

NOTES ON TUSCARORA POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, 1650-1713

by

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## INTRODUCTION

The Tuscarora of North Carolina for many years have remained an ethnographic blank in our understanding of southeastern prehistoric and protohistoric peoples. Sixteenth century Spanish explorations have provided some early material for surrounding areas. The English Roanoke voyages and early settlement of Jamestown have left us with excellent written, cartiographic, and pictorial records for much of Virginia and northeastern coastal North Carolina; but the eastern piedmont and coastal plain of the latter modern state are virtually unknown for this period.

This study represents an initial step toward closing this hiatus. Two related problems will be approached. First, what was the Tuscarora political organization from the beginning of continuous Colonial English contact, at about 1650, until the upheaval of warfare in 1711? Second, what was the specific level of cultural development of the Tuscarora as indicated primarily by their political organization? In pursuit of these problems emphasis will be placed on factors of culture change, especially relationships with neighboring people (Indians and colonists). In doing this a number of terms will be used that are common to everyday speech, such as: political, power, and authority. Because they tend to be ambiguous, they will be defined to avoid misunderstanding.

General definitions of things political seem to be scarce in social science literature. In spite of this, one offered by Swartz, Turner and Tuden seems workable. A ". . . political process is public rather than private . . . always involves public goals . . . [and] involves a differential of power (in the sense of control) among the individuals of the

group in question."<sup>1</sup> Two things should be noted about this definition. First, it is rather general, yet provides a basic starting point in approaching the problem upon which can be outlined the features unique to the Tuscarora. Secondly, its emphasis is on process rather than structure. Process here will mean the actions or operations (culturally determined) that are directed toward a particular goal.

Power and authority are often used interchangeably; however, as they will be used in this report, the meanings are very different. Power has been defined as "'the ability to do something or to act upon a person or a thing.'"<sup>2</sup> No limiting factors are involved. In some cases power relationships are institutionalized within a society and are considered right and natural. "When such legitimacy or right enters, the quality of the power is changed. We give the power a new name and call it authority. Authority is legitimate or rightful power." (Bohannon, pp.268-269). Miller has ably shown how concepts of authority differ from one culture to another.<sup>3</sup> What he describes for the Fox Indians can not be generalized to the Tuscarora; nevertheless, he certainly indicates how important it is to understand a people's concept of authority. Without such an understanding we can never comprehend the Tuscarora political process.

Before proceeding further, a brief note on the organization and breadth of the subject matter to be discussed is necessary. In order to understand a group's social organization it is essential to consider natural relationships of important factors. Examination of the historical record of the Tuscarora during this early period in North Carolina clearly shows they had not transcended tribal level organization. As Marshall Sahlins describes this level, ". . . production, polity, and

piety are not as yet separately organized, and society not as yet a holy alliance of market, state and church."<sup>4</sup> In other words, economics, politics, and religion are not distinct components but were deployments of generalized social relations and groups having other functions. This will be illustrated in greater detail in the next chapter, but it must necessarily be mentioned here in order to explain why the material is presented as it is. In an attempt to properly emphasize the political processes of the Tuscarora and yet show the functional and social relationships of various individuals and groups, a certain amount of what might be otherwise thought of as extraneous information will be introduced. For example, the political importance of what would superficially be classed as religious ceremony, roles of religious specialists, sexual division of labor, settlement pattern, game resources, and other areas will all be considered.

Little is known about the Tuscarora prior to 1650. Glottochronology, the comparative study of language vocabularies for measuring linguistic change through absolute time, has provided one clue. Lounsbury, using retentions between Tuscarora and the Five Nations languages, suggests a separation depth of from 1,900 to 2,400 years.<sup>5</sup> This indicates a long period of in situ development that must wait for archaeological confirmation.

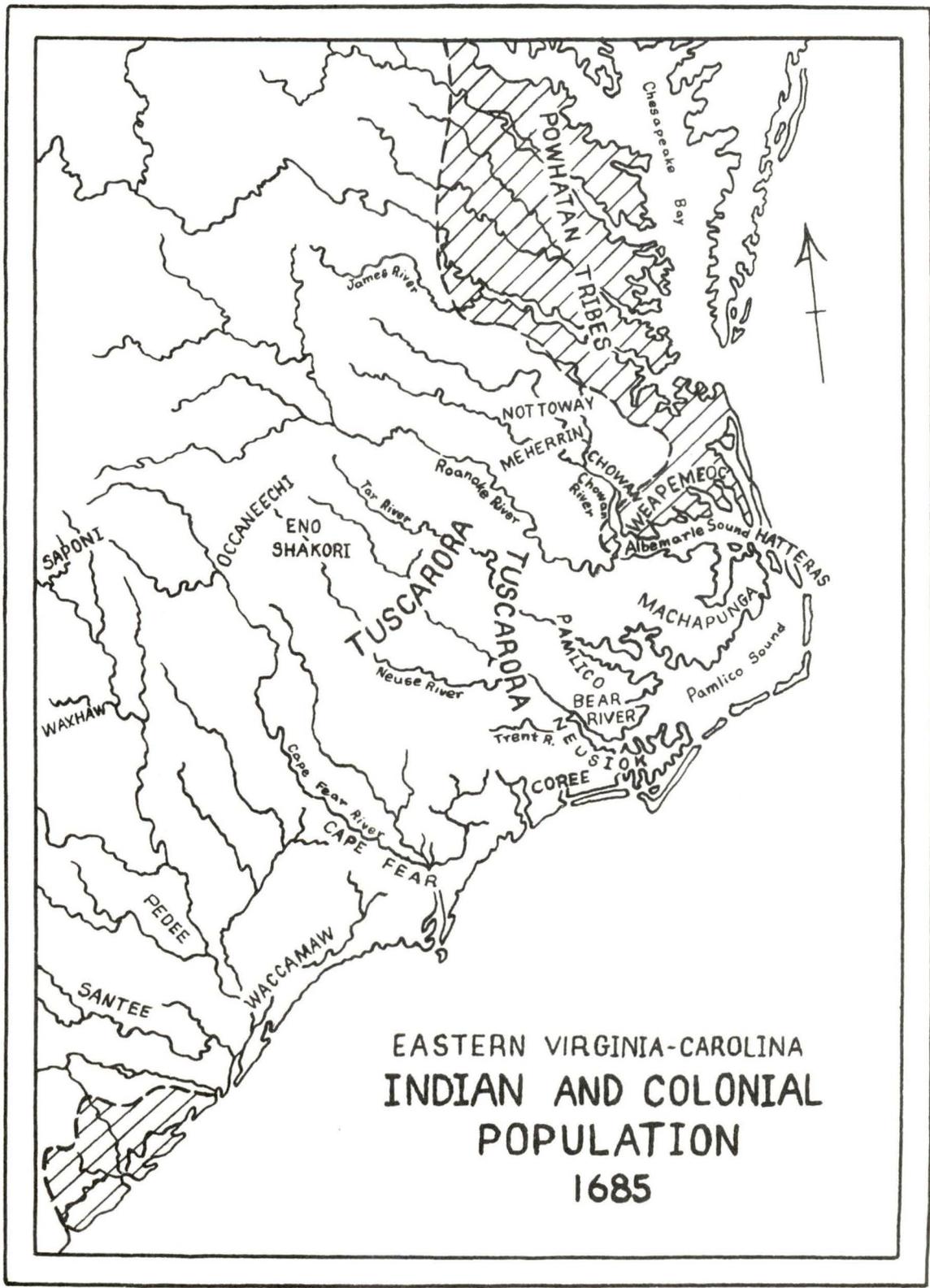
The Nottoway and Meherrin, both Iroquoian speaking people, were located north of the Tuscarora (see Map 1). A number of Coastal Algonquian groups were to the east. On the west and south the Tuscarora were bordered by Siouan peoples and the not so distant Iroquoian Cherokee. These are mentioned here by way of setting and background; however, more detailed attention will be given to them to establish the political

and social ecology of which the Tuscarora found themselves a part. These groups relocated on numerous occasions during the seventeenth and eighteenth century due to colonial expansions and hostilities (Bacon's Rebellion in 1675 for example) or in some cases inter-tribal warfare.

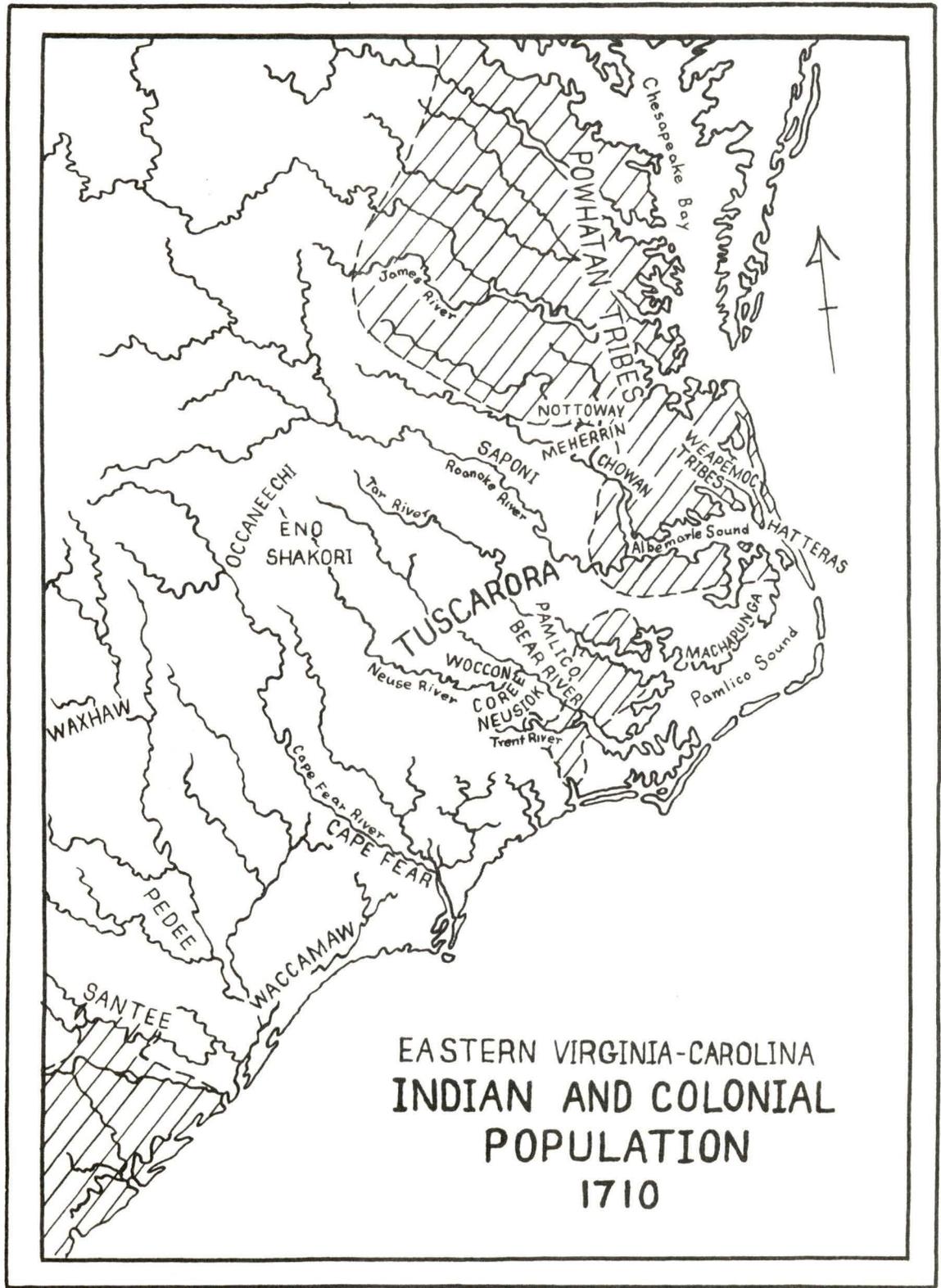
Because of this it has been difficult to identify groups such as the Mangoaks spoken of by Lane,<sup>6</sup> Smith,<sup>7</sup> and many others in the early Jamestown documents. Paschal (1953)<sup>8</sup> and more recently Binford (1967)<sup>9</sup> have suggested they were the Tuscarora. Mooney (1910),<sup>10</sup> Mook (1944)<sup>11</sup> and Swanton (1946)<sup>12</sup> have nominated the Nottoway, and Speck (1928)<sup>13</sup> the Meherrin. In one respect the argument remains futile because there are no known firsthand descriptions of encounters with the Mangoaks to provide us with any good ethnographic information. Therefore, pinning down their identity serves very little purpose until perhaps presently unknown material is brought into the picture.

