphere.

Next, one or two venerated women read the Creation narrative aloud to the whole community. This reading brings everyone back to together as if to remind the community of how they are of one. Typically following this social healing, the Turtle Dance is performed. The Turtle Dance is where the members of the community reenact their Creation through the tradition of ritualized song and dance. I will further elaborate on this specific ritual in the next chapter.

Four days prior to the ceremony, the men observe a strict taboo from the consumption of salt, sex, and alcohol. During the first day of the Green Corn, the grounds are swept and cleaned, replenished with sand, and the central mound is rebuilt. During the Green Corn, new willow boughs are cut, brought into the square, and placed on top of the arbors. The replenishing of new earth in the form of white sand symbolically represents making the entire earth anew. The new layer of sand also symbolizes the relining of the metaphorical uterus within the sacred fire mound as to facilitate a healthy pregnancy. After the square grounds are cleared and replenished with a new layer of earth, the makers of medicine physically and physically prepare the ceremonial arena before it is officially consecrated (Eric Jakubowski, personal communication 2011). Only fasting men may enter or leave the grounds in groups of two.

During the day, medicine plants are gathered by the men, which then are made into the famous white drink and *pvsv*, or warrior's medicine. The *heles hvya* ritually bubbles the white drink with a bubbling tube (symbolizing a penis), investing the breath of the Creator into the community's medicine. This frothy medicine, which symbolizes semen, is poured all over the aforementioned

four daughter logs, thus impregnating them with an act of divine conception. Then homage is paid to Yahola with a loud cry (Eric Jakubowski, personal communication 2011). Then the ceremonial leaders kindle a new flame in a shell conch, and the new fire is ritually lit. However, this fire is not yet born till the following morning's sunrise. Until then it symbolically resides in the birth canal.

The community fast is broken after the appropriate dances (Ribbon and Feather) and after the community has touched medicine and completed the scratching rites. Sacrifice and the release of transgressions are important themes carried in the scratching symbolism. Ceremonial officials use the jagged teeth from a sundried gar jaw (*Lepisosteus oculatus*) during these ritual bloodlettings. Only someone who has taken the necessary fasting precautions such as abstinence from alcohol, salt, sex, and food may obtain these faunal scarring implements. The arms and legs are first scratched, which leaves a series of several parallel striations. In addition to the limbs, a Yuchi 'x' may be scratched into the back if requested. This obvious ritual adoption makes the motif associated with the natural markings on a bull snake (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Before the scratchings, *pvsv* medicine is rubbed over the limbs, which will allow the medicinal

and magical powers to seep directly into the body. After the scratching rites, the participants "go to water," where their new wounds are ritually cleansed by fresh water (Doug Alderson, personal communication 2011).

Preceding the evening of traditional story telling and additional dancing, certain individuals are chosen or volunteer to keep an all-night vigil over the sacred fire. Apalachicola-Creek medicine leader, Doug Alderson, described this moment best, "during the vigil, the coming year is considered to be moving through the birth canal, with its emergence marked by the sunrise. At the moment of dawn, a silent stomp dance is performed, with sharp, spiraling turns to symbolize the cutting of an umbilical cord. The New Year has been born!" (Alderson 2007:221). Alderson's description of the spiraling dance maneuvers of the closing Green Corn Dance are the only time on the Apalachicola-Creek square grounds that a clockwise dance motion is allowed. This motion goes against the natural movement of the sun, and this model is reminiscent of Nabokov and Easton's drawing of the Yuchi closing Green Corn dance (Figure 31). This spiral symbolizes the severing of the umbilical cord from the fire to the sun (Doug Alderson, personal communication 2011).

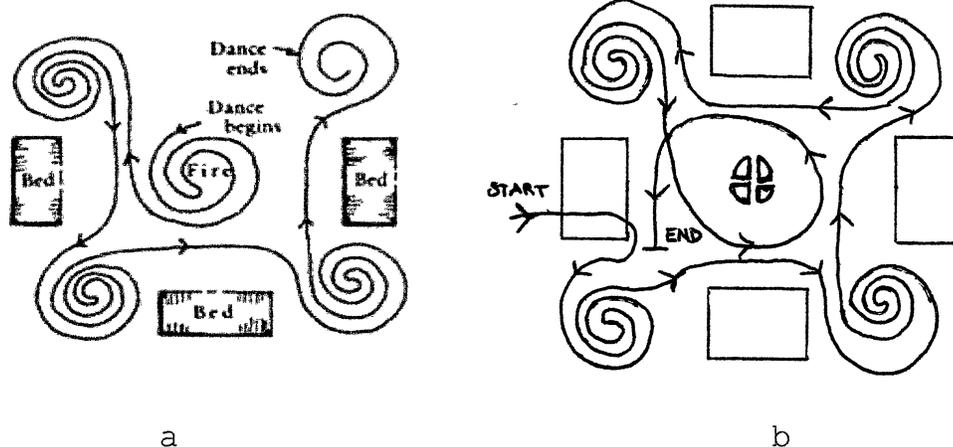


Figure 31. (a) Diagram of the closing Green Corn Dance as performed by the Yuchi (Nabokov and Easton 1989:110); (b) Drawing of the Apalachicola-Creek closing Green Corn Dance.

Because the ceremonial cycle follows the stages of the natural life cycle, by the time of the Little Green Corn Ceremony, the sacred fire is perceived as an adolescent. Little Green Corn is held towards the end of the summer and generally coincides with the second major ripening of crops. By the time of the Harvest busk that takes place in the fall, the fire has reached full maturity, as it will need full strength and independence to last through the tribulations of winter. Harvest is usually timed to occur with certain astronomical alignments and within proximity after the first "killing" frost.

The Harvest busk is considered to be the most ancient and important of the entire ceremonial cycle. This ceremonial marks the end of the female oriented growing season and the subsequent shift to the male oriented

hunting and foraging season. During Harvest, the veil between the tripartite divisions of the three worlds is at its thinnest (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). This is also a time when spirits from the recently departed are publically mourned and the spirits of the ancestors appear on the grounds at the highest rate (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

Around April every year during the spring celebration, the Berry busk, the fire ages into an elder. This fire is weak and extremely dependent. Therefore, the Berry fire is fed dry logs, so it does not exert any exorbitant amount of energy in consuming its fuel (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). The Berry busk also denotes the switch from the male oriented season back to the female agricultural season. This is the time when the earth wakes up from its winter hibernation, and this awakening is facilitated by the stomping nature of the Berry Dance.

Overall, these ceremonial cycles portray a conceptualized understanding of the importance of the natural order and renewal. Not only do these rituals improve the overall mental and physical health of the individual participants, but through these rituals brings to them an improvement in the group soul of the Apalachicola-Creek community. Through the making and touching

of medicine the community both binds and heals its wounds. By performing the sacred dances and traditional songs, these living descendants from Native Americans recreate the past through the present. The Apalachicola-Creeks reaffirm their relationship with the natural world by embracing the universal power, or energy, that is, in essence, the spirit of their Creator, the Master of Breath.

Chapter VI

THE APALACHICOLA-CREEK TURTLE DANCE AND CREATION NARRATIVE

This chapter, along with the previous chapter five, contains the fruition of that ethnographic research that I conducted at *Ekvny Hvtke* since my first Berry busk in April of 2005. The information provided in this chapter is the result of a massive compilation of notes that I have accrued throughout the last several years of intensive research. These notes were written on anything from yellow pads to the insides of book jackets and from miniscule print on airline napkins to shorthand on ticket receipt backs. I remind the reader that it is not always appropriate to have a pencil and paper on hand at these ceremonies. After fasting for multiple days and then sitting under the hot Florida sun morning until evening it can be quite an extraneous chore to then write an entire recollection of a couple of days' worth of events.

Along with several separate interviews conducted off the grounds, I have been to approximately ten busks, which includes mainly Berry, Green Corn, and Harvest Ceremonies.

Throughout the course of my participatory visits, I developed an amicable relationship with the community of *Ekvnyv Hvtke*, and I hold the upmost respect for their Sacred Fire.

This chapter is divided accordingly. First, a condensed version of the Creation narrative is recapitulated. Then I provide ethnography of the Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance. Because no two busks are exactly the same, this account is more of a generalized summation of a typical version of this dance. An interpretative analysis will then be provided on the interconnectedness that links the Turtle Dance to the Creation narrative of the Apalachicola-Creeks. In this analysis, the symbolic components of the dance and myth are deconstructed. I then compare this symbolism to the iconography on certain Mississippian Period art objects. An ecological analogy is then supplemented. Lastly, I provide supplemental ethnographies recorded by Frank Speck and Jason Baird Jackson on describing the Yuchi Turtle Dance and by John Swanton who describes the Mikasuki Turtle Dance. These inclusions allow the reader to recognize shared patterns and meanings amongst these separate but similarly structured rituals throughout time and history.

