Forging Social Archaeology, Ethnohistory, Southeastern and Folklore of the Mississippian Identities to Early Historic South

Edited by Gregory A. Waseklov and Marvin T. Smith
CONTENTS

List of Illustrations ix
Preface xiii

Introduction: Forging Southeastern Identities
Gregory A. Waselkov and Marvin T. Smith xvii

1
Shell Gorgets, Hybridity, and Identity Creation in the Hightower Region
Adam King and Johann A. Sawyer 1

2
The Fabric of Power: Textiles in Mississippian Politics and Ritual
Penelope B. Drooker 16

3
Revitalization Movements in the Prehistoric Southeast? An Example from the Irene Site
Rebecca Saunders 41

4
Navigating the Mississippian World: Infrastructure in the Sixteenth-Century Native South
Robbie Ethridge 62

5
Marine Shell Trade in the Post-Mississippian Southeast
Marvin T. Smith 85

6
Joara, Cuenca, and Fort San Juan: The Construction of Colonial Identities at the Berry Site
David G. Moore, Christopher B. Rodning, and Robin A. Beck 99

7
What's in a Phase? Disentangling Communities of Practice from Communities of Identity in Southeastern North America
John E. Worth 117
CONTENTS

8
Plant Use at a Mississippian and Contact-Period Site in the South Carolina Coastal Plain
Kandace D. Hollenbach 157

9
The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians Was Indeed Grand: A Reconsideration of the Fatherland Site Landscape
Ian W. Brown and Vincas P. Steponaitis 182

10
Nuances of Memory: Historical Legend vs. Legendary History
George E. Lankford 205

References Cited 221
Contributors 267
Index 269
ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

1.1. Shell gorgets from Moorehead’s Burial 6A   2
1.2. Crib gorgets of eastern Tennessee   5
1.3. Gorget themes and styles referenced in chapter 1   9
2.1. Locations of sites mentioned in chapter 2   18
2.2. Clay cast of “octagonal openwork” fabric impressed on pottery, Wickliffe Mounds site   20
2.3. Clay cast of decorated fabric impressed on pottery, Stone site, Tennessee   26
2.4. Locations of sites from which “octagonal openwork” fabrics are known   29
2.5. Interior surface of copper “hawk man” plate from Burial 16, Mound 3, Lake Jackson, Florida   30
2.6. Twined tapestry fragment, Great Mortuary, Spiro, Oklahoma   32
2.7. Twined tapestry fragments, Great Mortuary, Spiro, Oklahoma   33
3.1 Location of the Irene site at A.D. 1250   42
3.2 Shell gorget with cross-in-circle design and Ramey incised vessel as cross-in-circle   43
3.3 Savannah-phase mound stages   48
3.4. Savannah-period and Irene-period intrasite settlement patterning at the Irene site   51
3.5. Relative mound stage heights   53
3.6. Bartram’s sketch of mounds 55
3.7. Pottery types 57

4.1. Mississippian World, ca. 1540 C.E., showing the route of Hernando de Soto 64

5.1. Marine shell artifacts in common use on archaeological sites of the Protohistoric Southeast 87
5.2. Sixteenth-century sites in the Southeast with marine shell artifacts 88
5.3. Early seventeenth-century sites in the Southeast with marine shell artifacts 90
5.4. Mid-seventeenth-century sites in the Southeast with marine shell artifacts 93
5.5. Late seventeenth-century sites in the Southeast with marine shell artifacts 94

6.1. Berry site excavations, 1986–2015 100

7.1. Ceramic style zones and political groupings of Spanish Florida, c. 1650 128
7.2. Selected colonial migrations in and around Spanish Florida 132
7.3. In situ ceramic transformations in early seventeenth-century Spanish Florida 135
7.4. Identity vs. ceramic practice for southeastern Indians 140
7.5. Partial schematic of a landscape of practice 150

8.1. Comparison of acorn density in flotation samples by component 174
8.2. Comparison of corn kernel/cupule ratio in flotation samples by component 175

9.1. Modern map of the Fatherland site, showing the three surviving mounds and the approximate location of a buried feature 183
9.2. Funeral of the Tattooed Serpent in 1725 185
9.3. Idealized diagram of stratification in the plaza at Fatherland 186
9.4. Detail from Brunotin’s 1723 map of the Natchez settlements 188
9.5. Anonymous 1730 map of the French siege at Natchez, showing four mounds along with the French and Indian fortifications 189
9.6. Caillot's 1730 map of the French siege at Natchez 190
9.7. Detail from Broutin's 1723 map 192
9.8. Detail from the anonymous 1730 map 193
9.9. Map of the Fatherland site 194
9.10. Detail from anonymous 1730 siege map 199
9.11. Detail from the Caillot 1730 siege map 200

TABLES

1.1. Turkey Cock Gorgets and Associated Gorgets from Sites in Eastern Tennessee 10
3.1. Sizes and Features of Savannah-Phase Mound Stages at the Irene Site 49
7.1. Regional Ceramic Style Evolution in and around Spanish Florida, c. 1500–1650 130
7.2. Characteristics of Ceramic Assemblages Comprising Style Zones Discussed 130
7.3. Ceramic Practice Domains 144
8.1. Summary of Samples Analyzed from the Riverfront Village Site 159
8.2. Plant Taxa Identified in the 38AK933 Samples 161
8.3. Plant Taxa Recovered from the Smudge Pit (Feature 747) 168
8.4. Comparison of Plant Taxa from the Riverfront Village Site by Component 170
8.5. Plant Taxa Recovered from Several Mississippian Sites in the Savannah River Valley 179
9.1. Mounds Shown on French Maps 198
Forging Southeastern Identities explores the many ways archaeologists and ethnohistorians define and trace the origins of Native Americans’ collective social identity.