It would be out of the scope of this paper to try to map the shifts in native and intrusive population that took place. However, to provide a setting for the material to follow, Maps 1 and 2 illustrate the extent of colonial expansion and tribal locations for 1685 and 1710 respectively.<sup>14</sup> This is the earliest period for which we have enough historical material to accurately piece together something about the Tuscarora.

Initial white settlement in North Carolina came in late 1659 and early 1660's in the Albemarle area.<sup>15</sup> This posed no immediate threat to the Tuscarora who had by this time been engaged in an active fur trade with Virginia colonists for nearly ten years. By 1677, planters were spread out from the Chowan to Currituck Sound. Discontent with stringent controls led the people to break their ties with the Crown. Instability of government remained a problem throughout these early years. Poor social



Map 1



Map 2

control was part of the result; and, relations with the Indians degenerated as population increases began to demand more land. In 1691 some Huguenots who were originally settled on the James River came to Carolina and located on the Pamlico. In 1704, the town of Bath was laid out and in 1708, a small French colony established itself on the Trent River. Two years later Graffenried and his Swiss Palatines bought land from the Neusiok for what was to become New Bern.

A brief look at Map 2 will show what happened to the Indians along the coast during this period. The violent outbreak by these groups with a number of more southerly Tuscarora villages on September 22, 1711, was an unexpected certainty. A prophetic letter written by Virginia Governor Spotswood to the Ministry of Queen Anne in February, 1710/1 will be quoted here at length because it points out how clearly this was coming to a head:

I am credibly informed the Indians have more reason to complain of injustice from the people of Carolina who are daily trespassing upon them and if they do sometimes retaliate it is the most excuseable because your people have been the first aggressors by seating without right on the lands of which the Indians had the first possession. . . . Some . . . intending to fall upon the Indians and to compel them by force to yield to their unwarrantable intrusions, the such actions have been tolerated during the late confusion, I hope your authority will now restrain them from an action so unwarrantable, and which may be attended with a train of ill consequences by involving both Governments in a war with the Indians, for tho: they may perhaps surprize that one nation, they ought to consider there are a great many other that will take the alarm when they find the English have broke their faith with them and that there is no dependance on our Treaties, which would be a just reproach on us--They would do well to consider that every act of violence is not attended with the like success and that the next may be made accountable for the consequences of such an unjustifiable undertaking.<sup>16</sup>

Bitter fighting lasted into 1713 when a large group of Tuscarora fled north to accept the protection of the Five Nations. By 1716, those remaining in North Carolina were settled on a reservation in present day Bertie County. During the next ninety years others left and in 1803, the reservation lands were sold and the last remnant joined their kinsmen in New York.<sup>17</sup>

The above historical sketch is only a brief introduction to the factors of culture change that are important to the problems posed for this study. An extensive unpublished thesis on the historical incidents relative to the Tuscarora in North Carolina has been compiled by Herbert Paschal. Other shorter published works of this scope are readily available;<sup>18</sup> and J.N.B. Hewitt's "Tuscarora" in the Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico stands as the best summary covering later material for Pennsylvania and New York (pp.842-853). Due to the sufficient amount of literature which is in existence, going into more detail on historical background would serve no purpose and would undesirably extend the range of this study.

The list of anthropological literature dealing exclusively with the Tuscarora is short. It begins with Hewitt in 1910 (pp.842-853), then to a series of articles and a monograph by Wallace between 1949 and 1952,<sup>19</sup> continues with Landy in 1957<sup>20</sup> and concludes with several by Graymont in the late 1960's.<sup>21</sup> The primary orientation of these last three authors has been in culture, personality and linguistics of the more modern day New York Tuscarora.

Early Tuscarora social organization has been glossed over or guessed at on the basis of nineteenth century ethnography in surveys of the southeastern United States.<sup>22</sup> There are a number of reasons. Primary sources

are difficult to use because the English in part applied the model of the social and political order of Britain to the people they found in the New World. The only two major documents available, John Lawson's A New Voyage to Carolina<sup>23</sup> and Christoph Von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern<sup>24</sup> are both problematic. The former, a record of Lawson's observations and travels in North Carolina from 1701 to 1708, is often written with no direct reference as to which tribe is being described. The pertinent section of the latter was constructed by the author on the basis of memory after a six week period of captivity from September to October 1711, during which his primary preoccupation must have been with self-preservation. Most of the other sources are scattered throughout historical magazines, colonial records and letter books. All are heavily loaded with the individual author's personal bias, and a great deal of care must be exercised in their use to recognize these and to avoid implanting one's own preconceived framework on the material.

Historical sources have been and will continue to be used three ways in this study: (1) for brief background summary, (2) to emphasize previously unnoted but historically important happenings or relationships, and to correct erroneous ones, and (3) as a relatively untapped source of ethnographic information.

## Chapter 1. - Endnotes

1. Marc J. Swartz, Victor W. Turner and Arthur Tuden, ed., "Introduction," Political Anthropology (Chicago:Aldine Publishing Co., 1966), pp.4, 7.
2. Bertrand Russell quoted in Paul Bohannon, Social Anthropology (New York:Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p.267.
3. Walter B. Miller, "Two Concepts of Authority," American Anthropologist, 57(1955), 271-289.
4. Marshall D. Sahlins, Tribesmen (Englewood Cliffs:Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), p.15.
5. Floyd G. Lounsbury, "Iroquois-Cherokee Linguistic Relations," in Symposium on Cherokee and Iroquois Culture, ed. William N. Fenton and John Gulick, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 180 (Washington, D.C.:Government Printing Office, 1961), p.12.
6. David Beers Quinn, ed., The Roanoke Voyages: 1584-1590, The Hakluyt Society, 2nd Series, No. 105 (half title page indicates No. 104), 2 vols. (London:For The Hakluyt Society, 1955).
7. Edward Arber, ed., Captain John Smith, Works. 1608-1631, The English Scholar's Library, No. 16 (Birmingham:The English Scholar's Library, 1884).
8. Herbert Richard Paschal, "The Tuscarora Indians in North Carolina," Thesis University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill 1953, pp.16-21.
9. Lewis R. Binford, "An Ethnohistory of the Nottoway, Meherrin and Weanock Indians of Southeastern Virginia," Ethnohistory, 14(1967), 123-125.
10. James Mooney, "Nottoway," Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, II (Washington, D.C.:Government Printing Office, 1910), p.87.
11. Maurice A. Mook, "Algonkian Ethno-history of the Carolina Sound," Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences, 34 (1944), 185, 195.
12. John R. Swanton, The Indians of Southeastern United States, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 137 (Washington, D.C.:Government Printing Office, 1946), p.218.
13. Frank G. Speck, Chapters on the Ethnology of the Powhatan Tribe of Virginia, Indian Notes and Monographs of the Museum of the American Indian, No. 5 (New York:Heye Foundation, 1928), map.

14. Maps 1 and 2 of colonial expansion and tribal locations are indebted to Samuel A'Court Ashe, History of North Carolina (Greensboro, North Carolina: Charles L. VanNoppen, 1908), I, pp.376-377; William P. Cumming, The Southeast in Early Maps (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1958), plates 32, 46, 51, 53; A.B. Faust, ed., "The Graffenried Manuscript C," German American Annals, 12(1914) 70(map). Archer Butler Hulbert, ed., The Crown Collection of Photographs of American Maps (Cleveland: Privately Printed by A.H. Clark Company, N.D.), Series I, part 5, plate 29; Series II, part 3, plate 37; Lawson frontispiece; Swanton, map 11 facing p.34.
15. This paragraph length summary of North Carolina history is indebted to Ashe, I, pp.59-60, 130-146, 161.
16. Southern Historical Collection M S. 1342, item 16, Francis Lister Hawks Historical Papers. "Letters of the Hon:ble Alexander Spotswood Late Governor of Virginia. Respecting the affairs of North Carolina addressed to the Ministry of the Late Queen Anne 1710-1712," pp.12-13. I wish here to express my thanks to the authorities of the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill for permission to consult this and other MSS.
17. J.N.B. Hewitt, "Tuscarora," Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, II (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), p.848.
18. Verner W. Crane, The Southern Frontier 1670-1732 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1928), pp.95, 158-161; Chapman J. Milling, Red Carolinians (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1940), pp.113-134; Douglas Letell Rights, The American Indians in North Carolina (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1947), pp.43-61.
19. Anthony F.C. Wallace, "The Tuscarora: Sixth Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy," American Philosophical Society, Proceedings, 93(1949), 159-165; "The Clearing and the Forest: The Two Worlds of the Tuscarora," Philadelphia Anthropological Society, Bulletin 3, No. 3(1950), 3-4; The Modal Personality Structure of the Tuscarora Indian. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 150(Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1952); and William D. Reyrburn, "Crossing the Ice: A Migration Legend of the Tuscarora Indians," International Journal of American Linguistics, 17(1951), 42-47.
20. David Landy, "Tuscarora Tribalism and National Identity," Ethnohistory, 5(1958), 250-284.
21. Barbara Graymont, "Problems of Tuscarora Language Survival," in Iroquois Culture, History and Prehistory, ed. Elizabeth Tooker (Albany: New York State Museum and Science Service, 1967), pp.27-28; "The Tuscarora New York Festival," New York History, 50(1969), 143-164.

22. Harold E. Driver, Indians of North America, 2nd ed. (Chicago:The University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp.302-304; Swanton, pp.641-654.
23. John Lawson, "A New Voyage to Carolina,:" in A New Collection of Voyages and Travels: With Historical Accounts of Discoveries and Conquests in all Parts of the World, ed. John Steven (London, 1709), II. Edition used hereafter: Lawson's History of North Carolina, ed. Frances Latham Harris (Richmond, Virginia:Garrett and Massie, 1937).
24. Vincent H. Todd, ed., Christoph Von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern (Raleigh:North Carolina Historical Commission, 1920). Hereafter cited as Graffenried.

## GENERAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Lawson in 1701 described Tuscarora territory between the Neuse and Pamlico Rivers as being "very thick of Indian Towns and Plantations " (p.60). This same type of settlement pattern was observed by Barnwell eleven years later. "Tho' this be called a town, it is only a plantation here and there scattered about the country, no where 5 houses together, and then 1/4 a mile such another and so on for several miles."<sup>1</sup> After capturing a Tuscarora who told him there were two routes "to the English settlements, one short road through the woods, the other a round about way thro' their Indian Settlements" (SCHGM, pp.36-38) they traveled the rest of that day and half of the next through these hamlets (SCHGM, p.38).

Graffenried describes the upper neutral Tuscarora village of Tasqui as being "fortified with palisades, . . . the houses or cabins were very artfully made of withes, mere pieces of bark, placed around in a circle or ring, so that a great fire was placed in the center [of the village ]" (p.272). This semi-spherical shaped structure was apparently a unique feature of the Tuscarora; other neighboring people built cabins with a center-ridged roof (Lawson, pp.58-59). Cabins were occupied by "several Families . . . though all related to one another" (Lawson, p.188). As with other Iroquoian peoples, the Tuscarora reckoned descent through females (Lawson, p.207), and a matrilineal residence pattern may have been reflected by the fact that related families lived together.

