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V. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ETHNOHISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The archaeological and ethnohistorical background of the southern Texas region and the Jim Wells County area is briefly summarized. The Late Prehistoric era is discussed in general terms in this section. Late Prehistoric cultural patterns and chronology are discussed in greater detail in Section XI. For additional prehistoric background and the history of archaeological research in the region the reader is referred to Mallouf, Baskin, and Killen (1977), Hester (1980a), and Hall, Black, and Graves (1982). Campbell and Campbell (1981) and Campbell (1983) summarize the ethnohistorical record for south Texas.

SOUTHERN TEXAS PREHISTORY

Intensive archaeological research has only taken place in southern Texas during the last decade (Hester 1980a; Hall, Black, and Graves 1982). Therefore, many problems in the regional prehistory have yet to be addressed. One of the greatest problems in understanding southern Texas prehistory is the lack of a tightly controlled chronology. Much of what is known about the chronologic development of southern Texas prehistory is based on comparisons with adjacent regions such as central Texas and the lower Pecos River area. The fact that even less is known about adjacent northeastern Mexico compounds the problem.

In broad terms, the prehistory of southern Texas and adjacent regions can be divided into three eras or general time spans: the Paleo-Indian, the Archaic, and the Late Prehistoric. These three eras are seen by some as being developmental stages of a theoretical progression of culture toward civilization (cf. Willey and Phillips 1958; Prewitt 1981a). Herein, the three eras are seen as little more than gross divisions of cultural change through time. It can be argued that southern Texas has always offered a generally inhospitable environment for cultural development. Climatic and environmental conditions have provided challenges to cultural adaptation that have been successfully met by only a limited range of adaptive strategies. All known prehistoric cultures in southern Texas were hunting and gathering cultures that depended on the locally available natural resources for survival. Agricultural subsistence and sedentary life styles were nonexistent in southern Texas prehistory. Evidence for extra-regional trade and contact is rare for most areas of south Texas (Hall, Black, and Graves 1982:468-469).

The Paleo-Indian era in southern Texas, as well as in most areas of North America, has been traditionally viewed as a big game hunting adaptation to a late Pleistocene and early Holocene environment. The earliest human inhabitants of southern Texas are assumed to have been small groups of nomadic hunters who used spears tipped with fluted projectile points such as **Clovis** and **Folsom** to kill large Pleistocene animals like the mammoth and bison 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. Archaeologists are becoming increasingly aware that these early peoples also depended on a variety of resources in addition to extinct megafauna (Hester 1980a:28). Other resources notwithstanding, Early Paleo-Indian cultures remain best known for the distinctive remains of their hunting weapons. Surface finds of fluted projectile points

are known from most areas of southern Texas especially in the interior. The late Pleistocene coastline is believed to have been much lower than the modern Gulf coastline due to the global lowering of the sea level (Hester 1980b). Evidence for Early Paleo-Indian adaptations to the late Pleistocene coastal environment may lie on the now inundated continental shelf (Coastal Environments, Inc. 1977).

Although many fluted projectile points have been collected in south Texas, only a few localities have been found that contain buried Early Paleo-Indian components. One such locality, the Buckner Ranch site, is located in Bee County some 50 miles northeast of 41 JW 8 (Sellards 1940). Hester (1980a: 142-146) interprets the Buckner Ranch site as an occupation site used by a succession of Paleo-Indian groups over a comparatively long time. The occurrence of lanceolate projectile points at Buckner Ranch along with stemmed dart points usually considered "Archaic" may be attributable to changing adaptive patterns during the later millennia of the Paleo-Indian era.

A series of unfluted lanceolate projectile points, including the **Plainview, Golondrina, Scottsbluff,** and **Angostura** types, are believed to represent successive Late Paleo-Indian occupations in south Texas (Hester 1980a). Adjacent regions once again provide the best excavated evidence of similar cultural adaptations. Sites like Baker Cave in southwest Texas (Word 1970; Hester 1983; Chadderdon 1983) document a shift to a more modern environment and toward small game hunting and plant gathering adaptations during the Late Paleo-Indian era. It is argued here that at least by 7000 B.C. human adaptation in southern Texas focused on a variety of plant and animal resources. Population increase during the later part of the Paleo-Indian era can be inferred from the much larger numbers of artifacts and sites in comparison with those attributable to Early Paleo-Indian occupation.