CONTRIBUTORS
Robin A. Beck / Ian W. Brown / Penelope B. Drooker / Robbie Ethridge / Kandace D. Hollenbach / Adam King / George E. Lankford / David G. Moore / Christopher B. Rodning / Rebecca Saunders / Johann A. Sawyer / Marvin T. Smith / Vincas P. Steponaitis / Gregory A. Waselkov / John E. Worth

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA PRESS
WWW.UAPRESS.UA.EDU
Forging Southeastern Identities: Social Archaeology, Ethnohistory, and Folklore of the Mississippian to Early Historical South

Forging Southeastern Identities: Social Archaeology, Ethnohistory, and Folklore of the Mississippian to Early Historical South, edited by Gregory A. Waselkov and Marvin T. Smith, is a volume dedicated to Judith Knight and her contributions to archaeological publication. The editors focus on the topic of identity and, along with the contributors, demonstrate a variety of approaches employed to investigate Mississippian identities in the late pre-Columbian and early historic southeastern US. In their introduction, Waselkov and Smith provide a brief discussion of identity as approached in archaeology, relying on definitions put forth in relational sociology that point to identities as multiple, changing, and interrelated. The authors in the subsequent chapters engage with how identities were created, maintained, and/or changed to varying degrees. They rely on various lines of evidence, including a wide range of material culture, activities, and historic accounts in the search for southeastern identities.

Contributions from Marvin Smith (Chapter 5) and Adam King and Johann Sawyer (Chapter 1) focus on the production and distribution of engraved shell gorgets in the southeast during the 16th and 17th centuries and within burial contexts at Etowah, respectively. Penelope Drooker (Chapter 2) provides a thorough overview of textiles in the Mississippian and early historic periods and their role(s) in power and ritual throughout the southeast. Rebecca Saunders (Chapter 3) and Kandace Hollenbach (Chapter 8) hone in on diachronic changes to identities at single sites over time as evidenced through mound construction and potting practices at the Irene site on the coast of Georgia and changing foodways in South Carolina’s Coastal Plain.

Two chapters review past research and new data from two sites featured prominently in historic accounts of the early contact and colonial periods. David Moore, Christopher Rodning, and Robin Beck (Chapter 6) review the past 14 years of archaeological research at Joara, a Mississippian principle town that Juan Pardo briefly converted into a colonial outpost (Fort San Juan) with accompanying town (Cuenca). Ian Brown and Vincas Steponaitis (Chapter 9) reassess the Grand Village of the Natchez (aka Fatherland site) based on recently rediscovered historic maps that indicate the presence of more mounds than originally thought and how they were usurped by the French-colonial military.

Chapters from John Worth (Chapter 7) and George Lankford (Chapter 10) are more methodological. Worth critiques phases as archaeological constructs, particularly when phases based on pottery styles are equated with historically documented ethnicities and
political identities. Lankford explores oral histories and narratives recorded during the historic period and how they can inform on past identities of Native Americans, African Americans, and Euro-Americans.

Three chapters stood out as particularly informative contributions that delve into different aspects of identity and weave together multiple lines of evidence to support their assertions. In the first chapter, King and Sawyer investigate the roles identities played in the reoccupation of Etowah around AD 1250. Shell gorgets in both local and non-local styles were concentrated within particular quadrants of the mound, but also interred together on a necklace worn by a woman interred in the mound. They posit that the burial of both local and non-local people and gorgets in Mound C was an integrative act that served to create a new community at Etowah.

In chapter 3, Rebecca Saunders indicates that the changes to the layout and pottery evident at the Irene site on the southeast coast of Georgia around AD 1300 exemplify revitalization. She describes the final construction episode of the platform mound that resulted in a drastic change in shape and size as “a provocative act” that “obliterated characteristics that made it a symbol of power” (p. 54). Simultaneously, there were significant changes in mortuary practices, diet, marital patterns, and pottery production. In particular, the changes to pottery involved the rejection of the style that was produced during the previous 150 years and the resurgence of complicated stamped iconography using a method that had not been employed for 2,000 years. She considers these “created traditions” (p. 83) as revitalized social identities rooted in the past.

Robbie Ethridge describes the Mississippian infrastructure Soto, Luna, and Pardo encountered and exploited during their expeditions into the interior southeast in Chapter 4. She paints a picture of the Mississippian southeast as a mosaic in which people and polities were interconnected through trails, roads, streams, guides, translators, and porters, often across cultural and linguistic boundaries. She indicates that competition and hostility alongside cooperation “served as binding agents” between polities.

Waselkov and Smith’s volume would have benefitted from a concluding chapter to draw together the common themes and summarize the various insights from each of the chapters. Some contributions only tangentially addressed identity while others were more explicit. However, the editors wisely chose to explore identity, a hot topic in contemporary archaeological research and other related fields. Also of interest is the temporal frame that bridges the late Mississippian and early historic periods, a contested time when dramatic changes occurred including long-term historical changes associated with the arrival of Europeans and their expeditions through indigenous territories. Archaeologists and historians interested in the southeastern US and the construction of identities during contested times will find this volume valuable.