Summary of the Creation Narrative

In the beginning, or what is considered as the "first time," the Master of Breath used the powers of his creative force and begot the world and the entire universe. He then begot the earthly beings. However, all of these new creatures were lost in a void of nowhere. The Master of Breath had not yet given these perfect beings their Original Instructions, so they lingered chaotically without purpose. Soon a great confusion grew out of the order-less meanderings of the earthly beings, but this was brought to a halt when *Locv*, or Turtle, cried out in disarray. Supposedly, *Locv* was the first creature to be formed by the Creator. After her concerned plea, water began to immediately appear everywhere.

This newly formed omnipresent body of water began to drown most of the creatures, so Turtle taught some animals to swim. Others found safety upon her back. Because of this dramatic affair, many of the animals that could not swim began to feel the emotions of fear and anguish. These were the first feelings to be felt by any creature, thus began the primal instinct for promoting the longevity of life, and therefore, survival. Being a natural swimmer, *Locv* did not fear the water, but upon hearing the feared cries from the other helpless beings, she began to feel compassion.

With her compassion came both memory and example, which together make the Creek components of learning.

Turtle knew her back was too small to rescue all the drowning animals, so out of compassion she dove into the abysmal sea and began to bring up earth. Upon many dives, she gathered much earth to pace on her shell, thus this earth grew exponentially larger and larger. Since the birds were the closest to the earth, they perched upon it and shook their wings dry. Through these drying movements with their wings, the birds learned flight. They were the first creatures to understand order and find their niche in the sky.

Fuco, the duck, then realized her place in the water. She was special because she occupied two realms, the Lower and Middle Worlds. Wanting to help Turtle, *Fuco* assisted by stamping out the edges of the earth with her feet, so other creatures could easily climb ashore on the newly created earth. The kindness from *Fuco's* actions produced the twin sibling emotions of happiness and sharing. These active feelings exist in a dualistic relationship and often feed off each other.

Now that happiness existed, the sky-dwelling birds began to aid the other creatures by beating their wings in tandem to dry the mud piled earth. Some birds beat their

wings so rapidly that they rose above and saw the Master of Breath. He was extremely content with their actions, so he gave to them beautiful songs and cries. These vocalizations would be an indirect sign of the Creator's pleasure and appeasement of the coexisting relationship within the newly structured world. The hawks and eagles could fly the highest and were the closest birds to the Master of Breath.

Pleased at the camaraderie and thankfulness amongst the sky-dwelling inhabitants, the Creator then breathed onto the breast feathers of some birds. This breath caused these feathers to become soft, fragile, and sacred. These feathers are often used in prayer, and prayer was subsequently born out of thankfulness. Birds are believed to carry the prayers of others who were not blessed with speech by the Creator. Many other creatures learned peacefulness by the bird's natural inclination to fly upon the sky winds.

While *Locv*, *Fuco*, and other avian creatures shared the responsibilities of drying the earth, rivers, streams, and lakes began to form from the water that fell from the sky-dwellers' wings. By this time, both the water-dwellers and the sky-dwellers knew their place in the order of their separate realms. However, the land-dwellers lacked

structure to their lives. Uncertainty and chaos were abundant due to the lack of Creator's Instructions.

Meanwhile, a lone tree had been standing firmly rooted to the ground amidst all the earthly confusion. Completely calm and happy, the tree reflected upon the forces of creation. Soon it was swamped with the obtrusiveness of the other jealous and confused creatures until there amassed a great darkness and disorder. The Master of Breath noticed the unruliness in the Middle World, so he encouraged Turtle to call a meeting of all the animal, sky, sea nations, as well as the star, forest, and botanical nations. Everything that has substance, form, thought, or action was called.

At this meeting, Turtle, under the guidance of the Creator, commanded and placed the moon and the sun on opposing sides of the Master of Breath. She then placed the winds and the waters in their appropriate places. Finally, finding the structure and order that they once lacked everything began to fit into its right place.

Then the Creator gave his Original Instructions to every being, and the rhythms and movements of the animated cosmos were set into action. With these Instructions came contentment from all of the beings. Then a great square was centered around the Master of Breath. This is the original square ground. Seasons were set and would teach the

inhabitants order, place, and rebirth. Harmony and balance were the mechanisms needed to achieve clarity over confusion. The Master of Breath then chose the sun as the embodiment of his heart, hand, and eye.

On the original square, the Master of Breath took four logs from the tree nations and arranged them in the center. Then the logs and the sun began to burn with fire, throwing warmth and light so that all living creatures could see. However, this in turn caused the Creator's present form to disappear, at least as the creatures had individually perceived him. His essence, however, was transformed into the sacred fire and the sun. The Master of Breath then prophesized the coming of the humans and told the animal beings to teach these newcomers what he had taught them. These teachings provide all beings with the tenets that bring an order and balance within the universe and an understanding of placement within nature. According to the Apalachicola-Creek cosmogony, this is "how things came to be."

Ethnography of the Turtle Dance

The Turtle Dance is solely performed at night once at every busk throughout the annual Apalachicola-Creek ceremonial cycle. This is one of the dances that has a

specialized nighttime designation. The darkness of the natural surroundings on the square grounds mixed with the quick and luring animated movements from the sacred fire adds an element of the primordial metaphor to the overall experience. It varies what day within the scope of the three-day ceremony that the dance is performed, and, ultimately, that decision is reserved for the women to make. Usually, the Turtle Dance happens on the first night of the ceremony, which is the night before the main day of ritual events. As stated previously, the Creation narrative is often read aloud by one or two venerated females to the rest of the community on the same night shortly before or after the dance is performed.

To lead the dance, the matriarch of the grounds chooses a male and female couple, and usually this is based on the strength of their bond as a revered couple. Typically, these two are married to one another (possibly on the square grounds), but this is not required to fulfill the lead couple. It should be noted that it is uncommon for a young couple to lead this social dance; however, younger men have recently been leading the Feather Dance and occupying important ritual offices, like the twin dog-whipper deacons, or known in Muskogee as *hamvtlvs*.

During the Turtle Dance, the men wear Traditional Creek and Seminole ribbon shirts, and they prefer an ornamented Creek sash tied around the waist with a particular style of knot. Straw hats are adorned with similar yet smaller sashes that are tied around the hatband. The women wear long traditional hand made dresses, each with individually created beautiful designs. These designs may be from a traditional or modern template. Seminole and Miccosukee geometric designs and patterns on ritual clothing are a social norm.

Ritual paraphernalia is exclusively reserved for the lead couple. The lead woman wears hollowed out turtle shell shakers (*Terrapene carolina*) around her ankles, which are drilled and filled with beans or rocks. The repetitive shuffling of these ankle shakers has a pleasant rhythmic effect. The lead couple carries in their hands two preserved turtle effigies, a male and a female, respectively. Each individual holds the opposite sexed turtle effigy. The lead couple forms two lines that are double file male and female alternating, breast-to-breast. Engendered couples two abreast line up behind another just outside of the west arbor, outside of the shell spiritual retaining ring around the square grounds. The males dance closest to the fire while the women are on the outside,

which conveys a role reversal (Eric Jakubowski, personal communication 2011).

Meanwhile the *heles hayv*, along with the two other ceremonial leaders, occupy a position standing together in the southeastern ordinal between the west and south arbors. This position is also where the sacred bundles are displayed during the following day of rituals. The *heles hayv* outlines a complete circle around the three ceremonial leaders with a wooden medicine staff that has a carved effigy of a black racer snake. This circle makes an obvious depression in the white sand. This circular division creates delineation between a sacred and profane spatiotemporal reality, or in their words, "another world" (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

Two of the ceremonial leaders are equipped with coconut or turtle shell shakers in their left hands, while they begin a medium tempo four-beat repetitious rhythm with the shakers. These rhythms are accented on the one and three beats. The shakers are adorned with iconography depicting the Creek cosmological model of Upper and Lower World subdivisions. The shaking rhythms that the ceremonial leaders produce, therefore, symbolize the persistent heartbeat of the world, or Turtle-earth.

The dancers begin their double slide-step with their feet, right, right, then, left, left, and so on. The lead couple then, in synchronicity, steps over the outer ring of shells and into the square grounds, and thus the dance begins. When the grounds are consecrated, or "closed," entry may only be accessed in pairs and through arbor "portals" (Doug Alderson, personal communication 2011).

The two leaders of the double lines of participants (about fifteen people long making thirty total) make their first entrance into the center of the inner square grounds through the southern end of the west arbor. The dancers then turn right and begin dancing around the central fire in a counterclockwise rotation. In the southwest ordinal the lead dancers make a sharp right turned loop and continue counterclockwise past the south arbor, until they reach the southeast ordinal. In this ordinal another loop is made. The loops are always turned counterclockwise. After the second loop is complete, the lead couple directs the dancers through and around the middle post of the east, or women's, arbor. Moving onward, the dancers then make a loop in the northeast ordinal and follow past the north arbor. Then a symmetrical loop is made in the northwest corner around the bird mound. The leading couple then makes their way past the west arbor and makes a giant circle

completely around the fire before exiting through the west arbor. The entire group follows suit and exits the very way they came into the square grounds.

