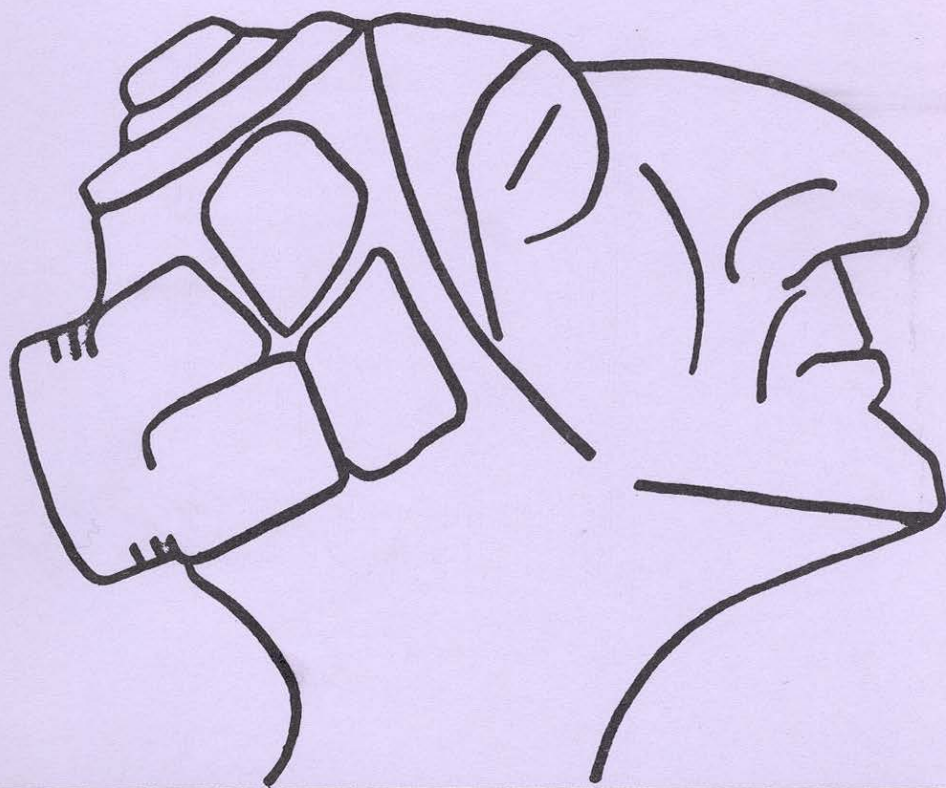


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CONTENTS

Notes on the Creek Hothouse.....	<i>William C. Sturtevant</i>	3
A "Coffee Bean" Style Pipe from Beloit, Wisconsin	<i>Frederick W. Lange</i>	6
Notes on Symbolism	<i>Clemens de Baillou</i>	12

NOTES ON THE CREEK HOTOHOUSE

William C. Sturtevant

ABSTRACT

Clemens de Baillou described two Creek council houses in Volume XIX of *Southern Indian Studies*. This article adds to those descriptions three more. First is the Muskogee type described at Eufala; second is the council house at Tukabahchee; and third is the "chokofa" built at Thlopthlocco after the Civil War.

In a recent issue of this journal, Clemens de Baillou appended to his discussion of the Cherokee rotunda two brief descriptions of the similar Creek council house that were omitted from Swanton's compendia (1928:59, 171-181; 1946:386-405) which de Baillou cites on the similarity of the Cherokee and Creek council houses. To these I can add three more.

Swanton distinguishes two architectural types widespread among Southeastern Indians: the solidly built, usually circular type (hothouse, rotunda) and the more open rectangular type. The former was the usual winter house and the latter the summer dwelling. The "town house," "temple," "rotunda," or "council house" was patterned on the winter house.

In 1885 a nice description of the old Creek winter house was provided by George Washington Grayson (1843-1920), a Coweta townsman resident in Eufaula who held many offices in the Creek Nation, ending as Principal Chief appointed by President Wilson in 1917. He was a well-educated man, highly literate in both Muskogee and English, who was perhaps the principal informant of J. R. Swanton—"the most prominent and intelligent of all Creek Indians of his time. . . . deeply interested in the history and ethnology of his people" (Swanton 1928:31). His description is as follows:

tsuk ofu, was a house or cabin made of logs or poles and daubed with clay from the ground to top so that timbers were invisible and wind or cold could not reach the occupants. For floor, a properly tempered kind of clay was put down which when dry did not crumble into dust. In the centre of this floor was an elevation of the clay, of some 4 or 5 inches of proper size called totkinleiku on which the fires were built. They usually procured for this fire fuel that consisted simply of the dry and seasoned branches of the Black-Jack oak which do not make much smoke, for there was no hole for the smoke to go out through. This warmed the room and kept all within comfortable for the night or day. (Grayson 1885:84)