Hester (1980a:146) dates the end of the Paleo-Indian era to roughly 6000 B.C. and defines a transitional cultural period, the Pre-Archaic, between 6000 and 3500 B.C. in south Texas. This author has elsewhere argued that the term "Pre-Archaic" is no longer a useful cultural construct (Black 1980). If human adaptation in southern Texas already focused on a wide variety of resources by 7000 B.C. as is argued here, then an "Archaic" life style was obviously present during the so-called "Pre-Archaic." The term "Pre-Archaic" should be replaced by the more appropriate term, the "Early Archaic," as it has been redefined by Story (1980).

The Early Archaic era embraces roughly 3000 years of prehistory in south Texas, 6000 to 3000 B.C. The adaptive patterns evidenced across south Texas during this era are common to a large area of the Western Gulf Coastal Plain (Story 1980; McKinney 1981). Early Archaic sites in deep south Texas are poorly represented in comparison to Early Archaic sites along the Balcones Escarpment area that borders southern Texas on the north. This may reflect a very limited occupation in deep south Texas during this era or it may simply reflect the poor preservation of these sites and the relative dearth of archaeological research in the region. It has been suggested that drier, warmer climatic conditions occurred during the Early Archaic (Bryant and Shafer 1977). Higher rainfall and reliable springs along the Balcones

Escarpment may have made this area a much more favorable environment than inland south Texas.

Evidence of prehistoric occupation of south Texas during the succeeding millennia after 3000 B.C. is much more abundant. Excavations in the Choke Canyon Reservoir area have uncovered evidence of the Archaic era at dozens of sites. One of the problems of dealing with the Archaic cultures of south Texas is that they did not produce as many distinctive dart points in comparison with central Texas Archaic peoples. In south Texas, triangular and leaf-shaped bifaces are much more common than stemmed dart points. This is a problem because most of the Archaic chronologies in Texas and elsewhere rely on projectile points as chronological indicators. Various central Texas style Archaic dart points are often found in surface collections from south Texas. It has long been assumed that excavations would eventually document these artifacts in context and thus provide an equivalent south Texas Archaic chronology. This assumption has been called to question by recent investigations. The Choke Canyon excavations sampled buried Archaic components at many sites, yet stemmed projectile points were recovered in only very small numbers. Unifacial tools, simple bifaces, and distally beveled tools (gouges) were much more common. Grant Hall (personal communication) believes this reflects a much greater reliance on plant and small game resources in south Texas in comparison with an emphasis on deer and bison hunting in central Texas (Hall, Black, and Graves 1982; Hall, Hester, and Black 1986).

One unusual Archaic site in south Texas is the Loma Sandia site in Live Oak County (Hester 1980a). The 1977-1978 excavations at this cemetery site produced many Archaic burials believed to date to the later part of the Archaic era. The variety and quantity of the grave goods found with the Archaic burials may be linked to participation in a regional exchange system extending many hundreds of miles to the east (Hall 1983). Hall has suggested that cemeteries such as Loma Sandia may be located in areas with high concentrations of important natural resources such as pecans.

The later part of the Archaic era in south Texas, during the first millennium A.D., is recognized primarily by the widespread occurrence of small, expanding stem dart points such as the **Ensor** type. An overall reduction in size of projectile points also occurs in central Texas during the Late Archaic. Sometime around A.D. 1000 the Late Prehistoric era begins. Late Prehistoric cultures in south Texas are recognized by the presence of true arrow points and several distinct tool forms such as the small end scraper and the beveled knife. Bone-tempered ceramics occur over a wide area of south Texas by A.D. 1300. Accompanying these changes in artifacts are changes in adaptive strategies. Hall (in Hall, Black, and Graves 1982:471) sees a broader, more diversified hunting emphasis during the Late Prehistoric that often included large animals such as deer, bison, antelope, and possibly javelina. These changes in hunting emphasis may be partially attributable to the adoption of the bow and arrow and partially due to wetter conditions created by a significant climatic shift.