It is possible to estimate the size of these villages. The figures, however, may or may not have included people living in surrounding hamlets who affiliated themselves with a specific village center. Lawson in 1701 found five hundred such individuals in a winter hunting quarter (p.58).

In 1713 five neutral villages fled to Virginia to escape the attacks of the North and South Carolina forces.<sup>2</sup> Governor Spotswood sent out scouts who found them dispersed on the colony's frontier and estimated there were "upwards of 1500 of them (Men, Women and Children)."<sup>3</sup> One of these villages provided representatives to talk with Spotswood. According to them their village consisted of "ab't 100 men & a great many women & children" (VHM 19, p.272). From these figures a population of three to five hundred per village seems reasonable.

Estimates of military strength by contemporaries of this period are quite close to each other. Lawson suggested there were 1,200 fighting men and fifteen towns in 1708 (p.255). Barnwell, in the account of his march north from South Carolina in 1711-1712 to subdue the Tuscarora, thought "they can't be less than 1,200 or 1,400 men" (SCHGM, p.34). Governor Spotswood of Virginia writing in 1712 believed they had 2,000 warriors.<sup>4</sup> Tribal tradition recorded in 1825 by David Cusick for an earlier pre-contact period claimed, "The Tuscaroras were yet numerous and had twenty-four large towns, and probably could muster six thousand warriors."<sup>5</sup> This initially seems like an exaggeration; but, a statement by Lawson seems to make it possible. "The Small-Pox and Rum have made such a Destruction amongst them that, on good Grounds, I do believe, there is not the sixth Savage living within two hundred Miles of all our Settlements, as there were fifty Years ago" (p.238).

Computing total population from these estimates is only a step above guessing. Lawson wrote that warriors composed two fifths of the total excluding old men (p.255). Using 1,200 warriors as a base this would mean a population of 3,000, adding old men perhaps 3,250 at the most, with fifteen villages averaging two hundred or slightly more each.

Lawson's ratio appears high and a case could be made for a lower percentage. Hewitt suggests one warrior per four of total population (p.852) and this seems more realistic. Utilizing the one to four ratio with Lawson's estimates we have an average of three hundred and twenty per village or 4,800 total. While villages must have varied in size, the last average corresponds better with the observations made by Lawson at the hunting quarter and the figures available for the five neutral villages in Virginia. With currently available information, it is not possible to be more exact in this matter. It is not known which individuals were classed as warriors or what the significance was of Lawson's excluding old men from his figures. We have only one estimate of the total number of villages; and, it is impossible to know for sure that all hamlet dwellers identified themselves with a particular village center.

One thing is clear, however: a large percentage of the total population lived in these dispersed hamlets; and they must have worked primarily as agriculturalists. Barnwell reported that numerous fruit trees: apples, peaches and quinces were maintained by them (SCHGM, p.34), and within the three hundred and seventy-four houses they destroyed were found more than two thousand bushels of corn. Considering this was the 30th of January, many months after the harvest, and does not include what the inhabitants may have been able to hide or carry with them, it becomes obvious that these areas were the bread basket of each village.

Nearly everything we know about Tuscarora division of labor and differences in status comes from Lawson. While he spoke generally of the people living in eastern North Carolina without specific reference to the Tuscarora, it seems reasonable to apply this information to them. First of all he touches on several points in which tribes differed from

their neighbors, such as housing (p.58), types of mats (p.200), use of circumcision (p.223), and importance in trade (pp.238-239). Therefore, any major differences in the areas of status and role would probably have been mentioned by him. Secondly, much of this information is presented along with a description of the hunting quarter, which, as will be shown later, was an important characteristic part of the Tuscarora annual cycle, and further supports the contention that it applies to the Tuscarora. Finally, they were the most powerful and numerous tribe in the area (p.239) and it is only natural that they would provide Lawson with what he describes as the norm.

"The Indian Women's Work is to cook the Victuals for the whole Family, and to make Mats, Baskets, Girdles, of Possum-Hair, and such like. They never plant Corn amongst us . . ." (Lawson, p.199). Young men commonly worked in the fields during the agricultural season (Lawson, pp.184-185, 189), but their work as well as everyone else's varied somewhat throughout the year. When the fall and winter hunting season came the entire village moved to set up temporary quarters nearer to the game (Lawson, p.219). The women carried grain and other provisions, and were occupied with getting fire-wood and making baskets and mats (Lawson, p.220). Men who were poor hunters procured bark for the cabins, ran errands back to the town where the old people were left (Lawson, p.59), made bowls, dishes and spoons of gum-wood or tulip (Lawson, p.220) and some made clay tobacco pipes (Lawson, pp.220-221). The reed mats (Lawson, p.200) and these other goods were used in trade to acquire raw furs from their neighbors (Lawson, p.221) and therefore apparently no stigma was attached to being a poor hunter since there were plenty of other jobs to be done. Men who proved their prowess as hunters were expected to concentrate solely on

this activity (Lawson, p.220).

Young girls, commonly several together, beat the corn to be used in bread or soup with a large wooden mortar and pestles (Lawson, pp.219-220). During the appropriate seasons they helped the women gather nuts, wild fruit, and tubers (Graffenried, p.271; Lawson, p.220).

The streams and rivers cutting through their territory yielded an important diet supplement. Sturgeon and bass were taken by the men with snares and clubbed as they came upstream to spawn, and fish wiers were used to catch trout and other fresh water fish (Lawson, p.221).

Besides fishing and hunting, men were involved in warfare which sometimes took them far from home. Lawson was impressed by their ability to organize such distant expeditions that often split into several groups yet managed to meet at the head of previously unknown rivers five to seven hundred miles away (pp.216-217). Planning, organization and cooperation were all important for such endeavors. In the case of war parties, advice was sought from "the ancient Men of Conduct and Reason, that belong to their Nation; such as superannuated War-Captains, and those that have been counsellors for many years, and whose Advise has commonly succeeded very well" (Lawson, p.210). Then final plans of strategy were worked out by what may have been war chiefs (Lawson, pp.210-211).

The old men of the village were important sources of time-tested reason and caution. Lawson repeatedly refers to their important place in decision-making or ceremony (pp.185, 188, 189, 194-195, 196, 198, 206). Governor Spotswood wrote of the Tuscarora in July 1711 that "their old men . . . have the greatest sway in their counsels" (Spotswood I, p.96).

Status differentiation, to the extent it existed, was for the most part achieved. As Lawson expressed it:

Thus, he that is a good Warriour is the proudest Creature living; and he that is an expert Hunter, is esteemed by the People and himself; yet all these are Natural Vertues and Gifts, and the Possession of a Fool as a Wise-Man. Several of the Indians are possessed of a great Many Skins, Wampums, Ammunition, and what other things are esteemed Riches amongst them; yet such an Indian is no more esteemed amongst them than any other ordinary Fellow, provided he has no personal Endowments which are the Ornaments that must gain him an Esteem among them; for a great Dealer amongst the Indians, is no otherwise respected and esteemed than as a Man that strains his Wits and fatigues himself does with all his Pelf" (pp.208-209).

In spite of Lawson's mistaken idea that skill in hunting and warfare was completely an innate ability, the important feature to note here is their emphasis on more traditional values. Even though extensive trade for English goods had been going on for one to two generations little social status was gained by having capitalistic prowess. Principles of mutual aid and informal reciprocity were still important. "The Victuals is common throughout the whole Town; especially when they are in Hunting-Quarters, then they all fare alike, whichsoever of them kills the Game" (Lawson, p.188). The maintenance of these attitudes was important to the continued stability of the political system.

The basis for this stability can be seen in a number of areas. Lawson was amazed to find they never scolded their children, always treating them with tender indulgence (p.213). This was in contrast to the child-rearing techniques of physical punishment and deprivation that he later admitted were more familiar to him (p.258). Instead, the methods used were ones stressing responsibility to the family and village. The pressures were more "other-oriented."

As the child grew, the "others" included not only those related to him physically or socially of the village population, but also the unseen powers thought to be controlling his world. In other words, the entire interrelated sphere of belief system became important. Hudson has defined belief system as "a philosophy or theory, consisting of the major categories by means of which people factor out their universe the postulated causal agencies which explain what goes on in their universe, and the logic by means of which these general concepts and propositions explain particular occurrences."<sup>6</sup> Thus the ceremonies observed by Graffenried during his captivity (Graffenried, pp.267-268, 274) were not unimportant exercises but a necessary part of the warfare preparations. A hunter never ate of the first of any type of animal he killed (Lawson, p.222) to be sure that he would be able to kill another one. The first mouthful of every meal was often thrown into the fire,<sup>7</sup> probably in the same spirit. "They have thousands of these foolish ceremonies and beliefs, which they are strict Observers of . . . and to pretend to give a true Description of their Religion it is impossible" (Lawson, p.223).

How do these factors of other-orientation and a belief system inseparable from the consequences of daily life affect the realm of social control? Once again from Lawson we have several examples. The use of compensation with goods or services as opposed to death or imprisonment in a legal dispute was extremely common. There are many examples in the literature for this on the Tuscarora tribal level, between villages, and when an individual was killed by a colonist.<sup>8</sup> As we might expect, it was used within the village social system as well. "They have no Fence to part one anothers Lots in their Corn-Fields, but every Man knows his own, and it scarce ever happens that they rob one another of so much as an Ear

of Corn, which if any is found to do, he is sentenced by the Elders to work and plant for him that was robbed, till he is recompensed for all the Damage he has suffered in his Corn-Field; and this is punctually performed, and the Thief held in Disgrace that steals from any of his Country-Folks" (Lawson, p.189).

The Tuscarora belief system was an important link in the maintenance of authority. Lawson was present at the funeral of a Tuscarora man who had been killed by lightning. A shaman in charge of the ceremony proceeded to tell the people the tribal traditions about lightning and other related matters (Lawson, pp.225-226). "There was present at the same time an Indian that had lived from his Youth chiefly in an English house; so I called to him and told him what a Parcel of Lyes the Conjuror told, not doubting but he thought so as well as I, but I found to the contrary; for he replied, that I was much mistaken, for that old man . . . did never tell Lyes; and as for what he said, it was very true, for he knew it himself to be so" (Lawson, p.226). This is only one individual, but if any segment of the Tuscarora population had turned its back on traditional authority and belief system we would expect it to be such a person as this. Even though there are no equivalent records for an earlier period, sixty years of contact with colonists and many additions to material culture had little apparent effect in these areas.

Social control and status were intrinsically related. Status was achieved, for the most part, by the best hunters, warriors, and most successful shamans. Deference was given to them because of their service to the village. Their advice was usually good; their skill saved lives or provided food. They were interested in the welfare of the group and not in their own individual gain. Altruistic or at least balanced

reciprocity was the ideal. As a child grew up in such a social environment, an attitude of responsibility toward those around him was encouraged. He also learned what the Tuscarora belief system demanded of him to sustain the order of his world. Social control was supported by the approval or disapproval of the lineage, the village, and by the unseen powers of the universe, and not in obeisance to the personal power of one man. The authority of a group of elders or even a village chief, as will be shown later, was based on their ability to guide the people toward the achievement of common goals.

It is plausible that no missionary work taking place among the Tuscarora in North Carolina may have contributed significantly to the maintenance of the traditional systems of belief and authority. There was no formal, organized church in the colony until 1711, and that was without a full-time minister for many years afterward (Ashe, History of North Carolina, I, p.197).

