

Preliminary Report on the Hopewellian Skeletons from the Klunk Site, Calhoun County, Illinois

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This paper constitutes a preliminary assessment of a study of about three hundred skeletons from the lower Illinois River valley that were excavated by Mr. Gregory Perino of the Thomas Gilcrease Foundation of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

In the way of introduction to the Klunk mound group material and its significance for eastern United States prehistory, some background should be given concerning the racial history of the populations associated with the cultural traditions. The broad model proposed by Neumann (5) will be followed here, and is summarized as follows. The most ancient populations in eastern North America which are reasonably well documented appear in early Archaic times, as early as 4000 B. C., and perhaps earlier in a few cases. Two widely distributed and quite homogeneous populations dominate the whole of the eastern United States at this time, both seeming to have considerable antiquity, and showing perhaps, a generalized common ancestor. In the northern area, primarily associated with a Great Lakes area Archaic cultural pattern, is the Lenid variety, described elsewhere by Neumann (6). An example is Old Copper. The area south of the Ohio Valley is populated by groups which may easily be distinguished from the Lenids, and which are generally associated with the southern riverine Shell Mound Archaic cultural pattern. These populations are consistently of the Iswanid variety, described by Neumann. The largest sample of this variety to date comes from Indian Knoll, which has a radiocarbon date of 3352 B. C. ± 300 years (1). The earliest material from Modoc Rock Shelter is also Iswanid.

Neumann proposes a differentiation from Lenid to the Ilinid variety, and from Iswanid to the Walcolid variety, beginning in Medial Archaic times, perhaps as early as 2500 B. C. or earlier. An Ilinid population is associated with Glacial Kame. This process of Lenid to Ilinid differentiation may also be observed in Classic Hopewell times, according to Neumann. The sequence of Modoc Rock Shelter reflects the progressive differentiation from Iswanid to Walcolid. The Walcolid variety, especially, is quite widespread by Terminal Archaic, and Early Woodland times, with the Iswanid becoming marginal or peripheral by Early Woodland times.

During Terminal Archaic and Early Woodland times the Walcolids apparently enjoyed a considerable extension of their range, moving up the Ohio Valley into the New York and eastern Great Lakes area, and into the Illinois Valley. In the Illinois Valley they are associated with Red Ocher and Morton, and in the Northeast, with Laurentian and

Point Peninsula. It has also been suggested that a population of the Walcolid variety was associated with Adena in the Ohio Valley. In general, the Lenids and Ilinids appear to be peripheral to the distribution of these groups during this time. With the appearance of Hopewell in Middle Woodland times, however, the Lenids once again become the dominant population north of the Ohio River and in the Illinois Valley (2). The Middle Woodland population in the Southeast is predominantly Walcolid, associated with such cultures as Copena and Marksville, while the differentiated Ilinid populations become dominant in the north. A final northern expansion of the Walcolid population during the Hopewell breakdown in Late Woodland times takes place in connection with the spread of Middle Mississippi culture. In most of the cases discussed above, little admixture is indicated, with the possible exception of Adena, in which case there may be a certain amount of Walcolid-Ilinid admixture. As a consequence, the populations associated with these culture complexes ought to be reasonably homogeneous.

The material from the Klunk mound group is rather significant when considered in this framework, in that it offers evidence which may be used to test certain of the foregoing hypotheses. The site may be briefly described as follows. The mounds are located on the western bluff overlooking the Illinois River, in Calhoun County. Archaeological evidence in the form of log tombs, subfloor burial pits, zoned Hopewell pottery, Hopewell Stamped rocker-dentate pottery, and so on, indicates that the main body of the material is Classic Illinois Hopewell. The burials associated with this culture pattern constitute the largest sample of the Illinois Hopewellian population extant. One Hopewellian mound overlies a low Archaic or Early Woodland mound, which may have Red Ocher affiliations. This material offers an interesting comparison to the Hopewell series, and to Early Woodland populations from other sites. Finally, a few intrusive Jersey bluff burials are found in the mounds.

A preliminary investigation of the population associated with Classic Hopewell at the Klunk site results in an interesting and significant statistical pattern. Viewed in a cursory manner, it tends to exhibit a rather significant amount of variability, although it is primarily Lenid in character. Closer scrutiny of the material reveals a very consistent direction in the skewness of the statistical description—that is to say, the variability is not at all random. Those characteristics which diverge from the expected Lenid pattern, if considered as a group, are just those characteristics and tendencies which differentiate the Lenid from the Ilinid, in greater or lesser degrees.

Furthermore, there is no indication of any tendencies toward Walcolid characteristics, ruling out the possibility of significant admixture from this population. This is entirely consistent with Neumann's proposal that Classic Hopewell is a period of Lenid to Ilinid differentiation.

It is interesting to note further that those burials which are associated with Bluff culture are consistently Ilinid, and compare very nicely with the material from the Schild site. This last is under preparation

in the same laboratory, and promises to be a large and very homogeneous sample of the Jersey Bluff population.

The Archaic Early Woodland material which has been examined and given a radiocarbon date of 908 B. C. comprises a small but very homogeneous sample that is unquestionably Walcolid. This material is tentatively classified as Red Ocher. This is not particularly surprising since it is during this period that a differentiation of Iswanid to Walcolid is hypothesized. Consequently, some Red Ocher groups would already be expected to be clearly Iswanid, some clearly Walcolid, and some in an intermediate condition between the two.

Conclusions

1. The hypothesis that the Illinois Hopewell population is essentially Lenid is strengthened by a preliminary investigation of the Hopewellian skeletal material from the Klunk Mound group.

2. The proposed Lenid to Ilinid differentiation during Classic Hopewell times is also reflected in this investigation.

3. The Lenid population associated with this Illinois Hopewell group appears to be essentially identical to the population associated with Ohio Hopewell, which is contemporaneous.

4. An examination of the presumed Red Ocher burials indicates a definite Walcolid association, which is expected.

5. The few Jersey Bluff burials present are consistently Ilinid, and compare very well to other Bluff populations examined.

6. A northern source for certain of the characteristics that influence the development of Hopewell out of the indigenous Adena and Red Ocher is indicated by the appearance of certain Point Peninsula ceramic characteristics, such as dentate stamping. This helps to explain the appearance of Lenids in Hopewell, since their distribution at this time was to the north and west of the Illinois and Ohio Valleys. This is pointed out by Griffin (3 and 4).

Literature Cited

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