The Late Prehistoric era in south Texas is better known than preceding eras because of better site preservation and better site visibility. The chronology of the Late Prehistoric era in south Texas remains in question. In central Texas, the Late Prehistoric is divided into two phases, the Austin

phase and the Toyah phase (Prewitt 1981a). The division between the early and late segments of the Late Prehistoric is not as clear in south Texas. Hester (1980a:158) has argued on the basis of excavated assemblages that in parts of south Texas the expanding stem arrow points (Austin phase) may have been used at the same time as the contracting stem arrow points (Toyah phase). The overlapping dates between some Late Prehistoric sites in the Choke Canyon area may support Hester's contention.

Several broad patterns of cultural adaptation have been defined for southern Texas. Hester (1976, 1981) sees a major division between coastal and inland adaptations which he terms the "maritime" and "savanna" traditions. The maritime and savanna traditions can be traced back several thousand years to at least the middle part of the Archaic. Ethnohistoric sources indicate that there were physical, linguistic, and cultural differences between coastal groups (whom Cabeza de Vaca termed the "canoe peoples") and inland groups. The maritime tradition involved full-time occupation along the bays and barrier islands of the middle and lower Texas coast. Subsistence was primarily based on fish, shellfish, and coastal fauna and flora. By contrast, the savanna tradition involved more diverse adaptations to a variety of localized inland resources.

The inland area of southern Texas had highly variable resource distribution. Areas with concentrated resources, termed "high resource density" areas, were surrounded by much larger "low resource density" areas (Hester 1981). High resource density areas often occur along perennial streams or rivers where concentrations of plants, animals, water, and lithic resources were found in close proximity. These "generalized resource areas" (Hall, Black, and Graves 1982:467) were repeatedly occupied through time, producing long linear archaeological sites paralleling the water courses. The distribution of water is one of the most important factors governing prehistoric settlement patterns in southern Texas. Virtually all of the perennial streams and rivers in south Texas evidence repeated occupation throughout prehistory. Smaller, more ephemeral streams and small springs were less heavily occupied. Sites along these less predictable water sources were probably occupied during periods of wetter climatic conditions. Upland areas located well away from reliable water sources evidence less intensive occupations that may be linked to the seasonal exploitation of certain plant resources (McGraw, Van Note, and Jones n.d.).

Hester (1981:123-125) suggests that along the coast and inland in high resource density areas the aboriginal groups may have developed well-defined, restrictive territories. These restrictive territories would have been the areas containing adequate resources year round. Hester believes that the large cemetery sites such as Loma Sandia in Live Oak County and the Late Prehistoric cemeteries along the coast reflect the existence of restricted territories. In contrast, most areas of south Texas did not have the high resource density necessary to sustain restricted territories. These areas would have been occupied by groups with much broader territories.

JIM WELLS COUNTY AND VICINITY

The present study is the only intensive archaeological project ever conducted in Jim Wells County. As of 1983, only 13 archaeological sites had been officially recorded in Jim Wells County. Sites 41 JW 1 and 41 JW 2 are located in the southern part of the county. Both sites are known only from surface collections of mostly Archaic materials. Sites 41 JW 3, 41 JW 4, and 41 JW 5 were recorded by L. W. Patterson along Lagarto Creek in the northern part of the county. All three sites have lithic materials that may be attributable to Archaic occupations. Of particular interest is 41 JW 3 which Patterson says is located on a rise that is one of the few lithic sources in the area.