We have seen the importance of different individuals and groups within Tuscarora social organization and the basis for their roles and authority. One person has been left out, the village chief. "The kings are really only the chiefs of a certain number of wild Indians, but still, it is hereditary and is passed on to posterity" (Graffenried, p.245). However, Graffenried was describing the men representing the different tribes and villages who had been defeated by Colonel Moore in March 1713,<sup>9</sup> so his statement is not solely in reference to the Tuscarora who may not have had hereditary chiefs. Indeed, Lawson in one of his many general statements wrote "the Succession falls not to the King's Son, but to his Sister's Son . . ." (p.207). This is what would be expected in a matrilineal descent system, but does not necessarily refer to the Tuscarora since it

also was common to other people living nearby (Swanton, p.654). At a meeting held with two great men of a Tuscarora village in 1713, a passing reference is made to "ye young king of ye same Town " (VHM 19, p.273). He was not engaged in the negotiations, but remained with the people of the village. With the emphasis placed on the wisdom of elders by the Tuscarora, a young man or boy in the position of village chief seems strange unless perhaps it was a hereditary office. One other temptingly vague bit of information that might pertain to the problem is found in a letter written by Governor Pollock in June 1713. The neutral villages had already fled their homes earlier in the year at which time, "Tom Blunt's wife and two of his children and his sister's son" (NCCR, II, p.50, underlining mine) had been captured. In the letter he was reporting their release. It is conceivable that the sister's son, who would have been present in the family under a matrilineal residence system, was the next heir and therefore kept with the chief's nuclear family. There is no suggestion that the position was hereditary to a particular clan with an individual elected to fill the office. This was the case in the nineteenth century but may have been adopted from the Five Nations after Tuscarora removal from North Carolina. Therefore, on the basis of this kind of data, some type of hereditary Tuscarora chief is only a reasonable possibility for pre-1714 political organization.

Several different functions were associated with the role of village chief. It will later be shown that he acted as a moderator in the village council, he may have sometimes been the village's representative to tribal and inter-tribal assemblies, and he acted as the voice of the people and host when strangers visited the village. Even when Graffenried and Lawson were prisoners, the Catechna Chief brought them food (Graffenried, p.265).

The village chief was in a general way involved with the daily activities of the people. On occasions he helped the shaman treat the sick (Lawson, pp.227, 59). He and the great men were consulted on the arrangement of marriages (Lawson, p.196), and were prominently involved in funerals (Lawson, p.192). There were no real privileges associated with the job, no special personal attendants or no spectacular housing. Hancock's lodging was described by Graffenried as a "hut two miles from the village" (p.266). He did have many responsibilities which were important to the maintenance of group pride, cohesion, and a smoothly operating political process.

The village chief was distinctly different from the great men who normally made up the tribal level councils. From Lawson's Tuscarora vocabulary we learn the word for "king" or village chief was /Teethha/ (p.244) as opposed to the later term for chief or great one used in the early nineteenth century /yaikowaununh/.<sup>10</sup> The Iroquoian-speaking Nottoway apparently had the same term for their "king" /Teerheer/ (allowing for difference due to a lack of careful, standard phonetic transcription) (EJ III, pp.366, 368). The Nottoway who remained in Virginia had dwindled to a remnant of twenty-seven by 1820 when a word list was elicited from their "Queen" (Gallatin, p.81). The word for "Queen" in their vocabulary was /e tesheh/ (Gallatin, p.321), the root -tesheh is very similar to the earlier forms recorded for the Tuscarora and Nottoway "king."

Governor Spotswood, writing in 1717, a few years after the dissolution of the Tuscarora in North Carolina, provides us with his own view of kingly status. "[T]he Chief Person of the Indian Nation is distinguish'd amongst themselves by the Title of King, Yet everyone knows that those Kings are of no great Consideration among the English, nor of much authority

among their own People, and as to the Nottoway Nation in particular. I will maintain there is not so great distinction between their Kings and their People as there is between a Corporal and the 'private' Centinels of a Company in regular Troops" (Spotswood II, p.200). This may be somewhat overstated but it places the village chief in a realistic light and it corresponds more closely to his actual position within the tribe as opposed to the inference one gets from early accounts describing them as kings and emperors. A number of these will be analyzed later; and it will be clear that such errors were due to the concepts of authority familiar to the Europeans (Miller, pp.271-289).

## CHAPTER 2 - Endnotes

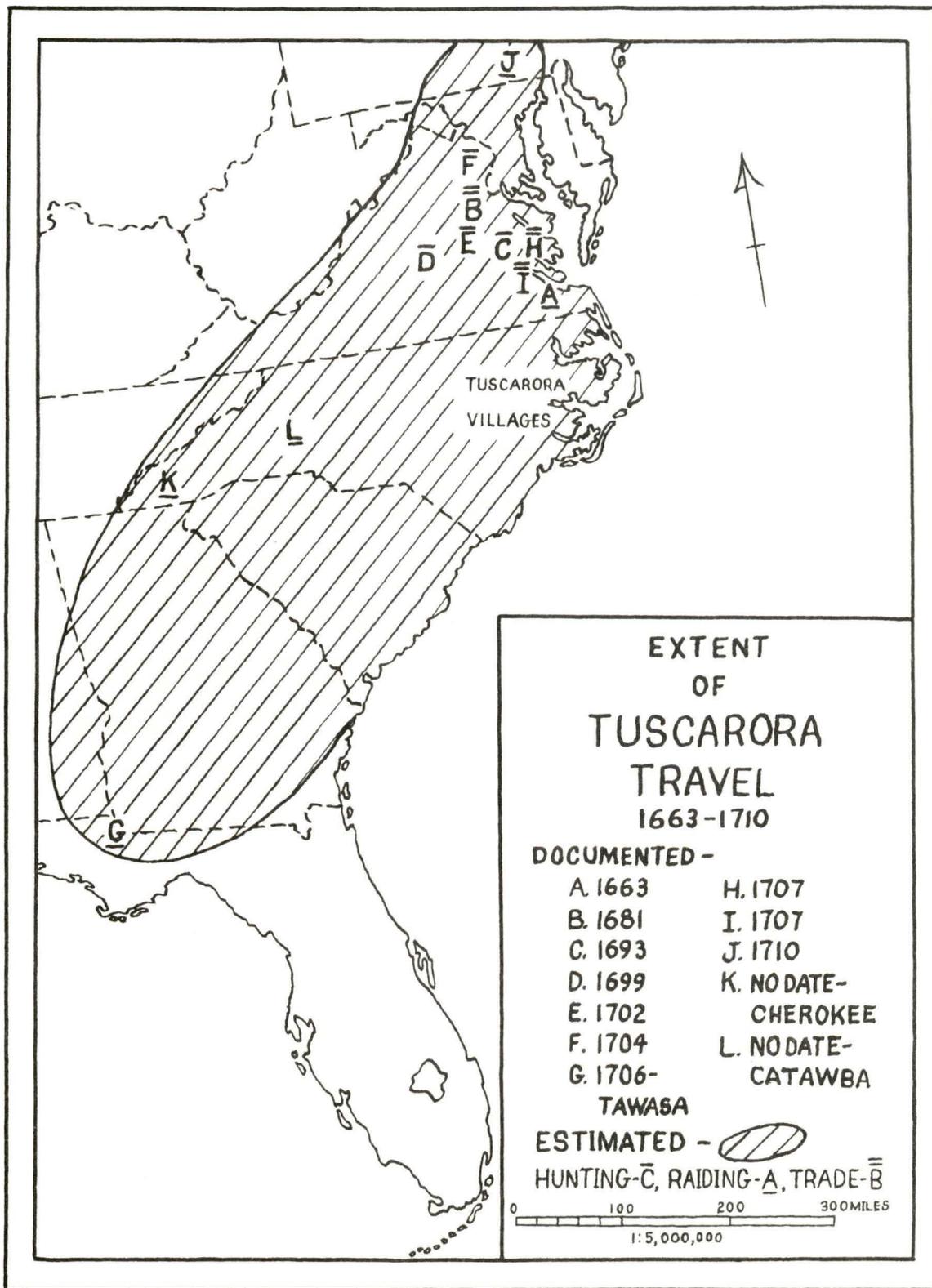
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## TERRITORY, TRAVEL, AND EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Tuscarora territorial concepts and various facets of intertribal relationships were intrinsically tied to their political process. For example when the Weanock traveled south from their village on the James River after 1645, they came to a place in Tuscarora territory on the Roanoke River called Chanoh. "After they had bene there a while the Tuscaroora demanded the reason of theyr comeing there upon theyr Land".<sup>1</sup> Two Tuscarora chiefs then sold them much of the region north of the Roanoke and west of the Chowan Rivers.<sup>2</sup> Apparently there was some type of clause in the contract, however, for during the next forty years the Weanock made several moves which took them north to the Nottoway and then back down to the territory they had purchased and the Tuscarora promptly attacked them, killing four of their people before they could get to the English for protection (VHM 8, p.5). The Tuscarora were prohibited from having any villages in this area by an undated seventeenth century treaty (probably in 1672).<sup>3</sup> This land may have therefore been viewed as a peripheral holding used for hunting and as a buffer zone between their villages and the inhabitants of Virginia. Such areas were obviously important to the Tuscarora whose villages moved to hunting quarters in the fall where they built temporary houses, staying until the beginning of the planting season in spring at which time they moved back to their village (Lawson, p.220). Each town's livelihood depended on the security of their main village, including outlying agricultural areas, and having a large enough hunting territory. During mid-winter 1701, John Lawson visited a Tuscarora hunting quarter on his trip from South Carolina. It was located northeast of the Eno (Neuse) River (p.56) several days travel time from the settlements of the Eno and Shakori (p.54). He said of his

visit "We got nothing amongst them but Corn, Flesh being not plentiful, by reason of the great Number of their People [500]. For though they are expert Hunters, yet they are too populous for one Range, which makes Venison very scarce to what it is amongst other Indians, that are fewer . . ." (p.59). The Tuscarora traveled long distances in search of game. In October 1693 the inhabitants of Henrico County, Virginia (environs of present day Richmond) formerly petitioned the House of Burgesses to prohibit the Tuscarora from hunting around their plantations and in their woods.<sup>4</sup> Six years later on May 2, 1699, after what must have been a bad hunting season, the Nottoway complained the "Tuskaruroes often come into the upper partes of the Country, about Appamattox [see Map 3,D], amongst the English, who furnish them with aarms and Power & shott, which enable them to hunt upon and burn up all their [Nottoway] grounds, whereby their game is Destroyed and their hunting spoyled" (CVSP I, p.65). This probably refers to their use of fire drives as a means of getting game. "Thus they go and fire the Woods for many Miles, and drive the Deer and other Game into small Necks of Land and Isthmuses where they kill and destroy what they please. . . . Here it is that they get their Complement of Deer-Skins and Furs to trade with the English" (Lawson, p.219). In late October 1702, the Nottoway complained again this time with the Pamunkey and Chickahominy "that the Tuscorurs Indians come in great bodies into this Country to hunt where by the game w<sup>ch</sup> is their chief Support is destroyed . . ." <sup>5</sup>

Trade with the colonists depended on finding game. Deer skins were most highly in demand by traders in this area (Crane, Southern Frontier, p.111). When deer were not available nearby, they were found elsewhere. At least some Tuscarora villages had been actively engaged in economic



Map 3

dealings with colonists since the 1650's.<sup>6</sup> In 1670 John Lederer described Katearas, a Tuscarora town he visited, as "a place of great Indian trade and commerce,"<sup>7</sup> and in 1681 Tuscarora and Occaneechi were actively trading in Virginia at a fort on the Rappahannock River (see Map 3,B) near present day Fredericksburg.<sup>8</sup> By 1691 enterprising traders had traveled deep into Tuscarora territory, and William Byrd I of Virginia gives us a hint as to how big the business had become. Writing to Stephanus van Cortlandt of New York he asked for all the wampum he could send him, two thirds black and the rest white for which he would pay him by return ship, and then goes on to explain the difficulties of retrieving two escaped Indian slaves due to a market overly flooded with English goods. "I understand they were in the farthest part of the Tuskerora Country, abt 300 miles fro' hence [James River] I shall Send that way Some time this moneth, I have ingaged my traders (if possible wth any reasonable charge to redeem), wch they have promised to doe . . . Black wampum would oblige Indians more than anything, wch wee want. However hope to retrieve them, thought twill be Something dearer English Goods being plenty amongst those Indians."<sup>9</sup> As important as secure hunting territories were for the maintenance of their role in colonial trade, it is not surprising to find they jealously guarded their lands.