During the dancing performance, the entire choir of dancing participants sings a song in Muskogee, which is, of course, their ritual language. The words are "Locv, Locv, hopoyv, hopoyv; Locv, Locv, ekvn-hayv, dees." This translates from Muskogee to, "Turtle, Turtle, Seeker, Seeker; Turtle, Turtle, Maker of Land" in English. The 'seeker' is understood to be the Turtle scouting for land, I was told (Doug Alderson, personal communication 2011). Since this dance and song in particular are performed at every busk ceremonial, the melody and words are readily recited by a great number of members of this community. At times, the melodies and words to other songs and dances seem to be facilitated with help from those who are more familiar with the song repertoire, but the song and melody to the Turtle Dance seems memorized by the community at large.

Interpretations

The Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance has an array of symbolic meanings and layers that are attached within the ritual. Most obvious of these symbolic gestures is its

relationship to the Creation narrative. The overarching themes of renewal and rebirth are deeply embedded within both the narrative and the ritual. In fact, the Turtle Dance is essentially a physical manifestation, or a ritual template, of the events that took place during the Apalachicola-Creek cosmogenesis.

As previously stated, the Turtle Dance is designated as a nighttime activity. The only light at this time stems from the dancing flames of the sacred fire located in the center of the grounds. The darkness surrounding the square grounds symbolizes the chaotic void of 'nowhere-ness' that existed in the beginning stages of Creation. As the ritual participants enter the square grounds at *Ekvvnv Hvtke*, they must step and cross over the boundaries of the shell ring, which symbolizes a movement from the outer darkness of the Lower World onto the shores of land in the Middle World. Just as the first creature, the female sea turtle, *Locv*, came out of the primordial oceans, so do, in a symbolic sense, these ritual participants. Because *Locv* occupies the roles of both earth giver and mud-diver, she is celebrated for her toils of labor and visionary quest she performed while alone in the dark. As stated in the myth, Turtle was a revered creature with a powerful spirit, and it was through her compassion that a basic foundation of order was

brought about from the deepest parts of the chaotic Under World.

The progression of the dance begins with a movement from the west arbor, which is associated with death and darkness, to the center of the square, which symbolizes the world of "light, vision, and warmth" (Daniels 1984:155). The two turtle effigies held by the leading couple serve as guides to the following dancers and lead them out of the nowhere, just as *Locv* guided her animal companions out of the pitch-black darkness in the narrative.

The overall outline that the dancers make resembles a sea turtle (Figure 32). The loops created by the dancers in the four ordinal directions make her exterior flippers. Her head is outlined in the east arbor, and her shell is depicted in the broad circle that is made around the sacred fire in the inner square. As the ritual participants exit through the west arbor, her tail is made.

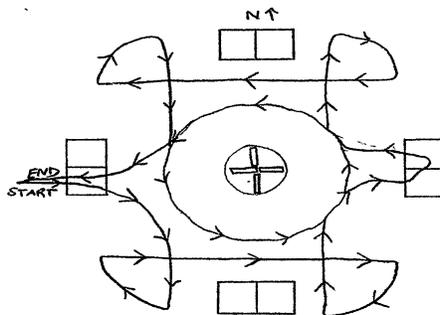


Figure 32. The Turtle Dance stepped choreography makes the outline of a sea turtle in this line drawing.

The zoomorphic form of the sea turtle depicted in the steps of the Turtle dance is centered on the sacred fire mound. Metaphorically, when Turtle comes upon land (the square grounds), she gives her nocturnal birth and nests her eggs into the central mound. This is where the eggs undergo the miraculous process of a natural incubation. The stones located within the fire mound symbolically become Turtle's eggs, which are safely nestled within the confines of the beach, away from the predators of the marine world. Symbolically, the egg stones in the fire mound serve as a cosmological representation of the colossal rocks within the geological interior of the Turtle-earth (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011).

The double slide/step of the dance has a literal aural appeasement by contributing to the overall rhythmic sound, and supplements an on-beat half time response to the droning of the shaker's persistence eighth beats. The shuffled mechanics of the participants' feet when contact is made with the earth produces an echoing soft blow, which is quite impressive when performed by sixty feet in tandem. This beat is known as the cosmic heartbeat (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). The Apalachicola-Creeks believe this sound also reproduces the pushing of blood through the uterus of the pregnant animals, including

humans (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). In this sense, the ritual participants are enacting the natural process that foreshadows birth.

After the closing stages of the dance, the group circles around the sacred fire and metaphorically lays several eggs. During the closing stages of the ritual dance, the dancers leave the ground through the west arbor, symbolizing the Turtle's departure from the beach and her subsequent reentry into the primordial ocean from whence she once came. Because the eggs have been effectively transferred to land, the dance has completed its course. The Creation narrative, and therefore, the universe have then both successfully been recreated through this ritual.

Iconographic Comparisons

Aside from formulating a pictorial outline of a sea turtle, the dance steps of the Turtle Dance also make a variant of a Mississippian Period motif closely resembling the crib theme style (Figure 33). It has been demonstrated that crib style shell gorgets probably functioned as lineage identifiers for elites marrying across socio-political boundaries (Sawyer 2009). Critical to his synthesis, Sawyer suggests that the centering motif symbolized in the crib style gorgets (square cross) also

likely functioned as identity markers based on political rank and authority (Sawyer 2009:199).

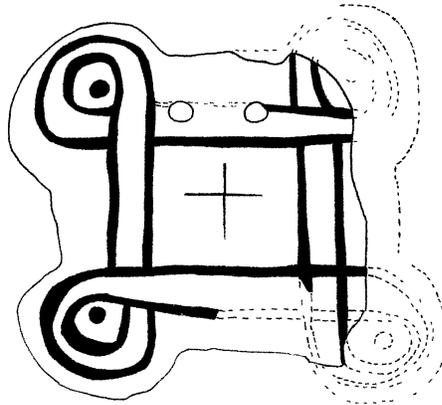


Figure 33. Sawyer's line drawing of a crib style shell gorget (NC-Bu-WW4) from the Warren Wilson site, North Carolina (Sawyer 2009:124).

George Lankford has elaborated further on the square cross symbol, postulating that the iconographic motifs on Cox Mound style gorgets (Figure 34) functioned as a stylistic cosmogram of the Mississippian universe (2007a:20). Basing his arguments on Antonio Waring's comments on the fire-sun-deity conceptual complex (Waring 1968:33-35), Lankford also argues that the circle and cross in the center of the Cox Mound style motif represents the four log placement on a fire mound (Lankford 2007a:20-21). Adding to this deconstruction, the author found that the divisions of the three-leveled cosmological strata (Upper World, Middle World, and Lower World) are apparent within both the Cox iconography and the modern square grounds.

Through Kent Reilly's cut-up and fold-out technique, Lankford sees the four crested birds in the cardinal directions as the four Upper World wind powers (Reilly 2004b:131; Lankford 2007a:20-21). The shell represents the Under World, and the looped square represents the stable or the earthly domain (Lankford 2007a:24).

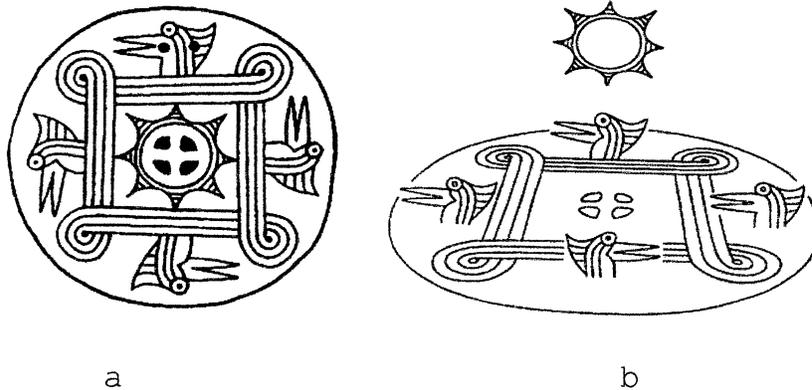


Figure 34. (a) Cox Mound style gorget (Lankford 2007a:9);
 (b) Cosmological model of the Cox gorget (Lankford
 2004:211; 2007a:30).

James Howard, Alex Barker, Peter Nabokov, Robert Easton, and George Lankford have all noticed that a similarity existed between the looped square motif with its centered four-log structure and contemporary Muskogee square grounds (Figure 32) (Howard 1968; Barker 2010; Nabokov and Easton 1989:110-111; Lankford 2007:20-21).