Alvin C. Boldt, a former resident of Jim Wells County, recorded 41 JW 6, 41 JW 9, and 41 JW 12 east of Alice. A recent interview with Boldt revealed that 41 JW 6 and 41 JW 9 are actually two of a series of four to six small localities within an area about 700 m in diameter. Boldt collected a variety of Archaic and Late Prehistoric artifacts from these sites over a 15-year period. Some two and a half kilometers to the east Boldt made surface collections from four or five other localities along a low drainage. One of these localities was recorded as a separate site, 41 JW 12, based on Boldt's recollection that he had collected only Paleo-Indian and Archaic points from it. T. C. Kelly is currently studying the Paleo-Indian points from this site. All of Boldt's localities are small areas less than 100 m in diameter. Most are located on slightly raised topographic features adjacent to or overlooking small, unnamed drainages that flow into Agua Dulce Creek. Judging from Boldt's collection of burned rock, snail, and flake concentrations, most of the localities appear to be small occupation sites. The presence of chronologically sensitive materials dating to virtually the entire prehistoric sequence suggests the area was long a favored campsite. Boldt stated that prior to land modification in the 1930s the area had running creeks that held catfish and shallow rainy season lakes or swampy areas. Several of the localities are located adjacent to former lakes.

Gunnar Brune (1981:266) mentions that the Amargosa Springs near the Hinojosa site was visited by early man as evidenced by a **Clovis** point he says that Alvin Boldt collected near the springs. This statement is in error. Boldt actually found the **Clovis** point on an eroded ridge several miles northeast of the springs. The point was an isolated find (designated as 41 JW 13 due to the possible significance) that was not associated with any known or visible site. Chandler, Knolle, and Knolle (1983) discuss additional Paleo-Indian projectile points that were collected along Javelin Creek in northern Jim Wells and adjacent Nueces Counties.

The Hinojosa site and 41 JW 7 were initially recorded during a survey of SCS project localities in 1974 (Hester and Bass 1974). Site 41 JW 7 is located across Chiltipin Creek from the Hinojosa site near the Amargosa cemetery. The site is described as a light scatter of flakes, burned rock, and a few artifact fragments and is believed to represent a temporary campsite.

Jim Wells County remains archaeologically poorly known. Based on the few recorded sites and observations by local collectors, site density is comparatively low. Most site locations occur along the many small drainages in the

county. One factor that may partially account for the relative low density of visible sites is the overall flat nature of much of the county. In contrast with areas to the west and north, Jim Wells County is less eroded and has deep soils. Older archaeological sites may be buried. On the other hand, cultivation and deep plowing have exposed many of the known sites, including 41 JW 8.

Warren (1984) recently surveyed a 100-acre-tract in Jim Wells County, seven miles south of 41 JW 8 along Resaca de Enmedio, a tributary of Chiltipin Creek. He did not locate any prehistoric sites despite backhoe trenching along the stream.

Adjacent to Jim Wells County are some of the best known and least known counties in south Texas in terms of archaeological resources. Duval, Brooks, and Kleberg Counties are very poorly known. Nueces and Live Oak Counties are comparatively well known whereas San Patricio County falls somewhere in between. C. K. Chandler (1982, 1983) has published several articles describing archaeological materials from San Patricio County.

Duval County archaeology has been recently summarized by McGraw, Van Note, and Jones (n.d.). They note relatively low site densities in upland areas and overall low densities of cultural materials in the southern part of Duval County.

In contrast, Nueces County has a much higher known site density, especially near the coast. Several hundred sites have been recorded in Nueces County, including inland campsites (Black 1978), cemetery sites along Oso Creek (Patterson and Ford 1974; Hester 1980a), sites on the barrier islands along the coast (Campbell 1964), and shell midden sites on the bay shores (Highley, Gerstle, and Hester 1977). The most recent summary of Nueces County archaeology can be found in Carlson, Steele, and Bruno (1982). Archaic and Late Prehistoric sites are well represented while Paleo-Indian sites are much less common. The Gulf coast and the bay systems offered a very different set of resources than was available inland.

The archaeological resources in the area south of Jim Wells County in Brooks County and in adjacent counties have been summarized in Mallouf, Baskin, and Killen (1977) and more recently in McGraw (1984). Much of this area occurs within the "sand plains" of southern Texas where surface water has long been all but nonexistent. Site densities appear to be low except near the few available water sources, such as the small aeolian depressions which hold water after periods of heavy rainfall.