Grayson writes the two Muskogee words in this passage in the orthography recommended by J. W. Powell, whose questionnaire he was filling out. In traditional Muskogee orthography they would be written *cukofv* and *totkenliketv*. In Haas' phonemic orthography, the forms are *cuk-u fa* (literally 'house-inside,' 'room' in recent times) and *tu tk-inleyka* (literally 'fire [where] it sits, fire's seat,' i.e. 'fire-place') (for these last, I am indebted to M. R. Haas, in lit. 9 July 1962).

A description of the related council house among the Creeks was recorded by the artist John Mix Stanley in connection with his portrait, painted in June, 1843, in Indian Territory, of Tukabahchee Micco, principal medicine maker of the Upper Creeks, a Tukabahchee townsman:

In his town is a building of rather a singular and peculiar construction, used during their annual busk or green-corn dances as a dancing-house. It is of a circular form, about sixty feet in diameter and thirty feet high, built of logs; and was planned by this man in the following manner:—

He cut sticks in miniature of the building, and distributed them proportionately among the residents of the town, whose duty it was to cut logs corresponding with their sticks, and deliver them upon the ground appropriated for the building, at a given time. At the raising of the house, not a log was cut or changed from its original destination; all came together in their appropriate places, as intended by the designer. During the planning of this building, which occupied him six days, he did not partake of the least particle of food. (This passage appears in Stanley 1846:10 and, with one minor grammatical correction, in Stanley 1852:12.)

In the 1930's, Angie Debo recorded in Oklahoma that:

At least two [Creek] towns—Thlopthlocco and Pukkon Tullahassee—built *chokofas* after the Civil War. William Fields, a present-day Creek, says that the one at Thlopthlocco was made of logs; it "was oval centered and had a cone shaped top. There was one room built on opposite sides, and in the oval room was held the dances when the weather was unfavorable." Both these structures were destroyed by fire, and they were never rebuilt. But even after the *chokofa* disappeared from the Creek country, some of the towns marked a circular area in the proper place near the square and lighted a fire there on ceremonial occasions. (Debo 1941:292)

Swanton (1928:180) also heard that several Creek "hot houses" had been built in Oklahoma but most disappeared during the Civil War, after which the only one built was at Pakan Tallahassee, which later burnt down (Swanton could discern the remains at the busk grounds in 1912).

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Smithsonian Institution

Washington, D.C.

A "COFFEE BEAN" STYLE PIPE FROM BELOIT, WISCONSIN

Frederick W. Lange

ABSTRACT

A "coffee-bean" style ceramic pipe was excavated from the State Line Mound Group near Beloit, Wisconsin. This style of pipe is most commonly known from Georgia, with other examples known from parts of the Southeast. A pipe similar to the Beloit specimen was excavated from the Hollywood Mound in Georgia, associated with the Lamar Focus (A.D. 1300-1600). Megascopic analysis of paste and temper and comparison with two other ceramic specimens from the Beloit area indicates that the Beloit pipe was locally manufactured. Although the general pipe style is relatively rare, a broad range of stylistic variations are included in the designation "coffee bean." A more critical study of the style might produce significant interpretive results.

A volunteer effort by students from Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin, during the summer of 1967 made possible the excavation of four mounds in the State Line Mound Group (Ro-39), so-called because the original group straddled the state boundary between Illinois and Wisconsin. The mound group is located on the second terrace of the Rock River, approximately one-half mile east of U.S. highway 51 on the line between section 36 Rock County, Wisconsin, and section 4 of Winnebago County, Illinois and was originally composed of eight mounds. The three northernmost mounds, a linear on the Wisconsin side, a "turtle" type mound on the state line, and an oval on the Illinois side have been destroyed by natural and human forces during the twentieth century. The remaining group includes two conicals, two ovals, and one "turtle." All but the turtle (which was not excavated at the request of the property owner) were excavated, in addition to testing for habitation areas in the vicinity of the mounds (Lange 1968).

Fifteen artifacts of prehistoric manufacture were recovered from the whole of the excavated area; one seemed unique enough to warrant further comment. This artifact, a ceramic pipe bowl fragment, was found in Feature 1, Mound A, a large oval mound oriented longitudinally east-west and measuring eighty feet long, thirty-five feet wide, and three and one-half feet high. Feature 1 was located twelve feet east of the center point of the mound and had an orifice five feet in diameter; it was at the surface of the original ground level, was two and three-tenths feet deep, and had clearly defined edges and straight sides.