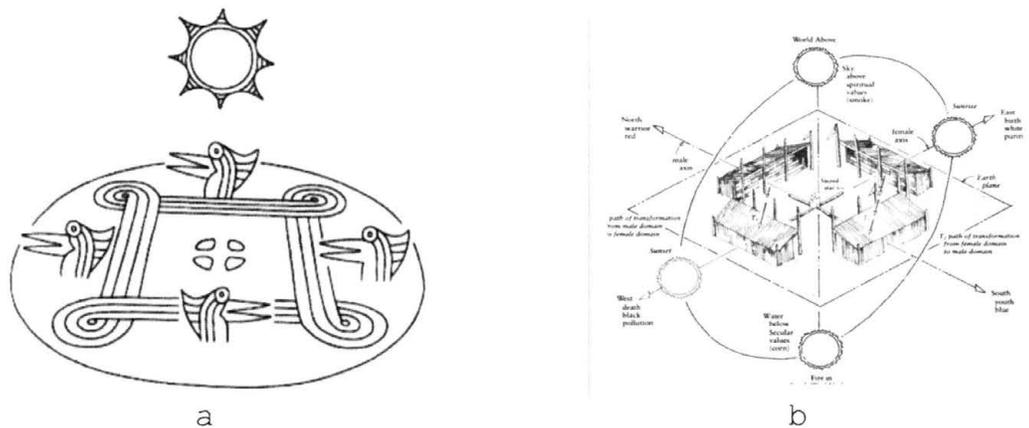


Figure 35. (a) Lankford's cosmological model in the Cox Mound style compared to (b) a Muskogee square ground diagram by Nabokov and Easton (Lankford 2004:211, 2007a:30; Nabokov and Easton 1989:110).

These comparisons left a resonant mode of wonder in my thoughts. I suggest, as many others have before me, that if the Cox Mound Style was a template for Southeastern square grounds, then it also may have functioned as a mnemonic device for square ground ritual dancing. Comparing the dance choreography of the Apalachicola-Creeks' Turtle Dance to the three dimensional Cox Mound style motif discussed by Lankford demonstrates remarking similarities (Figure 36). The four looped corners made by the Turtle's flippers fit the design within the square cross motif, while the sun-fire log placement is positioned in the very center of the Turtle's body. The four flippers, or loops, could be the anchors that initially stabilized the earth on the Turtle's back. However, the four cardinal birds pose a problem to my

comparison, but upon researching Yuchi customs, I may have found a plausible explanation.

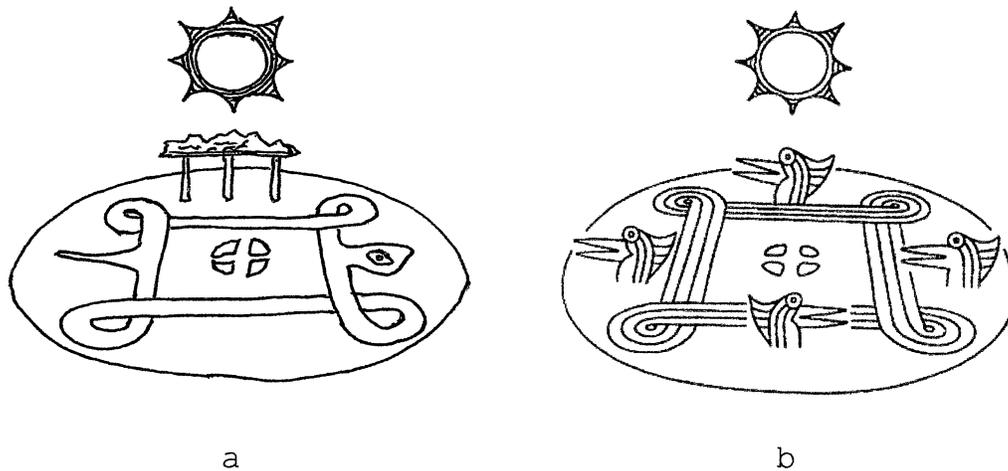


Figure 36. (a) The Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance motif resembles (b) Lankford's Cox Mound style gorget when three-dimensionalized (Lankford 2007a:30).

I believe that the crested bird images on the Cox Mound Style were meant to represent the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) (Figure 37). It has been suggested that the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker was a symbol of warfare in the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (Hudson 1976:130-131). However, it is a belief held by Dan Penton, that when this creature's beak is opened, the woodpecker is in the act of singing, which carries a peaceful connotation; this open beak posture is opposed to when the closed beak posture, which represents a warfare connotation (Dan Penton, personal communication 2011). Interestingly, the Yuchi consider the woodpecker to be a

highly revered messenger and a master of singing and drumming (Hackett 2011:1).



Figure 37. (a) Crested bird from the Cox Mound style gorget (Lankford 2004:211) compared to (b) a 1754 illustration of an Ivorybill Woodpecker by Mark Catesby and George Edwards (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ivory-billed_Woodpecker).

An etymological investigation of Yuchi words for woodpeckers validates Penton's remarks. The Yuchi have eight various words for woodpeckers. The deconstruction of morphemes in every one of these eight words demonstrates a repetitious sound, representing drumming and/or singing (Hackett 2011:1). *Se'khwa khwa ni*, the Yuchi word for an undesignated woodpecker, translates to "sing/shake shells-small" (Hackett 2011:1). It is also a Yuchi belief that the woodpecker glyph is a symbol to commence singing and drumming (Hackett 2011:1). Interestingly, the Yuchi just recently adopted the Cox Mound style gorget as their national symbol (Kevin Smith, personal communication 2011).

If the crested bird images in the Cox Mound Style gorget are, indeed, peaceful messengers of song and dance,

as the Yuchi currently believe, then there is a similarity in focus between the themes in both this Mississippian Period iconography and the cosmological symbolism in the Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance. I believe that within the iconography of the Cox Mound style, these crested birds are poised in singing positions while the looped square represents the stabilizing of the earth that may be accomplished through ritual dancing.

Ecological Analogy

The Turtle Dance is undoubtedly mirrored off of the natural long-distance migratory patterns of which various marine species of female sea turtles partake during their nesting season. Five species of sea turtles (out of a total of seven) are native to the Florida beaches and include loggerheads (*Caretta caretta*), green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbills (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), leatherbacks (*Dermochelys coriacea*), and Kemp's ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys kempi*) (Figure 38) (Shoop et al. 1985:254). Truly an amazing natural phenomenon, these ocean faring reptiles can swim more than a thousand nautical miles, without any geographical landmarks to aid their navigation, to lay their eggs on their natal beaches where they once

hatched up to five decades prior to this event (Tangley 1984:353).

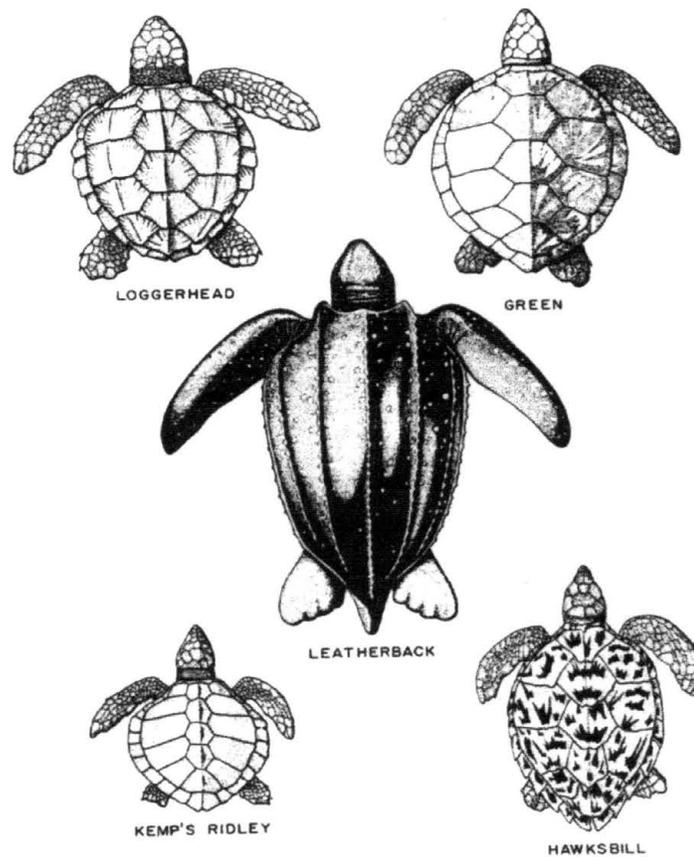


Figure 38. The five species of sea turtles native to Florida. (<http://daniellesdives.wordpress.com/2010/09/25/types-of-sea-turtles-found-in-florida/>).

Interestingly, the mechanisms of navigation that propel the seaward journeys of nesting sea turtles do not contradict with the basic tenets of the Apalachicola-Creek Creation narrative. Some scholars have suggested that these long-distance migrations are regulated by current-borne signals of a "chemical nature" (Luschi et al. 1998), while others have posited that migratory directionality is

indicated by the rotation of the stars in the night sky, which acts as a celestial star-map (Alerstam et al. 2003:256). Furthermore, it has also been hypothesized that the earth's electromagnetic field steers the naturally occurring magnetite particles found in various species of turtles (Tangley 1984:356).

