

## **The Havana Culture**

Late in the Archaic Period, near the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, dramatic cultural changes occurred quickly.

The area was occupied by the Prairie Lake people of the Red Ocher tradition, who lived in substantial villages on riverbluffs above the floodplains.

About 2,600 BP, pottery-making Marion groups from the north as well as Black Sand people from the south began settling the floodplains of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. These immigrants had a profound influence on the local people, who soon abandoned their bluff based villages and Red Ochre cemetery burials.

The intrusive immigrants lived in small hamlets on the floodplain. These hamlets have produced no evidence of their burials or mortuary activity, but they do contain the first pottery in Illinois.

By 2,200 BP, the interaction of the Marion, Black Sand and Red Ocher cultures catalyzed rapid culture change and the beginning of the Havana culture. (Farnsworth 2009)

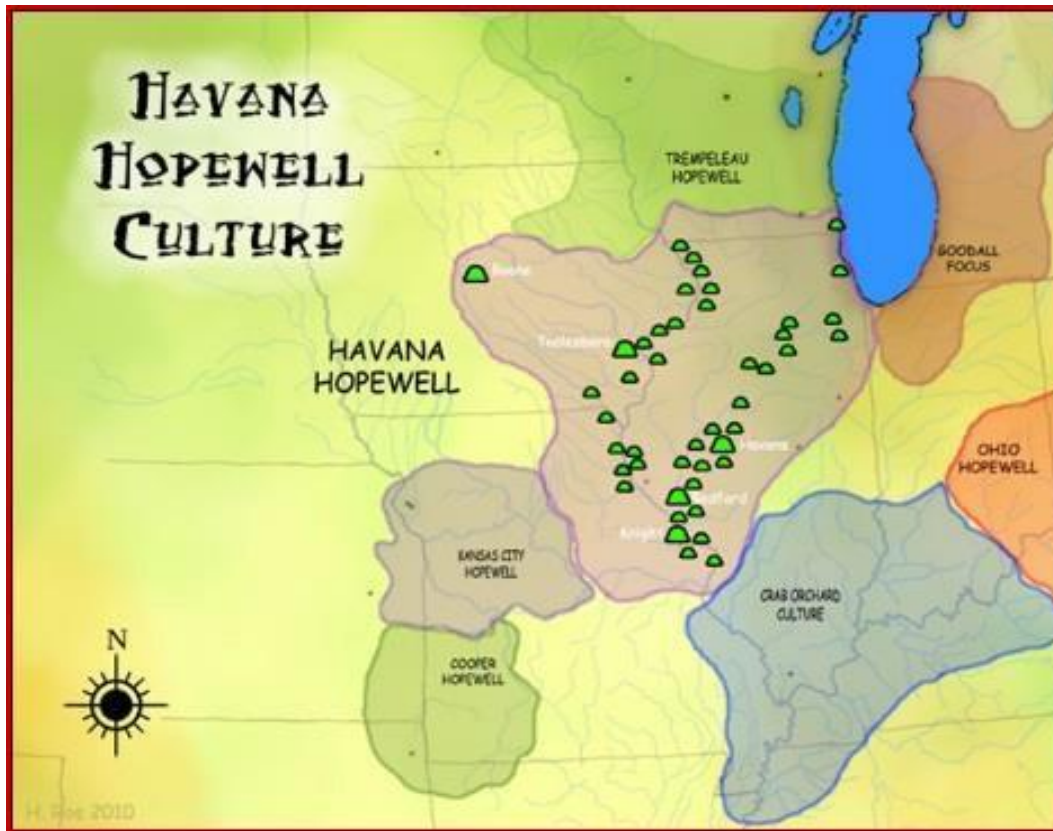
## **Havana Hopewell**

By 2,100 BP, about 100 years after the Havana culture emerged, extensive mound building and Hopewellian mortuary ritual had begun. Eventually, the Havana built Hopewell mounds and ritual centers at ~ 9-12 mi. intervals in the floodplain along the river.

