
The Noscuk

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Let's take a look into the dynamic history of the Noscuk valley and its people.

2700-1900 BC: The Wells site

The site with the earliest prehistory my team could find was The Wells Site, which gives us a peak into the lives of what would become a very advanced people. To give a comprehensive look at the locations of some artifacts, we will first go through the sorts of terrain found in the settlements of the Noscuk Valley. Although my team found 64 sites with Cuad-style dart points, 63 sites with St. Peter Points and 27 sites with ceramics, we will only be looking at the areas where each of these items were most dominant. This site, located at the confluence of the St. Peter and Little rivers features several animal remains, plant remains and artificial remains that all point to a more nomadic people. 5 pits found in this area with charcoal and burnt rock could indicate some sorts of rituals, but because there was a lack of evidence for houses gives us the clue that these prehistoric people inhabiting this site moved around quite a bit. The lack of houses shows us that people inhabiting this area would have been a mobile group, that used the resources provided to them at the confluence of these rivers to survive. For food, the Cuad-style dart points found near the river were used for hunting, after which the catch could be roasted at the 5 pits. They dieted on goose foot, animals, and seemed to have developed some sort of infantile agriculture for maize. Rabbits, deer and antelope were quite abundant in this area and provided food for the individuals who inhabited or used this site. This population seemed to have been quite survival focused, as there were no indications of class relations and economics, which meant they were a

very oligarchical society. From what the team found, these people were more focused on learning how to use the land to help themselves survive. Therefore this society must have been community focused.

The Layers Site

Now forwarding looking 700 years into the development of the Noscuk sites, we come to the layers site, which in many ways, shows an improvement both socially, and economically in the lives of those who inhabited this area. This Early Agricultural/Formative time period between 1250-800 B.C.E. was characterized by vast improvements in the population, rituals, and agricultural practices of the people during this time. 6 pit houses were found, with five having dimension of 4-5 meter diameters with storage pits, while one pit structure was found to have 7 meter diameters with no storage pits. That these houses were found with storage units shows us the increasing sedentary nature of this new population. Additionally, 19 bell-shaped storage pits were found, which further indicates the permanence of the settlements of these people during this time period. Food was now being produced in a more efficient manner that could even be stored, and dogs being domesticated also indicates their probable use as hunters. The domestication of these dogs could mean that the people of this time now valued the utility of the dogs, as they could help in the hunting of meat, could help protect homes, and could serve in other agricultural realms for the settlements. This use for dogs was also accompanied by an appreciation for them, as 2 dog burials were found on the site. The unique location of the reverine zone eventually led to the people creating their own canal system, featuring 10 canals. All these agricultural improvements helps

make this community much more self-sufficient, with more proliferation of other cultural features that truly exposed the characters and identities of these people.

Economically speaking, this population was flourishing with exotic minerals, advanced tools. Contrasting with The Wells Site, 159 exotic minerals, ceramic sherds and even human burial sites were present. The mineral and ceramic sherds indicate trading and a discovery of the utility for these ceramics. It seems that during this time period, ceramics were new and not as artistically developed as we will later see in the next site. The burials also indicate that there was some kind of social or economic structure that contributed to a less oligarchical environment. Clearly, only a few individuals were being buried, which indicated their importance in the community. The rituals surrounding these burials were also more exquisite, with some sites featuring deposits of pipes, and a figurine. These all go to indicate that some people were viewed as more important in this society and they were memorialized and cherished in these burials.

The 62,000 flaked stone found also contribute to the fact that these individuals now traded with each other, but also traded up to 100 miles away. It seems, at this time, that the people in the Noscuk are truly find their identity, and are becoming a more sedentary, dynamic society. With all these improvements, the population growth was supported, and the inhabitants of this Riverine zone lived life more comfortably, with time to make their society more complex with rituals, art, and class.

The Mortars Site: Classic Noscuk

During this time frame spanning from 1200-1300 AD, it is clear that the population had grown greatly, and there was a full civilization of people with clear rituals, clear character, agricultural and technological advancements, as well as artistic innovation.

Structurally, this population was still community based with Adobe structures and compounds featuring several families with common shared amenities such as cooking pits and walls. In terms of the larger population, there were now entertainment centers, sports recreational facilities the community could enjoy and entertain themselves with. In terms of food, because of the several technological advancements like axes and stone artifacts, as well as better water irrigation, the population was able cultivate or use crops like mustard seeds, maize, and cactus which

addressed the community food needs. Additionally, the proximity of this site to the St. Peter River offered the population more opportunity to hunt food such as rabbits, deer and sheep. The dogs of the society were also being used more, whether as pets or as hunters.

Artistically, because of increased trade and artistic development, more bracelets, charms, and pendants were very evenly prevalent throughout the population. Ceramics were more decorated, shells were being utilized for jewelry, and all these artifacts also played a role in the burial rituals of these people. Most burial sites featured pots, jewelry, and beads, which indicate the art produced by this culture was very much connected to the rituals the community followed. The abundance of decorated ceramics and Glycymeris shell bracelets with the entertainment features of these communities further indicate their leisurely practices that featured the several advancement this community was experiencing. Looking at the prehistory of The Noscuk Valley, it is clear that its inhabitants, through time, figure out how to maximize their sometimes unfortunate landscape in order to increase quality of life and support booming populations.