Lawson as Surveyor-General was of course interested in areas yet undiscovered, and he found the Indians extremely able to draw maps for him. "But you must be very much in their Favor, otherwise they will never make these Discoveries to you, especially if it be in their own Quarters" (Lawson, p.217). As the North Carolina colonial settlements expanded often with little regard for the rights of the Indians, resentment and mistrust grew. As an indication of these feelings, the first question asked of

Graffenried and Lawson during the trial at Catechna was the reason for their traveling up the Neuse, through their territory without going first to clear it with the chief (Graffenried, p.266). From what we know about the control of power, and the importance of these lands in the social systems of the Tuscarora, we can safely conclude two things: (1) these territories were well defined and (2) were probably controlled by village and lineage authority.

Inter-tribal relations were extremely important to the Tuscarora but can not be properly understood separate from the tribal organization. Tuscarora traditional history says they were a confederacy of three tribes (Cusick, p.35). Hewitt lists these as "Kă 'tě 'nu' ā kā; i.e. 'People of the Submerged Pine-tree'; the second A' kawěntcākā (meaning doubtful); and the third, Skarūrě, 'Hemp-Gatherers'" ("Tuscarora"; p.842), this last being the origin of what is today rendered "Tuscarora." It is not clear who these tribes were in terms of our system of group names based on information recorded by explorers and settlers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1888, twenty individuals who still identified themselves as A' kawěntcākā lived on the New York reservation near Sanborn but were "not regarded as true Tuscarora."<sup>10</sup>

Villages carried on many activities as autonomous units. At other times the framework existed for a group of villages to join together for common purposes, but the organization was not as binding (by comparison to village unity) and could be disclaimed. Also, at least in the beginning of the eighteenth century, these alliances included several non-Tuscarora villages. This was especially true of a number of more southwestern Tuscarora towns near the Neuse River and its tributaries. In 1703, war was declared by the Carolina government against the Coree.<sup>11</sup> No other details

are known about reasons or results except that their villages were excluded from all English trade in August of that same year (NCSR XXII, p.734). When Barnwell decided to build a fort in 1712 he chose the site of the Coree town which was farther north and west, closer to Tuscarora villages than their earlier settlements were (SCHGM, p.49).

In February 1704, a group of fearful settlers living near the Tuscarora wrote to the North Carolina Council asking that an interpreter be sent to help them approach the local villages for a peace agreement. "That wee have great reason to believe yt [that] ye [the]neighbouring towns of ye Tuscororah Indians are of late dissatisfied with ye Inhabitants of this place and several actions and discourses of ye bare-river Indians and more than ordinary familiarly of late yt is between them and ye Tuscaroras Indians is to believe yt they are Indeavoring to perswade them yt ye English here desires a war against them" (NCHGR 2, p.194). The Woccon, living less than ten miles from at least one Tuscarora village (Lawson, p.251), may have been refugees from South Carolina. Linguistically affiliated with Catawba and other Siouan dialects, their history prior to 1700 is unknown. Certainly their population of nearly five hundred made the growing white settlements that much more of a threat (Lawson, p.255).

The Coree, Bear River, Machapunga, Neusiok, Woccon and other groups were allied with the Tuscarora of Catechna and several other villages. All of these people were threatened by colonial expansion and unhappy with the kind of treatment they received from the settlers (Graffenried, p.265). This alliance was clearly stronger than the Tuscarora tribal organization. The eight towns which later remained neutral had no representatives at the trials of Graffenried and Lawson. It was following the second trial and several days after their capture that messengers were sent to these

other towns to find out their positions in the matter (Graffenried, p.269). No joint council of a complete tribal nature was held on the explosive situation. Only after Spotwood's letter demanding Graffenried's release (two weeks later) was any formal contact made with the neutral villages. This took place in the council at Tasqui, but even then only four deputies were sent who could do nothing but listen to their proposals and take the information back to the Catechna council chiefs (Graffenried, pp.270-273).

The eight neutral Tuscarora villages had a relatively strong tribal level organization, but it understandably buckled beneath the weight of events from 1711 to 1714. At the beginning of this period, however, Graffenried describes them as powerful opportunists. "There were seven [in all other references eight] villages of the Tuscarora Nation, which very much wanted to pretend that they had nothing to do with this Indian war and massacre, and for this reason had no understanding with the other Indians. These were somewhat farther distant, more beyond [toward] Virginia, and are loyal yet, keeping their loyalty on the account of trade, these seven towns or villages hold the others in this region in certain bounds and submission" (Graffenried, p.276). The indication is that they had the most to lose in a war and two points of the treaty they made with Virginia on 9 December 1711 confirms this. "That on the part of this Government . . . assurance be given them that upon their performance of their engagements to this Government, a peace shall be concluded with them, and a free trade again opened between this Colony and their towns, and likewise that according to their desire this Government will interpose that no unjust Encroachments be made upon their Lands by the Inhabitants of North Carolina" (EJ III, p.294).

These eight villages also had alliances with nearby non-Tuscarora peoples, among the the "Shachoes [Shakori] and Chickahaws [probably Chickahominy and not Chickasaw]" (EJ III, p.294). These relationships were important for trade to provide an early warning system against approaching enemies, and as friendly stopping places when traveling or hunting.

Lawson in 1701 met with two Tuscarora who "were going among the Shoccores and Achonechy [Occaneechi] Indians to sell their Wooden Bowls and Ladles for Raw Skins, which they make great Advantage of, hating that any of these Westward Indians should have any Commerce with the English which would prove a Hinderance to their Gains" (p.57). Later he describes how when rum was introduced as a trade item it was carried in small barrels, primarily by the Tuscarora, along these same routes to their neighbors farther west (p.238). These trade agreements were an important part of the Tuscarora economic sphere which included division of labor (by age, sex, and hunting ability) and production (agricultural, skins, wooden and fiber trade goods). Economic success was firmly tied to territorial security and both of these were ensured to a considerable extent by a political organization functioning well enough to keep the system going internally, at the same time maintaining external relationships. This system was necessarily a dynamic one, constantly adapting to new pressures. Certainly when trade with the colonists began around 1650, all of these areas were affected, and to some extent tribal migrations, colonial expansion, the addition of rum as a trade good and a myriad of other things that followed for which we have no records were also important factors in determining the state of Tuscarora tribal organization in 1711.

Some information exists to illustrate these changes. The Shakori who were allies of the neutral eight towns in 1711 were their ardent enemies

in 1654.<sup>12</sup> Lawson wrote in 1709 that the "Iroquois or Sinnagars, are the most Warlike Indians that we know of, being always at war . . . [refusing] to live peaceably with the Tuskeruros" (p.210). Two years later they were allied with a patchwork confederacy which included several Tuscarora villages. These realignments correspond to the directions taken by the two major segments of the Tuscarora that seemed to exist in 1711. The historical records do not provide enough information to outline tribal organization and inter-tribal relations prior to 1690. However, after this time sub-tribal multi-village polarization resulted primarily from the by-products of colonialization. This was not fragmentation or factionalism because, as it will be shown later in greater detail, the village was the primary political unit.

Largely from later oral tradition we know the Catawba, Cherokee and Powhatan Confederacy were long standing enemies of the Tuscarora.<sup>13</sup> There is one interesting report that the Tuscarora also raided a number of Tawasa villages in 1706. The account of it came from a prisoner taken by them who was later sold to the Shawnee.<sup>14</sup> Certainly Map 3, which has the distribution of documented long-range travel by the Tuscarora, shows the importance of such activity.<sup>15</sup> These incidents of travel for hunting and warfare are hardly representative of the extent that it must have taken place. Since interaction with closer neighbors was even more common, it would be useful to know something about the political organization of all those groups with whom we know the Tuscarora came in contact. This is no easy task. A number of classifications into culture or sub-culture areas has been suggested to clarify differences in southeastern United States cultures; but, each author has admitted the difficulty of this due to a general lack of information.<sup>16</sup> Hopefully the detailed study of documents

by ethnohistorians and future archaeological work will bring our picture of the late prehistoric and early historic Virginia-Carolina area into better focus.

The Powhatan Confederacy is usually described to have had the most hierarchical social organization. The "political units were true tribes and the rulers had absolute authority, including the power of life and death over their subjects" (Driver, p.344). These tribes, however, were for the most part small. Total population has been estimated at 8,000 by Mook and 9,000 by Mooney.<sup>17</sup> There were thirty tribes in the confederacy resulting in an average of about three hundred or less for each of them. A few, notably the Pamunkey, were much larger than the others (ca. 1,000) (Mook, "Tidewater Population," p.201). The pyramidal organization was itself apparently recent. "[I]t is clear from the early narratives that the so-called Powhatan 'confederacy' was an empire, rather than an alliance or confederacy, and that it was established by conquest within the memory of those natives with whom the Jamestown colonists first came into contact" (Mook, "Tidewater Population," p.199). The confederacy was short-lived. After two uprisings under Opechancanough, from 1622 to 1636 and 1644 to 1645, they were placed on reservations and became tributaries of the Virginia government (Swanton, p.153).

The Nottoway and Meherrin lived south of the James River around the present-day boundary between Virginia and North Carolina. They spoke an Iroquoian dialect similar to that of the Tuscarora, but as ethnic identities were never as large or powerful. In 1708, they each occupied one village and their combined population was probably no more than four hundred (Lawson, p.255). On the basis of mid-seventeenth century accounts of them Binford has suggested: "[The] Nottoway and Meherrin were societies

politically organized into territorial units not exceeding the local community. There were no customary mechanisms for the ultimate settlement of disputes which transcended the organization at the community level . . . Leadership was at the community level and status was weakly developed with respect to high status differential access to goods and services" (pp.140-141). Here again we find small, one or two village tribes, this time with a social organization similar to what we have seen for the Tuscarora villages.

Bordering the Tuscarora immediately to the west were a number of what have been classed as Siouan speaking people.<sup>18</sup> The dialects seem to have been both mutually unintelligible and very numerous (Lawson, p.239). As Coe has noted,"[t]his variety of languages observed at one point can serve only as an index to the complex nature of the aboriginal occupation; it does not identify cultures! There is no necessary relationship between the language a people spoke and the other elements of their culture. Some of these tribes with different speech participated in the same basic culture while some of those sharing a common language varied considerably in their cultural expression."<sup>19</sup> Such variation among the Siouan tribes is expressed in the differences in political organization which Lawson found among them in 1701. "The Santee King . . . is the most absolute Indian Ruler in these Parts . . . He can put any of his People to Death that hath committed any Fault which he judges worthy so great a Punishment. This Authority is rarely found amongst these Savages . . ." (Lawson, p.16). Shortly thereafter he spent several days at one of the two Waxhaw villages and observed a very different governmental system. The village chief is hardly mentioned and there was a special building in which all affairs of government were conducted. "In this Theatre, the most Aged and Wisest

meet, determining what to Act, and what may be most Convenient to Omit" (Lawson, p.33). It is interesting that while the council was important for the Waxhaw as it was for the Tuscarora, the physical details differed. The Tuscarora council met outside in the open and the Waxhaw in a special building made for that purpose. Lawson mentions each of the numerous towns of the Catawba had a "State-House" also, but the Saponi and other tribes he visited did not have them (p.37).

The Catawba were generally agreed to have been the largest of these Siouan tribes (Swanton, p.104). Many others were small, single village groups at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Totero, Saponi, and Keyauwee were planning on moving together in one village for mutual assistance and protection from their enemies when Lawson visited them in 1701 (p.45). Several years later he numbered them plus the Occaneechi and Shakori at about seven hundred and fifty men, women and children.