The archaeological resources along the coast and margins of Baffin and Grullo Bays in Kleberg and Kenedy Counties are known from reports by Hester (1969, 1971). Recent work by Herman Smith (1982, 1983) may soon offer new insights into the prehistory of this area.

Live Oak and McMullen Counties are comparatively well known after years of work in the Choke Canyon Reservoir area. Twelve volumes in the Choke Canyon Series have been published by the CAR-UTSA to date. These include ethnohistoric work (Campbell and Campbell 1981), historical archaeology (Everett and Bandy 1981; Fox 1984, 1986), survey work (Thoms, Montgomery, and Portnoy

1981; Roemer 1981), survey and testing (Weed and Shafer 1981; Hall, Black, and Graves 1982; Hall, Hester, and Black 1986), and major site excavations (Brown **et al.** 1982; Scott and Fox 1982; Highley 1986). These reports document the best known archaeological area in southern Texas.

HISTORIC INDIANS OF SOUTHERN TEXAS

Historic contact in south Texas first occurred in the 1530s with the appearance of Cabeza de Vaca on the Texas coast (Campbell and Campbell 1981). In the following centuries the native inhabitants of south Texas were decimated by disease and displaced due to pressure from Spanish colonial occupations spreading from the south and groups of Apaches and Comanches moving in and raiding from the north. Within a few hundred years the native inhabitants of south Texas lost all ethnic identity. The small amount of ethnohistoric data known was collected by the Spanish. This information is spotty and motivated by an interest in converting the natives to Catholicism rather than recording native life styles (Campbell 1983).

The ethnohistoric sources suggest that south Texas was inhabited by hundreds of small bands who spoke many dialects of several language groups (Goddard 1979). An erroneous picture of linguistic and cultural homogeneity was fostered by use of the term "Coahuiltecan" to refer to virtually all the native groups of inland south Texas (cf. Ruecking 1955; Newcomb 1961). Campbell's work has called attention to this problem and has provided an accurate summary of the little that is known about the native inhabitants of south Texas and adjacent northeast Mexico.

The most accurate source of information on the aboriginal inhabitants of southern Texas comes from several documents written by survivors of the ill-fated Narvaez expedition to Florida in 1528. The most important and most famous of the survivors is Cabeza de Vaca, the treasurer of the expedition. Cabeza de Vaca's personal narrative and a similar narrative written by a historian, Oviedo y Valdes, based on a joint report of several of the survivors of the Narvaez expedition, provide perhaps the only accurate ethnographic data that is available for the inhabitants of southern Texas (Campbell and Campbell 1981).

It is very unfortunate that Cabeza de Vaca's account has been misinterpreted by many Texas historians. The key to understanding the account lies in accurately tracing Cabeza de Vaca's route across Texas. As Campbell and Campbell note, a careful study of the Narvaez expedition accounts reveals that Cabeza de Vaca traveled across southern Texas and crossed the Rio Grande in the vicinity of Falcon Lake. This interpretation is based on a well-reasoned study of the landmarks mentioned in the accounts as well as the Indian groups, direction of travel, and the repeated clearly stated goals of the survivors. A similar interpretation, published in the early 20th century (Davenport and Wells 1918-1919), has been virtually ignored by many historians as recent public school history textbooks attest (Campbell and Campbell 1981:65). The probable travel route of Cabeza de Vaca is shown by Campbell and Campbell (1981:Fig. 1) to cross Jim Wells County. The Campbells provide an excellent summary of the Indian groups mentioned by Cabeza de Vaca as well as by later accounts. The following pertinent details of the groups

that ranged near Jim Wells County are extracted from Campbell and Campbell (1981).