The first explanation basically defines the course of migrations as following a coded chemical trail, a sort of scent highway, which could be explained through the Creek idea of an all-encompassing power or energy that guides instinct. The second explanation suggests that the sea turtles are circumnavigating the oceans through the cognitive reading and awareness of the layout of star positioning within the night sky. The third theory posits that sea turtles are guided by a magnetized energy that occurs throughout the entirety of the planet.

Whatever explanation the field of science determines is most correct for turtles is still suiting to the Apalachicola-Creeks' understanding of this ecological behavioral phenomenon: the turtle is in tune with an instinctual path of residual chemical energy, is capable of reading the predictive and rhythmic astronomical patterns in the Lower World, or these creatures are magnetically driven by the energetic forces of the north and south

poles. Either way, these creatures are able to clue into the natural elements in the universe to successfully reach their nesting destinations, and therefore, successfully produce offspring.

Both the Creation narrative and the Turtle Dance emphasize the importance of the female essence, and this is certainly reflected in the Apalachicola-Creek social and ritual life. Traditionally, women own the agricultural fields, the square grounds and the sacred bundles. It is the women that head all the clans. Women are the matriarchs. Women are the ultimate providers in their community. Because they are so deeply connected to the phases of the celestial moon and the growing forces of Mother Earth, women occupy the central position in the Apalachicola-Creek cosmology. In this sense, they are bestowed with incredibly charged powers. Females hold the roles of guiders, faith providers, nurturers, and as givers of life. Without the female essence from the female Turtle, the Apalachicola-Creek world would still be in a chaotic and unorganized conflict.

Yuchi and Mikasuki Ethnographic Analogy

Within the broader scope of the Southeastern Native American ethnographic literature, there exists only a few

written accounts of the Turtle Dance (Speck 1909; Swanton 1928; Howard 1984). Seemingly absent from the majority of Muskogee Creek cosmogonies, the concept of the earth as a Turtle may have originated in the Northeast Native American cultural region and possibly diffused to the Apalachicola Province through the Yuchi or Shawnee, which are both non-Muskogee speaking tribes. As mentioned in chapter four, both the Yuchi and Shawnee refugees occupied the settlement called Savano Town, which was near the Palachocola Town located on the Savannah River from the 1690s to 1716 (Ramsey 2008:110). These hypothesized speculations are meager at best, and proving a history of a ritual, such as the Turtle Dance, would require a massive amount of research.

Nevertheless, I find it valuable to include both Frank Speck's work on the Yuchi Turtle Dance and John Swanton's work on the same ritual amongst the Mikasuki (Swanton prefers this spelling as opposed to Miccosukee). The Mikasuki arguably obtained this ritual from the original Apalachicola Province. Notably, the Yuchi performed their "Big Turtle Dance" at night, and the women wore shell rattles on their legs. As Speck explains, the dance movements appear to fit the Apalachicola-Creek Turtle Dance

choreography. The following is taken from Speck's ethnography written in 1909:

THE BIG TURTLE DANCE: In loose order, the leader having a hand rattle in his right hand, the dancers grouped themselves in the southeast corner of this square [grounds]. All formed in a compact mass and the leader in the center began moving in a circle, rattling and shouting 'ho! ho!' The dancers kept in close ranks behind him echoing his shouts. After about five minutes of this, the leader started toward the fire and the dancers all held hands. A woman having the turtle shell rattles on her legs came from the northwest corner and took her place behind the leader holding hands with him. In single file the latter led them around the fire, sun wise. In 1905 there were two of these women. When the men whooped they were joined by two more, when they whooped again the women left the line. After circling a number of times the leader stopped, stamped and whooped and the ranks broke up, the dancers dispersing to their various lodges about the square. The first song was thus finished. After a short interval a leader stepped toward the fire and circling it alone started the second song and was soon joined by the other dancers. Two or more women having the shell rattles on their legs took part. During the course of the next few songs the leader took the line to each of the four corners of the square, led them around in a circle and then back to the fire. No drumming accompanied this dance. Women joined in as well as children and strangers. This dance was continued for about two hours, at intervals, and was the only one danced on this night (Figure 30) [Speck 1907:119].



Figure 39. The 1909 Yuchi Big Turtle Dance (Speck 1909:pl.xii).

The following contains John Swanton's 1928 ethnography on the Mikasuki-Seminoles. Interestingly, the Hitchiti the word for turtle is *yokchi*, which is pronounced phonetically *yō' kchê* (Williams 1992:41). Perhaps the "kwi" that is sung during this ritual is an abstract variant of *yokchi*. Also, notice the importance of alternating sex in double file and the song leader's use of a rattle:

In the terrapin dance, a drummer and an assistant singer stay by the fire to furnish the music. The dancers went single file, men and women alternating. Each dancer clasped both hands together and moved them about to right and left, jumping a little at times. The leaders kept repeating "kwi" over and over and the rest of the dancers said "haha." There was only one song, and they stopped after they had danced around four times. According to the Mikasuki chief the dancers went in double file, men and women alternating but not holding each other's hands. One rattler furnished the music and there were four songs. [Swanton 1928:532-533].

Chapter VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the people of the *Ekvvnv Hvtke* Tribal Town have a long descent from those Mikasuki, Hitchiti, Muskogee, Cherokee, and Yuchi speakers that once inhabited the Lower Chattahoochee River Valley in present day Alabama and Georgia. It is likely that the sacred fire that burns at *Ekvvnv Hvtke* is ancestrally tied to the fire that burned in the original core "mother" town in the Apalachicola Province prior to the removal of the 1830s. Just as the Apalachicola-Creeks' ancestors identified themselves collectively through the central fire and ball pole in their respected *tvlvv*, today, these contemporary Native Americans still consider themselves the "people of one fire." Today, the square grounds at *Ekvvnv Hvtke* currently houses the focus of their community ceremonies and is located in Blountstown, Florida. These people are proud to claim that their ceremonial arena is located near the reservation once owned by their ancestors, the Apalachicola band of Mikasuki-speaking Lower Creeks.

Throughout this thesis, I utilized many methodologies that have, in the past, proven successful at Native American cultural recovery. However, I believe that my examinations of the living traditions carried on by the present day Apalachicola-Creeks are more of an anthropological "rediscovery," or historical ethnography, rather than a lost cultural construct that is implied by the term "recovery." Nevertheless, the San Marcos four field approach lent this thesis both framework and structure, whilst theories from archaeology and cultural anthropology helped me decipher this vastly complex religious system. Additionally, comparative religious studies further buttressed my final arguments.

Through the direct historical approach, I traced the movements and migrations of the Apalachicola-Creeks and their *tvlvv* to the ancient Apalachicola Provincial town as documented by the Spanish missionaries and the English traders of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Archaeological evidence from ceramic analyses suggests that the Hitchiti-speaking Lower Creeks that lived in the Apalachicola Province had considerable antiquity within the entire southeastern region. This antiquity is represented through an unbroken linkage of cultural material, such as ceramics, that stretches well beyond the Mississippian

Period into the Woodland Period. It is a tenable argument that the Deptford and, later, Swift Creek cultures lie at the foundation of this archaeological continuance.

Through a structural analysis of the *Ekvnv Hvtke* square grounds, certain cosmological symbolism have been identified and established. By breaking down these sets of symbols into themes and motifs, cultural patterns and relationships were recognized. Furthermore, ethnographic research and ethnological comparisons have allowed for cross-cultural investigations. Together, these methods and resources can serve as a validation for the evidence of contemporary Native American cultural continuity.

It can be further said that the Apalachicola-Creek social fabric is more of a diverse quilt. The ornately designed cultural intricacies that are hemmed and stitched into each squared pattern collectively represent a plethora of Southeastern Native American ideologies. This fabric is, in fact, an ethnic collage, comprised of different pathways of traditional perceptions based on particular experiences.

Like their ancestors, the Apalachicola-Creeks represent an amalgam of sundry ethnicities and linguistic backgrounds, and this intake of varying cultural groups resulted in an interwoven web of diverse ritual life. Today, these people still perform rituals that explicitly

link them to their Native American heritage. These rituals are part of a set of largely interconnected fire-renewal ceremonial cycles that occur four times throughout the year. One of the most obvious and symbolically flamboyant of all the rituals, sacred dancing most catches the eye of the observer trained in anthropological methods.

Essentially, this is because these contemporary dances still retain the heart of Apalachicola-Creek culture while it projects their "envisaged cosmic order" (Geertz 1966:4).