Coastal Algonquian people lived along the shores and sounds of the Atlantic coast. A number of these, the Chowan, Weapemeoc, Croatoan, Secotan, Roanoac, Pamouik, and Moratuc, were contacted by the Raleigh explorers from 1584 to 1590. Although little can be said about their level of social organization, apparently each had a "tribal-like" structure involving a "King" whose realm included several villages.<sup>20</sup> This may have been a fictional organization which as we have seen can be expected from these early writers who had brief contacts with the Indians and tended to describe things in terms of their own concepts of authority. One hundred years later the Weapemeoc territory was occupied by a number of small groups, the Yeopim, Pasquotank, Perquiman and Poteskeet (Swanton, p.206). The Chowan occupied one village with a population of two hundred and forty (Swanton, p.124). The areas of the Secotan and Pomouik were

populated by single independent villages, the Machapunga (village of Mat-tamuskeet) (Lawson, p.255), and the Bear River Indians (village of Randanquaquank) (Lawson, p.255).

The Coree and Neusiok were placed on maps of the Raleigh explorers around the mouth of the Neuse River. They are of unknown linguistic affiliation (Hoffman, p.37) but culturally were probably similar to other coastal people. All of these groups were living in one or two villages by 1700. They had no apparent pan-village organization. A colonial trader, William Gale said of them in 1703: "They live in small Towns, and barke cabbins, pallisado'd in w'th 2 or 3 rows of Stakes, every Town or nation hes its perticular King & different language . . . Ye nations I am as yett acquainted with are, the Portes [Poteskeets], Leites [?], Nazimumbes [Nansemond], Choans [Chowan], Maherins, Pampticoughs, Bay Rivers, Marchi-pooongs [Machapunga], News Rivers [Neusiok], Cores, Corrennines [village of Coree, Lawson, p.255], Connamocksocks w'th all w'ch (ye Cores & Corennines excepted) & ye Tuscaroorays, have verry Free commerce w'th" (NCSR XXII, p.754).

These coastal inhabitants were the first native people of North Carolina challenged by colonial expansion; they had offered no unified front of opposition. This remained true until the outbreak of a number of them with several Tuscarora villages in 1711.

While the Tuscarora traveled nearly to the Gulf of Mexico (Tawasa villages) and the North Carolina-Tennessee Mountains (Cherokee); these were primarily war expeditions. The extent to which the people they contacted were important models for political process and structure is conjectural. Even if we did decide that it would be important, very little is known about the pre-1700 social organization of these groups who made

up the famous confederacies of the Southeast during the nineteenth century (Swanton, p.646). It has been suggested that towns, often stretching along streams or trails with interspersed farmlands, were politically independent competing more often in ceremonialized games than in warfare with others close to them.<sup>21</sup>

This general picture of the southeast, and more specifically what we have seen in detail for the Tuscarora and their immediate neighbors, supports a proposition made by Kroeber. "[M]ore often than not in native North America the land-owning and sovereign political society was not what we usually call 'the tribe,' but smaller units" (Kroeber, "Land-Holding Group," p.303). He goes on to say that what are referred to as tribes were often small nationalities with the actual important political bodies being "bands" or "villages" (p.303). At times these "nationalities" were located in single settlements and others, the Tuscarora a case in point, were much larger. Lawson noted these features characteristic to specific groups as he traveled from South Carolina through the territory of what we usually call the Siouan tribes. "Although their Tribes or Nations border one upon another, yet you may discern as great an Alteration in their Features and Dispositions, as you can in their Speech which generally proves quite different from each other, though their Nations be not above ten or twenty Miles in Distance" (Lawson, p.25). Indeed, it was undoubtedly such differences along with defined territories and political alignments which made the tribal designations used and recorded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries meaningful. Ethnic stereotypes, derogatory or otherwise, seem to have also been the basis of some names. Nottoway, for example, was a term meaning "adder" in Algonquian dialects (Mooney, "Nottoway," p.87) which has remained as that people's appellation when in

fact they called themselves Cherohakoh (Gallatin, p.82). Tuscarora, as was shown, means "hemp-gatherers" and may have been a descriptive term applied to them as an important characteristic activity.

Bringing this discussion of tribal or national identity back into a proper time perspective, we must remember the effects of colonial contacts. The "importance of ethnic and cultural cohesion of Southeastern confederations probably has been exaggerated. Once European influence began to be felt within the Indian societies . . . political and military cohesive factors became much more significant than ethnic considerations."<sup>22</sup> We need to look next at the Tuscarora from 1650 to 1713 to determine their political structure in detail and to see how this functioned under these pressures.

## Chapter 3 - Endnotes

1. William G. Stanard, ed., "The Indians of Southern Virginia, 1650-1711. Depositions in the Virginia and North Carolina Boundary Case," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 7(1900), 350. Hereafter cited as VHM 7.
2. VHM 7, p.350; William G. Stanard, ed., "The Indians of Southern Virginia, 1650-1711. Depositions in the Virginia and North Carolina Boundary Case, Conclusion," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 8(1901), 7. Hereafter cited as VHM 8.
3. J.R.B. Hathaway, ed., "Articles of Peace with the Tuscarora Indians," North Carolina Historical and Genealogical Register, 2(1901), 218-219.
4. H.R. McIlwaine, ed., Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1659/60-1693, II (Richmond:The Virginia State Library, 1914), p.454. Hereafter cited as JHB II.
5. H.R. McIlwaine, ed., Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia, II (Richmond:The Virginia State Library, 1927), p.275. Hereafter cited as EJ II.
6. Clarence Walworth Alvord and Lee Bidgood, eds., "The Discovery of New Brittain," in First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians 1650-1674 (Cleveland:The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1912), pp.105.
7. Clarence Walworth Alvord and Lee Bidgood, eds., "Discoveries of John Lederer" in First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by the Virginians 1650-1674 (Cleveland:The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1912), p.162. Hereafter cited as Lederer.
8. Fairfax Harrison, "Western Explorations in Virginia Between Lederer and Spotswood," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 30 (1922), 326.
9. William G. Stanard, ed., "Letters of William Byrd, First," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, 28(1920), 23.
10. J.N.B. Hewitt, "Akawentcaka," Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, I (Washington, D.C.:Government Printing Office, 1907), p.33.
11. J.R.B. Hathaway, ed., "Relating to the Indians, 1703," North Carolina Historical and Genealogical Register, 2(1901), 204. Hereafter cited as NCHGR 2.
12. Alexander Salley, ed., "Francis Yeardley's Narrative of Excursions into Carolina, 1654," Narratives of Early Carolina 1650-1708 (New York:Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), pp.27-28. Hereafter cited as Yeardley's Narrative.

13. James Mooney, Myths of the Cherokee, Smithsonian Institution, Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology 1897-1898, pt. 1 (Washington, D.C.:Government Printing Office, 1900), p.379; Frank Speck, Catawba Texts (New York:Columbia University Press, 1934), p.28.
14. David I. Bushnell, "The Account of Lamhatty," American Anthropologist, 10 (1908), 568-574; CVSP I, p.118.
15. Map 3 of extent of travel is indebted to the following sources listed by dates as they are plotted: A. 1663, JHB II, p.23; B. 1681, VHM 30, p.326; C. 1693, JHB II, p.454; D. 1699, CVSP I, p.65; E. 1702, EJ II, p.275; F. 1704, H. R. McIlwaine, ed., Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1702/3-1712, III (Richmond:The Virginia State Library, 1912), p.54. Hereafter cited as JHB III, EJ II, p.380; G. 1706, CVSP I, p.118; H. 1707, CVSP I, p.113, EJ III, p.147; I. 1707, CVSP I, p.117, EJ III, pp. 147-166; J. 1710, Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, II (Philadelphia:Published by the State, 1852), pp.511-512; K. N.D., Mooney, Myths of the Cherokee, p.379; L. N.D. Speck, Catawba Texts, p.28.
16. Driver, Indians of North America, p.302; A. L. Kroeber, Culture and the Natural Areas of Native North America (1939; rpt. Berkeley:University of California Press, 1947), p.95; Swanton, pp.812-813.
17. Maurice A. Mook, "The Aboriginal Population of Tidewater Virginia," American Anthropologist, 46 (1944), 193-195.
18. William C. Sturtevant, "Siouan Languages in the East," American Anthropologist, 60 (1958), 738-743.
19. Joffre Lanning Coe, "The Cultural Sequence of the Carolina Piedmont" in Archaeology of Eastern United States, ed., James B. Griffin (Chicago:The University of Chicago Press, 1952), p.301.
20. Bernard Hoffman, "Ancient Tribes Revisited: A Summary of Indian Distribution and Movement in the Northeastern United States from 1534 to 1779. Parts I-III," Ethnohistory, 14 (1967), 27-30.
21. A. L. Kroeber, "Nature of the Land-Holding Group," Ethnohistory, 2 (1955), 305.
22. John T. Juricek, "The Westo Indians," Ethnohistory, 13 (1966), 160-161.

## POLITICAL PROCESS AND STRUCTURE 1650 to 1713

From the evidence available, the council clearly emerges as the most important governing or decision-making unit of the Tuscarora from 1711 to 1714. This governmental body existed on two levels, the village council and the tribal or inter-tribal council. Unfortunately the only first-hand accounts of these come from Graffenried. After his initial captivity, probably on September 11, 1711, he and Lawson were taken to Catechna. They were brought before "king" Hancock, the town chief, with his council. Nothing transpired except a short report by the leader of the party that brought them. The next morning the village council formally met. "Toward ten o'clock there came a savage here, another there out of his hut; council was held, and it was disputed vigorously whether we should be bound as criminals or not. It was decided no, because we had not been heard yet" (Graffenried, pp.264-265). Graffenried's limited understanding of the Tuscarora language makes us doubt his thorough comprehension of what was discussed by the council, but this brief description is interesting because it suggests the council's importance in decision-making at the village level. While the identity of the council members is unclear, their coming from a number of different houses gives the impression they were from as many different families representing their particular lineages. Lawson, while not specifically in reference to the Tuscarora, lists as council members "King . . . War-Captains, and Councilors . . ." (p.206).

A further clue is added from the proceedings of a meeting with representatives of the Tuscarora town of Raroucaithe, the members of which had fled with five other villages to the western frontiers of Virginia to escape the Indian army led by Colonel Moore from South Carolina in 1713

(VHM 19, p.272). The following excerpts give the flavor of the exchange:

We are sent by the Town to hear what the Gov'r says or has to propose & upon their return, their Great men will come in to conclude . . .

Do they desire to live in ye same manner as our Tributarys do, and what do they mean by this proposal. They cannot answer it without consulting their Town-- they may tell lyes and their people may be offended with them & not stand to their offers.

Why do they rather desire to live here than to return to their old Settlem'ts in North Carolina. They can't say till they know it from their people . . .  
(VHM, 19, p.274).

Certainly these individuals were under a great deal of stress. Throughout the account they emphasized the willingness of their people to agree to what was proposed to them, but their authority was limited solely to getting this information and taking it back to be discussed by the village. For a decision this major, the views of the people were of prime importance and if a council made the final choice, it clearly had to be a representative one. Normally, a village did not negotiate such treaties individually, so the above quote provides an example of village polity in this type of situation.

Graffenried's description of the Catechna council includes no details about how the proceedings were carried on, except to say they "disputed vigorously" (Graffenried, p.265); nor does he say anything concerning where the council was held.

Elsewhere Graffenried gives an account of a Neusiok village council, at which time he negotiated the purchase of their town for the future site of New Bern. "The kinglet . . . came with seventeen fathers of families. They went out into an open field and placed themselves in a circle on the ground . . . After having represented my reasons to them, they also told

their own, and . . . came to an agreement" (Graffenried, p.374). While this was not a Tuscarora council, it sounds similar to what might be expected on the basis of the scant information available. Also, it corresponds to the known format followed by the Tuscarora in tribal and inter-tribal councils to be discussed next, the latter of which the Neusiok were part.