No remains of interment were found in Feature 1 and soil sample tests by the Soil and Plant Analysis Laboratory of the University of Wisconsin-Madison showed no presence of bone phosphorous. In addition to the ceramic pipe bowl, two pieces of ground stone were found in the pit.

The ceramic pipe bowl fragment is grit-tempered and has six applique nodes. Two other nodes were recovered but were not attached to the main fragment. The nodes are arranged in two rows around the bowl, the center of the top row being 18 mm. below the rim and the center of the lower row being 40 mm. below the rim. Members of each row are approximately 10 mm. apart. Although the base of the pipe is missing, it is estimated that the height of the complete specimen would be about 60 mm.

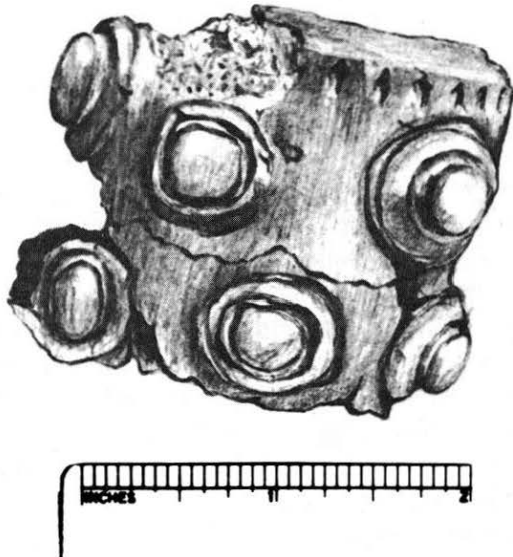


Figure 1. Coffee Bean style pipe from Mound A, State-Line Mound Group.

The bowl of the pipe has an overall diameter of 48 mm. and an orifice diameter of 26 mm. The nodes protrude an average of 11.5 mm. from the exterior of the pipe and have an average diameter of 20 mm. Each node is ringed by two incisions, one setting off the node from the bowl; the second, around the node itself, is 5 mm. out from the bowl and defines a node end 13 mm. in diameter.

The exterior of the rim is decorated with punctations 5 mm. long (measured from the outer edge of the rim) and 2 mm. wide that are spaced approximately 4 mm. apart. The exterior surface is yellowish-brown (10 YR 5/3, Munsell) and has a hardness of between 2.5 and 3.5. One node which is not covered by the smooth yellowish-brown exterior is a yellowish-red (5 YR 5/4). The bowl area is blackened, presumably due to burning, and the base area is especially darkened. However, no carbon residue was present.

A search for pipes similar to the fragment found in Feature 1 resulted in a sample of ten ceramic pipes and one steatite pipe of the style referred to as "coffee bean" by George A. West who wrote, "The pipe is almost invariably made of pottery and is found principally in Georgia" (1934:298). Six pipes illustrated by West came from Georgia, two from Wisconsin, and one each from Illinois, Tennessee, and Alabama.

All of the specimens show nodding over the bowl of the pipe; however, only one has the broad incising characteristic of the Beloit pipe. This occurs on a pipe from Pepin County, Wisconsin, the nodes being nowhere near as prominent as on other examples of this type, in fact almost flat, and the incising limited to the base of the node. The other ten pipes are evenly divided between having a thin incision around only the base of the node and having none at all.

A twelfth example of a coffee bean pipe, excavated from the Hollywood Mound in Georgia (Lamar Focus), is illustrated by Thomas (1894:328). The pipe shows flat but prominent nodes and incising almost identical to the Beloit example. Willey (1966:250) gives the Lamar Focus a date of ca. A.D. 1300, roughly contemporary with late Effigy Mound and Sears (1964:244) suggests a date of A.D. 1500-1600 or even possibly later.

Although we should perhaps not look as far afield as Georgia on the basis of one artifact, the position of the State Line Mound Group in a geographically favorable location for cultural contacts and the presence of stylistically related examples in geographically intermediate locations should not prevent us from looking.

The State Line Mound Group is located within the southern geographical boundary area of the recognized limits of the Effigy Mound culture. Beloit was described in historic times as the location of numerous Indian camps and an important intersection of many trails (Buell 1918:119). The same circumstances may be hypothesized for prehistoric times and the Beloit-Rockford area was probably subject to many influences from Illinois, Mississippi, and Rock River valley.