Cabeza de Vaca spent several years among a group known as the Mariames (Campbell and Campbell 1981:13-22). The Mariames had a bilobate territory; most of the year they lived in the lower Guadalupe River valley. During the summer they traveled southwest along the coast and then moved inland to the northeastern edge of an extensive concentration of prickly pear. Campbell and Campbell (1981:14) place the Mariames' summer territory west of the Nueces River in parts of Jim Wells and Duval Counties. In 1533-1534 when Cabeza de Vaca was with the Mariames, their summer territory may well have included the 41 JW 8 area.

The Mariames relied on the vast fields of prickly pear for survival during the summer months. Apparently the superabundance of prickly pear fruits (tunas) provided a stable food source for several months. Periodic movement is indicated in order to find areas with ripe fruit. The fruits were usually eaten as they were found or after they were brought back to camp. In the late summer prior to the Mariames return to the lower Guadalupe River, the juice of the prickly pear fruit was extracted, and the tunas were split and dried in the sun so that they could be carried on their return to the winter territory. Land snails were noted in the Oviedo account as being an additional important food resource in the summer. The snails were searched for very carefully. Water was sometimes scarce in the summer territory of the Mariames as Cabeza de Vaca notes that tuna juice was squeezed into holes in the ground; the resulting sweet juice was consumed as a substitute for water.

Few other details of the Mariames summer subsistence pattern are directly stated in the accounts, however, a number of activities can be inferred from general statements and from suspicious missing comments. For example, it can be inferred that a wide variety of small animals were hunted, including snakes, rats, and fish. These animals were eaten as well as their bones which were saved and pulverized to be eaten later. Deer were hunted during the semiannual migration between the territories by chasing them into the bays and forcing them to swim until they became exhausted and drowned. Bison were mentioned as used by the Mariames for clothing and shields. No mention is made of bison hunting during Cabeza de Vaca's stay among the Mariames. This may be due to the occurrence of drought conditions as it can be inferred from several statements that the years 1533-1534 were unusually dry (**ibid.**:15).

The Mariames lived in small circular huts consisting of a four pole frame covered with mats. The mats were presumably made from some sort of woven plant fiber. The simple structures were transported every two to three days to a new encampment. Comparatively few items of material culture are discussed in detail. Bows and arrows were used. Some bows were obtained from the Avavares during the prickly pear season by trade. Small bison hide shields were used. Flint knifes, flint flakes, scrapers, digging sticks, and mortar and pestles are not directly mentioned but can be inferred (Campbell and Campbell 1981:18-19). Campbell and Campbell (1981:19) state that: "Pottery was evidently not made because it is said that prickly-pear juice was collected in holes in the ground for lack of suitable containers." Some

type of woven or flexible basket was used to carry the dried prickly pear fruits. A small net is mentioned and described as being about five and a half feet in length and width. Cooking features used by the Mariames that might be preserved include open hearths and some type of pit oven.

The Avavares are another group described by Cabeza de Vaca that lived at least part of the year in the Jim Wells County area. Campbell and Campbell (1981:24-27) suggest that the Avavares may have ranged on both sides of the Nueces River in parts of Jim Wells, Duval, and San Patricio Counties. The seasonal movement of the Avavares is not clear. They are mentioned as collecting prickly pear in the summer and trading bows with the Mariames. They are also mentioned as remaining in the prickly pear area after the other groups had left. They apparently spent considerable effort (up to five days) searching for late ripening prickly pear. One passage describes the Avavares locating a stream valley with trees containing an edible pod after spending several days searching in vain for ripe tunas. Campbell and Campbell believe that these trees may have been the Texas ebony which has seed pods that hold edible seeds into the winter.

The Avavares hunted deer and used the deer skins to keep warm in the winter. The Avavares suffered greatly during the winter of 1534-1535 when the Spanish stayed with them for eight months. The Spanish noted that they mostly ate roots during the winter and suffered much more hunger than the Mariames. Cabeza de Vaca told of an interesting legend among the Avavares that involved a strange man known as Mala Cosa ("bad thing"). Mala Cosa was alleged to enter houses at night carrying a torch and a large flint knife. He would select a man and preform surgery on the man's abdomen and elbow. Other strange behavior is associated with this legendary character. Mala Cosa probably represents the trickster, an almost universal mythological figure among North American Indian groups (Radin 1956).