Information about councils above the village level is more complete. The day after Lawson and Graffenried were captured, the Catechna village council met in the morning, but at night, what appears to have been an inter-tribal council assembled. "[F]rom all the villages [came] a great number of Indians with the neighboring kings, upon a fine, broad, open space, especially prepared for the festivities or executions. And there was appointed an assembly of the chiefs as they call them, consisting of the most prudent, sitting after their fashion in a ring around a great fire. King Hancock presided. There was a place left in the ring for us, where were two mats, that is to say pieces of wickerwork woven of small canes or reeds, laid down to sit on, which is a sign of great deference and honor " (Graffenried, p.265). In another version Graffenried writes: "The 'Assembly of the Great', as they style it, (consisting of 40 elders sitting on the ground around a fire according to their custom) took place at ten o'clock at night."<sup>1</sup> The Woccon, Neusiok, Coree and at least one other village of Tuscarora (Harooka) all lived near enough to Catechna to have been present for this assembly (see Map 2), and they are known to have been included with those who were part of the hostilities (Graffenried, p.270; NCCR I, p.875). Some of the evening arrivals may have been from the outlying agricultural areas of the village.

The proceedings continued after the prisoners were seated with their

Indian interpreter. "The king gave a sign to the orator of the assembly, who made a long speech with much gravity. And it was ordered that one of the youngest of the assembly should represent and defend the interests of the council or of the Indian nation . . . The king always formed the question, and then it was debated pro et contra. Immediately after that came a consultation and decision" (Graffenried, pp.265-266). Graffenried claimed they were to be released until Lawson argued with the Chief of the Coree town the next day. Supposedly this resulted in their being condemned to death and the initial organization of plans for war (Graffenried, pp.266-268, 270). Graffenried admits that he pleaded for his life "with the offer of my services and all sorts of favors if I were liberated" (Graffenried, p.269), and at sometime during his six week captivity made a treaty to confirm his own neutrality and that of his colony (Graffenried, p.271). That Graffenried was spared and Lawson killed is known, but the excuses and justification of the former are not important to the problem at hand. It can only be hoped he did not fabricate most of the material we must rely so heavily on for many details of Tuscarora political organization.

Governor Spotswood, hearing from a trader that Graffenried was in captivity, sent a letter on October 7, 1711 demanding his release (Graffenried, p.282). It was read to the "chiefs of the villages . . . [who then] had a council, and it was decided to let me go to the village among the Tuscaroras where the Indian trader from Virginia was" (Graffenried, p.272). He was taken by four guards to the town of Tasqui where representatives from the majority of the Tuscarora villages, which continued to remain neutral (Graffenried, p.270), were meeting in a circle around the central village fire.

The council which consisted of the chiefs of the Tuscarora Nation was sitting around on the ground. There was a place left for me and a place for the Indian trader above and the Indians who came with me . . . The orator of the assembly began a long speech and asked the four Indians who came with me what was the cause of my detention and my crime. After a hearing, I was found and declared innocent, and it was decided to comply with the desires of the Governor of Virginia . . . [T]he four Indians of Catechna would not agree to that . . . pretending that they dare not do it without the consent of the other kings and chiefs, yet promising to let me loose as soon as the king and council should be together (Graffenried, pp.272-273).

Graffenried was finally released and the information above was part of his report to North Carolina Governor Hyde. Fortunately, other accounts exist which can be used as a basis for cross-validation of some of the material. These are records which include the paraphrased statements of different delegations that met with Virginia officials several times from October 1711 to February 1714. All of the Tuscarora villages involved were for the most part neutral during the war, in spite of their outward agreeableness to help the colonists. On October 15, 1711, Spotswood met with five Tuscarora great men who were acting as representatives for these eight neutral villages but were authorized only to hear the governor's proposals and then would have to consult each town (Spotswood I, p.121; NCCR I, p.815). In compliance to demands made at that meeting, three individuals went to Williamsburg to speak to the Virginia Council on December 8, 1711 with "full power from the [eight towns] . . . to treat and agree with this Governm<sup>t</sup> upon the terms proposed by the Governor" (EJ III, pp.294-295). Later it was revealed that this unanimity was not as complete as it appeared to be. In March 1712, fourteen Tuscarora informed the House of Burgesses that "they did not intend to perform any of their Engagements

in the Treaty made with them in December preceding" (JHB III p.15). In a second attempt to establish peace with Virginia, "four of the Great men of the Tuscaruro Nation . . . attended the Governor in Council and by their Interpreter represented . . . that what engagements were heretofore entered into by the persons who came hither last December was without any authority from their Rulers and never communicated to them: but that they are now ready to send persons fully impowered to conclude a peace. . . they would not promise further than they had been directed by the rest of their Great men" (EJ III, p.320).

At about this same time, a clear example of the village authority within the tribal context is reported in an exchange between Tom Blunt and North Carolina Governor Pollock. Blunt, the village chief (NCCR II, p.25) of Ucouhnerunt, one of the eight neutral towns, was trying to establish himself with the governor. In May 1712, he brought in a number of stolen horses. He spent four days in September giving Pollock intelligence reports on the strength and provisions of the hostile Indians. Early in October, Blunt asked for the reopening of trade, which was denied by Pollock, but the Governor did agree to give him ammunition if he would bring in twelve hostages from each town. Pollock went on to explain "only for his own town we would desire no hostages, for the trust that we put in him, of which proposal he seemed pretty well satisfied, and was sure, he said of four of their towns that would agree with [us], and he believed all would; only he would go home, and conclude with the rest" (NCCR I, p.880).

During the next year, most of the people of these neutral Tuscarora villages fled to Virginia (CVSP I, p.165). By September 1713, their numbers were swelled and they were being accused of harassing the frontier

settlements (Spotswood II, p.34). Governor Spotswood finally established contact with them in November. Fifty tributary Indians of Virginia led by two traders "found them dispers'd in small partys upon the head of Roanoke [River], and about the Mountains in very miserable condition, without any habitation or provision of Corne for their Subsistence, but living like wild beasts on what ye Woods afforded, in dispair whether to return to their old Settlements in No. Carolina and run the risque of being knock'd in the head by the English and So. Carolina Indians or to submit themselves to ye Senecas, who had made them large offers of Assistance to revenge themselves on the English, upon condition of incorporating with them" (Spotswood II, p.42). One hundred and sixty of the men present were consulted briefly and they agreed to send in two representatives to hear what the terms for peace would be. These men "desir'd leave for all their Great men to come and treat w'th me" (Spotswood II, p.42). This was agreed to and over 1,500 Tuscarora men, women and children moved in closer to the Virginia settlements in anticipation of the treaty and some sort of hoped-for normalcy.

It was during this time that the exchange with the great men of the village Raroucarthee, described earlier, took place. Some degree of pan-village or sub-tribal cohesion was maintained. In February 1714, three men representing four of the eight villages "attended the Governor & Council, declaring that upon the Return of their Great men sent hither in December . . . the Indians of the Late Tuscaruro Towns, . . . had sent them the s<sup>d</sup> Deputies humbly to beg that a peace may be granted them" (EJ III, p.365).

Clearly authority was at the village level from 1711 to 1714, but it could be argued that this was due to a breakdown in tribal level political

organization at the outset of the war. Early brief accounts of the Tuscarora do not shed much light on the problem. What may be nothing more than village chiefs are viewed as state monarchs. Francis Yeardley wrote a narrative of a visit in 1654 with "the emperor of the Tuskarorawes . . . at a hunting quarter . . . with 250 of his men, [who] met our company, and received them courteously, and after some days spent, desired them to go to his chief town" (Yeardley's Narrative, p.27).

Even if we do accept the idea that the chief had some type of jurisdiction in more than one village, it does not necessarily follow that he was a tribal ruler. It could merely be a reference to the two villages most Tuscarora towns had, one permanent, the other temporary in a hunting quarter.

When John Lederer visited the village of Kateras in July of 1670, he described it as the "chief seat of the haughty Emperour of the Toskiroro's, called Kaskufara, vulgarly Kaskous . . . he was the most proud imperious barbarian that I met with in all my marches" (p.162). This reaction must have partly been due to the fact that this "barbarian" demanded his rifle and shot and sent him on his way with a minimum of hospitality. From George Bullock and Richard Saunderson, deponents for the Virginia-North Carolina boundary case, we learn the Tuscarora had been at war with the settlers of the Albemarle Sound region in the late 1660's (VHM 7, pp.345, 347-348). In 1672, the "Emperor [village chief?] and 30 Kings [council members?] under him"<sup>2</sup> were going to conclude a peace, so perhaps Lederer encountered a chief expressing the anger and contempt of the people of his village instead of what he described as a "haughty" monarch.

Finally, further evidence drawn from the depositions of the boundary case may shed some light on this early period. The Weanock, members of

the Powhatan Confederacy, fled their village on the James River during the 1645 uprising of part of the confederacy under Opechancanough, at which time they moved southward, stopping several times over the next few years. In 1653 or 1654, they purchased from "two Tuscarora Kings, one named Nicotaw Warr, and the other named Corrowhaughcoheh, and one Tuscaroora Queen called Ervetsahekeh . . . all the land to ye Southward of Cotchawesco Creek & upon Wycocons Creek & on ye North side of Roanoke River from the heads of those creeks downward to Chowan, and that they have heard both from their ancestors & the Tuscarooras that these Lands did Really belong to these Kings" (VHM 8, p.10). This would suggest something other than a single central authority. Perhaps these were village chiefs. The account raises other problems, however, such as their right to dispose of the land. Did it belong to them personally; or, more in keeping with their role as it was outlined earlier, were they acting on behalf of their village?

Obviously these scattered early accounts are not sufficient on which to base any general conclusions, and it will be necessary to turn to the more numerous documents of the period from 1685 to 1710. These will be surveyed for incidents that point out something about individuals and groups important to the Tuscarora political structure.

While there are no good specific descriptions for this sphere of Tuscarora social organization like those of Graffenried, a few shreds of information from Lawson and colonial records should prove helpful. In a general statement without reference to tribal identity, Lawson states:

The king is the Ruler of the Nation, and has others under him, to assist him, as his War-Captains, and Counsellors, who are picked out and chosen from among the ancientest Men of the Nation he is King of. These

meet him in all general Councils and Debates, concerning War, Peace, Trade, Hunting and all the Adventures and Accidents of Human Affairs, which appear within their Verge; where all affairs are discoursed of and argued pro and con, very deliberately (without making any manner of Parties or Divisions) for the Good of the Publick; for, as they meet there to treat, they discharge their Duty with all the integrity imaginable, never looking towards their Own Interest, before the Publick Good. After every Man has given his Opinion, that which has most voices, or in Summing up, is found the most reasonable, that they make use of without any Jars and Wrangling, and put it in Execution, the first Opportunity that offers. (pp.206-207).

Swanton ascribes this to the Siouan tribes who were small in number and interprets it to mean some of their chiefs were "as absolute as Powhatan" (Swanton, p.646). However, there were other small Algonquian and Iroquoian remnants living nearby. Many of these lived in one or two villages according to Lawson (p.255), and their "king" was a "ruler" of a one-or two-towned nation, very similar to the kind of independent dominion that seemed to be held by the Tuscarora villages. Nothing in Lawson's statement indicates these men had absolute authority. They did not necessarily choose the members of their council, nor did they make the final decisions. In most respects it corresponds equally as well to the Tuscarora.