A similar problem of possible contact between the southeastern and midwestern portions of the United States was approached by Bareis and Porter (1965:95) in relation to a pottery vessel excavated at the Cahokia site in southwestern Illinois. In making a detailed study of the paste and temper of the vessel, they sought to satisfy two objectives: "(1) to determine whether or not the vessel was made of materials locally available and, (2) if foreign, to suggest a likely area for the occurrence of these materials" (1965:96).

In an attempt to fulfill somewhat the same objectives, a portion of the Beloit pipe was submitted to Porter, along with another sherd fragment from the State Line Mound Group and a sherd excavated from a mound on the Beloit College campus. His

report indicated that the pastes were very similar (mud containing sand grains) and that the tempers were coarse diabasic textured rock, common to the locality of excavation (Porter, personal communication). From this information, it would appear that the Beloit pipe represents the movement or distribution of a decorative idea or physical beings rather than the trading of the artifact itself.

Stylistic comparisons of the pipes broadly labelled as "coffee bean" show a wide variation under a rather large umbrella. However, the general type is found relatively rarely, and, in the unfortunately few contextual cases, on an apparent very late prehistoric time line. It is thought that further investigation and refinement of the pipe style might lead to more definitive results. The writer would be appreciative of learning of other similar specimens.

Acknowledgements

The writer wishes to thank the Logan Museum of Anthropology, Beloit College, for its support of the State Line Mound Group Excavation, and James W. Porter for generously undertaking the examination of the ceramic specimens submitted to him. The illustration of the pipe bowl was done by Miss Gretchen Laundy, a student at Beloit College.

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NOTES ON SYMBOLISM

Clemens de Baillou

ABSTRACT

The excavations at Estatoe and Chauga Mound encountered some structural details which could not be explained adequately in terms of functionality. It is suggested that symbolism and religious imagination are reflected in these details. Symbols such as the conch shell (symbol for rebirth and creation) are found in diverse areas. Because symbolism is basic and universal it should be useful in tracing the movements of men. Utilitarianism is often secondary to imagination, a fact which should be kept in mind in interpreting meanings of findings of excavations.

The excavation of Estatoe with its following report¹ did not answer all questions. At the time our report was published we hesitated to go more deeply into the problems of symbolism and religious imagination which we found reflected in structural details. For this reason, we are now trying to illuminate some points which remain totally unexplained.

It seemed striking to us that the enormous corner posts of the temple structure were through all the five construction phases extremely deeply embedded and set in direct reference to the four cardinal points. The posts used as corner posts seemed to have been up to sixteen inches in diameter and were resting on stone slabs or wooden blocks. This striking structural detail could only be technically explained. It seemed to us even a question whether the stone support or wooden blocks constitute a difference which could be further symbolically interpreted. At the excavation of Chauga Mound, a few miles away from Estatoe, it was noticed that several large stones were embedded in an otherwise homogeneous fill. At the time the report² was written, the attempt was made to interpret them just as level markers used in the mound construction. We found at Estatoe, independent from the southern corner post, a stone column about four feet high. This too must have had a function, perhaps relating to some astral constellation or calendar point. The fact remains that the corner posts were the most important element in the structure, not only by the size but by the relation to North, South, East and West.

¹A. R. Kelly and Clemens de Baillou, "Excavation of the Presumptive Site of Estatoe," *Southern Indian Studies*, XII (October, 1960), 3-30.

²A. R. Kelly and R. S. Neitzel, *Chauga Mound and Village Site (38 Oc1) in Oconee County, South Carolina*, (University of Georgia Laboratory of Archaeology Series, Report Number 3). Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Laboratory of Archaeology: May, 1961.

Certainly we should not be surprised if people very symbolically minded and believing in ceremonialism erect structures according to their religious imagination, especially a temple. A Cherokee medicine man picked an herb only from the East after circling it a few times in a ceremonial manner. He also approached a sickbed only from the east, the side of the rising sun. Here we would like to mention that some farmers in North Georgia take the cherry bark used as medicinal tea only from the east side of the tree trunk. This custom was most likely acquired by early settlers from the Indians.