During the Turtle Dance, the participants theatrically, ritually, and, therefore, literally recreate their universe. As I have demonstrated in the previous chapters that when performed in the ceremonial arena, this particular dance and accompanied song become a physical manifestation of the Apalachicola-Creek Creation narrative. It is through these symbolic gestures, singing, and ritual dancing that these Native Americans gain access to the primordial powers that were present during the moments of first Creation.

It was Mary Helms that said, "no power can exceed the potency of the original procreative forces that first created, named and ordered the elements of the world, life forms, and human societies" (Helms 1998:10). In this sense, no other power may supersede the original creative force of

the beginning. However, because the Apalachicola-Creek temporal system is based on cyclical time, access to these primordial powers may be achieved but only through the correct ritual performance of their Creation narrative.

The oral telling and retelling of the Creation events during the Green Corn Ceremonials functions as a ritual supplement to the Turtle Dance. Åke Hultkrantz once stated that mythic narratives constitute a "ritual text" and these ritual narratives hold the power to sanction the "cosmic conditions" (Hultkrantz 1972:341-342). Similar to this idea, certain stories can also be perceived as the narrative form of a ritual (Myers 2001:47). These statements are applicable to this research, in that the Turtle Dance and Creation narrative are to be understood as maintaining a highly significant and symbiotic relationship one with another. I believe that this dance acts as a mnemonic device that "tells" the entirety of Creation through its choreographic movements across the ceremonial arena.

This ceremonial enactment is regulated to a form of ritual that is accessible to the entire community, and I suggest that it fits under Knight's categorization of a communal rite of intensification (Knight 1986:680). The songs are for the past, present, and future generations of

the community and families of *Ekvnv Hvtke*. The success of passing on this oral narrative and ritual is rested upon the interdependency of learning and transmitting these traditions between the older and younger generations.. If the younger generations lose interest in the religious customs of their ancestors, then those customs die. However, the older generations can use new aids to pass on these traditions just as, in the past, they were passed on by their successors.

Through this oral narrative and the use of mnemonic devices, the Apalachicola-Creeks constantly reaffirm their group identity, social cohesion, and Creation. The symbolism imbued within the Turtle Dance ritual, acts as a locative for generative memory. Deeply rooted in sacred thought, the Apalachicola-Creek collective memory is an active process as opposed to history, which is a passive and reconstructed process. Therefore, memory, to the Apalachicola-Creeks is a constant reaffirmation of the past, yet it is consciously portrayed in the present. The Turtle Dance is a vehicle to theatrically visualize the original Creative Power that transformed the chaotic darkened realm of nothingness and brought about light and order.

In the cosmology of contemporary and ancient Southeastern Native Americans, there exists a necessity for the reiteration of renewal and rebirth. The world renewal symbolism presented in the Turtle Dance and Creation Myth of the Apalachicola-Creeks is thematically and conceptually tied to the complex ideologies of their Mississippian Period ancestors. Because ancient voices have been silenced, these Mississippian ideas are most evident in the iconography embedded into those tangible material objects and within the architectural grammar within various mound sites. In this sense, the symbolism imbued into the media and sacred landscapes likely acted as principal agents of ideologies that, in turn, ultimately supported the religious foundation and structure with the pre-Columbian Southeastern Native American cultures.

The multidimensionality within the sacred landscape of the square grounds, as I have demonstrated, functions as a cosmogram of the Apalachicola-Creek universe. Antonio Waring Jr. postulated that the Southeastern square ground model was a template derived from the ceremonial mound centers of the later Mississippian Period (Waring 1968:54-58). George Lankford, Alex Barker, and Adam King have all commented on the similarities between modern square grounds and Mississippian iconography and site layout (Lankford

2007a; Barker 2010; King 2010). Moreover, historically, Creeks have referred to their rotundas, or council houses, and square grounds collectively as *tcoko-thlako*, or "big house" (Hudson 1976:221; Nabokov and Eason 1989:111). The duality implied in this name may indicate that at one time the functions of these two structures may have been consolidated as a mound temple during the Mississippian Period.

As previously stated, Southeastern Native American square grounds serve as markers of social identification. Similarly, it has also been posited that "Mississippian platform mounds serve as identifiers of divine political validation, chiefly authority, and social identity" (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:12). Based on Knight's research, Blitz and Lorenz further observed that "platform mounds were symbols of the earth associated with rejuvenation and fertility; the periodic addition of episodic stages of mound construction may have been a communal rite of world renewal" (Blitz and Lorenz 2006:12; Knight 1986). Moreover, Cobb and Nassaney commented that, "for most mound sites, their importance lies not so much in the amount of vested effort, but in the fact that people participated in a communal construction activity that likely had strong ceremonial and ritual implications" (Cobb and Nassaney

2002:530). Cameron Wesson, in a comparative analysis, states that "by constructing mounds Mississippians and Creeks gave physical form to an important element of their ethnogenesis. These sacred mountains form an essential component of their sacred landscape by mapping a portion of a mythic narrative onto their constituent architectural forms" (Wesson 2008:50).

This codified imprinting of cultural ideologies upon sacred landscapes undoubtedly existed even in the Woodland Period, as well as the Mississippian Period. Cobb and Nassaney recognized the impact of the Woodland concept of cyclical time in relation to the construction of mound sites:

The reuse of mounds by adding new mantles... often had connotations of death and rebirth... it likely reflects an indigenous perspective on the cyclicity of time, further situating a mound within the reproduction of the ritual system. In other words, mounds and earthworks served to evoke the *past* through buried ancestors, reproduce the *present* through ritual, and point to the *future* as a landmark that would attract others at a later date [Cobb and Nassaney 2002:534].

Building on these arguments, I believe that the community-based rituals that were performed by the mound-building cultures of the Mississippian and Woodland Periods may have played a bigger factor in these ancient religious

systems than what has been previously thought. Certainly, the communal rituals that occur within the ceremonial setting upon temple mounds would be structured with cosmological symbolism that is cognitively ascertainable to the entire community. This hypothesis being stated, it can be assumed that just as the symbolism embedded within the structure of modern square grounds conveys strong cosmological ideologies, the Mississippian centers functioned similarly.

In conclusion, I believe that the Apalachicola-Creeks' Turtle Dance and Creation narrative represent an embodiment of cosmological and cosmogenic symbolism based on the overarching concepts of world renewal. These renewal concepts are based on the Native American perception of cyclical time. Within these symbols, certain themes and motifs that are present in the rituals performed at *Ekvnv Hvtke* are deeply rooted to the ideologies once held by the Apalachicola-Creeks' mound-building ancestors. World renewal was undeniably a recurrent, if not, omnipresent theme within the Mississippian and Woodland Period systems of belief, and as I have illustrated, this renewal theme still plays a major role within the Turtle Dance at the Apalachicola-Creeks' square grounds in Blountstown,

Florida. The Turtle Dance is a reaffirmation of the bonds that tie these people to their past, present, and future.

This cultural continuity is the product of a series of successful transmissions of ritual and the telling of episodic narratives by generations of Native American families throughout the last multiple centuries. These surviving processes demonstrate that the contemporary people of *Ekvny Hvtke* are not desperately holding onto their religion, nor do I believe that these people are running through an imagined tradition based on the anthropological literature. The fire renewal ceremonial cycles and knowledge of the cosmos attests to and reflects their permanence as a Native American community.

Even if you believe that our temporal system is situated in a never-ending repeating cycle, rituals, like languages, can still become lost in the foggy haze of time. If Native American communities are reapplying sacred meanings to symbolic objects that lost their original purpose, the objects will only take on a new meaning that is related to the present day conundrum called experience. Cultures change over time, as do religions. Religions are malleable institutions that can be molded and shaped to the needs of the people that use them.

To finally answer the last question I asked in the introduction to this thesis, where is the line drawn between a living culture and a revitalized culture, I suggest that the modern researcher will find great difficulty by drawing a line between a living tradition and a culture in the process of revitalizing its once lost traditions. Perhaps, by asking this question, I am oversimplifying a complex ethnographic process, so perhaps, the answer could be both. In this sense, the Apalachicola-Creeks are a living tradition that is and will always be in a constant state of revitalization and renewal.

The research provided in this thesis, I hope, will provide a foundation upon which to conduct further investigations in the field of Southeastern studies. I also hope that the premise presented in this thesis will aid others in searching for evidence of cultural continuity in contemporary Native American tribal life. The opportunity to study the Apalachicola-Creeks and their ceremonial life has been a truly an amazing experience.

APPENDIX A

THE APALACHICOLA-CREEK CREATION MYTH:

"How Things Came to Be" (Daniels 1995:18-23)

In the first time, that is, at the beginning, the world and all that there is, "was." Father Spirit, Master of Breath, Creator, thought it so, that is, caused it to be so.

Aeha! All that there is, had no place. All the newly-created things—the birds, the insects, the trees, the rocks, and everything else—were in a NOWHERE.

Now, it isn't very pleasant to be nowhere. It's like being lost, and worse.