Disputes which involved persons from one town were taken care of by dealing at the local village level. William Byrd I, writing to Lord Effingham in a letter dated June 10, 1689, provides an example. "Some Indian Servants being lately ran away from their Masters met two Taskeroodas (a great Nation to ye Southward) & have killed one of them. He that slew him I have caused to be secured. The Taskeroodas have sent to demand Satisfaction. I have appointed to meet them ye 13th instant, when, I

expect ye great men of the Town & the relations of y<sup>e</sup> Slain man . . ." (VHM 26, p.28). This shows that, at least part of the time, disputes with outsiders were resolved without recourse to the tribal organization by either party. On other occasions to present a more united front a higher level delegation would register a complaint. Such was the case in January, 1690 when Mr. Duckingfield, who lived on the Chowan River in North Carolina, reported to the Virginia Council that eight or ten of the "Kings and Great Men of the Tuskaroro Indians Complained to him that two of their Indians were wanting, and they Imagined the English had killed them."<sup>3</sup>

Final governmental decisions were dependent upon unanimity of opinion on major issues. If this could not be accomplished, much to the chagrin of impatient colonists, the issue was shelved. In some cases a similar uproar occurred when a village made a decision contrary to the wishes of their white neighbors and even other Tuscarora villages. This happened in at least one situation nearly resulting in an economic disaster and warfare. On October 14, 1707, Jeremiah Pate of New Kent County, Virginia, was killed at the "head of Pamunkie River" (EJ III, pp.158-159). Five to ten Tuscarora who had been employed to hunt for the inhabitants of the frontier plantations were accused of the crime (CVSP I, p.123; EJ II, p.158). Messengers sent to the Tuscarora returned with word that "some of the Great men would be in within two days and would bring one of the murderers with them the other three not being in their towns" (EJ III, p.165). A first and second trial date came and went during January. (EJ III, p.166). Until the matter was settled, all trade with the Tuscarora was ordered to be stopped. (EJ III, p.165). On April 20, 1708, word came by way of some traders who had recently been with the Tuscarora, "some

of their Towns were willing to deliver up the murderers of Jeremiah Pate, but that there were other of the said Towns who had declared they would rather hazard their Lives than to surrender Charles one of the said murderers" (EJ III, p.171). There is no record that the matter was ever settled. The Virginia government, in order to force the hand of the belligerent Tuscarora towns, gave them a twenty day ultimatum, which was ignored (EJ III, p.182). In September, they asked North Carolina to cease trade with the Tuscarora to force them to comply (EJ III, p.191). At about that time it is reported "this hath had some effect on them already [trade boycott], for they have made Overtures for an Accomodation and . . . their coming in to compleat it, hath been only obstructed by the raging of a violent distemper among them for several weeks past."<sup>4</sup> In spite of this optimism, nothing was concluded. When it was discovered the Meherrin and Nottoway were giving goods to the Tuscarora, all trade was stopped south of the James River in Virginia (EJ III, p.200), and in a final act of desperation, trade with North Carolina was halted in March, 1709 (EJ III, p.211). All for naught, the Tuscarora were never reported to have complied with their demands. By the end of April, pressure on the Virginia Council from irate merchants was so great that all trade was reopened (EJ III, p.214).

This brings us back to the period of open hostilities in North Carolina (1711-1713). The preceding evidence indicates the lack of central tribal authority during that period was not new to the Tuscarora. The earliest records of visits with who were very likely village chiefs, give the questionable impression that they were powerful monarchs. This was probably due to the background of the visitors and the briefness of their contact. At times, villages acted independently, or in alliance with others, but a strong, centralized tribal authority may not have ever existed. While the village chief is given an aura of power, it appears that, in reality, the

council determined village policy. The chief acted only as their spokesman.

More specific patterns of political organization can be seen in the records of greater interaction from 1711 to 1714. The great men referred to time after time were council members. Graffenried called their sessions the "assembly of the great" (NCCR I, p.928). Hewitt has suggested this to be a translation of the Tuscarora terms for the "council of chiefs," which he could have heard from his interpreter (p.850). The general word for chief, /yaikowaununh/ (Gallatin, p.321) or /ya koo wah nunh/,<sup>5</sup> signifies "one who is great," either in size or position. This same terminology seems to have been applied to the village councils, but this is not as clear. Certainly we meet with mathematical problems of the size of tribal assemblies if all village council members were included. This seems to have been flexible; perhaps those skilled verbally or respected and trusted by the group were sent. There is no hint in any of these documents that chiefs were chosen by clan matrons in a woman's council as we find among them later in New York and Ontario, but this by no means proves it was not present. However, one thing is certain: those individuals representing their villages in an inter-tribal or tribal council, or a meeting with a colonial government, had to be very careful not to exceed the power authorized them.

The position of the "king" or village chief is unclear from the above accounts. He is rarely mentioned separate from council activity and more often than not, the council, or the people, or town are referred to without specific references to him. Hancock, the Chief of Catechna, presided over the council proceedings at his village in such a way that he appeared to direct discussion and maintain order but in no way solely determined the

decisions. From the linguistic information available, the old men, elders, or counselors were the members of both the village council and higher level assemblies of the great. The village chiefs were not necessarily included in the latter of these. Chiefs such as Tom Blunt might transcend their usual sphere of activity on the basis of personal ability, becoming "big men" influential with other towns (NCCR I, p.932; Graffenried, p.276). It has been shown how important the chief was for village unity and as the people's representative when only one person was needed. In the accounts of important meetings presented earlier, however, negotiations were always carried on with two to four council members. The same procedural sequence occurred a number of times. The deputies were sent to hear the proposal with no authority to agree to anything, then took the information back for the council's decision, and then if there was agreement, men were sent to conclude a treaty under those conditions. When specific points had to be discussed a larger number of great men with negotiating power were sent to the meeting. In many cases, there was not always agreement between villages in an alliance and this was probably true within local settlements as well. Under the extreme circumstances of social and physical pressures from 1711 to 1714, undoubtedly families and villages were split and village units realigned themselves, some going north and others staying in Virginia and North Carolina. Historically, however, this marked the end of Tuscarora prominence in these colonies.

## Chapter 4--Endnotes

1. William L. Saunders, ed., The Colonial Records of North Carolina, I (Raleigh:P.M. Hales, Printer to the State, 1886), p.920. Hereafter cited as NCCR I.
2. Selections From the Epistles of George Fox (Cambridge:Trustees of Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund and the Managers of the Mosher Fund of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends, 1879), p.154.
3. H.R. McIlwaine, ed., Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia, I (Richmond:The Virginia State Library, 1925), p.147.
4. Southern Historical Collection MS3406-C, Preston Davie Collection, September 20, 1708, Letter from Edmund Jennings--President of the Council of Virginia. University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.
5. Henry R. Schoolcraft, Notes on the Iroquois (New York:Bartlett and Wellfare, 1846) p.252 .

## CONCLUSIONS

Concluding statements of a study such as this one often have an aura of finality and certainty. To attempt that here would be both unjustifiable and undesirable. Relying almost solely on historical documents at the present time, the certainty of additional information still waiting to be uncovered by the archaeologist, archivist, and linguist makes caution mixed with anticipation the most reasonable tone for the general summation which follows.

Two major problems were posed. The first asked, what was the Tuscarora political organization from the beginning of continuous colonial English contact, at about 1650, until the upheaval of warfare in 1711? The primary political unit was apparently the village from the very beginning of this period. This was true for much of the native population living around the Tuscarora as well, allowing for individual variations in specific features of political organization. Political authority rested in the hands of highly representative councils; the members of which, at the village level, were probably chosen by their lineage. They expressed in council sessions the opinions of the lineage on land use, trade, alliances, warfare, hunting, and other matters of group importance. In the formal context of negotiations with colonial or Indian neighbors, usually two to five delegates represented the village. These were in reality only spokesmen who could make no commitments for the group without first receiving the agreement of each village they represented. Village chiefs, mistakenly described as state monarchs by early explorers, were primarily occupied with the internal affairs of their towns. They acted as host and representative when visitors arrived. Each moderated his village council, and was always involved in public affairs, although

not as sole decision-maker or center of the activity. He was, in a sense, a "good-will ambassador" and functioned to maintain village unity.

Political organization above the village level is difficult to define. From 1700 to 1713, Tuscarora tribal organization was dwarfed by two alliances of villages, each including Tuscarora, Algonquian, and Siouan peoples. This was due primarily to factors of colonial expansion. Inhumane treatment and forced slavery seemed to have been a general aggravation (Hewitt, p.844) but other factors were more differentiated. Eight Tuscarora villages located north of the Neuse, around the Tar River, were able to secure English goods from Virginia traders more easily than others farther south. While all Tuscarora villages were concerned about dwindling lands along the Atlantic coast, a number of more southerly ones felt the most threatened. They had not only made room in their territories for the displaced Coree, Neusiok, and Woccon, but early in the eighteenth century, a number of colonists had homesteaded threateningly close to their villages. Adding to this their secondary place in the Virginia trade network, which was far superior to that of the unregulated North Carolina traders, it is not surprising that these villages united to lash out in violence against the colonists around them in September 1711.

Prior to 1700, information is too incomplete to be able to say with any certainty what kind of pan-village organization may have existed. This makes it difficult to deal with the second major problem posed for this study. What was the specific level of cultural development as indicated primarily by political organization? I tend to concur with Kroeber and Juricek (see pp.39-40, above) that European influence in this area resulted in cohesive, cooperative alliances that were not present before these influences were felt. Tuscarora tribal organization was segmentary in nature,

corresponding remarkably well to Sahlin's outline of features characteristic to such a group (Tribesmen, pp.20-33). Independent local communities, each having agricultural and hunting territories, were structurally and functionally equivalent. Trade agreements and political alliances sometimes involved "outsiders" (Bear River, Coree, Neusiok, Shakori and Woccon). While one village or alliance of villages could exceed another, as the neutral Tuscarora had done economically, it was not by an inherent right. Certainly villages cooperated for war expeditions or occasional mutual aid, but a ranked conical political structure involving all the villages of those people calling themselves (or called by others) "Tuscarora" is doubtful. Village chiefs were in fact "petty chieftains" with no special deference given to the office. Individual chiefs, such as Tom Blunt, became "big-men" by personal ability and were probably crucial to the maintenance of pan-village alliances.

If a segmentary tribal level social organization was in existence prior to 1700, what explains the use of the name "Tuscarora" for a group of villages which were so loosely tied together politically? Ethnic factors of common language and some identifiable shared cultural traits are one reasonable explanation. This does not necessitate any specific political structure for the period following 1650, which is the first time the designation "Tuscarora", in an identifiable form, appears in the historical literature.

What indications are there that a segmentary tribal organization existed with different villages during the seventeenth century? Two important cultural factors shed some light on this question. First, the annual production cycle of Tuscarora villages had been basically the same for at least sixty years. In winter of 1654, a Tuscarora village was

found in a hunting quarter by English traders. While some hunting was carried on during summer months, agricultural and gathering pursuits were of prime importance. This pattern was well suited to the needs of villages involved in fur trade after this time (1654), perhaps with the addition or increased use of more mass kill methods of hunting such as the fire drive. Second, the traditional belief system, concepts of authority, and means of social control were relatively unaffected by contact with whites. Furthermore, Lawson reported individuals who had accumulated English goods were not thereby able to elevate their status. Positions of status were still achieved by the best hunters, shamans, and counselors. Generalized or at least balanced reciprocity remained the ideal for the distribution of goods and services.

It was shown in chapters two and three that the above factors were tied intrinsically to political process. Their continuation in the face of expanding colonial influences would indicate the maintenance of a segmentary tribal organization and not the fragmentation of a strong centralized chiefdom. In fact, the alliances of Tuscarora villages evident in 1711 may represent a centralization greater than any which existed prior to that time. These two alliances were themselves clearly due to the influences of colonial contact and correspond to others in the Southeastern United States that came into existence under similar pressures (Juricek, pp.160-161).

The findings of this study serve two obvious functions. First, the ethnographic picture of the Tuscarora in North Carolina, especially concerning social and political organization, is now more complete. Second, the groundwork is laid for research related to the ethnohistory of the Tuscarora during the years following 1713.

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