Many ritual centers were associated with bluff-top villages with adjacent mounded cemeteries, suggesting some groups chose to continue some of the Red Ocher culture. (Farnsworth 2009; Griffin 1967)

## **Ceramics**

The Havana developed a distinctive limestone temper ceramic technology and style. Their Fine Havana Zoned Stamped vessels are the first Hopewell pottery. Pots with distinctive decorations were later imported from Hopewell centers in Tennessee and Georgia. Cooking and storage vessels were common and widely distributed. Grave goods included Fine local and imported Hopewell pottery as well as common pottery.



[Havana Hopewell culture map HRoe 2010.jpg](#)

The adoption of Havana flint maize agriculture and limestone tempered ceramics had profound influence on the Adena people, and coincided with the transformation of the Adena into the Ohio Hopewell culture. (Yerkes 1988) citing (McGimsey and Wiant, 1986).

Ohio Hopewellian traits which were adopted by the Havana include: increased burial ceremonialism; importation of exotic raw materials; and trade in animal effigy platform pipes. Some Havana pipes were made from imported Ohio pipestone.

Pottery vessels decorated with abstract bird appear in both Havana and Ohio Hopewell sites about 2,150 BP. Havana pottery seems to have evolved from earlier styles in the upper Midwest, while Ohio Hopewell pottery does not seem to have evolved from earlier Adena ceramics in the Ohio River Valley. This suggests that Havana technology and style spread east to Ohio where it replaced earlier Adena ceramic practices.

(Griffin 1967) (Struever, 1965, p. 218)



Townsend and Sharp 2004 p64  
Gilcrease Museum Cat. #88

Havana Hopewell jar with incised raptors  
Klunk Mound, Ill. (2,000 - 1,600 BP)  
H 14 cm



Deborah Platt - Flickr: Pottery, CC BY-SA 2.0  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=23010902>

Ohio Hopewell pot with incised Spoonbill  
Hopewell site, Ohio

The Havana and Ohio Hopewell shared many spiritual beliefs and practices, but their cultures were distinctly different.

Power and status was **earned**.

(Braun, 1979, p. 79).

#### **Havana Hopewell:**

- Villages were above the floodplain along tributary streams.
- Buried their dead in log tombs within conical burial mounds. Contrasting with the Ohio Hopewell tradition of cremation, Havana burials were extended, or the skin-wrapped skeleton was placed as a bundle in the grave. (Stoltman, 1983, pp. 223-224)
- The Havana invested less in grave goods than the Ohio Hopewell. Some materials used for Havana artifacts were transported great distances, but most were sourced nearby.

#### **Copper**

- The Havana made celts, adzes, and awls of copper.
- Copper pendants, gorgets, ear spools, and plates with repousse designs came from Ohio

(Bender, 1985, p. 47; Struever and Houart, 1972).(Yerkes 1988)

The labor intensive Hopewellian ritual system and trade began to collapse about 1,650 BP. Burial mounds were no longer built, Havana Hopewell projectile point styles and chert tools vanished from the tool kit, as did the grave goods associated with the HES.

In the Havana heartland, there was a shift in settlement patterns. Less than 100 years after the collapse of the HES, about 1,550 BP, a new Woodland culture (the Weaver) is seen in former Hopewell sites. The cultural change from Hopewell to Weaver may have been peaceful. Weaver ceramics use earlier Hopewell ceramic shapes and design elements, suggesting that the Woodland Weaver potters descended from Hopewell potters who taught them manufacturing technology and style.

Farnsworth, Kenneth B. (2009), 'The Woodland Period', in Alice Berkson and Michael D. Wiant (eds.), *Discover Illinois Archaeology* (Illinois Association for Advancement of Archaeology and the Illinois Archaeological Survey).

Griffin, James B. (1967), 'Eastern North American Archaeology: A Summary Prehistoric cultures changed from small hunting bands to well-organized agricultural towns and tribes.', *Science*, 156 (3772), 175-91.

Yerkes, Richard W. (1988), 'The Woodland and Mississippian Traditions in the Prehistory of Midwestern North America', *Journal of World Prehistory*, 2 (3), 307-58.