And not only was everything nowhere- the bluejays, the rattlesnakes, the foxes, the ants, the squirrels, the moss, and everything else- not only were they nowhere, they were also in confusion. They hadn't been given their Original Teachings, their First Instructions. Though each thing was perfect, just as the Father Spirit made it- though each thing was perfect, just as Father Spirit thought it- nothing had yet learned its duties.

So, being nowhere, and knowing nothing, they were all in confusion amongst themselves. They didn't know what to do, and they weren't very good at being still. There wasn't any order. And it isn't very Muskogee to be without order!

Why! There wasn't even a Paksofv, the ceremonial square ground, so that the place of each thing could be seen and be known.

You must understand that this was Father Spirit's first time at creating, and there wasn't much experience in these matters... Well, anyway, the One Above, HSKTMSE, the Master of Breath, was quite amused at first by all this confusion-

tha is, until Locv was the first being to be formed. Poor Locv! She was alone, some say, in a void of nothingness. And she cried out. And she was heard by Father Spirit, the One Above.

And suddenly, water was everywhere.

There are some who say that water came first and then the Turtle. Be that as it may, water was now everywhere; water made a place for things to be. It was good that all now had a place to be... but it was bad that place was water, because most everything was drowning. It certainly does take experience to be a good Creator, some say... HSKTMSE was sure getting experience!

"Help us!" everything in the water cried out. "Help us!" Turtle heard the others. She taught some to swim immediately. Now the story doesn't say how the Turtle knew how to swim, so we just assume it came naturally. Some could not swim, and these she rested on her back and on the back of the swimmers.

"Ah, all is well," she thought. Not so. They had not yet experienced tiredness, because they were still new. Tiredness came quickly, and there was much anguish, and fear came to be. Fear was the first feeling to be known, and thus became the most important feeling. And we all know fear is one thing that helps people keep alive.

Turtle, though, did not fear the water too much, sensing that it was her home and domain. However, the cries of the others brought a new feeling to her, and compassion was born. Compassion, like many things, cannot dwell alone or in nothingness. Compassion can dwell only in the breasts of creatures with form and substance. With compassion now her companion, Turtle remembered her own cries, and how the Master of Breath had caused water to be. Thus memory and example, the tools of learning, came to be.

(All things made by Father Spirit have reason in their own way, and according to their own ability. Now notice that by the Creek view, not everything has the same kind of reason or the same kind of thoughts. Everything reasons according to its own.)

Turtle, now, remembering her own cries and hearing the cries of others, knew that something had to be done, and

soon. She looked about with compassion and then dove beneath the waters. She swam about and found some earth. Turtle piled up this earth and then dove again and again. Soon there was much earth being formed about.

Of all the creatures in the world, birds were the closest to the new earth, and they clamored up on it. They were soaked and stretched their wings to dry them. They did not yet know that they were sky-dwellers and could fly. As they flapped their wings, shaking off the water, they rose upwards and knew flight.

Fuco, the duck, did not rise too high (of course she was kind of fat anyway); she seemed to like water and returned to float freely upon it. She felt at home as her big feet pushed her about. Fuco did not sink, nor did she look beyond that place at that moment. Fuco understood water and her place. Fuco now had no fear of water, and happiness was born.

Happiness, which comes from understanding, is always born a twin and cannot live alone. Happiness is not lonely by nature; it is active and feeds on sharing, its brother. So Fuco went to help the Turtle, and sharing came to be. With her big feet, she pushed the mud together and packed it down. She smoothed out the edges where it met the waters, and now the other creatures could climb ashore with ease.

Birds, happy now by finding themselves airborne, also desired to help. With their wings they dried the land. They beat their wings very hard; some rose to great heights and saw the One Above. Father Spirit was pleased with their actions and gave them songs and wild cries so that all the others would also know of His pleasure. That is why we always say a quiet prayer or "thank you" when we hear a bird burst into song. The Master of Breath breathed on the breast feathers of some birds, and those feathers at once became soft and delicate. These gentle feathers are called "prayer feathers" or "little prayers." Birds felt at peace and at one with the One Above; they knew brotherhood and were thankful. Prayer was born of thankfulness. Eagles and hawks flew closest to Father Spirit. They carried the prayers of thankfulness for the other creatures who had not yet learned to speak for themselves. Even today, feathers are the brothers to prayer and peace. While birds were in the sky, they could circle, soar, and rest on air. They

looked calm and quiet as they flowed with all that was natural. Other learned peacefulness from their example.

The Water Turkey worked hardest at drying the land with her great wings. So hard did she work, and so tired did she become, that Father Spirit preserved the ripples of the first water on her tail feathers. The ripples are there today with their rainbow colors quietly hidden in sunlight, and they remind us of Water Turkey's part in the first times. Today, we learn unselfish service from the Water Turkey's example. The old ones say that the rippled feathers help the Water Turkey to fly upward with ease; thus, we learn that Father Spirit rewards in quiet but lasting ways. So much water was dried out by the Water Turkey, that now she must spread out her own wings to dry them after diving. The great Water Turkeys constantly dry their wings, to be ready to work again should the need ever arise or the Father Spirit ever call for them. Water Turkey is called the vigilant bird. Today, Water Turkey's feathers carry the cedar and tobacco upwards in prayer; her feathers are very sacred and must not used without deep devotion and the permission of the Elders.

Where the land was piled high were mountains; where it was spread out were plains, forests, and gentle hills. Valleys occurred where the great creatures and the giants of old walked. Yes, Locv and Fuco worked hard, and Water Turkey and the other birds did their part to secure the meaning of sharing. As those winged creatures dried the land, rivers, ponds, lakes, and streams flowed from the water that dropped from their wings. Everything that could come ashore. They filled the good land, Aniweda, with life.

The water creatures knew their place and abilities; the sky-dwellers had discovered theirs too! It was the in-between creatures, the land-dwellers, who had not found their ways yet; they cause great confusion. There was much moving about, each one trying to be where the others were or to do what the others did. Uncertainly came from lack of instruction. Things were a mess and getting worse. It is still said today that on the Square that confusion occurs where too many things try to occupy the same place at the same time... even if those things are but one's own thoughts. In councils ever since, each person is allowed to have a full say without interruption, lest too much specking all at once cause confusion. For these reasons and others, no

one is to go on the Square without knowing clearly his purpose for being there.

During this time of confusion, a great tree sought only to stand in one place and enjoy itself, as it reflected on all that had just come into being. The tree was truly happy within itself, understanding itself and understanding the ways and being of the others. This tree had learned that joy comes from within and not from without. Just standing there, watching birds in flight and feeling peacefulness and contentment, it appeared calm and happy. All the other creatures, in their confusion, saw its happy look. The others also wanted the tree's happiness. They crowded around quickly, trying to share the tree's feeling. Poor tree! It was crowded on, beaten down, and broken in every way, all because it was happy and the others didn't know their proper places. The tree felt happiness and pain, and—~~aeha!~~—happiness was discovered. Nothing stayed still, nothing cooperated with anything else, all these things and creatures went about making an extraordinary confusion. Greed, the child of not knowing oneself, came to be. Clouds all crowded into one place, and everything there became very dark and damp. The fog crowded in too, making things worse. The winds gathered up in one place, and their noisy pranks and quarrels made everything near them miserable. The sun could not decide what to do, and so its just sat still, confused and fearful, pondering its grievances while all living things near it shriveled in the searing heat. Where the sun was not, there was too much darkness and cold. Creatures stumbled about; some got hurt. Not only the birds, but by now all other creatures of speaking, singing, or crying out, had found their voices. Noise and shouting everywhere! Quietness was only a thought of the past... not even clear enough to be a dream.

Father Spirit, Master of Breath, Creator, saw all this confusion and was no longer amused by it. He was puzzled. "Did I not make all things?" said the One Above. "From Me, don't they have a reason?" Mystery came to be from not seeing and acting together, but only separately. The One Above could see and know all things, but His creatures could not. Turtle spoke: "Father of All Being, we cannot hope to see and know as You. You are the whole, but we are only parts. We are You, but each of us is only one small part. We know enough to be troubled from ignorance of many things, but not enough to know peace."

"You have spoken well, Turtle," said the One Above. The wisdom of the Master of Breath had come to rest in Turtle, she who had been the first created one. "In you," He said, "shall be thoughtful wisdom, slow and full of sureness; I will put other kinds of wisdom in other things.

"You were first," He said, "among all things; all know you. Call all the nations together for me."

Turtle called the sky nations, the birds. She called the animal nations and the water nations too. She summoned the star nations, forest nations, the grasses and everything that has form, substance, and thought or action. She called all beings together. Father Spirit had told her how to call the many nations and where to put them. She set the sun on one side of Him and the moon on the other. Father Spirit said, "Let the winds rise at My shoulders and the waters at My feet. Put the birds at My hand and the star nations above. Let all other nations sit with the grasses all around Me, in front of Me, behind Me, and at My sides."