The second point which surprised us was a stone layer at the Estatoe Mound forming a four-leaf clover with the corner posts in the outer part of the leaves. This stone layer belonging to the late or "contact period" is hard to explain. It had no direct function and its smooth but heavy waterworn quartz lumps had to be smeared over with a heavy layer of gray clay to make it possible to walk on it. This layer covered the last of the large firebasins which were used before for happy feasting and celebrating. It was often noticed at other such cultural centers that the Indians changed their habits and ceremonies at the time of the first contact with the white intruder. The question is: what symbolic or mythical function had this stone layer? Here we like to remember a frequently occurring creation myth, namely that the world rose out of chaos and water forming a stone mound which was then tied at its four corners to the cardinal points. This would seem to fit our structure, which was already tied with the corner posts through several phases while the stone layer set an end to joyful feasting, forming a terra firma for the people whose world was shaken by strange invaders. As such, it served as a floor for a meeting house with its council and meditation. We remember only one other mound that produced a striking stone layer. It was the Bessemer Mound of Alabama, but there the stone layer formed the base of the mound and not the top.

Not much attention was given to a small effigy found during the excavation of Chauga Mound published in the report as mentioned above. It is a little steatite plate thirty millimeters high, actually a strange anthropo-zoo-morphic presentation of an eagle goddess. It has a round human head and two eyes indicated, a crossband engraved over the front of the body and another cross-engraving on the back. One of the wings and one of the legs is partly broken, but striking in this little figurine is the only protruding part, an overdimensioned vulva. This should indicate that we have to deal with the fertility goddess. Whether it was meant to be an eagle or some other bird cannot be said. The shape of the wings is stylistically similar to eagle representation as often has been seen in the dancing warrior. Culturally, it must belong to the lower Cherokee at the late period of the southern cult. Not to our knowledge has any similar representation been found. Phallic symbols occasionally occur, but a fertility goddess with bird features seems to be unique.

A symbol we frequently find is the conch shell. The inner spiral of the conch shell we see often used as a pendant and the spiral probably represented eternity. The outer part of large conch shells were frequently used as masks over the faces of dead, eyes and mouth indicated by small drilled holes or engravings. It can be assumed that the function of such a conch shell mask was to assure eternity or rebirth. It was doubtless interesting to primitive man to listen to the sound of the conch shell which gave him mystical ideas, not knowing that he was listening to the echo of his own bloodstream. Several times we found infant burials, or *perhaps premature infants, buried by squeezing the scanty remains* of bones in the opening of the shell. One should not wonder that the opening and its coloration reminded man of the female sex organ, therefore, he buried his premature infants in another mother shell. One point which interested us especially is the fact that we see a similar symbolism in India. We have in our possession a copy of a wood carving from the Jagannath Temple, Puri, India, (See Figure 1). The figure is of Nrisincla, the man-lion of Avatura of Vishnu. He is surrounded by conch shells and is sitting on one. The conch shell is the Yoni or the symbol of creation. The conch shell was one of "fourteen treasures" taken from the ocean. To this we can only add that in India and in some other places the cowrie shell too is considered to be the sex and fertility symbol.



Figure 1. Nrisincliia, the man-lion of Avatura of Vishnu.

The astral mythological imaginations belong doubtlessly to the earliest which man developed. Eduard Stucken showed already in 1896 with his *Astralmythen* how mythos and symbolism circled our world through millenia. The wandering man with his changing environment changed the legends. The basic symbolism, however, is the basic property of our psyche. Observing astralmyths and legends should offer us an opportunity to trace the human wanderings beyond the boundaries of language or it could be coordinated with it. The reoccurrence of certain imagination is especially striking if there is no possible contact like finding a red ocher-painted skull in a pre-Columbian but late burial mound in the Delta of the Altomaha, reminding us of the near eastern, perhaps eight thousand year old burials. Approximately twenty Sumerian terms seemed to have drifted to Polynesia and ultimately to South America (E. Stucken, *Polinensches Sprachgut in Amerika und in Sumer* 1927). This did not disturb Thor Heyerdahl. We know now that *hron*, or *hrön*, old germanic word for the whale, is identical with the Greek God, Chronos. Doesn't it raise the question of whether the Leviathan of the sea was con-

sidered a divine creature and creator of low and high tide, which is more important to shore-living people than day and night? An intensified study of whale mythology should perhaps answer more than one question.

In conclusion we would like to say that realism is not the same to all people. The strange features of Estatoe which we could not interpret "realistically", technically, were real in their symbolic meaning to the Estatoiens. We often see that the utilitarian aspect is of secondary importance. The oldest pottery we know of is perhaps close to ten thousand years old, but the ceramic technique was known to man more than twenty thousand years, as we see it in the slender nude goddesses from the northern Danube basin. A beautiful goddess was to men simply more important than some kitchenware. If we trace the wandering words which carried the ideas and legends, we will trace beyond our excavation. Imagination is born in the human mind and man projected it to the starred firmament.

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