The Avavares had contact with a number of groups in the area, including the Mariames, the Fig People, the Cutalchuches, the Maliacones, and the Susolas. The Fig People were a coastal group that Campbell and Campbell place just south of Corpus Christi Bay. The Avavares apparently had friendly contact with the Fig People with whom they visited and traded. The Cutalchuches, the Maliacones, and the Susolas are mentioned as collecting tunas in the same area as the Avavares. Few details are available for these groups.

Campbell and Campbell also summarize ethnohistoric data for the 17th and 18th centuries for south Texas, but detailed information such as that just summarized is simply not available for these later periods. Cabeza de Vaca and his companions were the only Europeans to have actually lived among the aboriginal Indians of south Texas. Later accounts are almost all passing references made in connection with various duties of the Spanish colonialists. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the native groups were displaced by the Spanish from the south and the marauding Apache from the north. European diseases also played an important role in the destruction of native culture. Remnants of the native south Texas groups entered various Spanish missions in the area, including the missions at Guerrero, San Antonio de Bexar, and Goliad. It is obvious from the mission records that the groups were fragmented, displaced, and disoriented (Campbell 1979, 1983; Campbell and Campbell 1985).

By 1828, when Jean Louis Berlandier traveled through southern Texas, the only remaining Indian groups in the region were the Lipan Apaches, the Comanches, the Tonkawas, and a few surviving Karankawa along the coast. The Lipan Apache were forced into south Texas by the Comanches from the north. The Comanches actually only ventured into southern Texas to raid the Spanish and later Anglo settlements. The Tonkawa were a central Texas group that ranged into south Texas to hunt bison. By the 1870s, even these groups had been eliminated from south Texas. Today there are no known descendants of the aboriginal peoples who once lived in southern Texas.

ABORIGINAL SOUTH TEXAS

To generalize, the aboriginal cultural history of southern Texas can be viewed as a series of specialized hunting and gathering adaptations to a demanding environment. These specialized adaptations developed from a long culture history beginning at least 9000 years ago. Some of the groups present when the first Europeans chanced upon south Texas were probably direct descendants of the Paleo-Indian peoples who settled in the region. Outside influence through trade, migration, or the diffusion of ideas was probably minimal and restricted to similar peoples in adjacent regions. Northeast Mexico, the lower Pecos River area, and central Texas were the most important adjacent regions in terms of influence on and similarity to southern Texas groups. Population density probably remained low during all but the most favorable climatic conditions. Even during the most favorable climatic cycles the yearly climatic variations probably held the populations to relatively low densities. Most groups lived a nomadic life style governed by the seasonal availability of resources. Plant resources probably provided a much greater amount of the subsistence than did animals. Small animals, insects, snails, and snakes probably contributed more to the daily diet than did larger animals.

Social organization probably never involved much more than a band level society. The basic social group was probably the band (microband). The size of the microbands probably varied a great deal depending on subsistence patterns, climatic conditions, and territory size and location. Estimates of band sizes range from 30 (Hester and Hill 1975) to several hundred (Campbell 1983). Seasonal aggregation of related microbands into macrobands was governed by the availability of superabundant resources. The bands had territories centered on certain geographical features such as stream valleys or bay systems. Seasonal availability of favored resources often caused the bands to range over considerable distances and to develop oddly shaped territories such as the bilobate territory of the Mariames (Campbell and Campbell 1981). Coastal groups remained on the coast year round and were well adapted to the marine environment. Inland groups had more varied adaptations dependent on climatic conditions, territory resources, and culture history.

Considerable interaction occurred between band groups. Related bands exchanged gifts, intermarried, shared territories, and camped together during certain seasons when superabundant resources were available. Most groups probably had patrilineal descent systems. Warfare was uncommon although certain groups were hostile to one another. Valuable or uncommon resources

were often traded between groups. Flint, flint tools, marine shells, shell ornaments and tools, bows, asphaltum, and red ochre are items that were commonly traded. Coastal groups traded with inland groups from adjacent territories.