It was done as spoken. In this way, all things knew where the center was. The One Above is really without form or shape, but each saw Him in a way that each could understand. Each saw the Master of Breath as one of its own.

The Fathers Spirit spoke with the voices of winds; light shone from the Creator's eyes; happiness and joy sprang from the heart of the One Above; and every part of the Master of Breath gave forth example for all to see and know. To each, Father Spirit gave First instructions, Original Teachings. He taught the clouds to move about and the rocks to take pleasure in solitude and stillness. He showed the mountains where to stand and the plains and valleys where to spread out. He asked trees to stand in fellowship and the winds to dance about and touch all things. Father Spirit forgot to remove anger from the winds, but He did give them gentleness for their major portion. The sun was set on its path, with light for companionship. The moon was give its trail, and the star nations were sent to be its brothers and sisters. To each, Father Spirit gave secret things as well. Into every rock and lead a lesson was hid. Into every voice and sound a meaning was placed. With every creature in its appointed place around the Master of Breath, a great square was formed. Each saw its proper place and understood order. To

all, He gave harmony and balance. The earth was to be mother to all and selfish to none. With First Instructions came contentment, because each now understood its own way.

Father Spirit said: "You shall talk among yourselves only as long as you remember your duties and your voices don't become sister to trouble, mother to anger, or companion to unhappiness. You will each be a teacher of your secrets and wisdom, but you will each be a student of one another as you seek patiently to know and understand each other's ways.

"Children will come to you, but you must teach them the proper ways. They will learn their places from you. This shall be the way of things. There will be seasons which will shelter for these ways, and thus there will be time and change, growth and learning. The seasons shall be as grandparents to all things."

All things heard the Father Spirit, Master of Breath, the Creator. Order came to be as understanding became clear.

Father Spirit said: "Sister tree that suffered pain will forever remain green, to remind everyone of those first times and the confusion. The tree will remind you of life. As the sun makes its journey through the sky-kingdom and the seasons, all other growing things will become as that first tree when beaten down.

"For a season, the cold and frost will be with you as this bitter lesson and memory, but berry and blossom will come forth to renew this time, when all sat down together to learn and to seek balance and harmony. At the time of the Mulberry Blossom, all shall sit together and seek to follow these teachings.

"Sun shall be like My heart, My hand, and My eye. It shall be ever-watchful. Sound shall be your voice, but silence Mine.

"I am life and will dwell with you. My life and light will dwell here in your midst." So saying, the Master of Breath took four limbs from the tree-nations and placed them in the midst of all the things that had come together on the great Square. While He spoke, the logs began to burn with Fire. The sun began to burn also; all knew that the Father was there too. And then suddenly, each felt warmth in its

own bosom and knew that the Master of Breath had come within, too. None could any longer see the Father Spirit in its own form, but only in the Fire which burned in their midst and continued to speak.

Father Spirit said: "Bears shall live in the forest and shall have charge of feeding the Fire; others shall help too. Birds shall fan Me with their wings, and the winds will sing around Me. The sun will shine above Me with all the sky-dwellers, the moon, the stars, and all of the air. One day a new nation will come among you to dwell. When they are raised up, you shall each seek to teach them your lessons. You will guard them for each other; you will set them on the good road and be friendly to them." Thus, Father Spirit foretold the coming of First Woman and her children, the nation of humankind.

Many things the One Above spoke about at that time. But that is mystery: each knew only its own first lesson and had not yet gone out to find the teachings of others. During First Instruction, Original Teachings, all listened intently and learned their public and private ways. Turtle, though, was too busy with her own self-importance to listen well, and she did not learn her own First Instruction or her own ways. Turtle had discovered arrogance and conceit but hid them under her smooth shell, so that others would not know. But that is another story for another time. This is how all things came to be! At least, this is how the old ones told it.

APPENDIX B

13

TEN GENERATION, DESCENT CHART FAMILY

Surname Reference: BOGGS

<p><u>1</u> Andrew Boggs RAMSEY born 1932 where Blountstown, Florida died where</p>	<p><u>2</u> Alice Kathleen BOGGS born 1910 where Blountstown, Florida died where</p>
<p><u>3</u> James Daniel BOGGS born 1871 where Boggs Pond, Florida died 1933 where Blountstown, Florida</p>	<p><u>4</u> John J.W.J. BOGGS born 1840 where Apalachicola River died 1917 where Boggs Pond, Florida</p>
<p><u>5</u> John J. BOGGS born 1810 where Apalachicola River died where Boggs Pond, Florida</p>	<p><u>6</u> Polly PARROT BOGGS born 1783 where Georgia died 1898 where Boggs Pond, Florida</p>
<p><u>7</u> Tuskie Haco/COCHRANE born 1700s where Alabama (GORAKKO) died 1832 where Calhoun County, Fla.</p>	<p>born where died where</p>
<p>born where died where</p>	<p>born where died where</p>
<p>born where died where</p>	<p>born where died where</p>

<p>Eloise Stanley RAMSEY born 1935 where Greenville, Florida died where</p>	<p>James Andrew RAMSEY born 1908 where Bristol, Florida died where</p>
<p>Alice McClellan BOGGS born 1881 where Walton County, Florida died 1962 where Blountstown, Florida</p>	<p>Sarah E. Smith BOGGS born 1844 where Calhoun Co. Fla. died 1934 where Calhoun Co. Fla.</p>
<p>Mele Pule Misgroove born where Georgia died where Boggs Pond, Florida</p>	<p>John BOGGS, Jr. born where Tennessee died where Marshall County, Al.</p>
<p>Polly (a bought wife) born where Georgia died where Georgia</p>	<p>born where died where</p>
<p>born where died where</p>	<p>born where died where</p>
<p>born where died where</p>	<p>born where died where</p>

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<p>B.C. #13259 M 5 Dec. 1953 M.C.</p>
<p>B.C. # 32981 M 11 April 1931 M.C.</p>
<p>M 16 July 1896 M.C. D.C. both Bible Records 1900 & 1910 Census</p>
<p>M 30 Sept. 1866 M.C. Bible Records 1880 & 1885 Census D.C. # 9664 Pioneer Certificate #114 1850 Census Fla. Hist. Soc. Quart. April, 1981 Pioneer Certificate # 11</p>
<p>C.C. # 9664 Affidavit- Minnie B. Gree Edith Brantley Land Payment Records 1851</p>
<p>1832 Creek Indian Rolls Emigration of Ind. Vol Eastern Band of Cherokee' Report</p>
<p>Fla. Hist. Quart. Oct. 19 Clements Survey 1831 Treaty with Fla. Ind. # 1 Harjo-Boggs-Parrot, Hist Papers of Band Hist. Vol. 1 1986 rev. Docket 272, BIA Affidavits, Blount Family</p>

Figure 40. Dr. Andrew Boggs Ramsey's genealogical chart (Ramsey 1991:9).

APPENDIX C

A PORTRAIT OF THE APALACHICOLA-CREEK COMMUNITY



Figure 41. The Apalachicola River, looking downstream at Torreya State Park, Florida (Picture taken by the author).



Figure 42. The Women's Ribbon Dance. (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler).



Figure 43. Dan Penton as a log bearer at a Green Corn Ceremony at Pine Arbor Tribal Town in 1993. (<http://northfloridaindians.webs.com/apps/photos/>).



Figure 44. The sacred fire mound with swirl cross motif made of sacred tobacco and cedar (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler).



Figure 45. Doug Alderson (left), Eric Jakubowski (middle), and Dan Penton (right) with White Drink (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler).



Figure 46. The women feeding the sacred fire first at the Berry Ceremony, April 2009 (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler).



Figure 47. A ghostly shot of the Buffalo Dance at the Berry Ceremony, April of 2005 (Picture courtesy of Duncan McKinnon).



Figure 48. Dan Penton watches a stick ball game at the Berry Ceremony in April of 2009 (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler).



49. The red and white painted bison skull that was placed under the new ball pole at *Ekvnnv Hvtke* (Picture courtesy of David Zeigler).



Figure 50. Adam King, Johann Sawyer, Doris (*Emv*) Adams, Jesse Dalton, Chris Bolfing, and Chris Thornock at the *Ekvnnv Hvtke* square grounds in 2010.

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Jesse Otis Dalton was born in San Diego, California, on January 10, 1982, the son of Laura Ann Scrivener and Jerry Otis Dalton. After receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts in anthropology with a minor in music from Texas State University-San Marcos in December 2005, he relentlessly toured the country in a bluegrass band, while endlessly searching for the American Dream. Following a four-year stint on the road, he returned to the academic institution and entered the Graduate College of Texas State in the fall of 2009. During the summer of 2011, he attended Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro. He is a strong advocate of community-based agrarian societies and supports the ultimate freedom of creative and artistic expression; he also holds a Doctorate in Divinity from the Universal Life Church-Modesto, California.

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This thesis was typed by Jesse Otis Dalton.